



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Farmer-to-Farmer Implementer's Meeting Notes

December 4, 2015

Prepared by



Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development

Cooperative Agreement AID-OAA-A-13-00053

Submitted by: Laura Alexander

Tel: 202-367-9986

E-Mail: lalexander@vegaalliance.org

Contents

- Farmer-to-Farmer Implementing Partners Meeting Agenda 2
- FY2015 Summary and GAO Recommendations..... 3
 - Key messages 3
 - Pending follow-up actions from the meeting 3
 - International Volunteering Overview – Benjamin J. Lough 3
- Lessons Learned Panel 3
 - Land O’Lakes’ MentorCloud online portal – Dean Smith..... 3
 - Winrock – DeAnn McGrew 4
 - Catholic Relief Services – Bruce White 5
- Technical Presentations by USAID Staff..... 5
 - NRM/Climate Change - Moffat Ngugi 5
 - Nutrition and Agriculture - Katherine Dennison..... 6
 - Input Supply Systems - Mark Huisenga..... 6
 - Food Safety - Kelley Cormier..... 7
- Breakout Discussions 7
 - Climate Smart Agriculture..... 7
 - Nutrition and Agriculture..... 7
 - Input Supply Systems 7
 - Food Safety 9
- Report on Initial Findings of MSO Task Force 10
- Mini Debate: Benefits of F2F Targeting Recruitment of New Volunteer Populations 10
- Breakout Groups 11
 - Project Directors 11
 - Recruiters 11
 - Program Officers/Coordinators – Volunteer reporting and recommendations..... 11
 - ICT and Applications..... 12
 - LWA/Associate Awards 12
 - Monitoring and Evaluation 13

Farmer-to-Farmer Implementers Meeting Agenda

8:30 AM	Welcome and Introductions, Overview of Agenda (<i>Peggy/POA</i>)
8:40 AM	FY2015 Summary - Accomplishments and GAO Report (<i>Gary, Erin</i>)
9:15 AM	Lessons Learned Panel – <i>Bruce/CRS, Dean/LOL, DeAnn/Winrock</i>
10:00 AM	Mini-Debate #1 - Value Chain vs. Support Sector (<i>Michael/POA, Nyambura/CRS</i>)
10:15 AM	Technical Presentations by USAID Staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRM/Climate Change - <i>Moffat Ngugi</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition and Agriculture - <i>Katherine Dennison</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input Supply Systems - <i>Mark Huisenga</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Safety - <i>Kelley Cormier</i>
11:15 AM	Breakout Group: Discussion #1 (Each breakout can start with a mini-debate on the topic or go straight into a discussions of the implications for F2F)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NRM/Climate Change (<i>Demian/FAVACA</i>) • Nutrition (<i>Hamdy/LOL</i>) • Input Systems (<i>Victoria/CNFA</i>) • Food Safety (<i>Sadie/LOL</i>)
12:00 PM	Report on Initial Findings of MSO Task Force (<i>Deborah/VEGA</i>)
12:30 PM	Lunch with speaker: Professor Ben Lough on International Volunteerism
1:45 PM	Mini-Debate #2 – Costs/Benefits of F2F Targeting Recruitment of New Volunteer Populations (<i>Angela/Winrock, Diana/ACDIVOCA</i>)
2:00 PM	Breakout Groups: Discussion #2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Directors - Manual Revision Process, PERSUAP and Pesticide Reports (<i>Facilitated by Gary/USAID</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiters – Background and Reference Checks, MSO Outreach Discussion (<i>Facilitated by Maria/CRS</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Officers/Coordinators - Volunteer Reporting; Volunteer Recommendations (<i>Facilitated by Andi/Partners</i>)
3:15 PM	Report Back on Small Group Discussion
3:30 PM	Breakout Groups: Discussion #3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICT and Applications for F2F (<i>Meredith/ACDIVOCA</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Awards – Marketing and Coordination (<i>Nona/Winrock</i>)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M&E Q&A (<i>Erin/USAID</i>)
4:15 PM	Wrap Up

FY2015 Summary and GAO Recommendations

Full presentation at:

farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/farmer-farmer-program-implementation-summary-fy-2015

