

TANZANIA

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

Sustainable Agriculture



Since 1961.

Program: Sustainable Agriculture

Job Title: Agriculture Extension Volunteer
Crop Extension Volunteer
Environmental Education Volunteer

Dates of Service: April 28, 2016 – April 27, 2018

Staging Dates: February 7, 2016 – February 8, 2016
(in the USA)

Pre-Service Training
(in Tanzania): February 9, 2016 – April 28, 2016

*dates subject to change

AA104 = 3307BR
AA110 = 3306BR
AA117 = 3305BR



This document is intended to give an overview of the project you are invited to work on in the Peace Corps. For more detailed information about Tanzania and living there, please read the Welcome Book via the link included with your invitation and check out the related Web sites referenced in the Welcome Book.

For further information about serving as an Agriculture Extension Volunteer, Crop Extension Volunteer, or Environmental Education Volunteer in Tanzania, call the Country Desk Officer for Tanzania at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington, D.C., (9AM to 5PM, EST):

Toll-free: 1-855-855-1961, press 1, then extension 2872;

or directly at (202) 692-2872.

or via email at Tanzania@peacecorps.gov

A NOTE FROM THE PROGRAM MANAGER

Welcome to Tanzania!

I am glad that you have dedicated the coming two years to live and work in Tanzania, to contribute to the development of rural communities. I congratulate you for this unique opportunity that will contribute to your knowledge and give you the experience and the satisfaction of supporting improvement of livelihoods in Tanzania's villages. *Karibu* (Welcome)!

Sustainable Agriculture is one of three Peace Corps projects in Tanzania, others being Health Education and Secondary Education. Volunteers work with their communities to identify a few priority areas to work in from a range of activities – these include crop production, gardening, animal husbandry, environmental awareness, tree planting, small scale income, as well as supporting the utilization of rural indigenous knowledge in arid zones. Much of what we do focuses on supporting families affected by HIV/AIDS.

This project is firmly grounded in sustainable agriculture and natural resources management. Eighty percent of Tanzanians live in villages and that is where all Sustainable Extension Volunteers are posted. Due to high levels of poverty in these villages, Volunteers spend significant amounts of time creating and facilitating opportunities for villagers to improve their livelihoods. Although people in villages are may be financially poor, they are hard working, welcoming and supportive.

I look forward to your arrival and your participation in improving the lives of Tanzanian villagers.

Victoria Mwaifunga

Program Manager

Sustainable Agriculture



PEACE CORPS TANZANIA HISTORY

Peace Corps Volunteers first arrived in Tanzania (then called Tanganyika) in 1962. Since then, approximately 2,000 Volunteers have served in Tanzania, working in education, health, the environment, and agriculture sectors. In the early years of Peace Corps/Tanzania, most Volunteers focused on education.

As a result of political disagreements over the Vietnam War and former President Julius Nyerere's philosophy of self-reliance, the Peace Corps withdrew from Tanzania from 1969 to 1979. The Peace Corps had another, shorter period of interrupted service in 1991 and 1992 because of tensions and security concerns related to the Persian Gulf War. In 1992, a thorough evaluation of the Peace Corps' development priorities in Tanzania led to a decision to focus efforts on revitalizing the program in secondary education. In 1996 Peace Corps/Tanzania launched an agriculture project, and in 2000 it initiated a school health education project. Today, Peace Corps/Tanzania has about 200 Volunteers; 60 percent of them serve in the education project, 20 percent in the agriculture project, and 20 percent in the health education project.

