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John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report

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USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security

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FY22 Annual Report: Farmer-to-Farmer Program

This report summarizes experience and progress with Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 implementation of the John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Program. In addition to the narrative, attachments include a summary of F2F Program performance in FY22 against the standard F2F Program Performance indicators; details on the FY22 Program performance by Country F2F Projects; details on volunteers and assignments by country; details on volunteer characteristics; a list of F2F Associate Awards and related volunteer data; and a sample of F2F project volunteer assignments success stories.

The F2F Program was first authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1985 to provide for the transfer of knowledge and expertise of U.S. agricultural producers and businesses on a voluntary basis to developing and middle-income countries and emerging democracies. The 2014 Farm Bill designated the F2F Program as the "John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter F2F Program" in honor of one of the pilots killed September 11, 2001, and of former Congressman Bereuter, who initially sponsored the F2F Program.

The F2F Program objective is to generate sustainable, broad-based economic growth in the agricultural sector. A secondary goal is to increase the American public's understanding of international development issues and programs and international understanding of the U.S. and U.S. development programs. Since F2F's inception in 1985 to date, the program has completed 21,226 volunteer assignments with 13,757 host organizations, directly assisting more than 1.6 million agricultural professionals and impacting over 180 million indirect beneficiaries.

FY22 Program Procurement

During FY22, USAID received \$15,000,000 from PL-480 for F2F programs and administrative support. The total amount was obligated, as detailed under "F2F Program Management" below. The majority of funding was obligated to the implementing mechanisms. These include eight Leader with Associates (LWA) Cooperative Agreements and one Associate Award Cooperative Agreement for an Agricultural Volunteer Opportunity Project (AVOP).

FY22 Program Implementation

Program implementation in FY22 continued for the eight LWA activities, implemented by: ACDI/VOCA, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Cultivating New Frontiers in Agriculture (CNFA), International Executive Service Corps (IESC), Land O'Lakes Venture 37, National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International (NCBA CLUSA), Partners of the Americas (POA), and Winrock International. The AVOP Associate Award Cooperative Agreement, implemented by POA, continued in FY22 as well.

Core Program Activities: During FY22, the F2F Program continued modified program activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic but also returned to in-person assignments depending on country-

specific situations. During the pandemic, implementing partners (IPs) pivoted to a “Paired Remote U.S. Volunteer” model where a U.S. volunteer is recruited to provide remote support in partnership with a local volunteer who visits the host in-person. This allowed the program to continue providing critical volunteer technical assistance during difficult circumstances to farmers, agribusinesses, and organizations around the globe. However, as conditions changed, U.S. volunteers began to travel to provide in-person support again so the FY22 programs are a mix of both types of assignments.

A total of 72 Country F2F Projects were active in FY22 (grouped together in the table below). F2F was active in 44 countries during FY22.

F2F Country Projects Active in FY22

Country Project Categories	Number of Projects	% of Projects
Animal-Sourced Foods	12	17%
High Value Agriculture	9	13%
Agribusiness Development	8	11%
Field Crops	8	11%
Horticulture	8	11%
Food Safety	6	8%
Rural Livelihoods & Resilience	6	8%
Agricultural Extension/Education/Training	5	7%
Financial Services	3	4%
Tree Crops	3	4%
Food Security	2	3%
Support Services	2	3%
Total	72	100%

AVOP Activities: In FY22, AVOP continued to manage previously awarded sub-awards with projects in Morocco, Philippines, Cambodia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Burkina Faso—implemented by High Atlas Foundation, Grameen Foundation, University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK), Purdue University, and Browse and Grass Growers Cooperative (BGGC) respectively. AVOP awarded the third and final round of the Small Grants Program with grants to Engineers without Borders (Guatemala), Convoy of Hope (Bahamas), and CRDF Global (Uzbekistan). A list of AVOP sub-award activities is included as Attachment B.

AVOP also implemented activities related to knowledge management, with the aim of improving volunteer program operations and effectiveness. These included:

- Assisting with various Community of Practice (CoP) meetings and other IP meetings, including the Implementing Partners Meeting in February 2022,
- Managing F2F social media platforms and regularly updating each account with original content from implementing partners to promote F2F and specific program activities,
- Attending conferences to represent F2F and help spread the word on the program, and
- Updating the F2F website (farmer-to-farmer.org), brochure, and other materials.

Volunteer Activities: During FY22, the F2F Program completed 924 volunteer assignments. Assignments were carried out in 44 countries. Volunteers provided 14,678 days of technical assistance services to host organizations in developing and transition countries, with volunteer services worth over \$7.65 million in value. The table below summarizes assignments by program.

FY22 Volunteer Assignments

Program	Volunteer Assignments Completed		Volunteer Days	Average Days/Assignment	Hosts Assisted
	Total	% Women			
ACDI/VOCA	50	48%	963	19.3	47
CNFA	168	27%	2,937	17.5	142
CRS	165	22%	2,510	15.2	52
IESC	76	28%	1,489	19.6	18
NCBA CLUSA	56	46%	857	15.3	20
POA	166	43%	2,462	14.8	64
Venture37	42	48%	359	8.5	15
Winrock	91	27%	1,081	11.9	29
High Atlas Foundation	24	33%	719	30	17
Grameen Foundation	17	29%	317	18.6	11
AVOP/BGGC	14	21%	136	9.7	4
AVOP/Purdue	21	67%	238	11.3	4
AVOP/UTK	21	33%	422	20.1	7
AVOP/Small Grants	13	54%	188	14.5	15
Total	924	34%	14,678	15.9	445

Volunteer Characteristics: As mentioned, F2F continued to implement a mix of “Paired-Remote U.S. Volunteer” assignments as well as returning to in-person assignments in FY22. For the Paired-Remote, when this pivot was designed, it was determined that the data on the in-person local/national volunteer would be the one reported in the required indicator tables as they were directly interacting with hosts. The data on the U.S. remote volunteer is tracked separately (and is shared at the end of this section). Therefore, the demographic information on volunteers below is a mix of in-person U.S. and in-person local/national volunteers. This accounts for some shifts in data trends, particularly in the race/ethnicity data. Of the 924 FY22 assignments:

- 608 were completed by men (66%), 315 by women (34%), and 1 by a non-binary volunteer
- 493 (53%) were first time F2F volunteers, while 431 (47%) were repeat volunteers.
- While volunteers can often fall into multiple categories, they were asked to select their primary occupation category: 296 (32%) from NGOs, 208 (23%) from educational institutions, 112 (12%) from rural financial institutions, 105 (11%) were from agribusiness/private enterprises, 66 (7%) from government organizations, 65 (7%) from farms, 46 (5%) from farm cooperatives / associations, 18 (2%) were retired, and 8 (1%) were students.
- Volunteers, in terms of self-identified race/ethnicity: 326 (35%) identified as “Black/Not Hispanic”, 267 (29%) self-identified as “White/Not Hispanic”, 109 (12%) as “Asian”, 71 (8%) as “Black/Hispanic”, 52 (6%) “White/Hispanic”, and 0 as “Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander”. In addition, 76 (8%) identified as “Other,” and 22 (2%) declined to identify race/ethnicity. As noted above, for paired-remote assignments, F2F officially tracks the demographics of the local/national volunteers who provide in-country support to hosts which account for some of the shift in race/ethnicity. At the end of this section, the demographic data on the U.S. remote volunteers is also shared.

The F2F Program strives to recruit from a diverse pool of volunteers. F2F volunteers come from a broad population, including farming, agribusinesses, non-profit organizations, public and private agencies, and education institutions, which have diverse populations. F2F also targets minority-based organizations for AVOP Small Grant opportunities and connects with a variety of Minority Serving Institutions for recruitment of volunteers.

Volunteer Activities: The 924 volunteer assignments focused on technology transfer (52%), organizational development (19%), business/enterprise development (21%), financial services (6%), administrative support (1%), and environmental conservation (less than 1%). Volunteers worked at various levels of the commodity production and marketing chain, including information and input support services (44%), on-farm production (33%), processing and post-harvest handling (13%), and marketing (10%).

Hosts and Persons Trained: The FY22 volunteer assignments provided technical assistance to diverse hosts. Since host assistance is provided through multiple volunteer assignments and

continued contact and follow-up by F2F staff, host data is also tracked cumulatively over the life-of-program (LOP) in some of the Attachments. Through the LOP, F2F volunteers have assisted 1,226 host organizations, including 445 new host organizations in FY22. These new FY22 hosts include: 244 cooperatives and associations (55%); 24 individual private farmers (5%); 79 other private enterprises (18%); 38 NGOs (9%); 26 educational institutions (6%); 11 public sector agencies (2%); and 23 rural financial institutions (5%). In FY22, volunteers provided direct, formal training to 36,888 program participants (50% women). This included 9,084 youth ages 15-29 (25%).

Additional Resources Provided: Volunteers' individual initiatives, often assisted by F2F IPs, leveraged a total of \$649,136 from various U.S. sources to assist their hosts in FY22. Volunteers also continued to provide information and advice following completion of their assignments. Volunteers provided 1,867 days of additional technical assistance to hosts after their assignments, valued at \$974,574. Hosts and in-country partners demonstrated their support for and commitment to the F2F Program by providing an estimated \$968,274 in cash and in-kind resources to support their volunteer assignments.

Outreach: F2F volunteers and IPs conducted outreach activities to inform the U.S. public and partner countries about volunteer programs, international development issues, and foreign aid. In FY22, this included 946 presentations made to groups worldwide; 174 publications, radio or TV broadcasts conducted in the U.S. and 294 in host countries; and 1,622 social media publications worldwide.

U.S. Remote Volunteers: As noted above, data on U.S. remote volunteers providing virtual support are not officially tracked in the F2F indicator data reported above. But IPs shared demographic information about the ones who participated in FY22. Of the 509 US remote volunteers, 344 (68%) were male and 165 (32%) were female. In terms of self-identified race/ethnicity, 277 (54%) self-identified as "White/Not Hispanic", 83 (16%) "White/Hispanic", 64 (13%) identified as "Black/Not Hispanic", 46 (9%) as "Asian", 8 (2%) as "Black/Hispanic", and 2 as "American Indian or Alaskan Native". In addition, 11 (2%) identified as "Other," and 17 (3%) declined to identify race/ethnicity. U.S. remote volunteers came from 46 states plus the District of Columbia. The highest numbers of volunteers came from Georgia (59), California (30), Virginia (29), Maryland (28), Pennsylvania (22), Minnesota (20), North Carolina (20), Illinois (17) and New York (17).

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Impacts

During the fourth year of implementation, IPs continued to collect host baseline data on all new host organizations before or at the time of the initial volunteer assignment with them. Data on program outcomes and impacts was collected and reported in the Year Three Annual Report (through September 2021) and will also be collected and reported in the Final Report (through September 2023).

The F2F Program makes a best-effort attempt to measure outcomes and impacts of volunteer

program activities. Systems and indicators have evolved over time based on program experience and provide a useful base for assessing impact. Indicators are useful for planning and monitoring to maintain a focus on results. However, it is realized that the aggregated data must be considered only indicative of Program outcomes and impacts for the following reasons:

1. A major issue—as with any assessment—is that of attribution, as the volunteer services are often only one factor affecting host operations.
2. Collection of data, especially as relates to incomes, is often sensitive and difficult. Furthermore, hosts frequently don't have data at hand and hosts and field staff must rely on estimation of costs, production changes, sales, and other indicators.
3. Exchange rate changes impact economic data substantially in specific countries. The global aggregates ignore this.
4. While outcomes and impacts of some volunteer activities accrue almost immediately, others take time—perhaps years in the case of tree crops—to develop. During the final years of the program, some volunteer assistance will be too recent to provide time for impact to develop or be measured, resulting in significant undercounting of outcome and impact.
5. Assignments, hosts, and interventions are quite varied. Some, such as adjustments to processing systems, may show immediate impacts. Others, such as changes in annual crop production or marketing, will show impact on an annual basis, with lag time to impact dependent on the timing of the volunteer assignment. And others, such as organizational development which requires systemic change, or fruit tree planting, may take years to show impact.
6. Finally, the adoption process for any innovation generally involves a gradual period of testing and phased adoption. Thus, adoption rates, and impacts, spread from hosts to other actors in the sector and develop gradually over time. There may also be a quick adoption followed by dis-adoption after one crop year or over time, as hosts test innovations.

Farmer-to-Farmer Program Management

The F2F Program is managed by the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security (RFS). During FY22, USAID received an allocation of \$15,000,000 from PL-480 for F2F projects and administrative support. Of this amount, \$14,638,747 was obligated for F2F Program implementation and \$361,253 was obligated for program management (staff, office space and support, travel, USAID evaluation, etc.).

F2F Administration

During FY22, the F2F Program operated within the RFS Center for Agriculture-led Growth (CA), in the Production Systems Division. The CA was headed by Carol Jenkins, together with Jerry Glover, although during the year, Jennifer Tikka replaced Carol as the head of CA. Peggy Carlson served as Program Analyst overseeing activities in FY22. Evania Robles also served as Program Analyst until June 2022. And John Peters served as a Senior Advisor throughout FY22. All three positions are hired as U.S. Personal Service Contractors (USPSCs). Obligations for Program management and oversight amounted to 2.4% of total F2F funding, allocated as follows:

	Agreement No.	Amount Obligated (\$)
F2F PSC (Program Analyst)-III	7200AA20S00047	\$142,000
F2F PSC (Strategic Advisor)	7200AA21S00011	\$105,000
Travel	-	\$58,741
IT & Space – Tax	-	\$54,232
Misc. (Consultants, Ads, etc.)	-	\$1,280
Total		\$361,253

Program Funding

As mentioned, the F2F FY19-23 Program has nine awards—eight LWA Cooperative Agreements for core programs and one Associate Award Cooperative Agreement for AVOP. FY22 funding was allocated to programs as outlined below.

F2F Program Funding FY 19-23

Program Focus	IP	Agreement No.	Implementation Period	LOP Planned Obligations	FY22 Obligation
East Africa & Asia	CRS	7200AA18LE00006	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$11,250,000	\$ 2,475,000
West Africa	Winrock	7200AA18LE00009	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$11,250,000	\$ 2,376,005
Southern Africa	CNFA	7200AA18LE00005	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$11,250,000	\$ 2,475,000
Caribbean Basin	POA	7200AA18LE00007	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$11,250,000	\$ 2,452,068
Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia (ECCA)	ACDI/ VOCA	7200AA18LE00002	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$5,250,000	\$ 1,007,000
Food Safety & Quality	Venture 37	7200AA18LE00011	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$5,250,000	\$ 1,007,000
Coffee, Coops & Horticulture	NCBA CLUSA	7200AA18LE00008	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$5,250,000	\$ 1,007,000
Financial Services	IESC	7200AA18LE00010	10/1/18-9/30/23	\$5,250,000	\$ 1,007,000
Total				\$66,000,000	\$13,806,073
Agricultural Volunteer Opportunities Program	POA	7200AA18LA00001	5/1/18-12/30/23	\$7,000,000	\$832,674
Total				\$73,000,000	\$14,638,747

Associate Awards and Buy-Ins

In addition to the PL-480 funding obligated as detailed above, the F2F Program received the following Mission or Operating Unit funding.

