John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Mid-Term Evaluation for the 2009-2013 Program

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John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Mid-Term Evaluation for the 2009-2013 Program

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Farmer-to-Farmer Special Program Support Project

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- review the goals and implementation of the Program, and seek opportunities to make the program more efficient and effective; and
- identify best practices and problem areas so that the program can make mid-course corrections.

The team would like to acknowledge the many people who greatly assisted us in discussing, reviewing, planning and organizing the ideas in this report. The Implementing Partners (IP) provided us with reports, prepared our field visit itineraries, and provided guidance and expertise on the various aspects of managing the F2F Program: Peggy Carlson of Partners of the Americas; Nona Fisher of Winrock International; Harriet Paul of Florida A&M University; Scott Clark of CNFA; Angelina Tracy of ACDI/VOCA; Eric Wallace of National Cooperative Business Association; and their staffs. The field IP staffs in El Salvador, Costa Rica, Bangladesh, Ghana, Lebanon, Moldova, Georgia, Mali, Haiti, Kenya, Egypt, Senegal, and South Africa arranged our itineraries in-country and provided the team with immense efforts to ensure we were able to successfully understand how the F2F Program worked on the ground. Many people at USAID, in the field, and in the DC office spent time with the evaluation team providing answers to the many questions we posed.

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We would like to acknowledge the many volunteers who availed themselves to us to take the evaluation survey and to be interviewed, sometimes at great length, by the team, providing us with valuable firsthand information on the F2F volunteer experience.

Finally, the many, many hosts with whom we visited deserve a very special set of thanks for welcoming us into their homes, fields, and offices and patiently answering our questions during what were often busy points in the farming and production cycles of their work. We hope that our conclusions in this report, if able to influence the shape of a new phase of the F2F Program, will repay their time with more effective ways to provide them with the technical assistance for which they are so appreciative.

The many contributors to this report are representative of the large F2F community, both in the US and abroad, and the many backgrounds, perspectives and efforts that make the program special.

II. Acronyms

AA	Associate Award
ADVANCE	Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement (Ghana)
ADA	Agribusiness Development Activity (Moldova)
AMP	Access to Mechanization Project (Georgia)
AOTR	Agreement Officer's Technical Representative
APOT	Asociación de Productores Orgánicos de Turrialba (Costa Rica)
BFS	Bureau for Food Security (USAID)
CATIE	Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (Costa Rica)
CpVD	Cost per Volunteer Day
DCHA	[Bureau of] Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (USAID)
ECCA	Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia
E&E	Europe and Eurasia
EGAT	Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (USAID)
F2F	Farmer to Farmer Program
FFP	Food for Peace
FTF	Feed the Future
GDA	Global Development Alliance
HBCU	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Individuals
IEPC	International Extension Program Coordinator
IP	Implementing Partner
IPIA	International Programs in Agriculture
IRG	International Resources Group
LOP	Life of Project
LWA	Leader with Associate
MAVEN	Mali Agricultural Value Enhancement Network
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MSC	Mechanization Service Center
MSI	Minority Serving Institutions
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NIS	Newly Independent States
PAPA	Participating Agency Program Agreement
PDP	Program Development Projects
PG	Performance Goal
PCV	Peace Corps Volunteer
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
SATI	South African Table Grape Industry
SPSP	Special Programs Support Project
UFH	University of Ft. Hare (South Africa)
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USG	United States Government
VWB	Vets Without Borders
WAI	Weidemann Associates Inc.

III. Executive Summary

The John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer (hereafter F2F) program has been a mainstay in agricultural technical assistance provided by USAID since 1985. The program is unique in its ability to reach American farmers, agricultural businesses and educators, and to link them directly to their counterparts throughout the developing world. The fruits of this exchange result in economic empowerment, growth in the agricultural sector, and an increased understanding of how people in different cultural settings live and work. The assistance provided by the Americans is notably voluntary, but in addition the Americans often contribute products, materials, and sometimes financial support to the organizations and hosts with which they work. Hosts also volunteer their time and share their limited resources to ensure a productive exchange.

A team of six specialists in areas related to agriculture, gender, capacity building, and enterprise development produced this mid-term evaluation of the FY09-FY13 F2F Program after visiting thirteen F2F countries, interviewing dozens of stakeholders in the program, and considering the many questions posed to the team by USAID. The program has fielded 1,343 volunteers to assist 918 hosts during this cycle thus far, and is on track to achieve ambitious impact goals.

The team's overall assessment is that the F2F Program is an effective means of delivering short-term technical assistance while providing quality people-to-people exchanges. We suggest the program continue generally as it is. However, we believe the program could broaden participation by US institutions and highly-qualified individuals, and possibly even grow in size and scope, if there is higher-level analysis of piloted programmatic innovations, a special effort to better communicate the impact of the F2F Program to the American people, Congress, and USAID; and attention is given to overcome inefficiencies in the F2F monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system.

Major Findings and Recommendations

I. Reinforcing the Strengths of the F2F Program

A. Profile and Image of the Program

Finding: The F2F Program as a whole gets very little exposure both within USAID and outside of it. This is compounded currently both by uncertainty about where it fits in the Agency bureaucracy and by the burden of the day-to-day management responsibilities of such a complex program. Together, these factors limit the amount and quality of substantive information on the impact the F2F Program that Congress, the public, and other interest groups receive. The recent insertion of the F2F Program in the new and still somewhat unsettled Bureau for Food Security (BFS) provides a good opportunity to review the relationship of the F2F Program and the Agency's other priority programs and to raise the profile of the program within USAID, especially with senior management.

Recommendation: Prior to preparation of the procurement and assistance instruments for the next cycle of the F2F Program, the Assistant Administrator of the BFS should request a strategic plan for

the management of the F2F Program. The plan should result in clear guidance throughout the Agency as to how the F2F Program fits within the Agency's priority programs and the role expected of it. The development of this plan should help raise the profile of the program within USAID, especially with senior management. In the longer term, the staffing of F2F should be done in a way to free up the F2F Director from lesser administrative tasks so he or she can work more with senior management and LPA to create more exposure for the F2F Program.

B. Dual Program Goals

Finding: The F2F Program is achieving its technical goals, but increasing pressure to do so efficiently and cost-effectively puts pressure on both hosts and volunteers, reducing opportunities for cultural exchanges.

Recommendation: Maintain an emphasis on securing volunteers with strong technical expertise who can contribute to achieving program results, while also elevating the importance of cross-cultural objectives in the F2F Program by selecting volunteers who are culturally sensitive and inquisitive. Determine ways to report on the impacts of the cultural exchange, and make a choice to limit the number of times a volunteer can serve and the number of hosts that a volunteer can work with in one assignment.

C. Regional Focus

Finding: The team found that the global reach of the F2F Program remains appropriate and that assigning specific regions to implementers is good management practice. However, the rationale for the regional preferences for Africa and the Caribbean Basin found in the Farm Bill are not clear.

Recommendation: Remove the target geographical allocation and make awards based on expected impact.

D. Alignment of F2F with USAID/USG Programs

Finding: F2F projects are generally well aligned with USAID's relevant program priorities, including the US Government's Feed The Future initiative. F2F also in some cases works well alongside Peace Corps, Millennium Challenge Corporation activities, and/or US-university-led programs including the Collaborative Research Support Programs. Rapid shifts in program focus and target locations, such as in some FTF priority countries, have however created additional costs and some hardship for some F2F implementers.

Recommendation: Continue to encourage alignment of the F2F Program with other USG programming, especially through the use of associate awards, and with respect to general objectives to improve agricultural productivity, linking producers to markets, reducing rural vulnerability, and enhancing nutritional status. Permit F2F implementers some flexibility to engage in alternative locations and work on value chains where key volunteer assistance has the potential to make a significant difference for a particular host or as needed to complete established workplans.

II. Broadening the Impact of the F2F Program

E. LWA Mechanism

Finding: The LWA mechanism has been very effective in aligning the F2F Program with Mission objectives and has significantly and positively impacted the amount of funding and buy-ins by Missions.

Recommendation: Retain the LWA mechanism for core IPs and build in means and flexibility for the IPs to market the mechanism with USAID missions and bureaus. Given recent changes to funding limits on LWA awards, the evaluation team recommends that USAID continue to award LWAs with a regional focus and consider awarding more LWAs including specific awards, with limited core funding, aligned to Feed the Future goals.

F. Quality of Core IP Staff and Grant Management

Finding: The team found that IPs have been able to hold down program costs. The technical competency of staff and programming is good. Country staff members are generally well-known local development experts spending most of their time programming and supporting assignments before and during the volunteer visit. The country teams range in their level of technical skills; teams with more generalists can usually draw on the technical knowledge of good local partners and technical staff of other projects, often with the same implementer.

Recommendation: Country staff should devote more time to refining recommendations and following up on their implementation and impact with greater technical support from the IPs.

G. Flexible Volunteers

Finding: The team found that IPs use flex volunteers to take advantage of opportunities as they emerge outside of targeted countries and value chains but that its overuse lessens the impact of measures to increase strategic and geographic focus.

Recommendation: The team recommends that flex assignments be limited to 15 percent of the total assignments and only in the IP's assigned region.

H. Increasing Diversity

Finding: Efforts to increase the diversity of the volunteer are increasing, with mixed results. Pressure for finding experienced, return volunteers is sometimes at odds with a goal to bring new volunteers with a wider range of professional, ethnic, and sexes into the programs. The number of women in volunteer assignments has increased over the last phase, with better success in some regions than others.

Recommendation: Recruiters are encouraged to work with a wider network of academic and professional associations to bring new volunteers into the program and to expand their outreach with, e.g., the large US regional network of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education

program of USDA. Continue efforts to increase the diversity of the volunteer pool by expanding the reach of recruitment notices. Optimize the use of repeat volunteers to increase volunteer diversity. Consider increasing opportunities to locate two volunteers together.

III. Tightening up the Informational Foundation of the F2F Program

I. Indicators and Reports

Finding: F2F Programs work in many different and complex environments not easily captured by a single instrument. The indicator tables are lengthy, time intensive, and do not always collect data that is helpful for project management. The Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool, piloted in this phase, is valuable but needs some refinements to make it more easily administered with greater consistency.

Recommendation: Revise the list of required indicators and reduce those less relevant for project management. The OCAT can also be revised to capture levels of institutional capacity in a less subjective manner by including checklists for each rating and by providing more training to implementer teams.

J. Program Data Collection and Analysis

Finding: The current reporting process for data is time consuming, error prone, and does not result in useful analytical tools for learning and improving the program. Nonetheless, there are many examples of positive outcomes of F2F volunteer assistance. Formal efforts at impact assessment have been made, both qualitative and quantitative, but the current indicators are not reliable and may overstate actual results. Figures for indirect beneficiaries appear to overstate on-the-ground changes.

Recommendation: Consolidate the reporting process by having the IPs report their data into a single database, or simply upload the Excel data into a centralized database for easier processing. In addition, hire a project manager to provide program-wide M&E support, including training for field and DC-based staff on the indicators, tracking baseline data and impacts across the program, and performing regular analysis of sector-specific, regional accomplishments, as well as against specific USAID goals

IV. Basing Innovation on Timely Analysis

K. SPSP Contract

Finding: The SPSP contract provides important services to the F2F management team, especially the administrative support for organization of routine meetings of the IPs, the management of the small grants and PDP programs. These activities have provided the F2F Program with opportunities to grants, sharing lessons learned and best practices, testing innovative ways to recruit and place volunteers in the field, and expanding the number of implementing partners. However, there is neither a systematic compilation of program data nor an ongoing effort to analyze those operations

so to guide F2F management or the grantees themselves in modifying their programs.

Recommendation: Rebid the SPSP contract for the next phase and include the task of developing a central reporting database or structured excel sheets, more analytical capacity to identify important issues and opportunities related to F2F programming, and a grants program targeted on innovative programs including those proven in this phase to be effective and possibly new ones identified in this report.

L. Managing for Innovation

Finding: Innovation was of interest to USAID during this F2F cycle, especially as it relates to possible new IPs and new approaches to recruitment and scheduling of volunteers. The SPSP contract has not yet led to systematic analysis of the experience to date and identification of innovative measures that should be considered. The F2F project director spends little time on pursuing new opportunities to recruit and field volunteers, mostly because he is totally tied up with day to day reporting and data collection.

Recommendation: F2F leadership should consider proposing one or more new approaches to the F2F program for explicit inclusion in the scope of work for the RFA for the next phase of F2F. Any or all of the ideas proposed in this report would be attractive program innovations. They are also initiatives that would attract broader range of US institutions in the program.

The F2F management team, especially the project leader, needs to have time to work with higher level Bureau management to develop a strategic plan that is at least in part innovative and expands participation in the program. It also requires that the SPSP contract, at least in the next phase, provide central data base management for the program and analytical capacity to help assess and design program innovations.

IV. Introduction

The Farmer-To-Farmer (F2F)[1] program, authorized by Congress in the Farm Bill, funded through Title V of PL 480, and at present managed by Bureau for Food Security (BFS) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) provides voluntary technical assistance to farmers, farm groups, and agribusinesses in developing countries. Since 1985 when the program began, over 13,000 volunteers have served in 103 countries. In October 2008, a new five-year phase of the F2F Program was authorized. USAID implements the program primarily through cooperative agreements to US non-profit organizations that work closely with local partner organizations to place and support the volunteers.

This report presents the findings of an evaluation of the F2F Program carried out by a team of independent consultants who reviewed the progress, impacts, and important issues of the program for USAID. Building on past assessments and evaluations (especially the 2002 and 2007 evaluations) and current program monitoring documents, the purpose of this evaluation was to a) review the goals and implementation of the program and make recommendations to significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, and b) identify best practices and problem areas so managers can make mid-course adjustments to the program.

Assuming that the next Farm Bill (2012 or 2013) will fund the Farmer-to-Farmer program for another five-year period (2014-2018), this evaluation should help inform the drafting of the Bill. The evaluation also provides recommendations and information to USAID and the implementing partners to guide management decisions.

The evaluators carried out site visits in 13 countries, and interviewed 33 returned volunteers and 88 program managers and other implementing partner staff, as well as staff of USAID. The review was conducted over an eight month period from September 2011 to April 2012. Detailed accounting of program implementation is provided, including inputs, outputs, impact, and costs (both planned and actual). The team reviewed the principal program strategies outlined in the Farm Bill and the 2007 Request for Applications (RFA) and Request for Proposals (RFP) that procured the services to be provided through the F2F Program, and provides an analysis of important issues related to F2F strategies of program targeting, volunteer diversity, the dual objective of cultural exchange and technical impact, and special projects created in this cycle to enhance the program.

The team reviewed the important issues of alignment of F2F programming with USAID programs and priorities, specifically the new high priority US government (USG) initiative, Feed the Future (FTF), the technical quality and developmental impact of the program, and monitoring and reporting on program impact including institutional development.

What the evaluation team discovered is a long-running program (over 25 years) that is relatively

[1] The team is choosing to use F2F instead of FTF to avoid confusion with USAID's Feed the Future Initiative.

comfortable within itself, carrying on from day-to-day and year-to-year quietly and efficiently with a simple strategy that supports host country development and USG strategies. The program achieves results while operating on the margins of the more publicly scrutinized development assistance and disaster relief programs of USAID. The program owes its longevity and continued support to the fact that it draws on volunteerism to provide technical advice and cross cultural understanding in a people-to-people program that creates economic growth and international good will. Volunteers for the program overwhelmingly (98% of those surveyed) stated they would consider another assignment. The program builds partnerships with universities and the private sector. It puts a face on foreign assistance.

We believe, though, that the F2F Program could engage more actively and aggressively with higher levels of USG leadership and be more innovative in the way the volunteers are used, their roles, length of assignment, countries targeted, and new institutional arrangements.

V. Background

The U. S. Congress first authorized the F2F in 1985 as a part of the Farm Bill. The objective of this new program was to provide for the transfer of knowledge and expertise of U. S. agricultural producers and businesses on a voluntary basis to middle-income countries and emerging democracies. Since that time, the Program has been reauthorized four times, in 1990, 1995, 2002, and most recently in 2008. The program is named for Congressman Douglas Bereuter, an avid sponsor of the program, and John Ogonowski, one of the pilots killed on September 11, 2001. The F2F Program's purpose is defined by the Farm Bill, and a broad community of stakeholders is interested in the results and progress of the program, including the US Congress, USAID/Washington, USAID field Missions, USDA, , implementing partner NGOs, and the US agricultural community.

The F2F Program is patterned after short term volunteer programs pioneered by VOCA and other US Private Voluntary Organizations. In the first few years, about $1.3 million per year was allocated for the F2F. PVOs implemented their own international volunteer programs concurrently with Farmer to Farmer. In fact, more volunteers were supported with funds other than F2F funds. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the State Department and USAID initiated a special F2F Program in the Newly Independent States (NIS), as a tool of soft diplomacy. This additional funding for the NIS led the F2F Program to quadruple in size. Throughout the 1990's, the NIS program operated on about $7 million per year, in addition to about $3 million for the traditional F2F Program in the other parts of the world. Since 2002, the merged program has continued with funding of about $10 million per year. Currently, about 14% of F2F funding is allocated to NIS.

Throughout the 1990s USAID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation with the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA) administered the F2F Program. In 2003, program management was transferred to the Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau (EGAT), Office of Agriculture and Food Security. NIS F2F Program activities were extended in 2003 while the worldwide program was competed through a new RFA to address EGAT's goal of "reducing poverty and hunger and promoting peace and prosperity in developing and transitioning countries." This transfer

resulted in a shift in the focus of F2F away from organizational development and towards greater alignment with EGAT objectives, notably impacts and value chains.

The 2002 Farm Bill authorized $10 million for each of fiscal years 2003 through 2007 for sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin countries. The program was implemented until 2008 through standard Cooperative Agreements with US NGOs.[2] Though the grants are awarded through a competitive process, many of the same US NGOs have implemented F2F through the years, including ACDI/VOCA, Winrock International, Land O'Lakes, Partners of the Americas, and CNFA. Each of these institutions brings its own approaches, experiences, systems, and technical expertise to the program. USAID Missions are asked for concurrence prior to startup of activities in country and attempts are made in most cases to support on-going development activities in the country.

The Farm Bill was amended in 2008 to authorize a minimum of $10 million for each of fiscal years 2009 through 2013 for sub-Saharan African and Caribbean Basin countries and $5 million for other developing or middle-income countries or emerging market countries. The core 2009-2013 F2F Program, at its midpoint at the end of 2011, is being implemented through a total of eight cooperative agreements with NGO implementing partners (seven leader awards and one core-funded associate award), a contract for support services with a for-profit consulting firm, and a two-person office within USAID. F2F is unique among USAID's development assistance programs in the breadth of its scope and its dual goals of providing technical assistance and enhancing the US public's understanding of foreign cultures and US development assistance efforts through the use of volunteers overseas.

The current F2F Program has planned allocations for about $45.9 million for seven leader agreements, a $9.8 million ceiling for a contract for special projects and support funds, and about $315,000 for USAID administration costs. In addition, associate awards funded by country missions at $100 million (as of October 2011) have been made (Figure 1). During the present program cycle approximately 3,000 F2F volunteers will ultimately provide advisory services in at least 28 countries through the leader agreements.

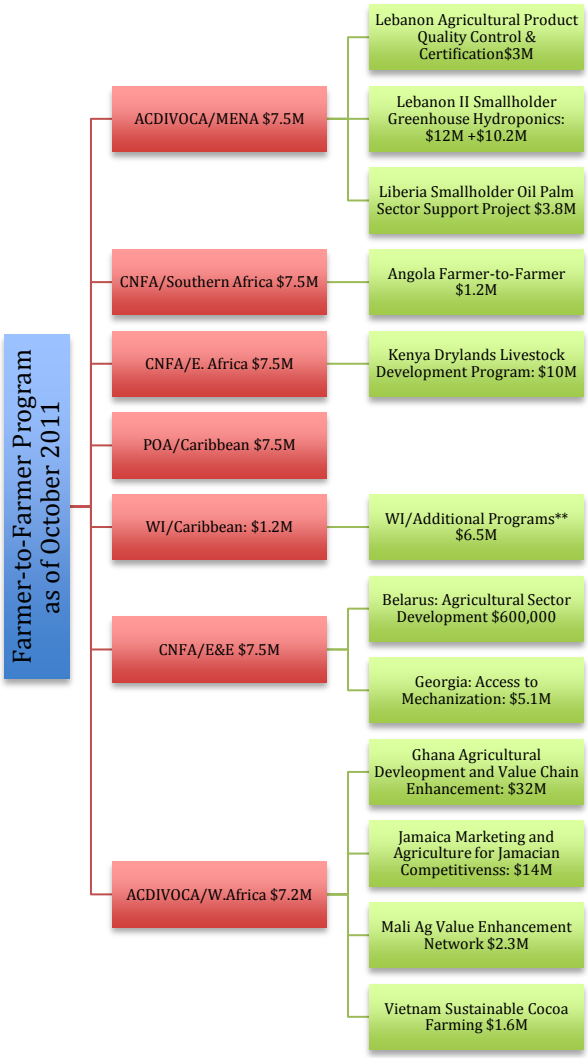
The Farm Bill specifically stipulates that F2F should coordinate with other US foreign assistance programs and activities. While funded and managed by USAID/Washington, the volunteer assignments are in other countries, requiring cooperation and coordination between USAID's Bureau of Food Security, the relevant Regional Bureaus and USAID Country Missions, and the Implementing Partners.

Assistance is provided through short-term volunteer technical assignments with a program emphasis on targeted focus areas and sector impact. Generally, volunteers help host individuals and organizations build local institutions and linkages to resolve local problems and often provide direct hands-on training. The volunteer nature of the effort provides a unique people-to-people dimension to this development program. Most returned volunteers engage in public awareness activities in their US communities to share their experiences and promote better understanding of international development issues and objectives. In fact, in the current phase, volunteers are given clear guidance in their scopes of work and

[2] See discussion below on the Special Project Support Program that is implemented through a contract under the RAISE Plus IQC by Weidemann Associates Inc.

orientation materials about their responsibilities to give public talks or provide information to local media about their volunteer assignments after they return home.

Figure 1: F2F Leader with Associate Awards



Note: Award amounts are over the Life of the Project. ** The Winrock Associate Award is funded by the USAID/W/BFS.

In February 2007, a mid-term assessment of the F2F Program found that the program was "…well managed…has generated positive results…and had no serious problems." It addressed issues of number of agreements and implementing partners per region, program focus, program assignments further up the value chains, balance people-to-people emphasis with development goal, reduce reporting, closer relationship between implementers and USAID missions and the private sector, and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) as recruiters. Important new management features of F2F were also recommended in the 2007 mid-term assessment, some of which were included as guidance for proposers in the Request for Applications (RFA) for this phase:

- Provide better balance between the people-to-people objective and the economic impact objective
- Award separate agreements per region with one implementing partner per region;
- Concentrate program in projects with better-defined activity focus areas;
- Provide increasing percentage of volunteer assignments at multiple nodes along project value chains, especially with processors and marketing associations;
- Institute annual (rather than quarterly) reporting;
- Establish a more active dialogue between IPs and USAID missions in program planning and increase collaboration with USAID mission programs;
- Reconsider the role of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) as "recruiters" to provide greater access to more diverse volunteer pools; and
- Explore greater collaboration with the private sector and other donor programs.

The team evaluated the implementation of these recommendations and reports on these in Section V on Implementation Issues.

The Leader with Associates (LWA) award mechanism is used for each recipient of the core F2F awards, and it is allocated by region. This was meant to facilitate the addition of associate awards to each recipient's core award, with USAID mission or central funding, "…to support a) additional volunteer services within countries of the core country region; b) complementary training, technical assistance or other support for programs on which FTF volunteers are providing services; and/or c) new agricultural volunteer programs in countries outside of the core country region." The LWAs have the flexibility to assign up to 20 percent of volunteer assignments for "flexible" assignments in countries and sectors outside of the recipient's core F2F country(ies) and Country Projects. These flexible assignments are intended to allow the recipient to use volunteers to carry out exploratory activities in new countries and sectors, respond to emerging needs and opportunities, and exploit targets of opportunity.

In addition to the LWAs, Weidemann Associates Inc. (WAI) was awarded a Task Order (under the Raise Plus Limited Scope Set Aside IQC) to implement a F2F Special Program Support Project (SPSP) designed to contribute to meeting overall F2F Program objectives. This SPSP required WAI to i) award grants to qualified US based organizations to carry out special F2F small grant projects using voluntary US technical assistance for agricultural development programs in developing countries and emerging democracies, ii) award Program Development Project (PDP) grants to diversify the F2F Program, iii) carry out special studies, and iv) provide supportive services to the program.

VI. F2F Implementation Progress (FY09-FY11)

This section reports overall inputs, outputs, outreach and impacts for the F2F Program during the fiscal years (FY) of 2009-2011. The numbers and projections shows a program that is, with few exceptions, overall on track in terms of inputs, outputs, and impacts. Full analysis of this data is provided throughout this evaluation report (see also Annex 7).

As of October 2011, the program is just beyond the halfway point. The core projects have been allocated about two-thirds of their time and funds. The Winrock/Caribbean programs were not quite at the half-way point and the Winrock/Other Associate Award is just one quarter completed. Table 1 provides a snapshot on the progress made through a select number of inputs and outputs and shows the percentage of total funding allocated and program days used.

Table 1: Snapshot of Progress Towards Inputs and Outputs Based on Funding Allocated and Implementation Days Between (FY09-FY11)

			Progress Towards 5-Year Performance Goals				
Implementing Partner	% of total funds allocated	% of program days used	Host Institutions Assisted	# of Persons Directly Assisted	# of Persons Trained	# of Volunteers	# of Volunteer Days
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	60	60	32%	82%	67%	53%	45%
ACDIVOCA/ West Africa	62	60	49%	300%	100%	45%	43%
CNFA/ East Africa	61	61	54%	40%	53%	55%	57%
CNFA/ ECCA	61	60	45%	61%	70%	57%	59%
CNFA/ Southern Africa	61	61	47%	60%	38%	55%	67%
Partners/ Caribbean	60	60	41%	66%	168%	44%	42%
Winrock/ Caribbean	44	25	43%	84%	108%	41%	38%
Grand Total	62	51	46%	90%	84%	52%	52%

The snapshot shows:

- 51% of program days have been used, and 62% of anticipated funds have been allocated;
- The program is about 52% to its program goals for the number of volunteers and the number of volunteer days;
- The implementers have already directly assisted 90% of the persons anticipated when setting program goals, so they will greatly exceed this goal; and
- Approximately 46% of the hosts' program goals have received assistance.

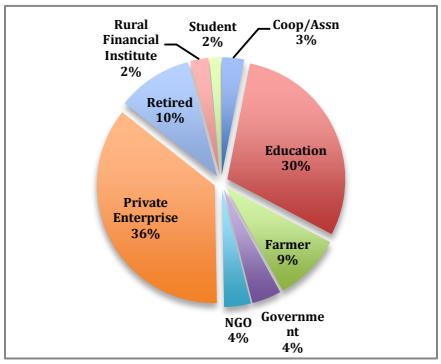


Figure 2: Volunteer Occupations

Progress in delivery of planned inputs

The program appears, overall, to be on track to achieve performance goals for planned inputs, namely volunteers, volunteer days, and various in-kind contributions (see Annex 7). During the three-year FY09-FY11 period:

- 1,350 (20% female) volunteers[3] were fielded over the course of 22,667 days. This is 52% of the estimated total number of volunteers and volunteer days for this program, and the program was 51% complete by October 1, 2010.

[3] See Annex 7, Table 1.

- Over one third (36%) of volunteers are from private enterprises, 29% are from educational institutions, 13% are retired, 9% are farmers and the remaining are from other occupations (Figure 2).
- Wisconsin and California are home to the largest number of volunteers–148 and 166 respectively, or about 20% of volunteers fielded. North Carolina, Minnesota and Florida all provided over 50 volunteers each to the F2F program in this cycle.
- The estimated value of volunteer services leveraged is at approximately $11 million for the core programs, and estimated value of host contributions is about $1.7 million.

Table 2: Inputs for F2F 2009-2011, by Region

Region	# of Vols	# of Volunteer Days Completed	Estimated Value of Volunteer Services Leveraged (US$)	Estimated Value of Host Contribution (US$)	Average # of Volunteer Days Completed
Africa	593	11,209	$5,315,700	$300,533	19
East Africa	214	4,271	$2,022,700	$84,352	20
Southern Africa	195	3,603	$1,697,120	$141,427	18
West Africa	184	3,335	$1,595,880	$74,754	18
ANE	86	1,508	$788,540	$45,155	18
Central Asia Republics	38	672	$315,840	$12,997	18
East Asia	14	177	$150,950	$17,900	13
South Asia	34	659	$321,750	$14,258	19
ECCA	193	3,109	$1,457,000	$62,695	16
LAC	329	4,737	$2,256,750	$1,037,962	14
Caribbean	187	2,484	$1,219,160	$618,184	13
Central America	114	1,676	$788,960	$347,631	15
South America	28	577	$248,630	$72,147	21
MENA	184	2,824	$1,358,340	$259,040	15
Grand Total	1385	23,387	$11,176,330	$1,705,385	17

- The volunteer assignments averaged approximately 17 days. The region with the shortest average assignments is Central America and the Caribbean, and the longest assignments were in South Asia and East Africa. The only outlier is in South America, where Technoserve had a long-term advisor program in Peru with two assignments of 110 days in length.

Planned outputs

This section will outline the average host in each program and track the planned outputs of the program, including numbers of people trained, and other types of direct and indirect beneficiaries.

Table 3: Average Host Profiles

Implementing Partner	# of Hosts	Members/Owners	Employees	Clients	Family members	Net annual income (US$)	Annual gross sales (US$)	Membership	OCAT Rating
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	81	157	52	3,317	11,383	$64,591	$703,591	8	3.21
ACDIVOCA/ West Africa	119	188	53	2,063	8,465	$153,020	$740,986	114	2.27
CNFA/East Africa	66	1,717	50	1,654	14,785	$40,399	$14,942,176	2,422	3.23
CNFA/ECCA	132	2,486	128	1,415	9,885	$333,829	$1,432,637	13,177	3.52
CNFA/Southern Africa	79	3,254	48	1,034	22,192	$89,962	$226,605	4,299	2.82
POA/Carib	311	475	13	2,865	1,687	$120,992	$48,805	473	0.42
WAI/SPSP/ Small grant	32	95	30	180	711	$-	$-	0	0
WAI/SPSP/ PDP/FAMU	18	59	71	4	379	$(23,928)	$295,802	1	
WAI/SPSP/ PDP/NCBA	15	117	7	5	731	$16,149	$37,699	117	2.70
WAI/SPSP/ PDP/PSPK	9	245	195	407	3,391	$4,350,826	$14,512,373	244	0.00
Winrock/Other Countries	33	8	218	36,963	144,075	$652,737	$20,004,818		3.01
Winrock/Caribbean II	23	36	11	245	1,043	$437,571	$3,076,545	51	1.59
Grand Total	**918**	**965**	**54**	**3,323**	**12,209**	**$210,822**	**$2,053,404**	**1,239**	**2.35**

The average host had 965 members, annual income of $210,822 and annual gross sales of approximately $2 million. The average OCAT rating is 2.35. The Caribbean region (for the Partners of the America's and the Winrock program) had the lowest overall OCAT scores. The average volunteer directly assisted 75 persons.

The F2F Program, including both the core and special projects, during this period had:

- Assisted 918 hosts, directly assisted 104,174 persons and trained 50,002 persons;
- Assisted females at approximately a 40% rate;
- The potential to indirectly benefit over 15 million (includes members/owners, employees, clients and family members).

Table 4: Outputs by Core Programs

Row Labels	# of Vols	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Male	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Female	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Total	Sum of Persons Trained Male	Sum of Persons Trained Female	Sum of Persons Trained Total
ACDIVOCA /MENA	183	6,772	1,656	8,428	3,804	1,025	4,829
ACDIVOCA /W. AFR	145	15,076	14,063	29,139	4,198	2,596	6,794
CNFA/E. Africa	173	6,190	4,388	10,578	4,102	2,954	7,056
CNFA/ECCA	231	5,967	2,370	8,337	3,344	1,488	4,862
CNFA/Southern Africa	172	4,581	2,401	6,978	2,760	1,569	4,329
POA/Carib	255	11,952	6,871	18,823	7,742	4,769	12,511
WI/Carib	31	1,276	612	1,888	1,076	484	1,560
WI/Other	27	1,230	543	1,773	624	129	753
Grand Total	1217	53,044	32,904	85,944	27,650	15,014	42,694

The Core F2F Program[4] was responsible for 90% of total volunteers fielded, and about 81% of persons directly assisted. The Vets without Borders program was responsible for approximately 9% of all directly assisted persons due to their livestock vaccination program. This outlier explains the large difference between the percentage of total volunteers fielded by the core program and the percentage of persons directly assisted.

Table 5: Outputs by PDP and SPSP Programs

Special Projects	# of Vols	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Male	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Female	Sum of Persons Directly Assisted Total	Sum of Persons Trained Male	Sum of Persons Trained Female	Sum of Persons Trained Total
PDP-FAMU	26	1,203	989	2,192	1,203	989	2,192
PDP-NCBA	26	1,230	409	1,639	1,137	344	1,481
PDP-PSPK	26	921	864	1,785	433	454	887
WAI-Small grant	90	6,608	6,006	12,614	1,970	776	2,748
Grand Total	168	9,962	8,268	18,230	4,743	2,563	7,308

The volunteer activities can be described as:

- The majority (63%) of the volunteer activities have been in technology transfer; 19% in business and enterprise development, 13% in organizational development and 5% in financial services and environmental conservation.
- 40% of volunteer assistance was for on-farm production; 36% for production support services, 13% for processing, 11% for marketing, and only 3 assignments were in financial services.
- About three quarters of all activities were with cooperatives/associations (30%), individual private farmers (28%) and other private enterprises (18%). In nearly one out of every four assignments private farmers are hosts.
- Of the 6,594 volunteer recommendations in the core program, 50% were economic, 32% were organizational, 12% were environmental, and 6% were financial.
- The volunteers averaged 5 recommendations per assignment.

Table 6: Summary of F2F Outputs

IP	Country For PG compare	Average of Persons Directly Assisted	Economic	Organizational	Fin-ancial	Environmental	Total Vol Recommendations	Average # of Vol Recommendations
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	Egypt	45	553	161	72	138	924	12
	Lebanon	38	405	102	6	4	517	9
	Other	58	118	170	11	19	318	7
ACDIVOCA/ W. AFR	Ghana	401	32	208	33	16	289	5
	Liberia	66	42	37	21	32	132	9
	Mali	29	45	60	1	7	113	4
	Nigeria	66	70	17	19	7	113	3
	Other	111	14	30	7	8	59	6
CNFA/E. Africa	Kenya	72	69	137	26	17	249	4

[4] The Winrock International Associate Award for additional countries is included here.

	Other	35	10	24	6	15	55	3
	Tanzania	39	54	110	26	38	228	5
	Uganda	83	41	98	12	7	158	4
CNFA/ECCA	Georgia	22	110	101	13	40	264	3
	Moldova	28	132	114	22	18	286	4
	Other	60	59	54	3	8	126	5
	Tajikistan	71	55	27	6	18	106	4
	Ukraine	36	28	12	3	7	50	3
	Uzbekistan	28	23	0	2	8	33	4
CNFA/Southern Africa	Angola	27	25	58	24	24	131	4
	Malawi	34	30	87	34	73	224	4
	Mozambique	59	149	79	24	84	336	6
	Other	34	8	33	3	9	53	2
POA/Carib	DR	61	344	92	10	97	543	8
	Guyana	32	143	26	0	27	196	6
	Haiti	66	186	67	0	2	255	6
	Nicaragua	107	331	115	4	52	502	7
	Other	77	84	39	0	21	144	3
WI/Carib	El Salvador	52	60	12	1	5	78	3
	Other	100	6	4	0	2	12	2
WI/Other	Bangladesh	58	22	60	0	5	87	4
	Ethiopia	32	7	0	0	1	8	3
	Other	198	5	0	0	0	5	3
Grand Total		71	3260	2134	389	809	6,594	5

Impacts achieved to-date and prospects for impacts from the program activities

Impact data was reported for 535 total hosts (almost 60%). The impact indicators were revised from the first year to the second and third year. A new system, the Organizational Impact Objectives (OCAT), was adopted to create a metric to measure improvement in organizational development. Although clear definitions have been provided, implementers remarked at the 2011 Annual IP meeting as well as throughout the evaluation some confusion about when to track certain indicators. It appeared unclear to some IPs when loans and environmental issues should be recorded–for every assignment or just those assignments where these indicators were relevant to the scope of work. The F2F Program Standard Indicator Reporting Table Definitions state very clearly (and underlined) that the loans should be measured only for financial service impact objectives, and improved environmental indicators should be used only for environmental objectives.

The evaluation team provides analysis and recommendations regarding reporting and monitoring and evaluation in this report. Table 7 below, however, does reflect some of this confusion–especially when the number and amounts of loans are decreasing. Membership has been reduced by 95,635 persons, instead of increased by the performance goal of 2,383 persons. The reason the IPs cite for this decrease

is that often the goal of the program is to decrease membership, not increase it.

Beneficiaries. The F2F core programs have almost completed progress towards their beneficiary goals. A few outliers: ACDIVOCA/MENA has a decrease in the number of family members. The CNFA/Southern Africa program has exceeded the total beneficiary goal by 1539%.

Table 7: Beneficiaries' Progress Toward Program Goals

	Members/Owners	Employees	Family Members	Clients	Total
IP	Progress	Progress	Progress	Progress	Progress
ACDIVOCA/MENA	10%	3%	-443%	1%	-77%
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	35%	132%	663%	28%	142%
CNFA/East Africa	628%	23%	52%	5%	50%
CNFA/ECCA	11214%	119%	99%	44%	97%
CNFA/Southern Africa	1669%	1072%	2435%	229%	1539%
Partners/Caribbean	247%	12%	86%	7%	51%
Winrock/Caribbean	56%	5%	92%	13%	63%
Grand Total	678%	77%	131%	24%	98%

Recommendations: The core implementers have provided hosts with 70% of planned recommendations. Almost one in three recommendations from the core program have been adopted - 2,127 out of a total of 6962 recommendations (with 60% of hosts reporting).

Economic and Environmental Impacts: The F2F Program has increased net annual income by over $44 million, gross sales by $92.3 million and annual revenues by $37.1 million. The program has exceeded its goals for increasing net annual income by 313% and for increasing gross annual sales by 150%.

Table 8: Progress Towards Goals (60% of hosts reporting)

Progress Toward PG	Increase in Net Annual Income (US$)	increase in Gross Annual Sales (US$)	Increase in Area Under Improved Production Technology (ha.)	Estimated Value of Resources Mobilized by Host (US$)
ACDIVOCA/MENA	80%	72%	391%	17%
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	443%	-161%	258%	4%
CNFA/East Africa	1%	348%	436%	16%
CNFA/ECCA	776%	884%	0%	10%
CNFA/Southern Africa	502%	283%	2419%	1126%
Partners/Caribbean	144%	52%	0%	81%
Winrock/Caribbean	609%	-189%	174%	0%
Grand Total	313%	150%	11%	29%

OCAT scores have risen on average by 0.2 points.[5] The number of hectares under improved production technology is 37,154 hectares. About 502 new products and services are being offered by hosts. ACDIVOCA/MENA and CNFA/East Africa make up the large majority of new services. The large numbers for MENA probably reflect support that F2F gives to a GDA there to increase tomato production for processing. Other support to dairy development could also be significant.

[5] Although see discussion in M&E section and Annex 6. The team did not find this to be a meaningful number.

Table 9: Progress Towards Recommendations and Recommendation Adoption Goals						
	# of Volunteer Recommendations		# of Major Volunteer Recommendations Adopted		Progress to Goals	
IP	Program Goal	Actual	Program Goal	Actual	# of Recommenda-tions	Recommenda-tions adopted
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	1,352	1,732	946	715	128%	76%
ACDIVOCA/ West Africa	1,296	706	778	208	54%	27%
CNFA/ East Africa	1,240	680	620	211	55%	34%
CNFA/ ECCA	1,621	852	1,508	275	53%	18%
CNFA/ Southern Africa	1,180	744	885	231	63%	26%
Partners/ Caribbean	2,473	1,630	2,102	438	66%	21%
Winrock/ Caribbean	162	90	123	33	56%	27%
Grand Total	**9,324**	**6,534**	**6962**	**2,127**	70%	31%

The F2F Program outreach expanded its reach through the use of blogs, Facebook pages and other forms of electronic media. Of the 214 volunteers who took the evaluation team's volunteer survey and reported using electronic media for outreach, 94% preferred email, 36% used Facebook, 22% used LinkedIn, 20% used a personal or business website, 15% used a blog, and 4% used Twitter. The implementing partners reported the following in terms of outreach:

- 911 press releases were issued to local press/radio/TV media;
- 1352 media events by implementers and F2F volunteers;
- 1227 group presentations by implementers and F2F volunteers;
- The grantee and volunteers in the U.S leveraged approximately $2.5 million.

