



To express interest in this assignment please email emily.keast@crs.org

CRS Farmer to Farmer Program

In-Person Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work

| Summary Information | | | |
|---|---|--|--------|
| Assignment Code | BJ2118 | | |
| Country: | Benin | | |
| Country Project: | Soybean | | |
| Host Organization: | Nature Plurielle NGO | | |
| Partner: | Department of Crop Production | | |
| Date of baseline data collection: | 04/01/2022 | | |
| Date of host agreement signing: | 04/12/2022 | | |
| Number of previous volunteer assignments: | 2 | | |
| Volunteer recommendations given | 07 | Volunteer recommendations applied (Total): | 03 |
| Assignment Title: | Training women on agroecological practices | | |
| Objective of the assignment: | Strengthen women farmers' capacity on the use and promotion of sustainable agroecological practices and integrated farming systems (fish-crop) as a model of sustainable agriculture. | | |
| Assignment preferred dates: | Early May 2023 | | |
| Desired volunteer skill/expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agronomist. • Specialist in crop production, agroecological practices, pest and water management, and integrated (fish-crop production) systems management. • Strong knowledge of best agroecological practices for market gardening vegetable crops (or similar crops) • Ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education levels; familiarity with participatory approaches. • Excellent facilitator and communicator. • Familiarity with training women. | | |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance | Technology Transfer = T | | |
| Type of Value Chain Activity | Farm Production = F | | |
| PERSUAP Classification ¹ | II | | |
| Number of people to be trained | Men | Women | Youths |
| | 5 | 25 | 10 |
| Will the assignment address gender gaps? | Yes | | |
| Will the assignment address climate change? | Yes | | |

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.



A. BACKGROUND

The Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program is a United States 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. The F2F project has been implemented in Benin since September 2018 by CRS, to support the cashew and soybean value chains over a period of five years, both approved by the USAID mission in Benin.

B. HOST

Nature Plurielle (NaP) NGO has been operating since 2015 and was officially registered on May 23, 2018. The organization was created by young university graduates from various professional backgrounds, including agronomy. NaP's main objective is to contribute to integrated and sustainable agriculture development in Benin. The NGO's mission is to promote agroecological measures to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. More specifically, the NGO aims to: (i) promote agricultural diversification through green entrepreneurship; (ii) make ecological phytosanitary products accessible to rural producers and assist agricultural producers in sustainable production; (iii) protect nature, climate, and natural resources; (iv) organize information and awareness campaigns on biodiversity and climate; (v) advocate for food security through entrepreneurship development with a focus on organic agriculture; and (vi) conduct scientific research. With its headquarters in the commune of Avrankou, department of Oueme, NaP supports agricultural producers, youth, and women agricultural entrepreneurs in the palm oil tree and vegetable crops sub-sectors through training, monitoring, and provision of advisory services for the improvement of crop quality and yield. NaP's first agroecology and environmental protection F2F assignment focused on promoting biological control products. The second assignment focused on coaching student ambassadors on environmental protection issues and having them train schools and promote easier access to ecological phytosanitary products for producers. Now, the host wants to support women in agroecological practices promotion.

C. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

The Commune of Ifangni, an area of intervention for NaP-ONG, covers approximately 242 km². The commune has a small river and shares a large border with Nigeria. It is an agricultural commune whose lowlands were exploited for market garden vegetable crops and fish farming. In this commune, market gardening contributes to improving the living conditions of producers and is an important source of



income, especially for women. Young unemployed people and women (mostly heads of single-parent families) participate in market gardening and practice it year-round.

Several market gardeners are placed in groups consisting of vulnerable women and young people. They have not received training in market gardening, soil preservation, and water management and are witnessing lower production yields. In addition, these women are exposed to the toxicity of the phytosanitary treatment products they buy in the surrounding markets and Nigeria. The nearby waters and the lowland species are threatened with pronounced contamination.

NaP NGO is requesting a F2F assignment to strengthen the capacities of these women so that they can support themselves through their market-gardening activities. This can be done by improving their productivity, protecting them from disease, and teaching them about environmentally responsible food safety.

D. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of the assignment is to strengthen the capacities of women market gardeners in the use and promotion of responsible agroecological practices and integrated market gardening-fish farming management as a model of sustainable agriculture. Setting up new market gardening practices will increase yields and further empower women through IGAs.

Specifically, this assignment aims to:

- Strengthen the capacities of women in pest management and efficient water management through an integrated market gardening-fish farming approach.
- Train participants on the use of organic insecticide in crop treatment.
- Train participants on innovative agroecological techniques in market garden production.
- Facilitate practical agroecological demonstrations.

E. HOST CONTRIBUTION

The host will provide a conference room for the different sessions and ensure the mobilization of key and relevant staff who will work closely with the volunteer to ensure the objectives are achieved. The host will provide accommodations and cover associated costs for the participants in partnership with the women's association. In addition, the host will provide the necessary materials and inputs for the practical sessions on agroecological application.

F. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

At least 30 women will be trained on agroecological practices, pest management, and the use of biopesticides. They will gain a good understanding and relevant practical skills in improved agroecological production for vegetable crops. This assignment will contribute to increasing women's income by staggering the sale of fish farming products, which was the subject of another women's



empowerment project focusing on income-generating activities. Additionally, it will contribute to environmental protection by reducing the use of chemical products.

G. DELIVERABLES

- Volunteer final report due BEFORE departure.
- Participant attendance list.
- Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment in-country.
- Debrief with USAID and F2F country staff.
- Volunteer outreach activities in the US and in-country using social media, newspapers, radio, TV, etc.
- Guidelines for women and other training materials.

H. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY

| Days (not dates) | Activity |
|------------------|--|
| Day 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel from the US and arrival at Benin International Airport, pick-up and check-in at Livingstone Hotel |
| Day 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer welcome and orientation at CRS office in Cotonou for security briefing. Any necessary hand-outs will be prepared and printed at CRS offices. • Travel to Porto-Novo and check in at Ayelawadje Hotel. |
| Day 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Avrankou and introduction of the volunteer to the host organization by F2F team. • General orientation with the host. • First-hand briefing on the main objectives and modality of the assignment. • Detailed work plan covering all activities required. |
| Day 4-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen the capacities of women in pest management and efficient water management through an integrated market gardening-fish farming approach • Train participants on the use of insecticide plants in the crop treatment |
| Day 7-8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train participants on innovative agroecological techniques in market garden production |
| Day 9-11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installation of agroecological practices |
| Day 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief with host, participants, representatives and F2F |



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



| | |
|--------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit updated training materials, attendance sheet and any reference materials to CRS F2F team. |
| Day 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finalize and submit volunteer report, PPT presentation to CRS F2F team. |
| Day 14 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Debriefing with USAID.• Volunteer returns to the US. |

I. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

The desired volunteer for this assignment is:

- An agronomist and specialist in crop production, agroecological practices, pest and water management, as well as in integrated (fish-crop production) systems management.
- Knowledgeable about best agroecological practices for vegetable crops (or similar crops).
- Experienced in training adults, especially farmers with low education levels, and familiar with participatory approaches.
- An excellent facilitator and communicator.
- Familiar with training women.

J. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Cotonou, on arrival and the following night, as well as at the end of the assignment, volunteers will stay at [Livingstone hotel](#) near the CRS office and not far from the airport. For the rest of assignment period for the work with the host organization, the volunteer will stay at the [Ayelawadje Hotel](#) in Porto-Novo for all the training sessions in Ifangni. Travel between the hotel and the training venues will be arranged by CRS. CRS will pay for hotel accommodation.

CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer's work. NaP's management leadership will work closely with the volunteer during the training preparations and the training sessions to ensure that key persons are trained, and that the assignment's goal are achieved. Travel arrangements, adhering to COVID-19 safety precautions, will be made by CRS. Volunteers are encouraged to bring N95 masks and Covid-19 TDR tests with them if possible. Communication networks in the area are generally good but occasionally patchy.

K. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

▪ Targeted trainees' Description

The main participants to be trained through this assignment are women vegetable producers. Some agricultural advisors of NaP NGO will also be participating. Some advisors understand French but most of the women have a low level of advanced French. Training will be done in 'soft French.'

▪ Training Materials



The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to travel. Flipcharts, markers, and masking tape can be obtained from the host in case the volunteer wishes to do illustrations. If possible, the volunteer should bring a laptop with him/her. However, if it is not possible, CRS will provide a spare laptop for the volunteer to use during the assignment. For PowerPoint presentations, NaP will provide a video projector. Some other materials like right hives can be provided by the host.

- **Electricity, internet, cellphone signal, key security, health issues**

In general, the electricity supply, internet connectivity, and cell phone signals are stable in the assignment area of Ifangni. The hotel and the training venue have stable access to electricity. Cell phone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available in the country. The volunteer will also be given a cellphone with a local sim card and data bundle that can be used to access internet when out in the field.

Ifangni is close to the Nigerian border and the volunteer can expect to engage with Nigerians in the area. Although security levels in Benin are generally good, the volunteer will be instructed about security measures and safeguarding before going to the host organization. The volunteer is advised to bring along (in their hand luggage) any regular medications they take to prevent health issues.

- **Working Environment and culture**

NaP NGO is headquartered in Avrankou, Department of Ouémé. Ifangni is the commune of Plateau Department and is in southwest Benin. Avrankou (the host's office) is about 50km from Cotonou. People in the assignment sessions area are mostly *Christians*, some are *Muslims*, and most are also involved in endogenous religion. In the commune of Ifangni, the endogenous ceremonies worshipping "ORO" (a divine entity) are vibrant, but sometimes they place restrictions on women. The volunteer will hear the main local language *Goun* but also *Fon* and *Yoruba*. People are very nice and respectful, especially towards foreigners; they are social and open to collaboration.

- **Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer familiarize themselves with this SOW and read updated documents on agroecological practices and soil fertilization techniques in Benin and West Africa. The volunteer can also visit the [farmer-to-farmer digital library](#) for relevant documentation about similar work.

- **Weather Appropriate Clothing**

Appropriate clothing is light (not dark). In southern Benin, the weather is humid with temperatures varying between 23 to 25 degrees Celsius. Rainy season starts in March and it will likely be rainy in the period of assignment (April and May). Daily weather conditions in the department of Plateau can be found [here](#).

L. KEY CONTACTS



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



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 | |
|--|--|
| Emily Keast Volunteer Coordinator Farmer to Farmer Program 228 W. Lexington Street Baltimore, MD 21201 920-265-0491 Email: emily.keast@crs.org | |
| CRS Country Program: | |
| Joel Angelo Houndjo Country Project Director, CRS Benin F2F Email: angelo.houndjo@crs.org Tel: (+229) 62188707 | Adédédji Innocent Labiyi Country Project Coordinator, CRS Benin F2F Email: innocent.labiyi@crs.org Tel: (+229) 61263194 |
| Host Organization: | |
| François Noudaïkpon T. Executive Director NaP NGO Email : natureplurielle.napong@gmail.com / f.noudaïkpon@yahoo.com Tel : (+229) 97 00 34 93 | Fernand Houessou Head of Accounting and Planification E-mail : natureplurielle.napong@gmail.com Tel : (+229) 66 38 35 65 |