



To express interest in this assignment for virtual support, please email emily.keast@crs.org
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**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program
 Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	LR216
Country	Liberia
Country Project	Rice
Host Organizations	Foya Rural Women, INTOFAWOR, Mayor Farmers' Cooperative, Meinah Farmer Cooperative, Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation, and Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Corporation.
Assignment Title	Technical assistance for inclusive business model, contract farming design for increased commercialization, and effective mutual relationship.
Assignment preferred dates	October-November 2021
Objectives of the assignment	<p>The objectives of this assignment are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the stage for processors/buyers to provide seeds and other inputs to producer organizations as part of contract farming. • Provide an opportunity for the value-chain actors involved to identify their individual strengths and weaknesses and how their collective efforts can bring gains to their businesses through mutual relationship regardless of the challenges at individual level. • Increase private sector investment in agriculture. • Generate a steady income source at the individual farmer level. • Help producer organizations and smallholder farmers overcome the challenges of access to finance for increased agricultural productivity. • Ensure that product aggregation becomes a profitable and sustainable business. • Provide a practical and process-oriented approach for a sound planning and implementation of contract farming (CF) scheme. • Design viable contract farming arrangement as part of an urgently required business model innovation based on a rapid but sound assessment of the starting situation.
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<p>A suitable volunteer candidate for this assignment must have relevant experience working with rural farmers association and agriculture sector. The candidate should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal qualifications in agribusiness, with experience in agro-enterprise development, administration, and management. • Agribusiness development experience in developing countries with expertise in contract farming and business plan models, template development, administration, and management. • Good adult facilitation and interpersonal skills.



Type of Volunteer Assistance	Business Enterprise Development (E)
Type of Value Chain Activity	Information and Inputs Support Services (S)
PERSUAP Classification	Type III

A. BACKGROUND

The producer organizations, agro input dealer and rice processor listed below are registered farmer-based organizations and private enterprises operating in Foya Statutory District in Lofa County. Their characteristics, modus of operandi and challenges are as follow:

Foya Rural Women

Foya Rural Women, a farmer cooperative, is involved in production and aggregation of paddy rice. It operates a VLSA and has total membership of 61 farmer-groups and it is active. This producer organization received training in post-harvest loss reduction and business management through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project. Nonetheless, this producer organization further needs training in designing contract farming to guide management in business planning, and effective management for increased profitability.

INTOFAWOR

INTOFAWOR, a farmer-based cooperative, is engaged in aggregation and sales of paddy rice. The total membership of this farmer-based organization is 3,100 and it is fairly active. This farmer-based cooperative received training and coaching in post-harvest loss reduction and business management through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project. Nonetheless, this producer organization further needs training in designing contract farming to guide management in business planning, and effective management for increased profitability.

Mayor Farmer Cooperative

Mayor Farmer Cooperative is engaged in production and aggregation of paddy rice. It has a total of 100 farmer-groups. It is active and received training and coaching in post-harvest loss reduction and business management through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project. Nonetheless, this producer organization further needs training in designing contract farming to guide management in business planning, and effective management for increased profitability.

Meinah Farmer Cooperative

Meinah Farmer Cooperative, a producer organization, is involved in the production of and sales of paddy rice. This farmer-based producer organization has a total of 158 farmer-groups. It is fairly active and is replicating training knowledge. This group received training and coaching in post-harvest loss reduction and business management through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project; however, it further needs training in organizational management, crafting contract farming agreement and business plan.

Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation

Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation, a registered private enterprise, is engaged in sales assorted with agro inputs. This enterprise shop was furnished by CNFA. It is active and had received training in business and financial management best practices through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project. Equipping this enterprise with knowledge



in crafting contract farming agreement and business plan will enable them to increase market size and gross sales revenue.

Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Corporation (AIIC)

AIIC, a registered Liberian-owned rice milling corporation, is located in Foya Town, Lofa County. AIIC has an integrated rice mill currently under installation. The Corporation currently operates a ton/day mill in INTOFAWOR warehouse. It is active and received training in business and financial management best practices through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project; however, it is not replicating said training knowledge at its factory site in Foya. Nevertheless, equipping its purchasing manager and lead aggregators with knowledge and skills in crafting contract farming agreement will help the purchasing manager and lead aggregators to develop actionable purchasing plan for the mill.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

Liberia has an agrarian economy; 70% of the total population of 5M people work and live in the agricultural sector. The mentioned producer organizations and private enterprises are part of this 70% that are working in the agricultural sector of Liberia. These producer organizations are working in the rice value-chain of the agriculture sector in Foya Statutory District in Lofa County. As producer organizations, they will play a vital role in the supply of paddy rice to AIIC mill whose annual input consumption is 4,608 metric tons. Technical need assessment conducted amongst the highlighted producer organizations in Foya Town in Lofa County, despite the various training they had received through CNFA-USAID funded LADA project, clearly revealed that these producer organizations do not have any formal agreement between them and buyers.