To hit performance goals, implementers need to increase the number of press releases (total goal is 2513), but the implementers have already exceeded or are on track to meet all other outreach goals.

Data Trends and Outliers

Table 10: Average Number of Days Per Assignment, by Region

Region	Last Cycle (FY02-08)	This Cycle (FY09-11)
Africa	24	19
MENA	17	16
ECCA	18	14
LAC	16	16
Flex	n/a	19

Table 11: Average Days by Sector, FY08-FY11

Sector	Avr # Vol Days Completed
Dairy and Animals	17
Flexible	18
Grains	19
Horticulture	16
Oilseeds, Tree Crops, Nuts	18
Other	16

Trends and Outliers in Average Number and Length of Assignments

The F2F Program overall has a lower average of days completed this cycle versus last cycle. It appears this trend may be because of the implementers involved, not necessarily regions or any other shift. Table 10 shows that the last cycle of the F2F Program, the average number of days per assignment was 19 and now it is 17, with the most dramatic change coming from Africa where the number of days decreased from 24 to 19 days. During the last cycle, Land O'Lakes and OIC International had much longer average assignments than any other implementer and they are no longer involved in implementing the core F2F Program. This may be the primary reason for the shift.

Table 10 shows the average number of volunteer days by IP from the last F2F cycle to this F2F cycle. Partners of the Americas (POA) and FAMU both had an average two-day decline per assignment. The average assignment to the ECCA region has significantly shortened, from 18 to 14 days.

In terms of sectors, the Peru/ITE project has an average of 110 days per assignment. The gender, agriculture, coffee, aquaculture, and East Caribbean food security programs all averaged around 10 days per assignment–significantly lower than other sectors. The SPSP projects tend to either be very long, or very short in relative length—they average 23 days in 2009, and 13 days in 2011. The total number of volunteer assignments by mid-point of the last F2F cycle was 1868, an average of 622 assignments per year. For this phase, F2F has an average of 447 assignments per year. This phase has accomplished 72% of the comparable number of assignments from the last phase.

Outliers in Number of Recommendations and Persons Directly Assisted or Trained

The number of hosts and persons directly assisted and trained was fairly consistent among implementers aside from a few outliers. Table 1 shows the number of hosts, the number persons directly assisted and trained (and the average number per volunteer) and the number of potential beneficiaries for every person directly assisted or trained. From this table, we observe the following outliers:

Table 12: Average Number of Days Per Assignment, by IP

	Average # of Vol Days Per Vol	
	FY02-08	FY09-11
ACDI/VOCA	18	17
CNFA	18	18
FAMU	21	19
Land O'Lakes	27	n/a
OICI	27	n/a
POA	17	15
VSU	19	n/a
Winrock	18	17
Grand Total	19	17

- POA/Caribbean serves about 311 host institutions, or about one third of all hosts. This is more than twice to five times the number of hosts served by other IPs. Partners also fielded the most number of volunteers (20% of total). The POA program has volunteers visit more than the average number of hosts. Hosts, however, receive fewer volunteers than the average program. The result is that the Partners program seems to reach out further than the average program, spreading volunteers among a larger variety of hosts.

Table 13: Number of Volunteers per Host and Hosts per Volunteer

	# of Vol Per Host	# of Hosts Per Volunteer
ACDIVOCA/MENA	2.3	0.4
ACDIVOCA/W. Africa	1.2	0.8
CNFA/E.Africa	2.6	0.4
CNFA/ECCA	1.8	0.6
CNFA/S. Africa	1.6	0.6
POA/Carib	0.8	1.2
WAI/SPSP	2.3	0.4
Winrock/Other	0.8	1.2
Winrock/Carib	1.3	0.7
Grand Total	1.5	0.7

- ACDIVOCA's West Africa program, particularly Ghana's staple foods program directly assisted one-third of all direct beneficiaries, or 29,149 persons. This is significantly higher than other programs.
- The Winrock/Other program lists a potential number of beneficiaries of more than 5.7 million, or 36 thousand per person trained or assisted. This outlier can be explained by a livestock assignment where the host was an NGO with posts throughout Bangladesh, and the artificial insemination training included train-the-trainers from local NGO posts. The potential beneficiaries included all members of BRAC and the village where BRAC will operate and assist with artificial insemination.
- The number of hosts served by each volunteer during the last phase of the F2F Program was .8 or each volunteer went to an average 1.3 hosts. There has not been a dramatic shift during this phase, but a trend to have more volunteers serve fewer hosts.

VII. Management Issues

USAID Management of F2F Program

The F2F administration/Agreement Officer's Technical Representative (AOTR) or "project officer" has moved several times to different offices and bureaus due to several USAID reorganizations, including once since the start of this present 5-year cycle. Over time, F2F management has been passed from its earlier location in the Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation in the DCHA Bureau, to the central EGAT bureau, and now seems to be settled in the newly formed Bureau for Food Security. While this organizational uncertainty might have resulted in management problems for the management team, these changes appear to have been "absorbed" without difficulty. They do not appear to have delayed decisions related to the awarding of the core F2F grants nor the implementation of the new SPSP contract. The team believes this is due to two factors: the determined and efficient way in which the AOTR oversees the program, and the fact that the program is not on the priority scope of Agency management above the F2F project officer level. The F2F management team essentially goes about its business, developing and processing the procurement instruments they need in a timely fashion, and providing close oversight of the program to ensure on-time obligation of funds and submission of routine Agency reporting.

During the present phase of the program USAID reduced the USAID F2F management team from three to two officers by combing the positions of program analyst and program advisor. The present staff size and expertise of the USAID/W F2F staff appears sufficient to provide basic overall coordination, support, monitoring, and direction of the Program by USAID at its current size and scope. The skills and training of the Officers could be better utilized to innovate and better position the F2F Program in addition to the routine administrative tasks that come with administering a multi-million dollar, multi-implementer project. The contracts of the two current team members are coming to an end in September and October 2012 and it is not clear what plans have been made to fill the positions at that time.

There are however ancillary issues to consider before determining that this team size and makeup is sufficient for managing the program: i) the utility and effectiveness of the SPSP contract and ii) the

extent to which the F2F Program is seen to be operated at its full potential. Both of these issues are addressed later in the report.

Profile of F2F within USAID

USAID senior management, in this case from the leadership of the BFS to the Administrator, does not give much attention to the F2F Program. One possible reason is that F2F is an old program and attention of senior officers tends historically to be focused on newer priorities of the current administration. Also, the program as designed pretty much runs itself and has its own reliable (at least until now) supporters on the Hill. The program can be said to "run itself under the radar." But, if the program is to grow or innovate significantly to reach its full potential, higher levels of management at USAID should be more aware and informed of the nature of the program and the breadth of its impact in the field and in the US. With the creation of BFS, and the recent placement of F2F in this Bureau, some uncertainty exists about F2F management responsibilities (chain of command above F2F administration team). Increasing the impact of the F2F Program will be difficult without higher levels of management support.

USAID's Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) division likes the F2F Program and believes it could play an important role in linking programs such as FTF to US farmers and taxpayers. The example of US farmers helping farmers in other countries is a good representation of US diplomacy and development efforts, especially in a post-conflict context. The F2F Program, however, has not played a key enough role in major food aid or other priority areas for LPA to highlight it. The BFS has a public information officer who can now work more aggressively to promote the benefits of the F2F Program in the broader context of increasing food security.

The bureaucratic uncertainty about where F2F fits within the Agency is not greatly affecting the day-to-day implementation of the program, but it does inhibit efforts to raise the profile of F2F within USAID and on the outside, and seems to be constraining consideration of strategies to expand and grow the program. Congress, the public, and other interest groups could be receiving more and better substantive information on the impact the F2F Program is having. This in turn could help justify, albeit in a modest way given the size of the F2F Program, the priority being given to food security and agriculture development by the present USAID leadership. We must note, however, that In the process of raising the profile of the program, the higher ups and Congress will surely want to know what the bottom-line impact is. They will want to know the value of F2F as a cultural exchange/diplomacy /US outreach tool. While everyone recognizes that cultural exchange is an important tool for USAID, it is also the case that it is not easily nor well reported. The program needs to make a clear and compelling case for the value of the cultural exchange through F2F technical volunteers, perhaps building on the arguments presented by the volunteers themselves who have stated that their ability to provide appropriate and effective technical assistance is enhanced by familiarity with the cultural context (see Annex 4).

Recommendation:

Given the recent insertion of the F2F Program in the new and still somewhat unsettled BFS, the team recommends that the Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Food Security (BFS) develop and communicate a strategic plan for the management and alignment of the F2F Program within the broader

BFS, based in part on this Evaluation Report. The plan, developed in close concert with the present F2F management team and the IPs, should focus initially on determining the degree to which the F2F Program should fit within the Agency's priority programs and the role expected of it. With this clarified better than it is now, the Agency, together with LPA and USDA, should be influencing the next Farm Bill's Farmer to Farmer legislation so it is consistent with and provides appropriate resources (financial, staff, management support) for the F2F Program. Inherent in this strategy is the issue of whether or not to grow the program, either through greater core funding, increases in volunteers through F2F associate awards, or other sources of funding like the private sector.

The F2F Project leader should have the time to address strategic issues including options for program growth, and to raise the profile of the program with USAID senior management, Congress, the public, USAID overseas missions, and USAID personnel overall. To do this the F2F Project leader should be provided enough staff either in his office or through a support contract such as the present SPSP to free him from lesser administrative tasks so he can work more with senior management and LPA to provide more exposure of the F2F Program, more communication with USAID field staff in the target countries, and more attention to the possibilities for innovation and growth in the program.

Establishing active and productive communication between IPs and USAID missions

Communications among the main actors in the F2F Program are active and productive. Some of this communication is stipulated in the LWA. In recent years, USAID has tried to streamline the management of its programs while maintaining adequate oversight of its implementing partners. The cooperative agreement mechanism, of which the LWA is a special type, provides the Agency with opportunities for substantial involvement, or better collaboration, with the grantee. The RFA for this phase states that the areas of "substantial involvement" by USAID in the LWA Cooperative Agreements include:

- Approval of the Recipient's Annual Work Plans and Country FTF Projects;
- Approval of key personnel (FTF Program Director/Coordinator and FTF Program Country Directors);
- Approval of FTF volunteer assignments outside of normal program parameters;
- Approval of the Recipient's monitoring and evaluation plan; and
- Concurrence in Requests for a AA applications.

The RFA also stipulates that specific substantial involvement provisions for associate awards will be proposed by the commissioning unit and should be consistent with those of the leader award. They will be identified for each award, including a) approval of the Recipient's implementation plans; b) approval of specified key personnel; and c) collaboration or joint participation between USAID and the Recipient. The substantial involvement allows Missions to work in collaboration with the IP in designing a F2F Program, providing good opportunities for strategic alignment with other programs in the Mission portfolio, as well as with Agency priorities. At the same time, both IPs and USAID AOTRs tend to like the flexibility LWAs provide in program design.

Overall, USAID is working well with its core IPs in administering its awards and managing the program's implementation. Many F2F Programs are implemented in close coordination with other USAID and MCC funded activities. The F2F activities are increasingly developing good synergies and contributing to

shared goals with USAID missions. The Leader Agreements, managed from Washington, attempt to align themselves with Mission programs, but the communication process appears to be highly dependent upon the willingness of the Mission and the ability and inclination of the IP respresentative to establish and maintain that relationship. Examples of where this relationship is not too close are Bangladesh and Egypt, where the IP's F2F Country Directors were not routinely included as a member of the USAID Mission's list of project leaders/Chiefs of Party or Team leaders. So when routine meetings are held, F2F is not a part of the program and is not informed of Mission issues/priorities, and cannot offer feedback to and interact with the Mission Director and senior mission management, as is commonplace in such sessions. Bangladesh and Egypt USAID Missions have, since the evaluation, taken note of the omission. With turnovers and normal rotations of staff it could be helpful for the F2F Program Director to communicate the need for F2F inclusion for exchange of information/progress that would be mutually beneficial.

The pace of work in rolling out the FTF activities in some of the priority countries has meant that USAID staff members have had less time than in the past to pay attention to the program and meet with volunteers before or after their assignments. The AOTRs and mission contact officers may now be able to develop closer relations with the F2F Country Directors, discussing pros and cons of hosts and potential assignments, but less knowledge of the volunteers and their activities than in earlier phases of the program.

In Bangladesh, for example, F2F volunteers worked with small pond owners/managers to produce more fish and shrimp for domestic consumption and marketing. Thus the goals of Feed the Future pertaining to availability, access and utilization were all met under one system of providing technology to a group of producers. More food was available, incomes increased and of the total production, more nutrient dense food was consumed, improving nutrition (utilization).

In another activity in Bangladesh volunteers assisted an innovative entrepreneur to begin making and marketing organic fertilizers from diverse sources of locally available materials, and also introduced vermiculture to provide another source of organic fertilizer. All the products contribute to the sustainability of food production and the local fragile environment, yet another goal of Feed the future met.

Establishing more active communication between the F2F IP country managers and USAID Mission staff would assist USAID in learning about projects that are actively assisting the Mission to meet high-level goals.

Information flow from F2F to USAID Missions

A key recommendation of the 2007 mid-term assessment called for FTF strategies and work plans to be developed in closer collaboration with USAID in-country and relevant regional missions. It suggested that IPs should engage in more active dialogue with the Missions to promote a closer relationship. To facilitate the working relationship between F2F IPs and USAID in the field, the F2F management team must communicate with USAID field offices on two levels. Generally, the team must ensure that program and contracts officers in all USAID missions know about the F2F Program as a potential

resource to support their program (especially through the AA mechanism). And more specifically, they must communicate with missions in countries where F2F core programs will be sending volunteers.

As regards general information on the F2F Program, just like any of the many centrally funded USAID programs and projects, up to date, attractive, and informative websites are a main means of communication to officers and offices throughout the Agency. The more aggressive centrally funded projects take advantage of formal orientation and training sessions for new hires, regional meetings of USAID officers, articles in Front Lines and other Agency communications to "market" their services and procurement mechanisms like the LWAs available in each of the core implementing partners under F2F.

Additionally, the F2F staff participated in a variety of activities to help develop USAID agricultural programs and, in the process, hopefully, to identify opportunities for linking FTF voluntary technical assistance to USAID's broader agriculture and rural development agenda:

- Bosnia: Review of USAID Economic Growth and Agricultural Sector Activities
- Senegal: Design of Agricultural Education and Research Project
- Review of Progress on ADVANCE associate award
- Senegal: Evaluation Panel for Agricultural Education and Research Project
- EGAT: Award and Start-up of Modernizing Extension and Advisory Services
- EGAT: Preliminary Design for a Modernizing Agricultural Education and Training Systems
- EGAT: Review of Potential CRSP Technology Scaling Up Project Proposals
- EGAT: Coordination of a Strategy Review of Agricultural Education and Training Issues
- FFP: MYOP Reviews for Liberia.

Communications between the F2F management team and USAIDs receiving F2F volunteers regarding problems, program opportunities, and other substantive issues depends heavily on how the IP manages the relationship with the USAID office in country. The program could benefit from a process that is less passive and involves greater participation of USAID Mission personnel, ensuring a greater level of coordination between F2F and other USAID program activities. A close working relationship with USAID is as much the responsibility of senior F2F management as it is of the IP. It is not something, however, that can be left to the IPs alone. Oftentimes the IP Country Director is intimidated or, as found in Bangladesh and Egypt, is uncomfortable approaching USAID. Or, as in the case of the Haiti program, the F2F activities are simply not of much interest to the USAID mission because the focus areas of small animal production, horticulture, and beekeeping are not the priority FTF value chains that the mission's agriculture budget is targeting. The result is a lapse in communications and USAID not being engaged or linked to F2F regarding the processes used, problems, and successes and the lack of feedback results in important information not flowing up channels to the Mission Director or the Ambassador. An issue that exacerbates the communications gap is the rotation of USAID field staff on a regular basis. For example, key staff in Bangladesh, including two Office Directors and the Mission Director all rotated in at the same time. That change plus a big push for the Agency's FTF Program resulted in F2F, not intentionally, but virtually, falling through the cracks temporarily with respect to normal communications. The team found several cases where the F2F management team helped the IPs increase their willingness and capacity to plan more closely with USAID officers in the field. In Lebanon where F2F is closely linked to

other USAID agricultural programs communications are open and frequent and have helped to both parties. Using this approach more often in the future would improve the level of joint planning of F2F activities between IPs and the USAID field staff.

The issue is a complex one, however. Because the F2F Leader Awards are global programs managed in DC, the contact USAID staff in the field do not have any authority over their activities nor is anything written in their work objectives to support any significant involvement in the program. As a result of both personal interest and program relevance, some field staff did follow F2F activities with a high degree of interest in the past. It was common for them to meet with volunteers either on their way in or out of the country and to attend debriefings organized by the IP staff when the volunteer completed his or her assignment. However time for these activities has decreased as FTF multi-year strategies have emerged and more agricultural activities are starting up and requiring the direct attention of mission staff.

The situation is different for the AAs that are typically funded and managed by the missions themselves. In these situations, there is close relationship between the IPs and the USAID mission AOTRs since the Mission has a vested interest in the AA program.

Relationship between F2F management team and IPs

The key to effective management of the F2F Program is the relationship between the F2F management team in USAID Washington, and the Implementing Partner F2F Directors (most of whom, though not all, are also based in Washington, D.C.). The team found this relationship to be open, healthy, and productive, facilitated in great part by energetic commitment to the F2F Program by the IP Directors, and by the steady hand of a seasoned, likewise deeply committed F2F Project Officer at USAID.

The RFA for the core LWA F2F awards, and the award documents flowing from that competitive process provided clear normative guidance to all awardees defining operating procedures for the program including the reporting system required by USAID of all grantees. The annual meeting of implementing partners serves as an important mechanism for USAID management to inform, educate, and modify management systems, tools, and procedures.

Beyond the annual implementers' meeting, however, the F2F management teams meet in an informal, ad hoc way, as needed. Beyond this, the program does not seem to have a regular mechanism for overall program communication between all stakeholders. Some implementing teams, such as that primed by ACDI/VOCA in West Africa, have taken steps to bring their partners together for more substantive discussions. In January 2012, they held a workshop in Accra, Ghana where ACDI/VOCA and Winrock staff discussed issues related to monitoring and evaluation of the F2F Program. Participants agreed it was a valuable learning opportunity that would help to systemize reporting across the region. ACDI/VOCA has recently established a virtual "Community of Practice" across West Africa to strengthen their information sharing. POA holds similar regional meetings of their F2F staff for the Caribbean programs. The F2F Program needs more support from USAID to develop proactive communication systems to promote more sharing of their experiences and to keep all stakeholders informed of important program actions. USAID can encourage the IPs to participate more widely in established

communication forums at USAID (such as Microlinks and AgriLinks), as well as posting new information relevant to the F2F Program via newsletters, or electronic media. It may be useful, during times especially of transition/reorganization of USAID for the AOTR to hold informal quarterly meetings (even virtually through group teleconferencing) with the IP program managers to communicate changes, especially to communicate new chains of command and shifting agencies priorities. The more involved the F2F Program can be in communicating with USAID on how the IPs might best respond to changing goalposts, the better results.

F2F funding decisions

As noted above, the core funding for the F2F Program is channeled to USAID's Bureau of Food Security through the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance's Food for Peace Office. The core funding supports the Leader Awards as well as the SPSP, including PDPs and small grant projects. Each year, as budget allocations are being determined for the Agency, the Food for Peace Office transfers F2F funding to BFS. Over the past two years, FFP has been able to provide US$ 12.5 million because a deobligation of other funds and supplemental funding had resulted in a robust budget. The upcoming year's allocation however will return to a US$ 10 million level because of the overall cuts in the federal budget for foreign assistance and the emergency assistance needs in the Horn of Africa and elsewhere. According to a senior Food For Peace Officer, the F2F funds come at the cost of emergency food aid, and the final determination of F2F allocation levels is made against both the current and projected needs for food aid and the overall funding environment. In previous phases of F2F, there may have been more flexibility and dialogue between F2F project officers and FFP staff in the allocation process at some levels, but more rigidity at others, e.g., the earmarks for activities in the former Soviet Union specifically.

Role and contribution of SPSP

The SPSP contract with WAI is supposed to provide F2F management with routine services such as management of the small grants program and program development projects, organization of the annual IP meeting, and preparation of special program evaluations and studies.

Small Grants projects

WAI released a Request for Application (RFA) in late 2009 to solicit proposals from organizations interested in participating in the implementation of the F2F small grant projects. According to the RFA, the objective of the small grant projects

BOX 1: F2F SMALL GRANTS, 2009-2012

- Cooperative Coffees Inc., "Enhancing the livelihoods of small-scale coffee farmers."
- Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA), "Food Security and competitiveness in the Eastern Caribbean."
- International Executive Service Corps (IESC), "Sesame seed Value Chain in Ethiopia."
- Veterinarians without Borders, "Veterinarian service in Liberia."
- TechnoServe, "Enterprise Competitiveness" (Peru).
- University of Arizona, "Global Aquaculture."
- Iowa State University, "Bridging the Gap: Increasing the Competitiveness of Ugandan Women Farmers in the Marketplace."
- Mercy Corps, "Increase the Competitiveness of Small and Medium Milk and Meat Processing Enterprises in Mongolia."
- Purdue University, "Increasing Access to Local, Regional and International Markets by Organizing Organic Producers within a Farmer's Association: APOT of Costa Rica."
- Thunderbird School of Global Management,. "Strengthening Women Entrepreneurship in Peru by Consolidating Agro-Related SME Competitiveness Through Improved Business Management Skills.¨
- Technoserve, "Enabling Producer Organizations and SME Service Providers to Tap the Potential of San Martin's Value

was to test good new ideas in the use of US agricultural volunteers and to allow new institutions to participate in the F2F Program. Small grant projects were to address specific country activities, thematic areas, or work that draws on volunteer resources from a specific target group. They could also explore new ways to leverage volunteer costs or innovative ways of programming volunteers. The small grant projects by definition were to involve collaboration with a US-based organization to carry out F2F volunteer programs.

Each small grant project is for up to one year and $100,000. Successful small grant project implementers can apply for subsequent grants to continue project activities up to three years. Future funding is dependent on implementation performance.

By mid-way through this F2F cycle, WAI had awarded a total of thirteen small grant project grants. A new solicitation issued near the end of FY11 resulted in five additional small grant projects for FY12, second year grants to Iowa State University in Uganda, Purdue University in Costa Rica, and FAVACA in Caribbean, and first time grants to National Peace Corps Association in Africa and League of Hope in Haiti.

One of the objectives of the small grants program is to tap a specific, select group of specialists to carry out targeted assignments. Presumably this is an attempt to reach out to groups of specialists not participating normally (or extensively) in the F2F Program through the normal core grants. In several cases, this objective was certainly accomplished through these grants. Cooperative Coffees recruits volunteers from an organized group of coffee processors (toasters) in the United States who advise coffee growers in producing countries on ways to improve quality of the product they send to the US. This grant, because it directly links producers with processors in the private sector often leads to business deals and technical and market information sharing that continue well beyond the short assignments of the F2F volunteer.

While some of Cooperative Coffees volunteers had participated in the past with the core IPs, this grant allowed Cooperative Coffees to approach the fielding of F2F volunteers in a more coherent fashion, and according to the organizer of this grant, identify more field opportunities, match the volunteers with the assignments better, and produce a more coherent package of experiences including a richer exchange of information between Cooperative Coffees leadership, the volunteers, and the hosts.

The Veterinarians without Borders (VWB) grant taps a nationwide network of practicing veterinarians who volunteer to travel to just one country, Liberia, to provide hands on services as well as to train practitioners and veterinarians in animal health and preventive care. As with Cooperative Coffees, VWB has fielded volunteers in the past through core implementers. However, this small grant provided them with an opportunity to get insinuated into the program as an organization, not simply a recruiter of individual vets for the core implementers. While they believe their organization is too small to become a core F2F implementer, they see opportunities in linking the availability of short term veterinarian volunteers to larger development programs such as the RTI-implemented education program and/or the DAI agriculture project in Liberia, in which case they would most likely become a sub-contractor or sub-grantee using funding from those programs directly rather than through F2F LWAs. Without the F2F

opportunity to break into this kind of activity, they would not be in a position to pursue these opportunities.

Purdue University is providing agriculture extension agents selected from the Indiana statewide extension service to assist an organic coffee and vegetable-producing cooperative in Costa Rica with their organizational and marketing problems. This grant used a recurrent team approach, working through a regional multinational organization in Central America, to assist one local institution increase their productivity and marketing of organic products. The model may have opportunities for replication (See Annex 4 describing this grant and the opportunities to expand the activity).

The small grant to University of Arizona reaches widely into a loosely organized group of practicing aquaculture specialists (Aquaculture without Borders) who are farmers, academics, and industry retirees. The involvement of a US University linked to a professional network, to provide F2F volunteers is interesting and instructive. While the University in this case was slow to get started implementing the grant (due to internal University grant management issues), they did eventually field more volunteers than their grant proposed (22 instead of 20), and they did so more efficiently than proposed and actually turned back a part of the unused budget. This model seems to work well in no small measure because a well-respected professional, with some sort of technical or academic connection to the volunteers even though they are spread out all over the US (some were students and academic colleagues at the university), operated as the focal point for recruiting, placing, and supporting the volunteers in the field. This model also would be easily adapted to include some form of programmed follow-up to each assignment, to ensure continued application of the recommendations and teaching material presented by the F2F volunteer, or to document the reasons for less than complete adaptation of the recommendations of the volunteer (The Director of this small grant made this recommendation and would probably build such an automatic follow-up visit of some sort into his next submission if he thought the program would be open to it.) The Aquaculture without Borders network maintains a website in which their F2F experiences are socialized among the group, and through which they can recruit new and repeat volunteers for the F2F Program.

For the most part, the small grant recipients followed the traditional (and generally encouraged) practice of sending one volunteer to one assignment at a time. An exception to this was the small grant in which Purdue tested sending volunteers to Costa Rica in small groups of 3 rather than into the field as individuals. They did, however decide that three volunteers (plus the in-country Purdue staff and the grant director from Purdue who accompanied the volunteers in-country) was too large a group to be effective and that for their next grant they would limit the group to two volunteers, with the added twist that one of the two would be a repeat volunteer with more locality and language familiarity. The group approach may work in certain circumstances, especially where organized training sessions require the presentation of more than one subject or technical matter covered best by more than one volunteer and presented best in a coherent way at the same time to a group of hosts. We note that some IPs have used the two-member team approach to fielding volunteers, such as Winrock International in their Mali program. Some core programs have also used husband and wife teams as volunteers (see Profile on Peter Wotowiec in Annex 5).

The length of assignment in regular core F2F Programs, and most small grants, varies between one and three weeks, but Technoserve received their grant based on a volunteer period of 5 months, in one case extended to 10 months. The Technoserve grant manager was attracted to the F2F Program because of the "innovation" factor advertised in the RFA. At the time, they were working in another part of the world on an approach to developing business plans for small businesses, so when they became aware of the F2F small grant program, they wanted to test the model in Peru with F2F volunteers. This required a much longer assignment period, and volunteers who can be away for that period of time (in this case, some are recent university graduates who had not yet become employed). Volunteers who make repeat visits of two to three weeks to the same site are actually doing the same thing; extending their assignment to either cover more material or to work with more hosts from the same association or locality. The new grant just awarded to NPCA plans for six-month assignments. It is interesting that the expansion of the time for F2F volunteers comes from a group of returned Peace Corps Volunteers, whose tour of duty was on average two years. Under its associate award in Ghana (ADVANCE), ACDI/VOCA uses longer assignments. They brought in one volunteer with expertise in agricultural communication for three months to assist with documenting volunteer assignments and media relations.

One interesting aspect of the Purdue and FAVACA small grants is that the volunteers were closely associated in the field with a regional organization operating in the receiving country. These organizations often have a better understanding of how and when to use short-term technical assistance than local institutions, that are often too eager to receive any and all help and will agree to almost anyone and any assignment. The case of Purdue in Costa Rica is especially interesting because the link with the regional institution, CATIE, could be used to extend the experience to several other countries in the Central American region where CATIE is also working and has needs for technical assistance F2F volunteers could provide. In fact, while the Purdue small grant is operating, Purdue staff are pursuing with CATIE opportunities in other south and Central American countries for F2F type assistance.

In most of the small grants, the grantee did not have permanent staff in the receiving country to program and assist the volunteers on the ground. One exception to this is the Purdue grant where a Purdue researcher, stationed at the CATIE campus in the project area, provided the link between Purdue and the field and accompanied the volunteers during their stay in country. Small grant volunteers are more apt to operate closely in their assignment with a counterpart from a local host organization, whereas volunteers in the core programs tend to be accompanied by an employee of the implementing partner.

Most grantees in the small grant program are generally satisfied with the program, would like to stay involved with F2F grants, but probably would not want to become core program grantees. Instead they would like to participate in a grant program with a longer term commitment (2-3 years) from F2F. Many of the contact persons for the small grants expressed concern that the substantive amount of reporting done by the individual volunteers and the grantee organization itself do not seem to be used for anything other than as a way for WAI to see that something is going on with the grant and that volunteers are actually going into the field as planned. They get very little feedback from the sometimes

detailed technical reports, leading them to wonder why the reports are required, or at least if there might be a more efficient way of reporting what WAI and USAID want to see, not encumbered by all the technical input now going into some of the reports. There does not seem to be any serious review and feedback process for the extensive reporting being done by the small grant volunteers. On the other hand, much of what the volunteers are writing is travelogue type accounts of their experience. This reporting and feedback dimension of the small grants program needs strengthening and more focus. A process needs to be applied so USAID can learn, in the short term, via WAI, the lessons being learned from the "experimental" small grants program. While the small grants recruited a higher percentage of first time volunteers than the core programs, many of the volunteers who go overseas in the small grants also make themselves available to other IPs under the core grants.

Program Development Projects (PDP)

WAI, under the SPSP, was required to select and fund Program Development Projects (PDPs), meant to identify and test institutions outside of the core F2F Program, with the potential to significantly diversify the volunteer pool. Three PDP grants were given during the first half of the five-year program: Winrock for an East African avian influenza prevention program "The Partnership for Safe Poultry in Kenya" (PSPK), The Florida A&M University (FAMU) South Africa F2F Program, and a National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA) project "Food Security in Senegal and Niger."

Winrock International/Kenya PSPK: The first PDP award made in March 2009 was the Winrock International PSPK project grant for a one-year program with a USAID/Kenya Mission buy-in using funds from their Avian Influenza budget. At the time, Winrock had not yet received its core LWA and Associate Award. A second tranche of funding was later made available from the USAID/East Africa regional mission to extend the work in three countries in the region. Finally, a third tranche of funds was provided by WAI (through June 2011) for volunteer assignments and staff time. PSPK was a pilot program to strengthen the Kenyan poultry sector by facilitating stakeholder collaboration, improving sector competitiveness, increasing incomes of smallholder poultry farmers, and promoting safe poultry production and marketing strategies. The project objectives were to raise household incomes, reduce the biosecurity threat of Avian Influenza, and to increase the competitiveness of the poultry value chain in Kenya (see Annex 7). In this case, the implementer, Winrock International, is clearly not a new, untested IP, so this subcontract did not produce a potentially new potential IP for the core programs.

FAMU/South Africa: In a second PDP competition in 2009, two awards were made to "diversify the F2F program." Florida A&M (FAMU) University was awarded a grant for a four-year program in South Africa, with 87 volunteers projected, beginning in mid-July (Project startup was actually complete in October). Its objectives were to complement and strengthen South African institutions working to improve agricultural performance of historically disadvantaged individuals (HDIs) in promising value chains, and to build institutional relationships between HBCUs in the United States and institutions in South Africa to support the advancement of rural HDIs in South Africa.

FAMU's task order subcontract stipulated these objectives would be met by supporting the expansion of the South African Table Grape Industry (SATI) Emergent Farmer Transformation Program, improving performance of the Hands-On Fish Cooperative's Emergent Farmer Aquaculture Development Program,

and mobilizing exchanges and collaboration between US HBCUs, and the University of Ft. Hare (UFH) to expand and improve the latter's extension services targeting rural HDIs.

FAMU's agricultural education Country Project was one of the few Country Projects that was not a value chain. Provincial government agencies responsible for agriculture, education and social development in Eastern Cape were also to be strengthened to increase their ability to service the needs of small farmers. UFH had limited resources to bring to the partnership, and few of the volunteer assignments were directed to university strengthening or improving extension services. Most F2F volunteers supported the AgriPark cooperatives, a university outreach program designed to improve the lives of the historically disadvantaged individuals in the communities around the University of Fort Hare. Volunteer assignments included nutrition, nursery production, water management, integrated pest management, cooperative development and youth development. FAMU started a new youth development program similar to 4-H for the Eastern Cape and the Western Cape based on the work of a volunteer in May, 2011. Five volunteers are planned for this area in FY 2012.

The aquaculture Country Project was implemented in partnership with the University of Stellenbosch, also as an outreach project to benefit farm workers on table grape and wine farms by producing trout during the cold months of the year in irrigation reservoirs. Farm workers formed a cooperative, Hands-on Fish Farmers' Cooperative, with the help of faculty at the University, who are also collaborators with the USAID Aquaculture CRSP, and F2F volunteers advised members on nutrition, fingerling production, water management, and feed technology. In spite of F2F assistance, the cooperative suffered declining production and membership and temporarily suspended operations last year. FAMU is exploring other ways to use volunteers to support aquaculture farmers in cooperation with the University of Stellenbosch.

The third Country Project in South Africa is a partnership with the South African Table Grape Industry (SATI). In one sense, it could be considered a typical value chain approach because it focused on one commodity. The Country Project presents a good rationale for working in this industry which employs 100,000 people and where black farm workers are making in-roads into farm management and ownership, although 97% of the agricultural land is still owned by whites. Twelve table grape farms were identified as potential hosts for 32 volunteer assignments in Fair Trade Accreditation, Business Management, Coloring of Grapes, and Worker Motivation. After the first year, FAMU transferred 12 of these assignments to the UFH portfolio to support agricultural education and extension training for the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal extension personnel. In 2012, some volunteer assignments had to be delayed or cancelled due to weather events and the distance of some farms from Cape Town. SATI viewed F2F as one of several providers of training and technical assistance and the demand for F2F volunteers in this Country Project seems to have been overestimated. Some new ideas have recently emerged for the deployment of volunteers in the table grape industry. For example, SATI recently requested F2F assistance to establish a Grape Academy and FAMU's new Western Cape Program Coordinator is working with SATI and progressive farm managers to provide a career path for young farm workers with the desire and potential to advance into supervisory and managerial positions with the help of professional development programs designed by volunteers.

FAMU is now embarking on a program in Haiti using flexible volunteers to initiate a collaborative program between a US Consortium of HBCU and 1890 Land Grant Universities and two Haitian institutions. Eight flex assignments are planned for Haiti in FY 2012.

NCBA-CLUSA/Senegal and Niger: In 2010, a PDP task order sub contract was awarded to NCBA/CLUSA to implement a four-year F2F Program in Senegal targeting the millet value chain and in Niger for the *moring*a value chain. CLUSA's millet F2F Country Project was designed to complement the three-year, $5 million USDA Food for Progress project implemented by CLUSA. Due to security issues in Niger, CLUSA and USAID agreed to terminate the Niger program and increase the size of the Senegal program as it explored the possibility of opening a new program in Zambia. The first country coordinator used his connections with Peace Corps to find opportunities for F2F volunteer assignments in villages where Peace Corps volunteers were working. A second coordinator was hired in Senegal after closing the Niger program and volunteer assistance was initiated in two new value chains: horticulture and small livestock. Both coordinators reached out to other USAID projects such as the Senegal Agricultural and Natural Resources Management project (Wula Nafaa II), Projét du Croissance Econmique (PCE), and the Agriculture and Nutrition Development Program for Food Security in Senegal (Yaajende), which welcomed the collaboration with the F2F project and requested F2F volunteers. Consequently, although the F2F Program has aligned itself with Feed the Future and other USAID priorities and complemented USDA, Peace Corp and other projects, it has lost some of its original focus on one millet value chain and evolved to include assistance to rice, community gardens, corn, fisheries, and nutrition.

USAID's F2F staff work closely with all core programs, and retains AOR responsibility for the PDPs. This leads to an unclear division of responsibility between USAID and the contractor that complicates implementation. The SPSP did not enhance coordination of F2F with Mission programs, and in some situations was perceived as creating obstacles in funding and reporting. The F2F management unit in USAID has worked hard to keep Missions informed about F2F Programs, but Missions do not understand the role of SPSP and in some cases the contractor overlooked securing Mission clearance of F2F Programs. Likewise PDP country projects were less scrutinized, contained less rigorous analysis, and changed more often than those directly managed by USAID.

The PDPs seem to be bringing some innovation, diversity and new participants in terms of volunteers, implementers and countries into the F2F Program. FAMU, as the only university among the major implementing partners, provided greater access to the 1890 HBCUs and the land grant universities. NCBA/CLUSA, composed primarily of cooperative members throughout the US, introduced F2Fto its members through this subcontract. This is one reason both FAMU and NCBA/CLUSA have placed a higher percentage of minority volunteers and a higher percentage of first time volunteers than the average for the F2F Program as a whole.

Another objective of the PDP was to provide a path for new organizations to become Implementing Partners. This objective also seems to have been well served by two of the three PDPs. All three PDP IPs are capable of competing for core grants in the future. All of them had previous F2F experience as recipients of F2F Cooperative Agreements in previous phases and/or through subgrants, and this PDP experience certainly strengthened them as implementers.

Special Studies

The contractor prepared a set of special studies that have added to the body of literature and resources for IPs to draw upon. While some of these studies have been put to good use, others do not seem to have led to major innovations or changed the way F2F operates. The contractor was also asked to perform assessments of F2F Program in several countries as input into the external evaluation. While some of these assessments resulted in corrective measures to improve the program, others were not well received by IPs. The team suggests that there probably was a better use for these funds.

Since the start of the SPSP contract, WAI has produced the following studies meant to inform implementers of the F2F Program on best practices:

Table 14: "Best Practice" Concept Papers

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Women in Agriculture Agricultural Schools Food Security New PDP SOW Directory of Organizations and Universities working with Volunteers	PERSUAP	Natural Resource Management Women's Leadership AET FTF FTF Food Security Support Services

These studies could be used effectively as a marketing tool for the technical capacity and leadership of the F2F Program—but they are not.

The purpose of this component was to provide program support to USAID and the IPs, including monitoring and evaluation, workshops and conferences, special studies, and general administration. These administrative services have been performed well, removing a burden from the AOTR. It is unlikely USAID could have provided the necessary oversight of a large and complex project such as the F2F Program with only two professional staff without a contract like this.

During this cycle the WAI SPSP team organized three annual Implementers Meetings (Istanbul and Washington), FTF Reviews, an Outreach Committee, ICT Evaluation Training, and an ICT Workshop for Implementers. They also organized a Volunteer Appreciation Event in Washington on December 7, 2010 that included an award ceremony for eighteen F2F volunteers who were recognized with the President's Volunteer Service Award for their contributions. Staff members of implementing F2F organizations as well as several USAID staff, representatives from other government institutions and congressional staffers attended the ceremony.

Finding: The SPSP contract provides important services to the F2F management team. We find the administrative support for organization of routine meetings of the IPs and the management of the small grants program especially valuable. These two activities have provided the F2F Program with opportunities to share lessons learned and best practices, and to test innovative ways to recruit and place volunteers in the field. However, even though the small grants appear to be providing a rich mix of new ways to field volunteers, it is not obvious that the contractor is providing any serious attempt yet to analyze those experiences so as to provide guidance to F2F management for program modification. The

team has begun to identify some of the lessons learned and results of the grants, but much closer analysis is needed during the remainder of this cycle to determine the best use of small grants in the future. The PDP subcontracts clearly strengthened three potential core implementers. It is less clear that the management of the three PDP grants, the field evaluations carried out by the contractor, and the special studies prepared to guide IPs in certain technical areas such as gender, environment, and institution building do not seem to be of significant value to the program, except for the PERSUAP effort. Nor is it obvious that the efforts to improve outreach through the creation of an outreach committee have yet produced notable results.

The team found that there might be opportunities for greater impact and efficiencies by a more careful assignment of administrative functions, taking more advantage of the SPSP contract. The F2F Program suffers from not having a central database, which can collect program data from each participating IP, but even though this could have been a responsibility of the contractor, it was not included in the scope of work. Therefore, the contractor has very little to do with the core program, rendering the contractor too distant and uninformed about the overall program.

