



Local Assignment: Ugandan or East African volunteer to be paired with virtual supporting American volunteer.

Potential volunteers from Uganda or East Africa should email [George.ntibarikure@crs.org](mailto:George.ntibarikure@crs.org) and [maria.nakayiza@crs.org](mailto:maria.nakayiza@crs.org) to express interest.

American volunteers wishing to support virtually should email [maria.figueroa@crs.org](mailto:maria.figueroa@crs.org)

**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program  
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

<b>Summary Information</b>	
Assignment Code	UG235
Country	Uganda
Country Project	Agribusiness Country Project
Host Organization	Kasolwe Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) society Ltd
Assignment Title	Credit management and review of documentation
Assignment preferred dates	Flexible
Objectives of the assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of SACCO credit management process (Loan appraisal process, disbursement, monitoring and repayment procedures)</li> <li>• Review existing documentation/policies, and provide recommendations for improvement</li> <li>• Establish an efficient credit management system</li> </ul>
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certified accountant or financial management specialist, with experience in credit and financial management</li> <li>• Excellent computer skills</li> <li>• Experience working with financial institutions in loan and savings management</li> <li>• Good communication and inter-personal skills</li> <li>• Adult facilitation skills</li> </ul>
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Financial Services (F)
Type of Value Chain Activity	Information and Input Support Services (S)

PERSUAP Classification	Type III
------------------------	----------

## A. BACKGROUND

CRS Farmer -to-Farmer program (F2F) is a USAID funded five-year (2019- 2023) program currently in its 2<sup>nd</sup> year of implementation with a primary goal of reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty across six countries: Benin, East Timor, Ethiopia, Nepal, Rwanda and Uganda. The program aims at achieving this goal through advancing inclusive and sustainable agriculture led growth aimed at generating sustainable, broad-based economic growth in the agricultural sector. The program’s secondary goal is to increase US public understanding of international development issues and programs and share the knowledge back in the US. To achieve its goals, F2F program provides volunteer technical assistance to farmers and farmer groups (associations and cooperatives), private agribusinesses, agriculture education institutions in developing countries like Uganda to address host identified technical needs in selected agricultural value chains. F2F volunteers are pooled from a broad range of US agricultural expertise, from private farmers with varied experience, University professors, bankers/certified accountants, animal health and nutrition specialists, soil scientists, agronomists who support local host organizations. F2F program introduces innovation and develops local organisations capacity for more productive, profitable, sustainable and equitable agricultural systems while providing an opportunity for people- to-people interactions within the agricultural sector. In Uganda, F2F program focuses technical interventions in the livestock and agribusiness value chains.

There is an increasing recognition that the livelihoods of smallholder farmers depend on much more than production of food staples alone. Enhancing incomes through market-oriented farming is considered a key strategy to address poverty. In the case of Uganda; agricultural and rural development strategies alike have increasingly promoted market- and/or commercial-oriented farming to integrate the subsistence farming activities of rural poor households with the market. This is reflected in the objectives, strategies and practices of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) as is evident in its famous slogan of “farming as a business”. However, the past years of NAADS implementation also suggest that integrating the subsistence farming activities of most farmers with markets remains a key challenge. In addition to the institutional and infrastructure related constraints, farmers have yet to fully internalize the concept of market-oriented farming. Notwithstanding the fact that for farmers to embrace farming as a business venture, access to finance/credit becomes key in financing their farming activities such as; purchase of agro-inputs (improved seeds/fertilizers/ pesticides), procurement of value addition equipment, agriculture mechanization, post-harvest handling and irrigation equipment etc. Similarly, for other actors in the agriculture value chain, access to finance is critical to guaranteeing business success.

Among the many strategies GoU has employed to make agriculture more attractive, it has encouraged and promoted savings and credit societies (SACCOs) as the engine to accelerate the accessibility of loans by

