



**To express interest in this assignment, please email
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**Farmer to Farmer
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ243
Country	Benin
Country Project	cashew subsector
Host Organization	Tropical Forestry School (EForT)
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Technology Transfer =T
Type of Value Chain Activity	Farm Production = F
Assignment Title	Innovative techniques of edible mushrooms production
Assignment preferred dates	June 2020
Objectives of the assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train the students and the teachers on comestible mushrooms seedlings production techniques, • Train the participants on innovative techniques of comestible mushrooms production • Train the participants on harvesting techniques of comestible mushrooms
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert in comestible mushroom production • Have practical experiences in comestible mushroom production • Be familiar with participatory approach • Be familiar with tropical edible mushroom species • Be familiar with a participatory appraisal • Be used to students training is an asset

A. BACKGROUND

The Forestry School was created in October 2015 (EFIB) and was renamed as Tropical Forestry School (EForT), by decision N°527/MESRS/DC/SGM/DAF/DGES/R-UNA/SA/013SGG19 of 07 August 2019. EForT is a school of Benin National University of Agriculture (UNA). It aims at supporting the Benin's economic development through human capacity building in the field of forestry while considering local communities' need regarding forest resources. Therefore, the school is committed to creating a new generation of technical managers capable of promoting technological innovations without overlooking endogenous knowledge and practices in order to set up efficient companies or production units. To achieve this, the school must, in addition to its training system, combine the sharing of experiences and examples of successes experienced in Benin or elsewhere to develop the entrepreneurial spirit among students.

The Tropical Forestry School is located at Akpotokou (Idigny) in Kétou district, department of the Plateau, at 138 km from Porto-Novo where is the University's Rectorate. This school started operating in the 2015-2016 academic year.

This school provides the following trainings:

- Bachelor in Tropical Forestry
- Master in Tropical Forestry
- Doctorate in Agronomy and Water Sciences, Specialty "Forestry and Wildlife Management"

For the 2019-2020 academic year, the institution registered:

- 42 students for the first year of Bachelor (enrollment still ongoing)
- 27 students for the second year of Bachelor
- 29 students for the third year of Bachelor
- 15 students for the second year of Master

The school has, regarding the school teaching and administrative staff:

- 15 teachers including two (02) women
- 05 administrative including one (01) woman.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

Compared to other agricultural products, mushroom is a crop whose technical production route is not well known in Benin. This is due to scarcity of mushroom scientists and poor knowledge of mushroom technical production route. Indeed, there are some edible mushrooms production initiatives in the country through some local NGO and research centers. But these initiatives need to be widened and improved. Hence, the edible mushrooms available on market and affordable for local people come chiefly from forest gathering activities. But the deforestation activities are making this gathering activity far from easy. In contrast, the economic importance of mushrooms in Sub-Saharan Africa mostly in Benin Republic is increasingly gaining attention. While the demand of comestible mushroom is augmenting, its availability is becoming scarce. Therefore, the cultivation of mushroom offers a window of business opportunities to local people mostly women and youths.

In the same time, Benin country has a tremendous potential of mushroom cultivation which is not fully exploited due to lack of knowledge.

The Tropical Forestry School as an institution which aims to skill students and create a new generation of technical managers capable of promoting technological innovations in order to contribute to Benin's economy, deems vital to build the students and the staff capacity on edible mushroom cultivation. This training will not only allow the school to possess an expertise in mushroom production but to build local farmers 'capacity as well.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of this assignment is to train 30 students and 10 teachers on innovative techniques of comestible mushrooms production technique. Especially, this assignment intends to:

- Train the students and the teachers on comestible mushrooms seedlings production techniques,
- Train the participants on innovative techniques of comestible mushrooms production
- Train the participants on harvesting techniques of comestible mushrooms

In addition, the training will focus on the following specific aspects:

- ✓ Varieties of Mushroom
- ✓ Mushroom Composing
- ✓ Spawning
- ✓ Casing
- ✓ Pinning
- ✓ Cropping

This training will be held in classroom with practical experiments in the field

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

The Tropical Forestry School contribution to this assignment will consist of mobilizing the participants (students and local trainers) to the training sessions. In addition, they will provide a training ward and all the required material for the training session. Finally, they promise to take in charge the roundtrip commuting of the volunteer from his or her hotel to its quarter every day.

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

This assignment will allow the school to develop an expertise for training students on mushroom production which will help to build farmers 'capacity on mushroom cultivation through these futures technicians (today students). Consequently, this will contribute to the development of mushroom production in Benin.

DELIVERABLES

- The participants have their capacity built on mushroom production and can produce this crop
- A Final assignment report is provided
- Debriefing with CRS Benin and with USAID local mission is done
- A PowerPoint presentation is designed

F. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY (DRAFT)

Day	Activity
Day 1	Departure from US
Day 2	Arrive in Cotonou (Benin), pick up at the airport and check in Livingstone hotel or Nobilla Airport 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 office and then move to the Tropical Forestry school located in Kétou at 168 km from Cotonou. The volunteer will have a meeting with the host organization in order to review and finalize his work plan.
Day 4	Assess the participants 'background about edible mushroom production techniques Train on general concepts related to mushroom Inform participants on varieties of Mushroom and classify the most important ones
Day 5	Training on compost production techniques
Days 6-7	Training on Spawning and Casing techniques
Day -8-9	Training on Casing and Pinning techniques
Day 10-11	Training on Pinning and cropping techniques
Day 12	Training on Cropping techniques
Day 13	Wrap up meeting with the school management staff, 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
Day 15	Travel back to US

G. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

To achieve this assignment objectives, the volunteers should have professional skills and solid experiences in mushroom production. He must be an:

- Expert in comestible mushroom production
- Have practical experiences in comestible mushroom production
- Be familiar with participatory approach
- Be familiar with tropical edible mushroom species
- Be familiar with a participatory appraisal
- Be used to students training is an asset

H. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Cotonou, the volunteer will stay at Livingstone Hotel or Nobilla Airport Hotel, whereas at Ketou, he or she will stay at City Hotel. In Benin, CRS will pay for hotel accommodation and will provide a local network SIM card as

well as a spare computer if needed. CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer’s work. The school will assure the volunteer commuting from his or her hotel to the training center.

I. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

1. Training Materials

The volunteer should prepare mushroom courses and prepare the related material. The handout materials can be print in CRS office in Cotonou. 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 school is in Ketou, an area very close to Nigeria Federal Republic. The Nigerian border is about 17 km. Ketou is also at 168 km from Cotonou, the biggest city of Benin and at 138 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’s 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/Yoruba. But people are opened and collaborate with foreigners.

3. Recommended Reading

The volunteer may read documents on: Benin agriculture with focus on mushroom production in Africa or in Benin.

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 waving between 23 to 36 Celsius degree. It is also a sunny weather with some rains fall from March.

J. KEY CONTACTS

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