Recommendation: SPSP Contract.
For the remainder of this F2F Program cycle, USAID and the contractor should focus on analyzing the experiences of the small grant program and the PDPs. Any new small grant awards should be made to gain experience in the program areas we have recommended in the Innovation section of this report or to provide more time and resources to grants already operating.

The PDP program should be continued in the next phase at a lower funding level to provide a path for other organizations to become implementers of core grants. We recommend a rebid of the SPSP for the next cycle of the F2F Program. The scope of work for the contract should include establishment and management of a central database for the whole F2F Program, administrative support to the F2F management team for meetings and events the program requires, and management of a small grants program. The next small grants program should provide larger and longer-running grants than the small grants being awarded now, but smaller and shorter than PDPs. These grants should be more directed towards priority countries, priority technical areas, specific volunteer pools, and/or special institutional arrangements.

Effectiveness and management of the LWA procurement mechanism

The Leader with Associates (LWA) cooperative agreement mechanism was used with the core Implementing Partners of the F2F Program during the present cycle to facilitate USAID missions buying in to the program with mission funding. Thus far, AAs have been used in three primary ways: i) to increase the number of volunteers provided by the core IP, used in those cases where the USAID mission likes to use F2F volunteers but wants more than the core budget of the F2F Program can finance, such as Mali, Belarus, and Angola; ii) to fund a long-term agriculture project to complement core program F2F volunteers with program structure and resources to implement and follow up on the advice of the volunteers; and 3) to create a project altogether separate from the F2F core program in that country, but that also includes F2F volunteers, such as Kenya (Pastoralists).

Leaders with Associate awards are a grant mechanism[6] that easily enables buy-ins from USAID field missions for new activities with the recipient of an existing already competed leader award. The benefits of this mechanism for the mission are that it can develop a new award with the lead organization, to provide access to specialized services (highly skilled volunteers) through a simplified procurement mechanism. Further, even if the Leader award activities are managed by USAID/Washington, the USAID mission that funds the AA typically manages that activity independently, although the original RFA did allow for situations where an AA could be managed by the F2F AOTR at USAID/W. An AA can be extended for up to five years, even beyond the life of the leader award, saving the mission management time and money.

In the current phase of the F2F Program, the seven main awards have been constructed as Leader with Associate awards. There are a total of 11 AAs, most of which fund activities in the country of the mission funding it. There are, however, important caveats. Volunteer assistance is not always the best option. In at least one country, a key FTF value chain implementer expressed dissatisfaction with the level of expertise provided by F2F volunteers assigned to assist with its projects. The volunteer assistance ended up costing the producer associations unnecessary expenditure to fix a technical problem that could have been avoided and delayed critical steps in a larger process. Another value chain implementer reported making careful use of volunteers rather than consultants, depending upon the task required. Consultants were used for time-sensitive technical jobs. Volunteers can be useful to provide strategic planning and financial capacity building that are often more independent tasks and do not have to synced to other assignments.

Table 15: Leader with Associate Awards, Total Funding

LWA Program	Leader Award Amount	Associate Award Programs	Total Associate Award Amount	Total Value LWA
ACDIVOCA/MENA	$7,499,707	Lebanon: Smallholder Greenhouse Hydroponics (2 awards); Lebanon: Agricultural Product Quality Control & Certification; Liberia Smallholder Oil Palm Sector Support Project	$15,000,000	$22,499,707
ACDIVOCA/W.Africa	$7,248,551	Mali: Mali Ag Value Enhancement Network (MAVEN); Ghana: Agricultural Development and Value Chain Enhancement; Jamaica: Marketing and Agriculture for Jamaican Competitiveness; Vietnam Sustainable Cocoa Farming	$49,700,000	$56,948,551
CNFA/E.Africa	$7,498,323	Kenya Drylands Livestock Development Program	$9,995,424	$17,493,747
CNFA/ECCA	$7,490,575	Belarus: Agricultural Sector Development; Georgia: Access to Mechanization	$5,696,179	$13,186,754
CNFA/S. Africa	$7,492,968	Angola: Angola Farmer-to-Farmer	$1,200,000	$8,692,968
POA/Caribbean	$7,500,000			$7,500,000
Winrock/Caribbean	$1,200,000	Winrock/Other	$6,489,0530	$7,689,053
Totals	$51,219,177		$82,791,603	$134,010,780

Policies governing the use of the LWA mechanism have recently been revised in three specific ways:

[6] Leader with Associate awards are typically cooperative agreements (a type of grant) mechanism that transfer funds from USAID to other entities to implement programs that are seen to contribute to the public good. They contrast with contracts that are mechanisms that USAID used to procure specific services or goods that are for the use or benefit of the Agency.

- The Leader and associate award ceilings specified at the time of award are limits that cannot be exceeded without further review and approval.
- The performance periods for the Leader and Associate Awards cannot exceed five years from the dates these awards are made without further review and approval.
- Any field buy-ins to a Leader Award must be anticipated in the budget and scope of work at the time of award and LWAs with buy-ins that exceed certain limits will require additional BAAR review and approval.[7]

The regulation change that will impact the F2F Program most directly is the need to provide justification for programs with a combined (leader and all associate awards) for $25 million or more. The need to justify the use of an LWA, as opposed to a non-LWA grant or cooperative agreement, will be the first hurdle (one, the evaluation team believes will be easily overcome). The need to estimate the amount of associate awards or buy-ins will be a second challenge, especially given shifting priorities and Missions budgets that are robust with FTF funding. The last challenge is structuring the awards in a way to remain within the $25 million limit. Currently, the ACDIVOCA/West Africa and ACDIVOCA/MENA programs greatly exceed this amount. These programs are grandfathered in, and therefore not impacted by the changes. The next phase, however, will need to take the revised policy into account.

How are the LWAs being used?

The missions are using the LWA mechanism in different ways. All of the AAs operate a bit differently; this flexibility in using different approaches to meet Mission goals is appreciated by USAID Missions and Implementing Partners. The mechanism allows the programs to be structured in various configurations to best meet Mission needs, so each one is unique. All AAs are required to include a volunteer component, which uses the same recruiting, support and reporting systems as the Leader programs. The LWA RFA suggested at least 20-25% of the AA budget should be used for volunteer costs, but most AAs seem to fall short of this goal. As these components have different objectives, deliverables and indicators from the core FTF awards, IPs use different support, monitoring and reporting systems for these aspects of the AAs.

In Ghana, the associate award (ADVANCE) is a value chain development involved in building value chain capacity for a range of actors. The associate award is structured to use volunteers for 20% of its technical assistance work. A single "volunteer unit" manages the in-country assignments for both of the leader and associate awards, developing their scopes of work, organizing the logistics of the assignments, and handling the two different monitoring and reporting systems. The staff members are paid out of both the leader and associate award budgets.

In Kenya, the current associate award (KDLP) is also much larger than the lead F2F award, but the institutional structure is quite different. The two current programs have no overlap in technical work and are managed independently by two different sets of staff for most activities and for most of the

[7] USAID ADS; "Leader With Associates (LWA) Revised Guidance: A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 303"; Reference Issuance Date, 09/07/11; p. 2

time.[8]

The current Mali case is more similar to a third management arrangement. In that case, the AA award is structured exactly the same way as the leader award but it more targeted, working only on the USAID mission Feed the Future priority value chains and in the Feed the Future targeted communities. The lead award has somewhat more flexibility in the areas and crops that it can support, but a single team manages both awards seamlessly, the only difference being the categorization of the assignment and the reporting process. In Mali specifically, the AA was designed and awarded prior to the establishment of the FTF priority value chains so volunteers were not limited to those locations or crop choices. Going forward, the AA will be more closely aligned to FTF priority areas.

In these three cases, the development of the associate award followed the inception of the lead F2F Program in that country.

CNFA implements four AAs totaling over $17 million (though one is on hold due to Mission funding issues). In Georgia, the Access to Mechanization Project (AMP) is a $5.1 million three year project that is providing fee-based custom machinery services to up to 14,000 small farmers by establishing 25-30 Mechanization Service Centers (MSCs), using a combination of matching grants, business and extension training and volunteer technical assistance. AMP is a follow on to the $20 million MCC financed Agribusiness Development Activity (ADA), also implemented by CNFA. About 3 percent of the AMP budget is used to support 25 volunteers. This is in addition to the 125 volunteers CNFA supports through its core F2F Program. The AMP's training coordinator is responsible for programing AMP volunteers using similar forms and recruiting and reporting procedures. The number of volunteers and number of persons trained under AAs are reported separately in the annual report, but are not included in the impact reporting of the core F2F Program.

The associate award in Angola was designed to complement leader award volunteer activities by providing the funding for additional volunteer technical assistance to the horticulture and legumes value chains. Although the Mission expressed satisfaction with the use of FTF volunteers under the associate award, the shortage of funds enabled only three volunteers to be fielded. Furthermore, in Q4 CNFA was informed that additional associate award funding obligations would not be forthcoming in FY12 due to budget shortfalls.

Our team found some missions that are well aware of the opportunity to buy in to the F2F LWA, such as USAID/Moldova, and they might have done so but their agriculture resources are fully committed to the ACED project. We also found other missions that were unaware of the buy-in opportunities of the LWA awards, such as El Salvador (that has almost no agriculture budget), and Haiti (that has a large agriculture budget).

USAID/Kosovo made a new, separate from F2F, award to CNFA for an agriculture project that includes short-term volunteers, building on the flexible volunteers CNFA has been providing under its leader

[8] The Farmer to Farmer leader award initially assisted the AA activities until they hired their own staff and they continue to backstop the volunteer activities as needed.

agreement. The Mission chose this rather than an AA because it wanted a high degree of control.

Next Phase LWA

The large number and amount of funding for AAs clearly points to both the success of the F2F program and its alignment with Mission strategies. As FTF funding grows and Missions look to successful and efficient mechanisms to achieve their goals, the team would anticipate that the F2F program will receive even more buy-ins. The ability to meet this demand, and, in addition, continue to achieve other BFS goals and support non-FTF programs needs to be considered during the next round of solicitations. The evaluation team suggests bifurcate the awards into those geared at FTF countries, and those geared at non-FTF countries. The FTF-oriented solicitations could have low initial funding and could be each focus on one aspect of FTF, such as nutrition, gender or private sector engagement. The non-FTF programs would carry a more global mandate and could be patterned much as they are in this phase—with regional leaders and centered on specific sub-goals of the USAID agriculture strategy.

Finding: The LWA mechanism has been very effective in aligning the F2F Program with Mission objectives, and has significantly impacted the amount of funding/buy-ins by Missions.

Recommendation: Retain LWA mechanism for core IPs, and build in more flexibility for the IPs to market the mechanism with USAID missions. Given funding limits on LWA awards in the next phase, the evaluation team recommends that USAID continue to award LWAs on a regional basis and consider having some LWAs have more funding for global programs, and having some with low funding for global programs that are aligned with Feed the Future goals.

VIII. Implementation Issues

A. Alignment with USAID/US Government priorities

The F2F Program operates within a strategic environment, guided by the overarching Foreign Assistance Framework and the US Farm Bill. USAID's Agricultural Strategy, USAID Forward, and most recently FTF and the Partnership for Growth initiatives are priority USAID programs to which the F2F core projects may be aligned. F2F projects may also contribute to global climate change, nutrition, and other relevant global objectives USAID supports and it has already done so in several countries. F2F AAs originate with USAID country programs, which themselves conform to the strategic priorities of the country team led by the Ambassador, national government priorities, and regional and continental priorities such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme in Africa. The team found that, in general, the F2F Program supports USG and more specifically USAID's objectives.

Although the RFA for the 2009-2013 cycle of F2F core grants was released before the specifics of FTF initiative were delineated, it requested applicants to write proposals supporting the broad outlines of these policies and programs, including the Presidential Initiative to End Hunger in Africa (IEHA), which laid the groundwork for FTF. As a result, F2F is broadly aligned with USAID agriculture and economic growth programs, and the recent FTF directions. FTF has two foundational objectives. The first objective, "Accelerating Inclusive Agricultural Sector Growth," has three components: i) advancing the productivity

frontier, ii) expanding markets and trade, and iii) increasing economic resilience in vulnerable rural communities. The second objective is "Improving Nutritional Status (especially of women and children)." These objectives together address multiple dimensions of food security through increased yields as well as sales in the market to increase incomes, encompassing all three components of food security: availability, access, and utilization. In a non-FTF priority country such as El Salvador, where there is no development assistance budget for agriculture programs, the USAID mission is aware of F2F Program efforts, but does not involve itself in directing its activities since it is a centrally funded, not a mission funded activity.

Feed the Future

Alignment with FTF programming in particular has several dimensions. The first is the simple geographical overlap of F2F projects with FTF programs by country. There are currently four regions and twenty countries with Feed the Future multi-year strategies.[9] The RFA for F2F included a much longer list of eligible countries. Volunteers went to 56 countries during this phase of the F2F program. Of that, 28 were core country programs (the others were flexible assignments, PDP or SPSP), of which 15 (53%) are also FTF priority countries. During this phase of the program, 629 volunteers (46%) from F2F core programs went to countries that were also FTF priority countries.

The team attempted to determine if there is more leeway allowed for the volunteers fielded under the "core" program rather than the associate award. Although F2F started this cycle before FTF, it generally is aligned with FTF. Country Projects are approved by USAID/W and Missions. They define what the F2F core program will do in each country. But we found that officers in Missions view F2F core project alignment with FTF priorities differently. For example, we found that Missions in Moldova, Georgia, and Senegal are comfortable with F2F core following their earlier designed Country Projects even if they are not in the same regions or deal with the same value chains being supported under Mission funded FTF activities, including AAs. In Moldova, USAID is pleased to have F2F is working in dairy, because their value chain project is not. In Haiti, while encouraging F2F alignment with FTF value chains, they are indifferent as to whether or not that alignment takes place, even though F2F is working in the same general geographic area of the country.

Under the current FTF multi-year strategies, each USAID mission has identified both a set of targeted value chains and a set of core regions within the country in which programs will be implemented. Because they are funded by the mission, most of the F2F associate awards are expected to respond quickly and to align with these priority crops and geographic locations because these awards draw on mission funds. The mission would question working outside these chains or areas.

As targeting increases, however, the situation for the F2F core programs becomes more complex. There is more leeway allowed for the volunteers whose assignments are counted under the "core" program than the associate award. In Ghana, shifts in the F2F priority crops and target locations during calendar year 2011 resulted in relocating the bulk of the associate award program to the north of the country and focusing on the priority crops of rice, maize, and soybeans. Volunteers under the core program had been working in the south and central regions of the country with various horticultural producers and

[9] See www.feedthefuture.gov for a current listing of implementation countries and regions.

producer associations. While discussions with USAID staff suggested that there would be somewhat more flexibility, especially in terms of time to complete an existing workplan, the implication was that the introduction of new hosts outside the focus regions or taking up work on new crops would be more difficult. In any event, given the structure of the Ghana F2F/ADVANCE program the reorientation of staff, both in terms of their relocation to offices in the north and in terms of time and effort would make it hard to run a portion of the F2F Program with a different focus.

Currently, the issue of alignment is something of a moving target. The MAVEN program in Mali is currently being revised at mid-term to align the program more closely with the FTF initiative than was originally envisioned. The core F2F Program still operating alongside MAVEN in Mali will take on MAVEN's other focus areas and continue to target smallholders outside of FTF-targeted geographic regions.[10] In part, the outcomes, however, of how well F2F manages to align its volunteer assignments with shifting guidance is dependent upon how well the Mission personnel communicate the priorities to the IP team, and how well the IP team is at reporting on their successes. In Mali, new guidance from the mission emerged abruptly only shortly after the year's workplan was finalized that only assignments with hosts in specific *communes* and villages could be "counted" as achieving results for F2F. While the program was working in some of those areas, it meant that some assignments categorized under the associate award were no longer going to helpful in meeting the mission's M&E purposes.

This example illustrates the importance of clarifying at what level alignment should be sought. It can be a challenge for a volunteer program that requires lead-time to find appropriate hosts and to match them with volunteers to quickly overturn established workplans to respond to rapid shifts in USAID implementation goals.

The head of the Bureau for Food Security clearly stated that it is agency policy for F2F resources to be as closely aligned as possible with the priorities and programs of FTF, and that shortly there would be guidance provided to the field to that effect. This guidance would cover priority and non-priority FTF countries. There has been serious and significant objection in some quarters of the Agency to this directive, and there are both pros and cons for F2F to subject its decisions regarding location and technical focus of the Volunteer placements inflexibly to the strict and narrow focus of the FTF program.

While USAID staff in different units have acknowledged that not all programs will or should be as closely aligned as others, pressure to continue alignment among all USAID programs is still increasing, especially in priority FTF countries, and the pressure on the F2F Program to conform will likely increase as well. Alignment will require strong communication lines between the Mission, the IPs, and their AORs. The issue of creating a formal F2F mechanism to ensure alignment is one the evaluation team considered. There are several levels of consideration for program alignment between FTF and F2F. The first is the degree to which F2F volunteers are sent to FTF priority countries. The second is whether F2F volunteers, regardless of their country of assignment, need to be closely associated with resources and programs of the FTF Multi-year Strategies in those countries. If pressure to continue alignment among all USAID programs increases, especially in priority FTF countries, the impact on the F2F program will likely increase. Closer alignment would require stronger communication lines between the Mission, the IPs,

[10] Thanks to the ACDI/VOCA team for clarifying an earlier account of this relationship.

and their AORs.

Recommendation: The evaluation team recommends that the current practice of encouraging centrally funded programs to follow the general path of alignment with priority Agency programs be applied in a flexible manner. In the specific case of the FTF initiative, we recommend permitting some leeway for F2F to work with particular hosts or on specific topics outside of the proscribed mission focus areas (see the example of the Partnership for Safe Poultry in Kenya project). Associate Awards should be used to provide additional alignment and support for Mission programs.

US Peace Corps

There appears to be a natural confluence of objectives between the F2F Program and the Peace Corps. Both have the objectives of providing assistance overseas, and cultural exchange between the US and other countries. In fact, one prior USAID Administrator expressed to the evaluation team his feeling that "I was never too excited about the F2F Program in USAID….we only need one Peace Corps." However, there are vast differences. Whereas Peace Corps tends to attract early career, younger volunteers to work for extended periods of time, the F2F focus is on high quality technical assistance that targets volunteers with 20-30 years' experience, many of whom would otherwise easily be in paid consultant positions.

While linking the F2F Program to the Peace Corps may seem to make sense as a way to streamline apparently duplicative agencies of the US government, there are some very good reasons why the F2F Program should stay within USAID. First, with few exceptions, the Peace Corps has not been especially responsive to the Presidential initiative FTF. The Peace Corps has not built up its program in agriculture or food security, nor has it reached out to form partnerships with US institutions with excellent global agriculture professionals and experience such as the Land Grant Universities and 4-H foundation. Second, the Peace Corps has been reticent to experiment with or adopt the shorter period of service the F2F Program is based upon, and the F2F Program would have serious recruitment problems if it promoted longer service periods.

In the prior phase (2003-2008), the F2F Program had a formal agreement with Peace Corps to field a certain number of F2F volunteers, but that program placed too great of an administrative burden on Peace Corps and did not meet its targets. The last review of the F2F Program therefore recommended that formal agreement be terminated, and it was. That review did recommend, however, that "collaboration with Peace Corps should be done on a case-by-case basis at the determination of the in-country F2F manager and the local Peace Corps office, provided it fits both organizations' in-country strategies and it makes sense from an implementation point of view."[11]

The evaluation team found many instances where Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) and F2F Volunteers are working productively together. In El Salvador, one Peace Corps volunteer working in a very remote area of the country, communicated a very specific technical problem related to animal nutrition in a small dairy cooperative. The PCV and the cooperative director prepared the request for a F2F volunteer, and the PCV found a place for the F2F volunteer to stay during his assignment, accompanied him while he

[11] QED Group, LLC; John Ogonowski Farmer-To-Farmer Program Mid-Term Assessment; February 2007, p. 41

was in the area making farm visits and providing technical advice, and is providing follow up with the farmers.

The F2F and Peace Corps programs in Mali have an excellent relationship. In Mali, villages have to request a volunteer before one will be placed there. Several F2F volunteers have been placed in villages where PCVs are working. The PCVs have been a big asset to the Winrock International F2F and Mali Agriculture Value Enhancement Network (MAVEN) programs in Mali and have helped to facilitate trainings provided by the F2F volunteers and have also helped with the implementation of their key recommendations. There are situations, however, where the relationship between the two volunteers can be awkward. Regardless of whether or not the F2F volunteer has had any experience in the country or with rural populations, because of their age and level of education, they may assume a position of greater authority in the relationship. In reality, s/he with months or years of experience in the country and the community, should be treated as a cultural resource and often technical advisor to the F2F volunteer, not simply as a handy translator, a reference book, or an assistant. F2F volunteers should be advised to acknowledge the PCV's experiences, to ask them about their responsibilities in the community, the work they have done, the challenges they have faced, and their suggestions for a successful assignment. PCVs can provide F2F volunteers with the cultural and political background they need to understand what is feasible, as well as advise them on how to make their suggestions sustainable. At the same time, the PCVs should acknowledge the F2F volunteers areas of expertise (whether or not they have local experience). In short, there needs to be a formal clarification of the roles of each type of volunteer to ensure a more equitable relationship.

F2F's partnership with Peace Corps in Moldova is significant. The F2F Country Director gives a presentation to new PCVs during their initial training. The APCD attends out briefings of F2F volunteers. Information is actively shared between the two organizations. With the shift away from community development, PCVs are assigned to partners, often the same ones F2F works with. F2F volunteers give technical support to less experienced PCVs, who, in turn, help make the F2F volunteer's visit more productive. About 25% of the 120 PCVs work in agriculture and rural development. Only about one-fourth of them have degrees or backgrounds in agriculture. Although the Ambassador's Self Help Fund is not available in Moldova and other parts of Eastern Europe to support small grants, USAID gives PC about $200,000/year under a Participating Agency Program Agreement (PAPA) for small grants (up to $5,000). It works well in Moldova (many F2F related projects such as greenhouses have benefited), but process is still bureaucratic.

Peace Corps is an excellent F2F partner and active collaborator in agricultural development in Senegal, thanks, in part, to a USAID funded $1.6 million PAPA for a new cross-sector program to address food security. Through intervention at the grass-roots level, this program aims to increase the capacity of partner communities to ensure their own food security. Peace Corps Volunteers work under this program in concert with local communities to develop a local response to global food insecurity.

Coordination with Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and other USG Programs

Alignment of the F2F Program with MCC activities is another complicated issue. El Salvador has MCC programs in economic growth and agriculture, but no USAID agricultural program funding. It is also one of the Partnership for Growth countries. The F2F program there has been told by the USAID technical

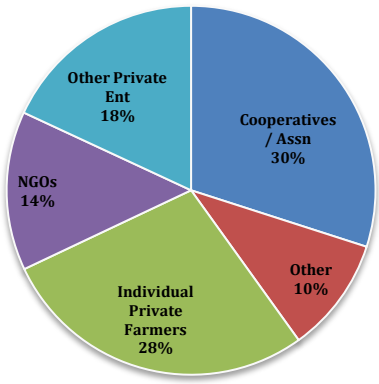
contact officer to work in the regions outside of where MCC is working in order to spread the benefit of US technical assistance in the country–a recommendation that appears to be the opposite of the "target and focus" principles of USAID's FTF programming, but one that seemed to make sense to the Mission as a way to provide broader USAID presence in El Salvador.

Farmer to Farmer in Moldova built a productive partnership with the Agricultural Competitiveness and Enterprise Development project which is jointly funded by USAID and MCC. In another case, a new activity, the Access to Mechanization Project (AMP), implemented by CNFA in Georgia was developed as a follow on to the $20 million MCC-financed Agribusiness Development Activity (ADA) there. In general, however, F2F does not seem to be closely engaged with MCC programs.

Private Firms

Working closely with the private sector to encourage or facilitate private investment in the agriculture sector is a primary strategy of the FTF initiative and the USAID leadership. The F2F program works closely with private producers, marketers, and processers in every country volunteers are sent. In fact, 46% of F2F hosts are considered private sector operators.

Figure 3: Types of Host Institutions



In El Salvador, F2F has successfully assisted a number of private sector firms on a smaller scale, with in-country private firms in food processing (milk, cheese, and sausages). In both Kenya and Mali, F2F volunteers have worked with private seed companies to improve their handing and distribution of improved seeds. In Ghana, the ADVANCE program helped to create the Soybean Council of Ghana that is in turn a member of a Venture Capital Fund established with some government backing. The fund is providing capital to Ghanaian firms, some of which are host organizations of the F2F Program. Although the numbers may yet be small, engagement with private sector entities is in place and expanding.

In addition, and to provide more support to the program the suggestion has been made that F2F could do much more in partnership with US private companies who work internationally (e.g., John Deere, Cargill, American Soybean Association, Walmart, or General Mills). One approach to this idea is offered in the Innovation section of this report.

Balance people-to-people objective with economic impact objective

The F2F Program seeks to balance the objectives of having a people-to-people cultural exchange and achieving economic impact. The RFA for the 2008-2013 cycle of F2F Program reinforced the trend towards predominance of the economic impact objective, by stating "the recipient's F2F Program goal shall be to generate rapid, sustained and broad-based economic growth in the agricultural sector." The F2F Program was to use volunteers to increase sustainable private sector agricultural growth; improve productivity, trade and competitiveness; and develop market opportunities for suggested impacts of:

increase farm and enterprise profitability; increase institutional capacities; improve financial services; or improve natural and environmental resource management.

The RFA recognized that the F2F Program enhances US public knowledge of the developing world through the volunteer's experience and his/her dissemination of information on assignments to the general public following return to the US They also promote better host country understanding of US foreign assistance programs through their volunteer work with and interaction with people of the host country. Specifically, the RFA set an objective of the program as: "…to increase the American public's understanding of international development issues and programs and international understanding of the US and US development programs."

The wording in the RFA suggests there is not necessarily any tension between the primary and secondary objectives, when it states the program "… has been an effective, low cost program that blends two goals—providing good people-to-people level exchanges and enhancing sustainable economic development. As F2F has learned since its founding in 1985, a rewarding cross-cultural experience for American agriculturalists abroad is made even more satisfying when the assignments are well designed to have a permanent development impact."

The evaluation team debated the premise that these two goals are always mutually supportive. As F2F Programs move toward greater alignment with USAID agricultural development objectives, as discussed above, there is pressure put on both the IPs and the volunteers themselves to make the best use of their time in the field to achieve results. While this is a positive direction for the program overall, it can create a preference for returned volunteers who "can hit the ground running" and are "a known quantity" and some field staff noted that this can inhibit IPs' search for new faces. Many of the returned volunteers believe that multiple assignments improve the volunteers' effectiveness, network of colleagues, familiarity and trust in the implementing partners, cultural understanding, and help them follow-up on recommendations. Some IPs choose to maximize the value of the volunteer's trip by increasing the number of hosts s/he will visit on any one assignment, leaving little time for getting to know the hosts on a more personal level. Some hosts do not have more than one week to devote concentrated attention to a volunteer and working with more than one host in an assignment allows more effective use of volunteer time and reduces burnout. Interviews with some the field staff in some countries elicited suggestions for maintaining the technical emphasis while making small changes in the design of their assignments to continue to facilitate a meaningful cross-cultural opportunity.

The comments from the volunteers on this subject of balance differed greatly. Here are some representative examples of the various sentiments expressed by the volunteers:

- "The more Americans are understood by and understand other cultures, see friends and are seen as friends, the peace [and] well-being of the people of this planet are ensured."
- "I am a teacher. I think knowledge of technical aspects of my tour will have much longer lasting effect that my personal contacts."
- "Technical knowledge is of little value if cultural issues cause it not to be used."
- "I have lived 20 years in Africa, my reason for going was for technical assistance; however, the

culture ALWAYS comes into the picture and therefore it is impossible to separate it out if one is to do a good job."

- "In this case, the assignment was very science based, and cultural differences did not have a significant impact on the overall assignment."
- "The more people from different cultures understand each other, the more the world can understand each other."
- "The need to upgrade the US image overseas and the need to accurately depict other cultures to US citizens."
- "I believe building stronger relationships between the countries (and the citizens of those countries) fosters the chance for future projects more so than the technical assistance. Also, the opportunity for technical assistance is somewhat limited whereas the cultural exchange element can have a long impression and impact multiple people."
- "I teach people how to grow food, which changes multiple peoples' lives. I DO receive cultural exchange but that comes thru the teaching and educational elements."
- "For example, I never had an opportunity to talk to a Muslim person or see their religion/culture more personally. My FtF host/translator was extremely helpful and I appreciated this exchange so I'm now not such a cultural/religious idiot. I also teach university ag students in America, so I also learned new things from host farmers to bring to the classroom. I was also able to dispel terrible stereotypes that people have of Africa, its people, cultures, traditions, farmers."
- "However, the short amount of time allowed to accomplish the extensive SOW left little time to explore non-assignment activities."
- "The programs are usually specific to technical questions, and it really depends on how much experience the volunteer has in developing countries and how well they can understand and relate to the difference in overall economic environment."

Table 16: Responses on Volunteers' Personal Choice Changes due to F2F

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I am more apt to invest in or purchase products made in the country or region where I volunteered.	6.6%	13
I more actively seek out people or experiences from the country or region where I volunteered.	10.7%	21
I am more likely to visit the region as a tourist.	7.1%	14
I have or will encourage others to visit the country or region for tourism.	7.7%	15
I actively seek out information (books, speakers, blogs, etc.) on the country or region where I volunteered.	6.6%	13
I remain in contact with people who I met during my assignment.	27.6%	54
I provide financial contributions to the local communities or individuals I met during my assignment.	3.1%	6
I provide ongoing technical support to the local communities or individuals I met during my assignment.	15.3%	30
I have attempted to influence institutions in the US to which I belong (Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, non-profits, universities) to be more engaged in the country or region where I volunteered;	10.2%	20
I have engaged or written elected US officials to increase support or resources for the Farmer to Farmer program.	5.1%	10

There is currently no measure of the value of the cultural exchange part of the F2F experience, but Table 16 shows how volunteers are affected by their experiences. Talking with IP field staff, it is clear that F2F volunteers also have an important influence not only on their hosts but also on the staff themselves: on their own personal goals and career aspirations, from the drivers to the country directors, and that this impact would be worth articulating more deliberately.

Another potential measurement is the economic value of the cultural exchange. Three out of four volunteers surveyed stated that their assignment had impacted their personal or consumer choices; the majority of volunteers interacted with locals outside of their assignments, including participating in cultural activities; and many volunteers commented that the cultural exchange aspect of F2F is as important, or more important, to them as the technical aspect. The program could consider trying to find a way to quantify or qualify this aspect of the program in order to increase the attention and better balance the goals of F2F.

The evidence of the cultural impact on the hosts is not clear. The evaluation team members used as a proxy of this impact two questions about the names of the volunteers and the state from which they came. Hosts definitely remembered the names of the volunteers they liked and especially the ones who made return visits, and this seemed loosely correlated with volunteers who worked with only one or two hosts over the course of their assignment. As a general rule, however, hosts had no recollection of the US state from which the volunteer came. About half of the hosts reported maintaining some kind of contact, either by email or by phone, with the volunteers that they hosted, although the intensity of the contact diminished over time if no return visit was scheduled. There were a few situations where volunteers made special efforts to visit their hosts when they were in country on other assignments.

Recommendation: Maintain emphasis on securing volunteers with strong technical expertise who can contribute to achieving program results, while also elevating the importance of cross-cultural objectives in the Farmer to Farmer program by determining ways to report on the impacts of the cultural exchange, and by making a choice to limit the number of times a volunteer can serve and the number of hosts that a volunteer can work with in one assignment.

Gender and Diversity Issues

Among the requirements of the RFA for this phase of the program was the request for applicants "to provide systematic consideration of gender issues and impacts in the Farmer to Farmer program" and "to seek to promote gender equity." These goals are increasingly important as F2F has continued to link with the Feed the Future objectives which emphasize the need to increase women's participation in value chain development and to improve the nutritional status of women and children.

Recently, in March 2012, USAID introduced a new policy on gender equality and women's empowerment. This specific policy builds on the USAID Policy Framework 2011-2015 that lists as one of USAID's seven new operational principles, "*Integrate gender equality and female empowerment into USAID's work.*" The new policy mandates gender analyses at the country, program, and policy levels. At the same time, the Agency launched the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, which will take the measurement of the ability of agency agricultural programming to reduce gender disparities in five

livelihood domains, including aspects of agricultural production, resources, income, leadership, and time. For the most part, data collection on which the index will be based will not be the responsibility of implementing partners. The index will offer a way to measure the success of USAID's programming in reducing gaps between men and women. Thus to the extent that implementers are able to effectively identify and reduce gender-based constraints through their own work, the greater impact it will have on the variables measured by the index.

Gender Analysis and Gender Integration in F2F Programming

There is a continuum of attention to gender integration in the programs among the implementing partners. Some organizations have or are in the process of developing strong gender policies within their own institutions as well as in their programs, including Winrock International, Mercy Corps, and TechnoServe. Some of the implementers have prepared briefing materials on gender issues related to F2F activities. Brochures by CNFA and ACDI/VOCA, for example, discuss how men and women have different levels of participation or control over different domains of social life and explain, in a general way, how these areas of inequality or different spheres of responsibility might influence the level of participation in or success of the volunteer assignment or of the development activity itself. The CNFA one-pager explicitly states that its program "seeks to improve gender equity in our host communities," a goal that is aligned with USAID's FTF objectives "[T]o bring about robust agricultural growth and reduce global under-nutrition, FTF is committed to working with host countries to significantly improve the ability of women farmers to reach their full agricultural productive capacity."[12] Both briefers identify specific topics for the volunteer to investigate, such as the level of participation by women in a training session, and offers suggestions on actions to follow to enhance gender-equitable outcomes. NCBA, a new and still small program, does not have a formal gender policy, but the Project Director reported speaking to volunteers before departure about gender issues.

Some implementers have taken additional steps. In USAID/Ghana's FTF Value Chain Project (formerly ADVANCE) currently implemented by ACDI/VOCA as an associate award, a gender assessment was completed at the start of the project and the project hired a gender advisor. The Mali F2F core program and AA (MAVEN) staff received gender training and used a F2F volunteer assignment to review their program from a gender perspective.

Nonetheless, the level of gender expertise in the F2F Program, while improving overall, remains relatively low compared to current agency expectations. Implementing partners should be wary of recruiting volunteers as "gender experts" who have had little formal study or training in the field. Both the pre-assignment information and in-country orientations are a good start but they only provide basic, generic advice, e.g., to hold meetings for women at a time that does not conflict with household responsibilities.

[12] www.feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/resource/files/FeedtheFutureGenderFactSheet022012_0.pdf

Table 17 : Contributions of Women Volunteers to F2F Program

Implementing Partner	# of Female Volunteers	% of Total Volunteers	V days completed	Estimated Value of Volunteer Services Leveraged (US$) Female	Estimated Value of Host Contribution (US$) Female	Persons Directly Assisted Male	Persons Directly Assisted Female	Persons Directly Assisted Total	Economic Vol Recommendations	Organizational Vol Recommendations	Financial Volunteer	Environmental Vol Recommendations	Total Vol Recommendations
		% of total program contributed by Female Volunteers											
ACDIVOCA/MENA	17	9%	9%	10%	4%	8%	10%	8%	9%	5%	10%	17%	9%
ACDIVOCA/W. AFR	30	21%	21%	21%	25%	16%	17%	16%	13%	24%	12%	13%	18%
CNFA/E. Africa	27	16%	17%	17%	9%	18%	18%	18%	14%	19%	7%	9%	15%
CNFA/ECCA	21	9%	9%	9%	8%	6%	8%	6%	9%	7%	8%	8%	8%
CNFA/Southern Africa	46	27%	27%	27%	31%	33%	33%	33%	22%	26%	42%	24%	26%
PDP-FAMU	8	31%	31%	31%	36%	37%	53%	44%	9%	43%	17%	21%	30%
PDP-NCBA	9	35%	28%	28%	35%	39%	37%	38%	30%	77%	71%	40%	43%
PDP-PSPK	5	19%	17%	17%	25%	20%	49%	34%	11%	23%	29%	0%	18%
POA/Carib	73	29%	30%	30%	30%	37%	53%	43%	23%	37%	50%	9%	24%
WAI-Small grant	31	37%	40%	35%	38%	49%	57%	53%	48%	45%	35%	34%	41%
WI/Caribbean	7	23%	23%	23%	28%	8%	13%	10%	14%	13%	0%	43%	16%
WI/Other	4	15%	19%	19%	11%	31%	50%	37%	21%	15%	0%	17%	17%
Grand Total	278	20%	21%	21%	25%	24%	31%	27%	19%	25%	26%	21%	22%

The quality of this information could be significantly improved if implementing partners took greater initiative to develop and share detailed analysis of gender issues in specific value chains in specific countries. They can draw on USAID missions' and centrally funded gender assessments in agriculture to design volunteer assignments to address gender-based constraints and to provide relevant gender guidance, as appropriate, in all assignments. IPs also have a responsibility to ensure that volunteers understand that overcoming gender disparities is a USAID priority, that it is a serious goal, and that such differences cannot be dismissed as "business as usual."

Volunteers cannot on their own be expected to identify gender-based constraints to increased agricultural productivity or design avenues towards more gender-equitable participation in value chain development. A reflection of the volunteers' lack of attention to the issue is seen in the following data point: among the over 300 people completing the volunteer survey, 266 skipped a question related to the quality of preparation they received on how gender issues might affect their work assignment. Of the 63 who answered, 95% thought their preparation was adequate and yet of those, 40% also noted that they did their own research rather than rely on what was provided orally and in writing by the F2F materials.

Table 17 details the contributions of women volunteers to the F2F Program overall. Looking at contributions by sex, there is only a small variance between females and men regarding the inputs and outputs of their assignments. Women volunteers tend, on average, to assist slightly more persons, especially women. Though women make up only 20% of the total number of volunteers and 21% of the volunteer days completed, they worked with 31% of all women directly receiving assistance and 27% of all persons (male and female) directly assisted. There is some suggestion from the volunteer survey that

women may choose to work with women's group, explaining in part the higher proportion of women beneficiaries assisted by women volunteers. There is also evidence that the Weidemann's special project programs focused on gender do have an impact on the overall participation of women in the F2F Program. The small grant projects have a rate of 37% of women volunteers—the highest percentage of any of the programs. POA has the highest percentage of women volunteer participation of all the core programs at 29%.

Reviews of the volunteer reports and interviews with volunteers suggest that they do not necessarily know gender issues when they see them. With few exceptions, they are working within local norms and without gender training and they do not question their experiences. One volunteer, for example, responded "In this project there were no particular gender issues affecting the [assignment] outcome" and then a few questions later stated "there are some strong cultural mores which affect gender relationships in the work force. Women in this region are not accustomed nor necessarily interested in seeking jobs which are currently occupied by men." Similarly, many volunteers skip over the gender questions in the end of assignment documentation altogether.

Gender Equity among Volunteers and Beneficiaries

Another aspect of gender equity is in the proportion of men and women as volunteers and as beneficiaries. Women volunteers make up a minority of volunteers (about one in five), much less than the proposed average of 31%. A larger proportion, about one-third, of those directly assisted and/or trained are women:

- 20% of all volunteers are women;
- 40% of those directly assisted are women;
- 35% of those trained are women.

Table 18 shows that most of the projects are on track to achieve performance goals set for fielding female volunteers and assisting female clients. The ACDI/VOCA programs in the Middle East and in West Africa lag significantly behind their gender equity participation goals for women volunteers. This is in

Table 18: Proposed % of Women Volunteers

ACDIVOCA/MENA	60%
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	60%
CNFA/East Africa	14%
CNFA/ECCA	12%
CNFA/Southern Africa	20%
Partners/Caribbean	30%
PDP-FAMU	20%
PDP-NCBA	26%
PDP-PSPK	19%
WAI/SPSP	20%
Winrock/Caribbean	25%
Grand Total	31%

Table 19: Progress Towards Gender Goals

Implementing Partner	Goal for Female Volunteers	Progress	Goal for Female Directly Assisted	Progress
ACDIVOCA/MENA	203	8%	2,535	65%
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	194	15%	2,430	579%
CNFA/East Africa	42	64%	8,241	52%
CNFA/ECCA	48	44%	2,053	114%
CNFA/Southern Africa	63	73%	3,858	62%
Partners/Caribbean	173	42%	12,214	56%
PDP-FAMU	17	47%	1,392	71%
PDP-NCBA	18	50%	293	140%
PDP-PSPK	6	83%	2,160	40%
WAI/SPSP	20	155%	1,160	516%
Winrock/Caribbean	19	37%	450	136%

part due to the ambitious goals ACDI/VOCA set of having women comprise 60% of all volunteers, at least twice the goal set by other implementers (see Table 18), but these two programs, especially in the MENA region, still lag behind the others in the percentage of women volunteers.