F2F LOP Buy-Ins

Mission / OU	FY	Program	IP	Agreement	Funding
USAID/Moldova	2019	Organic Agriculture Development	CNFA	7200AA18LE00005	\$1,000,000
USAID/RFS	2021	DEIA Mentoring Program	Winrock	7200AA18LE00009	\$150,000
USAID/Guatemala	2022	Goat Activity	POA	7200AA18LE00007	\$1,000,000
Total					\$2,150,000

USAID Missions and Offices have accessed F2F LWAs over the years to fund a variety of additional agricultural programs that are based on use of volunteer technical assistance plus additional complementary activities. The Buy-in from USAID/Moldova continued from FY19 and expands CNFA's ongoing project with a focus on organic agriculture. The USAID/RFS DEIA Buy-in with Winrock explores new ways to diversify the F2F volunteer pool and will generate lessons learned that can be shared with the CoP. The Buy-in activity from USAID/Guatemala which began in January 2022 and will end in September 2023 focuses on goat production and has a \$1M match from a private foundation.

During FY22, there were seven active Associate Awards in Mozambique, Lebanon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Latin America, Solomon Islands, and Liberia, as well as the AVOP award. Four Associate Awards reported indicator data, excluding AVOP. These Associate Awards resulted in 62 volunteer assignments for a total of 2,132 days valued at \$1,112,904 in volunteer time. These programs provided training to 4,345 individuals (57% women) through assistance to 667 host organizations. Volunteer assignment and performance indicator data from Associate Awards is summarized in Attachment J, except for the F2F-funded AVOP activity, which is reported as part of the core LWA programs.

F2F Associate Awards Active in FY22

Country	LOP Amount	Project	Implementer	LWA No.	Award Number	Project Start	Project End
Mozambique	\$10,572,854	Feed the Future Resilient Agricultural Markets Activity – Beira Corridor (RAMA-BC)	Venture 37	AID-OAA-L-13-00008	AID-656-LA-17-00001	12/12/16	12/11/22

BFS	\$7,000,000	Agricultural Volunteer Opportunities Program	POA	OAA-L-13-00005	7200AA18LA-00001	5/1/18	12/30/23
Lebanon	\$5,900,000	Lebanon Investment in Quality	Venture 37	AID-OAA-L-13-00008	72026818LA-00001	9/1/18	5/30/22
DRC	\$12,000,000	Management of Fall Armyworm in Maize for Smallholder Farmers	Venture 37	7200AA18LE00011	72066019LA00002	10/18/19	9/30/24
LAC	\$18,000,000	F2F Program	POA	7200AA18LE00007	7200AA20LA00005	10/1/20	9/30/25
Solomon Islands	\$16,499,709	Strengthening Competitiveness, Agriculture, Livelihoods, and Environment – Natural Resource Management	Winrock	7200AA18LE00009	72049220LE00001	10/1/20	9/30/25
Liberia	\$2,930,000	USAID Agriculture Sustainability	CRS	72066921LA00001	7200AA18LE00006	7/22/21	7/21/22

F2F Program Analytical Work

During FY22 the F2F Program completed the following:

- Reviewed F2F Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Activities as part of an external assessment to recommend improvements
- Collected data on a variety of F2F activities to include in Taskers and Briefers
- Analyzed FY21 F2F data for regular and special reports

Additional Office Support Activities

The USAID F2F Team contributed to a variety of additional office tasks to help in efforts to expand USAID agricultural programs to address food security, economic growth, and environmental sustainability. In FY22, these included:

- Participation in Innovation Lab meetings to increase awareness of F2F and build opportunities for collaboration
- Managed the design and procurement of the RFS Extension and Advisory Services activity (Enabling Farmers for Agricultural Transformation - EFAT), awarded as a F2F Associate Award to Winrock International
- Lead efforts to include F2F implementing partners and projects as a mechanism for supporting strategic activities that were part of the Ukraine Supplemental Funds
- Participation in regional calls with Missions to promote opportunities for engaging with F2F
- Support the development and launch of a new Associate Awards funded by USAID Mission in Sudan, Tajikistan, and the Dominican Republic
- Support Missions on a variety of tasks in Egypt, West Bank & Gaza, Eastern and Southern Caribbean, and South Sudan

Attachments:

Attachment A: Approved F2F Country Projects

Attachment B: F2F AVOP Sub-award Projects through FY22

Attachment C: FY22 F2F Volunteer Data and Activity Indicators by Program

Attachment D: F2F Host Data by Program

Attachment E: FY22 F2F Volunteer Characteristics

Attachment F: FY22 F2F Volunteer Assignments by Country

Attachment G: FY22 Public Outreach and Leveraging of Resources by Project

Attachment H: FY22 Volunteer Assignments by Volunteer State of Origin

Attachment I: Summary of F2F Program Activity To-date by Country F2F Project

Attachment J: FY22 Associate Award Volunteer Assignment and Performance Indicator Data

Attachment K: FY22 F2F Program Success Stories

Attachment A: Approved F2F Country Projects

Partner	Country	Country Projects
ACDIVOCA/Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia (ECCA)	Tajikistan	Rural Enterprise Development
	Kyrgyzstan	Agricultural Education & Training
		Rural Enterprise Development
	Georgia	Food Safety
		Rural Enterprise Development
	Armenia	Rural Enterprise Development
Catholic Relief Services/East Africa & Asia	Ethiopia	Crops
		Livestock
	Benin	Cashew
		Soybean
	Nepal	Crops
		Livestock
	Rwanda	Horticulture
		Maize
	Timor-Leste	Modernizing Agriculture
	Uganda	Agribusiness
		Livestock
	CNFA/Southern Africa	Malawi
Horticulture		
Legumes		
Mozambique		Horticulture
		Poultry
		Sub-sector Services

	Madagascar	Horticulture
		Aquaculture
		Livestock
		Rice
	Moldova	Livestock/Dairy
		Organic Agriculture
	Zambia	Aquaculture
		Legumes
		Horticulture
	Zimbabwe	Horticulture
Livestock/Dairy		
Legumes		
IESC/Financial Services	Kenya	Access to Finance
	Tanzania	Access to Finance
	Sri Lanka	Access to Finance
NCBA CLUSA/Coffee, Coops & Horticulture	El Salvador	Coffee Systems
	Honduras	Coffee Systems
	Ecuador	Coffee Systems
		Cacao Systems
	Peru	Coffee Systems
		Cacao Systems
Partners of the Americas/Caribbean Basin & Burma	Dominican Republic	Rural Adaptation and Resilience
		Youth in Agricultural Development
	Burma	Tree Crops
	Colombia	Rural Enterprise Development

	Jamaica	Livestock and Aquaculture
		Rural Adaptation and Resilience
	Guyana	Horticulture Production & Marketing
		Livestock Production and Marketing
	Guatemala	Rural Enterprise Development
		High Value Horticulture
Winrock/West Africa	Guinea	Agricultural Education & Training
		Rural Livelihood
	Ghana	Post Harvest
	Mali	Rural Livelihood
	Nigeria	Agricultural Education & Training
	Senegal	Agricultural Education & Training
Post Harvest		
Venture 37/Food Safety & Quality	Egypt	Food Safety & Quality
	Lebanon	Food Safety & Quality
	Bangladesh	Food Safety & Quality
AVOP/HAF	Morocco	Cooperatives Leading Sustainable Agriculture
AVOP/Grameen	Philippines	Capacity-building of the Coconut Subsector
AVOP/Purdue	Trinidad & Tobago	Agricultural Extension
AVOP/UTK	Cambodia	Sustainable Intensification
AVOP/BGGC	Burkina Faso	Food Security & Nutrition
AVOP-Convoy of Hope	Bahamas	Food Security & Extension
AVOP-CRDF	Uzbekistan	Agribusinesses in Horticulture
AVOP-EWB-USA	Guatemala	Cardamom Drying

Attachment B: Agricultural Volunteer Opportunity Project Sub-award Projects through FY22

Implementer	Country	Project	Funding	Time Period
High Atlas Foundation	Morocco	Cooperatives Leading Sustainable Agriculture in Morocco	\$1,097,382	7/3/19 - 9/30/23
Grameen Foundation	Philippines	Capacity-building of the Coconut Subsector Program	\$1,180,000	7/10/19 – 8/31/23
Purdue University	Trinidad & Tobago	Agricultural Extension	\$660,729	1/01/20 – 9/30/23
University of Tennessee	Cambodia	Sustainable Intensification	\$613,000	1/01/20 – 8/31/23
Browse & Grass Growers	Burkina Faso	Food Security & Nutrition	\$613,000	1/01/20 – 4/30/23
Engineers without Borders	Guatemala	Cardamom Drying	\$199,991	12/1/21 – 3/31/23
Convoy of Hope	Bahamas	Food Security & Extension	\$199,243	12/1/21 – 3/31/23
CRDF Global	Uzbekistan	Agribusinesses in Horticulture	\$249,187	12/1/21 – 4/30/23
Total			\$4,812,532	

Attachment C: FY22 F2F Volunteer Data and Activity Indicators by Program

Table C-1a and C-1b: Volunteer Data (FY22)

Program	Volunteers				Prior Service		
	Male	Female	Non-Binary	Total	Prior Service	First Time	Total
ACDI/VOCA	26	24	0	50	35	15	50
CNFA	122	46	0	168	101	67	168
CRS	128	37	0	165	79	86	165
IESC	55	21	0	76	32	44	76
NCBA CLUSA	30	26	0	56	25	31	56
POA	94	72	0	166	54	112	166
Venture37	22	20	0	42	21	21	42
Winrock	65	25	1	91	50	41	91
High Atlas Foundation	16	8	0	24	7	17	24
Grameen Foundation	12	5	0	17	5	12	17
AVOP/BGGC	11	3	0	14	6	8	14
AVOP/Purdue University	7	14	0	21	12	9	21
AVOP/UTK	14	7	0	21	4	17	21
AVOP/Small Grants	6	7	0	13	0	13	13
	608	315	1	924	431	493	924
	66%	34%	0%	100%	47%	53%	100%

Program	Type of Volunteer Assistance							Commodity Chain Activities					Volunteer Days
	Technology Transfer	Organizational Development	Enterprise Development	Financial Services	Environmental Conservation	Administrative	Total	Support Services	On-Farm Production	Processing/Post-harvest	Marketing	Total	
ACDI/VOCA	25	9	15	0	0	1	50	9	25	8	8	50	963
CNFA	112	11	39	4	1	1	168	19	127	12	10	168	2,937
CRS	88	56	19	1	0	1	165	118	42	4	1	165	2,510
IESC	13	15	20	27	1	0	76	67	7	1	1	76	1,489
NCBA CLUSA	24	6	17	6	3	0	56	20	13	10	13	56	857
POA	90	23	41	7	5	0	166	71	36	27	32	166	2,462
Venture37	39	2	1	0	0	0	42	3	3	29	7	42	359
Winrock	39	32	17	3	0	0	91	50	10	26	5	91	1,081
High Atlas	15	4	3	0	1	1	24	11	5	1	7	24	719
Grameen	0	11	3	1	0	2	17	15	0	0	2	17	317
AVOP/BGGC	7	0	5	2	0	0	14	6	8	0	0	14	136
AVOP/Purdue	15	5	1	0	0	0	21	6	12	0	3	21	238
AVOP/UTK	15	5	1	0	0	0	21	5	15	0	1	21	422
AVOP/Small Grants	3	0	10	0	0	0	13	10	0	3	0	13	188
	485	179	192	51	11	6	924	410	303	121	90	924	14,678
	52%	19%	21%	6%	1%	1%	100%	44%	33%	13%	10%	100%	

Table C-2: Volunteer Activity Data (FY22)

Program	Value of Volunteer Time (U.S.\$)	Estimated Value of Host Contribution (U.S.\$)	Persons Trained					Number of Volunteer Recommendations Made
			Male	Female	Non-binary	Total	Youth	
ACDI/VOCA	502,686	20,823	1,469	1,409	0	2,878	688	185
CNFA	1,533,114	20,758	3,645	4,950	0	8,595	1,831	1,051
CRS	1,310,220	88,473	5,154	5,283	0	10,437	3,075	736
IESC	777,258	36,915	1,755	1,150	1	2,906	402	387
NCBA CLUSA	447,354	48,925	779	591	0	1,370	300	270
POA	1,285,164	645,326	2,421	1,887	2	4,310	1,381	734
Venture37	187,398	5,556	534	322	0	856	329	176
Winrock	564,282	69,963	1,454	1,180	0	2,634	685	470
High Atlas Foundation	375,318	2,800	104	195	0	299	105	67
Grameen Foundation	165,474	5,580	105	165	0	270	28	105
AVOP/BGGC	70,992	1,955	164	218	0	382	62	62
AVOP/Purdue	124,236	4,400	260	158	0	418	62	85
AVOP/UTK	220,284	16,130	259	194	0	453	136	71
AVOP/Small Grants	98,136	670	302	778	0	1,080	0	62
Total	7,661,916	968,274	18,405	18,480	3	36,888	9,084	4,461
Percent of Total			50%	50%	0%		25%	

Attachment D: F2F Host Data by Program

Table D-1: Host Data: Type of Hosts (FY22)

Program	Type of Host Institution							Total
	Cooperatives and Associations	Individual Private Farmers	Other Private Enterprises	Non-Profit, Public Interest NGOs	Public & Private Education Institutions	Rural Financial Institutions	Public Sector Agencies	
ACDI/VOCA	1	17	22	5	2	0	0	47
CNFA	122	1	17	0	0	0	2	142
CRS	21	0	16	8	5	1	1	52
IESC	3	1	2	2	0	9	1	18
NCBA CLUSA	18	0	0	0	1	0	1	20
POA	26	3	6	8	9	1	11	64
Venture37	3	0	8	4	0	0	0	15
Winrock	10	0	6	6	7	0	0	29
High Atlas Foundation	16	0	0	1	0	0	0	17
Grameen Foundation	9	0	1	0	1	0	0	11
AVOP/BGGC	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	4
AVOP/Purdue	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
AVOP/UTK	1	0	0	3	1	0	2	7
AVOP/Small Grants	9	2	0	0	0	0	4	15
Total	244	24	79	38	26	11	23	445
Percent of total	55%	5%	18%	9%	6%	2%	5%	100%

Attachment E: FY22 F2F Volunteer Characteristics

Table E-1: Volunteer Demographics and Activity Characterization FY22

Occupation	No.	%
Cooperative/Association	46	5%
Farmer	65	7%
Private Enterprise	105	11%
NGO	296	32%
Educational institution	208	23%
Rural Financial Institution	112	12%
Government	66	7%
Retired	18	2%
Student	8	1%
Total	924	100%

Race (Self-Identified)	Number	Percent
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1	0%
Asian	109	12%
Black/Hispanic	71	8%
Black/Non-Hispanic	326	35%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0%
White/Hispanic	52	6%
White/Non-Hispanic	267	29%
Other	76	8%
Decline	22	2%
Total	924	100%

Gender	No.	%
Male	608	66%
Female	315	34%
Non-binary	1	0%
Total	924	100%

Prior F2F Service	No.	%
Prior F2F service	431	47%
First Time F2F Volunteer	493	53%
Total	924	100%

Type of Assistance	No.	%
Administrative	6	1%
Technology Transfer	192	21%
Organizational Development	11	1%
Enterprise Development	51	6%
Financial Services	179	19%
NRM/Environmental	485	52%
Total	924	100%

Value Chain	No.	%
Support Service	410	44%
Farm Production	90	10%
Processing/Storage	303	33%
Marketing	121	13%
Total	924	100%

Table E-2: F2F Volunteers by Employment Category (FY22)

