



**Farmer to Farmer Benin  
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ207
Country	Benin
Country Project	Cashew subsector
Host Organization	URPA Oueme-Plateau
Type of Volunteer Assistance	<b>Technology Transfer (T)</b>
Type of Value Chain Activity	<b>Information and Input support services (S)</b>
Assignment Title	Cashew plantations management improved techniques
Assignment preferred dates	Earlier in September 2019
Objectives of the assignment	Help the cashew producers of URPA Oueme-Plateau to master the best plantations management techniques to improve their yields
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	Strong knowledge and expertise in farming management, organizational capacity reinforcement, orchards maintenance

**A. BACKGROUND**

The Regional Union of Cashew Producers of Ouémé-Plateau (URPA-OP) is a Cooperative Society with Board of Directors (COOP / CA) created on March 12, 2013 but officially registered on May 03<sup>rd</sup>, 2018 in compliance with the Uniform Act of the Organization for the Harmonization of African Business Law (OHADA) on the law of Cooperative Societies. It comprises two founding members that are the Common Unions of Cashew Producers (UCPA) of the communes of Kétou and Adja-Ouèrè which include eighteen (18) Village Cooperative of Cashew Producers (CVPA).

The URPA Oueme-Plateau network covers 599 producers members, including 472 men and 127 women with an area of 1225.25 hectares of cashew trees in production. The URPA-OP is endowed by FENAPAB with a technical staff. This staff consists of a coordinator, an office secretary and an agricultural advisor. Its main mission is to boost cashew production at regional level by providing advice to producers, setting up quality plant material, adapted production tools and organizing the marketing of raw cashew nuts through group sales system.

The Regional Union of Cashew Producers of Ouémé and Plateau (URPA / OP) is a service cooperative for the benefit of UCPA members. It has as purpose to:

- represent the cashew producers of Ouémé and Plateau at the local, national, sub-regional and international levels towards the public authorities and partners;
- defend the material, financial and moral interests of its members;
- coordinate the activities of the UCPA members;
- support cashew producers to develop professionalism in their organizations;
- provide technical assistance to cashew farmers through their activities;
- organize exchange experiences trips for the benefit of the cashew farmers;
- support the implementation of the policy of promotion of the cashew subsector at the local level;
- facilitate access to credits to the members;
- facilitate access to technical support for cashew nut producers;
- facilitate supply of specific inputs to cashew nut producers;
- contribute to build the organizational and management capacity of the members;
- seek partners and funding for the development of cashew farmers' activities;
- develop an information and communication system on the activities of the Union;
- look for outlets for cashew nuts selling;
- encourage all initiatives contributing to the development of the sector and the improvement of the living and working conditions of the producers members;
- lobby and advocate towards the partners.

During the 2017-2018 marketing year, the URPA Oueme-Plateau sold 140.329 tons of cashew nuts in a grouped system.

## **B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

The URPA Oueme Plateau is the only one in the country and in the cashew subsector that has no donor supporting them. In addition, it is the one recently officially registered and is at the beginning of the services delivering to the members.

Among the difficulties they have, some are listed below:

- low yields of the plantations
- absence of woods park;
- lack of nurserymen trained in improved techniques of grafting and lack of adequate equipment (lack of drilling, shade, etc.) for the success of this activity;
- Inorganization of nurserymen.

Some of their needs are the following:

- Improved techniques of the cashew plantations management,
- Improved techniques of the cashew plantations maintenance,
- Training of the technical agents and the farmers on the rehabilitation of plantations techniques,
- Installation of wood parks, pest and disease management;
- Training on project proposal designing and fundraising,
- Training on grafting techniques and nursery settling and management

### **C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The main objective of this assignment is to help the cashew producers of URPA Oueme-Plateau to master the best plantations management techniques to improve their yields. The assignment will intend specially to:

- Visit some plantations with the cashew farmers to make a typology regarding the farming techniques and the practices,
- Assess the ongoing practices and technologies of the cashew plantations management about seedlings production, planting, maintenance and harvesting,
- Make a participatory diagnosis of the cashew plantations problems,
- Define with the farmers some affordable improved practices and technologies,
- Train the farmers on the most important improved technologies and practices
- Make some recommendations to help the cashew producers to improve the yields

### **D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

The contribution of the URPA OP to this assignment will consist of mobilizing, supporting the commuting, the lodging and the feeding fees of the participants to the diagnosis and training sessions. In addition, the URPA OP promises to take in charge the roundtrip commuting of the volunteer from his or her hotel to its headquarter every day.