In 1996, PC/Tanzania initiated the Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Project to assist communities in natural resource management and to raise environmental conservation awareness. This project was implemented in cooperation with District Council leadership with the main focus of introducing farmers to new practices and technologies that will increase food production. In 2006 CBNRM Project was reviewed to change its focus to reach a larger number of communities. The project name changed to Environmental Education and Sustainable Agriculture in Rural Communities (EESARC) that aimed at empowering Tanzania's agricultural and agro-pastoral communities safeguard the environment and improve their livelihoods by increasing agricultural production. In 2011, a review of the EESARC project identified an opportunity to identify a stronger and explicit emphasis on food security, a critical priority for the Government of Tanzania. The Project name changed to Linking Environment and Agriculture to Sustainable Development (LEAD). Another review was done in 2013 which resulted in further focussing to ensure that Peace Corps Volunteers are well equipped to assist with training and providing resources to rural Tanzanian community members to improve their food security and natural resource management practices. After this project revision, the LEAD project was renamed the Sustainable Agriculture project, which remains to this day.

YOUR PRIMARY DUTIES

Goals of the Sustainable Agriculture Project

Goal 1: Improved Food Availability

Rural farmers will apply new and improved practices/techniques that sustainably increase staple food crops production.

Goal 2: Improved Food Access and Improved Livelihoods

Communities will improve their ability to access food and improve their livelihoods through gardening and improved post-harvest technologies.

Goal 3: Sustainable Natural Resource Management.

Community members will implement sustainable natural resource management practices.

Primary duties

The Sustainable Agriculture project places a strong emphasis on community-focused activities. At the village level, the Sustainable Agriculture Project enables Volunteers to be a facilitator and to act as a catalyst to enable village communities to better understand the challenges around them as well as identify possible solutions. The relationships you develop, and the growth in your counterparts' and community's skills as a result of those relationships, will be as important as the number of projects you help to establish in your community of service.

As a Volunteer working in the Sustainable Agriculture Project, you will be helping to promote appropriate agricultural practices, raise awareness of environmental conservation, and assist village communities in effectively managing their natural resources through some combination of the following:

- Training smallholder farmers to employ appropriate climate-smart agricultural practices/techniques to improve crop production and food security.
- Training and encouraging farmers to implement environmental friendly small scale income generating projects such as small animal husbandry and beekeeping to improve their livelihoods.
- Training farmers on soil improvement and water conservation and management techniques to sustainably increase availability of water for staple crop production.
- Training and encouraging community members to establish vegetable gardens to provide each household a means of producing most of their daily requirement of vitamins and minerals and/or income generation.



- Training farmers on increased profitability and improved post-harvest management of their crops through storing and preserving harvested products, adding value to raw unprocessed products, monitoring harvested and finished products and selecting for quality and consistency as well as monitoring markets for optimal timing of sales.
- Training community members on the importance of planting trees (including conserving indigenous forests) and agroforestry in order to protect biodiversity, soil, and other essential natural resources.
- Training community members how to construct and use appropriate technologies such as energy-efficient stoves to conserve the environment.

Volunteers working in the Sustainable Agriculture Project also work on HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities as no gains in agriculture area will be sustainable if HIV/AIDS goes unchecked.

Another exciting parts of your professional work is to participate in the Peace Corps monitoring, reporting, and evaluation (MRE) process. All Volunteers receive training on the Peace Corps MRE tracking and reporting system. Each Volunteer regularly reports MRE information and this information is summarized to describe overall progress of the project. This important MRE system helps Peace Corps improve its programming and report its accomplishments. The opportunity to learn and practice professional monitoring and evaluation skills are some of the many valued benefits of Peace Corps service.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY/COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Peace Corps Volunteers often develop secondary projects in addition to their primary work. Although some projects involve outside funding, many do not. Volunteers get involved in many different types of secondary projects with their communities. An area of special focus for Peace Corps/Tanzania is girls' empowerment. Volunteers work to promote girls' empowerment through peer education and organizing conferences. Examples of other secondary projects include teaching English language, promoting life skills through sports for youth, improving school facilities, constructing latrines, setting up libraries, and working with local NGOs for capacity building projects. Projects are selected based on the community's interests and concerns, available resources, continued sustainability, and the Volunteer's interests and skills. Secondary projects provide an excellent opportunity to become an integral part of the community.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Available Resources: Your best resources are the people you will work with. In the village you will identify person(s) interested in using sustainable agriculture practices who are also eager to learn - these people will be your counterparts. At the district level you may find government officials who work with natural resource management and agriculture programs who can guide you on guidelines and policy issues. The community leaders will guide you on community groups existing in your community that you can work with.