To decipher whether region or sector participation may have differentiated participation by women volunteers, the data was broken out by inputs (volunteers) and by outputs (directly assisted).

Figure 4 and 5 illustrate the wide gap in the number of male and female volunteers, as well as those assisted and trained by region. MENA, E&E, and the Central Asia regions have the smallest number of beneficiaries who are women and these regions are also served by the lowest percentage of female volunteers. By contrast, women account for 45% of those directly assisted in Africa, the proportion closest to 50% in any region, for any of the three indicators. Review of these figures suggest that IPs set their targets and place their emphasis on getting more women volunteers into the regions where women are able to participate actively, such as women producers, processors, and marketers in East and West Africa, East Asia, and the LAC region.

Figure 4: Proportion of Male/Female Volunteers By Sub-Region

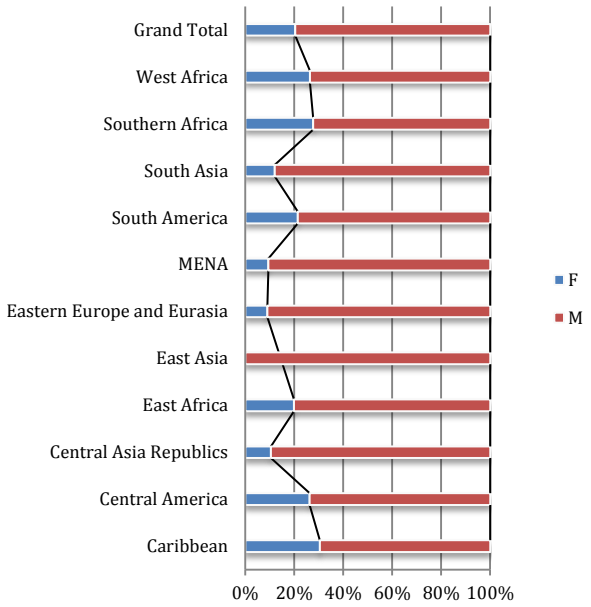
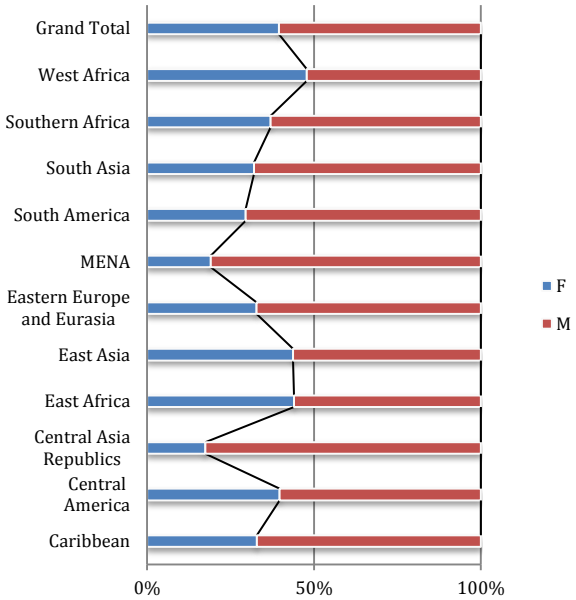
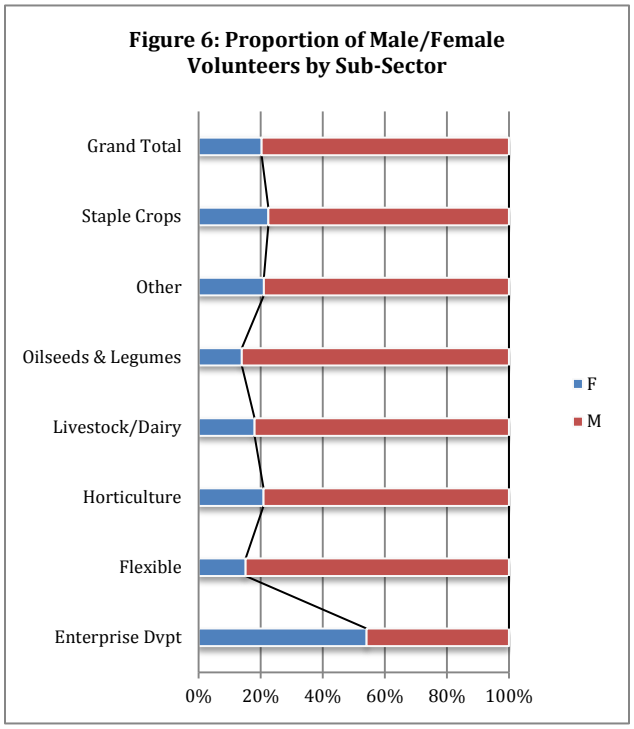
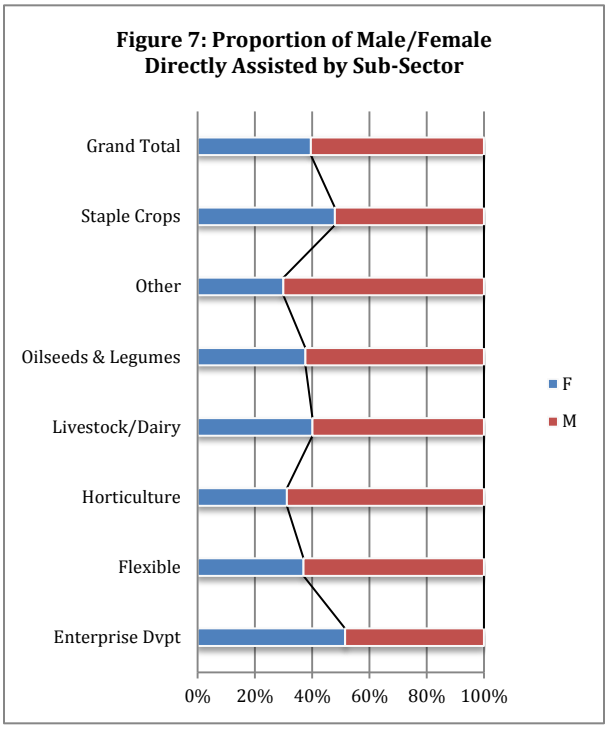


Figure 5: Proportion of Men and Women Assisted by Sub-Region



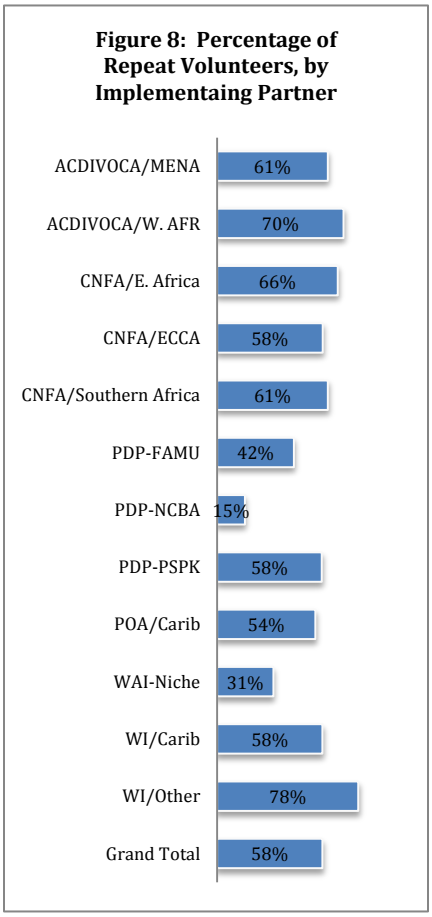
Similarly, Figures 6 and 7 reveal that a less stark but still skewed distribution of women as volunteers and beneficiaries by agricultural and economic subsector. Women volunteers are more likely to work on enterprise development than on crop production. Women beneficiaries show a more equitable spread across the subsectors. On the field visits, there were always at least a few women in mixed groups of producers, processors, and marketers, but they were typically a minority. Many assignments placed volunteers with women's groups, however, and these clearly drive up the numbers of women beneficiaries. F2F volunteers, both men and women, can set important examples of how to work equitably with both men and women as hosts as well as in the IP field offices, sending a message that





one's gender roles and responsibilities need not be a limiting factor in agricultural development or in one's career.

Many factors affect the rates of volunteer participation by women. The pool of known and experienced women candidates is smaller than that of men, especially in some of the technical areas for which volunteers are sought. Women volunteers report having greater difficulty in scheduling trips of two and three weeks because of the competing responsibilities they face at home and work. Some women volunteers are less willing to work in countries where women experience greater discrimination and lower social status than men (as in parts of the Middle East, West Africa, and Central Asia) or where they have concerns for their physical safety. At the same time, recruiters may not seek out women for positions in these situations because of their own perceptions about their suitability. Several women noted that working in pairs (whether as a married couple or simply co-located on an assignment with another volunteer) improved (or could improve) their comfort level in country.



Finding: As achieving gender equality has become a more explicit component of USAID policy and practice, interest in gender issues is also increasing among implementing partners, but the skills of staff members and the team's abilities to identify relevant gender-based constraints to their programs and to communicate the implications of this to volunteers is mixed in quality and effectiveness.

R**ecommendation**: Given the new attention placed by USAID on achieving gender equality, gender-briefing materials should be updated to reflect the new policy. IP staff should, wherever possible, be offered gender training. Gender analyses can be conducted of specific value chains so that SOWs can more clearly explain how the specific task addressed a gender-based constraint where appropriate.

Volunteer Selection and Quality

Country programs increasingly rely on a cadre of "super volunteers" who have proven themselves and can be counted upon to do a good job, especially in an environment that gives preference to development results. However, not all repeat volunteers are successful. IPs have accepted repeat volunteers based on positive ratings from other IPs, but country to country differences and personal characteristics make the transition from one program or location to another more difficult, and not all repeat volunteers work out well. In addition to technical qualifications, volunteers need to be able to be adaptive and flexible, willing to "make do" in sometimes difficult circumstances. In response, IPs develop their own cadre of repeat volunteers who they know and trust. Yet IPs frequently work closely together as subs, or, because they have developed certain technical strengths in their database provide volunteers to other IPs. Both ACDI/VOCA and Winrock have used each other, and sometimes Land 'O Lakes volunteers.

IPs should continue to be encouraged to take on new volunteers, expanding outreach to, e.g., the large US regional network of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program of USDA. There are a number of benefits to doing so:

i) Age: the current population of volunteers is old and aging, and it is important to continue to maintain a cadre of experienced, technically capable, and enthusiastic volunteers.

ii) Diversity: increasing the pool to bring on new volunteers can help to reach new target groups with different needs (gender, ethnicity, as well as professional diversity).

iii) Exposure: providing more qualified US citizens and permanent the opportunity to learn about international development programming and US foreign assistance programs.

The team, as noted elsewhere, believes that there should be a limit to the number of repeat visits allowed by any one individual, probably around 25, to encourage a wide exposure among the US agricultural community.

Table 20: Number and Percentage of Repeat Volunteers, by Region

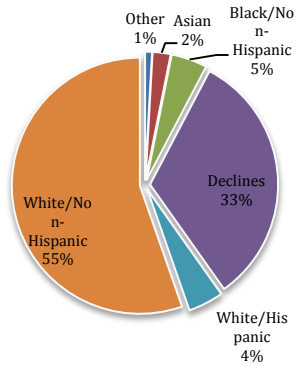
Region	# of Volunteers	Sum of Number of Volunteer Days Completed	Average of Number of Volunteer Days Completed	% of Repeat Volunteers	Average of Number of Volunteer Days Completed
Caribbean	184	2,458	13	52%	13
Central America	114	1,676	15	51%	14
Central Asia Republics	38	672	18	68%	18
East Africa	211	4,208	20	62%	20
East Asia	12	161	13	58%	11
Eastern Europe and Eurasia	189	3,064	16	56%	16
MENA	180	2,769	15	61%	15

South America	28	577	21	61%	13
South Asia	33	651	20	73%	18
Southern Africa	195	3,603	18	58%	19
West Africa	182	3,329	19	58%	18
Grand Total	1366	23,168	17	58%	17

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

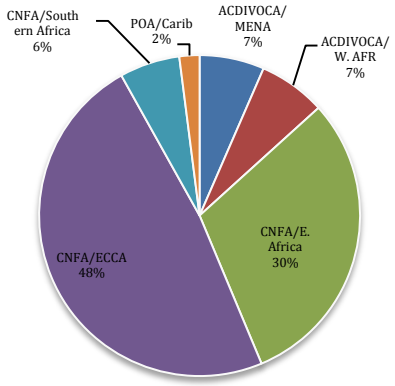
The last midterm assessment noted that the F2F Program had not yet met its goals of engaging a sufficiently diverse population of volunteers from among the wide range of ethnic and racial groups in the US. However, it did not recommend any "set-aside" for HBCUs to address this problem. In the RFA, applicants were strongly encouraged to include sub-awards for Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and/or Minority Controlled Private Voluntary Organizations (MCPVO). The F2F Program still, despite efforts, greatly lacks diversity in its volunteer pools.

Figure 9: Volunteer Ethnicity



It is difficult to assess he current level of diversity based on the information provided. Approximately one-third of volunteers declined to provide their ethnicity (see Figure 9). The majority of persons who declined (78% of all declined) were from the CNFA ECCA and East Africa programs (see Figure 10). CNFA is unsure why this might be the case, but they have observed that volunteers especially to the ECCA region are reluctant to disclose their ethnicity.

Figure 10: Percentage of Volunteers Declining to State Ethnicity



Approximately 55% of total volunteers or 37% percent of those who claimed an ethnicity were White/non-Hispanic. Only 5% of volunteers described themselves as Black/Non-Hispanic, 4% as White/Hispanic and another 3% are from other ethnic categories.

It was refreshing to learn that from the hosts' perspective, any volunteers are welcome, and whether they are men or women or of any particular ethnic background appears in most cases to be unimportant. Among the many dozens of people who participated in meetings organized by host organizations in East and West Africa, only one young woman expressed any preference. Most hosts were adamant that what they needed was competent technical assistance and that both men and women volunteers were capable of providing it.

US and non-American Volunteers

The core F2F Program requires that all its volunteers be US citizens, green card holders, or other legal residents; Associate Award programs and special projects, in contrast, are allowed to call on volunteers from countries in the country and region in which the program is located. Many interviewees, both F2F

staff members and hosts alike, expressed appreciation for the ability to use regional and/or national volunteers. They noted that the advantages of doing so included the overlap of culture and language with the hosts and the often greater familiarity with the local context. Sometimes the benefit included extra time with the host because the volunteer did not need time to adjust to a different time zone or to rest from a long trip. Others believe only American citizens should be volunteers because, as taxpayers, they should receive the benefit.

In Ghana, a few years ago under the volunteer component of the associate award, ADVANCE, ACDI/VOCA developed an internship program linking students in the Ghanaian National Service to be volunteers for F2F. One of those who was involved in the program has since been hired by the IP and works on the program.

Finding: Efforts to increase the diversity of the volunteer are increasing, with mixed results. Pressure for finding experienced, return volunteers is sometimes at odds with a goal to bring volunteers with a wider range of professional, ethnic, and sexes into the programs. The number of women in volunteer assignments has increased over the last phase, with better success in some regions than others.

Recommendation: Recruiters are encouraged to work with a wider network of academic and professional associations to bring new volunteers into the program and to expand their outreach. Continue efforts to increase the diversity of the volunteer pool by expanding the reach of recruitment notices. Consider increasing opportunities to locate two volunteers together.

Increasing the Technical Quality of Programs

The F2F Program maintains high levels of technical quality. The program in general continues to do an excellent job of recruiting skilled US volunteers and matching them with hosts who are ready and willing to receive technical advice. Early generations of F2F Programs assigned volunteers wherever good hosts were found. As a result, volunteers worked in a wide range of areas and capacities. Mid-term assessments in 2003 and 2007 found that the F2F Program provided high quality technical assistance through rewarding people-to-people exchanges, but recommended it seek greater development impact. On the basis of these evaluations and consultations with implementers, USAID challenged F2F implementers to maximize the impact of volunteer assignments while sharing technical skills and building bridges across cultures. In practice, this required some balance between simply responding to requests from potential hosts and identifying sub-sectors and activities that are most likely to lead to development impact and best suited to voluntary technical assistance.

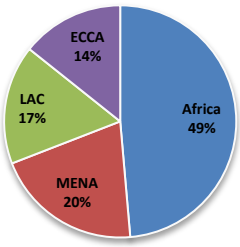
The 2007 mid-term review of F2F identified three areas of implementation that could improve the technical quality of volunteer assignments: greater geographic focus, improved targeting of volunteers assignments, and increasing the involvement of volunteers at all nodes of the value chain. All of these recommendations were incorporated into the RFA for the current phase. The F2F Program has reduced the number of Country Projects and concentrated the core program in fewer countries. The effect of this concentration is difficult to assess and is partly offset by the flexible assignments, Program Development Projects (PDPs) and small grants. These efforts to bring more diversity into the program, reach new countries, and test new ways of doing business are to be applauded and may be worth the loss of focus

if they are scaled up to or adopted by the major implementers. This section reviews in more detail how well F2F Program's efforts have responded to these new directions.

Geographic Focus

Proposals for an award under the F2F Program were to be global in scope, but with "core country" programs in a limited number of selected core countries within a given geographic region. The regional focus was meant to encourage the implementer "to leverage synergies in developing coordinated country programs in a given region" (USAID RFA 2008: 8). The global scope was meant to allow the implementer "to maintain capability to support innovative activities and institutional programs and respond to USAID Mission requests and development opportunities worldwide" (USAID RFA 2008: 8)

Figure 11: Funding Allocations By Region



USAID ran a progressive review and award process. Applicants were allowed to submit separate applications for funding for core country programs in any one or more of the designated geographic regions. Multiple applications were acceptable in non-Caribbean/African regions. The awards were made in five competitive groups. One award was made for $7.5 million over 5 years, for country activities in each of these regions: the Caribbean, West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. Two awards for $7.5 million over 5 years were awarded for core country activities in the non-Caribbean/African regions.

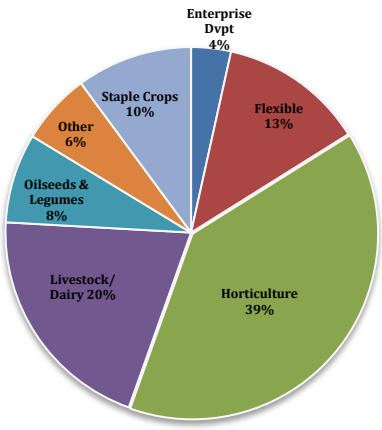
In practice, although there is a single prime award within any one major region, and (with only a few exceptions) only one implementer in a single country, there are at times multiple implementers at work within a region. For example, in West Africa, ACDI/VOCA holds the prime award and works in Ghana, Nigeria, and Liberia, but its sub awardee, Winrock International, manages the program in Mali and in Nigeria. The team found that the global reach of the F2F Program remains appropriate and that assigning specific regions to implementers is good management practice. However, the rationale for the regional preferences for Africa and the Caribbean Basin found in the Farm Bill are not clear.

There were indications in the RFA that USAID preferred F2F Programs to operate in countries with policy environments more conducive to economic progress. The RFA stated: "Typically, it is desirable for FTF programs to work in countries with good enabling environments so that the ideas of the volunteers can have wide impact, unencumbered by price distortions, corruption and red tape, but it is recognized that many countries have limitations in this regard and that substantial development impacts and rewarding volunteer assignments are also possible in other country situations." Despite this sentiment, in some countries F2F does work with parastatal organizations or crops that have poorly functioning value chains. The team has concluded that there is value to using volunteers in a wide range of political and economic environments, and that the emphasis for targeting countries with good enabling environments should not prohibit IPs from working in countries even under less optimal conditions (see, e.g., the discussion that follow below on utilizing volunteers in post-crisis and post-conflict situations)

Sectoral focus

Moving beyond a "targets of opportunity" approach, implementers became more explicit about technical objectives. As FTF programs increasingly defined program activities in terms of technical problems faced by hosts, they were better able to develop strategies for work with a host or sector, plan and implement support activities, and project and measure impacts. They began to focus voluntary technical assistance services in areas where they had a comparative advantage, concentrating volunteer services within a subsector. The commodity subsector is an example, referring to firms involved with a specific agricultural good or product. Another example is support service subsectors that include the financial, educational, research, and extension services vital to functioning of a competitive agricultural sector. Implementers chose 12 subsectors, called focus areas, in the previous phase of F2F, and by 2008 the Farmer-to-Farmer program consisted of 121 subsector projects in 41 countries. Sixty-one percent of all focus area subsector projects and 51 percent of all volunteer assignments were in horticulture, dairy and livestock, and diversification (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Percentage of Volunteer Days, by sector



Focus areas were not always well defined, but implementers and a program assessment team found this approach to be beneficial in obtaining and measuring impacts. These steps toward concentration and greater development impact were validated with a cost/benefit analysis in 2005 that showed that the F2F Program was heading in the right direction and the program "should not shy away from striving for development impact as well as simple goodwill and cultural exchanges."[13]

The F2F Program manual, revised by USAID in 2005, pushed the F2F Program further towards increasing development impact by recommending a limited number of subsectors and an analytical process to select the ones with the most potential for broad and sustainable impacts. Value chain analysis to "reveal constraints (policy, technology, organizations, etc.) and opportunities that provide focus for volunteer efforts within a subsector" was one method recommended to meet this requirement. Ex-ante economic analysis to compare the expected costs and benefits or impacts was another one. According to the manual, this analysis should lead to a plan detailing the proposed approach to volunteer assignments, discussing collaboration with partner and host country organizations, and specifying the expected results from volunteer inputs.

The current F2F Program has taken further measures to strengthen the overall analytical framework and methodology for achieving more sector-focused impact. USAID called for "going beyond simply placing individual volunteers, but rather focusing on development of specific market chains for which over-all impact can be evaluated" in the 2008 RFA. Applicants were instructed to include at least one 5-15 page Country Project for each country showing how it would address constraints within a specific commodity

[13] Montgomery, Roger. *Review of Farmer to Farmer Impact Assessment*; USAID/EGAT and USDA Foreign Agriculture Service, International Cooperation and Development; August 17, 2004.

or value chain or in a specific support sector. The Country Project could be for a value chain (dairy, horticulture, aquaculture, rice, forest products, etc.) or a support sector (extension services, cooperative development, input supply, financial services, agribusiness, etc.), as long as it contained "a clearly defined objective supported by adequate analysis of sector constraints and opportunities and links to impacts at the farmer level." Applicants were instructed to use a pragmatic rather than an overly analytic approach to Country Project analysis. Reliance on existing sector and sub-sector analyses completed by other institutions (donors, governments, partners, etc.) was encouraged. USAID's technical evaluation criteria gave as much weight (20 points) to Country Project Plans as to the other criteria.

Country Project Descriptions have provided the ex-ante analysis called for in previous evaluations and helped to sharpen the focus of country programs and reduce the number of activities per country. They have allowed IPs to present their country strategy and provided USAID an objective means to score technical proposals. However, some of the potential benefits are lost in practice by generous use of flex assignments and limited ability to measure impacts on the selected value chains or sectors in the short time available.

Figure 13: Classification of Volunteer Assignment,

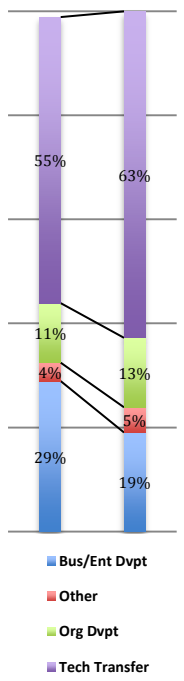
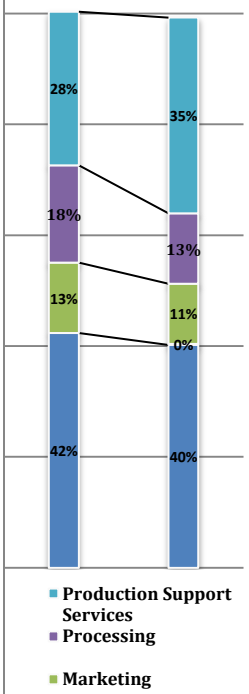


Figure 14: Classification of Commodity Chain Activity,



Value Chains

Given the popularity of value chain projects in agriculture development programs in the last decade, it is not surprising that the Farmer-to-Farmer program used and adapted this approach. A robust body of experience and literature on best practices has been developed, including a five-step approach for value chain analysis and selection requiring a significant level of effort and a range of technical expertise. Although the number of value chain projects has declined, USAID has invested more than $4.9 billion in agribusiness and agriculture value chain projects since 1995.[14] In the 2008 RFA, USAID did not require a value chain analysis or endorse any specific methodology, leaving it to each applicant to determine the type and level of analysis to adequately justify the Country Project proposed, the types of activities that would be implemented within the identified Country Project, and the anticipated results. But it did classify each Country Project as either value chain or sector support. Most IPs used a value chain analysis, which led to Country Projects for value chains.

At the end of 2011, 57 Country Projects were being implemented in 25 core countries under Cooperative Agreements and SPSP Program Development Projects. Ninety-eight percent of Country

[14] Agribusiness and Agriculture Value Chain Development Assessment Final Report by Weidemann Associates, April 2011. Four projects were started in 2010, down from a high of 40 in 2003.

Projects are classified as value chains. As shown in Figure 5, horticulture makes up 36% of the Country Projects, 20% are related to Livestock and Dairy, 13% to Staple Crops, and the rest in other categories.

The predominance of value chains can be explained by several factors. First, it was the common approach, widely adopted for agriculture and economic development projects. Second, measuring impact was believed to be more difficult with sector support projects. Third, support services projects are often institution building in nature, the impact of which takes time to manifest. Some implementers believed F2F had tested the sector support approach in previous phases and it was time to try something new. The lack of specific support services Country Projects is also explained by shifts in focus in USAID and other development organizations towards a private sector agenda. Finally, as resources allocated to agriculture declined, the new USAID agricultural strategy emphasized agribusiness/value chain projects and there were few support services projects with which Implementing Partners could partner.

In the current phase, many sector support type activities continue within each of the value chain-related Country Projects. Volunteers often bring support services expertise and help address constraints in the value chain that go beyond a single or group of hosts. For example, food safety is an important issue that transcends any single value chain. There are no food safety Country Projects, and volunteer assignments on food safety contribute to more than one value chain, yet they are counted under one or the other value chain. As shown in Figure 13, most assignments are at still at the farm production level of the commodity chain, but the percentage of assignments at the support services level has increased, while those at the processing and marketing level have decreased.

F2F Programs have worked well when partnered with other development activities, especially USAID funded projects. F2F's embrace of the value chain approach created opportunities for partnering with value chain projects and FTF projects where volunteers provide a cost effective means to address certain constraints in the value chain. As a global volunteer activity with modest funding per country, the Farmer-to-Farmer program is not and should not try to be a stand-alone value chain or FTF project. But those projects in core countries provide excellent opportunities for productive partnerships with F2F. Many of the F2F's Country Projects are implemented in parallel with value chain projects and FTF projects with excellent results. It is likely that F2F applicants drew on this experience and expertise in developing their proposals and Country Projects. Synergies abound when both the F2F Program and value chain or FTF projects are implemented by the same IP, but they are also common in those projects that are implemented by other contractors. However, because the F2F Program tends to be smaller with more general goals than value chain or FTF projects, its contribution to the impact of joint activities is sometimes overlooked or underestimated.

Some IP field staff whose technical skills may not be strong enough to capture the full benefits of a value chain approach may reach out and network with local partners and experts from donor-funded projects. When the F2F IP also has value chain or other agriculture projects that it implements outside of the F2F Program, the F2F staff may report through the Chief of Party (COP) of the other project who functions as a Country Director for all projects implemented by that organization. The synergy between projects helps ensure good host selection, well-written Scopes of Work, and can improve the follow-up available to hosts of the volunteer recommendations.

In sum, the value chain orientation has helped the F2F Program increase its focus, provide opportunities for greater collaboration with other programs, and has provided the basis for a more strategic approach designed to increase development impact. The value chain framework has not however significantly changed the content of the volunteer effort or the type of commodity chain activity.

Technical Quality of Staff

Country staff are very dedicated and hard-working, spending many hours on the road and in the office to ensure the comfort and safety of the volunteers. They are generally good networkers, linking volunteers and hosts and even linking hosts to locally available resources, and supplementing their own technical skills with those of colleagues and other partners. For example, one assignment in Upper Egypt supported a CIDA sponsored project to increase opportunities for women. F2F brought in specialists that trained the organization staff on managerial skills, finance, marketing, and job placement to leave behind a stronger organization. Local F2F staff often benefit from their engagement with the volunteers in many such situations. Field staff often mentioned the value of volunteer modeling professional behavior and the value of technical expertise as a large benefit of the program (although this is not captured in any part of the M&E system).

Home Office experts provide technical leadership in planning and overseeing country activities, but the level of country staffing has not increased and may have declined even as the goal of greater development impact has placed greater demands on country staff than in the past.

Most core programs are now operated by a Country Director and 1-3 program coordinators and backed up by home office staff, including a Project Director, country coordinators, recruiters and outreach and other staff. Locally hired Country Directors replaced expatriates. Many country staff members have considerable F2F experience, some having advanced from positions as translators or drivers and all seem to be highly skilled networkers. Many also have agricultural degrees; others have degrees in business, economics or international relations. Two country programs stated that recruiting staff with adequate technical backgrounds, especially among women candidates, has been difficult and that is has taken a long time to fill key positions.

Some IPs recruit country staff based on management potential and adaptability rather than technical skills, believing that technical requirements are too diverse to find in one individual and it is easier to teach the necessary technical skills to a generalist than management skills to a technical specialist. There is also some concern that a technical staff person might try to give technical direction where he is not qualified resulting in conflicts with volunteers.

Overall, the team found that IPs have improved the technical competency of headquarters staff and programming seems adequate. Country staff members are generally well known local development experts spending most of their time programming and supporting assignments before and during the volunteer visit. The technical competency of staff and programming is good. Country staff members are generally well-known local development experts spending most of their time programming and supporting assignments before and during the volunteer visit. The country teams range in their level of technical skills; teams with more generalists can usually draw on the technical knowledge of good local partners and technical staff of other projects, often with the same implementer.

The team found that the quality of the local staff is one of the most important factors in the quality of the F2F Program in any country. The impact of a volunteer's technical advice is greatest when she is matched with the right host, which has been selected and prepared for the visit. Managing this process is time consuming and professionally demanding. No less important is what happens after the volunteer's visit, especially the distillation of a volunteer's observations and advice into a short list of actionable recommendations and follow-up with the host on their implementation. Although most country staff recognize the importance of follow-up, it receives lower priority than fielding the target number of volunteers and satisfying reporting requirements. Many hosts are sophisticated enterprises or organizations, and managing the F2F Program to serve their needs requires highly developed professional skills. Furthermore, technical support in the chosen value chains seems to be lacking from the IPs. The team believes the F2F Program could benefit from IPs raising the priority of host follow-up and providing more regional technical support.

Implementing Flexible Assignments

As the F2F Program became more focused, it took parallel measures to maintain the ability to respond to emerging opportunities. IPs programmed seven percent of volunteer assignments outside of focus areas in the previous phase. Currently, up to twenty percent of volunteer assignments can be used to support activities outside of approved Country Projects. These flexible assignments allow volunteers to carry out exploratory activities in new countries and sectors, respond to emerging needs and opportunities, and exploit targets of opportunity. With the development of the FTF Multi-year strategies and the identification of priority value chains, the flexible assignments can also be used to work on crops other than those approved in the Country Projects.

One of F2F's greatest strengths is its flexibility. However, if the development hypothesis is true that the F2F can achieve greater development impact with greater focus, at some point the benefits of increasing the portion of flexible assignments may be outweighed by the reduced impact of the program.

In practice, at least 68% of volunteer days, flexible, small grant, PDP and core, have been spent in the focus regions of Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. By sector, about one third of all volunteer days are devoted to horticulture projects. Dairy, livestock and ruminants account for 21% and are the other largest sectors receiving F2F assistance globally. This differs from the priority FTF crops which favor staple grains first, with dairy and horticulture following.

Table 21: Comparison of Total Volunteer Days, FY 2004-2008 and FY 2009-2011

Region	# of Vol Per Year FY09-11	Vol Days Per Year FY09-11	# of Vol Per Year FY04-08	Vol Days Per Year FY04-08	% of Vol FY09-11 Vs. FY04-08	%of Vdays FY09-11 Vs. FY04-08
Africa	196	3713	131	3161	150%	117%
ANE	28	495	146	2748	19%	18%
ECCA	63	1021	257	4428	25%	23%
LAC	109	1570	104	1676	104%	94%
MENA	60	923	0	0		

The region shift has meant that there are now approximately 150% more assignments each year to

Africa, 104% more to LAC, and only a fifth to a quarter of the number of assignments to ECCA and ANE. Overall, the number of assignments per year is lower this cycle—a rate of approximately 71% to last cycle. This is likely due to fewer implementers.

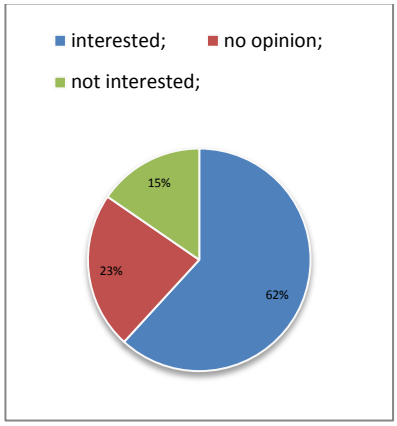
Increasing the Effectiveness and Efficiency of programs

The F2F Mid-Term Assessment in 2003 found that the program's consolidation resulted in economies of scale, cost savings, improved coordination, better program management, and greater program focus. The pattern of consolidating country programs under regional ones coordinated by one IP and reducing the number of core country programs continued and intensified in the current program. These measures appear to be cost effective. The configuration of one prime implementer per region has eliminated redundancies and disputes over focus areas and hosts and increased program cost effectiveness. Reducing the number individual cooperative agreements and identifying a single point of contact for program operations, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting for each region also reduced USAID's management burden. However, as noted elsewhere, these benefits have been partially offset by flex assignments, small grants, and other non-core F2F activity.

Cost effectiveness

Although costs have risen, IPs have been able to maintain an adequate level of staffing and programming in most cases. Salaries and fringe benefits are the largest budget item for the Farmer-to-Farmer program aside from volunteer costs. Cost pressures forced implementers to reduce staff to remain competitive at the same time they were challenged to achieve greater development impact. The 2007 FTF mid-term assessment and the 2008 RFA called for strengthening country level staffing with technical capabilities needed to support work in defined Country FTF Project areas and ensure sound monitoring and evaluation. After calculating cost per volunteer day (with which Implementing Partners could collaborate) and comparing it with the cost of paid consultants, the 2003 mid-term assessment concluded that the F2F Program was cost effective but heavily dependent on a full range of support services, such as activity design, host selection, scopes of work, the follow up to assignments, logistical support and security, impact assessment, translation and interpreting services as well as background information to bring the volunteer up to speed on the overall country context.

Figure 15: F2F Volunteer Survey Data on Social Networking



Following the evaluation recommendations, USAID challenged IPs to lower costs and began comparing performance across IPs, countries and regions by monitoring CpVD. Implementing organizations trimmed staff and replaced expatriate managers with local ones to reduce costs and remain competitive. However, the 2008 evaluation pointed out the difficulty of drawing meaningful conclusions about the cost efficiency or effectiveness of programs using CpVD, which for the last phase was calculated as $871/day. Besides being difficult to measure accurately, the CpVD failed to take into consideration the planning, support and technical direction required for greater developmental impact

as well as achievement of the people to people goals. USAID still monitors CpVD, but no longer uses it as a basis for selecting IPs. The projected CpVD for this phase is $1,134, a figure obtained by dividing the anticipated amount of core funding ($57.5 million) by the projected number of volunteer days (50,695).

Other cost cutting measures were taken as a result of the 2003 mid-term assessment, such as shifting program responsibilities to the field; increasing use of the internet for field recruiting, technical support and monitoring and evaluation; and more efficient use of American staff. In the 2008 RFA USAID directed Implementers to hold costs down without sacrificing technical competency in staff and program planning. It called for adequate logistical and planning support in the interest of volunteer safety, morale, and effectiveness and qualified program staff to plan, support, follow up, and report on volunteer assignments.

Finding: The technical quality of the programs seems to be improving as a result of more focused programming that is linked to USAID and USG activities. However programming volunteers has become more complex and many staff are giving inadequate attention to refining and following up with hosts on volunteer recommendations. Staff quality is very good and benefits through its engagement with senior advisors from other projects and volunteers.

Recommendation: Possible ways to continue to support improved technical quality of the F2F Programs might include:

- Encouraging F2F field staff to work more closely with volunteers to ensure that recommendations provided are the ones most critical for continued success and to delineate the steps for achieving or adopting the suggestion (Some programs do this to a greater extent than others).
- Linking hosts to other technical specialists in the country or region, whether through other USAID, USG, national, or NGO programs or by building a list of willing local volunteers.
- Consider establishing a competitive process for providing additional support through exchange visits of hosts to other hosts within the region or even reverse exchanges to the US.

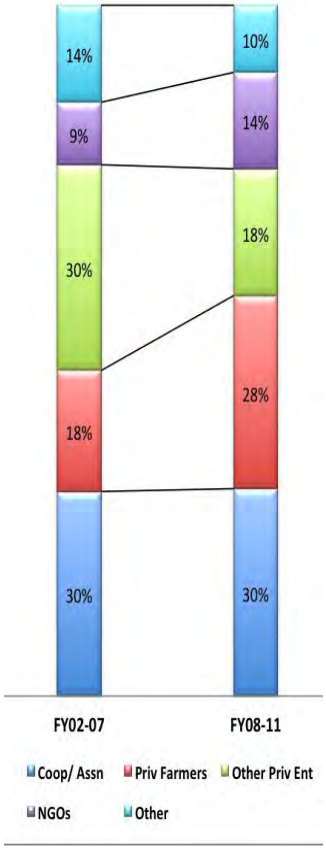
Improving Impact through Provision of Support Funds

A major issue in the F2F Program lies in the difficulties that hosts have in fulfilling or adopting the volunteer recommendations. In some cases the problem is a technical issue that can be resolved with further technical assistance. In some cases, the problem is one of resources, especially from the perspective of the hosts. Throughout the evaluation, in every field site, the team was told that hosts were unable to follow up on a range of volunteer recommendations because of a lack of resources or an inability to manage a specific connection to a supplier or other contact. Volunteers gave similar responses in their survey, noting both the importance of their own repeat visits to follow up on previous recommendations as well as the need for the local staff to provide continued follow up to assist with adoption. The volunteer survey asked “what, in your opinion, are the biggest barriers the host face in implementing your recommendations?” More than half (57%) of 262 respondents said that financial constraints were the biggest barrier; another 50% answered “other.” Of the latter group, many pointed frequently to the need for technical information, skills, poverty (not being able to access in-country resources, land ownership, etc.), and problems such as corruption or lack of markets as the primary

reasons for lack of adoption. Quite a few volunteers raised the need for extension services.

Local staff members however are already overburdened with the work of placing volunteers as well as with monitoring the volunteer process. During volunteer assignments, staff members often take steps to link hosts with local government officials, other development projects, and/or NGOs in the area. Some programs, such as Winrock's El Salvador and Mali programs, work extensively through local partners who are supporting the same hosts. Programs with associate awards such as in Ghana have the advantage of working with hosts who are partnered with other USAID programs. A third suggestion has been to develop reverse exchanges that would allow some host representatives (perhaps through a competitive process) to travel to the US or a third country to receive additional technical assistance. Overall, the issue of how to best structure follow-up support remains a critical one for maximizing the impact of the F2F Program.

Figure 16: Types of Groups Receiving Assistance, FY 2002-07 and FY 2008-11



The team did not find any evident to suggest that establishing a fund to support additional implementation of volunteer recommendations would be either useful or desirable. In some significant ways, the ability of the F2F Program to maintain that it provides only volunteer assistance is their comparative advantage with other programs. A support fund to implement recommendations adds an additional management burden, and it could induce hosts to implement recommendations they are not fully convinced about. USAID Forward, with a focus on working directly with local institutions, and various other United States Government programs may create opportunities for hosts to access funds for very specific endeavors. Providing support funds might also have a negative effect on the number of volunteers fielded—a trade-off there is no clear evidence to support.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Impact Measurement

In recent years, USAID's move towards more rigorous evaluations, reflected in the Evaluation Policy adopted in January 2011, argues for more robust measurement of impacts. F2F may well be among the programs asked to adapt to these new standards. This is no easy task for a program that operates globally and relies on volunteer assistance operating on a relatively minimal budget. The F2F Manual itself admits that impact measurement and reporting is challenging.[15] The major challenge from the IP perspective is in the interpretation of the indicator definitions and communicating a clear and consistent definition to field staff, especially in determining the OCAT rating which requires a significant amount of qualitative judgment that varies from collector to collector.