Key messages

- 750 volunteer assignments
- Assignments carried out in 38 countries
- 13,896 volunteer days with an estimated value of over \$6.5 million
- 887 host organizations, including 578 new hosts in FY15
- Direct formal training to 42,382 beneficiaries (44% women)
- 64,361 persons total directly assisted (42% women)
- Action has been taken on the following GAO recommendations:
 - Ensure F2F implementing partners screen volunteer candidates against terrorist watch lists
 - Develop guidance on other types of background checks IPs should perform
 - Ensure IPs systematically share negative volunteer assessment information
 - Monitor extent to which objectives and activities in SOWs are accomplished

Pending follow-up actions from the meeting

1. F2F Good Practice Manual will be updated:
 - a. USAID will circulate the current version of the F2F Good Practice Manual
 - b. Reviewers will provide updates to F2F Good Practice Manual to USAID by February 2016
 - c. USAID will compile updates and circulate for final approval
2. USAID will initiate a periodic outreach within USAID to increase awareness of F2F resources available.
3. The Outreach Committee will consider increased outreach opportunities, as recommended in the 30th Anniversary Learning Event.
4. VEGA will circulate the “Expanding engagement with MSOs to increase the recruitment of minority volunteers in Farmer to Farmer (F2F) programs” implementation plan and draft products to solicit inputs from all implementers.
5. USAID will circulate background materials mentioned by USAID technical topic presenters.
6. VEGA will complete and circulate a summary report on the IPM.

International Volunteering Overview – Benjamin J. Lough

Full presentation at: farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/international-volunteering-overview

Lessons Learned Panel

Land O’Lakes’ MentorCloud online portal – Dean Smith

Full presentation at:

farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/mentorcloud-peer-peer-social-networking-platform

Goals:

1. linked with hosts prior to and after assignments to share information to prepare the volunteer for his/her upcoming assignment;
2. source solutions that may require volunteer input prior to departure (e.g. – timely identification of a crop blight); and
3. foster longer-term information exchanges between volunteers and hosts that will sustain capacity building efforts and increase adoption of volunteer recommendations.

Lessons:

1. Out of 52 users only 8 are hosts after about a year into its implementation.
2. Bringing the host and volunteer together on the platform has proven to require a good deal of facilitation and staff-time resources.
3. Even though it offers a more dynamic experience, until now for host-volunteer connection it has only served the same purpose as email.
4. The language barrier makes it difficult or impossible for host organizations to connect with volunteers.
5. The staff time required to manage the system and ensure discussions and connections are being facilitated between hosts and volunteers is quite substantial.

Winrock – DeAnn McGrew

Scope of work review checklist at:

farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/volunteer-scope-work-review-checklist

Clues that your SOW is too ambitious:

- **Deliverables across more than one link in the value chain.** If the SOW is asking one volunteer to provide concrete deliverables for more than one major link in a value chain, it is probably too ambitious. For example, asking for help with production and processing, or processing and marketing. The SOW and assignment will usually produce better results if the host/volunteer focus on one specific link or topic.
- **Objective statement is broad or high level.** This might indicate host expectations that are too ambitious, e.g. host requesting training on “integrated NRM to enhance food security in relation to gender issues.” Often also leads to unclear tasks/training topics.
- **Potential volunteers are confused or propose off-topic workplans.** If potential volunteers don’t know how to tackle the assignment or propose a workplan/training plan that is not what the host/field intended, the SOW might be too ambitious. Have a discussion between volunteer and field staff/host before the trip starts to clear up any ambiguity and make sure the volunteer is comfortable with the scope.
- **Lots of in-country travel.** If the SOW includes too much moving around to different towns (e.g., more than 2-3 in 3 weeks), this wears down most volunteers. Similarly, if the assignment includes too many hosts (more than 2-3 in 3 weeks), most volunteers will not have time to get up to speed. Much of this also depends on the host capabilities.

Things to consider:

- Too much information about the overall objectives of the host (rather than assignment objectives) can be confusing.
- Supplying a tentative day-to-day schedule:

- Helps potential and recruited volunteers get a picture of what the field/staff host have planned. This can reduce misunderstandings in expectations, even if the schedule changes closer to assignment time. In this case, we request updated schedule from field staff.
- Helps field staff think through the assignment duration, factor in travel, rest time, etc., and prepare logistics.
- In an emergency, HQ staff know if are volunteers are in the field, where, etc.
- Providing information on trainee background helps volunteers prepare materials (e.g. are they literate? Any training in agriculture? English skills?)
- Requesting training materials from volunteers in advance allows field staff to review and provide guidance and adjust to host knowledge and local situation. This also allows staff to translate key materials ahead.
- Including details about anticipated outreach opportunities.
- Creating a checklist for SOW document review (see resource from Winrock)