Program	Cooperative/ Association	Individual Private Farmer	Private Enterprise	NGO	Educational institution	Rural Financial Institution	Government	Retired	Student	Total
ACDI/VOCA	0	2	26	2	16	0	1	2	1	50
CNFA	13	20	39	20	27	2	37	10	0	168
CRS	12	9	62	22	22	1	27	10	0	165
IESC	0	8	39	10	1	13	2	3	0	76
NCBA CLUSA	2	3	19	6	8	1	3	11	3	56
POA	0	7	60	17	53	0	10	19	0	166
Venture37	3	0	16	4	14	0	2	3	0	42
Winrock	3	8	21	19	22	0	15	3	0	91
High Atlas Foundation	7	5	4	0	1	0	2	5	0	24
Grameen Foundation	0	0	5	1	9	1	1	0	0	17
AVOP/BGGC	5	0	0	0	2	0	4	0	3	14
AVOP/Purdue	1	0	1	3	9	0	7	0	0	21
AVOP/UTK	0	1	2	1	16	0	1	0	0	21
AVOP/Small Grants	0	2	2	0	8	0	0	0	1	13
Total	46	65	296	105	208	18	112	66	8	924

Table E-3: F2F Volunteers by Race (Self-Identified) (FY22)

Program	American Indian or Alaskan Native	Asian	Black/ Hispanic	Black/ Non-Hispanic	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	White/ Hispanic	White/ Non-Hispanic	Other	Decline	Total
ACDI/VOCA	0	11	0	1	0	4	34	0	0	50
CNFA	1	1	51	70	0	6	29	3	7	168
CRS	0	33	1	103	0	1	27	0	0	165
IESC	0	4	0	67	0	0	4	1	0	76
NCBA CLUSA	0	1	1	1	0	10	33	8	2	56
POA	0	25	4	10	0	23	93	7	4	166
Venture37	0	6	1	0	0	0	11	20	4	42
Winrock	0	0	13	45	0	0	11	17	5	91
High Atlas Foundation	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	17	0	24
Grameen Foundation	0	12	0	2	0	1	2	0	0	17
AVOP/BGGC	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	14
AVOP/Purdue	0	2	0	12	0	0	4	3	0	21
AVOP/UTK	0	14	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	21
AVOP/Small Grants	0	0	0	1	0	0	12	0	0	13
Total	1	109	71	326	0	52	267	76	22	924

Attachment F: FY22 F2F Volunteer Assignments by Country

Country	Assignments
Zimbabwe	47
Colombia	41
Malawi	38
Kenya	37
Uganda	35
Guatemala	34
Benin	32
Jamaica	32
Tanzania	32
Zambia	32
Nepal	30
Rwanda	30
Guyana	29
Mozambique	29
Guinea	26
Ethiopia	24
Morocco	24
Dominican Republic	22
Cambodia	21
Egypt	21
Senegal	21
Trinidad & Tobago	21
Ecuador	19

Country	Assignments
Madagascar	19
Nigeria	19
Ghana	18
Honduras	17
Peru	17
Philippines	17
Georgia	15
Lebanon	15
Burkina Faso	14
Kyrgyzstan	14
Timor-Leste	14
Tajikistan	13
Myanmar	11
Bahamas	10
Armenia	8
Mali	7
Bangladesh	6
Sri Lanka	6
El Salvador	3
Moldova	3
Dominica	1
Total:	924

Attachment G: FY22 Public Outreach and Leverage of Resources by Project

	Outreach by Implementer, Partner, Volunteer					Value of Resources Leveraged by Implementers & Volunteers in the U.S.	Number of Days of Volunteer Technical Assistance from the U.S.	Value Volunteer Technical Assistance from the U.S.
	Presentations Made to Groups (worldwide)	Publication, Radio or TV Broadcast (in U.S.)	Publication, Radio or TV Broadcast (in Host Country)	Social Media Publication (Worldwide)	Total			
ACDI/VOCA	225	104	0	28	357	\$9,150	237	\$123,714
CNFA	134	4	107	402	647	\$54,993	99	\$51,678
CRS	205	0	9	214	428	\$150	8	\$4,176
IESC	132	15	49	137	333	\$2,032	254	\$132,588
NCBA CLUSA	56	5	11	127	199	\$1,296	210	\$109,620
POA	2	17	25	39	83	\$0	20	\$10,440
Venture37	21	4	1	138	164	\$5,000	106	\$55,332
Winrock	31	0	3	84	118	\$137,677	287	\$149,814
High Atlas Foundation	53	2	14	224	293	\$130,396	38	\$19,836
Grameen Foundation	1	0	3	37	41	\$89,656	93	\$48,546
AVOP/BGGC	4	0	4	170	178	\$57,868	106	\$55,332
AVOP/Purdue	18	23	8	13	62	\$134,217	189	\$98,658
AVOP/UTK	2	0	0	7	9	\$4,777	80	\$41,760
AVOP/Small Grants	62	0	60	2	124	\$21,924	140	\$73,080
	946	174	294	1,622	3,036	\$649,136	1,867	\$974,574

Attachment H: FY22 Volunteer Assignments by Volunteer State of Origin

State		FY22 Volunteers	LOP Volunteers
Alabama	AL	2	9
Alaska	AK	2	4
Arizona	AZ	3	9
Arkansas	AR	4	15
California	CA	33	83
Colorado	CO	10	27
Connecticut	CT	0	0
Delaware	DE	1	3
DC	DC	2	12
Florida	FL	27	54
Georgia	GA	5	18
Hawaii	HI	5	15
Idaho	ID	2	5
Illinois	IL	11	26
Indiana	IN	10	16
Iowa	IA	3	12
Kansas	KS	1	3
Kentucky	KY	1	4
Louisiana	LA	6	8
Maine	ME	4	13
Marshall Islands	MH	0	0
Maryland	MD	11	37
Massachusetts	MA	9	25
Michigan	MI	11	25
Minnesota	MN	13	51
Mississippi	MS	2	4
Missouri	MO	15	25
Montana	MT	1	4

State		FY22 Volunteers	LOP Volunteers
Nebraska	NE	2	8
Nevada	NV	1	1
New Hampshire	NH	0	1
New Jersey	NJ	4	8
New Mexico	NM	3	11
New York	NY	9	37
Non-US Volunteer	NA	488	934
North Carolina	NC	19	60
North Dakota	ND	2	6
Ohio	OH	5	16
Oklahoma	OK	2	10
Oregon	OR	10	34
Other American	OA	79	141
Pennsylvania	PA	11	31
Rhode Island	RI	0	3
South Carolina	SC	3	6
South Dakota	SD	3	3
Tennessee	TN	21	34
Texas	TX	8	27
Utah	UT	0	3
Vermont	VT	4	11
Virginia	VA	16	30
Washington	WA	22	47
West Virginia	WV	4	7
Wisconsin	WI	14	39
Wyoming	WY	0	1
Total:		924	2,016

Attachment I: Summary F2F Program Activity by Country F2F Project

Country	Country Project	Volunteer Assignments FY22	Volunteer Assignments LOP	Hosts Assisted FY22	Hosts Assisted LOP
ACDI VOCA					
Armenia	Rural Enterprise Development	8	29	7	28
Georgia	Food Safety	0	4	0	0
	Rural Enterprise Development	15	50	12	48
Kyrgyzstan	Agricultural Education & Training	2	7	2	7
	Rural Enterprise Development	12	51	14	60
Tajikistan	Rural Enterprise Development	13	61	12	56
	Flexible	0	0	0	0
	Total	50	202	47	199
CNFA					
Madagascar	Aquaculture	1	6	0	4
	Horticulture	8	13	7	16
	Livestock	6	12	6	13
	Rice	0	5	0	3
Malawi	Aquaculture	1	5	1	5
	Horticulture	7	20	5	15
	Legumes	26	31	25	30
Moldova	Livestock/Dairy	1	6	0	4
	Organic Agriculture	2	15	1	4
Mozambique	Horticulture	17	34	4	13
	Poultry	1	5	0	3
	Sub-sector Services	3	11	2	5
Zambia	Aquaculture	4	9	4	8
	Legumes	5	10	7	16
	Horticulture	21	26	29	34

Zimbabwe	Horticulture	16	26		12	19
	Livestock/Dairy	27	37		27	36
	Legumes	4	9		4	8
	Flexible	18	39		8	18
	Total	168	319		142	254
CRS						
Benin	Cashew	12	32		4	15
	Soybean	20	45		6	20
Ethiopia	Crops	14	35		2	14
	Livestock	10	20		2	10
Nepal	Crops	20	51		13	36
	Livestock	10	17		7	12
Rwanda	Horticulture	14	42		5	25
	Maize	16	38		9	22
Timor-Leste	Modernizing Agriculture	14	42		2	16
Uganda	Agribusiness	23	58		1	15
	Livestock	12	35		1	11
	Flexible	0	2		0	2
	Total	165	417		52	198
IESC						
Kenya	Access to Finance	37	77		4	22
Tanzania	Access to Finance	32	73		10	28
Sri Lanka	Access to Finance	6	6		3	3
	Flexible	1	1		1	1
	Total	76	157		18	54
NCBA CLUSA						
Ecuador	Cacao Systems	11	17		3	9
	Coffee Systems	6	11		2	5
El Salvador	Coffee Systems	2	8		0	6
Honduras	Coffee Systems	17	22		11	17
Peru	Cacao Systems	6	13		1	10

	Coffee Systems	9	15		2	8
	Flexible	5	8		1	5
	Total	56	94		20	60
POA						
Colombia	Rural Enterprise Development	41	59		16	35
Dominican Republic	Rural Adaptation and Resilience	18	41		6	16
	Youth in Agricultural Development	3	10		7	9
Guatemala	High Value Horticulture	25	39		0	5
	Rural Enterprise Development	6	19		0	4
Guyana	Horticulture Production & Marketing	16	35		15	21
	Livestock Production & Marketing	13	23		2	3
Jamaica	Livestock and Aquaculture	6	15		3	7
	Rural Adaptation and Resilience	26	37		12	19
Myanmar	Tree Crops	11	14		3	6
	Flexible	1	6		0	2
	Total	166	298		64	127
Venture 37						
Bangladesh	Food Safety & Quality	6	29		1	17
Egypt	Food Safety & Quality	21	50		5	33
Lebanon	Food Safety & Quality	15	46		9	28
	Flexible	0	5		0	5
	Total	42	130		15	83
Winrock						
Ghana	Post Harvest	18	40		11	33
Guinea	Agricultural Education & Training	5	14		2	8
	Rural Livelihood	21	45		2	17
Mali	Rural Livelihood	7	18		1	10
Nigeria	Agricultural Education & Training	19	42		8	22
Senegal	Agricultural Education & Training	7	22		1	12
	Post Harvest	14	28		4	11
	Flexible	0	6		0	4

	Total	91	215		29	117
AVOP						
Grameen/Philippines	Capacity-building of the Coconut Subsector Program	17	23		11	16
HAF/Morocco	Cooperatives Leading Sustainable Agriculture	24	59		17	73
BGGC/Burkina Faso	Food Security & Nutrition	14	29		4	11
Purdue/Trinidad & Tobago	Agricultural Extension	21	37		4	10
UTK/Cambodia	Sustainable Intensification	21	23		7	9
COH/Bahamas	Food Security & Extension	10	10		12	12
CRDF/Uzbekistan	Agribusinesses in Horticulture	0	0		0	0
EWB/Guatemala	Cardamom Drying	3	3		3	3
	Total	110	184		58	134
	Grand Total	924	2,016		445	1,226

Attachment J: FY22 Associate Award Volunteer Assignment and Activity Performance Indicator Data

	No. of Volunteers			Type of Volunteers				Volunteer Days Completed	Persons Trained			
	Male	Female	Total	U.S. volunteer	Local volunteer	Third Country volunteer	Total		Male	Female	Total	Youth
CRS/Liberia Agriculture Sustainability Activity	43	7	50	5	43	2	50	760	1579	2228	3807	1022
POA/Latin America	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Venture 37/Mozambique RAMA-BC	5	2	7	1	6	0	7	1331	159	195	354	175
Venture 37/Lebanon LINQ	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	3	1	1	2	2
Venture/37 DRC Fall ArmyWorm	2	0	2	0	1	1	2	38	122	60	182	0
Winrock/SCALE-NRM	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
FY22 Total	50	10	60	7	50	5	62	2,132	1,861	2,484	4,345	1,199

	Host Institutions								Local/Third Country Volunteer Countries & Counts
	Cooperatives & Associations	Individual Private Farmers	Other Private Enterprises	Non-Profit, Public Interest NGOs	Public and Private Education Institutions	Rural Financial Institutions	Public Sector Technical Agencies	Total	
CRS/Liberia Agriculture Sustainability Activity	121	0	26	1	0	0	0	148	Liberia (43), Uganda (1), Canada (1)
POA/Latin America	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Venture 37 /Mozambique RAMA-BC	103	420	0	1	4	0	0	528	
Venture 37/Lebanon LINQ	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	
Venture/37 DRC Fall ArmyWorm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	DRC/Belgium and Kenya
Winrock/SCALE-NRM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
FY22 Total	224	420	27	2	4	0	0	677	

Attachment K: FY22 F2F Program Success Stories

Attached please find a selection of F2F Program success stories from each implementing partner.



Tajikistan F2F: Proper technique is the way to success.

Mr. Nurali Naskonov a father of a large family, established his 8.8 ha farm in Kushoniyon District of Khatlon Province, in 2016. In the beginning, he grew only cotton as it is a traditional crop in Khatlon Province. However, in 2017 he decided to diversify his farm production and so the family planted fruit tree, built a greenhouse for vegetables, and established a lemon house. On three (3) ha. of his farm he planted apricots, peaches, plums, and persimmons trees. Over the next couple years, they built two greenhouses, and two lemon



Nurali Naskonov (second from the left), the head of the “Vatan” Dehkan Farm and his family members, during the persimmon harvesting. Khatlon Province.

houses. Initially it seemed that everything was going well with his business plan but later when the trees grew, Mr. Naskonov realized that the trees needed to be pruned, pest and diseases needed to be controlled and it became obvious that he did not have the appropriate knowledge to handle all the issues. The first broken branches of the young, not yet strong, trees made it necessary to hire pruning specialists, the first diseases and pests required them to hire agronomists and purchase expensive chemicals. None of the family members had pruning skills and orchard management experience. Due to their workload, hired specialists were not always available and were expensive. One day, while buying chemicals for pest control at the agro-store, Nurali met a farmer who told him about the Farmer-to-Farmer program. A short time later while



US Volunteer Bruce Bailey during his assignment in Tajikistan

on a separate assignment the Farmer-to-Farmer expert Ross Penhallegon visited Vatan Dehkan farm and demonstrated pruning techniques on several trees. After this acquaintance, Vatan farm decided to apply for a Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer.

In January 2022, Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer consultant, Bruce Bailey visited Nurali and the Vatan Dehkan farm for two weeks and taught pruning, grafting, watering, pest, and

disease control methods, as well as appropriate crop nutrition. After this collaboration, Nurali improved the quality and yield of the family's trees by reducing the incidence of pest and disease through the introduction of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods and cutting in half the amount of chemicals used, thereby reducing production costs. As the result the host increased their net income from \$13,050 to \$21,425 or by 61%.

The Farmer-to-Farmer expert taught us advanced methods of orchard management which has had results in a very short period of time.

– Nurali Nashonv



Nurali Naskonov, the head of the Khatlon province “Vatan” Dehkan Farm in Tajikistan with members of his family during the lemon and the persimmon harvests.



