

To express interest in this assignment, email: Mireille Ngokion at Mireille.ngokion@crs.org



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

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	UG250
Country	Uganda
Country Project	Agribusiness Country Project
Host Organization	Okwongodul Oil Seed Producers & Marketing Cooperative Society (OKOSPMC)
Assignment Title	Farming as Business along oil seed crops for sunflower, soya bean, groundnuts and simsim value chains.
Assignment preferred dates	January - February, 2021
Objectives of the assignment	Train participants on planning and management of farm businesses to enable them to make informed production and financial decisions to maximize farm incomes and food secure households.
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formal qualifications in agribusiness development, farm business management, agricultural development, or production economics 2. Wide experience in agribusiness extension related to developing market-oriented smallholder agriculture in low income countries 3. Good communication and inter-personal skills 4. Good adult facilitation skills 5. Ability to use ICT for virtual meetings added plus.
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Business/Enterprise development (E)
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 2nd 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 organisations. 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 its technical interventions in the livestock and agribusiness value chains

Poverty and food insecurity are endemic in rural Uganda. In what is still a largely rural economy (the population is around 16 per cent urban), agriculture accounts for two-thirds of Ugandan employment and a quarter of GDP (MAAIF 2011). Agriculture is dominated by small-scale production, so smallholder-driven agricultural growth is seen as key to inclusive growth. While subsistence still forms an important part of smallholder production, farmers are increasingly linked to the market. In 2005, 58 per cent of agricultural output and 46 per cent of food production in Uganda was marketed, and 77 per cent of farmers were selling part of their produce (IFAD 2011). For the drier Northern Region of Uganda, oilseeds are an important part of transformation of subsistence agriculture to market-oriented farming, and of post-conflict economic reconstruction. Oilseeds are particularly well suited for smallholder production, being short cycle crops (four months from sowing to marketing) and requiring few external inputs.

The Ugandan commercial oilseed sector dates back at least eight decades and has been identified by the Ugandan government as a focal area under the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) (MAAIF 2010) and has attracted much donor and NGO interest. The Vegetable Oil Development Project (VODP phase I and II), a collaboration between the Ugandan government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), has been a major push for the sector, with the objective of increasing household income by increasing domestic vegetable oil production (palm oil in the south and oilseeds i.e. sunflower, ground nuts and soya beans in the north) in partnership with the private sector. The goal of VODP project was to increase domestic production of vegetable oils and its by-products which would ultimately increase rural incomes for small holder producers and contribute to sustainable poverty reduction. Through these initiatives in partnership with the oil seed subsector Uganda platform (OSSUP)

comprising of producer organisations, both emergent, semi/commercial small holders, and private sector players such as traders, aggregators and processors, the project had significant impact on the promotion of oil seed cultivation and processing resulting into the up-scaling of Lira in Northern Uganda to a modern agro-industrial hub for oilseeds. Despite the good progress, there are some areas where it has been less effective, including; the timely release of improved open pollinated varieties (OPVs) of sunflower, linkages between research and extension, effective collaboration with private seed suppliers, and deepening extension provision (IFAD 2011). Several cooperatives like Okwongodul cooperative society in Northern Uganda continue to mobilize formation of producer groups and linking them to markets to tap into the potential of the oil seed crops for poverty reduction at the grassroots level.

Okwongodul Oilseed Producers and Marketing co-operative society Ltd (OKOSPMC) is an umbrella organization consisting of 34 Rural Producers organizations (RPOs) from five parishes in Okwongodul Sub County in Dokolo District – northern Uganda with *Reg. No.P.10293/RCS*. It is a member-owned cooperative society limited by shared capital and jointly owned by 1,620 registered smallholder farmers who grow oilseed mainly soybeans, Sunflower, Sesame, Beans among others for improved livelihoods of the smallholder rural farmers. The cooperative was established with aim of producing, processing, bulking, and marketing of oil seed to alleviate poverty among small holder farmers. The cooperative has a vision of a commercialized agriculture for sustainable household food security and incomes, and a mission of contributing to the transformation and revitalization of agriculture through the provision of agriculture inputs, agribusiness and value chain development for improved household food security and incomes among smallholder rural farmers.

