



**To express interest in this assignment please email maria.figueroa@crs.org
CRS Farmer to Farmer Program
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

| Summary Information | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Assignment Code | RW258 |
| Country | Rwanda |
| Country Project | Maize |
| Host Organization | Cooperative ibyiza biri imbere (COIB) |
| Assignment Title | Capacity building on maize post-harvest handling practices |
| Assignment preferred dates | July-August 2021 |
| Objectives of the assignment | The objective of this assignment is to build capacity and to equip the COIB Farmers' Cooperative with practical knowledge in good maize post-harvest handling practices and storage. |
| Desired volunteer skill/expertise | A suitable volunteer candidate for this assignment must have relevant experience working with farmers, maize production, agricultural cooperatives. The candidate should have a degree in Crop Production, Crop Science, Agronomy, Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness; at least 8 years of working experience with farmers, at least five years working with Agricultural cooperatives. He/she must be knowledgeable about adult training approaches, be prepared to work in remote area. |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance | Technology Transfer = T |
| Type of Value Chain Activity | On Farm Production = F |
| PERSUAP Classification ¹ | Type II |

A. BACKGROUND

Rwanda has experienced a remarkable recovery since the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi whereby the gross domestic product (GDP) has grown 10 percent per year on average. Agriculture is the dominant sector of the economy, contributing 33% of the country's GDP and about half of Rwanda's export earnings. Because about 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas and is engaged in agriculture to some extent, increasing agricultural productivity is key to improving incomes and decreasing poverty. The government of Rwanda (GoR) has therefore made agricultural development a priority and allocated significant resources to improving productivity, expanding the livestock sector, promoting sustainable land management, and developing supply chains and value-added activities. At the same time, Rwanda's agriculture sector faces a series of challenges. Agricultural land plots are very small (80 percent of land holdings are less than 1 hectare [ha]), and over 70 percent of agricultural land is either on hills or on the side of hills. To address such a challenge, in 2008 the Government introduced the land consolidation program whereby farmers in a given area with closed parcels

¹ USAID precisely classifies PERSUAP in four categories; **PERSUAP Type I** assignments directly related to pesticides recommendations, **Type II** as assignments with indirectly related with pesticides, **Type III** assignments related to curriculum review and designing, business plan development and strategies development and **Type IV** as assignments associated with other USAID projects and collaborators.



grow the same priority crops on a minimum size area in a synchronized manner on the provision of subsidized inputs by the government while the boundaries and rights on parcels remain intact.

Current agricultural policies are geared to increasing productivity in the sector by achieving scale in agricultural production. Risks can potentially have significant implications on stakeholders, investments, and development in the agriculture sector. Adverse movements in agricultural commodity and input prices, together with production-related shocks (for example, from weather, pests, and diseases, post-harvest quality loss), not only affect farmers and firms active in particular.

The current status of the maize value chain includes:

- **Production:** According to the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda (NISR), in 2019 Season B, maize cultivated area was estimated at 73,139 ha. This is a 6% decrease when compared to 2018 season B estimates. Maize production was 90,128 MT, a decrease of 2% from 2018 season B estimates. The average yield of maize was estimated at 1,232 kilograms per hectare.
- **Usage:** In Rwanda, fresh maize, maize flour, and maize grits are used for food products, while maize bran is used as animal feed.
- **Data:** Consistent data is difficult to obtain; however, it is estimated that consumption of maize flour has increased by 450 percent from 100,000 tons in 2004 to 550,000 tons in 2012.
- **Formal Trade:** Rwanda is a net importer of maize grain and general processed maize products, but is a net exporter of maize flour.
- **Informal Trade:** There is a significant informal trade in green maize between Rwanda and the DRC, however no official data exists to make a clear assessment of this activity.
- **Value Addition:** Most of the value addition to the value chain occurs at the agricultural level, followed by the processing stage.
- **Agricultural Seasons:** Rwanda comprises three agricultural Seasons scheduled as follows:
 - ✓ Season A that starts in September and ends with February of the following year;
 - ✓ Season B that starts in March and ends with June of the same year; and
 - ✓ Season C that starts in July and ends in September of the same year.
- **Maize Post harvest losses:** Official statistics also reveal that 16% of the farm produce is being lost during post-harvest period. The Government target is to reduce Post-harvest losses from the current 16 per cent to 5 per cent by 2024.