The F2F Program shifted its goals towards achieving greater development impact following program

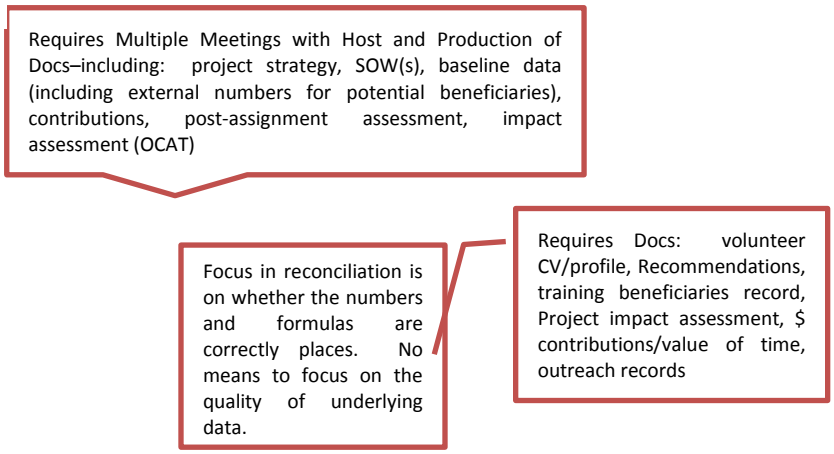
[15] Farmer to Farmer Manual, page 106.

evaluations and internal evaluations by Implementing Partners in the mid-1990s. Escalating costs also forced IPs to look for greater program efficiencies. The idea is that better measurement of real impact can help to identify the program's most effective areas of investment. In an increasingly resource constrained environment, this is a powerful concept, and is consistent with reforms by USAID and other donors designed to get more "bang for the buck." Major improvements have been made and overall IPs are generally comfortable with the current set of indicators. There however remains room for improvement.

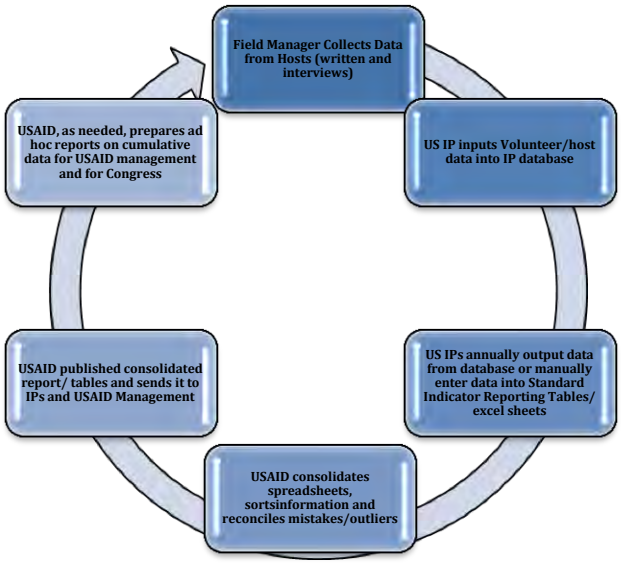
The volume of assessments, evaluations, studies, and success stories for the F2F Program is impressive and they describe a successful program. Many respondents interviewed for this evaluation believe that the program has achieved as much for the amount invested as any USAID project, although the team is not aware of any study that explicitly compares the costs and benefits of one program over another. The benefits of the project include both tangible and intangible outcomes, including not only quantifiable development impacts as well as less easily captured benefits such as good will, cross-cultural understanding, models of participatory governance, and trust.

IPs submit semi-annual reports to USAID tracking inputs, outputs, and outreach. Impacts are measured at the mid-term and final reports and are based on measuring changes at the host level following volunteer assistance. The changes are aggregated and reported by each IP, then aggregated by USAID for program level reports. While these reports are impressive for the amount of information and the overall results of the F2F Program, they are generally not intended to report on sector or country level impacts. The IPs are unclear how and why the data is used by USAID in analysis, making it more difficult for them to ensure the information they are collecting is precisely the data USAID needs.

Figure 17: Data Management and Reporting Process



The F2F reporting process, as it works now, causes inefficiencies that greatly decrease the ability of the monitoring and evaluation process to influence program design and impacts. USAID has embarked on a new Evaluation Policy, requiring more programs to establish counterfactuals. The Policy defines evaluation as: "the systematic collection and analysis of information to improve effectiveness and inform decisions about future programming. It sets ambitious standards for high quality, relevant, and



transparent evaluations to demonstrate results, generate evidence to inform decisions, promote learning, and ensure accountability."[16] The F2F Program would benefit from a streamlined reporting process in order to comply more readily with the new evaluation policy, and to be able to continually make incremental improvements and better target sectors and regions for F2F.

The Data Collection and Reporting Cycle

Figure 18: Implementing Partner Data Collection

Monitoring the inputs, outputs, and impacts of the F2F Program is a complex endeavor, involving thousands of volunteers and hosts, dozens of in-country program managers, several project managers at implementing agencies, and the two AOTRs at USAID. There are in addition people responsible for receiving and forwarding collected information and/or who conduct specific analyses. Reporting on the F2F Program involves collecting data at several junctures of the program both in-country and in the US by each implementing organization. There are about 50 different data requirements for each host and for the volunteers' work with the hosts. Much of this data is collected at the country level and is sometimes also processed there; other data is collated and analyzed by the implementer level, and by USAID. The more than 1300 assignments over three years completed thus far have produced over 65,000 individual data points. The information collected is related to: selecting host organizations and assessing their capacity; developing volunteer assignments; identifying volunteers and matching them with appropriate assignments; determining the results of the volunteer assignments in-country; tracking the impact of the volunteer efforts on the host organizations, and following up on the volunteers' outreach efforts back in the US As illustrated in Figure 19, there may be up to fourteen documents that are used to capture this information by the field and the US-based implementing staff.

[16] USAID/ Office of Learning, Evaluation and Research of the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning, *USAID Evaluation Policy: Year One*, February 2012, p. 2

BOX 2: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR EACH CNFA ASSIGNMENT

1) Strategy and Volunteer Assignments
   a. Country Project (CP) Document
   b. Host Profile (HP)*
   c. Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)*
   d. Host Strategy (HS) Document*
   e. Scope of Work (SOW)*
   f. Itinerary (ITI)
2) Expense Reporting
   a. Volunteer Budget (VB)
   b. Expense and Lodging Log
   c. Travel Voucher (TV)
3) Immediately After a Volunteer Assignment
   a. Training Beneficiary Report (TBR)*
   b. Trip Report (TR)
   c. Debriefing Notes (DN)*
   d. Post-Assignment Follow Up (outreach)*
4) Semi-Annually/Annually
   a. Project Impact Assessment (PIA)*

*indicates documents used to record data for USAID

In the field, staff members hold initial meetings with prospective host organizations to determine whether they are appropriate beneficiaries for the volunteer technical assistance (see more on the selection process, below). Selection of the host is sometimes opportunistic, especially at the start of a program, but it can also be strategic and formal, using a standard set of criteria. ACDI/VOCA, for example, has a chart with several categories that are assigned different weights to different questions that it can use in host selection (although not always). Others use the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) as an aid to host selection. Once a host is chose, multiple visits and/or phone calls typically take place between the field staff and the host before, during, and after the volunteer assignments. Data on the host can be updated either at specified intervals or as encountered during other visits. CNFA includes on its volunteer reports a question asking if there are updates to the host profile data.

BOX 3: CHALLENGES IN HOST SELECTION

In at least two countries visited, F2F volunteers provided technical assistance to producer associations linked to government run agricultural schemes. In both cases, the schemes were selected as hosts as a result of discussions with the Ministry of Agriculture early on in the life of the F2F country program. Producers hold leases on the land and are expected to produce a specific crop or set of crops during the main growing seasons. The farmers do not have the same flexibility to respond to market signals as do producers located outside the scheme, but they do have better access to inputs, especially irrigation water. Similarly, the association is limited in the price it can offer to the farmers, and risks losing sales to other buyers (even though such sales are technically prohibited). The decision to work with these groups lies in the dominance they have in the supply of these crops on the national market, rather than their internal capacity.

Each implementer has a somewhat different process for collecting, checking, and compiling the data although all core programs report on the same set of indicators for USAID.[17] ACDI/VOCA, for example, has a proprietary data entry system called PRIME; Winrock's parallel system is called PROMIS. In most cases, the field staff is able to enter the data from their forms directly into the computer system and it is reviewed by a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist at headquarter; in other cases, some information is sent directly back to headquarters for review and data entry. In the case of Partners, a sub grantee, University of Wisconsin Extension Services (UWEX), checks the data entered for quality, and dialogues with the Country Project Director to assist in normalizing the data across country programs. CNFA uses the information it collects to do analyses on reporting, data quality and OCAT.

Back in the US, other information is collected in a parallel process to help identify and recruit volunteers, and this is typically carried out by recruiters based in the US However, there are situations where a field office will make a recommendation for a volunteer or even request a volunteer who had been on a previous assignment. Some of the information about the volunteers is also later compiled and reported

[17] The Associate Awards however can and do report on different indicators from the core F2F programs, e.g., following the Feed the future M&E requirements.

by USAID as a way to understand the composition of the volunteer pool, including their occupations, state of residence, sex, ethnicity, and whether or not they are first-time volunteers. While this data is compiled throughout the year, it is sent semi-annually to USAID.

Host selection and assessment

The move towards emphasizing economic impact puts greater emphasis on the selection of hosts. Whether or not hosts have the capacity to benefit from the volunteer assistance provided to it is a critical question, and not a simple one to answer. It requires more staff time to identify hosts with potential to grow and to be able to adopt and benefit from volunteer assistance. It is partly dependent on formal measures but also on members' knowledge, commitment, and trust, which are not easily assessed. Host capacity also emerges as having greater importance as F2F Programs are expected to provide assistance to other USAID-supported agricultural interventions, whether formally through an associate award or simply as support to other in-country activities.

A few F2F country programs have developed strong and extensive networks among other USAID programs and national organizations. F2F Mali and El Salvador, both implemented by Winrock have country directors who have successfully developed an excellent referral system. They receive names of potential hosts from their networks and they also receive inquiries from organizations that have been told of the F2F Program by these same groups. In a country like Ghana with a large and overlapping associate award program, the host selection process is shared with the associate award and needs to mesh with its requirements.

Once a group or firm is identified, implementers collect information for a Host Profile (HP) data sheet and the Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT). The HP data sheet records information about the organization (name, contact information, location) as well as baseline financial and performance data. The HP data sheet also asks for information that is tracked for USAID, such as the area under environmental conservation or people facing environmental threat.

OCAT scores are also reported with the HP. The purpose of the OCAT is to assist F2F Programs to identify areas of weakness in the institutions with which they work and provide appropriate volunteer assistance to build their capacity in those areas. This is a laudable goal. The process was started during the current phase of the program, 2009-2013, to develop a measure for organizational strengthening.

The tool consists of a single page form (see Table 14) that includes some basic information about the host and then a series of questions to be answered on a scale of 1 to 5 as well as an option to indicate a 0 for either not applicable or insufficient information. The questions are grouped into eight categories: Governance, Management Structure, Management Practices, Human Resources, Financial Systems, Financial Reporting, Efficiency, and Sustainability.

A single page of instructions prefaces the form, intended for the F2F staff, about the process to follow in interviewing the host, filling out the form, and calculating the OCAT score. It is anticipated that staff will complete the form using "a participatory method" at the time of conducting baseline interviews for the host profile, and again during the mid-term and final reporting periods. Discussions with F2F staff in the field revealed significant variation in the processes used to complete the form and the understanding of

the ranking system. Staff members who collect the data are also not necessarily the ones who will make decisions about the types of assignments to be made for these hosts and are thus not aware of how the information can be used in programming.

ACDI/VOCA suggested (and have initiated in West Africa) creating a community of practice on M&E amongst F2F current implementers to review the indicators and to identify alternatives. Their staff suggested that a qualitative review of the recommendations could help to inform future programming, e.g., identifying the technologies most successfully adopted in each country or region.

The major challenge from the IP perspective is in the interpretation of the indicator definitions and communicating a clear and consistent definition to field staff, especially in determining the OCAT rating which requires a significant amount of qualitative judgment that varies from collector to collector.

Table 22: Illustrative Simplified FTF OCAT Form[18]

Name of Host Organization:	
Date of Assessment:	
Conducted by:	
Host Representative(s):	
Rating Scale:	
n/a	Not applicable or insufficient information
1	Very poor, needs urgent attention and improvement
2	Functional, but needs much attention and improvement
3	Satisfactory, needs limited improvement in many areas
4	Good, but some areas for improvement
5	Strong, no need for immediate attention or improvement

Farmer-to-Farmer Simplified Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT) Scoring Sheet	
Organizational Capacity	**Overall Score:**
A. Governance:	**Score:**
a. Organization has a clear mission/goals (clearly articulated for larger, formal institutions; clearly understood for others)	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Activities/strategies clearly support the organization's mission/goals	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
B. Management Structure:	**Score:**
a. Organization's structure has clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Clear administrative procedures exist and are followed (clearly articulated for larger, formal institutions; clearly understood for others)	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
c. Job descriptions are clearly defined and work assignments follow from job descriptions	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
C. Management Practices:	**Score:**
a. Organization has appropriate monitoring and evaluation practices in place	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Organization routinely disseminates information on its operations to appropriate stakeholders	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
D. Human Resources:	**Score:**
a. Staff are adequately informed of plans and objectives	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Staff are held accountable for their performance	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
E. Financial Systems:	**Score:**
a. Financial accounting and reporting procedures are used	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Annual budgets are prepared and used in planning activities	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
F. Financial reporting	**Score:**
a. Annual financial report is prepared and used for planning	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
c. Annual financial information is disseminated to appropriate stakeholders	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
G. Efficiency:	**Score:**
a. Relevant expertise exists within the organization or is readily accessible	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Organization is able and ready to adapt strategies to meet changing needs	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
H. Sustainability:	**Score:**
a. Organization's revenues equal or exceed its costs	n/a ☐ 1 2☐ 3☐ 4☐ 5☐
b. Stakeholders have a favorable impression of the organization and support its continued operations	n/a ☐ 1☐ 2☐ 3☐ 4 5☐

Another aspect of host selection is the ability of the group to provide contributions to the volunteer assignment. This can take many forms: contributing to the volunteer's meals, lodging, and/or

[18] This simplified OCAT (Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool) is for use in the Farmer-to-Farmer Program (FY09-13) as a test mechanism to address the chronic problem of lack of an indicator for institutional strengthening.

transportation; contributing refreshments and/or other supplies needed for participant training programs; and the value of labor provided for specific tasks. The contributions are seen as demonstrating commitment on the part of the hosts and their value is tracked on the "training beneficiary record" form that is part of the end of the assignment record keeping.

Host contributions are reported back to headquarters and to USAID/Washington and are reported on in the F2F annual reports. This past year's summary noted that "Host organizations demonstrated their support for the FTF program by providing an estimated $795,916 in cash and in-kind resources to support the volunteer assignments" (2011: 4). There has been no effort to determine whether the level of host contributions has any relationship to their adoption of volunteer recommendations or their success. It might be a useful exercise after further refining the indicators related to the adoption of volunteer recommendations.

Issues with Data Quality

Given the large number of data points collected, it is not surprising that some issues with quality have emerged. The issues are not equally distributed across the different pools of data. Information about volunteers, for example, is easy to collect and to verify. Data about hosts is more difficult to collect and to verify and data about impact is the most problematical.

Some implementers have taken steps to address data collection methods and differences in interpretation of the indicators within and across their teams to improve the shared understanding of indicators among their staff. In May/June 2009, CNFA brought its Africa country program staff together for a Farmer-to-Farmer in Nairobi, Kenya. It included participants from East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) and Southern Africa (Angola, Mozambique and Malawi), along with some of the CNFA Washington DC FTF team. Similarly, ACDI/VOCA and Winrock organized a regional West African training for staff members from Liberia, Nigeria, Mali, and Ghana. Those who attended expressed appreciation for having had the chance to exchange experiences and to gain clarity about what was expected in the M&E process.

IPs expressed concerns about the format of the OCAT itself. Staff members recommended changing the ranking scale so that the designation of "not applicable" was separated from "insufficient." It was suggested that "not applicable" be noted with a 0 and that "insufficient" should be noted with a "1" as it was not different from "very poor." Another problem noted was that some of the proprietary systems used by the implementer could not accept a non-numerical entry, such as "not applicable" and that this could throw off the calculations of the averages or would require a manual calculation.

It was clear from these IP discussions that the explanation of each rank would be enhanced by have a checklist rather than requiring an individual judgment about a particular level of capacity. For example, under the category of "management practices," instead of asking the rater to determine, what is "routine" and "appropriate" in the statement: "Organization routinely disseminates information on its operations to appropriate stakeholders" the statement could be followed by a checklist (illustrative only):

0 No verbal or written reports shared with shareholders/employees

1 Verbal reports shared with shareholders/employees annually
2 Written statements to shareholder/employees annually; annual staff/members meetings held
3 Written reports shared with shareholder/employees semi-annually; monthly staff/members meetings held.
4 Dissemination plan established; Written reports shared with shareholder/employees semi-annually
5 Communication officer hired; dissemination plan established; Written reports shared with shareholder/employees quarterly.

There were other, sometimes simple questions about whether the baseline data referred only to the activity of the group or firm being assisted by the volunteer or the entire organization. In one case, it appeared that the team was collecting data on the host for the specific commodity or action addressed by a volunteer. This leads to underrepresentation of the host's finances and may skew an understanding of its capacity to grow.

Another issue of data quality related how field teams calculate the number of recommendations provided by the volunteer. What, in fact, is a recommendation? They can be understood quite differently across implementers. Is it the number of suggestions offered in a series of lectures, numbering perhaps dozens or hundreds of specific options or is it the packaged sets of concreted and tested directives and were worked on in the course of the assignment and now prepared for reference for the beneficiaries, numbering only three to five in total. Some implementers work with their volunteers during the last two days of the assignment to carefully craft a small set of recommendations to be captured in a report and transmitted back to the host groups.

Table 23: Volunteer Recommendations, by Implementing Partner

Implementing Partner	Sum of Total Vol Recommendations	Average of Total Vol Recommendations	# of Hosts	% of all Recommendations Among IPs	% of Host Among IPs
ACDIVOCA/MENA	1,759	10	81	27%	10%
ACDIVOCA/W. AFR	706	5	119	11%	14%
CNFA/E. Africa	690	4	66	10%	8%
CNFA/ECCA	865	4	132	13%	16%
CNFA/Southern Africa	744	4	79	11%	9%
POA/Carib	1,640	6	311	25%	37%
WI/Carib	90	3	33	1%	4%
WI/Other	100	4	23	2%	3%
Grand Total	6,594	5	844	100%	100%

Table 23 illustrates that the number of recommendations differs widely among IPs, suggesting that they have different understandings and approaches to their identification and counting. WAI/SPSP has only 8% of the total hosts of the program, but 15% of all recommendations, and ACDIVOCA-MENA has 9% of all hosts, but 24% of all recommendations. The ACDIVOCA MENA programs average 10 recommendations per volunteer, two times the average.

In Egypt the IP has developed forms for completion by the volunteers, and one in particular could be

helpful in improving attribution. When a volunteer trains a group of farmers or agribusiness persons and then visits the farms or businesses of the trainees, the volunteer must fill out a sheet for each farmer visited and the specific recommendations applicable for that trainee's situation. The follow up later to determine impact is facilitated. It is still a labor intensive exercise, but does provide an opportunity to attribute the impact with more specificity.

A more definitive process for identifying appropriate recommendations would also simplify the capture of the indicator, "number of major volunteer recommendations adopted." The definition in the F2F manual states that this is a measure of "number of volunteer recommendations adopted by host" AND "This equates with the number of farmers, processors, and others who have adopted new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance." The number of recommendations adopted should not be equal to the number of people adopting recommendations, as evident by the problem in answering the following question "If a volunteer made three recommendations and all three recommendations were adopted by 10 people, were three recommendations adopted or thirty?"

The process by which data is aggregated can also be difficult. The primary means of determining overall inputs, outputs and impacts across implementing partners is to simply aggregate those numbers. The aggregated data point is what is reported as the overall input, output or impact. The assumption is that apples equals apples, or one recommendation equals another recommendation. Although guidance, with specific examples, is provided on how to determine what the correct data is for each indicator, it is not always sufficient to ensure that implementers collect the same information or process it in consistent ways. Therefore, when aggregated, the numbers are somewhat misrepresentative of the actual results.

It sometimes appears that aggregating the data does not always add "like to like." For example, the Vets without Border project vaccinated more than 4,025 animals during 2010. By assuming that each animal lived with a male and female head of household, they calculated that they had directly assisted 8,050 persons (split 50/50 by sex). The definition for direct beneficiary is: "direct beneficiaries receive face-to-face or hands on training or assistance from the [F2F] volunteer. Indirect beneficiaries (for example, those trained by direct beneficiaries) should not be included in this data."[19] In this case, VWB followed the guidance and put the best estimate of the number people directly assisted. The main recipients of the vaccination, however, were the animals. Does one vaccination equate to one farmer receiving a day's or a week's worth of hands-on technical assistance? No. However, both seem to fall equally under the standard definition.

The issue here is that the numbers are being aggregated, despite the fact that different IPs arrive at the numbers through their interpretation of the guidance. The aggregated numbers are used to tell the overall F2F story, and to make management decisions. Without an ability to add context to some of these numbers, the value of the numbers are significantly devalued.

Finding: F2F Programs work in many different and complex environments not easily captured by a single instrument. The OCAT is a valuable tool but needs some refinements to make it more easily

[19] USAID, Managing International Volunteer Programs: A Farmer-to-Farmer Program Manual"; March 9, 2005.

administered with greater consistency. Issues were found with other aspects of data quality and impact assessment.

Recommendation: Revise the list of required indicators and reduce those less relevant for project management. The OCAT can also be revised to better capture levels of institutional capacity in a less subjective manner by including checklists for each rating and by more providing training to implementer teams.

Impact Measurement

Notwithstanding continuing calls within USAID for F2F to demonstrate greater development impact, and the response of the Agency in implementing its new evaluation policy, the fact that the American public and the US Congress provide stable and increasing funding for F2F indicates that it enjoys considerable support and good will and is perceived as achieving impact. F2F tries to sustain and enhance this support in a number of ways, including encouraging volunteers to make public presentations and to use media to show the benefits of the F2F Program. In addition, both USAID and IPs maintain websites that provide current information about the program and each group issues an annual report to communicate the compiled results of the indicators discussed in the previous sections.

USAID is a leader in the US government and in the international development community in program planning, monitoring, and evaluation. F2F has used these systems to demonstrate notable achievements, but measuring impact has proven more difficult. IPs collect host baseline data and report on program outcomes and impacts in their mid-term report (through March 2011) and final report (through September 2013), but as noted there are some issues with the process of collecting data and the consistent understanding of the indicators.

A total of 918 hosts had received assistance by the end of FY 2011. Direct beneficiaries number almost 94,000 to date. These output indicators point to a well-performing program, but the best evidence of F2F's impact is found in several success stories presented as an annex in the annual report. Impact indicators, categorized by economic, organizational, financial and environmental, are presented in summary tables but not discussed in the narrative. The impact data is characterized by high variability between IPs and between Country Projects within one country.

The data systems used by IPs to report outcomes and impact are generally robust and capable of collecting and presenting data for all the F2F indicators. Twice during the life of the program, IPs use this data to assess impact on hosts, but with limited staff and funding, these reports generally do not attempt to assess the impact on targeted value chains or other Country Projects. One exception is a study commissioned by CNFA and included in its West NIS Final Report for FY 2004-2008.[20] After a review of ten hosts in three countries, this impact assessment found significant direct impacts in terms of improvements in capacity, quality and operational efficiency that translated into increased sales revenue and profit. Indirect benefits were also identified that affected the environment, suppliers, consumers and policy, the spread effects of which "might dwarf all other impacts." More importantly, "in virtually all cases the direct impacts on host organizations associated with volunteer assignments had

[20] Impact Assessment: CNFA Farmer to Farmer Programs Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus, 2003-2008 by Elon Gilbert

not been fully realized by those organizations, even as many as five years after the host first received their first volunteer." Finally, the assessment recommended renewed attention to selection of focus areas, partners and hosts and other measures included in the FtF Program Manual[21] to enhance the impact of F2F Programs.

Another attempt to analyze key impacts, success and failures of the F2F Program was done by USAID[22]. This study discussed the "difficulty of directly linking cause and effect between the volunteer's recommendations and business improvements, given the other factors that could impact the host's business." It also noted "most of the benefits/impact from the program will certainly spread beyond the lifespan of the project."

In addition, a few IPs have commissioned or used volunteers to prepare evaluations of specific project, such as that conducted by two volunteers for Winrock International to prepare an evaluation of its Partnership for Safe Poultry in Kenya project in 2011.

The problem of attribution is however the thorniest issue in conducting impact assessments for the F2F activities. Repeatedly in the field, the evaluation team found that F2F volunteers were working with other partners or following-up on the work of previous partners. In addition, some hosts receive significant funding from other development sources. Two seed companies in different countries had each received funding and large pieces of equipment from the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Volunteers assisting an aquaculture project in Mali were working with a producer association whose fishponds were constructed under a program of the USAID-funded AquaFish Collaborative Research Support Program managed by Oregon State University. Another development center in Kenya had benefited from a long-term three-year volunteer program organized through another international donor.

In reality, as a relatively small part of USAID's program (approximately $400,000 per country), F2F's impact on the country's economy, or perhaps even on the value chains it focuses on, will, in most cases, be modest. This fact should not detract from the significant, sustained achievements F2F has demonstrated over the years, particularly at the level of individuals and small groups. There is important value in the behavior modeling that occurs simply with the demonstrated value of a culture of volunteerism. However, considering the difficulty and lag associated with measuring impact, along with questions about the extent to which impact indicators are used for funding allocation, selection of target countries or value chains, reports to Congress or providing USAID Missions information they can use to show country level impacts, it does suggest it is time to review impact indicators with a view to simplification.

Discussions with IPs and hosts suggest that among the indicators that are either less reliable or less useful (or both) are those related to the number of indirect beneficiaries reached which is based on an average of family size; the number and increase in rural loans (which has been applied very inconsistently); the environmental impacts as currently configured as they appear to be of little

[21] Managing International Volunteer Programs: A Farmer to Farmer Program Manual, March 9, 2005
[22] An Analysis of FtF Impact Monitoring by Albert O. Yeboah, 2008

relevance to most assignments, and the increase in association membership, since in some situations it is a positive sign when membership decreases.

Finding: There are many examples of positive outcomes of F2F volunteer assistance. Formal efforts at impact assessment have been made, both qualitative and quantitative, but the current indicators are not reliable and may overstate actual results. Figures for indirect beneficiaries appear to overstate on-the-ground changes.

Recommendation: Consolidate the reporting process by having the IPs report their data into a single database, or simply upload the Excel data into a centralized database for easier processing. In addition, hire a project manager to provide program-wide M&E support, including training for field and DC-based staff on the indicators, tracking baseline data and impacts across the program, and performing regular analysis of sector-specific, regional accomplishments, as well as against specific USAID goals.

IX. Opportunities for Innovation in the F2F Program

The F2F program could probably survive by simply continuing to operate for another five years as it is now. There is support for that option within the community that is involved in the program. On the other hand, many of the returned volunteers we spoke with and IP representatives suggest the program not only could use some innovative approaches but really needs them. One NGO IP president characterized the F2F program as one that "Hit a home run, but remains stuck on third base!" Another expressed frustration at how little new thinking is happening around the program.

USAID clearly intended to look for innovative approaches when it created the SPSP contract and within it the small and PDP grants. So innovation was on their minds especially as it relates to possible new IPs, and new approaches to recruitment and scheduling of volunteers. But the SPSP contract so far has not led to systematic analysis of innovative measures that should be considered, but that certainly is possible between now and the end of the contract period.

While reviewing the program, our team identified program innovations that deserve further analysis by USAID, especially in the context of the strategic plan for F2F we are recommending. This could be an important issue for this cycle if the program receives more funding than expected this year (probably not) or next (maybe), the management team will need to have ideas at hand for these additional funds.

We have identified several areas for future work that could be piloted by the F2F leadership, if it were not tied down in managing the details of each IP and award. We suggest these ideas be tested through small grants in the last year of this cycle of F2F, and/or built into the RFA and included in LWAs for the next cycle.

Young Farmer to Farmer program

Establish a special cost-sharing partnership with Future Farmers of America (FFA) and/or 4H Foundation to provide adult leaders of these programs in the US as F2F volunteers to help build the structures and

leadership for rural youth groups in F2F countries. With funding from FFA and 4H, and possibly USDA or a US private sector company, the program could include reverse visitation to the US by adult and youth leaders of young farmer groups from the partner country.

During our country visits, we saw many examples of F2F volunteers making a personal connection with children of farm workers. In South Africa, for example, through school gardens and other youth activities they supported a farm program in nutrition education and youth development that could lead to successful careers in agriculture and other businesses. The farm manager is pleased with their contribution and the farm contributes their lodging and transportation. The IP, Florida A&M University, and its clients have benefitted, too. This is one volunteer's second F2F assignment in South Africa and another was an F2F volunteer in Guyana. Both have applied lessons learned here to the youth and community activities they carry out back home and they have helped recruit other minority volunteers from FAMU, including one who was selected as Outstanding F2F Volunteer in 2010. USAID has expertise in other youth development programs, such as youth at risk and alternatives to gangs in Central America.

If F2F does consider creating a special program for implementers to pursue programs with social objectives such as with volunteer assignments in youth development, how to satisfy the F2F goal of immediate economic impact will have to be addressed.

We are not sure there is enough demand for volunteers advising host country 4-H and FFA type programs to justify a special component or initiative. If F2F is willing to pursue youth development in agriculture without expectations for immediate economic impact from each volunteer's assignment, the demand for volunteers in youth development work will have to be measured and confirmed. The 4H Foundation reports it is working extensively throughout Africa, even though few of those countries have been able to establish teaching/research/extension systems similar to our land grant system that served as the basis for our FFA and 4H activities.

Special Cadre of volunteers for Post Crisis situations

During this evaluation the team examined whether F2F could organize a special effort to serve US interests in post-crisis (includes responses to natural disasters such as tsunamis, floods, typhoons and hurricanes, earthquakes, drought, etc.) and post-conflict (when violence and/or political crises have occurred, but have subsided and efforts are needed to accelerate economic development) situations. The feedback provided from IPs, hosts, volunteers, and USG officials provides evidence that, although there are some risks, F2F volunteers can provide rapid response expertise to accelerate agricultural production and support the value-chain/agribusinesses needs in affected areas to recover quickly from the economic shocks experienced from crises or conflicts. F2F volunteers have been fielded in such situations in the past, and indications are positive of their ability to perform and produce concrete results in these difficult situations..

Historically, in Vietnam and Laos, during the conflict there, volunteers played positive roles in promoting agriculture technology adoption while serving as people to people representatives, providing the human face that served as evidence of US support and commitment. This was also true in Eastern Europe, Sudan, and elsewhere. In Lebanon where, for over 20 years, the GOL has neglected agriculture,

volunteers have played a key role in helping modernize agriculture and agribusinesses, including technologies that are environmentally friendly.

There are regions like Transnistria that are politically sensitive and resistant to foreign government interventions, where F2F volunteers have worked successfully, and in so doing have helped open the door for more normal relations between countries. In the Republic of Georgia in response to the conflict with Russia, programs were developed with CNFA to support an agricultural mechanization project using volunteers to help deliver services and technical advice to farmers.

In Liberia, once security was re-established a successful F2F volunteer program was implemented by ACDI/VOCA under the LWA core funding. The program was responsive to the needs of farmers and assisted USAID by helping shape their design efforts for future programs.

In Egypt, because there was already a presence on the ground, ACDI/VOCA was able to reinitiate the F2F program three months after the Arab Spring Revolution took place. The volunteers were largely repeat volunteers in Egypt and had confidence in the assessment of local staff, with respect to security conditions. The volunteers were able to demonstrate continued US government commitment to farmers and agribusinesses on the ground despite the changes with the central government. In Tunisia, a year after the revolution, ACDI/VOCA sent an assessment team in to meet with local NGOs and learned of technical assistance needs in several areas, particularly post-harvest losses, youth programs, dairy production, women's cooperatives, Global GAP, and IPM for olives, table grapes, potatoes and herbs. That team is working with USG representatives to initiate work there. Embassy staff there agreed that Volunteer consultants are needed and should come to Tunisia. Scopes of Work (SOWs) for Volunteer consultants should be cleared with USG staff there prior to finalization. Flexible assignments under the F2F core program were felt most appropriate since the country program is small and does not have adequate funding for a buy in with a LWA.

In Haiti after the severe earthquake, the IP had a presence on the ground and was able to field volunteers promptly. One volunteer traveled immediately to Haiti from Florida to assist with reestablishing irrigation systems for horticultural crop production. He indicated that, because of the damage to infrastructure, homes and roads the usual logistics issues were monumental, but the volunteer efforts were important and much appreciated. He suggested that when volunteers go in after a natural disaster such as the earthquake, that a small-grants component or supplement, paired with volunteer technical guidance, would be extremely helpful to get farmers and businesses back into production and operations.

F2F has shown it can respond quickly to provide technical assistance for farmers and agribusinesses when certain conditions are right: 1) an ongoing country F2F program or a Flexible core grant, 2) security to allow mobility and safety for volunteers, 3) functioning local NGOs and or agribusinesses with which to work. But with certain specific modifications in the approach, F2F might be able to establish a cadre of volunteers already pre-processed for overseas assignments, to rapidly provide technical assistance to countries in a post-crisis or post-conflict situation. Certainly it will not be the solution for all situations.

This ready response capacity might be made up of Volunteers with experience in certain crisis-prone

countries, repeat F2F volunteers who have shown a high degree of capacity to operate without much support from IPs, and possibly F2Fs volunteers who have also been Peace Corps Volunteers who have shown an ability to operate in other cultures and in other languages. US citizens from those countries might also be a good source of volunteers able to operate in other countries, assuming they are not at risk due to prior affiliations. Possibly turning to diasporas in the US (Hmong vegtable producers, Haitian farmers, Zimbabweans might offer a rich addition to the F2F program, initially through the small grant program).

Even so, the program would probably have to develop special rapid orientation modules for volunteers heading into these situations, and special operating procedures to ensure the highest level of communication and security for the volunteer. The program might need to have the ability to provide a small support fund for these volunteers.

F2F Implementing Partners have data bases that include volunteers that fit the characteristics mentioned above. Other NGO groups are also active in providing volunteers in post-crisis, post-conflict activities, but few of them provide the type of agriculture specialists that F2F IPs can provide. A system that produces a level of cooperation, rather than competition, between IPs to field these post crisis volunteers would have to be in place or the program would not be able to respond quickly and appropriately enough. The Peace Corps has a similar special response program, but assignments are for much longer periods of time than most F2F volunteers are able to serve. The VEGA mission statement includes rapid response capability, precisely because some of these NGOs are VEGA members. This may be an issue F2F should consider together with VEGA, and possibly the Peace Corps.

F2F Volunteer Program with Shared Private Sector Funding

If we believe the Farmer to Farmer approach to international technical assistance in agriculture and cultural exchange is beneficial, it follows that leveraging more resources for the program, so more volunteers can be sent to the field, would also be beneficial. Arguing for more resources from within the USAID development assistance budget is certainly one approach F2F management can take. But another source for funding for F2F volunteers could be through a partnership with the US private sector. USAID is aggressively working on establishing relationships with the private sector that lead to increased private sector investment in agriculture overseas, especially in Africa. It seems reasonable to believe private agribusiness could be interested in funding F2F volunteers from their employees, especially if it gave them exposure to global areas and issues relevant to their business. As this report was being finalized, a private agribusiness was actively pursuing a way to provide funding for volunteers through the F2F program to be assigned in Turkmenistan for a dairy and horticulture project.

It is a fact that a portion of the “contribution” of F2F volunteers’ time is effectively a private sector contribution, or better put, a private citizen contribution. There are examples where private sector operators, through participation in the F2F program, build up collaborative private sector relationships and business deals, all on a relatively small scale. The Cooperative Coffee and Arizona University aquaculture small grants include private sector linkages of this type.

As USAID and the private sector work more closely together in Africa, opportunities for private sector

funding to field F2F volunteers might open up. This should be pursued, but adequate mechanisms to capture these private funds for the program must be devised. Small grants could be directed at implementing organizations that obtain matching funds to field F2F volunteers. Or, Core IPs could be encouraged to capture joint funding and support from private sector firms.

Educators and Educational Institutions in the Farmer-to-Farmer program

Historically the US University system, especially the Land Grant Universities, have played an important role in designing and implementing overseas agriculture development programs. The F2F program presents clear evidence of this valuable contribution. During the first half of the 5-year F2F cycle 2009-2013, 29% of the F2F volunteers sent to the field in the core programs, and 29% in the small grants, were classified as "educators." Six of the 18 small grants, and one of the three Special Development Project Grants, were awarded to Universities.

Table 24: Number of Volunteers, by Occupation and Implementing Partner

	Coop/Assn	Education	Farmer	GovT	NGO	Private Ent	Retired	Student	Not Specified
ACDIVOCA/MENA	6	44	18	3	4	93	15		
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	12	30	9	6	3	69	16	1	
CNFA/Eastern Africa	5	38	13	9	7	67	33		1
CNFA/ECCA	5	68	27	9	3	89	25	2	3
CNFA/Southern Africa	2	20	5	6	6	67	23		
POA/Carib	1	126	24	13	6	37	41	7	
WAI/SPSP/Small grant	7	18	18	1	9	27	2	8	
WAI/SPSP/PDP/FAMU	1	20				3	3		
WAI/SPSP/PDP/NCBA	2	5	3	1	5	7	2		
WAI/SPSP/PDP/PSPK		5	1	3	1	15	1		
Winrock/Other*	1	6	5	1		10	3	1	
Winrock/Caribbean II		10	4	2	3	6	4	2	
Grand Total	**42**	**390**	**127**	**54**	**47**	**490**	**168**	**21**	**4**

Note: Winrock/Other is an AA of its Caribbean program

The proposals presented for core awards by the Implementing Partners included sub-grant arrangements with several Universities, possibly to enhance minority recruitment.

Interviews with F2F hosts in several countries revealed that more often than not the F2F volunteers who come to the program from educational institutions bring with them a high level of teaching skills required to impart the advice and experience expected of them in a short period of time. They are used to preparing concise lesson plans and workshop materials. They have experience presenting new information, presenting different options, and working through the learning process with people who are not necessarily readily open to new ideas and concepts.

The links educator volunteers have with their home institution provide readily available resources to assist the volunteer prepare for a F2F assignment, a "community" of interested and knowledgeable colleagues who can offer advice, ideas and approaches to the volunteer prior to taking up the assignment overseas. The educational institution also provides a home for socializing the experience of the volunteer upon return to the US, and offers a broad range of opportunities to share the experience, fulfilling the cross cultural objective of the F2F program.

One limiting factor when educators are recruited for F2F assignments is the relatively strict calendar of commitments the assignment must be fit around. While most F2F volunteers, no matter their profession, have commitments that constrain their availability for F2F assignments, educators' schedules are far less flexible than others, requiring more lead time for recruitment and less opportunity for programming changes.

Few universities can become core implementers for F2F, and simply recruiting individual volunteers for the core IPs provides very limited added value to the program. University involvement can provide program coherence to the F2F program, and expand the universe of US institutions involved in the F2F program. The small grant program could be designed to award multi-year grants to Universities to field volunteers to pre-identified countries or programs of special interest to USAID.

Recommendation: Managing Innovation

In conjunction with our recommendation in Section IV b; Profile of F2F within USAID, we believe the F2F leadership should consider proposing one or more new approaches to the F2F program for explicit inclusion in the Scope of Work for the next cycle of F2F volunteers. It is possible that any or all of the ideas mentioned above would be attractive program innovations that Congress and the USAID Administration could get excited about. They are also initiatives that would attract a broader range of implementing partners than is now the case, hence contributing to the involvement of more US institutions in the program.