The supreme decision-making organ of the cooperative is the general assembly which comprises of members of OKOSPMC. The policy making organ and overseer of the cooperative's various activities is vested in the Board of Directors (BoD). The management of the organization is appointed by the BoD. The management is directly responsible for the day to day operations of the cooperative. In line with the cooperative Act 1991, a supervisory committee elected by Annual General Meeting supervises both the BoD and management.

The cooperative has the following specific strategic objectives including promotion of food security, farmer empowerment, promotion of agro-processing, promotion of commercial farming through collective marketing, farmer group development, and provision of financial services. The cooperative values transparency, integrity, equality, flexibility, respect for opinions and safety and security. The services offered to members include training farmers in agronomic practices, postharvest handling, lobby for infrastructure development and private sector engagement/partnerships for cooperative development.

B. Issue Description

FAO statistics from 1999–2012 show a robust growth in production of all three major oilseed cash crops: soya beans, sunflower, and sesame over the period, percentage of crop land allocated to soya beans in Northern Uganda rose from 0.21 in 2006 to 2.66 in 2010, although the percentages are comparatively still very low, there is potential for growth. What is clear from the data is that the increase in production is largely due to extensification (growing oilseeds on more land) rather than the intensification of production

(improving productivity on the same area), as yields have remained low and fairly static. The Lira hub is the most commercially developed region, with sunflower and soya beans the main oilseed cash crops. Farmers also produce significant volumes of sesame, and larger-scale traders deal in sesame alongside sunflower, soya and other agricultural crops. Major processors like Mukwano Industries and Mount Meru Millers Uganda largely focus on this hub, with processing plants in Lira town, and they lead the oilseed sector in the region. However, it's only a small percentage of small holder farmers that is engaged in the commercial production of oil seed crops despite their potential to improve incomes. Cooperatives like OKOSPMC have therefore developed initiatives particularly creating market linkages between producers and buyers like Mt. Meru, this is viewed as an incentive for small holder producers to engage in the commercial production of oil seeds. OKOSPMC in promoting the oil seed crops among target beneficiaries, faces challenges of subsistence farming as opposed to commercial farming due to low expertise in farming as business skills. Other associated challenges include business plan development concept, leadership and governance and post-harvest handling. Farmers have limited access to extension services, lack of knowledge on use of improved agricultural inputs (seed and inorganic fertilizers), lack of technical know-how of some basic production management practices, such as appropriate spacing, restoration of soil fertility, or timely land preparation and planting to enable a growing crop to utilize all the rain that is available in the season. Training farmers in the district on farming as business is a step for transitioning from subsistence farming to commercial farming and is crucial to maximize incomes.

Farming as a business (FaaB) requires long term planning of the use of resources, day to day management and emphasizes a shift from farming for subsistence to farming for profit. Farmers must learn to critically examine the costs related to production and marketing and critically relate them to the benefits that accrue, through improved efficiencies and better farm management information. A farmer needs to know not only how to cultivate crops and rear animals, but also how to manage his/her farm as an enterprise. Thus, every farmer must face management problems of deciding which enterprise to invest in, economically how much to produce in each enterprise and what methods to use. Apart from the skill and knowledge necessary to manage the farm, a farmer also needs to factor in factors of production such as land, labor, capital and organization skills; these together are known as production resources, a farmer needs them to start and manage a business. A farmer must plan well and combine them well for maximum benefit from his farm. Economic sustainability increasingly depends on selecting profitable enterprises, sound financial planning, proactive marketing, risk management, and good overall management.

The main challenge: Poor record keeping is particularly common among OKOSPMC members. Members lack basic record keeping skills such as tracking of expenses/revenues/cash inflows which affects their business decision making. This is coupled with lack of skills on enterprise selection to invest in highly profitable enterprises particularly at loan request. Often, farmers will borrow money for investing in agriculture but divert the funds to cater for other immediate needs or other businesses which often cripples their ability to repay the loans promptly which results into default. With the lack of proper records, farmers are also not able to make sound business decisions, plan effectively for current and future business growth. Based on the challenge above, OKOSPMC requested for F2F volunteer technical support to train farmers in farming as a business.