value chain actors particularly small holder farmers. The aim of promoting these SACCOs is because in developing countries like Uganda, there are low levels of saving culture owing to poor underdeveloped stock markets, dominance of urban based commercial banks, and non-regulated Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) in the financial markets as vehicles for savings. Hence Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) are intended to offer an alternative to improve the above undesirable situation in low income countries especially helping members who in most cases are farmers. SACCOs tend to be closer to farming communities increasing accessibility, the level of required paper work/documentation is far less as compared to the larger commercial institutions, hence preferred for the more illiterate /semi-literate populations. Savings and Credit Co-operatives (SACCOs) are community membership-based financial institutions that are formed and owned by their members in promotion of their economic interests. These institutions mobilize and intermediate savings exclusively within their membership under the co-operative statute 1991. Furthermore, they are one of the several types of cooperatives that are unique micro finance institutions categorized under tier four in the financial market and therefore not regulated by Bank of Uganda. Kasolwe SACCO is one of such cooperatives serving the financial needs of farmers and other business actors with in Kamuli district, Uganda. Like any other organisation, SACCO face a couple of challenges and these increase with increase in membership and if not addressed in a timely manner result into conflict, lack of transparency, poor accountability, hence defeating the intended objective of serving its members. One of such challenges relates to the credit management process for which Kasolwe SACCO has requested for F2F technical assistance to help address.

## **B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Kasolwe savings and credit cooperative society is a member owned cooperative started in 2007 and obtained legal registration in 2011, the cooperative is an affiliate member of Kamuli district farmers' association both located in Kamuli district. The SACCO has a total membership of 1,045 individual members out of which 42% are women, 33 savings groups and 5 institutions. The cooperative is democratically governed with 7 board members, a supervisory committee and various committees including a loans committee responsible for loan portfolio management. The board is responsible for policy formulation and provide overall guidance to ensure efficient management and operation of the SACCO. On the other hand, the management team comprised of 5 staff is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the SACCO. The cooperative has a vision **“to have sustainable and profitable enterprises for the active rural poor”**, and two mission statements; **“to improve the economic well-being by creating sustainable house hold incomes through quality economic service delivery”**, and **“to develop a savings culture among the low and medium incomes earners, and financially empower them by availing affordable credit services for sustainability of their businesses and other social needs”**. The cooperative has three savings products offered to members; voluntary savings (deposited and withdrawn at will), fixed savings and compulsory savings which are 20% of the required loan amount which must be deposited into the account before loan request. The SACCO also issues loan products such as; business loans, agriculture loans, motorcycle (“boda boda”), teachers, emergency and school fees loan, different loan products attract specific interest rates between 2 – 3% per month. Besides provision of savings and

credit services, the cooperative provides financial literacy trainings to members and mobile money services to increase accessibility and wider coverage of its services to members.

Currently, the SACCO has a total savings volume of US\$ 47,222 and a loan portfolio of US\$ 111,111, its evident that the saving culture is still very low among members, with a high borrowing rate. The management reports **a loan default rate of 35%, and a repayment rate of 65%**, which is not the ideal situation. As the number of clients/members increases, the probability of loan defaulting will increase due to an increase in loans issued, this is also coupled with crop failures and farmers failure to pay due to unanticipated poor crop harvests. Such challenges necessitate that the cooperative board and management become very vigilant and scrutinize the credit management process right from reviewing loan requests, appraisal of clients, loan disbursement, monitoring and repayment of funds. The cooperative staff have developed templates and procedures to guide the credit management process, however these have never been reviewed and no quality assurance has been conducted to review the entire process and provide recommendations for improvement. It's against this background that the cooperative has requested volunteer technical assistance to help in addressing the above challenges through a review of the credit management process, documentation and provide recommendations for improvement with an anticipated further reduction in the loan default rate.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The main objective of the volunteer assignment is to review the current credit management process, existing documentation and provide recommendations for improvement. The volunteer will:

- Review the credit management system, procedures (review the entire process from: loan appraisal for new clients, loan disbursement, loan monitoring and repayment) and documentation
- Develop revised procedures based on findings and recommendations
- Assist in establishment of an efficient credit management system
- Equip staff and loan committee of the board with skills and knowledge in loan portfolio/credit management

The volunteer will achieve the above objectives by working with both the management team (loan officers/manager/cashiers) and the board members on the loan committee.

In addition, the Volunteer will prepare guides for best practices in credit management for future reference and orientation/refresher training for SACCO staff.

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

With the volunteer’s technical assistance, the SACCO will have a well streamlined loan/credit management system, and in the medium to long term there will be a significant reduction in the loan default rate due to improved/more efficient systems. This will eventually lead to improved service delivery to members, improved transparency and accountability, strengthened group cohesion, improved cooperative performance, and enhanced sustainability of the SACCO.

**D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

Kasolwe SACCO board has committed to mobilize its staff to work closely with the volunteer. The SACCO management will avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer during the preparations and actual reviews and ensure that the volunteer accesses relevant information needed for the assignment.