Catholic Relief Services – Bruce White

Scope of work template at: farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/volunteer-scope-work-template

Technical Presentations by USAID Staff

NRM/Climate Change - Moffat Ngugi

Full presentation at: farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/climate-smart-agriculture

Climate Smart Agriculture defined as:

- Sustainably increasing agricultural productivity and incomes;
- Adapting and building resilience to climate change; and
- Reducing and/or removing greenhouse gas emissions, where appropriate (the FAO definition uses possible).

Implications for programs and implementation:

1. **Sound climate data and science.** Country, Regional and Washington operating units will work together to improve our understanding of climate change impacts, and the risks that climate change pose on agro-ecosystems and food systems that are the focus of the agriculture and food security portfolio.
2. **Development of climate smart technologies and innovations.** USAID investments will help develop and increase the adoption of technologies and innovations that help achieve the climate smart agriculture objectives, and are acceptable to and benefit smallholder producers.
3. **Strengthen human and institutional capacity.** USAID will build on the capacity and knowledge of agricultural innovation systems and services that support producers and food systems to deliver climate smart agriculture practices and services.
4. **Strengthen the enabling environment.** Support and assist country governments and regional organizations to establish policies, investments and an enabling environment that facilitate climate-resilient development.

5. **Partnerships for Impact.** USAID will partner with the private sector, civil society and host governments to maximize the effectiveness of CSA investments, including the enhanced use of public-private alliances.

Nutrition and Agriculture - Katherine Dennison

Full presentation at: farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/nutrition-and-agriculture-overview

Four planks to intensive nutrition programs:

- Regular, quality **contacts** with mothers/direct caregivers
- Behavior change **messages** reinforced by government, communities, and media
- **Nutrition-sensitive**, health, agriculture, WASH
- Improve quality and expanded collection and use of **data**

High impact actions:

- Special focus on the 1,000 day window from pregnancy to the child's 2nd birthday
- Maternal nutrition, optimal breastfeeding, dietary diversity, community-based management of acute malnutrition
- Integrating key WASH actions
- Improved prevention and treatment of acute malnutrition including commodities

Resources:

- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/technical-areas>
- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/1000-day-window-opportunity>
- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/nutrition-sensitive-agriculture-nutrient-rich-value-chains>
- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/role-nutrition-ending-preventable-child-maternal-deaths>
- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/intensive-nutrition-programming>
- <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/nutrition/water-and-development-strategy-and-multi-sectoral-nutrition>

Input Supply Systems - Mark Huisenga

Full presentation at: farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/input-supply-systems-overview

- Agricultural inputs, primarily seed, fertilizer and agrochemicals, have an enormous potential to leverage the efforts of hard-working farmers;
- Better inputs can lead to higher yield, less labor, and more resistant crops;
- Improved inputs lead to greater profit;
- Raising the awareness of and improving the efficiency in use of improved technologies and inputs among poor farmers could create a high demand for these inputs;
- Lowering the transaction costs of supplying rural areas with agricultural inputs and improving the linkages between importers, wholesalers, and retailers by removing marketing inefficiencies could improve input supply systems.

Food Safety - Kelley Cormier

- Importance of Food Safety: 1) Advances Trade; 2) Protects Public Health; 3) Enhances Food Security and Nutrition
- US Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)
 - Involves creation of a new food safety system
 - Broad prevention mandate and accountability
 - New system of import oversight
 - Emphasizes partnerships
 - Emphasizes farm-to-table responsibility
 - Developed through broad coalition
- FSMA opportunities within Feed the Future
 - Food Safety Capacity Building/SPS Systems strengthening
 - Private Sector Engagement
 - Innovations in traceability technology
- Resources
 - AgriLinks: agrilinks.org
 - FDA FSMA: www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/FSMA
 - Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance: <http://www.iit.edu/ifsh/alliance>
 - Food Safety Produce Safety Alliance: <http://www.producesafetyalliance.cornell.edu>

Breakout Discussions

Climate Smart Agriculture

Notes not available

Nutrition and Agriculture

The group realizes the significant potential of agricultural development to deliver good food and nutritional benefits to the poor especially smallholders. F2F mainly targets ensuring that improved agricultural practices and interventions will maximize smallholders' production and profitability which enhances their capacity to secure good sources of adequate food to their families, improve health and nutrition benefits and reduce malnutrition health risks.