You may find NGOs operating locally which produce materials relevant to your program and are ready to share these materials; you may find it useful to collaborate with the NGOs performing your activities. In addition, Peace Corps will provide you with some resources.

Location of Job:

You will be assigned to a rural village in one the regions of Tanzania. You will work directly with one or two villages comprised of 300 to 400 households and a population ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 people.

Working Hours:

Your work will largely depend on your initiative and ability to create a schedule for yourself and your farmer and/or primary school teacher counterparts. For many Volunteers, this can be very challenging. Your ability to activate the community will often determine your working hours, and vice versa – this position requires a patient commitment to a community, building trust as you build relationships.

While much of the work might take place during weekday daytime hours, some activities might take place at night or on weekends, especially big events like the World Environment day which

takes place in June 5th each year and International World AIDS day which takes place in the 1st of December each year.

Cultural Attitudes and Customs in the Workplace:

In Tanzania, respect tends to come with age and experience. Younger Volunteers sometimes experience initial difficulties gaining respect from their counterparts. However, your professional appearance, attitude and work habits, along with the positive regard you pay to your colleagues and community members, will go a long way toward gaining respect in the workplace.

Dress Code:

The manner in which one dresses is of great importance to Tanzanians. While at work and in the community you are expected to dress modestly. Female Volunteers are expected to wear modest dresses and skirts which fall below the knees and keep their shoulders covered. Due to the nature of the job, female Volunteers will sometimes need to wear loose fitting trousers. Tight pants for men or women are not looked upon favorably. Male Volunteers are expected to wear slacks, collared shirts, and loafers or other closed toed shoes when presenting themselves professionally. Work in the field may require more rugged clothing, yet it should be devoid of rips, holes, or stains. Another important aspect of personal appearance is hair style. For men, a short (above the collar), conservative hair style is expected. Men should also be cleanly shaven, but trimmed mustaches and beards are acceptable.

TRAINING FOR YOUR JOB

You will receive approximately nine weeks of pre-service training (PST) upon arrival in Tanzania. The PST approach is community based training (CBT) that exposes you to the practical realities of your work. You will live in a community along with approximately four to five other Peace Corps trainees and a language and cross culture facilitator (LCF), giving you an opportunity to practice in a real setting what you are learning in training. Classroom training will be divided into the following components: Kiswahili language, cross-culture, personal health and safety, and technical subjects on food security, natural resources management, and community development/empowerment. Most agriculture/food security topics will be accompanied by field practice at the village level. You will live with a Tanzanian host family during PST. The remainder of the training will be in the field where you will interact with the farmers/villagers, Peace Corps Volunteers, village extension officers, and village government officials. The training regimen will be very structured and demanding, often lasting eight hours a day, five and a half days a week. At the onset of PST, trainees are often anxious about their ability to develop the skills necessary to be successful. However, by the end of PST, trainees feel confident and prepared to begin their jobs irrespective of their professional background. The training group represents a carefully selected mix of skills and backgrounds, some more obviously attuned to the project than others; nonetheless, rest assured that if you were selected for this project you have a role to play, whether you are an agricultural professional, a community mobilizer, or a teacher.

LIVING CONDITIONS

You will be provided a house as a contribution of the village government. The houses vary from a mud house with a corrugated iron roof, to a concrete house with glass windows. Your house may not have any furnishings or may have minimal furnishings; for example, a couple of chairs, a table, and a bed. You will have a pit latrine and outdoor bath facilities, and you will fetch your water from a village water source. Rainwater harvesting and treatment of water for drinking will likely be a daily activity. There will be no electricity in your village or house. Kerosene lamps will be the main source of lighting and charcoal stoves, firewood or kerosene stoves will be used for cooking and heating during cold spells. Peace Corps/Tanzania provides a settling-in allowance that can be used to purchase those furnishings necessary to make your house comfortable on a modest scale. Volunteers are also provided with a stipend to purchase local mountain bikes to assist in their work activities and to make transportation in and a round their sites easier.