In addition to the training, the volunteer will be required to develop a training manual on 'Farming as a Business', which will be used for future reference and training. It is anticipated that once farmers begin approaching farming from a business perspective, their incomes and overall livelihoods will increase.

C. Objectives of the Assignment

The overall aim of this assignment is to train OKOSPMC beneficiaries (farmers) on planning and management of farm businesses to enable them to make informed production and financial decisions to maximize farm incomes and food secure households.

Specific objectives include:

1. Basics of farm record keeping such as types of records to keep including but not limited to expenses/revenues/cash inflows, simple balance sheets, cash statement. Including the design of simple templates for farmer use.
2. Cost Benefit Analysis and enterprise selection for better investment
3. Basic financial management: focused on, basics of budgeting/planning and efficient/profitable use of loans and repayment schedules

The requested volunteer technical assistance targets the small holder farmers who are beneficiaries of OKOSPMC services. The volunteer will provide training at two levels:

Level 1: Training of Trainers (TOT). Dynamic individuals from different farmer groups will be selected to participate in the ToT training – receiving a more in-depth training and there after cascading them to groups not reached by the volunteer. Subcounty staff will also be encouraged to participate in the training sessions.

Level 2: A total of 150 oil seed crops farmers will be trained in above mentioned topics to equip them with good farming as business practices. The farmers will be divided into manageable groups to allow easy learning and interaction while observing COVID SOPs.

The target audiences for this training will be drawn from both the host farmers and local government lead farmers. The audience will mostly be comprised of semi-literate farmers, the volunteer should design materials bearing that he/she will train through a local volunteer. The materials should be delivered using a participatory approach.

Host contribution – OKOSPMC will mobilize farmers, dynamic individuals as ToTs and potential resource persons to the trainings to be conducted by the volunteer. The organization will also avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and actual trainings, to ensure that key staff are trained to backstop TOTs who will continue training other members even after the assignment is completed.

Working relationship between US volunteer and local volunteer

Both the US and local volunteers review the scope of work and understand the assignment objectives. During the first connection call, the two volunteers are virtually introduced by a member from the Uganda F2F team, jointly they agree on modalities/approaches of executing the assignment, including the frequency of check in calls.

Next, the US volunteer pre-designs a step-by-step approach with appropriate tools/templates that are discussed and finalized with input from the Local volunteer. The Local volunteer executes each step, shares results, and together they determine how to execute the next step, adjusting the tools/templates as required. The Local volunteer should be willing to listen to and accept input/guidance from the US counterpart who is off site and share decision making.

On site, the local volunteer will capture a snapshot of the host situation on ground in line with the assignment and building on the scope of work information and share this with the US counterpart. The US volunteer reviews relevant data/observation/information collected by local volunteer, clarifies findings through email/skype/zoom or whatsapp, together they determine appropriate/needed/feasible intervention(s). US volunteer revises interventions steps accordingly and submits to local volunteer and the intervention plan is discussed and finalized. The assignment commences with local volunteer taking lead on ground following the agreed intervention plan and with an agreed periodic check-in for the entire duration of the assignment. Based on emerging ground situation, the local volunteer together with the US volunteer will develop materials/tools/templates to address the host needs being careful not to divulge from the scope of work objectives and deliverables.

Whenever possible, the local volunteer should use the most suitable communication platform (Zoom/whatsapp/Skype) with the US counterpart to directly engage with key members of the host organisations (Board and management/company owners) on assignment related discussion and evaluation of progress. This joint collaboration is expected to continue throughout the assignment period and update the host country and HQ recruiter of the progress.

Reporting is jointly done using the provided templates and submitted to CRS. Both US volunteer and local volunteer will be invited for a debrief meeting with USAID local mission. This will mark the end of the joint assignment. However, as always, both volunteers are encouraged to keep in touch with the host and where necessary post assignment. The field office or HQ office can offer any support for the follow up that may be needed

D. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

By providing this assistance, farmers will acquire skills in land preparation, seed selection, pest and disease identification and control, timing of planting, proper spacing, and weed management. As a result of the training, it is anticipated that sesame production volumes will increase, and this will translate into increased income at household level and the community at large.