However, for this to happen, the F2F management team, especially the project leader, needs to have time freed up to work with higher level Bureau management to develop a strategic plan that is at least in part innovative and expands participation in the program. It also requires that the SPSP contract, at least in the next cycle, provide central data base management for the program and analytical capacity to help assess and design program innovations.

Annex 1: Methodology

The Farmer to Farmer (F2F) evaluation team, in partnership with USAID, the F2F implementing partners, volunteers, and host organizations set about to conduct an evaluation to provide substantive recommendations to positively shape the hard work done in F2F, and to increase the impacts of that work. The team began the evaluation in late September 2011, and submitted the final draft report on April 16th. The final report was submitted on May 20, 2012. This methodology section will explain how we worked.

A. Organization of Work

The team organized its work initially around the major issues as provided in the scope of work (responsibilities and focus areas).

Table A1-1: F2F Evaluation Team Members

Name	Responsibility	Focus Areas
David Joslyn	Team Leader	Management (M)
John Swanson	Agricultural Technology Specialist	Program Strategies (S)
Donnie Harrington	Agribusiness Specialist	Implementation Issues (I)
Deborah Rubin	Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Gender Specialist	Implementation Issues (I)
Kristin Lobron	Senior Analyst and Technical Writer	Implementation Progress (P)
Elon Gilbert	Senior Adviser	Management (M)
Caitlin Nordehn	Analyst, Administrative and Operational Support	Implementation Progress (P), Information Management

To compile information for the Implementation Progress (P) section, the team took the annual report data and compiled the data into a 3-year report. After receiving the IP three-year reports, the data was verified then compiled into interactive pivot charts to track progress towards stated input and output targets, cost efficiency, outreach and analysis on region, sectors, volunteer occupations, gender and other areas to support the recommendations and conclusions of the report. The 5-year data for the previous phase of F2F was used to compare progress and better predict whether the IPs would succeed in meeting their performance goals. The process of compiling this data contributed to recommendations on the reporting systems and monitoring and evaluation.

Information for S-Program Strategy, I-Implementation Issues, and M-Management sections was collected through thorough review of available documentation, interviews with key players in implementing organizations and USAID (both Washington and field-based) and interviews and surveys with present and past volunteers. A complete list of those interviewed is provided in Annex 2. The methodology and results of the volunteer survey are also provided as an annex.

Field visits were conducted as required by the Scope of Work, to ensure the evaluation included on-the-ground information.

The team took into consideration time and cost limitations to ensure there was adequate time to evaluate the field projects. To create a standard approach for the rest of the field visits, the team began with a visit to El Salvador, an established, easy to reach place where travel costs were low. The team also considered regional specializations and language skills of team members to determine which team member would be assigned to each region. The table below summarizes which team member went to each country and the rationale for each country visit.

The team also looked at a number of special issues and opportunities for the F2F project: alignment with USAID strategies especially Feed the Future, working directly with US universities, F2F volunteers in post-crisis situations, and innovation. A limited number of case studies on some of these special issues support the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. The following examples are used to support the recommendations: Kenya Special Project; Purdue small grants program in Costa Rica; Post-crisis use of F2F volunteers; Country study of close alignment with USAID programming; and Educators and Educational institutions in the F2F program.

The "Basecamp" information sharing space (www.37signals.com) was set up by Cultural Practice LLC, managed by the Analyst and Information Management specialist, facilitated internal communications and held the document library and calendar for the team.

B. Timeline

The evaluation began on October 1, 2011, and will be completed by May 21, 2012. The total level of effort for this project was 289 days. Deliverables produced were:

- Draft Inception Report delivered to USAID: October 15, 2011
- Team participation in Implementer Meeting in DC: November 29, 2011
- Team meeting in DC: November 30, 2011
- Final Inception Report and prospective report outline delivered to USAID (including field visit plans): December 3, 2011
- Field visits: December 2011-April 2012
- Draft Report to USAID: April 16, 2012
- Presentation of findings to USAID and IPs: April 20, 2012.

Table A1-2: Country Visits

Country/IP	Dates/ Team Member(s)	Rationale
El Salvador, Winrock	December 4–10, 2011 Joslyn, Swanson, Harrington, Rubin, Nordehn	The El Salvador program is well-established. Located close to the US and relatively inexpensive to reach, it offered the team the chance to travel together to create a standardized approach to the field visits.
Costa Rica, Purdue Univ. (Small Grant)	December 12-13, 2011 Joslyn	The Costa Rica F2F program is a small grant project implemented by an educational institution.
Bangladesh, Winrock	January 12-19, 2012 Swanson	The Bangladesh program provides perspective on project implementation in a geographically difficult place coping with climate change issues. This is also a growing FTF program.
Ghana, ACDI/VOCA, Winrock	January 15-24, 2012 Rubin	Ghana has a well-established project and is a Feed the Future priority country.
Moldova, CNFA	January 16-21, 2012 Harrington	Moldova is a well-established program and hosts the largest number of volunteers in the F2F program. It will provide perspective on implementation in a small country.
Lebanon, ACDI/VOCA	January 19-24, 2012 Swanson	The Lebanon program provides a post-conflict/crisis perspective.
Georgia, CNFA	January 22-28, 2012 Harrington	Georgia provides a post-conflict case. The F2F program has a good relationship with the Mission, there is a $5.1 million Associate Award, and the F2F volunteers from the Associate Award piggy-back with the volunteers from the Global F2F project.
Mali, Winrock	January 25-February 1, 2012 Rubin	Mali provides the French-speaking Africa perspective, and insight into a unique livestock focus. It is another Feed the Future country with an associate award.
Haiti, Partners of the Americas	January 30-February 3, 2012 Joslyn	Haiti is an example of a post-crisis situation, has a small-farmer-oriented core program, and may receive flexible volunteers next year under an HBCU PDP and a small grant.
Kenya, CNFA, Winrock PDP	February 2 11, 2012 Rubin	Kenya had a large associate project funded by the local Mission, the regional Mission, and the Global F2F program–offering a unique insight on collaboration.
Egypt, ACDI/VOCA	February 14-20, 2012 Swanson	The Egypt program is historical, and will provide a view of the project in a transition and currently in-crisis country.
Senegal, NCBA/CLUSA-PDP	March 11-14, 2012 Harrington	Senegal was chosen to ensure adequate coverage of African countries given the funding priority there and because it was a country where a PDP was implemented.
South Africa, FAMU-PDP	March 18-27, 2012 Harrington	The S. Africa F2F project is managed by a HBCU, an arrangement USAID specifically asked to be evaluated.

C. Team Members

David Joslyn, Team Leader:

David Joslyn has over 40 years of international development experience with expertise in designing, managing, monitoring and evaluation of programs in rural and agriculture sector development, emergency and disaster relief and reconstruction, environment sector institution strengthening, and natural resources management. Mr. Joslyn's career includes senior technical and management positions with USAID, Peace Corps, the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, the private sector

consulting firm of International Resources Group (IRG), and The Chicago Council on Global Affairs. He has performed program reviews of the USAID Initiative to End Hunger in Africa project and IRG natural resources and environmental management contracts in Honduras, Panama, Bangladesh, Egypt, the Andean Amazon countries, and South/South East Asia. He served as Project Director for the Chicago Council on Global Affairs acclaimed Report on Global Agricultural Development, and is presently Senior Advisor to the Council's Global Agricultural Development Initiative. He has worked in Latin America, Africa and Asia, and has in-depth knowledge of global political and social issues, and familiarity with challenges and strategies for institution building, food security, and agriculture sector development.

John Swanson, Agricultural Technology Specialist:
John Swanson is a seasoned and versatile agricultural and economic development/education professional experienced in managing programs and resolving problems of producers, institutions, agribusinesses, markets, and in encouraging host governments to respond to needs of rural citizens. Managed contractors and grantees implementing agricultural research, conservation, extension and training programs. Coordinated selection, hiring and career guidance for all 27 mid-career Agricultural Development Officers joining USAID from 1999-2005.

Donnie Harrington, Agribusiness Specialist:
Donnie Harrington is an international development advisor with 40 years' experience including senior positions in USAID and USDA. He has evaluated economic development projects in Egypt and the Middle East as an independent advisor and served the Peace Corps and Missouri Department of Agriculture and as an as an Agricultural Development Officer. He is a creative leader with outstanding interpersonal skills, seasoned judgment and extensive experience in Latin America, Asia, Eastern Europe and Africa. He has a proven track record managing economic, agriculture and governance projects and coordinating with government agencies and donors and is a skilled communicator, mentor and team builder. Mr. Harrington holds a M.S. in Agricultural Economics from the University of Missouri.

Deborah Rubin, Institutional Capacity Strengthening and Gender Specialist:
Deborah Rubin is a senior social science development analyst. She provides technical advice on development programs and policies across many sectors. She has led efforts to improve gender integration in USAID programs and policies, as team leader for multiple multi-sectoral gender assessments and the only full gender audit in Africa as well as conducting numerous gender trainings. She coauthored a handbook on integrating attention to gender into agricultural value chains published in November 2009 which is being widely distributed to USAID missions for guiding their work on gender and food security. She has also worked on strategic planning and evaluation, and agricultural policy research, economic growth, business development, and poverty reduction. She has worked extensively with both the land grant and private university communities, evaluating USAID-funded agricultural research grants and leading a team of agricultural scientists to identify new priorities for the agency's investments in agriculture and NRM. Rubin has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship, a MacArthur Foundation Research and Writing award, a Rockefeller Foundation Agriculture and Rural Development Postdoctoral Fellowship, and a AAAS Diplomacy Fellowship. She has conducted long term field work in Tanzania and Kenya. She is a competent speaker of Swahili. She is the co-owner of Cultural Practice LLC, a woman-owned small business.

Kristin Lobron, Senior Analyst and Technical Writer:
Kristin Lobron is an experienced federal manager and consultant of international economic development projects, with a specialization in supply-side microeconomic interventions (competitiveness, value chain, business development services, entrepreneurship, business environment indicators), university-led business support services (career centers, MBA training, public-private-

academic dialogues, etc.), and in project design. Ms. Lobron brings over twelve years of experience in developing technical approaches to promote economic growth in developing and emerging economies, is an expert in hand-crafted artisan product development and is a winning grant writer (with experience managing request for applications/proposals at USAID).

Caitlin Nordehn, Analyst and Information Management Support:
Caitlin Nordehn is a development practitioner with a M.A. in Anthropology and International Development. She is currently a Program Associate at Cultural Practice where she is responsible for categorizing, analyzing, and synthesizing documents and materials related to the review of ten USAID agricultural programs called Collaborative Research Support Programs. As a Master's candidate she carried out funded independent research in Sweden. She examined the ways immigrants and refugees in Sweden negotiated their individual and collective identities in both public and private space. Additionally, she examined how the state and native Swedes engaged with immigrants and refugees. As an editorial assistant at Congressional Quarterly Press and writing instructor at The George Washington University she has demonstrated strong writing and editorial skills.

Elon Gilbert, Senior Advisor: Elon Gilbert has over 45 years of experience in agriculture associated with government, NGO, commercial organization and donor supported research and development programs. Internationally, he has worked with donor and foundation supported programs in Africa and South/Southeast Asia. Several long and short term assignments have focused on agricultural research policies and organizations as well as numerous evaluations, impact assessments and special studies. Gilbert has participated in several assignments related to the Farmer to Farmer program and has served as a volunteer himself on two occasions. Domestically, Gilbert was recently involved in a study of local food requirements and resource availability in Western Montana; and has served as a faculty member at the Universities of Colorado, Florida, Michigan and East Anglia. He has an ongoing involved with a cell culture media supplements company based in Missoula, Montana, as a board members, investor and advisor.

Annex 2: Interviewers and Interviewees

Joslyn, Harrington, Rubin, Swanson, Nordehn: El Salvador
David Joslyn: Costa Rica; Haiti; Washington, DC; Volunteers
Donnie Harrington: Georgia; Moldova; Senegal; South Africa; Washington, DC; Volunteers
Kristin Lobron: Washington, DC
Caitlin Nordehn: Washington, DC
Deborah Rubin: Ghana; Mali; Kenya; Washington, DC; Volunteers
John Swanson: Bangladesh; Lebanon; Egypt; Volunteers

A. Interviews, United States

USAID/Washington *(in alphabetical order)*

Gary Alex, COTR F2F Program (Joslyn, Lobron, Rubin, Harrington, Swanson, and Nordehn)
Robert Bertram, Director, Agricultural Research and Policy, Bureau of Food Security (Rubin and Harrington)
Susan Bradley, Program Analyst, Bureau for Food Security (Joslyn)
David Delgado; USAID/Guatemala (USAID/Haiti and Egypt prior) (Joslyn)
Aysha House-Moshi, Congressional Liaison Officer, USAID/Washington (Rubin and Harrington)
John Rifenbark, Assignments and Performance Counselor (Rubin)
Dale Skoric, Food for Peace, Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (Rubin)
Paul Weisenfeld, Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Food Security (Joslyn and Rubin)
Anne Williams, Assistant to the Administrator, Bureau for Food Security (Joslyn and Rubin)
Albert Yeboah, F2F Program (Joslyn, Harrington, and Rubin)

Implementing Partners

Partners of the Americas

Peggy Carlson, Director, F2F Program, (Joslyn, Lobron, Nordehn, Gilbert)
Steve Vetter, President, Washington, DC (Joslyn)
Meghan Oliver, Assistant Program Director F2F (Lobron, Joslyn, Nordehn)
Christine McCurdy, Program Officer (Joslyn)

University of Wisconsin-Extension (Lobron, Nordehn, Gilbert)

Larry Jones, Director, Program Development and Evaluation
Jennifer Kushner, Program and Evaluation Specialist
Kerry Zaleski, Monitoring and Evaluation Project Coordinator

ACDI/VOCA

Carl Leonard, President (Joslyn)

CNFA

Cassie Hammond Recruiter (Lobron)
Lauren Day, Recruiter (Lobron)
Scott Clark, Program Director (Harrington and Rubin)
Marco Johnson, Deputy Program Director (Harrington)
Dana Camp, East Africa Regional Coordinator (Rubin)
Erin Baize, ECCA Regional Coordinator (Harrington)

Winrock
Johnnie Frueauff, Recruiter (Lobron)
Nona Fisher, WI F2F Program Director, (Swanson).

NCBA/CLUSA
Eric Wallace, Program Director (Harrington)

Florida A and M University
Harriett Paul, Project Director (Harrington and Swanson)
Elizabeth Robinson, Program Coordinator

Vets Without Borders
Thomas W. Graham, CEO (Lobron and Joslyn)

Others
Rebecca Reichert, FAVACA (Joslyn)
Carolina Cely, Technoserve (Joslyn)
Monika Firi, Cooperative Coffees (Joslyn)
Kevin Fitzsimmons, University of Arizona (Joslyn)
Jim Murren, Purdue University (Joslyn)
Gene Kunze, Mercy Corps (Joslyn)
League of HopeGraham Huff, Mercy Corps (Joslyn)
Mike Deal; VEGA, Washington, DC (Joslyn)
Lance Jepsen; Independent consultant (Joslyn)
Mosbah Kushad, Food Crops Extension Specialist and postharvest physiologist, U. of Illinois, Urbana, Volunteer

B. Interviews, Overseas

El Salvador, Team Visit

USAID/El Salavador, San Salvador, *December 9, 2011*
Shamenna K. Gall, Agriculture Officer
Rafael Eduardo Cuellar, Project Manager
Thomas McAndrews, Deputy Office Director, Regional Program Economic Growth Office

Implementing Partners, *San Salvador,* *December 4-9, 2011*
Arlen Garza, Assistant, El Salvador USAID Farmer to Farmer Program, Winrock International
Ricardo Hernandez Auerbach, Country Manager, El Salvador USAID Farmer to Farmer Program,

Field Visits, *December 5-9, 2011*
Nidia A. Menjivar de Landaverde, Gerente Unidad de Mircrobiologia, LCI FUSADES
Flor de Mendoza, Director, FUSADES
Ana Delmy de Melara, Gerente Unidad de Mircrobiologia, LCI FUSADES
Karla Guadalupe Lopez M., Director of Human Resources, Agrosania, San Julian, El Salvador
Rebeca Stephannie Vasquez, President, Zarahemla, El Salvador

Buenavista farm, Juayua
Corina de Francia, Apaneca
FUNDESYRAM, Tacuba
El Porvenir farm, San Lorenzo
ACOPAJ, San Lorenzo
FOMILENIO/TechnoServe Dairy Producers
Calderitas Youth Coop, Apastepeque
La Espanola, Cojutepeque
Roberto A. Vega Lara, TechnoServe

Costa Rica, David Joslyn

Implementing Partners
Purdue University (Implementing Organization for a small grant), *December 6, 2011,*
James Murren, Director, Office of International Agriculture,

December 12-14, 2011, Turrialba, Costa Rica
Tamara Benjamin. Research Scientist

Field Visits, January 12-14, 2011, Turrialba, Costa Rica
CATIE (Facilitating Partner Organization for the Purdue small grant activity)
- Ronnie de Camino. Deputy Director General
- John Beer. Director of Research and Development

Eliecer Vargas. Economics and marketing faculty
Organic Producers of Turrialba (APOT)
Marie Benchet. Vice-president, producer
Jorge Avendana Rodriguez. Treasurer, producer
Claudino and Marcos Camacho. Producers
Edgar Rodriguez Carvajal. Producer
Floribeth Cerdas Calderon. Producer and APOT board member

Haiti, David Joslyn

USAID/Haiti, Port au Prince, *February 9, 2012*
James Wooley, Haiti/EGE

Implementing Partners, Port au Prince, *December 30, 2011–January 31, 2012*
Benito Migny Jasmin, Country Coordinator, Partners of the Americas
Gerard Michel Joseph, Field Officer, Partners of the Americas
Anderson Pierre, Field Officer, Partners of the Americas
Josemine Pierre, Administrative Officer, Partners of the Americas
Roger Rosen Jasmin, Ministry of Agriculture, Sub-director of Animal Production

Field Visits, *January 31 to February 1, 2012*
Quartier Morin (small animal production) 5 producers, Quartier Morin, East Port au Prince
Varreux 2 (apiculture) 10 producers, Varreux 2, East Port au Prince
Pierre Nicodeme and 3 other rabbit and honey producers, Caracol Poisson, Northern Haiti

La Riviere Salee (horticulture), La Riviere Salee Community Center, Northern Haiti
Hudson Hess, Family Life Outreach (rabbit raising)

Georgia, Donnie Harrington

USAID/Georgia, *January 27, 2012*
Steven Haykin, Mission Director USAID, Georgia
Monica Gorzelanska, Economic Growth Office Deputy Director, USAID, Georgia
David Tsiklauri, Project Manager, USAID, Georgia

Implementing Partners, *January 23, 2012*
Maka Noselidze, Country Director, Farmer to Farmer, CNFA Georgia
Davit Kirvalidze, CNFA Senior Advisor
Giorgi Niparishvili, Senior Program Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer
Nino Olgesashvili, Project Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer
Ana Nozadze, Project Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer
Shalva Pipia, Project Manager, Access to Mechanization Project
Elene Lomidze, Training Specialist, Access to Mechanization Project

Field Visits, *January 23-26, 2012*
Davit Slavinski, Owner of Eco Milk
Paata Sigua, Director Hora Greenhouse and Mushroom
Irakli Kasrashvili, Country Director, Mercy Corps
Badri Gogitdze, Owner, Sachkhere Farm Service Center
Gela Gamkrelidze, Owner Guria Machinery Service Center
Dimitri Bliadze, Manager VT Agro Greenhouse
Gigi Mikabadze, Manager Sense Selection Greenhouse
Koba Guazava, Owner Zana Eco Greenhouse
Bukhut Shengi, Bay Leaf Production
Darejan Kanteladze, Owner Tsalka Dairy
Elene Lomidze, Training Specialist, CNFA Access to Mechanization Project

Moldova, Donnie Harrington

USAID/Moldova, *January 20, 2012*
Rodica Moron, Project Management Specialist

Implementing Partners, January 16, 2012
Nadejda Mocanu, Country Director, Farmer to Farmer, CNFA
Diana Rotaru, Project Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer
Alexandru Luchian, Project Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer
Vadim Bostan, Project Assistant, Farmer to Farmer
Conrad Fritsch, Former Chief of Party, Agricultural Development Project

Field Visits, *January 17-20, 2012*
Jeffrey Goveia, Director, Peace Corps Moldova

Vitalie Danileico, Agribusiness and Rural Development Program Manager, Peace Corps
Victor Rosca, Director, Consolidated Unit for Implementation of IFAD Programs
Iurie Hurmuzachi, Deputy Director, National Federation of Agricultural Producers AGROinform
Macari Artur, Chair, Food Processing Department, Technical University
Teodor Botan, Director Agrodor (irrigation supplier and strawberry producer)
Larisa Savga, Rector, Cooperative University
Gary Kilmer, Chief of Party Agricultural Competitiveness and Enterprise Development Project
Galina Leasenco, Director, Center for Food Safety and Quality
Marina Vasiliuc, Director, Capital Consulting Company, Transnistria

Senegal, Donnie Harrington

USAID/Senegal, *March 14, 2012*
Henderson Patrick, Mission Director
Pape Dieye, Agriculture Specialist

Implementing Partners, *March 14, 2012*
Yaguemar Diop, CLUSA Country Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer Senegal

Field Visits, **March 12-13, 2012**
Aly Goulybaly, Technical Leader, CLUSA USDA Millet Project,
Alphonse Faye, Director CLUSA USDA Millet Project
Patrice Beaujault, Chief, Agriculture and Natural Resources Management USAID Wula Nafaa Project
Derreck Ekanem, Grants Manager, USAID Wula Nafaa Project
Danielle Stoermer, Peace Corps Volunteer Leader, Food Security Coordinator
Pape Omar Drame, President, Union des G.I.E producteurs de cereals locales (UGPCL) Thiare Village, Kaolack Department, Senegal
Amadon Diaw, President, Farmers Group, Kayemor Village, Kaolack Department

South Africa, Donnie Harrington

USAID, *March 26, 2012*
Jeff Borns, Mission Director, USAID/ Southern Africa
Erin N. Pacific, Chief, Regional Economic Growth Office, USAID/Southern Africa
Cecilia Khupe, Senior Regional Agricultural Program Manager, USAID/Southern Africa

Implementing Partners*, March 14, 2012*
Kevin Maart, FAMU Country Coordinator, Farmer to Farmer, South Africa

Field Visits, *March 19-23, 2012*
Andre Kriel, Farm Manager, De Hoop Vineyards
Alec Abrahams, Farm Manager, Klipland Siyazama Vineyards
Prof. Jan Raats, Member of AgriPark Board of Trustees and former Dean, University of Fort Hare
Prof. Farhad Aghdasi, Dean, Science and Agriculture, University of Fort Hare
rancois Lategan, Director of Extension, University of Fort Hare
Warren Bam, Farm manager, Lushof Farm

Khalid Salie, Director Genetics, HandsOn Fish Farmers and University of Stellenbosch
Phil Bowes, Transformation Manager, South African Table Grape Industry

Ghana, Deborah Rubin

USAID/Ghana, *January 24, 2012*
Kim Kim Yee, ADVANCE Project Officer, Economic Growth Team
John Mullenax, Agricultural Advisor, Economic Growth Team

Implementing Partners, *Jan. 16-18, 2012*
West Africa Regional Workshop for F2F Implementing Partners, Royal Richester Hotel (Legon, Accra)
Patrick Yattoh, Program Manager, Small Holder Oil Palm Support (SHOPS), Liberia, ACDI/VOCA
Bassey Daniels-Doe, Coordinator, Small Holder Oil Palm Support (SHOPS), Liberia, ACDI/VOCA
Michael Bassey, Country Director, F2F Nigeria, Winrock
Bara Kassambara, Country Director, F2F and MAVEN, Mali, Winrock
Belinda Arhin, F2F Leader Award, Country Director (ACDI/VOCA)
Frank Larbi, F2F Leader Award Project Officer, ADVANCE/Ghana, ACDI/VOCA
Cornelia Narie Kodjo, Volunteer Program Officers, ADVANCE/Ghana, ACDI/VOCA
Kofi Owusu Agyemang, F2F Leader Award Project Officer, ADVANCE/Ghana, ACDI/VOCA
Angelina Tracy, Director, Agribusiness, F2F, ACDI/VOCA (DC based)
Meredith Jones, Project Coordinator, Agribusiness, ACDI/VOCA (DC based)
Maria Bina (Maby) Palmisano, Senior Director, Monitoring and Evaluation, ACDI/VOCA (DC based)
Catherine Alston, Project Coordinator, Agribusiness, ACDI/VOCA (Washington DC based)
Julia Shuck, Volunteer Agricultural Communications Specialist, ACDI/VOCA ADVANCE volunteer

Field Visits, *January 19-24, 2011*
Osudoku Agricultural Cooperative Society (OACS) members (channel heads)
    Philip Apoka, Secretary
Kpong Irrigation Project (KIP) Authority Officials
    Jaco Aduah, KIP manager
Association of Mushroom Growers, members (Ashanti Region)
Kwasi Nyamekye, Managing Directore, Vester Oil Mills
Asante Akyem North Maize Aggregators (AANMAA), members
Carrot Growers and Marketers Association, members (Ashanti Region)
Rebecca Dowokor, CEO, Becky's Rice and Milling Services (rice aggregator)
Fafali Azaglo, Chief Executive Officer, Selasie Farms and Groceries
Thomas Carr, Chief of Party, ADVANCE, ACDI/VOCA
Emmanuel Dormon, Deputy Chief of Party, ADVANCE, ACDI/VOCA
Esther Aba Eshun, Gender Officer, ADVANCE, ACDI/VOCA

Mali, Deborah Rubin

USAID/Mali, *January 31, 2012*
Baou Diané, Project Management Specialist, Accelerated Economic Growth Team, USAID/Mali
Kalim Hanna, Agriculture Development Officer, Accelerated Economic Growth Team, USAID/Mali

Implementing Partners, January 26, 2012
Winrock International Headquarters, Bamako, Mali
Bara Kassambara, Country Director, F2F and MAVEN, Winrock Intl
Bourama Sissoko, Training and Outreach Coordinator, F2F and MAVEN, Winrock Intl
Konimba Bengaly, Livestock Program Officer, F2F and MAVEN, Winrock Intl
Aissata, Horticulture Specialist, F2F and MAVEN, Winrock Intl
Gerald Nolte, Volunteer, Agribusiness Specialist, MAVEN, Winrock Intl
Kenneth Earle, Volunteer Agribusiness Specialist, MAVEN, Winrock Intl
John Grover, Volunteer, Aquaculture Specialist, Winrock Intl
Catherine Alison, ACDI/VOCA (DC-based)

Field visits, Jan. 27-Feb. 1, 2012
Bréhima Sangaré, Director, Direction Régionale de l'Agriculture (Regional Office of the Ministry of Agriculture), Bamako District
Mamadou Soure, Monitoring and Evaluation
Karim Juni, Agricultural Advisor, Extension Department
Moussa Diabaté, President, CAB Demesso
Maimouna Sidibe Coulibaly, Director, Faso Kaba Seed Company
Munke Sangaré, President, Koli Magni Horticulture Cooperative
Fanta Bagayourgou, Treasurer, Koli Magni Horticulture Cooperative
Sata Keita, Vice President, Koli Magni Horticulture Cooperative
Additional 17 members, Koli Magni Horticulture Cooperative
Jean Francois Guay, Director, USAID/Mali Value Chain Project–Project IICEM (Abt Associates)
Moussa Ballo, President, Kayo Fish Farmers Cooperative, Koulikoro
Jean Dembele, Extension Agent, Ministry of Fisheries
Katibougou Women's Cooperative, Katibougou
Diadié Cooperative, Diadié
Kafara Farmers' Cooperative, Kafara
Bougouni Fisherman's Cooperative, Bougouni
Finkolo G., Women's Agricultural Union, Finkolo
Kalidou Tagola, Mayor of Finkologanadougou
Ouelessebougou Breeders' Group, Ouelessebougou

Kenya, Deborah Rubin

***USAID/Kenya**, February 2, 2012*
Samson Okumu, Food Aid Specialist, Agriculture, Business, and Environment, USAID/Kenya

***Implementing Partners,** February 2, 2012*
F2F/CNFA Headquarters, Nairobi
Nyamburu Theuri, Country Director, CNFA
Gabriel Mbokothe, F2F Program Coordinator, CNFA
Paul Odera Okutu, F2F Program Coordinator, CNFA
Mercy Kariuki, F2F Accountant/Office Manager, CNFA
Samson Kiwia, FTF Program Driver, CNFA
Francis Chabari, Chief of Party, Kenya Drylands Livestock Development Program

Winrock International
Bonface Kaberia, Program Officer (based in Nairobi)
DeAnn McGrew, Program Officer (based in Arkansas)

Field Visits, February 3-6, 2012
Mwea Rice Growers Multipurpose Society
First Choice Seed Enterprises, Thika
Ngila Kimotho, Managing Director, Dryland Seed Ltd., Machakos
George Cummins, Volunteer, Agronomist and Agricultural Educator, CNFA F2F program, Kitui
Janet Syombua Mumo, Programme Coordinator, Kitui Development Centre (KDC)

Bangladesh, John Swanson

USAID/Bangladesh, *January 18, 2012*
Mr. Richard Green, USAID, Mission Director, Interview
Mr. Mostapha El Hamzaoui, USAID, Director, Office of Food, Disaster and Humanitarian Assistance
Ms. Ramona El Hamzaoui, USAID, Director, Office of Economic Growth, interview,

Implementing Partners, *January 12, 2012*
Winrock International
Md. Shamsul Kabir, Country Director
Md. Mehedi Hasan, Asst. Country Director
Saurabh Kumar Dutta, Mand E Specialist

ACDI/VOCA (in WI office)
Zachary Hubbell, Administrative Director, PROSHAR
Roger G. Ellis, DVM and Volunteer

Field Visits, Jessor, Khulna, and January 12-18, 2012**,**
Mohius Samad Choudhury, Chief Operating Officer, Golden Harvest Agro Industries, Ltd. (Ghazipur) Mymensingh, Bangladesh
S. N. Choudhury, WI, Project Coordinator for Rural Enterprise for Alleviating Poverty (REAP)
S. M. Shamsur Rahman, WI, Prawn and Fish Culture Expert, REAP project site (and 25 farmers engaged in polyculture of fish and tiger prawns)
Farmer-producer specializing in producing prawn larvae for distribution to farmers
Sk. Ahmad-Al-Nahid (Swan), WI Regional Manager for Khulna area, Hosts
Saifuzzaman Moju, Owner/Manager of Shaphra Fish Hatchery, Jessore
Visited second hatchery, neighbor of Mr. Moju.
Rabiul Karim, Manager, Paragon Tilapia Hatchery, Boshundia, Jessore, Host, interview,
Ashit Bol, World Vision, Bangladesh, Divisional Coordinator, Host
Sylvester Rozario, World Vision, ADP Manager, Host
Chitalmari Village to see ADP (Area Development project), Chitalmari Village (25 women farmers)
Tayyeb Ur Rahman, Director, Environmental Friends Agricultural Development Foundation Host
Zakia Sultana, Manager, Vermiculture activity
PROSHAR Project Office, Host
Nazbul H. Khan, ACDI/VOCA, Livelihoods Team Leader, Host, interview

Ram Krishna Mohanto, ACDI/VOCA Livelihoods specialist,
Ram Krishna Kundu, ACDI/VOCA, Production Specialist, Aquaculture
Mohammad Amanullah, ACDI/VOCA, Production Specialist, Livestock
Roger Palm, Jr., President and CEO, Profishent, and Volunteer
Patti Y. Carpenter, Founder and Creative Director, Carpenter and Co., Volunteer
Jalma Village, Women's poultry group, in training, PROSHAR Project.
Md. Abdul Latif, DVM, Deputy Manager and Quality Control, AI, for BRAC, Host
M. A. Barik, General Manager, BRAC Dairy and Food Project
Md. Delowar Hossain, BRAC manager for Horticulture Enterprises
AQM Shafiqur Rouf, Deputy Manager for BRAC, AI Enterprise
Muhammad Nurul Amin Siddiquee, CARE, Team Leader, Strengthening the Dairy Value Chain Project. Interview
Md. Abul Hossain, Team Leader-Aquaculture, Poverty Reduction by Increasing the competitiveness of Enterprises,
Sara Piazzano, WI, Chief of Party, Actions for Combating Trafficking-in-Persons Program

Lebanon, John Swanson

USAID/Lebanon, Beirut, *January 23, 2012*
Mr. Georges Frenn, USAID, Senior Economic Growth Specialist
Ms. Christine Sayegh, USAID, Project Management Specialist

Implementing Partner, Beirut, *January 20, 2012*
Hassan Istaytiyyih, Eng. ACDI/VOCA, F2F Country Director, IP, Interview.
Noubia Gribi, ACDI/VOCA, Deputy Regional Director, MENA
Nadine Roumieh, ACDI/VOCA, F2F Marketing and business planning Specialist,
Charbel Abou Haidar, ACDI/VOCA F2F Field and Administration Officer
Ms. Rayane E. Rahal, Ingenieur Agronome, with QCC Project. Host.

Field Visits, Beirut, Zahle, Accar, Jounier, *January 20-23, 2012*
Said R. Gedeon, Deputy General Manager, Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agricultural Development Department. Host
Aida FARAH, Dir. QCC Food Quality Center, Host
Fadi el Khoury, General Manager, Host, Alfaco Trading Company, Terbol, Bekaa
Jamal Khaza'al, Chairman, LIBANVET, repeat Host,
Christine Codsi, coordinator, repeat Host (and support staff)
Souk el Tayeb, cooperative
Ramzi Abdul-Fattah, Community Development Project Manager (45 apple growers)
Nabil M. Nemer, Forest Entomologist, Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve, Host, interview.
Chadi Hosri, USEK, (Holy Spirit University of Kaslik). Head of Agricultural Sciences Department, Host,

Egypt, John Swanson

USAID/Egypt, *February 16, 2012 Cairo, (Maadi)*
Sheri Cahill, Agricultural Officer,
Mohamed Abo Elwafa, USAID, Program Manager, Agriculture and Agribusiness, PSD

Implementing Partners, *February 14, 2012, Cairo (Maadi)*
ACDI/VOCA
Adel Zekaizak, F2F Country Director,
Noubia Gribi, ACDI/VOCA, Deputy Regional Director, MENA
Omnia Morsi, ACDI/VOCA, F2F Senior Program Coordinator
Samah Makhlouf, ACDI/VOCA, Program Assistant, M&E
Hanaa El Bashari, ACDI/VOCA, Director of Finance, and Grants manager
Douglas Anderson, ACDI/VOCA, MBA, F2F Regional Director, MENA
Alexandra Harrison, ACDI/VOCA, Managing Director for GDA with USAID and Hines

Field Visits, Nubaria region, Borg Al Ara, Minya, *February 15-18, 2012*
Iman el Khatib, Chairperson of the women's Food Processing Group, West Noubaria Rural Devp. Project, Interview with her as spokesperson and 8 members present
Said Eid el Fiki, Dairy activities, Host,
Mohamed Abdel Rasul, DVM, Manager of the Yousry Al-Dawi, Dairy farm
Brian Boman, Professor and BMP Coordinator, University of Florida, and Volunteer, Interview.
Ahmed Abul Yazeed, Chairman of the TIBA association of 25 farmers. Host and five other farmers
Laila Ramzy, Chair, Women's Support Unit, Arab Women Alliance Association, Business Development Services Support (BDSP). Repeat Host
Staff of Women's Support Unit
Nadia Noshy, Senior Officer, Executive Manager and Board Member
Ahmad Rifaat, Dairy Processing Unit Manager, Host

Volunteers

February 2-22, 2012, David Joslyn
Thomas D. Syveru, F2F Horticulture volunteer with PoA, Port au Prince, Haiti
Peter Wotoweic, PoA Jamaica, Guyana. Multi-repeat volunteer,
Spencer Friedman; TechnoServe, Peru
Abner Hammond, FAVACA, Guyana
Traci Holstein, Arizona, Mexico
Dan Taub, TechnoServe, Peru
Arlen Albrecht, PoA, Nicaragua, Guyana, El Salvador
Jeff Hetrick,Arizona, South Africa
Tim Holler, FAVACA, St. Kitts/Nevis, Antigua/Dominica/St. Lucia, Grenada

February 22–March 7, 2012, John Swanson
Roger Ellis, New York State, Repeat Volunteer, Gainesville Florida
Michael Schmidt, Pennsylvania Repeat Volunteer
James Thibeault, Repeat Volunteer, West Virginia
Patti Carpenter, New York City, Repeat Volunteer
Mosbah M. Kushad, Urbana, Illinois, Volunteer

January 23–March 9, 2012, Donnie Harrington
Clint Goss, Farm Service Center Website, Georgia
Vera Shanov, Farm Service Center Business Plan, Georgia
Matt Cleaver, Mushroom Production, Georgia

David Dumaresq, Greenhouse Vegetable Production, Georgia
Joel Hunter, Tractor Maintenance, AMP AA, Georgia
James Grabek, Farm Service Center Business Plan, AMP AA, Georgia
John Kappelman, Dairy, Moldova

January 26, Deborah Rubin
Gerald Nolte, Volunteer, Agribusiness Specialist, MAVEN, Winrock Intl, Mali
Kenneth Earle, Volunteer Agribusiness Specialist, MAVEN, Winrock Intl, Mali
John Grover, Volunteer, Aquaculture Specialist, Winrock Intl, Mali

February 5, 2012, Deborah Rubin
George Cummins, Volunteer, Agronomist and Agricultural Educator, CNFA F2F program, Kitui, Kenya

January 17–18, 2012, Donnie Harrington
Thomas Kimmel, Irrigation, Moldova
Richard Edwards, Agribusiness, Moldova
Loren Parks, Dairy product marketing, Moldova
Ewan Ha, Food Safety, Moldova

March 23, 2012, Donnie Harrington
Trevor Hylton, Cooperative Extension Service, School Garden, South Africa
Tanda Nelson, Cooperative Extension Service, Youth, South Africa
Lue Jolly, Family Resource Management Specialist, FAMU, South Africa

Annex 3: References

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Partners of the Americas/Caribbean

Partners of the Americas 2008. Partners of the Americas John Ogonowski Farmer to Farmer Program – Caribbean Basin October 2003-September 2008 Final Report. Washington, DC: Partners of the America.

Virginia State University /Eastern Africa/

Mersie, Wondi. Virginia State University Farmer to Farmer Program in East Africa "Help Increase Farm Income" Final Report (October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2008. Petersburg, VA: Virginia State University.

Winrock International/ Asia and Near East

Winrock 2008. John Ogonowski Asia and Near East Farmer-to-Farmer-Program Final Report. Winrock, Int.

Winrock International/Central Asia

Winrock 2008. John Ogonowski Central Asia Farmer-to-Farmer-Program Final Report. Winrock, Int.

Implementer Documents.

Various projects including volunteer SOW, host strategies, success stories, project reports and descriptions, press releases.

Country FTF Program Reviews – Ghana, South Africa, Malawi,

Reports on FTF Implementers Meetings—Istanbul (2009), Washington (2010), and Volunteer Appreciation Event (2010)

Annex 4: Methodology of the Volunteer Survey and Selected Results

A. Volunteer Survey Methodology

The evaluation team designed a survey to help the team assess and quantify returned volunteers' perceptions of their assignment(s) and the impact the assignment(s) had on them after returning to the US. The implementing partners were asked to provide the evaluation team with the available names and email addresses for all of the volunteers fielded between October 2008 and December 2011.

The team chose a web-based survey instrument called Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com) on the basis of its technical capabilities and reputation. Survey Monkey's skip-logic feature allowed the team to ask each returned volunteer questions about their specific assignments. This feature allowed the team to assess and compare volunteers' experiences with different implementers in different regions. The survey went through several revisions by the team, was entered into Survey Monkey and tested by returned volunteers and members of the team. A final version was sent to the returned volunteers on February 3, 2012. The returned volunteers were provided with the Senior Analysts' contact information and were given 42 days to respond with a reminder on day 39.

The survey was divided into three sections to gain insight into the volunteers' assignments and the impact those assignments had on the volunteers. The first section captured background information on the volunteers. The second section addressed the implementers' and hosts' management of the volunteers' assignments, the use of the volunteers' technical skills, and their level of engagement with the hosts and beneficiaries. The last section focused on the impact of the assignment on volunteers after they returned home. The survey gave the volunteers the opportunity to either remain anonymous or provide the team with contact information for follow up interviews.

Table A3-1: Volunteer Responses by Program

Programs	Percentage of Responses
ACDI/VOCA	22.5%
CNFA	38.6%
Partners of the Americas/Caribbean	3.5%
Winrock International	20.2%
Small Grants/PDP/SPSP	12.4%
Land O' Lakes/Southern Africa	0.9%
OIC International/Western Africa	0.9%
Other	4.8%

B. Volunteer Survey Results

The survey was taken by 329 volunteers out of over 700 who were sent the questionnaire. The responses are representative of the overall ratios (occupation, gender) of the volunteers during this F2F period.

