



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	BJ2119		
Country:	Benin		
Country Project:	Cashew		
Host Organization:	Action Group for Grassroot Development (GrADeB-NGO)		
Partner:	-		
Date of baseline data collection:	06/14/2022		
Date of host agreement signing:	05/18/2022		
Number of previous volunteer assignments:	2		
Volunteer recommendations given (Total):	6	Volunteer recommendations applied (Total):	5
Assignment Title:	Honey production and beekeeping in cashew plantations		
Objectives of the assignment:	Build capacities of cashew producers of GrADeB NGO in integration of beekeeping into cashew plantations, and better honey production techniques.		
Assignment preferred dates:	End April 2023		
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist in beekeeping for honey production. • Proven knowledge in bee production techniques. • Experience in modern techniques of beekeeping. • Ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education level. • Familiar with participatory approaches. 		
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
	25	10	10
Will the assignment address gender gaps?	No		
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.

The Action Group for Grassroots Development (GrADeB) is a non-governmental organization that works towards effective and sustainable development in rural communities in Benin. Created in 2020 and officially registered in April 2022 under N° 2022 NO5/032/PDC/SGD/SAG, GrADeB-NGO's mission is to actively contribute to effective and sustainable development through social action. Its headquarters is based in Ikêmon in the commune of Ouèssè.

In the agriculture sector, GrADeB-NGO's interventions help the rural population, mainly subsistence farmers, to increase their income and acquire knowledge and skills which contribute to the improvement of their livelihoods. The NGO makes the agricultural sector its priority through improved soil quality, the use of organic fertilizers, access to quality seeds, pest management, and the adoption of improved agroecological practices linked to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Farmers in the intervention areas of Ouèssè, Tchaourou, and Savè are also supported to attain improved access to agricultural inputs and product markets, as well as rural financial services. Multiple interventions by the NGO have made it possible to alleviate some of the farmers' challenges.

The cashew sector is a priority for GrADeB NGO. Cashew nut is mainly cultivated like soybean in the Agricultural Development Pole 4 (PDA4), including the commune of Ouèssè. As in the soybean subsector, the NGO is working with cashew producer groups in the districts of Ikêmon, Kilibo and Toui in the Commune of Ouèssè. GrADeB NGO supports farmers in its intervention areas by providing many services on Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices, specifically how to improve cashew productivity/yields, and provide additional income to farmers.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

The center of Benin, in particular GrADeB NGO's intervention area (Ouesse, Tchaourou), is one of the major cashew production areas in Benin. During the production period (January to April), this agricultural activity occupies more than 60% of producers' time and generates more than 50% of income for producer households. The land area dedicated to orchards and cashew production continues to grow from one campaign to another and the area has become the country's largest producer of cashew nuts. Despite this



performance in terms of production area, raw cashew nut yields in the area remain low. Furthermore, efforts in terms of investment in orchards maintenance do not allow producers to reach their optimal level of production. Productivity per cashew tree and per hectare remains low.

In the commune of Ouessè, some producers are devoting themselves to beekeeping in forest areas, with an ever-increasing demand for honey and its by-products. Thus, the low level of cashew yield coupled with the increasing demand of honey from both domestically and in neighboring countries (Togo, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria) has made GrADeB NGO realize that beekeeping for honey production in cashew plantations could be a very profitable activity for them.

In addition, pollination is critical in cashew production and integration of honeybee colonies into orchards improves yields of raw cashew nut. Many scientific studies have shown that the low yields of cashew farms are due to the under-pollination of flowers. Cashew nut yields are known to increase significantly with insect visitation to flowers in the context of climate change.

The integration of beekeeping into cashew orchards will improve the yield of cashew plantations and will provide additional income to farmers.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The main objective of the assignment is to build GrADeB NGO's cashew producers' capacity to integrate beekeeping into their cashew farms. Specifically, this assignment aims to:

- Strengthen participants' bee production techniques.
- Train participants in the basic techniques of beekeeping management and honey harvesting to support the integration of honeybees into cashew orchards.
- Facilitate the installation of some model beekeeping units within cashew farms.

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

The host will provide an office, a desk, and a conference room for the different sessions and will ensure the mobilization of key and relevant staff who will work closely with the volunteer and farmers. The host will provide accommodation and cover associated costs for the participants. The host will support the volunteer with transportation to the field for discussions with farmers. In addition, the host will provide the necessary materials and inputs, and will commit to collect the right hives from some beekeepers for the practical sessions in the field.

