

**To express interest in this assignment please email** [**Chi.Olisemeka@crs.org**](mailto:Chi.Olisemeka@crs.org)

**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Summary Information** | | | | | |
| **Assignment Code** | **UG2105** | | | | |
| Country: | Uganda | | | | |
| Country Project: | Agribusiness | | | | |
| Host Organization: | Alumalum Rural Investments limited | | | | |
| Partner: | Rural Opportunities | | | | |
| Date of baseline data collection: | February 19, 2019 | | | | |
| Date of host agreement signing: | May 16, 2019 | | | | |
| Number of previous volunteer assignments:  Note, if this is the first/new host, please discuss with Peter and Nyambura before you proceed | | | 2 | | |
| Volunteer recommendations given (Total): | 10 | Volunteer recommendations applied (Total): | | | 8 |
| Assignment Title: | Development of business and strategic marketing plan for Alumalum cold pressed moringa and simsim oil | | | | |
| Objectives of the assignment: | * To assist the management of Alumalum to better understand their business, the target market and to develop a strategy for success * To provide a framework within which the business operates, and which can serve as a basis for discussion with financiers and other potential supporters | | | | |
| Assignment preferred dates: | November-December, 2022 | | | | |
| Desired volunteer skill/expertise | * Good understanding of small-scale marketing * Qualifications and experience in Small Enterprise Development/Market research and Market analysis/Business Planning, desirable. * Good writing, analytical and communication skills * Training skills for an adult audience | | | | |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance | Business/Enterprise Development (E) | | | | |
| Type of Value Chain Activity | Marketing (M) | | | | |
| PERSUAP Classification[[1]](#footnote-1)[1] | III | | | | |
| Number of people to be trained | Men | | Women | Youths | |
| 43 | | 13 | 36 | |
| Will the assignment address gender gaps? (Yes/No)  If yes, please include these in the issues description | | | | No | |
| Will the assignment address climate change? (Yes/No)  If yes, please include this in the issues description | | | | No | |
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1. **BACKGROUND**

The CRS Farmer-to-Farmer program (F2F) is a five-year (2019-2023) USAID funded program implemented with the primary goal of reducing hunger, malnutrition, and poverty across six countries: Benin, Timor-Leste, Ethiopia, Nepal, Rwanda, and Uganda. The program aims to achieve this goal through advancing inclusive and sustainable agriculture led growth aimed at generating sustainable and broad-based economic growth in the agricultural sector. The program’s secondary goal is to increase US public’s understanding of international development issues and programs and share the knowledge back in the US. To achieve these goals, F2F provides volunteer technical assistance to farmers and farmer groups (associations and cooperatives), private agribusinesses and agricultural education institutions to address key technical and institutional issues identified by the hosts in selected agricultural value chains. F2F volunteers are pooled from a broad range of US agricultural expertise including private farmers, university professors, bankers/certified accountants, animal health and nutrition specialists, soil scientists and agronomists who can provide technical assistance to the local host organizations. The program introduces new innovations and skills to develop local organizations’ capacity to participate in more productive, profitable, sustainable, and equitable agricultural systems while providing an opportunity for people-to-people exchange within the agricultural sector. In Uganda, the F2F program focuses its technical interventions on the livestock and agribusiness value chains.

Research and development organizations have now recognized that improving market access and enhancing the ability of resource-poor farmers to diversify their links with markets are among the most pressing challenges in smallholder agriculture. The Government of Uganda is increasingly putting emphasis on transforming subsistence agriculture to make farming a business and creating an entrepreneurial culture in rural communities. This behavior change implies that, farmers produce for markets rather than trying to market what they produce, with a clear understanding of how to achieve their income and other livelihood aspirations through better links with markets.

Farmers in Uganda face a complex of constraints that limit their participation and benefit from agricultural market chains. This is partly because they are not organized into formal groups which can benefit from economies of scale and meet buyer demands in terms of quality and quantity. Farmers lack access to information on market requirements, quality, volumes, prices, time and location of delivery. Understanding markets and marketing is a cornerstone for any business foundation. What to grow, when to plant, when to harvest, what value addition measures to employ and whether to store crops are all based on an understanding of the markets. Marketing is not something farmers should consider at the end of the production cycle. It must be among the first considerations when planning a farm business. It must be among the first considerations when planning a farm business.

For example, Uganda is the world’s 5th largest producer of sesame valued for its small white nutritious seeds; sesame is locally known as Simsim in East Africa. The crop is grown in Northern and some parts of Eastern and Western Uganda (Ashri, 2007). It is a high value crop with ready domestic, regional and international markets. Sesame is produced by smallholder farmers who grow it both for home consumption and as a cash crop. With the recent surge in global demand for sesame and sesame oil, farmers in Uganda have turned increasingly to growing sesame as a cash crop, earning it the nickname ‘white gold’ in Northern Uganda. Just like other crops, sesame farmers are no exception to the existing challenges of poor market access, poor product prices and manipulation by the many players in the value chain despite its high demand.

