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

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ278
Country	Benin
Country Project	Soybean
Host Organization	Eden-Vision for Sustainable Development (EV2D) NGO
Assignment Title	Post-Harvest Handling and Storage of Soybeans
Assignment preferred dates	January 2022
Objectives of the assignment	<p>Improve farmers’ knowledge of soybean storage and conservation methods to reduce post-harvest losses and increase their incomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Train farmers on post-harvest losses factors and agents;</li> <li>- Train farmers on biological conservation methods and techniques.</li> <li>- Train farmers on essential characteristics of storage structures</li> <li>- Train farmers on different methods of managing pests in soybean stocks</li> </ul>
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agronomist with proven experience in soybean post-harvest handling and storage practices</li> <li>- Ability to train adults using participatory approaches</li> </ul>
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Technology Transfer=T
Type of Value Chain Activity	Farm Production=F
PERSUAP Classification <sup>1</sup>	II

## A. BACKGROUND

<sup>1</sup> 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.

The "Farmer-to-Farmer" (F2F) program is an American initiative that provides technical assistance from highly qualified volunteers to farmers, farmer groups (cooperatives and associations), agribusinesses, research institutes and other organizations in the agricultural sector in developing countries and countries in transition. Technical support is traditionally provided by American volunteers, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this is currently carried out by remote paired volunteer model: a volunteer recruited locally and an American volunteer who work in close collaboration to complete the assignment. F2F project has been implemented in Benin since September 2018 and supports the cashew and soybean value chains for a period of five-years.

Eden Vision for Sustainable Development (EV2D) is a Non-Governmental Organization that works for the promotion of sustainable development and poverty alleviation in rural communities. It was created in 2019. EV2D's vision is to be an organization with technical strategies for strengthening the economic and technical knowledge of vulnerable socio-professional groups for agricultural development by 2030. The mission is to support the initiatives of young people and agricultural groups in the field of crop production and processing, while facilitating the professional development of vulnerable people. It supports farmer groups in rural areas with key focus on crops such as maize, palm tree, soybean, pineapple and vegetable crops at production and processing. As part of its activities to support the production sector, EV2D follows and works with farmers groups on improving the crop production systems, trains community facilitators and identified lead farmers on management skills, good agricultural practices as well as sensitizing agricultural groups on the challenges of climate change and adaptation measures.

## **B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

While working for crop production improvement and increase in crops availability, they have noticed the high level of soybean losses (and similar crops) that farmers usually register after harvest. Indeed, due to farmers' weak post-harvest handling knowledge and storage techniques, they usually register significant post-harvest losses caused by storage pests, bad storage conditions or agricultural practices before harvesting. The situation forces most of them to sell their product very early at low cost leading to fast unavailability of soybeans in some production areas, while they can wait some months to sell at better prices when demand is high. Lack of, or limited knowledge on, the conservation and storage methods and techniques is one of the key issues that, while resolved will significantly contribute to the reduction of losses and improvement in food security as soybean is used a lot in processing. We are currently in the soybean harvest and commercialization period and training the farmers on this will help them implement the acquired knowledge.

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

This assignment will be implemented in the commune of Djidja. Its main objective is to improve farmers' knowledge and skills in soybean storage and conservation methods to reduce post-harvest losses and increase soybean availability and incomes. To achieve this objective, the assignment will:

- Train farmers on post-harvest losses factors and agents;
- Train farmers on biological/organic conservation methods and techniques,

- Train farmers on essential characteristics of storage structures
- Train farmers on different methods of managing pests in soybean stocks; and
- Contribute to the improvement of soybean storage conditions.

#### **D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

EV2D will provide training hall and materials for this assignment. The host will also mobilize and support the commuting, lodging and feeding of the participants to the training sessions.

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

Through this assignment, at least 40 soybean farmers from two groups will be skilled in using good and appropriate storage and conservation methods and techniques. They will learn about, and, have better knowledge of good storage and conservation conditions and parameters to consider, the post-harvest pest of soybean and how to manage them and, the conservations methods. Implementing the new knowledge will significantly contribute to the reduction of post-harvest losses and increase soybean availability (especially for small-scale processors) for several months at an affordable price. This will also contribute to the farmers' income increase.

#### **F. DELIVERABLES**

1. Vol final report due BEFORE departure
2. Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment in country
3. Volunteer outreach activities in the US and in country
4. Training manuals
5. Debriefing with USAID and F2F country staff

#### **G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

Days	Activities
Day 1	Volunteer welcome and orientation at CRS office in Cotonou and signing of administrative documents. Travel to Bohicon and checking at the Hotel. Introduction of the volunteer to the host organization by CRS Benin F2F team. The volunteer will review and finalize the work-plan and discuss with them on any other arrangement for the work.
Day 2	Introduction of the volunteer to the participants. Make a quick diagnosis with farmers and conduct a SWOT analysis to better understand the real needs of participating.
Day 3 to 6	Hold training sessions
Day 7 to 8	Practical demonstration and application
Day 9	Debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff and host, Volunteer's return

#### **H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS (Academic and hands on experience on subject matter)**

The desired volunteer for this assignment should:

- Be an agronomist with professional experience in crop production in tropical zones.
- Be specialist in plant production, agricultural product storage and conservation, pest management.
- Have the ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education level
- Familiar to participatory approaches.
- Experience with the soybean production will be an asset

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

For this assignment the volunteer will be accommodated in Bohicon at “Hotel des Princes.” He/she will work in Djidja (located at 25 km from Bohicon) where the training sessions will be hold, EV2D will mobilize the participant to the training sessions and work closely with the volunteer for any need necessary for the success of the assignment.

## **J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

### **▪ Targeted trainees’ Description**

The participants in this training will be made up of about 40 farmers (men and women and young people) gathered around a professional agricultural organization. Some have a minimum educational level of the primary school and others are literate. Some of them can read and write in French and most of them speak the local language Fongbé. The volunteer will also work with technical advisors of the NGO the ones of the communal cell of the Territorial Agricultural Development Agency.

### **▪ Training Materials**

The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to arrival. Flipcharts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained from CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to do illustrations. If possible for the mission, the volunteer can bring a laptop with them, but it is possible to get a spare on site. For PowerPoint presentations, Eden Vision or one of its partners can provide a video projector.

### **▪ Electricity, internet, cellphone signal, key security, health issues**

The volunteer will work in the commune of southern Benin Djidja where power outages are sometimes experiences. Even if there were power cuts, a relay energy group will be set up. The telephone signal of the MTN and MOOV networks is good. In Bohicon where the volunteer will be accommodated, the electricity supply and the internet are more stable.

### **▪ Working Environment and culture**

Djidja is a rural commune of Benin located in the south of the country in the department of Zou. It is called the granary of Zou and it is located at about 150 km from Cotonou. Fongbé is the dominant local language. Other spoken languages can be recorded, and the people are Christians, Muslims, and Animists.

### **▪ Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer familiarize themselves with this SOW and read the documents on: techniques for producing, storing and preserving soybeans; the various actors and stakeholders in the soybean sector. The volunteer can read materials on the different soybean production and storage techniques in West Africa. Some materials may be found in the F2F digital resource library.

**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 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.**

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