The group discussed the indicators for nutrition improvement. They recommended using the indicators of the Local Health Authorities to track nutrition improvement such as high prevalence of low hemoglobin levels, in addition to a low amount of bioavailable iron in diets, may constitute the basic indicators of iron deficiency anemia in a population. Developing strategies of fortifying a vector food with iron and other supplemental elements was recommended especially for farmer women.

Input Supply Systems

Challenges:

- Smallholder farmers (SHF) in developing countries sometimes have difficulty finding reliable sources of high-quality agricultural inputs
 - Seed, fertilizer, farm equipment, veterinary supplies and services
 - Extension services

- SHF's often suffer from low-productivity due to environmental factors, but also to inappropriate inputs
- SHF's have to travel long distances to get inputs, pay high prices, and have limited choices
 - Often no reliable transport
 - Travel long distances for very small amounts of inputs
 - Inputs are bought on a large-scale, not suitable for purchase for small-scale farmers
 - No extension services for education about products
 - Unsafe use of pesticides and insecticides
- Input supply stores/agro-dealers could be purchasing counterfeit inputs- people buying/selling cheap goods
 - Counterfeit hybrid seeds, poor fertilizer

Discussion:

The main issue in input supply not always around access, often it's about input quality. In some developing countries, inputs are being provided in innovative and accessible ways, and the main issue is access of improved seed varieties.

Counterfeit inputs are a serious and very prevalent issue. There is an ongoing USAID study being done in Uganda researching how counterfeit goods make it to smallholder farmers. The study is measuring the efficacy of different ways of mitigating the reach of counterfeit goods such as scratch off barcodes on fertilizer or seed packages, and trying to ensure valid certification of products. A point was brought up around smallholder farmers buying smaller amounts of inputs than typically packaged, and then the input suppliers repackaging inputs in smaller quantities. Is this safe? Is this still certifiable?

The question was raised about whether volunteers could make accurate recommendations around specific inputs. One implementer thought that this wouldn't be possible, as the volunteer has limited knowledge of the landscape, but another point was raised that the field staff could accurately gain information about appropriate and affordable inputs available.

A question was asked around new technologies, improved seed varieties, and herbicides. What is being done for input suppliers to access these new technologies? If these work with cash crops they could make a huge difference in adoption with SHF's.

Mark stressed the point that farmer awareness, buyer awareness, and marketing awareness could help improve input supply systems.

How can Farmer-to-Farmer help strengthen input supply systems?

- It can be a goal of Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers to raise the awareness of and improve the efficiency of use of improved technologies and inputs among the hosts, thereby creating a high demand for these inputs;
- Volunteers could improve the linkages between suppliers and small-holder farmers;
- Continuity of working with key clients_ → smallholder farmers
- Train trainers to give technical training (for a fee, to encourage sustainable entrepreneurship)
- Work with countries to establish industry-recognized certification of agro dealers

- Training for new agro dealers on working capital, inventory control, sales and marketing, record keeping and managing business relationships
- Demonstration activities
 - Facilitate education of agro-dealers for buying appropriate inputs
 - Facilitate education of famers to buy and use inputs properly
- Economic empowerment to support agro-dealers
- Enterprise assignments focused on financial and business management, marketing, etc.
- Adapt inputs to local production, markets and entrepreneurs to support the needs of SHF's
- Input suppliers could further increase sales by holding farmer field days in which they demonstrate the appropriate use and storage of improved seeds and inputs.
- For instance, a value chain approach to improving access to inputs could identify input suppliers who have access to small-scale farmers and create a certification system that turns an input supply depot into an agricultural information hub.

Benefits

- Agricultural entrepreneurship
- Profitable and sustainable business to service small holders
- Improved crop-production and increased incomes for SHF's due to better inputs/improved education on inputs

Food Safety

Implementers involved in food safety seem to be working with hosts at every level in value chains from smallholder farmers to SMEs to associations to larger farms to food processors and packagers. Some of the challenges that organizations have experienced in food safety assignments are:

- Finding volunteers for food safety assignments because of the high degree of specialization often required, which reduces the pool of qualified volunteers;
- Food safety experts can be highly paid and are generally unwilling to work as a volunteer;
- Divergent perceptions of what food safety standards should be - Volunteers may have a stricter idea of standards than what the host organization is aiming for, leaving the host organization feeling like the volunteer was too hard on them;
- It is sometimes difficult to gauge the necessary level of expertise of the volunteer. One implementer gave an example of a host organization that thought that they had a higher degree of expertise than the volunteer.

