



**To express interest in this assignment please email**  
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**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program**  
**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ281
Country	Benin
Country Project	Soybean
Host Organization	Association for the Fight against Illiteracy in Benin (ALCA-Benin)
Assignment Title	Farming as Business: planning, profitability analysis and design of operating account for pineapple production
Assignment preferred dates	Mid-February 2022
Objectives of the assignment	<p>Strengthen the capacities and skills of pineapple producers on the profitability analysis of pineapple production to improve their economic performances and production resources management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the producer's knowledge on the importance and perks to hold financial accounting in pineapple farm management.</li> <li>• Train producers on different farm management tools and documents.</li> <li>• Train producers on designing a practical operating account</li> <li>• Perform a case study of profitability analysis in pineapple production to better make decisions and acquire the principles of accounting.</li> <li>• Support an action plan of acquired knowledge implementation.</li> </ul>
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Economist/Financial Analyst.</li> <li>• Specialist in business plan designing and farm profitability analysis.</li> <li>• Have a good knowledge of pineapple cropping system (or similar crops).</li> <li>• Ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education level and be familiar to participatory approaches.</li> <li>• Excellent facilitator and communicator (in local language will be an asset for local volunteer).</li> </ul>
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Business/Enterprise Development (E)
Type of Value Chain Activity	Information and Input support services (S)
PERSUAP Classification <sup>1</sup>	Type III

<sup>1</sup> USAID precisely classifies PERSUAP in four categories; **PERSUAP Type I** assignments directly related to pesticides

## A. BACKGROUND

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 over 5 years, both approved by the USAID mission in Benin.

ALCA-Benin is a non-governmental organization (NGO) established in 2004 with its head office in Porto-Novo, the political capital of the country. It works to support community members, mostly farmers, with no or little education and who have developed economic activities. ALCA-Benin's activities include education of Professional Agricultural Organizations (OPA) members to improve their activities and to guarantee better livelihoods, helping OPA and young people to design and execute income-generating activities, and supporting the promotion of agricultural value chains. ALCA-Benin also informs, educates, and communicates on climate and environmental issues. ALCA-Benin, has a keen interest in supporting pineapple farmers since its creation, even before the sub-sector became one of the priority crops identified by the Ministry of Agriculture through the Strategic Plan for Agricultural Sector Development (PSDSA). In the pineapple value chain, ALCA-Benin works with farmers from the current main pineapple production areas, including the communes of Zè, Allada, Toffo, and Tori-Bossito. The services provided to these farmers aim to improve and disseminate improved farming technologies for increased yields, incomes, and also scaling up of agribusinesses.

## B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

Financial management of the pineapple farms is the main issue that negatively impacts pineapple farming, followed by challenges of increasing yields and produce quality. Pineapple producers face challenges in organization and planning of production activities; they lack knowledge on farm management tools and documents and find it difficult to apply financial practices in farm management. These difficulties lead to producers' perception or impression that pineapple production is not as profitable as would otherwise be expected. Indeed, farmers do not know how they can make pineapple farming more profitable, as they are also not keeping accurate records of all the production and human resources (from the seed or planting materials to the marketing of the harvest) they use in the production. Moreover, farmers are unable to determine break-even prices depending on the production costs.

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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.

This training is the way to address these issues. Pineapple farms can be well managed by enhancing the farmers capacity on holding of relevant financial and technical documents. It will be an asset for them to choose and follow up input services, good agriculture practices and with the effective use of local resources to reduce cost of production.

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

Strengthen the capacities and skills of pineapple producers on the profitability analysis of pineapple production to improve their economic performances and production resources management.

Specific objectives:

- Improve producers' knowledge on importance and advantages to hold financial accounting in pineapple farm management through training on different farm management tools and documents.
- Train producers on designing practical operating accounts for their farm and help them find a way to reduce the production cost if possible.
- Perform a case study of profitability analysis in pineapple production in order to better make decisions and get the principles of accounting.
- Support an action plan of acquired knowledge implementation.

### **D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

ALCA-Benin will mobilize the participants for this training. with the support of the communal agricultural agency of Allada and Tori-Bossito, they will also ensure that the venue, local training aids and other teaching materials are in place. Also, the host will mobilize and support the commuting, lodging, and feeding of the participants during the training sessions.