**E. DELIVERABLES**

1. Volunteer assignment final report due BEFORE departure
2. Revised credit management templates/ procedures to be used in the entire process
3. A compiled manual of best practices in credit management
4. Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment
5. Training attendance lists
6. Volunteer debrief with CRS team, or USAID
7. Assignment related photos

**F. Schedule of Volunteer Activities in Uganda**

The volunteer will be expected to spend 2.5 weeks in country, with a strong preference for the longer duration.

Activity
Travel from home to US international airport
Arrival at Uganda Entebbe Airport. Pick up by Fairway Hotel shuttle to Kampala and check in at Hotel.
At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter proceed to CRS office for introductions and briefings including host brief, logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices. In the afternoon: Travel to Kamuli district
In the morning CRS introduces the volunteer to Kasolwe SACCO board and management team. Together with CRS and board members, the volunteer will review and finalise the action -plan. The action plan should include group presentations to be done after the assignment.
Familiarisation visit and courtesy call to district local government offices

<b>Activity 1:</b> Review credit management system, procedures (review the entire process from: loan appraisal for new clients, loan disbursement, loan monitoring and repayment) and documentation for the existing loan products
<b>Activity 2:</b> Together with staff, develop revised procedures based on findings and recommendations
<b>Activity 3:</b> Equip/provide refresher for staff and loan committee of the board with skills and knowledge in loan portfolio/credit management
<b>Activity 4:</b> Field testing for some of the tools developed/ revised tools and incorporate changes based on field activity
Develop a manual on best practices in credit management.
Wrap up meetings, whilst emphasizing key concepts of the assignment. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations. End of assignment presentation.
Travel back to Kampala
Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff. Volunteer finalizes his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well as finalise liquidations with finance.
Depart for the US
Outreach event in the US
<b>Note:</b> <i>This is a draft schedule that will be finalized based on volunteer actual dates of availability, Sundays are typical rest days and working on Saturday is, per the host's request</i>

## G. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa ([www.fairwayhotel.co.ug](http://www.fairwayhotel.co.ug)). In Kamwenge, the volunteer will stay at Century Hotels which is located within Kamuli town.

CRS will pay for hotel accommodation and provide the volunteer with per diems to cater for meals and other incidentals. The volunteer may get an advance which has to be cleared before departing Uganda. For more information, please refer to Uganda country information that will be provided.

## H. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

The volunteer should prepare materials for hand out which can be printed at CRS office in Kampala before commencement of the assignment. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations.

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer becomes familiar with Uganda’s agriculture sector plans and priorities, the management of savings and credit cooperatives in developing countries like Uganda. Details on weather, security and appropriate clothing are included in the country visitor’s information pack.

## I. KEY CONTACTS

To express interest in this assignment, please email the CRS Baltimore contact listed below. To find out additional information about the host, issue description or field conditions, please email the country contact provided below, copying the CRS Baltimore contact.

<b>CRS Baltimore</b>	
<b>Maria Figueroa</b> US Operations Manager/Uganda Recruiter Farmer to Farmer Program 228 W. Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21201 410-951-7366 Email: <a href="mailto:maria.figueroa@crs.org">maria.figueroa@crs.org</a>	
<b>CRS Country Program</b>	
<b>George Ntibarikure</b> Project Director Farmer to Farmer Program Uganda Office Tel: +256 031 226 5658 Mobile cell phone +256 772 472 103 Email: <a href="mailto:george.ntibarikure@crs.org">george.ntibarikure@crs.org</a>	<b>Maria Nakayiza</b> Senior Project Coordinator Farmer to Farmer Program Uganda Office Tel: +256 031 226 5658 Mobile cell phone +256 783922882 Email: <a href="mailto:maria.nakayiza@crs.org">maria.nakayiza@crs.org</a>
<b>Host Organization:</b>	
<b>Gerald Woira (Board Chairperson)</b> Kasolwe Savings and Credit Cooperative Society Ltd Mobile: 0782677980/0750865464 Email: <a href="mailto:woiragerald@gmail.com">woiragerald@gmail.com</a>	<b>Moses Mutibwa (Manager)</b> Kasolwe SACCO Mobile: 0782814506 Email: <a href="mailto:mutibwamoses88@gmail.com">mutibwamoses88@gmail.com</a>