### **E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

Through the volunteer technical assistance, the yields of the plantations will greatly be improved as well as the production activities. In addition, this assignment will help them to improve the adhesion of other farmers and to expand their activities to other Communes like Adjohoun, Bonou, etc. In addition, this technical assistance will be useful for improving cashew nuts group sales as well as increasing the market part from 5% to 20%.

### **F. DELIVERABLES**

The deliverables expected from this assignment are the follows:

- An assessment of the cashew plantation management practices is done,
- A participatory diagnosis of the cashew plantations problems and challenges is done,

- The cashew farmers are trained on the improved practices and technologies of the farms management,
- Debriefing with USAID and in country staff after assignment
- Provide activity report

#### G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY (DRAFT)

Day	Activity
Day 1	Travel from home to US international airport
Day 2	Arrival at Benin International Airport, picked up and check in at Livingstone Hotel.
Day 3	At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter go to CRS office for introductions and orientations (briefings including host brief), logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Any necessary hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices and Travel to Ketou and check in City Hotel. CRS Benin F2F team introduces the volunteer to URPA's staff and the administrative board as well as to the chief of police and to Mayor of the district. The volunteer will review and finalise the work-plan and discuss with them on any other arrangement for the work
Day 4	Visiting some cashew plantations and make some typologies
Days 5-6	Conducting diagnosis activities on the practices and technologies used by the cashew farmers
Day 7-8	Conducting a diagnosis session of the cashew plantations problems and challenges and define some improved practices and technologies to solve them
Day 9, 11 and 12	Train the farmers on the improved practices and technologies of the plantations management
Day 13	Wrap up the meetings with URPA's representatives, debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff, actions plan and recommendations review and travel back to Cotonou
Day 14	Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff. Volunteer will finalize his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well finalize advances and expenditures with finance
Day 15	Depart for USA
TBD	Outreach event in the US

#### H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

As described above, the volunteer we are looking for this assignment must have relevant professional skills and practical experiences in cashew plantations or fruit plantations management. Especially, he or she must be:

- Expert in plantations establishment and management

- Expert in orchards management improved practices and technologies
- Relevant experiences in seedlings planting, plantations maintenance and harvesting practices and technologies
- Open to share knowledge and it experiences with others
- He/she must be result oriented
- Working experience in the cashew subsector is an asset

## **I. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Cotonou, the volunteer will stay at Livingstone Hotel, whereas at Ketou, the volunteer will stay at the City Hotel. In Benin, CRS will pay for hotel accommodation, and provide volunteer with per diems to cater for meals and other incidentals. The volunteer may get an advance which has to be cleared before departing Benin. In addition, a local network SIM card will be provided to the volunteer as well as a spare computer if needed at his or her arrival in Cotonou. In Ketou, CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer’s work and The URPA will contribute to the volunteer ‘commuting as well as mobilizing and supported its members for the required sessions. Mr Alphonse HODONOU DEKOUNDE who is the president of the administrative board of the Union and Mr Olivier SENAHOUN who is the focal point of the Union will work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and his/her work, to ensure that the assignment goals are being achieved.

## **J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

### **1. Training Materials**

The volunteer should prepare materials for hand out which can be printed at CRS office in Benin before his arrival. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at the CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations during the sessions.

### **2. Working Environment**

The URPA Oueme-Plateau is headquartered in Ketou which in an area very close to Nigeria Federal Republic. The Nigerian border is at about 17 km. Ketou is also at 150 km from Cotonou, the biggest city of Benin and at 100 km from Porto-Novo, the capital of Benin. People of Ketou are mostly Christian and some are Muslim but all of them are well involved in endogenous religion. It is an area where the endogenous ceremonies to worship the ‘revenants’ are vibrant and with many freedom restrictions mainly for women during the period of August. The main language is Nagot. But people are open to collaborate with foreigners.

### **3. Recommended Reading**

The volunteer may read some documents on cashew plantations and about tropical farms.

#### 4. Weather Appropriate Clothing

The weather appropriate clothing is light and not dark clothes. In the south of Benin, the weather is a bit hot and humid with some temperatures varying between 23 to 36 Celsius degree. It is also a sunny weather with some rains fall from March.

#### K. KEY CONTACTS

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