



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

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ289
Country	Benin
Country Project	Soybean
Host Organization	Eden-Vision for Sustainable Development (EV2D) NGO
Assignment Title	Development of palm oil national and export market plan
Assignment preferred dates	May 2022
Objectives of the assignment	<p>The main objective of this assignment is to facilitate palm oil processors/producers to expand their market share to untapped national niches and regional markets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train participants on palm oil export process to international markets and requirements for a functional marketing process • Train participants on the development of the national market share through identification of potential palm oil supply networks • Strengthen participants' knowledge on the palm oil quality to meet the demand in the market. • Train participants on palm oil export standards and regulations based on current quality assurance certifications.
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expert in the agricultural value chains, market development and trade • Relevant experience in national and international palm oil market system • Solid experiences in agricultural market access • Ability to train adults, especially farmers who are illiterate and semi-literate • Familiar to participatory approaches.
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Business/Enterprise Development = E
Type of Value Chain Activity	Information and Input support services (S)
PERSUAP Classification ¹	Type III

A. BACKGROUND

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.

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. The supports are usually provided by American volunteers but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, currently, the missions are carried out by pairs of volunteers; a volunteer recruited locally and an American volunteer. F2F project has been implemented in Benin since September 2018 by CRS, to support the cashew and soybean value chains. Both the soybean and cashew country projects were approved by the USAID mission in Benin.

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. 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 NGO's 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 the vulnerable people. They support farmers' groups in rural areas, and their focus crops include soybeans, pineapple, palm tree, and vegetable crops at both production and processing levels. As part of its activities to support the production sector, EV2D follows and works with farmers groups on improving targeted crops production systems and value chain, trains community facilitators and selected farmers' leaders on management skills and good agricultural practices, sensitizes agricultural groups on the challenges of climate change and mitigation measures.

Besides being a food and cooking oil that is used in the preparation of local dishes, palm oil has potential for export like cotton, cashew, soybeans which are also grown in the same area. The palm oil sector is also one of the sub-sectors identified by the government for revitalization. Indeed, red palm oil is an important element in many African cuisines and is used in making cosmetics. The red palm oil production system remains rudimentary in the intervention areas. At the same time, the sale to international market by some processors represents the main and most important source of revenue of those producers and processors in the area. But it is clear that the palm oil produced meets very little to the needs (quantitative and qualitative) of external markets and not very competitive.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

Palm oil processors and producers face several challenges such as: lack of information on potential external markets, some national market of palm oil that supply to industries, insufficient equipment, and the use of inadequate palm oil processing equipment. Indeed, processors are reluctant to invest in the development or use of better, more productive equipment due to their limited market and marketing opportunities to sell and thus produce more. While these difficulties are partially explained by the lack of knowledge of suitable processing materials and equipment as well as the difficult access to agricultural credit, the lack of knowledge on the external market opportunities and the needs and requirements of those market which all the processor wish to access, also explained the limited development of the palm oil

processing units. The quality of palm oil marketed is lower than expected. Then, the palm oil produced doesn't meet the real needs and requirements of the wanted regional and international market which is the potential source of revenue to producers. So helping processors to realize the necessity to change their processing system based on the required international quality demand that they will know can contribute to system changing.

In order to meet this growing external need and provide a substantial income for producers, the need to train them on market development and the exportation process of palm oil to international market, through the standards and regulations that frame these markets, is a pressing need to be met for the benefit of producers. In addition, expertise in processing, according to quality certification Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), good manufacturing practices (GMPs) and good hygiene practices (GHPs) standards, will be done to participants. Knowing the requirement and having new market opportunities will help farmers increase their production and improve their processing chain.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of this assignment is to help palm oil processors/producers to expand their market to untapped national niches and regional markets

Specifically, this assignment aims to:

- Train participants on palm oil exportation process to international market and their functioning system
- Train participants on the development of the national market share through identification of potential palm oil supply network.
- Strengthen participants' knowledge on the palm oil quality needs for sought in the markets and the recommended palm oil processing and conservation methods and techniques.
- Train participants on palm oil exportation standards and regulations based on current quality assurance certifications.