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

A least 35 farmers will be trained and technically reinforced on Climate-Smart Agriculture practices in the cashew subsector. In addition, introduction of honeybees into cashew orchards will play a vital role in enhancing cashew yields as well as offering alternative income generation opportunities for smallholder farmers. This practice will enable bees to pollinate cashew flowers by contributing to climate change



actions. In terms of quality, this volunteer assignment will contribute to quality honey production in the area by improving harvesting, collecting, and storing techniques.

F. 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 farmers and other training materials.

G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY

Days	Activities
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 the CRS office. • Travel to Kilibo and check in at Galilée 2 motel.
Day 3 - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 5-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session in Ikèmon • Practical demonstration and application
Day 8-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session in Yaoui • Practical demonstration and application
Day 11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training session in Kilibo • Practical demonstration and application
Day 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare reports and recommendations for the host. • Debrief with CRS Benin F2F staff and host. • Submit volunteer reports, training attendance sheet, PPT presentation and any reference materials to CRS F2F team.
Day 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief with CRS and USAID; material release, submit final documents • Volunteer departure



H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

The desired volunteer for this assignment has the following:

- Expertise in beekeeping for honey production.
- Proven knowledge in bee production techniques.
- Practical experiences in bee usage for orchard pollination.
- Experience in modern beekeeping techniques.
- Adequate experience and skills in climate-smart agriculture practices in cashew or a related subsector.
- Ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education levels.
- Familiarity with participatory approaches.

I. 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 mainly at the “[Nouvelle Galilee 2 Motel](#)” of Kilibo and will travel back and forth to the different working areas with the translator and host’s team.

Note that in the field, lodging will not be at a hotel but, rather, a motel that does not have luxurious features so several first-class services could be lacking. The motel has a restaurant but cooks mainly local meals. However, there is the option of alternative accommodation at a hotel located 38 km from the assignment site. If the volunteer would prefer to stay there, this can be arranged.

CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer’s work. The host’s management leadership will work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and the training sessions, to ensure that key persons are trained, and that the assignment’s goals 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 very good but signals may be weak at times.

J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

▪ Targeted trainees’ Description

The main participants to be trained through this assignment are farmers (women, youth and mainly men) from three districts and many villages gathered around a cashew producer association and beekeeper groups. Some of them can read and write in French and most of them speak the local language *Nagot*. The host’s agricultural advisors will also participate in the capacity building sessions.



▪ **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 use 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, GrADeB NGO will provide a (chargeable) video projector. Some other materials like right hives can be provided by the host throughout the beekeeper's association.

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

In general, electricity supply, internet connectivity and cellphone signal are stable in the assignment areas of Kilibo, Ikèmon and Yaoui. But sometimes, in these areas the electricity is lacking for a few hours and internet connectivity is weak. The volunteer will be given a cellphone with a local sim card and data bundle that can be used to access the internet when out in the field. Cellphone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available.

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**

GrADeB NGO is headquartered in Ikèmon. Kilibo and Yaoui are the districts pertaining to the Ouèssè commune located in the central part of the country in the department of Collines. Kilibo is 323 km from Cotonou, while Yaoui and Ikèmon are 315 km and 328 km from Cotonou, respectively. People in Ikèmon, Kilibo and Yaoui are mostly Christian. Some are Muslim but all are also involved in endogenous religion. It is an area where endogenous ceremonies to worship the 'revenants' like the "ORO" divinity are vibrant. There are many restrictions in terms of freedom of movement from October-November, mainly for women. The principal local language is *Nagot*. People are very nice and respectful, especially towards foreigners; they are social and open to collaborating with foreigners.

▪ **Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer familiarize himself/herself with this SOW and read documents on beekeeping, cashew plantations and tropical farms production techniques. The volunteer can find materials on different topics related to Climate-Smart Agriculture in the cashew subsector in UN reports for Benin, West Africa, and Africa. The volunteer can also visit the [farmer-to-farmer digital library](#) for other relevant documents about similar work.

▪ **Weather Appropriate Clothing**



Appropriate clothing is light (not dark). In central Benin, the weather is somewhat hot and humid with temperatures varying between 22 to 33 degrees Celsius. It is generally sunny, with some rain starting in March. So, it will likely be rainy in the period of assignment (April and May). Daily weather conditions in the department of Collines can be found here: <https://meteobenin.bj/collines/>

K. 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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