COIB Cooperative Profile:

COIB (Cooperative ibyiza biri imbere), is a farmer's cooperative located in Nyamata village, Matunguru cell, Rugarama Sector, Gatsibo District, Eastern Province. The cooperative was established in 2010, and its registration no. RCA / 0186/2010 issued by the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) in the same year, 2010. The cooperative is composed of 140 members (70 male and 70 female) and cultivates maize on 16 Ha.

COIB cooperative has a good relationship with two financial institutions: SACCO Rugarama, and Bank of Kigali/Branch of Kabarore. Up to now, the cooperative does not have any outstanding loan from those banks. The cooperative self-finance its operations and activities.

COIB cooperative has a contract with one agricultural inputs supplier namely TUBURA company under the Government subsidy scheme.



Like other Cooperatives in Rwanda, COIB has a General Assembly, an executive Board which is made of Board of Directors who supervise the Cooperative Business, and Employees. The General Assembly takes the overall decisions and the executive board oversees the cooperative business and manage staff.

The cooperative has access to market for its maize produce and at the beginning of each growing season, the cooperative signs a farming contract with one or two big buyers in country, and for the last season B, 2019, the cooperative had contract with one buyer/company: the Africa Improved Food (AIF), which bought 65 Metric tons of maize from COIB.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

At COIB Cooperative, the post-harvest losses are particularly high. More than 25% of the grain produced can be lost through the entire post-harvest chain before reaching the consumer. These losses occur at every stage – harvest, transport, drying, shelling, winnowing, sorting/packaging, storage, and even during transport to market. The cooperative’s access to market is partly limited by this post-harvest handling losses and partly limited by poor produce quality caused by the level of aflatoxin in grains.

The root causes of this issue on the side of cooperative members are because of:

- i. lack of adequate extension services to build farmers’ skills in PHHS;
- ii. lack of proper packaging and storage;
- iii. insufficient of appropriate on-farm drying and storage facilities,

The above challenge requires urgent intervention to ensure that cooperative is run professionally, that is the reason why Farmer to Farmer project would like to bridge the gap between buyers and producers (cooperative members) to maximize financial returns for all value chain actors by providing technical assistance to Cooperative members focusing on how to improve their skills on post-harvest handling practices and storage as a contribution of Farmer to Farmer project to address some of the above issues.

By improving and introducing quality-enhancing techniques, farmers will be able to sell to much larger and more reliable markets, such as Africa Improved Foods (AIF), PRODEV Ltd, East Africa Exchange (EAX), etc. which are the main local buyers of maize grains.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The overall objective of this assignment is to build the capacity of COIB staff and board on Post-Harvest Handling Practices and Storage.

The specific objectives are:

- Develop training guide for the trainer and trainees
- Develop the training methodology/approach
- Identify small-scale postharvest handling practices and potential solutions which are most appropriate for local target cooperative.
- designing postharvest demonstrations to show farmers how to reduce losses, maintain quality and market value, increase shelf life and incomes.
- Conduct the training for the cooperative board, members and staff putting heavy emphasize on Improved Maize Crop Production practices, Innovated and locally adaptive harvesting techniques, convenient post-harvest handling practices, convenient and locally adaptive storage mechanisms and improved transportation methods.



- Prepare a training report, detailing how the trainings were conducted, achievements, challenges, lessons, opportunities for future engagements and recommendations.
- Organize a half -day presentation to cooperative members, other stakeholders like local government, buyers, any other partner to share the training report and recommendations.