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

EV2D, the host organization 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. But CRS will cover lodging and other related costs of the volunteer

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

The expected results through this assignment are:

- This technical assistance will be useful for improving palm oil sales as well as increasing the market share

- At least 60 palm oil processors will be trained and technically reinforced on palm oil sales and processing process.
- Palm oil producers/processors will have a better knowledge of recommended methods and techniques for palm oil processing and conservation.
- Experiences are locally transferred and adopted for better quality, productivity, incomes and livelihood.
- Palm oil producers will have better access to the regional and international markets and apply the necessary requirements

F. DELIVERABLES

- Volunteer final trip report due BEFORE departure.
- Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment in country.
- Volunteer outreach activities in the US and in country through social media, Journal, radio, TV
- Training materials and guide.
- Debriefing with USAID and F2F country staff.

G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Days	Activities
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer's welcome and orientation at CRS office in Cotonou and signing of administrative documents. • Introduction of the volunteer to the host organization • General orientation with the host, first-hand briefing on the main objectives and modality of the assignment and adjustment of the agenda for the coming days (work planning session).
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Sakete and checking at the Hotel • Introduction of the volunteer to the participants • Conduct a quick issue analysis and diagnosis with farmers to better understand the real needs of participating before beginning the training.
Day 3 to 7	Complete assignment related activities with and for participants
Day 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Ifangni and checking at the Hotel • Introduction of the volunteer to the participants • Conduct a quick issue analysis and diagnosis with farmers to better understand the real needs of participating before beginning the training.
Day 9 to 13	• Complete assignment related activities with and for participants
Day 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare reports and recommendations for the host and participants. • Debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff and host. • Submit volunteer reports, training attendance sheet, assignment report. PPT presentation and any reference materials to CRS F2F team.
Day 15	Volunteer's Travel back

H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS (Professional and hands on experience on subject matter)

To complete this assignment, the volunteer should be/have:

- Expert in the agricultural value chains, market development and trade
- Relevant experience in national and international palm oil market system
- Solid experiences in agricultural market access
- Relevant experience in food processing technologies and quality management.
- Knowledge of palm nuts processing techniques and food quality assurance is highly desirable. Skilled to train adults, especially farmers with low education level familiar to participatory approaches.

I. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

For this assignment the volunteer will be accommodated in Ifangni at “hotel ASSIKO”. He/she will work in Sakete (located at 74 km from Cotonou) and Ifangni (located at 65 km from Cotonou) 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 30 farmers and processors (men and women and young people) in each commune. Most of the participants are not academically educated and cannot read French but speak mainly the local languages *Yoruba and Nagot*.

▪ 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. The translation of handouts to the local language can be done in the locality of the assignment, if required.

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

The volunteer will work in the commune of Ifangni and Sakete, where electricity supply, internet connectivity and cellphone signal are stable related. The hotels and the cooperative headquarter have stable access to electricity and internet connectivity even though the internet becomes very weak sometimes. The telephone signal of the MTN and MOOV networks is good. About security, even though the security level in Benin and in both communes, is high, the volunteer will be instructed about security

measures and safeguard before going to the host organization. It is advised that volunteer take necessary precautions like coming along with their usual medicines, to prevent health issues.

- **Working Environment and culture**

Ifangni and Sakete are rural commune of Benin located in the south of the country in the department of Plateau in an area very close to Nigeria Federal Republic. People of both communes are well involved in endogenous religion. It is an area where the endogenous ceremonies, like “Oro divinity”, to worship the ‘revenants’ are vibrant and with many freedom restrictions mainly for women during the period of August. *Nagot or Yoruba* 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, read the documents on: oil palm processing techniques; oil palm certification and exportation process; the various actors and stakeholders in the oil palm sector. The volunteer can read materials on the different topic in Benin, West Africa, Africa and somewhere else. Some materials may be found in the [CRS’ 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.

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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