Farmer-to-Farmer assignment helps nonprofit organization in Trinidad increase chicken egg production

Vision on Mission (VOM) is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was founded in 1995 by Mr. Wayne Chance during his incarceration in the Port-of-Spain prison. The organization assists ex-inmates on their release to re-enter society successfully and is dedicated to the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-offenders, deportees, delinquent youths, and the socially displaced into society. To further

their mission and goals to create a better future for their members and community, VOM identified agriculture as a way to teach personal skills and money management. Because chicken eggs are in high demand commercially in Trinidad and Tobago and for consumption at VOM, the NGO decided to work towards increasing their poultry production for commercial chicken eggs. To support



Darrin Karcher teaches participants egg anatomy

the organization, the USAID-funded John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program connected with Darrin Karcher, Associate Animal Science Professor and Extension Poultry Specialist at Purdue University and Adjunct Associate Professor at Michigan State University.

Darrin Karcher has a vast amount of experience consulting with poultry operations and building Extension capacities. In March 2022, Darrin Karcher trained 21 people: one youth, one woman, and 19 men in the care of laying hens for commercial egg production and safe handling processes for eggs. Karcher prepared training materials focused on brooding, meat bird management, eggs, and anatomy/physiology of the bird. Specifically, the trainings prepared participants to properly brood chicks, identify and utilize best management practices for layers, identify egg nomenclature and demonstrate techniques to assess egg quality, how to properly handle poultry, perform external assessment on the bird, and dissect and identify gastrointestinal and reproductive tract parts.

With Karcher's training, VOM was able to increase chicken egg production by 50%. VOM is not only using daily eggs for member consumption, but excess production has also allowed the organization to sell at local farmers markets. The knowledge that Darrin Karcher has passed on will be essential for helping the VOM organization and its members to continue improving farm production. With the higher chicken egg production, VOM and its members have economic security for the future and a new income source for its members.

"This was an amazing experience. There is a distinct satisfaction one gains from working with people as you teach them versus just instructing them what to do."



Darrin Karcher (left) with VOM staff, participant and board member.



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Empowering The Maasai Women

HOW F2F VOLUNTEERS SUPPORTED SAMLI DAIRY COOPERATIVE TO TRANSFORM THE LIVES OF MAASAI WOMEN

Josephine did not consider rearing dairy cows as a business opportunity until she teamed up with her neighbors in Emali, Kenya. It is the culture of the Maasai to value the cow more than the milk it produces. Like many Maasai women in Emali, all she wanted was a cow that could produce enough milk for her six children.



US Volunteer Catherine Cassidy with Josephine and a group of Maasai women dairy farmers during one of the F2F volunteer assignments

Through the USAID-funded Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program in Kenya, IESC and Child Fund International teamed up to provide volunteer technical assistance to a startup called Samli Dairy Cooperative, which was founded in 2021 by a group of Maasai women in Emali, Kajiado County. The F2F support aimed to transform the social startup enterprise into a market-driven entity that is profitable, accountable, and capable of transforming the livelihoods of the poor women and children in the community. The support delivered by F2F through targeted volunteer assignments

changed how Josephine viewed her milk; it was once simply used for household consumption but was now transformed into a potential business opportunity.

Maasai are nomadic people, moving from one place to another in search of pasture for their animals and food for their families. However, increasing land acquisition and land subdivision into private property throughout Kenya's Maasai land has threatened this nomadic culture, forcing the Maasai to lead a sedentary life. Supporting Maasai women to commercially raise dairy cattle, which most families already possess, is a game changer in the quest for their economic transformation.

The F2F program provided technical support to Samli Dairy to improve its governance and implement effective strategies to grow its membership. Over the course of four Farmer-to-Farmer assignments completed by seven volunteers, Samli Dairy has become more democratic, accountable, efficient, and transparent through the adoption of new internal policies, procedures, and membership standards. The technical support also helped the organization to become more responsive to market needs, and it has subsequently been able to attract and retain satisfied smallholder dairy farmers as milk

Success Story

suppliers. Daily milk delivery for the cooperative has grown from 150 kgs to 5,000 kgs and membership has also shot up from an initial 60 members to a current 1,250.

Josephine heard of Samli Dairy from a friend who boasted about the prompt payments to milk suppliers and the training support farmers received through F2F and other partners. Josephine joined the cooperative and actively participated in the capacity building exercises and training opportunities, eventually emerging as one of the community leaders. Her farm productivity and income has grown significantly since. Not only does Josephine have a reliable milk supply for her children, but she now has a reliable source of income from selling milk. Being a member of the Samli Dairy Cooperative gives her protection as a vendor, and most importantly, she now has peace of mind that there is enough money to send her children to school.

"As you can see," Josephine says pointing at her herd, "this project has totally transformed our lives." She adds, "It was like a dream come true. I saw all my financial problems vanishing right before my eyes!"



F2F partner team exchange ideas with Samli Dairy management during a visit to their new yogurt production plant. Samli now processes 300 kgs of milk into packaged yogurt daily.

The Samli Dairy Cooperative is giving farmers like Josephine a consistent and reliable market for milk. Prior to the formation of the cooperative, farmers like Josephine had to depend on unreliable milk vendors who would pay low milk prices and sometimes fail to collect the milk altogether. Being in the cooperative also brought her peace during her recent pregnancy.

"I couldn't imagine how I could have handled the brokers when I was expecting. They take advantage of women, old and pregnant, who cannot run after them for their milk money," she says. "The cooperative came at the opportune time, allowing me to rest and wait for my payment through mobile money at the end of each month."

Currently, Josephine milks one cow and collects an average of five kilograms of milk per day, two kilograms of which are consumed in her own household and the remaining three kilograms are sold through the cooperative. A second cow is expected to start producing milk for her business soon. The future looks bright for Josephine and her family; now that she has a reliable income stream, improving milk production is her next focus.

CRS F2F Rwanda

Support for mushroom production helps a rural community in Rwanda

PROJECT LOCATION	Rwanda
TIMEFRAME	2019-2023
COUNTRY PROJECT	Horticulture
HOST	ABISHYZEHAMWE-TABA

PROGRAM STATISTICS

417

Number of assignments conducted

23,838

Number of people directly trained

191

Number of hosts supported

Abishyizehamwe-Huye is a community of 302 people, most of whom are elderly and survivors of the 1994 genocide or retired soldiers and community members who lived in and around Taba village before the genocide. This village sits within the Mukura sector of Huye district in southern Rwanda. It is a small settlement located 10 kilometers from Huye City. Most of Toba’s inhabitants work in agriculture to support themselves. The village has access to electricity, water for irrigation, and an early childhood education center to improve children’s nutrition, which also serves as a multipurpose hall where residents can meet.

As a relocated community, however, Taba’s inhabitants face a variety of challenges, including poverty, a lack of adequate housing, malnutrition, high drop-out rates from schools, early pregnancies, poor access to schools, and high unemployment among youth. The government has provided some financial and psychosocial support to the community. Together with local organization, Unity Club, the government built three hostels that each house up to 20 local families and supported elderly genocide survivors with health care services.

This support has been well-received by residents of Taba, however, they are reluctant to rely on handouts and government services indefinitely. Recently, they gathered to discuss how to lift themselves out of poverty. One suggestion that resonated within the community was cultivating mushrooms. Seeing mushroom production as a means to make money and to address some of their nutritional challenges, the community decided this was a path worth exploring.

Community members began by converting the land in front of the hostels into a small-scale mushroom farm. They launched their new endeavor with great enthusiasm, but soon realized they had a great deal to learn. “We had the idea of producing mushrooms and some of us started to grow them by ourselves, but we had no idea about best practices for production, or where we could sell our mushrooms,” said community member, Desire Kalisa.



Mushrooms are planted and grown in 10 long production beds inside the mushroom shelter. *Photo by Musafiri Ndatsikira/CRS*

After witnessing the residents' evident need, and at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture, the CRS country program in Rwanda provided financial support to the Abishyizehamwe-Huye community to build mushroom shelters in November 2020. Once the shelters were operational, Farmer-to-Farmer provided technical assistance on mushroom value chain development and good agricultural practices. Leonidas Mushimiyimana, a local volunteer, partnered with U.S. volunteer Khalid Hameed to deliver training on spawn preparation and storage, mushroom processing, disease and pest prevention, and post-harvest practices. Leonidas also introduced the community to several nutritious mushroom-based recipes.



Mushroom shelter. Photo by Musafiri Ndatsikira/CRS

Following the training, Leonidas, himself a mushroom entrepreneur, began purchasing the community's mushrooms and linking the community to other potential buyers. To date, his company, DEYI Ltd., has purchased 1,098 kilograms of mushrooms for a total value of \$1,900. Looking ahead, Taba's mushroom farmers will create a legal structure that will allow the farmers and DEYI Ltd. to formalize their purchasing terms and enter into a long-term purchasing contract. The farmers are on the right path and, once they have a formal structure, they will be able to tap into other potential markets.

In the meantime, in addition to selling to DEYI Ltd., the community has started selling their produce at the Huye City market, supplying around 20 kilos of mushrooms per week and earning a modest income of \$32. The community's aim is to make mushroom production and sales a dependable source of income. As Leonidas explained, "During the training, participants expressed their desire to increase mushroom production to the point where it became a source of income that would cover most of their basic needs. They have no land for farming other crops and currently they still depend on the government and aid from other sources, but they are confident that one day they will become the first established mushroom producers in the region, able to make a living out of it."



F2F local volunteer Leonidas Mushimiyimana trains member of Abishyizehamwe staff on mushroom cultivation in Huye. Photo by Musafiri Ndatsikira/CRS

Expressing her gratitude to F2F, Odette Mukakibibi, one of Taba's burgeoning mushroom farmers, told CRS that, "Our community members did not know anything about mushroom production, but today, most of us have the skills we need. We also have a market to sell to and a means to earn an income, plus we know how to cook meals using mushroom recipes to feed our families. We are grateful to F2F for its support."



SNAPSHOT

Sweet Success: How a Farmer-to-Farmer Program is Boosting Business for a Honey Processor in Bangladesh



Volunteer Robert Owen visits Solid Honey's processing facility to assess food safety and quality gaps.



Mr. Hasanul Banna, Managing Director of Solid Honey, proudly displaying his Jar of Honey

The USAID-funded Farmer-to-Farmer Food Safety & Quality Program (F2F FSQ), implemented by Land O'Lakes Venture37, has been supporting businesses with food safety improvements in Bangladesh since 2019. The program's approach focuses on quality versus quantity: the program engages with a limited number of partner agribusinesses, but provides in-depth and long-term support through multiple expert volunteer assignments.

Solid Honey, a commercial beekeeping and honey processing company, is one of the agribusinesses that received extensive support from the F2F FSQ project, enabling it to align with international food safety standards, increase production, and boost profitability.

Founded in 2000 by a father and son duo, Solid Honey is now fully managed by the son, Mr. Hasanul Banna. Relatively new to the sector, Mr. Banna sought guidance on proper food safety and quality practices for his facility. In 2019, Mr. Banna received his first U.S. expert volunteer, Mr. Robert Owen, who supported the business to identify key FSQ issues, trained staff on proper beekeeping and honey processing in line with international standards and assisted them in developing a FSQ strategy and implementation plan. In response to the volunteer's recommendations, Solid Honey invested nearly \$10,000 in food safety renovations for its processing facility, improving its products' safety and quality. "Thanks to the F2F volunteer experts, I was able to renovate my honey production facility following the international food safety standards," said Mr. Banna, proudly. These changes enabled Solid Honey to increase production and gain new clients, resulting in an additional \$6,000 per year in gross sales.

Since 2019, Solid Honey has received additional support from the F2F FSQ program and volunteer experts on the topics of Good Manufacturing Practices and a marketing piece on honey crystallization. After his initial assignment, Mr. Owen has remained in contact with Solid Honey, and he continues to offer support and advice on an ad hoc basis, an example of the lasting relationships that have been formed through the volunteer assignments. These continued efforts have been critical in progressing Solid Honey through its FSQ journey.

In the final year of the F2F FSQ project, plans are already in place to ramp up support to Solid Honey through two additional volunteer placements. Mr. Owen will return to Bangladesh to provide traceability and nutrition label support, addressing some of the last remaining gaps in Solid Honey's food safety and quality operations and ensuring the company is set up for sustainable success.

SENEGAL

Increased Income from Climate Smart Agricultural Practices

Prior to receiving F2F training, producers in the Mankou Horticulture Producers Group (GPM Mankou) struggled to properly manage the lands they were cultivating. The farmers were spending more than 30,000,000 FCFA (approx. 49,900 USD) on inputs such as fertilizer and chemical pesticides with no real knowledge of their proper use. This resulted in environmental issues in the area and lower crop yields due to ineffective input usage.

As part of the F2F Senegal's postharvest quality focus, GPM Mankou producers received training from paired volunteers in agroecological farming techniques, specifically on soil structure and fertility improvement, use of natural fertilizer, good farming practices, agriculture-livestock integration to better control pests and diseases without harming the environment, water use, management and conservation techniques, including composting.

"For us, trees were just occupying the space and reducing our possibilities of producing more vegetables. We did not have other thoughts than to cut them. Now, after this training, we have a better understanding of different things to consider or even entertain within the perimeter."

Moustapha Diop, GPM Mankou Member

generating activity. The women also recognize that this will improve the health of their families by using less chemical pesticides while allowing them to earn a living by selling these products to other producers because the demand is large. The women have already begun creating the compost piles and preparing bio-pesticide solutions based on ginger, garlic and hot pepper for a natural protection of their crops while preserving the environment. They are promoting the products by sharing the knowledge with other farmers.

These producers have reported remarkable changes in their cultivated areas, with better quality production. Djiby Diop, one of these producers, sold 67 bags (25 kg each) of finished compost that at 3,000 XOF (4.99 USD) per bag for a total value of 201,000 XOF (335 USD). Also, he was able to make remarkable savings in the purchase of fertilizers and chemical pesticides. He estimated his savings at more than 30% during the market gardening season. "These techniques that we learned from the volunteers came at the right time. We were able to apply them directly and see the results. Even before producing, I had made money by considerably reducing my pre-campaign expenses." he noted.



Participant looks on at his solar panel during a field visit

The national volunteer, Moussa Ndiaye, noted that GPM Mankou members were cutting down and getting rid of the trees that were in their fields because they did not know how important the trees were in a perimeter. Mr. Ndiaye shared concrete examples of why they should keep some of the vegetation and they quickly realized they needed to change their behavior.

As another result of the training, GPM Mankou decided that their female members should lead startup of producing compost and bio-pesticides as an income

Critical Pest Management Response in Guatemala

Theme: Nematode Prevention and Food Security

Synopsis: F2F volunteers Dr. Inga Zasada and Dr. Louise-Marie Dandurand supported *Popoyán* assess and train potato farmers on best methods and practices for controlling the Potato Cyst Nematode (PCN) infestation affecting the livelihoods of farmers in the Western Highlands of Guatemala. In turn, the volunteers sponsored an exchange through the University of Idaho for a F2F Guatemala Field Officer to travel to the U.S. and visit USDA's Agricultural Research Service at Oregon State University, the University of Idaho, and attend the Annual Society of Nematologist meeting. The team that emerged from this assignment is currently looking for funding to implement a project based on the findings from the F2F assignment to increase food security and profitability for Guatemala potato farmers through the management of PCN.

Full-length story:

PCN are one of the most damaging potato pests worldwide. These nematodes are labeled as high-risk for potato crops because of their ability to survive in soil for 20 years; reduce potato yield by 80% or more; reproduce at high rates; and be easily transported by agricultural tools and seed. Although PCN has been present in Guatemala for decades, the recent impact PCN is having on smallholder farmers has reached a crisis level.