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

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

- Mobilize and facilitate staff, committees and some members to attend all the training sessions.
- Provide venue for the training sessions and any other logistics
- Commit to implement all the recommendations provided by the volunteer (s) after the completion of the assignments.

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

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

- The Cooperative members (farmers) have a good understanding of good maize post-harvest handling practices.
- Maize quality improved
- Increased farmer’s income.
- Increased sales
- A final report explaining how the assignment was conducted, it should include recommendations to be implemented by the cooperative.

F. DELIVERABLES

1. A final report (in Word and Power Point) due BEFORE departure
2. Group presentation with cooperative leaders and other local authority staff at the end of the assignment in country
3. Volunteer outreach activities in the US and in country
4. A training Manual, Maize Post Harvest Handling and Storage Practices.

G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY

| Days (not dates) | Activity |
|------------------|--|
| Day 1 | Meet with F2F Team to review the scope of work and develop detailed Work Plan covering all activities required to effectively implement this scope of work |
| Day 2 | Orientation meeting with the host COIB Cooperative board committee and staff for introduction and review of the Scope of work. |
| Day 3 – Day 14 | The rollout of activities as agreed in the work plan |
| Day 15 | Organize the workshop to share achievements and recommendations |
| Day 16 | Prepare a report on the assignment |
| Day 17 | Conduct debrief session with CRS Country team and perhaps USAID mission on the completed assignment |



H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

As described above, to address this need, a suitable volunteer candidate for this assignment must have relevant experience working with farmers, maize production, agricultural cooperatives. The candidate should have a degree in Crop Production, Crop Science, Agronomy, Agricultural Economics, Agribusiness; at least 8 years of working experience with farmers, at least five years working with Agricultural cooperatives. He/she must be knowledgeable about adult training approaches, be prepared to work in remote area. Familiar with adult training approaches.

Additional requirements, a volunteer must:

- Be proactive, results-oriented and service-oriented;
- Have very good interpersonal skills, relationship management skills and the ability to work closely with community members;
- Be physical fit and must be passionate about working with developing communities.

I. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

The Volunteer accommodation and transportation within Rwanda, and meals will be taken care of by the F2F Program. Additionally, internet will be provided to the volunteer if needed when conducting this assignment.

J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

Training Materials:

The volunteer should prepare training materials for hand out which can be printed at CRS office in Rwanda. Regarding Flip charts, markers, and a projector if needed, can be obtained at CRS Rwanda office.

Working Environment

The training will be conducted at the training venue provided by COIB Cooperative office is in Eastern Province, Gatsibo District, Rugarama sector, Matunguru cell, Nyamata village. The volunteer will work closely with COIB Board committee and staff and in country F2F Field team as well.

Recommended Reading

Rwanda F2F program recommends that the volunteer takes his or her time to read to read about the maize value chain sub-sector in Rwanda. The volunteer will also need to read on cooperative movement and regulations in Rwanda found at Rwanda Cooperative Agency website: www.rca.gov.rw and any other document thought to be relevant to this assignment.

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; 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 hours).

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

| | |
|---|--|
| CRS Baltimore | |
| Maria Figueroa Volunteer Coordinator Farmer to Farmer Program 228 W. Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21201 410-951-7366 Email: maria.figueroa@crs.org | |
| CRS Country Program | |
| Grace Gasana CRS Farmer- to -Farmer Program Director for Rwanda Tel: +250,788307254, Email: grace.gasana@crs.org | Yannick Ndoli Farmer to Farmer Project Coordinator Tel:0788380064 Email: yannick.ndoli@crs.org |
| Host Organization: | |
| Nzabandora Jean Baptiste The president of COIB cooperative Tel: +250783112816/0785780152 | Rugwizimbaraga Jean Baptiste The vice president of COIB supervisory committee Tel: +250788511400 |