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES & REWARDS

Please reference the [Welcome Book](#) for more detailed information regarding diversity and cross-cultural issues, and safety and security in the Peace Corps.

Tanzania is a country rich in history and hospitality. Arrive with an open mind, free of preconceptions and expectations about your service as a Volunteer. Flexibility and adaptability will be two of your greatest assets. In general Tanzanians are very friendly hospitable people, eager to help you adapt to your new surroundings. There is cultural and religious diversity in Tanzania, with more than 120 ethnic groups, and large populations of Christians, Muslims, and those who follow indigenous religions.

Previous Volunteers have found the principal challenges of working in the Sustainable Agriculture Project to be lack of motivation and resources among host country colleagues and unstructured work conditions. It is important to recognize that while you have a lot of energy and motivation, your co-workers, targeted farmers, villagers, and youth may not perceive the same urgency for change that you do. When this happens, you may react by withdrawing – this only worsens the situation, as your ability to develop relationships and build trust is damaged.

You will also encounter very different social and cultural norms which will require flexibility and understanding on your part. For example, the American sense of privacy is a curiosity here. You will frequently be asked about your religion and marital status. You will be viewed as a role model, and your life here will be very public. You may often feel "on stage."

The village working environment in Tanzania is very different from most work environments you may have experienced in the United States. Some households are simply striving to survive and to have enough to eat. This type of situation often overrides all other commitments made at the village level.

Peace Corps requires greater dedication and commitment to serve than do most other work environments. It is for confident, self-starting individuals who are interested in assisting in other countries and increasing human understanding across cultural barriers.

COMMENTS FROM VOLUNTEERS

My primary agriculture projects right now are a demonstration garden and a grant funded dairy cow project. The demonstration garden is something I am working on with the counterpart that I brought to a Peace Corps training. We have planted a number of horticultural crops, using the "normal" planting technique for our village and then demonstrating improved techniques including double dug beds, mulching, and composting. Additionally, we use no chemical pesticides or fertilizers. The demo garden is right along the main road, so people stop to talk to us each day as we work in the field and this provides us with a great opportunity to explain what we're doing and to show the difference in outcome between the traditional techniques and the improved techniques.

One of the challenges I have faced in serving as Agriculture Extension Volunteer is overcoming two conflicting perceptions: people in my village either believe that I know everything about agriculture, or that I know absolutely nothing. I have overcome this challenge by being very selective about what opportunities I pursue in the village and by working with very motivated counterparts who understand that change does not happen overnight, and that I don't necessarily have all the answers.

Andrew, Agriculture PCV 2014-2016

Cooperate with village government, local schools and healthcare centers, community groups and NGOs to identify needs and create small projects in the areas of water resource management, environmental education, food security and health.

Zoe, Agriculture PCV 2012-2014

Every time I return to my site I'm returning home. I have friends everywhere; I know all the store owners and have done projects with most of them. When I'm gone from site I get calls from at least 3 of my good friends from site and we catch up on the news of the village and me. I truly feel like I am an important part of the Kinyamwenda family. I've learned that you never truly know the impact you have on others, and that we are making that impact consciously or unconsciously all the time. I have been somewhat surprised to see who I've helped, and who I've disappointed as it was not the lists I thought I'd have a year ago when I started my projects. However, I think I've been doing everything to the best of my abilities at all times and I would not do it any other way if I could go back. I've learned that development, especially sustainable varieties, doesn't take a year or two but generations to come to fruition.

Kyle, Agriculture PCV 2012-2014