In Guatemala, potatoes are cultivated in cold or temperate regions at altitudes that vary from 1,500 to 3,600 meters above sea level. These regions are mainly within the departments of Huehuetenango, San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, Sololá, El Quiché, Chimaltenango, Guatemala, Jalapa, Alta, and Baja Verapaz. Potatoes are also part of the main diet of smallholder farmers, especially in the Western Highlands of Guatemala.

Popoyán, a Guatemalan organization with 40 years of experience in the agriculture sector, is currently implementing a USAID Feed the Future Guatemala program in five departments of the Western Highlands, working directly with smallholder farmers. In spring 2022, Popoyán contacted Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) requesting two volunteers to develop a plan to control the PCN infestation causing major damage to potato crops in the Western Highlands.

F2F recruited Dr. Inga Zasada, a Plant Pathologist for USDA's Horticultural Crops Research Unit at Oregon State University, and Dr. Louise-Marie Dandurand, Director of the University of Idaho Pale Cyst Nematode Project at Idaho State University. The volunteers carried out diagnostics and trained 117 men and 31 women – 24 of which are youth – on crop systems to reduce PCN in the Western Highlands. Their training focused on 1) The biology, impact, spread, and distribution of PCN; 2) PCN control including cultural, chemical, resistance, rotation, sanitation, and clean seed changes; and 3) Lab exercises to view nematodes under a scope and a hand lens to recognize cysts on root or tuber surfaces.

As a result of this assignment, farmers reached are now aware of the importance of preventing the spread of PCN in a timely manner. Farmers also now realize the importance of reducing the levels of PCN through rotation with improved varieties if resistance is unavailable. In some cases where PCN was extremely high, the volunteers recommended that farmers plant non-host crops for a minimum of two years prior to considering planting a resistant potato variety. Farmers now realize that they cannot grow a susceptible variety when PCN levels are high, and they must rotate with non-hosts for a minimum of five years if resistant potatoes are not available.

Dr. Zasada and Dr. Dandurand believe this was a fruitful and timely training session for understanding the extent of the PCN issue in Guatemala. During the farm visits, the volunteers observed that in fact although

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PCN has been present in these regions for decades, the current levels should be cause for high alert after seeing heavily infected potato fields. Both volunteers agree that PCN is threatening the ability of smallholder farmers to earn income and provide food for their families and communities.

To follow-up, Dr. Zasada and Dr. Dandurand sponsored a trip through the University of Idaho for a F2F Guatemala Field Officer to visit the USDA Agriculture Research Service in Corvallis, Oregon, as well as the University of Idaho, to share more about PCN biology, control, and distribution in the U.S. The trip concluded at the 61st Annual Society of Nematology (SON) meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, where the volunteers and the F2F Field Officer presented a poster on the joint findings from the assignment. The volunteers extended the SON meeting invitation to two additional POA staff members. At the SON meeting, the team interacted with experts in biological control, nematode regulation, relevant industries, among others.

Since their assignment, Dr. Zasada and Dr. Dandurand have maintained close contact with their Guatemala hosts. The volunteers have since partnered with the F2F Guatemala team to draft a concept note to pursue funding for a project based on the findings from the F2F assignment. The project will seek to increase food security and profitability of Guatemala potato farmers through the effective and sustainable management of PCN (The PCN Project). While the volunteers see their F2F assignment as an invaluable opportunity to begin creating the change needed to combat the PCN problem in Guatemala, they also believe that if PCN is not addressed at a macro-scale, the problem could have a detrimental effect on food security for smallholder potato farmers in Guatemala.



Figure 4 F2F volunteers with Popoyan staff

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Three Assignments, Doubling of Vegetable Yields in Mozambique

As a result of three Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) assignments in 2022, Associação Agropecuária de Napúri, a smallholder farmers' association located in Mozambique's Ribáuè District of Nampula Province, has rapidly boosted yields of the vegetables crops. All three assignments were paired assignments, involving local volunteer working on the ground while collaborating virtually with U.S. volunteers.

The association was established in 2018 with funding from the Agriculture Department of Ribáuè District (SDAE) in partnership with an NGO called Organização Rural de Ajuda Mútua (ORAM, Rural Organization for Mutual Aid). Their main objective is the promotion of market-oriented agriculture to improve the socioeconomic conditions of its members. The association is comprised of 60 members, of whom 20 are women.



F2F volunteer Nelito Chavanha and Napuri members during a seedbed preparation. Credit: Nelito

Members of Associação Agropecuária de Napúri grow tomatoes, cabbages, onions, garlic, and pepper for sale locally in Ribáuè district. Members produce vegetables in plots ranging from 0.5 to 2 hectares. The yields of crops most demanded by buyers, such as tomato, cabbage, onion, and garlic, have ranged between 2 to 5 tons per hectare which is very low when compared to potential production of 10-25 tons. Pests and diseases and poor soil and crop management practices have been limiting the producers' yields.

In May of 2022, the association received a F2F local volunteer, Mr. Nelito Chavanha, from Manica province. Mr. Chavanha is a researcher in crop production at Higher Polytechnic Institute of Manica, entrepreneur in organic fruits, vegetables, and agricultural inputs and equipment who was paired with U.S. Volunteer, Mr. Sosten Lungu, Professor of Agronomy at Vermont Technical College who originally hails from Mozambique's neighboring country, Zambia. The two together trained 71 farmers, of whom 32 were women, in Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPM). The training involved both classroom and practical training.

In July 2022, the Association's learning continued. Again, Mr. Chavanha assumed the role of the local volunteer, but this time he was paired with U.S. volunteer Jason Reed, an educator and horticulturist, from Pennsylvania. Together the two trained 40 association members, of whom 19 were women, in good agricultural practices for vegetables production. Mr. Chavanha assessed the members' plots, concluding that production practices such as variety selection, soil management, plant spacing, and other practices needed improvement. During this assignment all trainees had an opportunity to learn from improved practices that can increase yields.

The Association continued to be keen to learn, receiving a third set of paired volunteers in August 2022. This time it was Vengai Rufu from Beira, who has extensive experience in organic fertilizer production and strong passion for organic production, and U.S. volunteer James Corven, a farmer from Vermont with more than 30 years of agricultural education and training experience. Together the two trained 61

farmers, of whom 32 were women, in organic fertilizer production. Given the hands-on nature of this assignment, the volunteer and farmers spent most of the assignment time in the field practicing and applying acquired knowledge and skills. The farmers were very happy to produce, for example, compost tea, and applied it immediately on their crops.

The farmers quickly started practicing what they had learned, including application of biopesticides. They soon observed that both in the nursery and in the field, only about a fifth of their vegetables were infested with pests or diseases, compared to about third earlier. The average yields of crops quickly improved. For example, cabbages that were recently harvested yielded 8 tons per hectare, compared to 5 tons earlier, while yields of onion increased from 3 to 7 tons, and tomatoes from 4 to 8 tons.

Mr. Marcelino, President of the Association, is very grateful to have received assistances from the F2F volunteers, stating, "We had the honor of receiving volunteers who gave practical demonstrations in the field, which greatly facilitated the assimilation of the recommendations and their immediate implementation. We are already reaping the fruits of training, from the vegetables already harvested, the yield of tomatoes, cabbages and onions was double compared to previous years."

2022: A Year of Firsts for an Entrepreneur Development Worker

Written by: Arcee Pila, M&E Specialist, Grameen Foundation USA

I learned how to be an entrepreneur at the university, but it was not until April 2022, 10 years after graduating, that I was able to set up my own business - co.cee co-working, the first minimalist coworking space in my hometown, south of Mindanao. It started as a personal struggle brought about the sudden shift of needing to work remotely due to travel restrictions. This created a blurry line between working and living in the same space which greatly affected my productivity. I initially resorted to working at cafes, but it led to an increase in my expenses. I found that we had an idle space big enough for a single office, so I decided to convert it to a co-working setup that I could then share on a need-based working space with others with similar woes. People would then ask why I didn't consider becoming a full-time entrepreneur?



My partner, Noel, and I during the ribbon-cutting of co.cee coworking's official opening.

Previously, I had unexpectedly landed in Non-Government Organization (NGO) work, far from my academic pursuit and a path that I had never imagined to be on. This year marks my 8th year in the development sector, a career shift, and now a vocation I aim to sustain. To further explore the sector, I grabbed an opportunity to join Grameen Foundation USA as a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist, my first international NGO engagement. This was one of the very few interesting INGOs that I applied for on creating breakthroughs to end poverty by empowering women through technology, using digitalization as a tool and the people served as the catalyst of change. One of the projects that I was assigned to was the USAID funded John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program Capacity-building of the Coconut Subsector Program in the Philippines (F2F-

COCOS). The odds were even more in my favor when I was tasked to accompany the first in-country US volunteer assignment after two years of travel restrictions.

Anthony (Tony) Timmons, a volunteer from the Bankers without Borders (BwB) and a Professor from University of Nevada, California USA, welcomed this assignment at the drop of a hat. He was assigned to train Household Multipurpose Cooperative (HMPC) on marketing and promoting their chocolate products. HMPC started operation as a microfinance institution and later transformed into a cooperative with 3,452 members, including 786 cacao farmers. They currently process about 20 tons of cacao into chocolate bars and offer other cacao-based products such as cacao tablea, cacao nibs, cacao vinegar, and cacao blue ternate tea. To market their products internationally, HMPC needed help in creating marketing promotional materials to attract new customers.

Thanks to their consistent efforts in partnering with the public sector, HMPC received various forms of support to further add value into their cacao productions including a chocolate processing facility from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) through the Rural Agro-Industrial Partnership for Inclusive Development and Growth (RAPID) Project. Since 2020, F2F COCOS has been providing various technical support. US-based Volunteer Annette Acosta conducted a financial risk evaluation and Brian Horsley improved its cacao profile, all done remotely! To date, HMPC can boast of highly improved chocolate products that are slowly getting traction in the local market.



Upper left photo: F2F COCOS US Volunteer, Anthony (Tony) Timmons posing with women farmer, Loreta Ambay, the featured farmer of the new chocolate flavor - choco latte; Upper right photo: Tony witnessing the actual chocolate processing of HMPC; Lower left and right photos: HMPC's new chocolate flavors and enhanced packaging with featured farmer stories.

One of Brian Horsley's recommendations was to work on improving their marketing approach and visibility. This was where Tony's technical expertise was put into action. After his exposure to HMPC's chocolate making processes and consultation meetings to reassess their marketing plans, he suggested improving on boosting their market by:

- Standardizing their brand "The Antipas" (including the identity design, font, and color palette) as geographical origin retention for buyers coming from different places;
- Adding more varieties to their chocolate products (choco-caramel, choco-latte, choco-espresso, choco-hot) to cater to diversified market preferences; and
- Reformatting their product packaging featuring farmer stories per flavor to inculcate a deeper farm-to-table connection in every box.

The recommendations were proactively and immediately applied by HMPC with Tony's guidance. Through sleepless nights and tireless days, they proposed some initial marketing studies to Tony. This opened a venue between both parties to exchange real-time insights on revamping the initial recommendations. Tony suggested to underline the challenges and successes of varying farmer stories for women, youth, elderly, and former armed groups, and match them into the new chocolate flavors to have a certain connection. After witnessing the earnest desire of HMPC to advance on this aspect and the altruistic guidance from Tony, I am positive that HMPC will go a long way with the new chocolate products.



HMPC personnel, F2F COCOS US Volunteer Anthony Timmons, Municipal tourism representatives, and myself during a field visit to one of the Municipality's agri-tourism places, where HMPC's products may potentially be displayed.

I am moved by the thought that our F2F COCOS volunteers, who are experts on their respective fields, offer their precious time, knowledge, and efforts in traveling across the world to provide pro-bono services to cooperatives who need their help. Even more in awe that the hardships brought about by the pandemic, especially to the smallholder farmers, sculpted them to be robust and

optimistic in taking concrete actions and moving forward. I am amazed at how a single short-term opportunity can create a massive impact not just to one's life, but to a cooperative and a community.

Personally, I noted the importance of product life cycle marketing mix strategies, wherein an action plan had to be prepared, such as enhancing product features to propose fresh ideas, for each phase of the product life to maintain the position in the market and counter competition. As a young entrepreneur/ development worker who is in the process of learning from the wisdom of such experiences, I will not stop at cherishing these valuable firsts. Instead, I will continue to make a step forward and take this as my inspiration and motivation to put my energy into something that would create a lasting effect to a person's life, for the better.

Women in leadership guide coffee and cacao cooperatives to success



Historically, agriculture has been a male-dominated industry, where trade, agricultural education and policies have favored male farming and leadership over women. What often is forgotten is that women have been farming since the beginning of time, balancing physically demanding labor with household responsibilities. To say agriculture is male dominated would be ignoring the reality of women's involvement in the food industry and according to the UN, 60-80% of food consumed in developing countries are produced by women.

Although education and social pressures in some societies do not favor women in leadership in the agricultural industry, the following women interviewed by Farmer-to-Farmer Peru Country Director Cynthia Mendoza and Senior Field Coordinator Ines Deustua share their experiences thriving and being challenged to become successful leaders in the industry. [NCBA CLUSA's USAID-funded Farmer-to-Farmer program](#) has had the pleasure of collaborating with Elena Castro, Maricely Guevara, and Flor Mira Herrera for several years. Learn more about their challenges, successes, and leadership in cooperative development in Peru:

Maricely Guevara, APROSELVANOR General Manager, San Martin, Peru – Maricely assumed her role as the manager of Asociación de Productores Selva Nor Oriental (APROSELVANOR) in 2015. She came from a family of coffee growers and from a very young age has been passionate about coffee production. Her dedication to this industry stemmed from the desire to help producers develop their capacities and improve both the quality of product and quality of life of other associates. As the mother of 2 young children, Maricely works hard to strike a balance between being present in their lives and growing an organization of 50 producers. Her leadership skills and passion to develop the capabilities of the association members has allowed her to focus on gender inclusion. Since the start of APROSELVANOR in 2015, they have been able to ensure that women can find their place in the organization, receive qualifications, and hold positions both as partners and directors. These women are dedicated to continuing the growth of the organization through exporting, making special coffees, and working with collaborators, such as the Farmer-to-Farmer Program, to continue to develop their capabilities.

Elena Castro, CAI BELLA President of supervisory committee, San Martin, Peru – Elena entered into leadership of Cooperativa Agroindustrial y de Servicios del Centro Poblado de Bella (CAI BELLA) as a founding member in 2015, as a joint effort of the cooperative and DEVIDA (National Governmental Institution

responsible to design and manage Peru's National Policy to Fight Drugs) to further develop alternative businesses to illicit coca plantations. Before assuming her position, female cooperative members referred leadership within the cooperative as "a waste of time" or "it's not worth it" because men and women had different opinions about the route the cooperative should take. Elena, motivated to represent her capabilities as a woman in leadership and with her extensive knowledge of farming, decided to assume the responsibility of leading CAI BELLA away from production of coca and into the production of chocolate. The transition from coca to cacao came from the desire to provide for their children through a less harmful industry and less lucrative industry knowing that, although it would be more taxing, producing cacao would ensure their children would remain in school. Elena and other women understood that this transition would be better for their families in the long run and in 2020 had grown to be 75 members, 33 of which were female. Women in CAI BELLA are responsible for manufacturing chocolate and have now successfully been able to produce an assortment of chocolates with 60%, 75% and 80% cacao.