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

Through this assignment at least 45 pineapple producers, members of the Pineapple Producers Cooperatives, will be trained. This assignment will contribute to:

- Increase the knowledge and skills of the participants in profitability analysis of their production to improve their economic performances.
- Improve the pineapple farm management through better input resources management and basic accounting. Indeed, this will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of input management to potentially reduce the production cost and increase farmers profits.

### **F. DELIVERABLES**

- Vol final report due BEFORE departure.
- Participants attendance list
- Debriefing with USAID and F2F country staff.

- 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, etc...
- Training manuals and tools developed during the sessions.

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

<b>Days</b>	<b>Activities</b>
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer welcome and orientation at CRS office in Cotonou and signing of administrative documents.</li> <li>• Travel to Allada and checking at the hotel for first training session.</li> <li>• 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 and adjustment of the agenda for the coming days (work planning session).</li> </ul>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of the volunteer to the participants</li> <li>• Make a quick diagnosis with farmers and assess their knowledge and skill gaps to comprehensively update training materials for fruitful intervention</li> </ul>
Day 3 to 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold training sessions</li> </ul>
Day 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel to Tori-Bossito and checking the hotel for second training session.</li> <li>• Introduction of the volunteer to the participants</li> <li>• Make a quick diagnosis with farmers and assess the knowledge and skill gaps of the participants comprehensively update training materials for fruitful intervention</li> </ul>
Day 8 to 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold training sessions</li> </ul>
Day 12 to 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare reports and recommendations for the host.</li> <li>• Debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff and host.</li> <li>• Submit volunteer reports, training attendance sheet, PPT presentation and any reference materials to CRS F2F team.</li> </ul>
Day 14	Volunteer travels back

#### **H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS**

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

- An Agricultural Economist/Financial Analyst.
- Specialist in business plan designing and farm profitability analysis.
- A good knowledge of pineapple cropping system (or similar agricultural subsector).
- Ability to train adults, especially farmers with low education level familiar to participatory approaches.
- Excellent facilitator and communicator (in local language will be an asset).

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

The volunteer will work and be accommodated in the communes of Allada and Tori-Bossito located in south of Benin. The work will be done in the town center of the municipality. There are hotels in the localities where the volunteer will be accommodated. In addition, the communication networks are very good with excellent security situation. Travel arrangements, adhering to COVID-19 safety precautions, will be made by CRS. The volunteer will be paid a per diem to cover feeding.

## **J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

### **▪ Targeted trainees' Description**

Participants in this training will be made up of members of the Pineapple Producers Cooperatives of Allada and Tori Bossito. Some have a minimum of primary or secondary educational level and others are illiterate. Most of them can read and write in French or in local language *Fongbé*.

### **▪ Training Materials**

The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to arrival. Flipcharts, markers, and masking tape 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, ALCA-Benin 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**

In general, electricity supply, internet connectivity and cell phone signal are stable in Benin's towns. The hotels and the training venue have stable access to electricity and internet connectivity even though the internet becomes very weak sometimes outside Cotonou. The cell phone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available in the country. In these towns, the volunteer will be accommodated, the electricity supply and the internet are more stable.

Even though the security level in Benin and in the area of assignment is high, the volunteer will be instructed about security measures and safeguard before going to the host organization. It is advised that the volunteer take necessary precautions like coming along with their usual medicines, to prevent health issues.

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

Allada and Tori Bossito are an urbans communes of Benin located in the south of the country in the department of Atlantique. Historic and religious town, Allada is located at about 44 km from Cotonou

while Tori Bossito is located at about 37 km from Cotonou. *Fongbé* is the main and dominant local language in both communes. Other spoken languages can be recorded (like *Tori* and *Adja*), and the people are Christians, Muslims, and Animists. They are very nice and respectful, especially towards foreigners; they are also social and open to collaboration with foreigners.

- **Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer familiarize themselves with this SOW and read the documents on: profitability analysis and design of operating account in pineapple production; the cropping activities and resources in pineapple production. The volunteer can read materials on the pineapple production in Benin, West Africa, Africa and somewhere else. Some materials may be found in the [CRS' F2F Digital Resource Library](#).

- **Weather Appropriate Clothing**

Clothing suitable for the weather is light, not dark clothing. In the southern part of Benin, the climate is hot and humid. During the dry season (November-February), average temperatures reach between 25-30 °C.

## **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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