This problem is hindering their abilities in accessing working capital and having access to guaranteed markets for paddy rice that is produced or aggregated. The lack of access to working capital will negatively impact their productivity thereby leading to food insecurity. On the other hand, lack of guaranteed markets will eventually lead to loss of income as a result negative price structure. Producer organizations will sell their paddy rice at lower prices if the supply paddy rice exceeds demand.

This volunteer assignment must focus on building the capacity of the mentioned core value-chain actors through training and also developing a template for contract farming. This will help producer organizations, purchasing managers, lead aggregators and agro input dealers in developing customize contract farming.

This arrangement can help integrate small-scale farmers into modern agricultural value-chains, providing them with inputs, technical assistance, and assured markets. Conflicts are common between buyers and farmers, and alternative dispute resolution methods may help resolve them.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The overall objective of this assignment is through a training, the capabilities of producer organizations and affiliates will be upgraded in terms of designing contract farming. Producer organizations and affiliates will be equipped with the needed knowledge and skills to develop contract farming and ensured administration and management to support the profitable commercialization of their rice business for sustainability.

The specific objectives of this SOW are:

- Develop training guide for the trainer and trainees.



- Develop the training methodology/approach.
- Train producer organizations and affiliates about the way contract farming works, especially illustrating the aggregation model (i.e., flow chart showing the relationship between farmers, aggregators, agro input dealers and processor).
- Train producer organizations and affiliates about the four key benefits of contract farming and inherent potential risks.
- Disaggregate participants into actionable groups for crafting a model contract farming based on a template developed by the US and local volunteer.
- Facilitate a SWOT analysis for each organization and the group of organizations to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and potential threats. They will use the results from this analysis to properly field their individual roles and responsibilities in the contract farming agreement.
- Develop a contract farming template from the perspective of the farmers, agro input dealers, processor, and producer organizations that are involved in production and aggregation.
- Provide a practical and process-oriented approach for a sound planning and implementation of contract farming (CF) scheme.
- Prepare a training report, detailing how the trainings were conducted, achievements, challenges, lessons, opportunities for future engagements and recommendations on how to reduce postharvest losses.
- Organize a half-day presentation to members, other stakeholders like local government, buyers, any other partner to share the training report and recommendations.

D. TARGET AUDIENCE:

- ✓ The board member composition includes:
 - Chairmen (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - Co-chairmen (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - Correspondent Secretary (1 each from the 4 organizations).
- ✓ The secretariat member composition includes:
 - Executive Directors (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - Administrative Assistant (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - Agriculture Officers (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - extension workers (1 each from the 4 organizations).
 - Business Managers (1 each from the 4 organizations).
- ✓ The rice processor, agro input dealer, and lead aggregators composition include:
 - Purchasing Manager (rice processor; 1 person),
 - Manager and Marketing Officers (agro input dealer; 2 people)
 - Lead Aggregators (rice processor; 8 people).

Breakdown of target audience:

Producer organizations (Mayor Farmers' Cooperative and Meinah Farmers' Cooperative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members: 4 people ea. (2x4= 8 persons) • Secretariat: 5 people ea. (2x5= 10 persons)
Aggregators (Foya Rural Women and INTOFAWOR Farmers' Cooperative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members: 4 people ea. (2x4= 8 persons) • Secretariat: 5 people ea. (2x5= 10 persons)
Processor (Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Corporation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchasing Manager: 1 • Lead Aggregators, Rice Processor: 8



Agrodealer(Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Manager: 1 • Marketing Officer: <u>1</u>
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E. HOST CONTRIBUTION

To conduct this assignment, producer organizations and affiliates are expected to meet the following requirements:

- Mobilize and facilitate staff and affiliates to attend all the training sessions.
- Provide venue for the training sessions.
- Commit to implement all the recommendations provided by the volunteer(s) after the completion of the assignments.

F. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

Following the completion of this assignment, the below listed outcomes are anticipated:

- Producer organizations and affiliates will understand the importance of contract farming.
- Producer organizations and affiliates will have the knowledge and skills needed in designing contract farming.
- Producer organizations and affiliate will be able to access finance because of the contract farming agreement.
- Smallholder farmers at the base of the pyramid will overcome access to finance challenges and thereby lead to increased productivity and income.
- Market linkages will be created between smallholder farmers, producer organizations, and agro input dealer and processor, and quantity and fixed price will be established as a result of the contract farming agreement.
- Producer organizations and affiliate will have guaranteed market access.
- Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Corporation paddy rice supply will increase as result of establishing contract farming relationship with producer organizations.
- Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation market size and sales revenue will increase as result of establishing contract farming relationship with producer organizations and processor.

G. DELIVERABLES

- Training attendance list for members will be supplied by producer organizations and affiliates.
- Training manuals developed.
- Contract farming template.
- Contract farming reached/modified by host organizations (because of this assignment).
- Debriefing with USAID and in-country group presentations after assignment.
- Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment.
- A compilation of training materials used during the training.
- Submission of the assignment report.

H. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN LOFA

Day	Activity
Day 1	Orientation session and travel to Lofa



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Day 2	Introduction and review of schedule, final preparation for training
Day 3-5	Start rollout of agreed work plan and conduct training with the first batch of participants (24 people) for the period of three days.
Day 6-8	Training continues for second batch of participants (23) for the period of three days.
Day 9-11	Facilitating contract farming arrangement with host organizations, considering SWOT analysis. Consolidating and submitting assignment reports (word and ppt) along with annexes (contract farming agreement templates)
Day 12	Debrief with host organizations and CRS field staff, final review and agreement of volunteers' recommendations and action plan, adjust assignment reports based on feedback from field level debrief (if needed)
Day 13	Travel from Lofa to Monrovia
Days 14	Preparation for final debrief with USAID, posting of key successes of assignment on Facebook and other social media platforms
Days 15	Debrief at CRS office with ASA Team and USAID local Mission.

This is a draft schedule, a final itinerary will be discussed and agreed upon arrival by all parties

I. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Foya Town, Lofa County, the volunteer's transportation, and accommodation will be taken care of by CRS.

J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

- **Training Materials:**

In the event the volunteer prepares materials for hand out, they can be printed at the CRS office in Voinjama City, Lofa County before leaving for Foya Town. Flip charts, markers, and a projector, if needed, can be obtained at the CRS Field Office in Lofa County in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations.

- **Recommended Reading**

Liberia F2F program recommends that the volunteer familiarizes themselves with this scope of work and takes his/her time to read about the rice value chain sub-sector in Liberia.

- CRS strongly recommends the volunteer becomes familiar with Liberia's agriculture sector plans and priorities, the agribusiness country project, and Liberia cooperative guidelines.

K. REMOTE/LOCAL VOLUNTEER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Both volunteers participate in a call to discuss objectives and collaboration approach at the start of the assignment. Collaboration platforms vary depending on the assignment and connectivity. The most frequently used platforms are MS Teams and WhatsApp. The volunteers are highly encouraged to visit [CRS' F2F Digital Resource Library](#), and search for resources that they could use or customize for training. Upon completion of your assignment, volunteers are requested to send any resources they would like to contribute to the library (whether created or found) to farmertofarmer@crs.org.

The local volunteer is responsible for assignment design, preparation, training, developing assignment reports, conducting action planning with hosts and outreach in country, and achieving the assignment objectives. The local volunteer works directly with the host with assistance/input from the US volunteer. Assignments usually last up to 2 weeks and can sometimes extend beyond two weeks due to pending follow



up visits, emails etc. Local Volunteers are asked to track assignment hours per day, to stay under 112 hours (14 days x 8 hrs).

Virtual support from a paired US volunteer helps provide supplementary training resources, fill in the gaps for technical areas, and share creative ideas and solutions. Two specific responsibilities are to: (i) complete the outreach component of the assignment and (ii) support the in-country volunteer as needed. US volunteers typically put in 4-8 hours per week, depending on the nature of the assignment and collaboration.

L. 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	CRS Liberia
Emily Keast Volunteer Coordinator Farmer to Farmer Program 228 W. Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21201 410-951-7366 Email: emily.keast@crs.org	TABI, GERALDINE Volunteer recruiter Agriculture Sustainability Activity (ASA) 16 th Street, Gardner Ave C-140 Sinkor, Monrovia, Liberia Tel: +231776448755 Email: geraldine.tabi@crs.org
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Host Organizations:	
1. Jef's Merchandise & Services Corporation 776330957	
2. Foya Rural Women 770905514	
3. INTOFAWOR 775206136	
4. Meinah Farmer Cooperative 770990553	
5. Agriculture Infrastructure Investment Corporation 0777848010	
6. Mayor Farmer Cooperative	



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