Flormira Herrera Jaramillo, General Manager of COCAU, San Martin, Peru – Flormira Herrera is a founding member, General Manager of Cooperativa Cacaotera Agroindustrial Uchiza (COCAU), and Agroindustrial graduate who returned to her hometown to embark on an adventure as a cooperative leader. Flormira is proud of the work she and the other coop members have accomplished. They have managed to survive the financial challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic despite being a young and small co-op. They have successfully managed to not incur any debt in order to grow as a cooperative and in 2021, went from 53 active members to 73. As the mother of a young 4 year old boy, Flormira remains living with her father and mother to help balancing raising a young child and leading a new and emerging cooperative. Her role as a mother and leader includes raising a child while cutting costs, traveling to obtain financing, training members, and creating market opportunities for COCAU.

Elena, Maricely, and Flor have all experienced reluctance inside and outside their cooperative organizations because of their positions in leadership as women. Flor expressed the following when asked about challenges in her role, "Culturally, a man is more entrusted with financial and leadership issues. To issue and control documentation was the role of man. Some people still think that. When there is a loan request or processing there is a different treatment because I am a woman". Despite these challenges, Flor, Maricely, and Elena have led their cooperatives towards successes as they have increased member involvement, created market opportunities, and been an example to other women in the agriculture industry.

[NCBA CLUSA's Farmer-to-Farmer Program](#) has had the pleasure of sending volunteers to CAI BELLA, APROSELVANOR, and COCAU in 2019. During these assignments the program has collaborated with leaders Maricely, Elena and Flor to complete assignments related to export strategy, marketing and branding, organizational development, financial education, sales diversification, chocolate making and honey water treatment. The Farmer-to-Farmer Program continues to

work with women in leadership as part of one of its major goals to increase gender inclusion. Tune into Part 2 of this gender inclusion series by reading the upcoming article being published mid-June.



Tajikistan F2F: Proper technique is the way to success.

Mr. Nurali Naskonov a father of a large family, established his 8.8 ha farm in Kushoniyon District of Khatlon Province, in 2016. In the beginning, he grew only cotton as it is a traditional crop in Khatlon Province. However, in 2017 he decided to diversify his farm production and so the family planted fruit tree, built a greenhouse for vegetables, and established a lemon house. On three (3) ha. of his farm he planted apricots, peaches, plums, and persimmons trees. Over the next couple years, they built two greenhouses, and two lemon



Nurali Naskonov (second from the left), the head of the “Vatan” Dehkan Farm and his family members, during the persimmon harvesting. Khatlon Province.

houses. Initially it seemed that everything was going well with his business plan but later when the trees grew, Mr. Naskonov realized that the trees needed to be pruned, pest and diseases needed to be controlled and it became obvious that he did not have the appropriate knowledge to handle all the issues. The first broken branches of the young, not yet strong, trees made it necessary to hire pruning specialists, the first diseases and pests required them to hire agronomists and purchase expensive chemicals. None of the family members had pruning skills and orchard management experience. Due to their workload, hired specialists were not always available and were expensive. One day, while buying chemicals for pest control at the agro-store, Nurali met a farmer who told him about the Farmer-to-Farmer program. A short time later while



US Volunteer Bruce Bailey during his assignment in Tajikistan

on a separate assignment the Farmer-to-Farmer expert Ross Penhallegon visited Vatan Dehkan farm and demonstrated pruning techniques on several trees. After this acquaintance, Vatan farm decided to apply for a Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer.

In January 2022, Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer consultant, Bruce Bailey visited Nurali and the Vatan Dehkan farm for two weeks and taught pruning, grafting, watering, pest, and

disease control methods, as well as appropriate crop nutrition. After this collaboration, Nurali improved the quality and yield of the family's trees by reducing the incidence of pest and disease through the introduction of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) methods and cutting in half the amount of chemicals used, thereby reducing production costs. As the result the host increased their net income from \$13,050 to \$21,425 or by 61%.

The Farmer-to-Farmer expert taught us advanced methods of orchard management which has had results in a very short period of time.

– Nurali Nashonv

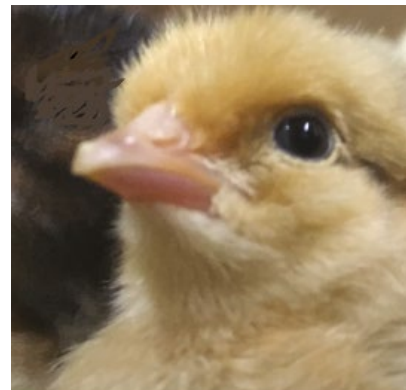


Nurali Naskonov, the head of the Khatlon province “Vatan” Dehkan Farm in Tajikistan with members of his family during the lemon and the persimmon harvests.



A Multitude of Chickens

Poultry production is especially valued and important for women and young adults in Burkina Faso. The majority of poultry production is practiced in traditional, free-ranging, scavenging management. These chickens are believed to taste better than those from raised on commercial farms. However, the hens produce only a few chicks per year due to high death rate and slow growth often taking over 6 months to reach slaughter size. The unmet demand for chicken is high and will only increase as the gap between production ability and consumer demand increases.



Seeking small business and poultry technical support members of Gnimassan Cooperative met with the F2F-Burkina Faso project to schedule an introductory training on the basics of poultry production. Gnimassan is a cooperative with 65 initial members at Houndé, Tuy Province. Approximately 35 of the members are women. Respecting the preference for local breed chickens while addressing the need to increase production and health standards became a goal of the training.

The F2F-Burkina Faso project conducted a paired remote training on poultry production as a small business to increase productivity and profitability. These sessions were facilitated by the local volunteer Michel Kere in collaboration with US volunteer Dr. Jon Moyle, Maryland University Extension.

The trainings introduced the cooperative to technical information about nutrition, breeding, biosafety, business planning, and micro-financing. The results were dramatic. *“Before we could get out 500 chicks but in the end only 80 to 100 would survive,”* Tuina Jean, President of the Gnimassan Cooperative. The importance of hygiene was previously not understood or that common diseases could be prevented or treated. The president estimated that the additional value from the chicks that survived for the members over the next six months was 900,000 F CFA (\$1,400 U.S.).

After the training all the members who attended applied with a business plan to a local bank. The members received a loan of 300,000 F CFA (approximately \$466 U.S. each) to expand its chicken production capacity for a total of 11,000,000 F CFA (approximately \$17,102 U.S.). The cooperative members have accepted the responsibility of a contract to train and support others in their region. This has brought in an additional 3,500,000 CFA (approximately \$5,400 U.S.) for the cooperative.

With the training and knowledge acquired, the cooperative has continued to improve their business and invested in a grinder-mixer and feed roaster to produce poultry feed for members of the cooperative and other farmers. This will lessen the cost of feed for the members and customers while maintaining quality and consistency.



"We do not have a word to thank the project, because the knowledge we received is not easy to be able to raise the money to pay. Giving someone knowledge is like giving them billions because it's something that will never end," Tuina Jean, president.

"The F2F project came to put us on a straight line, just when we were on a broken line."
Tuina Jean, President of the Gnimassan Cooperative of Poultry Producers of Houndé.



In Zimbabwe, a Youthful Volunteer with a Heart for the Rural Farmers



Ngwenyama farmers putting up the stand for their new water tank. Photo credit: Georgina Hove.

In August 2022, U.S. Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Volunteer, Sarah Smith, trained 27 farmers, including 20 women and six youth, in sustainable vegetable production in Zimbabwe's Gwanda District, Matabeleland South Province. During her assignment, she saw the hard work, determination, and challenges of her host organization, so she decided to go beyond training, to provide its members with means to ease some of the drudgery of vegetable production.

The host organization, Ngwenyama Garden, was formed by 27 members in 2015. The group had only 0.1 hectares of land, which was fenced with brushwood and irrigated with water fetched with buckets from the nearby Ngwenyama dam. Their purpose was to ensure adequate supply of diverse and nutritious vegetables to member households, with surplus produce sold to other community members.

Ngwenyama Garden members currently grow leafy vegetables such as kale, rape, spinach, as well as sugar (or common) beans and tomatoes. The production system is low input, based on planting saved seeds and applying compost and livestock manure to enhance soil fertility.

Throughout the group's existence, the members have faced challenges of low productivity and production, mainly due to poor soil, pest and disease management, planting of crops and varieties that are not adapted to the locality, delayed planting, incorrect plant spacings and poor water management practices. In 2021, Brethren in Christ-Compassionate and Development Services (BIC-CDS), a local NGO working in Gwanda district, assisted the group to install a solar pumping system, a 5,000-liter water tank and fencing around the garden. This enabled the group to expand the garden from 0.1 hectares to 0.8 hectares. The group had plans to further extend the garden to 1.5 hectares; however, the irrigation system needed to be upgraded.

At 26 years old, Sarah Smith is the first youthful F2F volunteer to train farmers in Zimbabwe under the CNFA's Farmer-to-Farmer program. She came to the country with experience in urban agriculture, having pioneered the design and implementation of the Farm-to-School program reaching over 400 school children in Columbus, Georgia. Under this program Sarah designed the curricula and lesson plans and assisted in grant writing, fundraising, program documentation and reporting, fund management, including for events and programming. Ms. Smith's assignment focused on providing Ngwenyama Garden members with knowledge in good agricultural practices, including in soil fertility and water management, composting, correct planting time and spacing, selection of adapted crops, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), value addition, and marketing.

Ms. Smith diligently focused on her assignment, training the members on disease identification and control in vegetables, pest scouting and control, as well as providing the practical steps of compost using nutrient rich material. She also taught about the organic control of the common tomato leaf miner moth, called *Tuta absoluta*, which causes significant economic losses in Ngwenyama garden.

Additionally, Ms. Smith decided to do something more. After spending a few days at Ngwenyama Garden and listening to the difficulties the members had faced in establishing the garden and how they are resolutely watering their crops using buckets, Ms. Smith set up a go-fund me campaign amongst her friends, family, and colleagues in the US.

Ms. Smith quickly raised US \$1,000 which was used to purchase an additional 5,000-liter water tank. By the time Sarah finished the assignment, the garden expansion was already under way and the farmers made contributions towards the fencing. “It is a great feeling to assist people who also put effort and hard work to feed their families,” said Ms. Smith on the day she handed over the 5000-liter water tank. The farmers were filled with great joy and motivation. The new 0.7-ha extension now has a tomato and butternut crop, whilst the previous 0.8 ha is in kale and green maize (corn). The farmers are already applying the recommendations from Ms. Smith’s training, such as the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and compost making.



Ngwenyama farmers in front of their installed water tank. Photo credit: Georgina Hove.

When asked how the group benefited from the training provided by Ms. Smith, Mrs. Zwelitsha Sibanda, the Ngwenyama Group’s secretary, said: “We learnt a great deal during the short stay we had with Sarah especially on composting, water and pest management. We are grateful for the effort she made in sourcing funds to install the second water tank which will enable the group to irrigate additional area. Sarah, we all thank you!”

Saplings of Hope

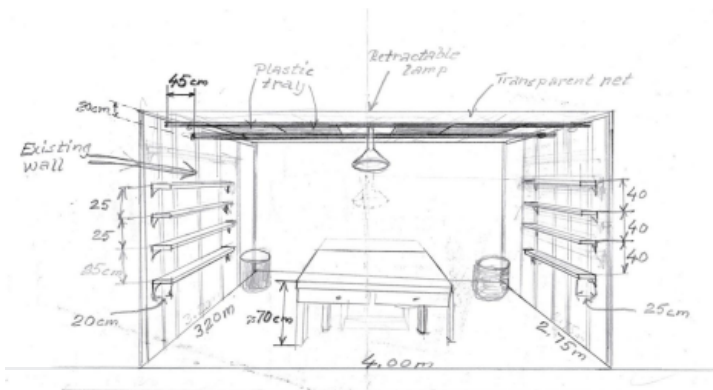
By Houria Chouhab, Volunteer Technical and Field Assistant

In March 2022, the High Atlas Foundation's Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) team had a chance to conduct planting workshops work with children at the orphanage Dar Tifl Marrakech.



The orphanage is located in the heart of Marrakech, and it shelters up to 400 residents whose ages range from 3 to 16 years old. Additionally, this place provides opportunities for the children to exercise their hobbies and favorite sports, such as football, martial arts, art, music, and

eco-green clubs. Furthermore, the orphanage consists of a multi-usage garden and a pedagogical farm that shelters domestic animals such as sheep, goats, rabbits, peacocks, chickens, and many more.



The U.S. volunteer, Afra Stenstrom, made a couple of recommendations for the person in charge of the orphanage's eco-club and pedagogical farm to apply after her F2F assignment. Among these recommendations was to create a greenhouse inside the

pedagogical farm. This volunteer along with her spouse, Jan Stenstrom, who also volunteered with F2F in another capacity, contributed designs of the recommended greenhouse.

A second F2F assignment led by local volunteer Oujidane El Fatimi. Oujidane guided the center in drafting a business plan for the greenhouse. After three meetings with HAF's representatives, the business plan was finalized by the F2F team and presented to the Stenstroms (the former US volunteers), who didn't hesitate to follow through on their commitment to personally fund the building of this greenhouse. HAF's nurseries' caretakers offered twenty trees of various saplings.



The big day arrived, and the children at the orphanage were way more excited than the whole team in charge of the greenhouse's construction. "In my free time, some of my friends play football, some join the aikido club...I like watching Mr. Abderrahim, the caretaker of the pedagogical farm, looking after the plants and the garden...and it feels good to let the soil run through my fingers. The mud smells good when it's winter, and I wish it would rain soon," said seven-year-old Anas.

This F2F technical assistance and support seeks to encourage youth to pursue their personal interests in education, environmental conservation, and socio-economic community development through a participatory approach as well as it will offer them additional activities at their pedagogical farm and have tree crops and medicinal plants for internal consumption. At the same time, the project aims to create partnerships and synergies between educational institutions, civil society, communities, and other partners to build strong youth center communities, which support disadvantaged youth in Morocco.

FY 2022 SUCCESS STORY: SUPPORTING YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE



MEETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES
IN PHNOM PENH

The population of Cambodia is predominantly young, rural, and relies on agriculture. Over 70% of the population in Cambodia is under the age of 35, including 40% between ages 18 to 34. Rates of rural to urban migration are highest among this group, leading to labor shortages in agricultural areas. Creating economic opportunities for rural youth and young adults is essential to the long-term prosperity of these communities.

In response to these challenges, the Royal Government of Cambodia has undertaken key initiatives to increase the participation of youth in the agricultural sector: the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (MOEYS) committed to integrating agricultural education into secondary school curriculum in its 2019-2023 Strategic Plan; the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is working to establish a Faculty of Agricultural Education and Extension at the Royal University of Cambodia (RUA); the Center of Excellence on Sustainable Agricultural and Nutrition (CE SAIN) recently launched an Extension program at its network of Agricultural Technology Parks; and the National University of Battambang (NUBB) has started to provide Extension services through its Faculty of Agriculture and Food Processing.

Despite these commitments, the majority of Cambodian youth still do not have access to formal agriculture or nutrition training and instruction. Agricultural education, particularly nutrition education, has not been integrated into national secondary school curriculum; the Extension system remains a patchwork of public sectors and civil society providers; and many university faculty lack the training to translate research into practice.



TEACHER TRAINING ON INTEGRATING AGRICULTURAL CONCEPTS INTO STEM CURRICULUM

Through paired remote, F2F Cambodia has supported these initiatives by partnering U.S. and Cambodian experts to organize trainings and demonstrations. This has included working with public universities NUBB, RUA, and CE SAIN's network of Agricultural Technology Parks (ATPs) to strengthen their capacity to provide Extension services to agricultural groups in their communities. Paired remote volunteers have also supported secondary and vocational schools to establish teaching gardens to provide practicum experience for students.

