

## Volunteer Storytelling Toolkit

### Overview

Thank you for serving as a food security volunteer! As America's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future works to give families and communities in some of the world's poorest countries the freedom and opportunity to lift themselves out of food insecurity and malnutrition. Your experiences as a volunteer in programs that support the initiative's work will arm you with a unique perspective and an important story to share. Through your volunteer work, you're helping support America's efforts to end global hunger and poverty.

This toolkit provides tips and resources to help you share your volunteer story with press, on social media or with members of your local community. Your local and national outreach helps the public understand why Feed the Future matters to them and how American volunteers like you are sharing your knowledge to empower and support developing countries around the world.

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## Documenting Your Trip

While you have probably informed your family and friends about your volunteer trip, you may also want to consider sharing those details with the community around you when you return. We know you will be busy pursuing your volunteer activities while you're abroad, but consider taking some time while you're there to document your trip! Below are some important steps that you can take to make sure you're capturing and sharing interesting, engaging content that will help inform your story upon your return.

- **Take Pictures:** Take as many pictures as you'd like: of your work site, your lodging, the people you meet (with their consent), etc. These can come in handy to share with organizations/media, in social media posts and in any presentations you might be giving.
- **Talk to People/Conduct Interviews:** Personal experiences from people you worked with in your respective country can help individuals understand the first-hand impact of your work. Use real names and quotes of people you met and spoke with wherever possible to demonstrate why your work matters on an individual level.
- **Capture Soundbites/Audio:** It can be tricky to capture an interview using only pen and paper. We recommend bringing a recorder (or using your phone) to capture soundbites of people you meet with – with their consent, of course! Audio can be helpful to capture exact quotes from people you meet, which can be impactful for any presentations you might make.
- **Keep a Diary:** Write your experiences down each day in your own words. This is not only a good exercise to document what you did on a day-to-day basis, but can help add context to how you were feeling, what you were thinking, and what you saw during your experiences.

## Sharing Your Experience

Consider sharing your unique volunteer story on your own social media channels, through outreach and engagement with your community and community leaders, and with local media outlets. Templates and resources are included in the Resources section at the end of this toolkit.

### Social Media

- ✓ Share images and anecdotes during, if it's safe to do so, and after your trip on your personal social media channels to raise awareness among your network.
- ✓ Draft a blog (or series of blog posts) to share stories and reflections from your volunteer experience.
- ✓ Include #EndHunger, @FeedtheFuture and other relevant hashtags and handles in your posts. (See the Resources section for more ideas.)

### Community Outreach

- ✓ Connect with your local community when you return by giving presentations to local schools, places of worship, or other community organizations, like the local 4-H.

### Press

- ✓ Familiarize yourself with the basics of Feed the Future and your volunteer program
- ✓ Share a pitch note announcing your trip and conduct follow-up outreach to your local media outlets when you return.
- ✓ Ask local media outlets if they would like to cover your volunteer experience or feature your story.
- ✓ Invite media to attend a local community presentation about your trip.

## Things to Know

Wondering how to reference Feed the Future and the specific program with which you're volunteering? Check out the information below for some ideas.

### **Feed the Future**

- Feed the Future is America's initiative to combat hunger and poverty throughout the world. It provides families and communities in some of the world's poorest countries with skills and tools that they can use to lift themselves up.
- Feed the Future works directly with people and communities to enable them to address the root causes of poverty and hunger in their country.
- Feed the Future is backed by 11 U.S. departments and agencies, and works in collaboration with partner governments around the world, global organizations and leading U.S. businesses, nonprofits, universities, research institutions, and the American people.
- The Peace Corps is one of the U.S. agencies working to increase food security and nutrition through the Feed the Future initiative.
- Feed the Future works in a select number of countries across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean that have great need and potential for growth.
- Feed the Future focuses on growing agriculture sectors; improving nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene, and women's empowerment; engaging the private sector; building research and agricultural capacity; and increasing overall resilience.

### **Farmer-to-Farmer**

- Volunteers can support food security and sustainability by serving as a volunteer through USAID's Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) Program, which contributes to Feed the Future's efforts to equip people with the skills, connections and knowledge they need to lift themselves up.
- F2F promotes economic growth, food security and agricultural development in developing countries, middle-income countries, and emerging markets.
- Through F2F, U.S. farmers, agribusinesses, cooperatives, associations, universities, and financial institutions provide advice, expertise and hands-on support to help vulnerable communities improve productivity, access new markets, build local capacity and resilience, and conserve environmental and natural resources.
- In addition to the critical work that the program's volunteers provide, they also promote international goodwill, understanding of U.S. foreign assistance programs, and private involvement in development activities.
- F2F is funded by USAID through the U.S. Farm Bill.
- Farmer-to-Farmer fundamentally changes the lives of both volunteers and the people in the countries we serve. F2F provides quality, cost-effective assistance by increasing access to technology, encouraging citizen diplomacy to establish long-term relationships, and elevating understanding of international development issues.
- Have additional questions? Please visit <http://farmer-to-farmer.org/about>
- To apply, please visit <http://farmer-to-farmer.org/content/farmer-farmer-volunteer-interest-form>

## **Peace Corps**

- Volunteers can support food security and sustainability by serving as an agriculture volunteer through The Peace Corps.
- The Peace Corps is a service opportunity for motivated changemakers to immerse themselves in a community abroad, working side-by-side with local leaders to tackle the most pressing challenges of our generation.
- The Peace Corps mission is to promote world peace and friendship by fulfilling three goals: to help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women, help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served, and help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.
- Today, approximately 7,000 Volunteers serve in 64 countries in the fields of education, health, youth in development, community economic development, agriculture, and environment.
- No one else in the American mission—Federal or civilian—is as immersed at the community level as a Peace Corps Volunteer. This grassroots diplomacy and development is indispensable to American interests.
- Peace Corps Volunteers contribute to Feed the Future by building local capacity among individuals, groups and communities to promote sustainable agricultural development, better nutrition and stronger resilience. Since 2012, approximately 1,000 Volunteers in at least 40 countries around the world have supported Feed the Future activities every year, reaching over 40,000 beneficiaries annually.
- Have additional questions? Please visit <https://www.peacecorps.gov/faqs/>
- To apply, please visit <https://map.peacecorps.gov/>

## Template Resources

The following are resources you can use to help share your Feed the Future experiences. They are available on the Feed the Future website:

### Media Materials

1. **Tips for Pitching Media:** Step-by-step tips for how to engage and coordinate with media.
2. **How to Build a Contact List:** Tips for how to develop a list of the organizations and media outlets that you want to share your story with.
3. **Pitch Note Example:** A draft note to share with organizations or media about your Feed the Future experience.
4. **Tips for Talking to Reporters:** Guidelines for how to prepare for print, television and radio media interviews.
5. **Following Up With Contacts:** Tips for sharing news with reporters or key organizations/ stakeholders (e.g., businesses, schools, community groups) after you've returned from your trip.
6. **Storytelling Tips:** Pointers on how to craft, hone and share your Feed the Future story.
7. **How to Write Blog Posts:** Tips for writing and updating your personal blog about your Feed the Future experiences, as well as how to share your content with other programs that may repurpose or share it.

### Social Media Materials

8. **Sample Social Media Posts:** Social post ideas you can share on your accounts to highlight your volunteer experience.
9. **Social Post Content:** Photos, hashtags and social handles you can use on your accounts to highlight your volunteer experience.

### Community Engagement

10. **Presentation Template:** Customizable PowerPoint that can be used to showcase your Feed the Future experiences when speaking with community groups.