Other key points discussed:

- Many assignments are not specifically on food safety, but volunteers are able to talk about and make recommendations on food safety when they see issues.
- Of the countries with F2F programs, there is a spectrum of levels of food safety capacity. Some countries need a lot more basic hygiene education and are working on issues of traceability and training on the new US regulations.

Report on Initial Findings of MSO Task Force

Presented by Deborah Rubin

How well is F2F gathering data on minority farmers?

- Currently do not have data and would be interested to have this baseline. (To set targets?)
- Historically there are few resources, a lot of discussion on this topic, but little support to move forward
- 2009-2014 first time to collect a baseline
- Minority volunteer trends have increased. Suggests F2F is doing better in this area than it might appear.

Tacking sub-set of income levels and if this is a factor in participation in F2F

- F2F can provide economic incentives, i.e. building relationships and opportunities among business owners
- How well is the program communicating the benefits of F2F volunteering?
- Interesting to have a break out of assignment cost and economics of volunteer demographic
- Use of zip codes to gather more demographics on the areas where we are recruiting

Have a general target to all implementers to meet

- Place targets to implementers to reach on minority recruitment.
- Should this general target be reflective of diversity of minorities? i.e., there are more Black farmers than Hawaiian farmers

General questions presented by the group:

- Why do we want more minority volunteers?
- Why would people of a minority race/ethnicity want to volunteer?
- What are the barriers?

Collection of volunteer self-identifying race/ethnic information

- Getting responses is a challenge, but it's unclear why.
- Difference among implementers and geographical area on self-identification reporting.

Mini Debate: Benefits of F2F Targeting Recruitment of New Volunteer Populations

- **Expansion of technical expertise needed** (particularly when F2F engages in new fields, like AET). It is important to find new volunteers that have that expertise. New volunteers are necessary to enter into new fields/sectors.

- Potential **new partnerships/collaborations** (Thunderbird relationship) → ability to leverage more resources
- **Expansion of F2F outreach**, i.e., Serves F2F's 2nd goal of increasing public outreach and people-to-people impacts
 - Repeat volunteers reach out to their same networks upon return from their assignment, new volunteers are able to increase outreach to new networks
- Ability to target **more women and minority population** volunteers
- Exposure to multiple Americans, each with different skills and personalities, **deepens the aspect of citizen diplomacy** --a core aspect of F2F, and reinforces American diversity and generosity.
- See benefits in the last USAID evaluation (Mid-term evaluation for 2009-2013 program) May 2012:
 - Current volunteer population is **aging**
 - Benefits from **diversity**: reach new target groups
 - **Exposure**: more US citizens able to learn about US foreign assistance programs
- Some repeat volunteers decide to manage the assignment themselves and no longer follow F2F staff advice on safety or technical issues (they become overconfident). Some new volunteers more **reliable to follow field staff advice**.
- New volunteers might have **suggestions for how we can improve the program or our own volunteer management procedures**. This ensures that we as implementers continuously improve and adapt as needed

Breakout Groups

Project Directors

The Project Directors discussed and agreed on a process to review and up-date the F2F Good Practice Manual. The update is needed as the Manual is over ten years old. It serves as a reference for implementing partners and to help evaporators and others understand the Program and is useful for orientation for new staff. The group divided responsibility for initial review of the Manual by sections with a lead and secondary reviewer for each. It was agreed to complete all section up-dates by the end of February 2016, after which USAID will consolidate and circulate for final approval. All implementers will submit examples and samples of good practice in implementation of the volunteer program.