Building on these assignments, the first cohort of in-person F2F volunteers successfully completed their assignments in Cambodia on May 9-22.



TEACHER TRAINING ON EMPLOYING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL FOR AGRICULTURAL TOPICS

The cohort was comprised of agricultural Extension specialists and faculty from the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture.



REVIEWING AGRICULTURAL LESSON PLANS WITH EXTENSION WORKERS FROM THE AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY PARKS

They traveled together to Cambodia before splitting up to work with their assigned host-organizations. Their assignments covered a range of topics, including developing agricultural education programs for youth, incorporating plant and animal sciences into STEM curriculum, and nutrition education.



MEETING WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES IN PHNOM PENH

At the end of the trip, the cohort came back together to present on their experiences and recommendations to MAFF, the MOEYS, and USAID/Cambodia. The volunteers strategized with NUBB, RUA, and the Agricultural Technology Parks how to strengthen their partnerships with secondary and high schools, and work together to promote the transfer of agricultural knowledge from school classrooms to home farms. The U.S. 4-H program in the U.S. provides a valuable model for engaging youth as the leaders of innovation and adoption in the agricultural sector.





SNAPSHOT

Helping an Egyptian Honey Company Meet National and International Food Safety Standards



Land O'Lakes, Inc. R & D Process Technology Engineer Lindsey Ann Dodge with the ElRaheeq Management Team

ElRaheeq has successfully exported 150 tons of honey products to seven countries and has become Egypt's second largest exporter.



Land O'Lakes Inc. Food Safety Management Systems expert, Alexandria Carnes, with ElRaheeq's Quality and Management team

ElRaheeq is a honey producing and processing company based in Fayoum Governorate, Upper Egypt. It employs approximately 15 full time employees and 10 part-time employees. ElRaheeq has been in the honey business for more than 40 years. The business establishes beehives, breeds bees, and produces a range of high-quality honey products, food supplements, honey wax, bee venom, royal jelly, propolis, and pollen. ElRaheeq produces around 200 tons of honey per year, and 75 percent of its products are exported to Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Malaysia, Singapore, Yemen, and Tunisia, making it the Egypt's second largest honey exporter. In 2019, ElRaheeq started moving to a new processing facility and needed to ensure that they were adhering to food safety and quality (FSQ) requirements. Elraheeq requested the help of Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers to put the building plan and needed infrastructure and to train their team on FSQ practices. In June 2021, the Saudi Food and Drugs Administration (SFDA), limited all honey imports from Egypt, except imports from factories registered with the SFDA. To register with SFDA, food facilities first need to register with Egyptian National Food Safety Authority's (NFSA's) whitelist, an official list of pre-approved factories that meet national food quality standards.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Food Safety and Quality (F2F FSQ) program has provided technical assistance to ElRaheeq since 2019: first by assessing its food safety gaps, and then by mobilizing two U.S.-based food safety expert volunteers and three local volunteers to help the company improve its food safety practices in-person, including Food Safety Management Systems (FSMSs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and honey quality and lab analysis.

After participating in classroom, hands-on trainings, webinars, and seminars conducted by the volunteers, ElRaheeq's team achieved significant improvements in food safety. Since its first support in 2019 by a volunteer from the United States, ElRaheeq improved the facility's infrastructure, improved GMPs to prevent contaminations and started the process of having effective Food Safety Management Systems (FSMS) with support from a second F2F volunteer. Additionally, three local volunteers paired with two US volunteers, supported the company in taking steps towards producing high quality and safe honey. "We are working hard to improve our company's food safety requirements and we are successfully registered in NFSA's Whitelist. ElRaheeq became ISO 22000 and ISO 9001 certified in food safety and quality management, and we are proud to be the second Egyptian largest exporter of honey products by exporting high quality honey to seven countries, after receiving F2F support and guidance to meet the national and international standards. Today, Elraheeq complied with all the requirements of the SFDA and is waiting for the unannounced inspection." says Waleed Nashaat, the co-owner of AlRaheeq for Honey.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program is funded by the United States Agency for International Development and implemented by Land O'Lakes Venture37.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

NIGERIA

Research and Training Reduce Cow Milk Spoilage and Increase Income of Herder Families

Although the dairy value chain has a high potential for resilience, nutrients, and value addition for rural households, it is still one of the most challenging value chains for producers and processors of dairy products. The high rate of milk spoilage, low demand for fresh milk, and loss of income resulting from quick spoilage of fresh cow milk constitute major challenges. This was the case for herders operating in the communities around the Kano campus of the Leventis Foundation Agricultural Training Schools (LFATS) – a beneficiary of Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Nigeria Program volunteer support.

Leventis Foundation Nigeria (LFN) requested volunteer support in the identification, development, and management of resilient agricultural value chains. F2F volunteers – comprising a U.S. (remote) and a national volunteer – developed training materials and trained faculties drawn from the six campuses of the LFATS. Volunteers used the training materials to improve the teaching and research capacity of the faculty.

Ahead of the volunteer assignment, the volunteers requested that each of the campuses work with students to provide a list of agricultural value chains in their region. The Kano campus' list included the dairy value chain, and as a result of the F2F training and recommendations, decided to focus their efforts in the dairy value chain on reducing cow milk spoilage through pasteurization.



Participants discuss during a breakout session

Working with students and selected groups of herder families, the Kano campus was able to address the challenges and reduce milk spoilage by teaching and promoting hygienic practices during milk collection and processing. Researchers explained to the herder families how proper hygiene would reduce pathogens and impurities that could get into their milk and affect the quality of the milk within minutes even after pasteurization. Secondly, wives of the herders were encouraged to always maintain proper hygiene and to increase the time of pasteurization of their fresh milk to thirty minutes from their usual duration of about five minutes. Staff and students from the Kano campus helped the herder families understand through demonstrations how hygienic practices and improved pasteurization would lead to increased shelf life of the milk from 2 to about 48 hours.

“I can never believe that just by using a clean bowl, my wife used hot water to wash every morning to milk the cows, sending our boys to go and clean the place I milk the cows, using this cloth to sieve the milk and not pouring directly into the bowl, ... I have added extra 24 hours to our cow milk freshness. Wow! If I have not seen it myself, I would never believe it.”

Abu Bubba, LFN, Training Participant

Herdsman in the Kano area recorded an average of 4 liters of milk per cow per day. Unless processed immediately and effectively, spoilage of the fresh milk begins to occur as early as two hours after milking the cows. As a result of lack of proper processing, herder families lose up to 3 liters of the fresh milk per cow daily, representing a 75% loss.

Additionally, LFN taught the herders' wives easy-to-adopt and cost-effective methods of processing of fresh milk into healthy and nutritious yogurt with longer shelf life of about 168 hours from the previous shelf life of 48 hours. The immediate result of the Kano campus project is the reversal of fresh milk spoilage and reduction of losses from 3 of 4 liters/cow per day (75%) to 1 of 4 liters/cow per day (25%). Another immediate result from this project is a 100% increase in processed milk and dairy products like yogurt.

Not only are producers seeing less loss, they are also experiencing increased revenue. Producers noted a 200% increase in revenue in yogurt, 140% increase in cheese and 31% increase in nono, a local beverage consumed with sorghum meal.

The successful trainings provided to herders and dairy producers through LFN is thanks to the agricultural resilience training provided to LFN by F2F Nigeria and the recommendations provided by the paired volunteers, resulting in greater outcomes for local dairy producers.

“All I can say is thank you all very much. Thank you. Our husband and I have a lot we are talking about because of this. I am planning to expand to yoghurt soon to make more money. I will soon become a good businesswoman as you have encouraged us. I am very excited that I have an opportunity to make more money and take care of my children. I will always be grateful to you all. Thank you very much.”

Ms. Hajia Buba, LFN, Training Participant



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

FARMER TO FARMER
The USAID John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program

NCBA
CLUSA
National Cooperative Business Association
CLUSA International

Farmer-to-Farmer Program contributes to micro, small and medium enterprise resilience in Central and South America



According to the United Nations, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are the backbone of countries' economies accounting for more than 50% of the jobs around the world and over 70% of businesses. By this definition, MSMEs include most of the world's food producers and play critical roles in creating employment and economic opportunities. Through the USAID-funded Farmer-to-Farmer Program (F2F), U.S. and local volunteer experts have provided trainings to create stronger value chains,

sustainable growth and expand cooperative businesses for MSMEs in the coffee and cocoa value chains. Since 2018, NCBA CLUSA has implemented the F2F program in collaboration with local MSMEs in Ecuador, Peru, Honduras and El Salvador where financial education, marketing, exporting, and business plan assignments have become a priority.

In Ecuador, NCBA CLUSA's USAID-funded Farmer-to-Farmer program had the pleasure of working alongside Asociacion de Trabajadores Agricolas Luis Vargas Torres to train members on financial planning and cacao formulation. Luis Vargas Torres was formed in 2005 by a small group of cacao growers dedicated to helping their association members gain access to broader markets and negotiate fair prices of their products. After these financial and chocolate formulations assignments with U.S. volunteers, Eric Fox and Thomas Forbes, association members Hilario Barco and Victor Cusco started their own chocolate making businesses. Since then, Hilario and Victor had the opportunity to develop their cocoa powder products and diversify their businesses by producing six different types of chocolate, including chocolate paste, dark chocolate, and chocolate with berry, almond and dried fruit flavors. These business owners buy the product from Luis Vargas Torres and the association receives a fair price to pay to its members.

Since 2018, the Farmer-to-Farmer program has completed six financial planning, four business planning, 17 marketing strategy, and two exporting assignments-to increase businesses and governance for organizations to become more competitive. As part of these objectives, F2F also focuses on environmental assignments that improve productivity and quality of product. Since the severe socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, MSME resilience and development has become a priority for lasting local growth and increasing the need for diversification of farming. Natural disasters and crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic affect MSMEs in a disproportionate way. According to the International

Trade Centre, among businesses in 136 countries, COVID-19 strongly affected nearly 62% of women-led small businesses and led to concerns of business closures all over the world.

In Honduras, F2F has partnered with Asociación de Productoras Libres de Marcala (APROLMA) which is a woman only organization with the main objective of empowering women in their entrepreneurial efforts and improving the institutional organization and commercial capabilities of members through the production of coffee. F2F volunteer Amanda Rose Newton trained APROLMA in March of 2022 on the production of organic fertilizers. After these trainings, organization member Nidia Vasquez used this new fertilizer preparation on her production of ornamental flowers which increased productivity and quality of her products and consequently allowed her to build an improved irrigation system for continued capacity expansion. By diversifying small businesses, members of APROLMA create a more robust and sustainable business structure that will promote resilience and cooperation in the community.

To navigate rising inflation, disruptions to supply chains and the climate crisis, it is critical that MSMEs continue to be empowered and supported. Through F2F's demand driven approach, U.S. and local volunteers have collaborated with host organizations and MSMEs in over 30 assignments related to financial and business capacity. MSMEs all over the world will continue to pursue development and growth opportunities as global environmental and political climates continue to change. To contribute to the knowledge transfer-by the F2F program, visit our volunteer assignment website and find out how to invest your expertise in small businesses growth.

CRS F2F Ethiopia

Local dairy farm in Ethiopia sees vast expansion following support from F2F

PROJECT LOCATION	Ethiopia
TIMEFRAME	2019-2023
COUNTRY PROJECT	Livestock
HOST	Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm

PROGRAM STATISTICS

417

Number of assignments conducted

23,838

Number of people directly trained

191

Number of hosts supported



Volunteer Dr. Sintayehu Yigerem during support on dairy farm design and management. *Photo by CRS*

Thanks to its considerable livestock numbers and favorable environment for livestock production, Ethiopia’s dairy sector has enormous potential for growth. Studies show that such development can lead to better incomes, greater employment and improved nutrition security. Unsurprisingly, private sector investment in dairy farming, milk processing and input provision has risen in recent years. Despite the fact that the dairy sub-sector continues to be characterized by traditional smallholder farming methodologies, milk production in Ethiopia has increased from 1.5 billion liters to 3 billion annually in the past 30 years. One family who have been at the vanguard of this growth are dairy farmers Amina and Mohammed Abuna Guto.

Fifteen years ago, Mohammed was raising a local breed of cattle, and producing very small amounts of milk that was hard to sell on account of local taboos. Luckily, Mohammed’s wife Amina came from a business background and had an eye for growth. Amina suggested that they replace their local cows with improved breeds and look further afield for markets. Mohammed listened to his wife and started to dream big. In 2008 they established the Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm, initially with just one Holstein Friesian cow on 0.2 hectares of land in Ziway, Oromia. Slowly, the farm began to grow but was still reliant on traditional management systems, such as open grazing and using crop residues as feed. The company saw more significant change in 2020 when the farm was introduced to Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers Dr. Sintayehu Yigerem and David Roberts who advised Mohammed and Amina to start forage production as well as feed and milk processing. They also suggested applying for bank loans and acquiring additional land under lease from the local government. Mohammed and Amina acted on the volunteers’ advice. They secured a loan of \$70,000 from a local bank, invested in their business and quickly began to reap the rewards.

By 2022 — just two years after the first volunteer assignment — the Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm had grown to 71 dairy cattle farmed on nine hectares of land, five of which are set aside for forage production.

The company now produces high-value green forage including alfalfa, corn and elephant grass, mixed with fruits like papaya and banana. They produce a variety of feed formulas, tailored to dairy cattle needs, depending on whether they are calves, heifers, or pregnant or milking cows, and employ software to formulate the feed rations based on animal body weight. The company now produces 225 liters of milk per day and collects a further 600 liters from nearby smallholder farmers that it pasteurizes, packages, and sells at a profit.

A second and third round of F2F assignments were completed in 2022. Volunteers Dr. Alganesh Tola, from the Ethiopian Institute of Agriculture, and David Blomquist, a microbiologist from Minnesota Food Protection Association in the U.S., focused their support on dairy product processing which led immediately to the introduction of new products — pasteurized milk, cheese, butter, and strawberry, mango and date flavored yogurts. The dairy farm then opened Shalo, a restaurant offering yogurt and other milk products to accompany traditional meals. The restaurant serves low-income clientele (e.g., youth, day laborers, civil servants) with prices that are accessible compared to other restaurants. On an average day, Shalo sells 150 liters of yogurt, 50 liters of pasteurized milk and 60 kilos of butter. The restaurant also supports the nearby Sher Ethiopia School with more than two thousand 100-milliliter capsules of milk on a daily basis.

Recently, the local government granted Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm a stall at a public park in Ziway and the company is planning to open two new shops in nearby Shashemene and Negele Arsi. To effectively promote its products and solidify strong business relations with consumers, two more F2F volunteers teamed up to share their technical expertise with the business. Mr. Mulugeta Yimmer, an expert and consultant in milk product quality management from LM Group in Ethiopia, and Bob Bond, a marketing expert from the U.S., trained dairy staff on product branding and marketing and helped Mohammed and Amina develop a brand and logo.

Through all its business operations along the value chain, Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm has created employment for 32 people (30% women) and is introducing other farmers in the area to new technologies (e.g., improved breeds, forage seeds) at low or no cost. Mohammed shared his contentment, telling CRS, “My satisfaction lies in my contribution to farming and the livelihood improvements of other smallholder farmers.” He added, “I am enthusiastic, especially after visiting Holland and Kenya, to develop and run a modern, model dairy farm in Ethiopia.”

