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

<b>Summary Information</b>	
<b>Assignment Code</b>	<b>LR226</b>
Country	Liberia
Country Project	Rice
Host Organization	Meinah Farmer Cooperative
Assignment Title	Capacity building on improved rice production techniques
Assignment preferred dates	January 2021
Objectives of the assignment	The objective of this assignment is to build capacity and to equip the Meinah Farmer Cooperative with practical knowledge in improved rice production techniques.
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	A suitable volunteer candidate for this assignment must have relevant experience working with rural farmers associations and should understand improved rice production techniques to enhance higher yields. The candidate should have a degree in general agriculture (rice agronomy) and at least five years of working experience with rural farmers in rice. He/she must be knowledgeable and understand adult illiteracy training approaches and be prepared to work in a remote area.
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Technology Transfer = T
Type of Value Chain Activity	On Farm Production = F
PERSUAP Classification	II

**A. BACKGROUND**

The Meinah Farmer Cooperative was founded on May 26, 2013 as a farmer-based organization by the USAID project. It got full cooperative status in 2014 by the Community Development Agency, Foya Statutory District. It has an active membership based of 59 (16 female and 21 male farmers).

The Cooperative is currently operating 7.4 hectares of lowland and farm it twice a year. The Meinah Farmer Cooperative is the second biggest rice producer cooperative in Lofa County. It has a significant collection of botanical varieties of rice (IR-5 135-140 days in field, Suakoko 12 & Suakoko-8 140-145 days in field, and Rok-3- 125-135 days in field). The Meinah Farmer Cooperative contributes 47% of the raw material supplies to the Agriculture Investment & Infrastructure Company (AIIC) with the capacity of milling 16MT/day, in Foya District, Lofa County.

**B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION:**

Rice is the world’s most economically, and culturally important food crop and its production is regarded as the single most important economic activity on the planet. More than 2.7 billion people, most of them poor, rely on rice as their major source of food. By the year 2025, this number will grow to 3.9 billion people. It is a major constituent of the diets consumed in Lofa County, and one of Liberia’s



staple foods. ASA project observed that the Meinah Farmer Cooperative is experiencing reduced yields due to poor soil management and lack of capacity improved rice production techniques.

<b>Stages of growth and development</b>	<b>Reduced yield and poor nutrient management observed during need assessment</b>
Nursery preparation and germination	Inappropriate nursery bed preparation and management leading to poor plant establishment
Tillering	Poor tillering due to inappropriate water weed, nutrient and pest management during production period
Panicle initiation and heading	Poor grain filling due to improper water and nutrient management during growth period
Maturity	Reduced yield due to improper weed, Nutrient, and pest management

Among these critical stages in rice production, tillering and panicle initiation are especially important. Between 15-40% of all varieties of rice produced by farmers do not achieve its expected yields due to poor soil fertility and nutrient management, thereby resulting into low yields and loss of income for many farming households.

When this assignment is conducted, proper management of soil fertility technology will help resolve various social and economic issues. A significant increase in yield will help alleviate food insecurity and food safety can be ensured by protecting commodities from mold growth and contamination.

Improved rice production technology will increase rice yield for Agriculture Investment & Infrastructure Company (AIIC). AIIC's increased rice yield will also lead to food availability to the growing population, decrease the area needed for production, and conserve natural resources. The above challenge requires urgent intervention to ensure that the farmer association/cooperative is run professionally. The project would like to bridge the yield gap between potential and actual yields on-farm to maximize financial returns and food self-sufficiency for all rice producers in the said locality by providing technical assistance focusing on how to improve their yields.

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

The main objective of this training is to enhance the capacity of the farmer cooperative members on good agricultural practices for increased productivity through adoption of rice farming management practices.

More specifically:

- Develop training guide for the trainer and trainees.
- Develop the training methodology/approach.
- Enhance farmers with knowledge on the rice varieties suitable for their soil structure.
- Enhance farmers knowledge in climate smart agronomic management (fertilizer use, conservation agriculture, spacing) practices for rice.
- Enhance farmer knowledge in climate smart integrated pest management (IPM).



- Identify local and improved rice production practices and potential solutions which are most appropriate for local targeted cooperative.
- Design and demonstrate field methods of enhancing high rice yield in the form of farmer field school demonstrations.
- Conduct the training for the board, members and staff heavily emphasizing improved rice production practices and innovated and locally adaptive production techniques.
- Prepare a training report detailing how the trainings were conducted, achievements, challenges, lessons, opportunities for future engagements and recommendations on how to attain the highest possible yields.
- Organize a half-day presentation to members, other stakeholders like local government officials, and farmers to share the training report and recommendations.

**D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

To conduct this assignment, the Meinah Farmer Cooperative is expected to meet the following requirements:

- Mobilize and facilitate group members and staff to attend all the training sessions.
- Commit to implement all the training protocol and recommendations provided by the volunteer(s) after the completion of the assignments.

**E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

Upon the completion of this assignment, the outcomes below will be anticipated:

- The Meinah Farmer Cooperative, will have knowledge on improved rice production techniques, maximize yields of rice through manipulating yield at all production stages, thereby enhancing, income generation, and increasing employment.
- Proper soil fertility management technology will serve as a major help in resolving various social and economic issues through increased yield. A significant increase in yield will alleviate food insecurity.
- Rice quality improved.
- A final report explaining how the assignment was conducted. It should include recommendations to be implemented by the host organization.

**F. DELIVERABLES**

- Final report one day BEFORE assignment completion
- Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment in country
- Training manual

**G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY**

Day	Planned Activity
Day 1	Orientation session.  Meet with ASA Team to review the scope of work and develop detailed work plan covering all activities required to effectively implement this scope of work.



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Day 2	<p>Leave for Foya City, Lofa County for introduction to cooperative management and review of scope of work.</p> <p>Develop detailed work plan covering all activities in the scope of work.</p> <p>Check in the hotel.</p>
Day 3-12	Start the rollout of agreed work plan and conduct the training.
Day 13	Organize workshop to share achievements and recommendations
Day 14	<p>Conduct debrief session with CRS country team and perhaps USAID Mission on the completed assignment.</p> <p>Fill out all necessary M&amp;E forms and submit to F2F program staff.</p>

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

**H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS**

**Additional requirements: A Volunteer should be:**

- Proactive, results-oriented and service-oriented.
- Have very good interpersonal skills.
- Flexible.
- Willing to work in a remote community.

**I. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Foya City, 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 Lofa County. Flip charts, markers, and a projector, if needed, can be obtained CRS - ASA Lofa County Project office.

• **Working Environment**

The assignment will be conducted at the venue provided by the Meinah Farmer Cooperative whose office is in Foya City, Foya District.

• **Recommended Reading**

ASA Project recommends that the volunteer familiarizes themselves with this scope of work and to take his or her time to read about rice production in Liberia.

**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](mailto: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; Sometimes extending 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 Liberia Program Office 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 Liberia Program Office contact.**

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