Recruiters

Notes not available

Program Officers/Coordinators – Volunteer reporting and recommendations

Group proposed emailing around trip report guidelines and recommendation forms from each implementer. They also shared a number of best practices, including:

- Before volunteers travel
 - F2F staff ensure that expectations for trip reports/recs are stated in the SOW
 - Volunteers are provided with templates and format, and also past trip reports
- When volunteers arrive in country, field staff should clarify the format and expectations for trip reports

- Some implementers take advantage of trip reports to collect additional host data – especially for hosts that are far away from the field office
- Exit interviews/debrief meetings in country
 - Volunteers take staff through reports
 - Field staff, host(s), and volunteer(s) go through recommendations together to figure out which are actionable/relevant (S.M.A.R.T)
 - 3-6 Recommendations
 - Develop with hosts an Action Plan for implementing specific recommendations, including timeline and due dates
 - Land O’ Lakes format for Recommendations Forms is:
 - Observation
 - Recommendation
 - Potential Impact
 - LoL field staff put recommendations in the appropriate categories (economic, financial, etc.)
- Ways information from reports is used besides reporting to USAID
 - Ideas for next volunteer assignments
 - Tips that can be used more widely – guidelines for a particular agricultural practice for example
 - Tap into additional funds for hosts
 - Volunteer recommendations also include recommendations to implementer – not just to hosts
- How host selection influences recommendations and host action plans for adopting them
 - Some implementers decide not to work with individual farmers
 - Some implementers focus more on potential beneficiaries and/or host contributions when selecting hosts
- How is information shared?
 - Intranet portal
 - Web-based platforms that can be accessed by recruiters and field staff

ICT and Applications

Notes not available

LWA/Associate Awards

Each LWA holder has about \$17 million ceiling (per LWA) that can be used for Associate Awards. (There is a \$25 million ceiling, minus the \$8 million Leader awards). Exceptions to the ceiling are post-conflict countries (per USAID designation), humanitarian assistance projects (funded by OFDA), and a few other special priority countries (Iraq, Afghanistan, and S Sudan).

ACDI/VOCA expects to be close to meeting their ceiling on both LWAs soon.

USAID Missions cannot compete amongst LWA holders; the mechanism is already pre-competed. Missions decide which LWA holder they want to engage for any associate award.

Gary notes that some USAID staff may have lingering concerns about Associate Awards, as a holdover from questions about use of the mechanisms six years ago. Other staff may not have a lot of awareness.

Gary & Erin send notes twice a year to approximately 200-250 agriculture, rural development and environment staff at USAID Missions, reminding them about the F2F LWA and encouraging its use.

The group was interested in doing more concerted outreach on this. Maybe the outreach committee can organize an Agrilinks or other event targeting USAID staff, to share info on F2F and benefits?

Gary thinks the big Feed the Future countries may have their money tied up in a few large projects that would be too big for F2F Associate Awards. And there is less Ag money for non FTF countries. –So this is a challenge. But this year, FTF missions may have unspent money and might be interested in F2F capacity building.

Gary also thinks climate change or environmental programming could be another opportunity for F2F associate awards (though still need to have a tie to agriculture).

Associate Awards should have 20% costs tied to volunteers and volunteer management; this meets the LWA requirement of “substantial volunteers”. This is a guideline; not necessary a firm percentage.

In Winrock’s experience, Associate Awards can take up to 2 years to complete. Most of the time is spent talking with the Mission and waiting for the Mission to get funding and/or to issue the RFAAA.

Implementers should keep Gary and Erin in the loop as they have conversations with Missions about Associate Award opportunities.

USAID and the outreach committee developed a handout which can be shared with Missions.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Resources

- M&E PowerPoint presentation:
- Standard performance and impact indicators: <http://farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/farmer-farmer-program-standard-performance-and-impact-indicators>
- Organizational development indicator: <http://farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/organizational-development-indicator-odi-final-22814>
- M&E Dos and Don’ts: <http://farmer-to-farmer.org/resources/monitoring-and-evaluation-dos-and-donts>
- Online M&E training modules: http://farmer-to-farmer.org/resources?title=training&field_audience_tid=All&field_sectors_tid=All&field_tags_tid=258

Q&A Summary

Q: What were the biggest M&E issues in FY 15?

A: All host organizations included in Table 1 should also be included in Table 2 (and Table 3), and all hosts included in Table 2 should be listed for at least one assignment in Table 1. Unfortunately, this year, almost no one had a complete match up between hosts in Table 1 and Table 2, so we had a lot of

revisions to correct this. Ensuring that all hosts in Table 1 are also included in Tables 2 and 3 (and vice versa) allows us to understand how assignments lead to impacts.

Q: Is it possible to update the definition of Indicator 16 (# of beneficiaries), which is exactly the same as Indicator 13 (# of potential beneficiaries)?