This year, the Ministry of Agriculture has organized an exchange visit for farmers to learn from Amina and Mohammed’s experiences in integrated forage and dairy farm management. Amina gave up running a boutique business to become the full-time manager of the Shalo restaurant and said, “At first, I struggled with breaking the taboo of selling milk in our community, but I’m happy my husband agreed with me and others also followed us. Now we have set our sights on developing markets for our latest products.”



Corn and alfalfa forage production by Mohammed Abuna Guto Dairy Farm. *Photo by Haile Deressa/CRS*



Volunteer Dr. Alganesh Tola and Alemitu (dairy lab technician at the Ethiopian Institute of Agriculture) supporting the host on product development. *Photo by Assefa*



New Shalo branding and logo.

USAID DFC Partner Bank Expands its Exposure to the Agriculture Sector

F2F VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT AMANA BANK TO TARGET NEEDS OF AGRICULTURAL LENDERS AND BORROWERS

The first-class USAID and U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) guarantee supports financial institutions to increase their agricultural lending activities by covering outstanding principals on qualifying defaulted loans to borrowers in the agricultural value chain, with a focus on women and youth borrowers. This USAID/DFC guarantee was provided in 2009 to Amana Bank, an Islamic bank in Tanzania, to strengthen the bank's ability to provide financing to agricultural borrowers while minimizing the bank's risk. Since then, despite efforts to provide innovative financial solutions to farmers, the bank's agriculture portfolio has remained under 1%.



F2F Volunteer Anania Maro with Amana Bank staff meeting fishermen and women fish processors in Zanzibar during the Market assessment assignment.

To support Amana Bank in their agri-lending efforts, the Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program in Tanzania mobilized three pairs of volunteer experts providing targeted training and support in 2021 and 2022. In August 2021, U.S. volunteer expert (USVE) Allyn Lamb and Tanzanian local volunteer expert (LVE) Ganza Wilson conducted an assessment to identify opportunities for expanding the agricultural lending portfolio. The pair also delivered hands-on agriculture financing training to bank leadership. Next came the development of a formal strategic plan for agricultural lending, with the help of USVE Allyn Lamb and LVE Anania Maro in September 2021. Anania and Allyn developed a business blueprint for Amana's lending to the agriculture, livestock, and fisheries sectors, on Tanzania mainland and in Zanzibar. The third volunteer pair, USVE Heather Weeks and LVE Fredrick Masungwa reviewed the bank's agriculture financing and lending tools, policies, and procedures, and redesigned the risk and loan underwriting matrix in March 2022. The pair also trained bank management on how to use the tools to help expand agricultural lending.

Success Story



F2F LVE Fredrick Masungwa training Amana Bank staff on how to use the newly developed agriculture lending policies, tools and procedures.

In response to F2F volunteer interventions and recommendations, Amana bank took major steps to strengthen their agri-lending including the provision of training for staff on agri-financing activities, employing a professional agriculture lender, developing a five-year formal strategic plan for agricultural lending, and adopting and approving specific agriculture lending policies and tools. With these new practices in place, Amana Bank partnered with input suppliers and the Government of Zanzibar in support of the Zanzibar blue economy initiatives and provided fishing inputs on credit to fisherman in Pemba including 835 boat engines (approx. \$2,500 USD each) and 350 boats (approx. \$4,300 USD each)

in April 2022, all under the DFC credit guarantee. The bank also disbursed \$18,000 USD in loans to farmers. Hussein Rashid Hussein, a fisherman in Pemba said, *"These boats and machines will not only enable us to fish deep sea and catch a wide variety of different types of fish that we are unable to find at the shore, but it also increases our safety, improves our businesses, and generates more income for our families and community in Micheweni."* With these new loans in place, the value of Amana Bank's agri-lending has increased by 79% in a span of 9 months – coming in at approx. \$1.45 million USD in June 2022, representing 2.4% of their overall customer financing portfolio.

Mr. Musa Kitoi, the Deputy Managing Director of Amana Bank reflected on the support provided by F2F, and said, *"F2F has supported the design of agricultural lending policy, that has helped us to improve and manage the credit risk on an ongoing basis to meet agriculture customer needs and to maintain a sound agriculture lending portfolio."*

F2F will continue to support Amana Bank with trainings to further expand their lending, including on agricultural cycles, assessing and accepting unconventional securities, and supporting agricultural loan monitoring and recovery techniques. Moving forward, the particular focus will be on reaching youth and women to catalyze Tanzania's prosperity, expand productivity and food security, create jobs, and improve livelihoods.

The American people, through the U.S. Agency for International Development, have provided economic and humanitarian assistance worldwide for more than 50 years.

The John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program (F2F) provides technical assistance from U.S. volunteers to farmers, farm groups, agribusinesses and other agriculture sector institutions in developing and transitional countries with the goal of promoting sustainable improvements in food security and agricultural processing, production and marketing.

Jamaican Alternative Fertilizer

Theme: Climate resilience and sustainable agriculture

Synopsis: F2F volunteer Troy Hinke supported Food for the Poor (FFTP) with capacity on how to utilize soil amendments differently than traditional chemical fertilizers in September 2021. Mr. Hinke worked alongside FFTP extension staff and local farmers to leverage low-input fertilizers such as vermiculture and composting. As a result of the training, FFTP staff and farmers are now better equipped to use locally available materials to build soil health and improve long-term productivity on their farms.

Full-length story:

The affordability of synthetic fertilizers is a constant challenge for farmers worldwide. In 2022, the price of fertilizer skyrocketed in large due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Both nations have had their fertilizer exports either restricted or completely cut-off from the world supply. In Jamaica, the price of Nitrogen, Phosphorous, and Potassium (NPK) fertilizer has increased nearly threefold since March 2022. Additionally, the conversations among farmers on the long-term sustainability of NPK fertilizers have circulated in the nation long before the recent spike in prices.

FFTP works throughout the agricultural, public health, and housing sector in Jamaica. The group builds thousands of homes a year for the islands' unhoused and disadvantaged. Additionally, a team of roughly 40 agriculture extension officers traverse the nation supporting farmers on topics such as sustainable production, post-harvest, and marketing. Many of the extension staff are conventionally trained agronomists and lack capacity and knowledge in areas such as composting and utilization of locally available materials to build soil health.

The F2F Jamaica field office works closely with FFTP and has conducted five assignments during the current program cycle. Because of the close relationship the F2F team has with FFTP staff, discussions were conducted in Spring 2022 to tackle the issue of high fertilizer prices and low productivity on many Jamaican farms. Through a competitive process that considered different approaches to soil health and alternative fertilizers, F2F and FFTP jointly decided to work with Mr. Troy Hinke in September 2022. Mr. Hinke owns and operates Living Roots Compost Company and sells his products to organic farms in the U.S. Additionally, Mr. Hinke has experience working at the Rodale Institute and as a Farm Manager at Oley Valley Organics.

The assignment began with the expectation that the F2F field staff and Mr. Hinke would work for 14 days alongside FFTP staff and farmers to increase their ability to leverage locally available materials as fertilizer moving forward. FFTP requested that Mr. Hinke and POA Field Officer Damar Wilson complete eight trainings with different farmers groups on practical trainings surrounding organic matter compost and calcium extract usage. The group also decided before the assignment that it would be necessary for the volunteer to provide either a protocol or a checklist for maintenance of compost and calcium extract operations in the future.

Partners of the Americas F2F Caribbean Basin & Myanmar

Annual Report – October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

During the assignment Mr. Hinke trained 66 men and 44 women – 57 of whom are youth -- throughout four different towns in four parishes. Mr. Hinke worked with FFTP staff to develop a feasible plan to cut conventional fertilizer use by 90% over the course of two and a half years. FFTP staff are now equipped to help farmers use techniques such as calcium extract and traditional compost to support farmers to reduce their fertilizer usage by 70% in just four months. This reduction in costs comes at pivotal time for farmers, when the economic opportunities for producing food are becoming less appealing due to the lack of affordable conventional inputs. Mr. Hinke additionally briefly worked with farmers on topics such as no-till, cover cropping, and utilizing ground cover to build soil health. All involved with the assignments agreed that these are priority areas for future F2F volunteers.

After his assignment, Mr. Hinke commented, “I provided growers with the fundamentals of soil biology, thermophilic composting, making a liquid form of compost, and making a calcium extract (especially beneficial to pepper or tomato growers). My hope is that by using a biological approach to growing, they can easily wean their soils off chemical inputs and move to a regenerative, healthier, and more inexpensive way of growing quality produce. Making and using compost only requires the energy put forth to assemble and manage the pile, as opposed to having to pay higher and higher prices for synthetic fertilizers.”

As a result of the assignment, FFTP and local farmers are now better equipped to use locally available materials to build long term soil health and improve their livelihoods. By reducing their reliance on conventional fertilizer, farmers will be able to save their income to reinvest into their farm business or better support their families. Additionally, utilizing the techniques in the training will ultimately reduce the farmers environmental footprint while increasing the long-term productivity of the soils they farm.



2 Troy Hinke Training Farmers in Composting

All Partners Benefit from Farmer-to-Farmer and Innovation Lab Collaboration

When two veteran USAID projects join forces, innovation and capacity building happens at scale. Between November 2021 and June 2022, the Southern African Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program and the Feed the Future Innovation Lab for Peanut together trained 3,636 farmers in groundnut production and aflatoxin control in Malawi (669), Mozambique (381), Zambia (1,254) and Zimbabwe (1,322). Of the trainees, 2,245 were women and 363 were youth.

This collaboration was built on the strengths of both parties. The F2F program has field offices in each of the four countries, where it has contacts to a large networks of development partners, including USAID Mission-funded projects, and the experience to organize trainings. The program can now also recruit local volunteers who are connected to U.S. volunteers who work virtually with them. This new model of F2F came as an adaptation to COVID-19.

In contrast, Peanut Innovation Lab has a deep expertise in groundnuts, an important food and cash crop for particularly women farmers in Southern Africa. It also has an increasing number of training tools available. The Lab has also launched Groundnut Academy, an online course that is freely accessible. The first module, on Agronomy, came online in 2021, and the second, on aflatoxin, in 2022.

Conversations between the two USAID projects rapidly led to consensus on how the two programs can achieve the greatest impact: F2F recruits local volunteers, who take Groundnut Academy course online, and then train farmers. This was done with the technical support of the Peanut Innovation Lab's Deputy Director Jamie Rhoads, the U.S. volunteer in the paired assignment model with whom local volunteers connected during Q&A sessions while taking the Groundnut Academy Course, and during the farmer trainings, to share experiences and ask questions. These sessions involved local volunteers from different Southern African countries, facilitating cross-the-country experience sharing.

Collaboration initiated in October 2021 on the Groundnut Academy's Agronomy course which had been just published. Focus was on the next rainy season, expected to start in November-December, when farmers could put in practice their learning. In October-November, altogether 18 farmer trainings were conducted in the four countries – eight in Malawi, two in Mozambique, seven in Zambia, and one in Zimbabwe – covering all aspects of groundnut production, from planting to crop management, to harvest.

The great enthusiasm from the part of the farmers and local volunteers led to continued collaboration when the Aflatoxin course was published in 2022. This time, the trainings were held just before groundnut



Top: Groundnut Academy training ongoing in the Eastern Province of Zambia. Bottom: Farmers receive certificates after the training. Photo: F2F team.

harvests, so that farmers could learn about ways to reduce aflatoxin during the upcoming harvest and storage. In May and June, an additional 39 trainings were conducted, of which 14 were in Zimbabwe, 10 each in Malawi and Zambia, and five in Mozambique.

The model resulted in impact at many levels. Farmers benefitted from the series of trainings conducted, showing up with great enthusiasm, in numbers that often went far beyond those expected. Farmers were also quick to start adopting practices taught. In Zimbabwe, F2F partner, USAID project Fostering Agribusiness for Resilient Markets (FARM), field officer Rudo Mushangwe states, “What was so far adopted was early ploughing and purchase of seed dressing. The farmers learnt about seed dressing during the trainings; 150 of the farmers from the two wards purchased seed dressing and are going to seed dress their seed for the first in life.”

While learning to produce more of this important food crop and an increasingly important cash crop was important for the farmers, so was the understanding gained regarding aflatoxin. Leya Lungu, 34, a farmer and training participant from Nyachilala Cooperative in Zambia’s Petauke district, Eastern Province, reflects on the knowledge gained during the aflatoxin training: “One thing I did not know that I learned was causes of aflatoxin and the long-term effect on human health if consumed. As a family, we always selected the bad groundnuts for consumption and sold the good ones. It is interesting that as producers, we chose to poison ourselves and sell the good quality groundnuts to people who do not even produce them.”

Chomba Mubanga, 29, a local volunteer and Technical Officer at Ministry of Agriculture, at Chipata District, Zambia’s Eastern Province, echoed the importance of learning about aflatoxin: “For me what stood out most is the fact that I got to learn more about the impacts of aflatoxin as I had very little knowledge about it and didn't know that it can lead to death. One interesting aspect was that aflatoxins are actually odorless and tasteless, that was new to me because each time I ate a groundnut which tasted bitter, I associated that to aflatoxins.”

In all, 30 local volunteers took the Groundnut Academy’s Groundnut and/or Aflatoxin courses (some volunteers taught in multiple trainings) and received a certificate as acknowledgement. Inonge Simalumba, 33, a local volunteer and a Camp Extension Officer at Zambia’s Ministry of Agriculture, states: “I enjoyed the whole process, the training, the Q&A with Jamie and the interaction with volunteers from Zambia and Malawi. It showed that the challenges we face with the farmers were similar so sharing experiences was good. With the information we got from the Peanut Innovation Lab, it was very easy to train, and we were confident that whatever issues the farmers would bring up, we would get a response. My biggest take away was that I could access all the materials I needed for future trainings from the Groundnut Academy website.”

Some of the local volunteers did not just train the farmers. For example, Mugove Gora from Zimbabwe helped farmers belonging to Murwira association in Bikita district of Masvingo province to revive their commodity group which had been abandoned during COVID-19, by assisting them to develop a budget for buying seed for the 2022-2023 rainy season, which they have now done. In Zambia’s Eastern Province, the local volunteers Chomba Mubanga and Emmanuel Phiri facilitated a linkage between the farmers and an agrodealer so that they could access quality inputs on credit. As a result, 64 farmers in Petauke district accessed improved groundnut seed as well as fertilizer from Rimbecks Agro Dealers to increase production and improve quality of produce.

The Mission-funded USAID projects participated as partners particularly in Zimbabwe, where the Fostering Agribusiness for Resilient Markets (FARM) project facilitated trainings on aflatoxin with 14 farmer groups. FARM field officer Harmony Marwa reflects on the importance of the training in the Zimbabwe context: “Peanut production in the smallholder sector has been on a steady decline as processors raise concerns on the high aflatoxin levels with the local crop. This training is the first step in reviving this important value chain as farmers then can meet the stringent quality requirements. The 14 groups are looking forward to have better quality produce this season. FARM is also assisting with market linkages, and we would be glad to share a bigger success story next year.”

Peanut Innovation Lab was also excited about the collaboration. Jamie Rhoads, the U.S. F2F volunteer and the Lab’s Deputy Director deliberates, “The Peanut IL was excited to find an innovative way to partner with Southern Africa F2F program through the Groundnut Academy. Working directly with the volunteers has been a great way to get immediate feedback on the content of the courses and helped us expand the reach of our extension tools, like the SAWBO animations and infographics. In some cases, we’ve even identified areas of needed research directly from farmers who are looking for answers to challenges we hadn’t considered.”

With these clear benefits accrued to all involved, collaboration between the Southern Africa F2F and the Peanut Innovation Lab will continue during the 2022-2023 rainy season, increasing scale and impact of both programs.