- Of the 329 volunteers to take the survey, 8.2 % cited their primary occupation as farmer and Manager/profession/service provider in agriculture services, followed by Independent consultant at 13.7%, Extension educator at 15.5%, and retired at 21.6%.
- Of the retired volunteers, 19.2% listed themselves as former manager/professional/service providers in agriculture services, 17.5% as other, 16.7% were extension educators, and 7.5% farmers.

Why volunteer?

A desire to help others was listed as the most important reason for volunteering by 78% of the respondents. Continuing to be involved in a specialization area after retirement was listed as the second most important reason for volunteering. Nearly 70% of the volunteers listed gaining contacts, suppliers or markets for their businesses as the third most important reason for volunteering.

Men/Women Volunteers

- Respondents: Male, 77.2% (254); Female, 22.8% (75)
- 65.3% of the volunteers completed their first assignment during this period
    - First assignment for 84% of the women who took the survey and 59.8% of the men
- 41.9% of the respondents only volunteered once during this period. 8.2% of the volunteers completed 6 or more assignments in this period. 58.7% of the women who took this survey only completed one assignment during this period while 54.3% of men completed two to five assignments.
- 33.3% of women completed assignments in two to five countries. Twice as many women completed assignments in only one country.
- Both men and women selected the desire to help others as the most important reason for volunteering (78.9% (191) men and 75% (54) women)

C. Cultural Exchange vs. Technical Assistance Summary

The cultural exchange element attracts volunteers and provides them with a broader view of international development issues, even for the majority of respondents who do not view cultural exchange to be as important as technical assistance. A large majority of the volunteers surveyed (90.9%) found the cultural exchange element of the program to be as important and the technical assistance element compared to 9.1% who did not. Overall, 98.2% volunteers were interested in the cultural exchange element of the F2F program. Among the respondents who did not find the cultural exchange element of the program to be as important as the technical element, 84% were interested in the cultural exchange element of the volunteer experience and 86.4% found that the program provided them with a broader view of international development issues.

Volunteers viewing TA as more important than cultural exchange:

"The programs are usually specific to technical questions, and it really depends on how much experience the volunteer has in developing countries and how well they can understand and relate to the difference in overall economic environment."

"Cultural exchange cannot be defined like a SOW, is not easily scheduled, and depends entirely on social factors that can be outside the scope of the visit--more suited to longer term programs such as Peace Corps."

"Primary objective is technical although one has to be culturally sensitive/ aware to be successful.

Cultural Exchange and TA Equally Important

- 67.2% of those who viewed cultural exchange to be as important as technical assistance were volunteering for the first time during this phase.
- 46.8% participated in 1 assignment; 46.8% participated in 2-5 assignments; and 5.2% in 6-10.

TA More Important than Cultural Exchange

- 64% of respondents who did not view cultural exchange to be as important as technical assistance were volunteering for the first time during this phase.

- 36% participated in 1 assignment; 52% participated in 2-5 assignments; and 12% in 6-10.

Volunteers were asked about their engagement with hosts and local communities. Volunteers reported that 60% of the time they followed up with their host organizations. Counting volunteers' multiple assignments across 26 different programs the survey found that volunteers were encouraged to engage with the local culture/community 76% of the time. Viewing tourism as a form of engagement with the local culture the survey measured the volunteers' visits to museums, local-restaurants and performances, purchasing of handicrafts, among other activities. There were 2,403 interactions with local communities reported from 329 volunteers over 542 different assignments. The vast majority of the volunteers engaged through shopping and visiting local restaurants and markets.

Cultural exchange element impacts the effectiveness of TA:

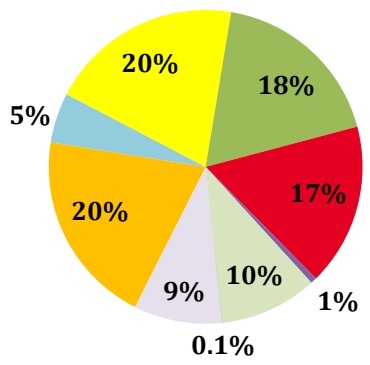
"…for programs to be successful, you need to understand the people and how they assess life and their surroundings."

"The two are linked—good friendships are more likely to result in hosts actually using some of the recs and asking more Q's."

"Cultural context is as important as the technical assistance element and helps to clarify the project needs."

"I believe building stronger relationships between the countries (and the citizens of those countries) fosters the chance for future projects more so than the technical assistance. Also, the opportunity for technical assistance is somewhat limited whereas the cultural exchange element can have a long impression and impact multiple people."

Figure A3-1: Types of Engagement with Local Community, by activity



- Museum visit
- Locally owned restaurant visit
- Live performance
- Local market visit
- Locally-owned store/business visit
- Viewed/purchased handicrafts
- Movie attended
- Guided tour of local sites
- Regional travel away from assignment post

Table A3-2: Types of Engagement with Local Community by Percentage of Assignments

Type of Engagement with Local Community	Participation relative to no. of reported assignments
Museum visit	40.4%
Locally-owned restaurant visit	**88.9%**
Live performance	22.9%
Local market visit	88.4%
Locally-owned store/business visit	81.0%
Viewed/purchased handicrafts	74.2%
Movie attended	2.8%
Guided tour of local sites	44.5%
Regional travel away from assignment post	0.37%

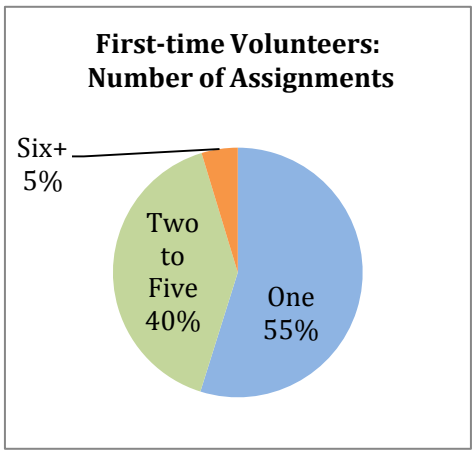
A majority of the volunteers (75%) reported that their consumer or personal choices were impacted by their assignment(s). About 27% of volunteers surveyed remain in contact with the people they met during their assignment, and 15% provide on-going technical assistance.

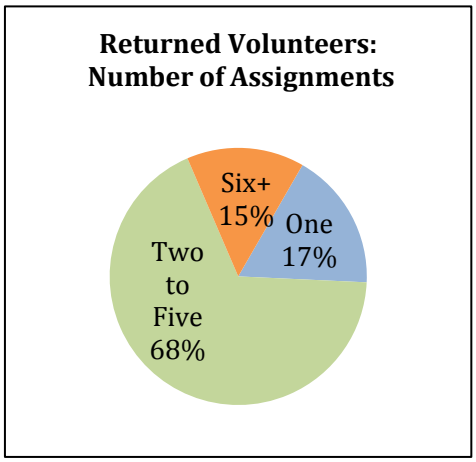
Table A3-3: Volunteers' Consumer or Personal Choices Impacted by Assignment(s)	
More apt to invest in or purchase products made in the country or region where I volunteered.	6.6%
Actively seek out people or experiences from the country or region where I volunteered.	10.7%
More likely to visit the region as a tourist.	7.1%
Have or will encourage others to visit the country or region for tourism.	7.7%
Actively seek out information (books, speakers, blogs, etc.) on the country or region where I volunteered.	6.6%
Remain in contact with people who I met during my assignment.	**27.6%**
Provide financial contributions to the local communities or individuals I met during my assignment.	3.1%
Provide ongoing technical support to the local communities or individuals I met during my assignment.	15.3%
Have attempted to influence institutions in the US to which I belong (Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, non-profits, universities) to be more engaged in the country or region where I volunteered;	10.2%
Have engaged or written elected US officials to increase support or resources for the Farmer to Farmer program.	5.1%

D. Returned Volunteers and Multiple Assignments

Multiple Assignments

- 41.9% of surveyed volunteers completed one assignment during the 2008-2011period. Of the first-time volunteers surveyed, 55% completed one assignment.
- 98.1% of the surveyed volunteers would consider doing another assignment.





- 65% of the respondents volunteered for the first time between October 2008 and 2011.
- 35% of the respondents volunteered prior to October 2008.

Impact of Returned Volunteers and Multiple Assignments

Many of the surveyed volunteers explained that multiple assignments improve the volunteers' ability to meet the needs of the hosts, knowledge/experience, network of colleagues, familiarity and trust in the hosts and implementing partners, cultural understanding, and help them follow-up on recommendations.

Selected volunteers' comments on the impact of multiple assignments:

"Repeat assignments allowed me as a participant to broaden my knowledge on the topic, to gain experience, and to deepen the impact of the project within the community we are working in. With each assignment, I was able to gain a better understanding of the challenges cooperatives were dealing with, while at the same time using what I had learned from previous assignments to share that information and strategies with other groups."

"Repeat assignments are more successful because needs are long-term and require incremental improvements over time. Relationships and trust are also an important to achieve results."

"If the repeat assignments were with the same host, it was very nice to see how the host has changed over time. If the repeat assignment involves the same SOW but in different country, it was great to see how the same program changes between countries and really helps you define your presentations to fit the changes."

"In some instances, I went back to the same country. Though so far I had assignments with different hosts, still I could get some information about my previous assignment and see again the local staff members of the recruiting agency (CNFA). This tends to strengthen interactions on a personal level, as well as with the program. One learns more and more about the host country and the way programs can be further implemented, the types of limitations and the general characteristics of a culture and the way of running things."

E. Volunteers' Preparation for Differences in Gender Norms

Volunteers reported that 96% of the time they were adequately prepared to handle differences in gender norms and attitudes during their assignment(s). Female volunteers felt inadequately prepared to handle these differences during 8.4% of their assignments compared to male volunteers at 2.5%. During 36% of the assignments volunteers reported using their own research/knowledge, followed by written briefing materials provided to volunteers (22%), verbal briefing from in-country staff (21%), accompanied by staff who assisted in handling issues arising from gender issues (13%), and verbal briefing from US program staff (8%) to deal with differences in how men and women interact with each other that could affect their ability to carry out assignments. These methods were sufficient for volunteers 95% of the time.

F. Volunteer Safety

Volunteers felt safe 97% of the time during their assignments. The country's political environment contributed to volunteers' feeling of insecurity 17 times, inadequate assistance from program staff in preparing for volunteer for assignment 5 times, social restrictions 5 times, inadequate housing or services 4 times, gender issues 3 times, and conflict with hosts 10 times.

G. Implementation

During 72% of the assignments volunteers strongly agreed that the needs of the host organization(s) were a match for the volunteers' skills, 27% agreed, and 1% disagreed. Overall 94% of the time the volunteers felt that the key needs of the hosts were met. Half of the time volunteers strongly agreed that the SOW they received prior to the assignment matched the work performed during the

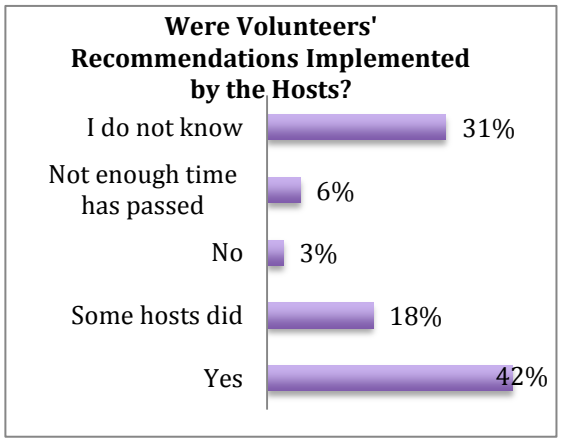
assignment, 43% agreed and 7% disagreed. Overall, 94% of the time the volunteers' thought that the assignments made good use of their skills.

Hosts' Implementation of Recommendations

Barriers to Implementation

Of the surveyed volunteers, 57.2% cited **financial constraints** as the biggest barrier hosts face when implementing recommendations. **Lack of needed utilities** (electricity, water, and information technology) is the second biggest barrier by 30.8%. The third biggest barrier, at 37.4%, was **transportation of inputs or final goods**. And 47.8% of those surveyed listed **the regulatory environment** as the fourth biggest barrier faced by hosts implementing recommendations.

Figure A3-2: Implementation of Hosts' Recommendations



Given the opportunity to comment further on these barriers volunteers found that lack of time, lack of access to resources including hosts' extension services and educational opportunities, as well as organizational issues, "cultural barriers" or social constraints, and hosts' attitudes reduced the hosts' ability to implement recommendations.

H. Volunteer Outreach

- Of those who reported using electronic media for outreach (214), 94% preferred email, 36% used Facebook, 22% used LinkedIn, 20% used a personal or business website, 15% used a blog, and 4% used Twitter.
- 82.8% conducted outreach activities related to their assignment after returning to the US
- 46.9% of the volunteers reported receiving support for their outreach activities from the organizations they volunteered with, while 53.1% did not receive this type of support.
- 72.2% of the volunteers reported that they had **not** talked with, or written to, their elected national level officials regarding their experience with the Farmer to Farmer program compared to 27.8% who had.

Social Networking

- 61.8% of the surveyed volunteers are interested in joining a community (such as LinkedIn or Facebook) to connect with other F2F volunteers and hosts. 15.4% were not interested and 22.8% had no opinion.

Annex 5: Volunteer Profiles and Interviews

"Super" Volunteer: Peter Wotoweic

One notable feature of the Farmer to Farmer volunteer program is the growing number of Volunteers, who are recruited for, or request, repeat assignments. Only half the volunteers who will be sent to the field during the 2009-2013 cycle will be volunteers who are going on assignments for the first time. The other half are going back either to a country and a specific project they have worked in previously, or they have been assigned to a new project, maybe even a new country. As the program has continued over time (more than 20 years now), a cadre of "frequent repeaters" has formed.

There may be a F2F volunteer who has had more assignments than Peter Wotoweic, of Pikesville, Tennessee, but not very many. As far as he can tell (and only he can tell, since this piece of information is not readily verifiable from any other source), Peter has had at least 25 assignments with the F2F program.

Prior to joining as a volunteer with the F2F program, Peter carried out one Volunteer assignment in Romania with VOCA and seven in Egypt with IESC. He then began to work with F2F as a volunteer with ACDI/VOCA and CNFA, from 2001 to 2006, carrying out two assignments each in Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Georgia, Azerbaijan and one each in S. Africa and Kyrgyzstan. Since 2006, Peter has been assigned to six projects in the Caribbean and Central America with Partners of the Americas and one with Winrock international. Remarkable as this record is, it becomes more so considering that Peter's wife Christine has carried out four tandem assignments herself to some of the projects Peter has advised. So together they have a record of about 30 assignments.

Peter is a retired educator, forever horticulturalist. He grew up in a family that owned and operated a greenhouse business, taught vocational courses in horticulture at the high school level, and was a vocational horticulturalist instructor in the Ohio State University system. Christine is a social worker, master gardener, and greenhouse specialist.

Peter's F2F assignments have been to provide advice on controlled environment cropping, hydroponics production, greenhouse management, integrated pest management, harvesting and post-harvest handling of produce. He co-authored the first edition (draft) of the Manual "Greenhouse Production in Jamaica." He and Christine visited farms, made recommendations regarding production procedures, and conducted training sessions on production procedures and marketing plans.

On one of her assignments, Christine conducted horticultural therapy training for staff at a school for handicapped students, a prison, and submitted a training plan such a program to the director of an orphanage.

Peter describes his experience with the F2F program in pretty simple, but meaningful, terms. "My goal in each project was to act as a catalyst to initiate cooperative positive action which would be continued by the hosts after I had left. The majority of times I felt that the goal had been reached." And he explains what he sees as the justification for repeat assignments. "The advantage of subsequent follow-up trips by the volunteer to the same host greatly strengthens that impact on the hosts. The volunteer becomes part of the host's accessible resources as well as a friend. Occasionally, hosts were not open to initially discussing problems with a "stranger". It became necessary to spend a little time socializing. Once my hair and beard turned gray, though, that issue seemed to diminish!"

Roger Ellis

Roger Ellis, Veterinarian, DVM, Granville, NY has volunteered with ACDI/VOCA, Winrock International, Land O'Lakes, and Heifer, International. He volunteered 11 times in eight countries: Honduras, working with Peace Corps Volunteers; in Nicaragua with Heifer, Intl.; in Russia, three times with ACDI/VOCA and one time with Land O'Lakes; in Ethiopia with Land O'Lakes; in Lebanon with ACDI/VOCA; in Liberia with ACDI/VOCA; in Egypt with ACDI/VOCA; and in Bangladesh with Winrock International. His work has been diverse with respect to animal health and disease management.

He has done training of groups, worked on dairy health improvement, modern artificial insemination methods, and dairy processing plant sanitation/hygiene issues, and animal nutrition. He worked with various local organizations, schools, joint venture dairy programs, country veterinarian groups, military assistance groups (in Liberia), With milk producers associations, and private businesses supporting animal health and vaccination programs.

He first learned of F2F through the Peace Corps. Was recruited by IPs to train PCVs in Latin America. He considered his work as successful. He saw progress and a change in knowledge and in thinking about animal health, disease prevention, nutrition, and sanitation. He saw the need and interest of the beneficiaries. To engage young recent graduate veterinarians he suggests an honorarium of US$50-100 per day as an incentive to get them engaged. Most newly begun veterinarians have high student debt and cannot afford to be gone from their practice. An honorarium might help attract them.

He felt he could have been more successful if he had received more money to purchase supplies. Average is around $100, but that was limiting with respect to vet. Equipment, medicines, etc. He suggests and amount of from $300-500 would be of more benefit. He had lots of high points in various countries and only one low point when he was not able to visit farms he had promised to see. Sometimes what he found on the ground was not what he had expected, but that did not deter him and was not a big issue.

He will volunteer again. He has recommended other veterinarians and has tried to engage younger recent graduate veterinarians into the program. He has maintained contact with some of his hosts/organizations/individuals, but not in all cases. He made and continues to make presentations to social groups, churches, Rotary, Cornell University (his alma mater) and has contacted US Congressional representatives on the value of the program.

His experiences help him appreciate many positive aspects of American life. It made him realize that it is important to have a government involved in infrastructure development and maintenance. He also learned the importance of having medications available and using them appropriately. He is very positive on F2F.

Brian Boman

Brian Boman, PhD., Ft. Pierce, FL., Water management, soil and nutrient management specialist. He has volunteered for ACDI/VOCA, Winrock International, CNFA, and DAI, since 1996. He has volunteered 15 times in six countries: three times in Egypt, five times in Kazakhstan, four times in Kyrgyzstan, once in Tajikistan, once in Serbia, and once in Guyana. He specializes in water management, nutrient application, irrigation infrastructure development, soil and water management and best management practices to improve crop production. He has worked most with water user and farmers associations, has worked with greenhouse operations, and some individual farmers/firms.

He was recruited by an IP and learned of F2F in that regard. Most assignments have gone well and been successful. Sometimes when the Scope of Work is changed some time is wasted. It is important to communicate to the volunteer when changes in the schedule or the scope are needed. Also, there has been inconsistency in the quality of interpreters. Some have the technical knowledge needed to translate effectively, while for others the technical vocabulary is lacking, and is not always found in a pocket dictionary. Sometimes different interpreters are brought in midway during the term of work and this leads to inconsistency and inefficiency while working with farmers if the right vocabulary is not used.

His best experience was while working in Serbia. Most unfavorable was in Guyana where there were two weeks of work to complete a five week assignment. It was not an efficient use of the volunteer's time and expertise. Nonetheless, he will volunteer again when the scope and his schedule permit. He has recommended other specialists with his skills to serve as volunteers. He has maintained contact with only one firm, but with many individuals with whom he has worked.

He has not made formal presentations, but the University of Florida, his employer in the US did a write up on his volunteer work in Asia, and the Florida Growers Magazine also did an article on his volunteer work in July of 2011. In his contact with Florida farmers and commercial agriculture producers he is often asked about his international work and is glad to share his experiences.

His experiences as a volunteer have broadened his knowledge base and this is beneficial. He suggests that volunteers have a minimum lead time of three months from the IP so planning and scheduling can be well accommodated.

Mr. James F. Thibeault

Mr. James F. Thibeault, Malden, WV, Marketing Specialist. He has volunteered for ACDI/VOCA and WI. He has volunteered 12 times in seven countries: Worked in Slovakia, Russia (Siberia), Brazil, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kenya, and Bangladesh. He is experienced in marketing, particularly handicrafts.

Usual volunteer activity is to help develop indigenous handicraft products to become marketable on a global, or at least larger scale and for export. He usually works with local NGOs or crafts associations.

He learned of the opportunity online and was recruited by ACDI/VOCA.

Although his experiences are generally positive, the recent work in Bangladesh was not up to the mark. He was asked to help develop a market for textiles and bamboo products. His scope was too broad and that raised doubts on how to carry out the tasks. The international market for bamboo products is dominated by China in both volume and quality. The goal was to make Bangladesh, particularly a rural local NGO competitive. Once on the ground in the Khulna district, he saw that the goal was unrealistic. Supplies and quality of product are not sufficient and certainly are not competitive with China. They had hoped to fill containers with product, but they are not close to being ready for such an endeavor.

He was not successful because the scope was unrealistic. He said he learned that USAID said it "would be done," so the effort was "politically driven" rather than based on reality. They need to start small, build capacity and develop products with an international demand. He suggests tying their products to the increasing tourism locally and in the Sundarbans National Park which is a Bengal Tiger preserve. Products that attach to the Environmental Niche have appeal and potential, but they need to start small and grow rather than expect to immediately enter the international export market. There is potential to attach to "ADORE" an NGO crafts-focused organization originally sponsored by the Ford Foundation.

They are functioning and could take the next steps to link to Environmental themes.

His highs were in Kenya helping market maize based handicrafts. He does not consider Bangladesh his low, but simply a scope developed due to political considerations and overly optimistic expectations rather than on market realities.

He will volunteer again, including in Bangladesh as long as the Scope of Work is realistic and narrower.

He has remained in contact with some hosts, but not all. He would recommend others to volunteer as, in general, his experiences have been positive. He has given talks to church groups in West Virginia regarding his F2F experiences. He was paired with Volunteer Ms. Patti Carpenter (see below) on the Bangladesh assignment.

Ms. Patti Carpenter

Ms. Patti Carpenter, Founder and Creator of Carpenter and Company "Global Style Crafted with Heart" of NY, NY. She has worked in Africa and Central America with ACDI/VOCA and with WI in Bangladesh. She was paired with Mr. James Thibeault on this assignment. She has volunteered twice with F2F in Africa and in Central America. She was recruited by ACDI/VOCA. Her area of expertise is textiles and basketry development and marketing. She found potential for products from coconut husks and bamboo canes. But that the lack of machinery for manufacture holds back the volume of marketable crafts.

Her usual hosts are local NGOs, particularly women's groups that are looking for outlets for their products, and how to expand sales, domestically or internationally. In Bangladesh she was to work with 18 local NGO based women's groups. Her experience was positive, but the scope was "too ambitious. It is unrealistic to expect her to work with 18 different groups in a two week time frame, not leaving enough time to do the job right. Logistical arrangements were fine, but the translator did not fully understand the technical vocabulary used. The person worked hard, but a person more familiar with craft products and product development would be better. She also met with exporters and found most were suitable to handle the products.

She met with "ARONG" which is BRAC's centralized craft division and found several products of high quality suitable for export. ARONG has already exported some products and may work with her to reestablish a US market. Her experience was positive because it got people thinking more about market demand and not just to produce something. Her time spent could have been more fruitful if the program had called for more time with fewer groups/persons. Her key recommendations were to link producers with exporters, and to provide training on New Products, first for local use and then for export.

She has made presentations at textile meetings and to a school class, on her work in Bangladesh. She indicated that she will volunteer again, but will probably be a paid consultant to return to Bangladesh.

Mosbah M. Kushad

Professor Mosbah M. Kushad, PhD., From University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. He is a Food Crops Extension Specialist and Postharvest Physiologist. He has done volunteer work in Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, and Rwanda, largely with ACDI/VOCA. He was working in Lebanon with an association of apple growers in the northern mountains near ACCAR. The purpose was to modernize their orchards and make recommendations to improve their production and marketing. He was recruited by ACDI/VOCA.

His demonstrations on pruning, fertilization, and IPM were highly effective. He found that orchardists were using technologies from 20-30 years outdated. They eagerly accepted his guidance and recommendations. Logistical support was OK. There is only one unheated hotel near ACCAR and it is unheated and it was very cold and snowy while he was there. He could also serve more than one local NGO thus increasing the impact of his technical assistance. His excellent skills and his fluency in Arabic made him a much valued expert. The 45 apple growers were held spellbound by his useful information.

One of his high points was explaining to an apple grower why his Granny Smith apples were turning brown after harvest. He explained that since Granny Smith always has green skin, you must wait long enough for it to mature and then it will not turn brown. If picked too early, as the farmer had been doing, they will most certainly turn brown. His advice on fertilizer usage and irrigation was equally important to growers.

He will volunteer again, but he is fully employed at U. of Illinois, so time is limited. He learned that his skills were ideally suited for delivering quality technical assistance in the Middle East, particularly Arabic speaking countries. He has had some contact with the growers association in ACCAR. He learned, once-again, that speaking the language of the country in which you are working is a huge plus.

George Michael (Mike) Schmidt

George Michael (Mike) Schmidt, PhD. Hydrologist/Irrigation Engineer and Remote sensing specialist from Bellefonte, Pennsylvania. He has worked in Liberia and the Virgin Islands. In Liberia he was with ACDI/VOCA. He provided some useful feedback based on the email questionnaire sent out to former F2F Volunteers. Several comments suggested areas of improvement to strengthen the effectiveness of F2F. This interview was to follow-up on his comments.

He served in Liberia on different occasions from 2004-2010 in a Post-Conflict situation. He worked for weeks preparing for his assignment and once he had arrived he learned that his Liberian Project Director was a Lawyer with no practical, technical, or scientific experience. Not a good omen. He was linked with a Liberian Hospital affiliated with the UN, with the purpose of his activities to draw NGOs out to work in rural areas. He was to work with an Organization for Water Management and Well Monitoring. He had three assignments in Liberia.

His first travels in the area were in Algeria where he crossed the Western Sahara on his own. He is an Agricultural Engineer. His task was to assist farms he characterized as between feudalism and share cropping in their link to modernity. He visited many small farms and found a huge need for assistance.

He was linked to the Ministry of Agriculture branch dealing with Land, Mines, and Energy. Work was to follow the value-chain model with each link of the chain dealt with in focus groups. He was to, but never actually met his Host. He later learned that his host was a rich female farmer with strong political connections and a jet setter.

A Liberian Extension Agronomist he was affiliated with encouraged him to work with small farmers and groups of farmers to improve dry season irrigation for vegetable production. One technology they worked on was use of the treadle pump. He was frustrated because he could not get decisions from the bureaucratic hierarchy in the Ministry or his Lawyer director to change the focus to work with small holders. In his terms “It was bureaucracy at its worst, highly restrictive and non-responsive.” His recruitment followed after he met an RPCV who referred him to ACDI/VOCA and on checking their

website he applied and was offered an assignment 24 hours later.

He learned a lot from his experience. He met many Gov't. Liberia (GOL) Academics and officials and still is in contact with many. But there was never any response from the ACDI/VOCA-USAID bureaucracy on working with poor subsistence farmers. Their focus seemed to be to support the well to do African elite. The will of the GOL is weak with a few dedicated professionals, but mostly politicos.

The Deputy Minister of Agriculture has a PhD in Agriculture, but he is an anomaly rather than a norm. He struggles with the incompetence and lack of decision making skills of his colleagues. The volunteer, Schmidt, wonders if he had been more assertive, he might have been more effective by pushing harder for decisions from "the higher ups". Or, perhaps as a member of a team working together with a blend of new volunteers with more experienced ones. Or perhaps if the volunteer had communicated directly with USAID, but the IP did not want that to happen.

His thoughts on the value chain approach. It is not a concept understood by the local residents at any level. One factor that negatively affected the program in Liberia was that other donors/implementers like the UN's FAO and some other NGOs like CARE and Chinese Assistance all paid subsidies to help farmers, but at a higher level than authorized by USAID. Hence not all programs were viewed equally. Also, the Chinese were not interested in developing indigenous capabilities as were the others. There is a large need for improving and making broadly available the machinery/tools, and equipment needed by small and medium sized farmers. The merchant business class largely Lebanese and the quality of the tools and equipment available is very inferior. There is a huge demand, but only garbage is available.

While he was in Liberia he was approached to do an assignment in the Dominican Republic (DR) to train farmers affiliated with resident Priest. Mr. Schmidt's view was that the scope of work for that assignment was to make farmers engineers after two hours of training. He found that to be unrealistic and said so, but the IP in DR refused to change or adjust the scope toward something more realistic, so, ultimately, he never went there as a volunteer.

He would like to volunteer again, but feels that he may have been "black listed" since he tried to correct an ineffective system, rather than accept it blindly. He felt his work was not successful due to the lack of open minds within American and Liberian bureaucracies.

His recommendations for future success are to send volunteers in teams, veterans with newbie's, and that assignments be longer in duration and scheduled to overlap with the cropping season for crops to be advanced. A better Monitoring and Evaluation system is definitely needed.

Matt Cleaver

Matt Cleaver has an MBA and a financial interest in a mushroom enterprise in California. In spite of his age (early 30s), he quickly diagnosed the strengths and weaknesses of his host's start-up mushroom production business, and made recommendations, which are already being implemented. Matt also provided advice to other mushroom growers, made recommendation on the design of a new facility, and trained a group of students from the Agrarian University. The USAID Mission Director visited the host while Matt was there and was impressed with Matt's knowledge and the fact that he is sharing it with other mushroom growers and students. Although he might have benefitted from better preparation on the political and economic setting, Matt's weak contextual orientation did not seem to interfere with his effectiveness. This is Matt's first experience as a Farmer to Farmer volunteer, but he was aware of the program because his father, who was a laboratory manager of a mushroom research facility, served as a volunteer. He was recommended for this job by Omon S. Isikhuemhen, Associate

Professor of Mycology and Biotechnology, North Carolina A and T State University, who has done similar assignments in Georgia but was not available for this one.

Clint Goss and Vera Shanov

Clint Voss and Vera Shanov typically take assignments once per year, usually in the winter, where suitable assignments can be found for both of them. Clint is a consultant with 30+ years of experience in software design and implementation, international technology consulting, and technology intellectual property litigation (**http://www.goss.com**). He has a Ph.D. in computer science and a hobby/business in performing and recording music, with a specialty in flute. Vera has an MBA in Marketing and over 30 years marketing experience, including international assignments (**http://www.goss.com/VeraShanovResume.pdf**). At least one other international assignment has been with Farmer to Farmer. CNFA recruited them for an assignment in Moldova last year, but they were already committed to another assignment. Clint's assignment is to teach Farm Service Center (FSC) personnel about web based marketing tools that use IT as means to achieve business success and develop a web site to serve as a pilot for a larger network to be constructed for all of the FSCs. Vera is instructing FSC staff in marketing and business management. The host is clearly pleased with their contribution.

David Dumaresq

David Dumaresq's first and only Farmer to Farmer assignment was in 2011 to assist a new private entrepreneur produce both open field and greenhouse tomatoes and cucumbers. David is the owner and operator of a successful farm business, including retail garden center, two farm stands, Community Supported Agriculture, and market farm in Massachusetts. Coincidentally, David was a neighbor of John Ogonowski, who produced hay and provided internships for students and immigrants from other countries. As a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador in 1995, David helped to host a Farmer to Farmer volunteer who told him 25 years of experience was required to become a F2F volunteer. After Peace Corps, David returned to Massachusetts and built his business. Last year, after rearranging business affairs, he accepted a volunteer assignment in Georgia. At that time, Deloitte had just signed a contract to implement USAID's new Economic Prosperity Initiative (EPI) and subcontracted the agricultural value chain work to CNFA. Sharing the same office space temporarily with the Farmer to Farmer program, EPI staff was so impressed with David, they offered him a job as an intermittent paid consultant. EPI provides a full range of assistance for greenhouse vegetables and mandarins and David actively links farmers and businesses with F2F. At this time, David is not prepared to leave his business and become a full time paid consultant and he is interested in doing other F2F assignments.

Joel Hunter

As an Agronomist and Extension Educator, Joel Hunter advises farmers in western Pennsylvania on no till farming and other farm management and production issues. His volunteer assignment in Georgia is training employees of Machinery Service Centers (MSCs) on no till farming and maintenance and repair of tractors as part of the Associate Award USAID/Georgia made to CNFA for the Access to Mechanization Project (AMP) under the authority of the F2F LWA. AMP is a $5.1 million three year project that is providing fee-based custom machinery services to up to 14,000 small farmers by establishing 25-30 MSCs, using a combination of matching grants, business and extension training and volunteer technical assistance. AMP is a follow on to the $20 million MCC financed Agribusiness Development Activity (ADA), also implemented by CNFA. Penn State University encourages Joel and other extension agents to take F2F assignments by giving them time off from their regular duties. Joel heard about this assignment

and another one he did for F2F in Kazakhstan from a colleague in the extension service. About 3 percent of the AMP budget is used to support 8 volunteers per year. This is in addition to the 25 volunteers per year CNFA supports through its core F2F program. The AMP's training coordinator is responsible for programing AMP volunteers using similar forms and recruiting and reporting procedures. The number of volunteers and number of persons trained under Associate Awards are reported separately in the annual report, but are not included in the impact reporting of the core F2F program.

Steve Morgan

Morgan has worked for 43-years in cheese making, starting when he graduated from high school in 1963. He worked his way to official certification training in cheese making before being promoted to a supervisor and cheese production manager. After retirement, he worked as a consultant for the University of Idaho, and helped a couple of start-up cheese companies in the state. A few years ago, he took his first international assignment as a F2F volunteer in Georgia and has done about six assignments with several hosts since then, all of them in Georgia. He is praised by hosts and CNFA staff for his ability to transfer relevant technology. Hosts have given CNFA a standing request for Steve's services.

Nino Adams

Nino Adams advised greenhouse owners and trained employees on greenhouse vegetable production for tomatoes and cucumbers on two assignments in 2011. Her advice was extremely well received. For example, her host implemented her recommendation to mitigate poor soil quality by producing cucumbers in bags and turned heavy losses into a net profit. Born and educated in Tblisi, Georgia, Nino worked as a Greenhouse Manager and Agronomist before joining ACDI/VOCA as a Program Coordinator for the Farmer to Farmer Program in Georgia in 2005. During her work with F2F, she met David Adams, an extension specialist from Oregon who came to Georgia and other countries as a F2F volunteer and helped her secure an internship at Ohio State University. In 2008 she returned to Georgia and began working with the Farmer to Farmer program, now being implemented by CNFA. After one year, she completed her Ph.D. in plant protection, married David Adams' son, and moved to Oregon to work for a vineyard supply company. When she lost her job due to the financial crisis, Nino accepted an assignment as a F2F volunteer. Her primary host in December was a new $1 million greenhouse to produce tomatoes with hydroponics using a turnkey greenhouse installation from Israel. A week before visiting the site in January, the greenhouse collapsed under the weight of a heavy snow.

Four volunteers were interviewed in Moldova

Loren Parks, Richard Edwards, Tomas Kimmel and Ewan Ha. All of them have taken multiple F2F volunteer assignments with more than one IP. All of them have also worked as paid consultants. Three of them have PhDs, with university appointments. Three of the four also have private sector experience and the fourth was in the extension service of a land grant university working closely with farmers and businessmen.

Some general comments and observations are as follows:

<u>Length of assignment</u>: Some F2F assignments should be longer than two weeks, especially if they could be structured to reach a group of hosts. One experienced volunteer said most of his volunteer assignments are for more than 2 weeks and he could really use more time for this one. Moldova uses a standard 18 day assignment and early departures are discouraged because shorter assignments increase the Cost per Volunteer Day. In one case, the volunteer finished his assignment early and would have liked to return a few days earlier. In this case, the Country Director tried to find another host for the

volunteer to assist, but the host was out of town. One of the others had similar experiences in previous assignments.

Differences Between IPs: Volunteers are aware of differences between IPs, and some tend to work with the same IPs and the same country; others do not seem to have strong preferences for one IP or county over the other. In fact, some volunteers consider F2F only one of several options for international development volunteer service. They often search the Internet for opportunities and are more likely to select the assignment based on the fit of their skills and interests than the IP or country.

Volunteering vs. Paid Consulting: Volunteer assignments (other than Peace Corps) are shorter than paid consultants. Paid consultants can provide more sustained assistance and they tend to be better at writing reports, but they also tend to be further removed from clients i.e. farmers. F2F works well when linked with donor funded value chain projects because they have the resources to address each constraint along the value chain. These individuals actively seek both types of assignments and recruiters from both sides reach out to them for specific assignments. Also, they are often recruited for another assignment before they leave the country. The most important criterion for accepting an assignment, paid or volunteer, seems to be whether they think the assignment is a good match for their skills and interests and whether they can make a difference. However, they generally seem to prefer volunteer assignments because i) being retired with a source of income, maximizing earnings is less important to them and ii) hosts know and appreciate the fact that they are motivated to share their knowledge and skills by something other than money.

Diversity: The diversity of age, nationality, education, and gender among volunteers is noteworthy. One host said the older volunteer was desirable because his experience in the US 40 years ago is relevant to current technology in Georgia e.g. cheese making with non pasteurized milk. The younger volunteers said age is less a factor of their success than their experience producing the crops on similar scale i.e. small to medium sized farms and production facilities.

Networking in the Farmer to Farmer Family: Farmer to Farmer can be seen as a family in many ways. Many volunteers contribute as much or more through their follow-up, networking and recruiting as in their two-week assignment. This is evidence that all three goals are being achieved (knowledge sharing, greater understanding of international development and bridge building with people in foreign countries).

Where are the Farmers?: Few of the volunteers profiled from Moldova and Georgia would be considered farmers in the traditional sense and some do not claim to know much about agriculture. Likewise, most of the hosts are agribusinesses or service suppliers. Farmers may be clients receiving indirect benefits.

Groups vs. Individual Hosts: They all find volunteering rewarding and one of the factors they look for is the opportunity to spread the impact of their assignment by having contact with more than one individual. In a recent assignment in another country, one volunteer said he helped one micro entrepreneur improve her business, but noted his assignment would have been more cost effective had he been assigned to an association or group.

Balancing the Goals: Volunteers and hosts see the primary objective of F2F as sharing technical knowledge and expertise. Both sides are comfortable with the secondary objective of building bridges between people of different cultures, while recognizing the limitations of a two-week assignment and differences among the volunteers. The F2F program has evolved; hosts make higher contributions and expect tangible benefits, but they also have a higher appreciation for quality technical assistance.

Annex 6: Additional Comments on the F2F Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting Systems[23]

The discussion in this annex supplements the material on that presented in the main body of the report. It answers specific questions that were part of the evaluation Scope of Work.

1. Are procedures in place and being implemented to collect required baseline and impact data on hosts?

All implementing partners collected the required baseline data as well as impact data on the hosts with which they work that are required under the core F2F program. The indicators on baseline and impact comprise two of four standard reporting tables (revised on March 19, 2010) titled: "Farmer-to-Farmer Program Standard Indicator Reporting Table Definitions." The four tables cover volunteer data and volunteer assignment activity data (Table 1a and b), host baseline data (Table 2), host impact data (Table 3), and volunteer public outreach and leveraging of resources (Table 4).

All core program and field staff members are given training on the Standard FTF Indicator definitions at the start of the program phase and some implementers have held additional regional workshops to review and discuss the processes used. In addition, the field staff members have copies of the indicator definitions as well as of the training materials they received, with examples of exercises on the fictitious country of "Faminestan." CNFA brought its Africa country program staff together for a Farmer-to-Farmer in Nairobi, Kenya. It included participants from East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania) and Southern Africa (Angola, Mozambique and Malawi), along with some of the CNFA Washington DC FTF team. Similarly, ACDI/VOCA and Winrock organized a regional West African training for staff members from Liberia, Nigeria, Mali, and Ghana. Those who attended expressed appreciation for having had the chance to exchange experiences and to gain clarity about what was expected in the M&E process.

Within IP organizations, there are both formal and informal channels for asking questions and receiving clarifications on specific points about the data collection and analysis process. Given the high level of data collection, monitoring, and reporting, however, there is a great deal of room for errors to enter the process. Furthermore, there are no easy means of triangulating the data from public sources, so field staff members have to depend on the willingness and honesty of the organization's leaders on the validity of the data about it, especially on revenue and expenses.