A: Erin will review the language and ensure it is clear enough for continuing implementation and confirm if any changes will be made before the end of the program. For consistency in reporting, definitions are not typically adjusted mid-program. While we probably won't make changes to any indicator definitions at this stage in the program, please do submit any indicator issues that need to be adjusted for the next round of F2F—we are collecting a list of these issues and suggestions for use in designing the next round of F2F indicators.

Q (VEGA): Is there guidance on how to calculate gender breakdown when data is not available or verified?

A: Gary's guidance is to report all unknown as Males. A 50/50 breakdown is not realistic, and there is no approximation approximation/calculation, so the program will report all unknown as males.

Q: What are the mid-term evaluation plans for the program?

A: F2F will conduct both mid-term impact reporting as part of regular reporting requirements for each individual program, and a mid-term evaluation of the F2F program as a whole.

- The **mid-term impact reports** consist of reporting data on F2F impact indicators, in Table 3. These indicator tables are due on October 15, 2016 as part of annual reporting.
- The **F2F mid-term program assessment** is currently planned for Year 4 of the program (FY17), to take advantage of the data available from the mid-term impact reporting. This assessment likely will be smaller and less extensive than previous program assessments, as the FY14 GAO review covered similar ground. Previous program assessments were conducted in 2007 and 2012 and are available on the DEC.

Q: Zeroes and Blank Cells in Reporting

- A:**
- A blank cell indicates to USAID that the data was not entered and is missing
 - A dash (—) and a zero (0) indicate either a null value or an irrelevant indicator for that host (for instance, number of agricultural loans for a host that doesn't issue loans)
 - Do not use "N/A" or any other text in an indicator field requiring numerical data. Using text in a numerical field will create an error when the data is consolidated. Use a dash (—) or a zero (0) in a numeric data set, rather than N/A.
 - For programmatic purposes and differential uses, individual implementers may want to distinguish between zeroes (0) and dashes (—). POA uses zeroes where they could have measured or had an impact but did not, and uses dashes if the indicator is not applicable.

- Because of how USAID compiles the data, be sure to delete notes columns or volunteer titles before submitting data. Any notes necessary to clarify data should always and only be below the table/data.

Q: Should host information in Table 2 be updated annually?

A: No, Table 2 data is baseline data, so once a host’s baseline data is entered, it should not change throughout the life of the project. If you collect data on a host in other years after the baseline, this should be reported in Table 3. Although Table 3 data is only required for the annual reports in Years 3 and 5, we will review and provide feedback on any data that is reported in Table 3 in other years. Some programs may find this useful for measuring progress and impact.

Table 2 should include all hosts for the life of the project, year by year. Include a separate year heading for each year:

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Standard Indicator Reporting Tables										
Table 2: Host Data (Baseline)										
Host	Country	Country F2F Project	Date of Baseline Assessment	Host Gender	Institution Type	Members/Owners	Potential Beneficiaries			Total
							Employees	Clients & Suppliers	Family Members	
Fiscal Year 2014										
Watershed Conservancy (WC)	Faminestan	Aquaculture	9/24/2013	F	N	1	74	3	385	463
Yousaree Financial Services	Faminestan	Rural Finance	9/30/2013	J	R	1	6	150	780	937
Fiscal Year 2015										
National Producers Korporation (N-P-K)	Faminestan	Legumes	12/17/2014	N/A	P	2	18	104	615	739
Faminestan Farmers Federation	Faminestan	Horticulture	12/18/2014	N/A	C	207	12	5	1,115	1,339
Count:	2	2	Total:			211	110	262	2,895	3,478

All hosts included in Table 2 must be reported in Table 3 as well for the impact reports in Years 3 and 5. If you don’t have updated information for any host, simply report the baseline data; for a host in this circumstance, their Table 2 data would be identical to the data reported in Table 3. The rows in Table 3 should be identical to Table 2 and every host in Table 2 must be in Table 3.

If you have an exceptional circumstance where hosts have been dropped or combined due to extenuating circumstances, or if the data in Table 2 is not accurate for an exceptional reason, please contact Erin directly with the updated information and a memo with the rationale/explanation so Erin can update the master Table 2, if required.

NOTE: It’s important for implementers to cooperate with Small Grants recipients and PDPs operating in their core countries, to ensure they have the necessary connections and information available. Share connections or information with VEGA as well, where applicable. This strengthens overall implementation of the program.