



To express interest in this assignment please email maria.figueroa@crs.org with copy to emily.keast@crs.org

CRS Farmer to Farmer Program Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ284
Country	Benin
Country Project	Cashew
Host Organization	AMDA Limited Liability Company (SARL)
Assignment Title	Improved Pineapple Juice Processing
Assignment preferred dates	March, 2021
Objectives of the assignment	<p>Improve the quality of the pineapple juice and address the capacity building needs of the technical team on good manufacturing practices, (GMPs), good hygiene practices (GHPs) and required processing techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the production team to improve and standardize the quality of the pineapple juice • Increase the knowledge of production staff on the different attributes of pineapple juice sought on the market. • Train staff on techniques and practices for improving the finished product quality and having better production costs. • Develop a flow-map of the processing plant that outlines quality control measures at each point (from reception to the final product)
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant experience in food processing technologies and quality management. • Knowledge of pineapple processing techniques and food quality assurance is highly desirable. • Ability to train adults, familiarity to participatory approaches.
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Technology Transfer = T
Type of Value Chain Activity	Information and Input support services (S)
PERSUAP Classification ¹	III

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



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.

Amda SARL is a limited liability company operating in the cashew and pineapple sub-sectors, settled in Parakou since 2017. It was a cooperative before changing to limited liability company in 2021. Amda SARL has a cashew apple and pineapple processing factory, with the mission of promoting the Beninese local processed foods to improve their competitiveness in the national and international markets. Suppliers are local producers with binding contracts with Amda. Juices are supplied to some hotels, shops, bars and restaurants in Parakou and surroundings areas. Amda SARL has its sales agents whose responsibility is to reach out to potential markets and raise sales orders and deliver to the clients in a timely manner. The processing factory has obtained the certification of Benin Food Safety Agency for its cashew juice but not yet for the pineapple juice. The yearly production capacity is about 5 tons of both processed pineapple and cashew apple juices while the current production is around 1.5 tons for both juices given a gross revenue of \$20,454. The factory is member of the Union of Cashew Apple Juice Producers and the network of food processors of Benin.

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

The production of pineapple juice is a great growth opportunity for Amda SARL in the food and processing industry. In the juice production chain, the company faces several technical problems such as the lack of quality control measures in pineapple juice processing, leading to products with a variable taste and as a result a decline in customers. In addition, the scarcity of the raw material coupled with the increase in pineapple prices sometimes leads to poor quality of the finished product since the company has to balance the production cost and the market price. A brief assessment done on the operations of Amda SARL shows that some of the production staff have not mastered the techniques of production of pineapple juice and sometimes malfunctioning of the equipment happens. In addition, the lack of skilled labor as well as a lack of innovation techniques are a handicap to a better productivity and quality of pineapple juice produced and marketed. All these factors negatively affect Amda's competitiveness in the pineapple juice market.

other USAID projects and collaborators.



Based on the fact that Amda SARL has expertise in processing, according to quality certification and the HACCP standard, a strengthening of the organization's capacity and the improvement of its effectiveness in the pineapple processing chain through the capacity building of the agents in pineapple juice processing techniques based on GMPs and GHPs standards, is a recognized need.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to improve the quality of the pineapple juice produced by Amda-SARL to ensure that the end product is standardized and is competitive in both the local and international markets. Specific objectives:

- Help the production team improve and standardize the quality of the pineapple juice
- Increase the knowledge of the Amda SARL's production staff on the different attributes of pineapple juice sought on the market.
- Train Amda SARL's staff on techniques and practices based on GMPs and GHPs standards for improving the finished product quality and having better production costs.
- Develop a flow-map of the processing plant that outlines quality control measures at each point (from reception to the final product).

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

For this training, Amda SARL will:

- Provide venue for the training session and any other training logistics needed by the volunteer (such as raw materials for demonstration, glass bottle, aluminum can, the processing unit).
- Mobilize and support the staff to attend the training session as well as providing materials for practical sessions.
- Support the commuting, lodging and feeding of the participants to the training session.

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

Through this volunteer technical assistance, Amda SARL is expected to increase the company's juice pineapple quality and conquer new markets for its product; increase their customer's loyalty and confidence and sustainably strengthen the positioning of Amda SARL's pineapple juices on the market; and staff/technical agents are more qualified in pineapple juice production techniques and the factory will have a strong competitiveness in pineapple processing. All these will significantly increase their incomes and the factory's production capacities as demands increase.

F. DELIVERABLES



- Volunteer final 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.
- Training manuals and production plan draft.

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. • Travel to Parakou and checking at the hotel.
Day 2	Introduction of the volunteer to the host organization by F2F team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 3 to 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold training and practical sessions
Day 8 to 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare reports and recommendations for the host. • Debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff and host. • Submit volunteer reports, training attendance sheet, PPT presentation and any reference materials to CRS F2F team.
Day 10	Volunteer travels back.

H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

As described above, the desired volunteer for this assignment must have relevant professional skills and practical experiences in food processing tools and techniques. Especially, he/she must

- Be an expert in agri-food technologies and quality management.
- Have relevant education in food technologies or related field with relevant practical work experience, especially with SME or rural enterprises.
- Have strong knowledge of pineapple processing techniques and food quality assurance.
- Have the ability to train adults, familiarity to participatory approaches.
- Have experience working with people from low education level.

I. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Parakou the volunteer will stay at hotel Soleil d'Afrique and will be going to Amda's factory at Banikani area for the assignment activities. Amda will contribute to the volunteer's commuting as well as



mobilizing and supporting its members for training sessions. The Director will work closely with the volunteer during the preparations and training sessions to ensure that key persons are trained and that the assignments goal are achieved.

J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

▪ Targeted trainees' description

The participants for this assignment are Amda's technical and administrative staff. They have the relevant education level to efficiently understand and implement technics, tools and knowledge to be receive from the assignment.

▪ Training materials

The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to travel. Flipcharts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained from the host's office 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, Amda SARL will provide a video projector and some materials for practical sessions.

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

In general, electricity supply, internet connectivity and cellphone signal are stable in Parakou. The hotels and the training venue have stable access to electricity and internet connectivity even though the internet becomes very weak sometimes in Parakou. The cellphone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available.

About security, even though the security level in Benin and in Parakou 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

The city of Parakou (chief town of the Borgou Department) is in northern Benin, about 450 km from Cotonou. The Volunteer will work at Amda's factory and will interact with employees and others. In this place, the main local languages are *Bariba* and *Nagot*, and most of the people are Christians and Muslims. But volunteers can also meet animists. The population speaks other local languages (such as *Dendi*, *Fon* and others). People are open to collaborate with foreigners.

▪ Recommended reading



CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer become familiar with this SOW and read documents on fruit juice competitiveness in Benin and West Africa. It is also recommended to read about SME processing units and their activities. We also recommend reading about the national policies regarding norms and quality in agricultural processing (HACCP plan for example). The volunteer can read some books or reports on related areas, especially in pineapple subsector. Some additional orientations could also be given by the host before assignment starts.

- **Weather appropriate clothing**

The weather appropriate clothing is light and not dark clothes. In the North of Benin, the weather is a bit hot and dry with some temperatures varying between 28 to 42 Celsius degrees. It is also a sunny weather with some rains fall from May.

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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