2. How, when, and by whom is baseline data collected?

In the field, the staff members of most IPs hold initial meetings with prospective host organizations to determine whether they are appropriate beneficiaries for the volunteer technical assistance (see more on the selection process, below). Selection of the host is sometimes opportunistic, especially at the start of a program, but it can also be strategic and formal, using a standard set of criteria. ACDI/VOCA, for example, has a chart with several categories that are assigned different weights to different questions that it can use in host selection (although not always). Others use the OCAT form as an aid to host selection, but do not have a minimum or maximum ranking to qualify or disqualify an organization from participation. Once a host is chosen, multiple visits and/or phone calls typically take place between the field staff and the host before, during, and after the volunteer assignments.

[23] Prepared by Deborah Rubin (Cultural Practice LLC) and Kristin Lobron (Independent Consultant)

Data is primarily collected by the field staff, usually by one or two people, depending on the size of the office and the location of the host. The Country Director as well as the technical or other field staff members are involved. The OCAT form data is intended to be collected in a participatory manner, but that is not always the case. IPs vary in the extent to which they explain the form and its purpose. Some field staff collect the data in an extractive manner and others are more participatory. Interviews with hosts on the data collection process suggest that they do not always know why different types of data are being collected nor about what is supposed to be done with it.

Data on the host can be updated either at specified intervals or as encountered during other visits. Volunteers are also used as a source of information. CNFA/Kenya includes on its volunteer reports a question asking if there are updates to the host profile data. This data is supposed to be checked by staff members either by phone or on the next visit to the host location.

Baseline data, whether for the indicator tables or the OCAT form, is collected as the host is identified and plans for the first and sometimes later assignments are being planned, depending on the specific data point.

3. How, when, and by whom is impact data collected?

Impact data is handled more strictly than baseline data. It is collected by the country staff members. While this may coincide with the visit of a second or third volunteer to the same host, the impact data collection seemed to be the responsibility of the staff and not a task asked of volunteers. In most cases, the IPs collect impact data between three to six months, and then periodically after establishing the baseline, but this may vary depending on other reporting dates and requirements, e.g., to finish up the mid-term report. Data is collected manually and entered into computer files in-country. In the case of CNFA, the data is collected and tracked in-country on the Host Profile Form, maintained as an Excel file. These files are later sent to headquarters. Other IPs have proprietary data input systems. Field staff members usually have access to these systems and enter data into them.

4. Are there problems with any of the Standard FTF Indicator definitions?

- Number of recommendations adopted

The practice of deciding what 'counts' as a recommendation differs among IPs. The "best practice" solution is for the country staff to meet with the volunteer on the last day or two of his/her visit and work through their recommendations to narrow the list to about three clear and concrete suggestions that are both practical and feasible given the financial and physical capabilities of the hosts. This list should be translated into the local language if necessary and conveyed to the host. While volunteers may write long lists of recommendations in their end of assignment reports, the final set of recommendations should be clear and delimited. This allows for their adoption to be monitored and directly linked to impact.

Although the Standard FTF Indicator Table1b currently asks for the number of "major volunteer recommendations" and does note that these be "the most substantive," the implication remains that more is somehow better rather than having a focus on the quality of the recommendation.

Clearer guidance is needed for the indicator "Number of volunteer recommendations adopted by host" in Table 3. As discussed more fully in the body of the report, there is uncertainty about whether this is about having a single person adopt multiple recommendations or about many people adopting a single recommendation. The current definition equates "number of recommendations adopted" to "number of

farmers….who have adopted…" but these are not equivalent numbers, as the example show. Furthermore, if many people adopt an irrelevant recommendation, it will still have no impact.

Additional problems with this indicator include:

- the recommendations linked to organizational development or environmental conservation may not have an immediate economic payoff;
- not all recommendations are appropriate for all people within an association, but could have a big return for some;
- the indicator does not allow for variation in quality;
- the indicator does not allow for circumstances beyond the producer's/business person's control that inhibit his/her ability to adopt the recommendation.

In short, it is not clear if this indicator it is meant to be a reflection on the capability of the volunteer and his/her technical expertise in identifying a solution to a current problem or on the capability of the host to succeed in his/her enterprise. The number alone is not meaningful.

- Type of volunteer assistance

This indicator is intended to help track the type of assignment and its impact on the host, but this creates difficulties for the IPs in having to choose only one category. An assignment under "enterprise development" may result in recommendations that are really on organizational development but, if adopted, will improve the profitability of the enterprise. Categorizing them under enterprise development skews the results. Some IPs recommended making "organizational development" a cross-cutting category whose recommendations could be included under any of the other classifications.

- Increase in the number of rural/agricultural loans AND Increase in the number of rural/agricultural loans

It was clear at the November 2011 implementors' meeting that these indicators had been differently applied in the field and was not clear to the IPs. Some did not understand that this was only to be completed for those with financial service objectives, despite the wording in the definition. It was noted that the number of loans was not a useful indicator.

5. Are there any specific problems with data collection?

- Consistency of labeling

In the table, information about the hosts is reported three times: as the recipient of volunteer services (Table 1); at the baseline (Table 2); and on impact (Table 3). The numbers reported were not always consistent, since a single volunteer often assists more than one host, making the number reported in Table 1 higher than in Table 2. By breaking these into two separate tables that cannot be reconciled/ matched up, it reduces the amount of analysis one can do that directly links the volunteer to the end-of-project impacts. In addition, the information is difficult to compare quickly because the same data may be entered or written differently into the excel sheet. For example, one IP might write "Dairy and Livestock" and another "Livestock and Dairy."

- Adoption of recommendations

As noted above, the confusion over the definition of a recommendation leads IPs to count their number and the scope of their adoption in different ways, and most are not that rigorous. An association president might be asked how many of his/her members are now following a particular technique, but without any field check to confirm. In other cases, a show of hands of members at an association meeting at which only some members are present gives the answer. Either of these practices will provide an over or under counting.

- Change in OCAT rating

Most of the IPs did not find the change in the OCAT ratings to be a useful indicator given the lack of consistency in the ranking across staff members and across country programs. In some situations, rankings decreased because a volunteer had helped them understand that they had misunderstood specific questions. It is a useful tool in a specific case, but the rankings are not globally significant.

6. Do [implementing partners'] staff members think that the Standard FTF Indicators and the data collection systems are capturing most of the FTF Program benefits?

Discussions with IP staff members brought out that the problem of attribution of impact to the F2F volunteer assignment is probably the most problematical aspect of the indicator data to capture. The volunteers do not work in a vacuum and neither do the groups they help. Most are receiving support of various types from other organizations, and it is often the other assistance that makes possible their adoption of volunteer recommendations. For example, a village in Mali received help from a volunteer to improve their management of fish ponds. But the ponds were constructed with the help of another USAID funded activity, which also provided technical assistance. How can the two be distinguished? This promises to be a more significant issue as F2F aligns more closely with other USG programs.

7. What, if any, changes would staff recommend for the M&E system?

Some indicators should be dropped, including the number of indirect beneficiaries, which, as a simple multiplier, could be done at headquarters, if at all. Given the issue of attribution noted above, it is not a meaningful number. The area under improved environment practices was also noted as of doubtful value, but might be more important in the future if a more direct climate change target is introduced.

Combining some of the reporting tables they are currently using such as number of days and impact could help reduce reporting demands. When they compare their progress against the baseline data, other efficiencies could also be developed to meet progress measurements.

Use of cost/volunteer day is not as effective a measure of success as would be cost/impact (assuming that impact is more accurately measured).

Several IPs noted that there is a large cost to the M&E process.

8. Are there other issues or problems in this area?

Organizations involved in the PDP noted that their reporting requirements were high. They were required to submit monthly, quarterly, semiannual, and annual reports and that this was a higher number than had previously been required under earlier cooperative agreements and/or what was expected under the current LWA. The PDP implementers also noted they were subject to very close supervision from Weidemann Associates Inc. on their financial expenditures and reporting and that disbursements were slow.

Recommendations monitoring program impacts on institutional capacity development

IPs expressed concerns about the format of the OCAT itself. Staff members recommended changing the ranking scale so that the designation of "not applicable" was separated from "insufficient." It was suggested that "not applicable" be noted with a 0 and that "insufficient" should be noted with a "1" as it was not different from "very poor." Another problem noted was that some of the proprietary systems used by the implementer could not accept a non-numerical entry, such as "not applicable" and that this could throw off the calculations of the averages or would require a manual calculation.

It was clear from these IP discussions that the explanation of each rank would be enhanced by have a checklist rather than requiring an individual judgment about a particular level of capacity. For example, under the category of "management practices," instead of asking the rater to determine, what is "routine" and "appropriate" in the statement: "Organization routinely disseminates information on its operations to appropriate stakeholders" the statement could be followed by a checklist (illustrative only) (see pages 66-68 in the main report).

It may be useful to restrict the use of the OCAT to associations. Many of the questions are not meaningful to individual small producers.

In sum, while some refinement in the OCAT is suggested above, the bigger issue to ensure more consistent training in data collection and application of the form.

Recommendations for general program monitoring

The team found that the process of compiling data compiling for the F2F program is prone to error and laborious, requiring a high investment of time by many people in the implementing organizations and in USAID alike. The evaluation team recommends both i) developing a database system into which implements can upload data and ii) the hiring of a project management analyst to handle data reporting.

The system could be an off-the-shelf database system for tracking indicator information to systematize the reporting process. Instead of entering information into an excel sheet, the information would be entered into a central database. The database could be housed at USAID or at a management contractor. The primary user would be the F2F AOR or project manager. There are several benefits a database system can offer:

- Real-time data availability;
- Data could be tracked against benchmarks on a regular basis to better assess management and overall health of the program;
- The ability to query data, including over time, is extremely important to analyzing overall design. A series of queries could quickly make determinations on changes over time in a sector, a region or another trend.
- Data consistency: Drop-down boxes (with the ability to add/ delete options) would improve the consistency of how data is reported and greatly reduce the amount of time spent normalizing data inputted into excel sheets;
- Data texture: IPs, USAID, and this evaluation team all agree that the number of indicators may be too high, but, at the same time, does not provide the most salient information. There is a lot of information collected that could be useful to programming future F2F phases, but the

information cannot be readily accessed because: i). It is not reported to USAID or ii) It is in qualitative formats (i.e. recommendations). A database can allow for additional information to be compiled, i.e., data that is already collected. Flexible assignments are a good example of this. The IPs currently report only at the country level, not the sector level, for flexible assignments (although they are asked to track the sector, they do not report this). A database would allow the information to be queried easily to determine where the most demand for flexible assignments are, and to incorporate that information into future program design. To refer back to the VWB example earlier where animal owners are the direct beneficiaries of the vaccinations. A database would allow the IP to select from limited categories how the direct beneficiaries were determined – thus taking the guess work out of it for USAID and to allow like programs to be grouped together for analysis.

- Better Information to link volunteers with program impacts such as a database would allow for queries that group a volunteer's work across countries, and also to group the number and types of assistance provided to a single host. These types of queries would allow for better analysis on the causal effect of reported impacts. It would also provide a good tool to ensure the program was reaching out to new beneficiaries, and to new volunteers.

Other options to the single database system however could include using the Program Support contract (currently held by Weidemann Associates) to compile the data and report it to USAID. They could hire a certified Project Management Professional or someone with the equivalent analytic and program management background, to manage the inflow of data/reporting from the various IPs. The PMP has a working group devoted to international development, so finding a person with a relevant technical and business skill set should not be difficult. The benefit of having a project manager shared among the IPs is to improve the consistency of the data, and to improve the tracking capabilities of USAID.

The primary functions of the PMP would be:

a. Compile and track indicators for F2F;

b. Ensure data quality and consistency for F2F;

c. Conduct trainings, webinars, or provide technical assistance to IP Field and US-based managers on data collection methods, interpretations and reporting requirements.

d. Run queried reports for USAID, as requested.

The project management could assist in improving data quality by improving the understanding and ability of the IPs for the F2F program to interpret the data definitions in a similar manner. Training could be provided, as necessary.

Annex 7: Data Tables/Implementation Progress

This annex is an expansion of data available in the report. The purpose of this annex is not to analyze the data, but to report it. Anticipated funding to this cycle of the F2F program is about 40% less than last cycle, a drop from approximately $104 million to approximately $63 million.

Volunteer Profile

- 20%, or 278 volunteers have been female;
- 78% of volunteer occupations are in private enterprise, education, or retired;
- 10% of volunteers are farmers;
- 55% of the volunteers were White/Non-Hispanic and 34% did not specify ethnicity or replied 'other'; and
- 59% were repeat volunteers, meaning they had previous assignments with F2F.

Wisconsin and California are known for fielding the largest number of volunteers. Each had around 10% of the total volunteers. Detailed results from the volunteer survey are provided separately in Annex 3.

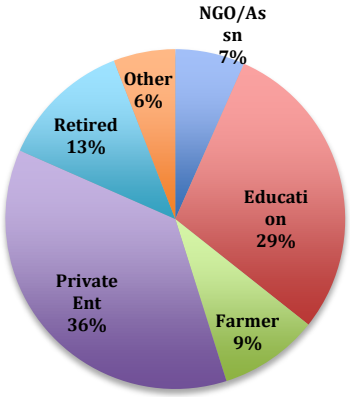


Figure A7-1: Volunteer Occupations

Progress in the Number of Volunteer Days Completed

Each program is making good progress towards meeting their goals of fielding volunteers and meeting volunteer day goals. Table A7-1 illustrates that the ACDIVOCA and Winrock/Other programs are

Table A7-1: Number of Volunteers by Sex and by Implementing Partner

Implementing Partner	Male			Female			Total		
	PG	Actual	Progress	PG	Actual	Progress	PG	Actual	Progress
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	135	165	122%	203	17	9%	338	182	54%
ACDIVOCA/ W. Africa	130	116	89%	194	30	15%	324	146	45%
CNFA/E. Africa	272	144	53%	42	27	69%	314	171	55%
CNFA/ECCA	350	210	60%	48	21	44%	398	231	58%
CNFA/S. Africa	247	94	38%	63	46	56%	310	140	42%
Partners/ Caribbean	407	181	44%	173	73	43%	580	254	44%
WAI/SPSP	228	115	50%	61	53	87%	289	168	58%
Winrock/ Other	239	23	10%	85	4	5%	325	27	8%
Winrock/ Caribbean	56	24	43%	19	7	37%	75	31	41%
Grand Total	2,064	1,072	52%	888	278	31%	2,953	1,350	45%

significantly behind the other programs in their goals for fielding women volunteers. Winrock/Other fielded 8% of volunteers projected in the performance goal, and only 10% of volunteer days (they have used 42% of allocated days).

An analysis from last program shows the number of assignments per year has dropped proportionately

with a reduction in funding. Regional shifts in the average number of assignments per year reflect the realigned regional priorities. The number of assignments per year to ECCA has fallen 81% from 363 assignments per year to 68 assignments to year. Africa has an increased the number of assignments by 33%. Perhaps most striking is a shift of MENA assignments by almost 50%, however the actual number of assignments per year increase is relatively small (20 per year).

In-Kind Contributions and Resources

The value of volunteer time contributed to the F2F program is approximately $11 million dollars over three years. The average amount per volunteer is $8,063 or $478 per volunteer day. The special projects had a significantly higher amount per volunteer day at $528, almost 10% more than the volunteers at the 'core' implementers.

USAID has allocated $28 million to the F2F program thus far in this cycle. Host and volunteers together have contributed another $12.6 million (45% of USAID funding), bringing the total value of the program to over $30 million. Contributions by hosts and volunteers thereby contribute approximately 31% of the total costs of the program, a generous cost share.

Table A7-2: Contributed Value to the F2F Program, by Host and Volunteer

Program	Est. Value of Vol Services Leveraged (US$)	Est Value of Host Contribution (US$)	Vol Contributions per assignment	Vol Contributions per Vol Day	Value of Host Contribution Per Host	Value of Host Contribution per Vol Day	Host Contribution Per Volunteer
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	$1,334,330	$257,040	$7,291	$475	$280	$92	$1,405
ACDIVOCA/ W. Africa	$1,312,240	$51,030	$8,988	$470	$56	$18	$350
CNFA/ Eastern Africa	$1,621,970	$66,082	$9,376	$470	$72	$19	$382
CNFA/ECCA	$1,772,840	$75,692	$7,675	$469	$82	$20	$328
CNFA/ Southern Africa	$1,154,790	$56,439	$8,952	$470	$61	$23	$438
POA/Carib	$1,733,830	$932,170	$6,799	$470	$1,015	$253	$3,656
WAI/SPSP	$1,427,960	$194,061	$9,038	$530	$211	$72	$1,228
Winrock/ Other	$303,620	$12,894	$11,245	$470	$14	$20	$478
Winrock/ Carib	$215,260	$30,327	$6,944	$470	$33	$66	$978
Grand Total	$10,876,840	$1,675,735	$8,160	$478	$1,825	$74	$1,257

Table A7-3: Progress Toward Volunteer and Host Contribution Goals		
IP	Progress toward PG-Vol. Contribution	Progress toward PG-Host Contribution
ACDIVOCA/MENA	47%	20%
ACDIVOCA/West Africa	43%	7%
CNFA/East Africa	57%	0%
CNFA/ECCA	59%	1%
CNFA/Southern Africa	52%	11%
Partners/Caribbean	42%	111%
WAI/SPSP	60%	11797%
Winrock/Other	10%	9%
Winrock/Caribbean	38%	7%
Grand Total	46%	4%

ACDI/VOCA MENA, POA, and the special projects have relatively high cost share by the hosts per volunteer assignments. They are the only three programs that are not only on track, but have actually exceeded the host contribution performance goal. The F2F program is fairly unique in accounting for the imbedded costs of the hosts for the technical assistance received. The overall contributions by these hosts are significant. Other programs must make extraordinary efforts in order to meet their performance goals in host contributions. All programs are on track to meet performance goals for volunteer contributions.

Progress in Outputs

Implementers track major volunteer recommendations as a metric to place value on technical assistance provided during volunteer assignments. The implementers then track whether the recommendations have been adopted, as a metric of success. Volunteers made 8,725 recommendations thus far in the program. The majority (78%) of the recommendations were organizational or economic.

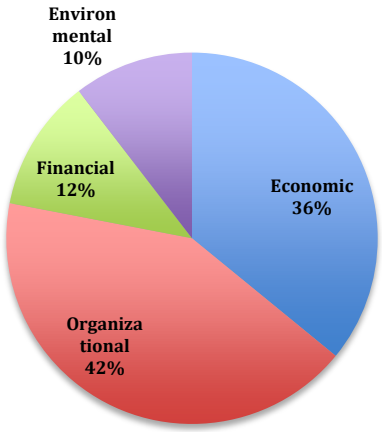


Figure A7-2: Volunteer Recommendations by Category

Most programs are on track to meet the number of volunteer recommendations. The adoption rate, however, of those recommendations is still very low at 30% overall. These low adoption numbers may reflect the low percentage of sampling, or various other concerns (as discussed in this evaluation) about the difficulty of tracking the adoption rate for recommendations. ACDIVOCA in the MENA region is exceeding expectations in both making and adopting recommendations.

Table A7-4: Progress Towards Performance Goal: Recommendations Made and Adopted						
	# of Recommendations Made	# Major Volunteer Recommendations PG	% to PG-# of Recommendations	# of Recommendations Adopted	# of Recommendations Adopted PG	Progress to PG Recommendations Adopted
ACDIVOCA/ MENA	1,759	1,352	130%	715	946	76%
ACDIVOCA/ West Africa	709	1,296	55%	208	778	27%
CNFA/ East Africa	690	1,240	56%	126	620	20%
CNFA/ ECCA	865	1,621	53%	385	1,508	26%
CNFA/ Southern Africa	478	1,180	41%	163	885	18%
Partners/ Caribbean	1640	2,473	66%	537	2,102	26%
WAI/SPSP	1,141	946	121%	130	699	19%
Winrock/ Caribbean	90	162	56%	33	123	27%
Winrock/Other Countries	100	n/a	n/a	16	n/a	n/a
Grand Total	7472	10,270	73%	2,313	7,661	30%

Progress in Impacts

About 60% of the hosts assisted provided data for the mid-term impact assessment completed by the IPs. The following data is based on this sample. Table A7-4 provides program-level information on how big the sample is for that particular IP, as well as the progress each IP is making towards the performance goal in the number of hosts assisted. The following information on impacts will be impacted by the size of the sample. The programs with very low impact data (therefore less reliable results) are: CNFA/East Africa (24%); CNFA/South Africa (39%); and Winrock/Other (program is too new to have much information).

The OCAT rating is still new, and, as reported by USAID at the 2011 Annual F2F Implementers Meeting, not able to be accurately reported upon. The OCAT numbers in Table A7-5 are reported to show what OCAT reporting does look like at this point. CNFA E. Africa and ECCA programs used high numbers (such as 12) when reporting on OCAT. This is likely an Excel sheet error and needs to be remedied.

Table A7-5: Host Data, Progress toward Performance Goal, and Base for Impact Assessment					
	# of Hosts PG	Sum of # of Hosts	Sum of # of hosts with impact data	LOP Progress to PG	Impact Sample Base
ACDIVOCA/MENA	254	81	63	32%	78%
ACDIVOCA/ W. Africa	243	119	66	49%	55%
CNFA/E. Africa	122	66	16	54%	24%
CNFA/ECCA	290	132	85	45%	64%
CNFA/S. Africa	167	79	31	47%	39%
Partners/Carib	752	311	208	41%	67%
WAI/SPSP	117	74	41	63%	55%
Winrock/Carib	54	23	23	43%	100%
Winrock/Other		33	6	n/a	18%
Grand Total	**1,999**	**918**	**539**	**46%**	**59%**

Table A7-6: F2F Progress Towards Economic Goals						
	Annual Gross Sales (US$)			Increase in Net Annual Income (US$)		
IP	Actual	PG	Progress	Actual	PG	Progress
ACDIVOCA/MENA	$16,940,894	$23,660,000	72%	$3,408,780	$4,258,800	80%
ACDIVOCA/W. Africa	$(31,326,171)	$19,440,000	-161%	$15,514,814	$3,499,200	443%
CNFA/E. Africa	$(3,355,105)	$3,670,000	-91%	$(48,602)	$1,337,250	-4%
CNFA/ECCA	$66,963,011	$4,300,850	1557%	$7,831,879	$1,157,184	677%
CNFA/S. Africa	$2,783,885	$2,832,888	98%	$979,732	$709,216	138%
Partners/Carib	$10,684,905	$4,211,586	254%	$7,322,474	$2,406,621	304%
WAI/SPSP	$51,087,542	$318,611	16034%	$6,186,876	$303,759	2037%
Winrock/Carib	$(5,602,582)	$2,970,000	-189%	$3,058,571	$502,000	609%
Winrock/ Other	$232,093	n/a	n/a	$232,093	n/a	n/a
Grand Total	$108,408,472	$61,403,935	177%	$44,486,617	$14,174,030	314%

Hosts, Economic and Environmental Indicators

Most programs have assisted almost half of the number of hosts they anticipate assisting. The ACDIVOCA MENA program is only a third to its goal, so is in danger of not meeting the performance goal. POAA, despite having significantly more hosts than any other IP, has only reached 41% of its goal of 752 hosts.

The program is overall on track to meet economic impact goals, but this is based upon the strength of performance, combined with the low performance goal, of the SPSP (particularly the PDP program) and of the CNFA/ECCA program. ACDIVOCA in West Africa, and CNFA in East Africa have seen declining annual gross sales and, in East Africa, declining net annual income. The small sample size makes it difficult to draw conclusions about these figures.

Table A7-7: Progress Towards Improved Production, Services, and OCAT Rating									
	Increase in Area Under Improved Production Technology (ha.)			Number of New Products/Services			Average of Increase in OCAT Rating		
	Actual	**PG**	**Progress**	**Actual**	**PG**	**Progress**	**Actual**	**PG**	**Progress**
ACDIVOCA/MENA	7,927	2,028	391%	213	101	210%	0.7	1.5	48%
ACDIVOCA/ W. Africa	5,014	1,944	258%	28	97	29%	2.2	1.4	162%
CNFA/E. Africa	138	420	33%	57	126	45%	n/a	2.0	n/a
CNFA/ECCA	3,213	94,792	3%	159	134	119%	n/a	1.8	n/a
CNFA/S. Africa	12,414	840	1478%	18	67	27%	0.8	2.1	37%
Partners/Carib	7,912	225,621	4%	56	141	40%	2.0	1.6	129%
WAI/SPSP	12	0	n/a	0	0	n/a	0.0	0.0	n/a
Winrock/Carib	1,952	1,120	174%	19	12	158%	-0.9	2.0	-45%
Winrock/Other	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Grand Total	38,582	326,765	12%	550	679	81%	0.8	1.6	50%

The F2F program has not made a lot of progress, overall, in increasing the area under improved production technology, but this may be the result of reporting issues rather than actual progress (See Annex 6) As discussed in the monitoring and evaluation (M and E) section, this indicator was reported to be difficult to ascertain. The F2F program overall is exceeding expectations in the number of new products or services introduced. The Africa region, however, is falling below performance goals.

Annex 8: Case Study of the Purdue University Small Grant in Costa Rica

Purdue University Small Grant; a teaching experience to learn from

Purpose of the Grant
Purdue University's International Programs in Agriculture (IPIA) and Purdue Cooperative Extension Service (CES), in collaboration with the Centro Agronómico Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE), based in Turrialba, Costa Rica, received one of the first WAI-managed small grants. The proposal stated that ten F2F volunteers, over the period of one year, would work with the Asociación de Productores Orgánicos de Turrialba (APOT), also located in the Turrialba valley in Costa Rica , to improve APOT's organizational management, increase product development, and help the producers market their products more effectively in Costa Rica and abroad. The 250 APOT member families were to become familiar with product development and market techniques using models developed by Purdue and CATIE, in association with APOT, leading to improved farmer livelihoods.

The focus of this small grant targets the confluence of three cross-cutting issues high on USAID's priority list: natural resources management, gender roles and equity, and integrated pest management.

The Hosts and their Institution
APOT, at the time of the grant approval, was a fairly well established association of coffee, banana, sugar cane, and cacao farmers with 5 to 20 hectare farms, who have always focused mostly on organic coffee farming, adding to their family income with secondary crops. But recently, they have begun to branch out into organic vegetable farming to improve their own diets while earning some extra income in the local markets. Interviews held with APOT members revealed that in large part the motivation for organic farming comes from women producers and consumers. They attribute this to a deeper concern for their children's health and nutrition, and they see a close connection between these concerns and on-farm practices including use of pesticides, non-organic fertilizers, and maintenance of water quality. Women also do a lot of the vegetable gardening and marketing, while the men manage the traditional crop of coffee, at least until it is picked. Women then have a larger role through the drying and toasting steps if they are done on farm.

Both men and women members of APOT own land, but married couples usually do not own land together. Much of the land farmed by APOT members is still held legally in the hands of farmers' parents, to be inherited later. In one case where the husband owns their land, the woman could co-own it but she does not want to be co-owner because then her net worth would not have permitted her to obtain the several education subsidies she has received from the government for her children to attend school.

APOT was always loosely associated with CATIE, the regional education and research center, receiving occasional advice and assistance from CATIE staff. APOT grew from 12 members in 1998 to 250 in 2009, but experienced a major internal management crisis in 2010 which diminished membership from 250 to 30, almost destroying APOT. APOT historically assists members mostly with marketing of their coffee and most recently with the fresh retail markets at CATIE and in Turrialba.

The F2F Volunteers and Grant Management
During 2011, nine volunteers, recruited by Purdue University's International Programs Office from the Indiana state extension service, served in Costa Rica in three groups of three each, providing advice through on-farm visits and the provision of training seminars for APOT members.

Operation of this grant relies heavily on Purdue's International Extension Program Coordinator (IEPC) and a Purdue research scientist based in Costa Rica at CATIE. The IEPC recruited, placed, and supported four Purdue Extension Educators that went to northern Nigeria in 2009 with the Purdue Improved Cowpea Storage project, funded by the Gates Foundation, for two weeks to implement a "Train the Trainer" program with regional NGOs, and Nigerian State Agricultural Development Program offices. More than 650 Nigerian Extension Agents received training on this new storage technology. The IEPC coordinator has recruited volunteers for the F2F program for assignments with core IPs ACDI/VOCA, Winrock International, Land O'Lakes, and Partners of the Americas, although only a couple have been successfully placed because the core implementers tend to ask Purdue to recruit at the last minute when they have problems finding volunteers on their own, leaving Purdue with an inadequate amount of time to recruit the appropriate skills and experience. So he was familiar with the F2F volunteer model when the RFA for these small grants came out and led the application process for this grant.

The Purdue research scientist based at CATIE had been a Peace Corps volunteer in Costa Rica and has worked for several years at CATIE as a core faculty member with a dual appointment at Purdue as a research scientist. She lives on a farm she owns with her husband near CATIE, and has intimate knowledge and personal relationships with APOT members.

Both of these Purdue employees, with some assistance and input from CATIE and APOT, prepare the scopes of work for the volunteers to be assigned to the program, and accompany the volunteers during their entire 2-week stay in Costa Rica, providing logistic, interpretation, translation, and technical support. CATIE charges, at discounted prices, for lodging and transportation required by the program, and the volunteers use some meeting room, library, and internet facilities at no cost to the program.

Volunteers, on their last day in Costa Rica, spend time in the capital, San Jose, writing up their reports, and discussing "How will this experience affect the way I work back in Indiana?" Several times the program managers have tried to get them in to see the USDA attaché, with no luck so far.

The Assistance Provided

The original idea of this grant was conceived before the management crisis occurred, and when the Association was a lot larger than it is now. Therefore, the estimates in the grant proposal of attendance at training courses and the potential for broad-based impact (250 members) were overly ambitious.

Responding to the serious institutional weakness of APOT caused by the management and financial crisis, the Purdue volunteers adjusted their training material and provided very timely assistance to the new APOT management team to review the structure, statutes, and operating regulations of the Association, while at the same time providing advice on small farm business management and basic principles of operating an organic product retail market.

The Impact

APOT officers and several member farmers were interviewed in December 2011 in Costa Rica at the APOT office and at the farmers' homes. The APOT officers expressed firm views that the three workshops offered by the three groups of Purdue extension agents during the year were extremely helpful, and that they are relying heavily on the material related to Association organization and management to continue to strengthen the Association. They are anxiously awaiting the next visits of the Purdue advisors. The farmers, always reticent to attend workshops and seminars that take them away from their daily activities, all felt it was worth giving up a day to attend the Purdue-led training sessions, and they explained how the tools that they obtained by attending these sessions are now part

of their everyday lives. They did want their leadership to provide more timely information to them regarding the time and place of the workshops, suggesting that this was not always done in the past.

According to the APOT members interviewed, the most useful recommendations adopted by APOT members have been related to better organization and presentation of produce at the Turrialba and CATIE fresh retail markets, overall revamp of the APOT business model and regulating statutes, and on-farm planting time and input application recordkeeping and management. CATIE's Director of research and development lauded the project because it focused on what he called "the root problem of the APOT business model" rather than just technical agronomic issues which can be covered by local technicians.

Former and newly appointed APOT treasurer Jorge Avendana enjoys showing his hillside farm where he grows coffee, pigs, chickens, goats, bananas, pineapple and now vegetables. He is possibly more in tune than some of his neighbors with the approach taken by the Purdue F2F volunteers and the recommendations they have made for better business management because he is a retired school teacher. But, he has been motivated now to turn his farm into a model farm for use in training other APOT members (and enticing future members to join APOT and attend future workshops). He told me he especially likes the F2F tenet of "people helping people"…"pueblo a pueblo." He believes having specialists spend a short period of time with them in their homes and on their farms encourages the hosts to think about globalization and the challenges and opportunities they must face. He liked the way the Purdue extensionists approached the subjects of the workshops in simple, practical, straightforward ways." He feels that local Costa Rican extensionists most likely would have presented the information in much more technical, academic language, not caring if the participants understood the message.

One of the greatest contributions this group of F2F volunteers has made is to give encouragement and motivation to this group of organic farmers who are pretty good farmers, but terrible business managers and marketers, who are repeatedly discouraged and beaten back by unpredictable weather and markets. If APOT survives and grows again as a vital farmer association, it will be in part because these outsiders from Indiana believed in them enough to contribute their time, knowledge, and experience to their cause–and because they are blessed for the moment with a window of high coffee prices!)

Follow-up

Purdue delivered the number and quality of volunteers as stipulated in the grant agreement. However, Purdue and APOT admit that more work is required to complete the institution strengthening objectives of the grant. Still, the momentum generated within the organization to become a leader in organic agriculture in the Turrialba region, more broadly in Costa Rica, and maybe even beyond is encouraging enough that Purdue submitted a proposal for a follow-up grant under the F2F program. The grant would provide extensionists during 2012 to continue development of specific APOT business plans for coffee, bananas, the farmer's retail market and new products, within the larger business plan developed in 2011. They would also carry out a "train the trainer" program in 2012, using the training materials packet developed in 2011 by Purdue and APOT. To begin implementation of the business plan developed in 2011, committees would be formed and the organizational structure strengthened in 2012.

The Purdue proposal claims that 40 core farmer families of APOT worked closely with the 2011 F2F project, and that these families, along with approximately 40 indigenous Cabecar families, would be the main "hosts" of the F2F volunteers. The objectives of this grant, "Capacity Building and Business Planning for an Organic Farmer's Association: APOT and the Cabecar Indigenous Community of Costa Rica" are:

- Prepare business plans specific to coffee, bananas, and the organic farmer's market;
- APOT members and Purdue CES volunteers will conduct Train the Trainer workshops with the Cabecar indigenous community in Grano de Oro to develop their organizational capacity;
- A new business plan incorporating the Cabecar indigenous group into APOT will be elaborated;

This grant proposal was approved early in 2012. The grant manager reports that as of mid-March 2012 "…the extensionist volunteers are conducting the first set of workshops, which have been going quite well. APOT has organized themselves into product committees, as well as six subcommittees to tackle such tasks as membership guidelines, promotion and advertisement, and agriculture production. Attendance is up, and the Board of Directors is super-organized with regard to logistics and scheduling. We are completing marketing action plans for the products. The farmers are enjoying this process, and are excited about seeing how the various components from last year and this year are fitting into a concrete business plan."

Lessons to be learned

Purdue and APOT leadership have reviewed the experience of the F2F niche grant. They will adjust the model in several ways:

- Facilitate more and better interaction between the APOT leaders and association members regarding timing of F2F seminars.
- Reduce field teams to 2 extensionists instead of 3. Three is proving to be too cumbersome to manage. Actually, though, if you include the Purdue field researcher and the Purdue grant manager both of whom accompany the extensionists most of the time for language and technical reasons, there will ultimately be teams of 3 or 4 even with the core team of 2 extensionists.
- Now that the program has sent three groups (9 extensionists) to the field, from now on configure each team with one member who has visited Costa Rica in an earlier visit, and one new extensionist.

Other adjustments to take place over the timeframe for small grants:

Land Grant Universities (and most small grant recipients who are not F2F core PIs) need a longer lead time to plan F2F-type activities in conjunction with other time demands. If the small grant program is continued in the next F2F cycle, the necessary lead time for recruiting and startup should be factored into the calendar. This holds especially for new Universities to the program. If Purdue, for example, continues to participate following the recruiting and implementation model used in the Costa Rica project, they should not need as much lead time to recruit since they have the experience, information available, and a network of returned volunteers and possible repeat volunteers. One approach would be to award a one-year grant by the end of the first year of the cycle, for implementation during year 2 of the cycle, and two one-year possible extensions depending upon progress and the availability of resources year to year.

Some advantages of innovations tested in the Purdue grant

- Linking a US educational institution (in this case a Land-Grant University) with a Central American educational institution (CATIE) with a regional reach, opens a multiplicity of programming options for the F2F program. Even though neither institution per se had been involved in the F2F program in the past, each had individuals on their staff who had very good contacts and experience with the program.

- It recruits from one population of expertise (extension agents working in Indiana). Indiana has about 270 extension agents in the field and 190 extensionist educators on campus from whom Purdue can recruit for the F2F program. The advantages of this "captive" group of 460 candidates is that they all have a certain degree of similar formation and approach to their work, they are all "agents of change", educators or trainers with experience providing technical assistance and advice. They are linked to each other through social network systems through which their experience in the F2F program is shared, increasing the general level of familiarity with the F2F program and the Costa Rica project specifically.

- It focuses on building one host institution (APOT). Purdue University and APOT are developing a form of institutional linkage that should result in continued influence in support of APOT's future and continuing development. The Purdue F2F participants are developing training and technical assistance materials specifically for the APOT member needs, so there is institutional growth through the frequent updates of these materials and the continued contact the Purdue extentionists maintain with their hosts in Costa Rica.

- It depends upon the decision by PU to give extension agents ("volunteers") time off with pay to participate in the program. (While one could argue that the term "volunteer" is being stretched in this case, given that who is "volunteering" the time is the University budget, not the Volunteers themselves, it is abundantly clear that the Purdue extentionists are volunteering to the F2F program the limited time their agency will allow them to be away from their home site.)

Ideas for expanding the model:

It is conceivable that Purdue University could become a core F2F Implementer and obtain a 5-year LWA award. There is probably a limit to how many F2F volunteers can be recruited each year from the 100 or so Indiana extension agents now the source of Purdue's F2F volunteers. However, Purdue could reach out beyond the extension service, as well as into neighboring states' extension services. This latter option, however, if it were expected to operate like the present model, would require the same type of agreement to give extension agents time off with pay so they can participate.

Purdue and CATIE could also replicate the F2F niche project in other countries throughout Latin America, most notably in Central America, Paraguay, Ecuador, and Colombia. The CATIE Deputy Director General told me that the F2F model being used with APOT in Costa Rica could be used in several other countries where CATIE has programs, most funded with non-US donor funding (Nordic, EU countries). CATIE maintains offices in all these countries (Central America, Dominican Republic especially), facilitating the management requirements of fielding F2F volunteers. Expansion of this model might be possible if Purdue joined with 2 or 3 other US Land Grant Universities, to partner with CATIE is several countries, linking F2F volunteers with ongoing agriculture development programs that have a very aggressive extension component.

Annex 9: Profile of the Partnership for Safe Poultry in Kenya (PSPK) project, a Program Development Project

The Partnership for Safe Poultry in Kenya (PSPK) (March 2009-August 2011) started as a pilot "special project support program (SPSP)" of the current phase of the F2F program. Implemented by Winrock International in Kenya, the project worked across Kenya in nine districts at various points of the poultry value chain. The project supported a range of activities to increase the safety and market orientation of smallholder poultry production, providing trainings on identification and treating poultry diseases (including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza), on business development, and on nutrition. The project reached poultry producers through the Kenya Poultry Farmers Association, building its organizational capacity as well as the skills of its member groups and their members in turn to build a recognizable brand reflecting safe poultry. The project received funding from several sources, each with somewhat different objectives. The activity started with a buy-in of $500,000 to F2F under the Weidemann Associates Inc. activities from USAID/Kenya Avian Influenza (biosafety) funds for improving the safety of the smallholder poultry supply, with training in identification and treatment of poultry diseases as a pilot study. The USAID/East Africa mission provided $500,000 for exploratory work to expand the program in the region in the second year. Weidemann Associates Inc. added $100,000 to field more volunteers in the last year.

By the end of the project, 45 volunteers had contributed their services alongside 6 paid consultants from both the US and Kenya. A total of 1,572 people (58% women) were trained directly by PSPK volunteers and an additional 1,613 people (at least) were trained by those trainees. Twenty-seven host organizations were also supported.

There were a number of innovative aspects to the project. The activity worked at many nodes of the value chain, linking a range of stakeholders to create a real chain and to strengthen its operation. The project used US volunteers and consultants as well as Kenyans in its provision of technical assistance. A value chain analysis was conducted (by a volunteer) as part of the larger project. Women producers and entrepreneurs were a significant proportion of the beneficiaries. Communication and outreach to the public was an important part of the activity as well, and created a live web portal at www.kenyapoultry.org. There was also a small grants program totaling just under US $37,500. Finally, but very importantly, the project explicitly developed partnerships in country to strengthen the value chain, from the Kenya Ministry of Livestock Development to feed producers to various other trade and producer associations, as well as individual farmers.

It was hoped that the pilot would be expanded to work more extensively in the East Africa region, and initial exploratory work took place under a one-year extension from 2010-2011. New value chain assessments for Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda were conducted and presented at a regional workshop. But PSPK, for all its many successes, is in part an object lesson of the perils of close alignment to USAID priorities. According to discussions with Winrock staff members as well as USAID, the decision under the Feed the Future Multi-year Strategies at both the bilateral Kenya office and the regional office made it difficult to argue for a poultry project when the chosen focus value chain was livestock with an emphasis on disease that was interpreted not to include poultry but only cattle.