In addition, the Volunteer will develop Soya bean agronomy training manual for both the farmer level- and organizational level – training.

The anticipated deliverables include:

- A list of trainings conducted, and people trained
- Training guidelines/manuals developed
- Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment
- Volunteer feedback
- Field trip report and expense report

E. Schedule of Volunteer Activities in Uganda

Day	Activity
Day	Both local and US volunteers are virtually connected before the start of the assignment. Both get briefing from George/Robbinah and work out how the assignment will be accomplished and share resources.
Day 1	The local volunteer arrives at CRS office, gets a briefing from Robbinah or George about the host and then discusses with the team the related logistics and anticipated outcomes. Volunteer may also prepare study materials while still at CRS Office. After briefing, travel to Kamwenge to commence the assignment in the company of Robbinah/George.
Day 2	In the morning, Robbinah/George introduces the volunteer to the Kamwenge dairy cooperative management. Later in the day, the management (including representatives of Board of Directors) convenes a meeting for the volunteer to meet the entire core staff to discuss the objectives of the assignment and sketch out a work/action plan. In the afternoon, the volunteer will have a familiarization tour of OKOSPMC activities, facilities, and discuss about existing market outlets/strategies. The trainings venue will vary from classroom/church/halls or under tree.
Day 3-10	<u>Commencement of the course</u> : Volunteer introduces the course (objectives, planned content, schedule) and gathers and discusses participants’ expectations with a view of harmonizing these with the initial plans. Agree with the participants on the final training program and time as well as the code of conduct (rules and norms) for the course. Recap of the relevance of the assignment to the participants emphasizing the importance of attending the full course for full benefits from the package.

	<p>Training of ToTs from selected farmer groups, the volunteer will spend 2- 3 days as appropriate to cover more in-depth trainings as these will be responsible for follow up with groups trained and reach groups not trained by the volunteer.</p> <p>Dive into the training addressing specific objectives 1- 3 above for each of the selected farmer groups. Trainings will be conducted for two half days for each of the selected farmer groups. The volunteer will reach at least five farmer groups based on the actual volunteer availability. There should be a strong emphasis on participatory and practical approaches during the training sessions.</p> <p>Summing up the assignment and emphasize take-home practical tips; participants evaluate the training; volunteer solicits participants' input into assignment final report recommendations. Overview and handover of the training guide developed by the volunteer.</p>
Day 11	Summing up the assignment and emphasize <u>take-home</u> practical tips; participants evaluate the training; volunteer solicits participants' input into assignment final report recommendations and develop an action plan.
Day 12	Volunteer travels back home/Kampala
Day 13	Submit the Trip Report (TR) and other deliverables and discuss any pending issues with relevant CRS staff. If possible, the volunteer and CRS team attend a debrief at USAID Mission.
Day 14	Depart for home

F. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa (www.fairwayhotel.co.ug). In Dokolo, the volunteer will stay at Dokolo Hotel which is within Dokolo town. The volunteer will work accompanied by cooperative staff in rural areas where groups are located.

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.

G. 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 oil seeds subsector, production and management systems in Uganda. Details on weather, security and appropriate clothing are included in the country visitor’s information pack.

H. 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.

CRS Baltimore	
Mireille Ngokion Uganda Recruiter Farmer to Farmer Program 228 W. Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21201 410-951-7366 Email: mireille.ngokion@crs.org	
CRS Country Program	
George Ntibarikure Project Director Farmer to Farmer Program Uganda Office Tel: +256 031 226 5658 Mobile cell phone +256 772 472 103 Email: george.ntibarikure@crs.org	Robbinah Hakiza Senior Project Coordinator Farmer to Farmer Program Uganda Office Tel: +256 031 226 5658 Mobile cell phone +256 772490897 Email: robbinah.hakiza@crs.org
Host Organization:	
Olade Santos OKOSPMC Chairperson Phone: 0782 424 562 Email: oladesantos4@gmail.com	Marcos Ecir OKOSPMC Secretary Manager Phone: 0772644966/0702644966 Email: : marcos73.danifoods@gmail.com