1. **ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Alumalum- is a private company located in Northern Uganda – Amuru District (with in Acholi sub region). Its services are rooted in promoting agroforestry systems aimed at building the environment and reduce carbon emissions. Company Mission: “We put trees in the ground and money in the hands of farmers through empowerment and access to the markets”. Alumalum vision: “To be a leading the movement in the establishment of biodiverse agroforestry systems, producing food and cash; conserving water and building soil; and, capturing carbon in northern Uganda”. Alumalum services are aimed at building sustainability of farmer livelihoods through promoting three agroforestry systems managed organically, providing guaranteed markets for partner farmers’ crops, and ensuring food secure households. The company partners with 1000 farmers distributed among all the three systems. These agro-forestry systems include system 1: Integration of cocoa, bananas and hard wood species, system 2: Sesame intercropped with fruit and hard wood tree species, this is a short-term system aimed at promoting perennial farming, and system 3: moringa intercropped with a preferred food crop for food security. Currently 143 partner farmers are engaged in the moringa agroforestry system coupled with demonstrations have been established at the different Alumalum farm sites. The company sources organically grown sesame and moringa seeds from the partner farmers and conventional seeds from the wider market, these are processed into moringa oil both organic and conventional for the export market (LUSH hand-made cosmetic products).

The market structure involves numerous players, which reduces the farmer’s share of the final price. On average, the farmer receives 70 % of the ex-local assembly level price and 60 % of the ex-regional level price. Thus, if farmers were to sell collectively at regional level there is potential for a 10 percent increase in prices compared to selling at the farm gate (Source; SDPS, 2013). Out of the 77% sesame sold, 42 % is exported from Uganda are as raw seed and unclean grains from the garden to the market rather than oil and other processed products. There is no value addition. The produce is mainly marketed to Asian Countries through Kenya. While Kenya is not a known producer, the value addition through seed cleaning and packaging for export are mainly established in Mombasa where the product is prepared for export. This means intermediary Kenyan businesses earn more profits from sesame marketing than the farmers of the crop enterprise in Uganda that include Alumalum member farmers.

Alumalum to thrive in its business needs to come up with a business and marketing strategy that will outline a roadmap for success, through addressing the business operation challenges that are likely to hinder this company’s growth, as well as putting the company in a position that will improve its ability identify and seize opportunities. Although operations have commenced, the proprietor is operating without any basic business plans for his operations. Alumalum has never conducted a market analysis to understand its market environment and its competitive advantage and does not a business plan to guide its operations. Alumalum is on the receiving end in terms of prices offered to its products. It is against this background that Alumalum requests for technical support in market analysis and development so that farmers can gain confidence and improve their negotiating power by consolidating relationships with their buyers and establishing effective communication channels.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The assignment tasks will involve coming up with a business plan that clearly outlines the company’s vision, mission and goals, and a strategic marketing plan. The specific objectives of this assignment include:

1. **Develop a general description of Alumalum by addressing the following.**
2. What is the business objective?
3. What are the company’s guiding principles?
4. What business is Alumalum in and how do they do it?
5. A brief description of the target market
6. What factors will make the company succeed? What are the major competitive strengths? What are the significant challenges the company faces?
7. **Products and Services:**
8. A brief description of the industry and how the company is poised to take advantage of emerging opportunities.
9. A description of the products and services that the company deals with, from the company perspective as well as from the customers’ end.
10. What factors give the company a competitive advantage or disadvantage?
11. What is the pricing structure for the products (oil and seed cake)?
12. What is special about the product?
    1. **Develop a marketing plan:**
13. Analyze the facts about the vegetable oil industry in Uganda with a clear understanding of the total size of the market and current demand in market.
14. What are the trends in the target market with reference to consumer preferences?
15. Is there a growth potential in this market for the products?
16. What entry barriers keep potential new competitors from flooding this market?
17. Who are the customers, their characteristics, and geographic locations?
18. What products does the company compete with?
19. Does the company have a niche market or the potential to develop one?
20. Outline a marketing strategy consistent with the niche market defined above.
21. How will the company promote its products?
22. What is the pricing strategy and does the pricing strategy fit in with what was revealed in the competitive analysis?
23. How do the prices fit in with those of the competition?

**.** Facilitate the preparation of a comprehensive Business Plan for Alumalum company

1. Facilitate the development of an implementation strategy for the plan with appropriate milestones

**Target Audience:** This will include management team at Alumalum head office and field staff.

**Host contribution:** Alumalum management has committed to mobilize its team of staff, managers, and board to participate in the trainings to be conducted by the volunteer. Participants selected will be those with the capacity to contribute to resource mobilization.

**ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

* Improve the efficiency in the business operations. This will save on time, costs and thus increase income earnings for the processor,
* Create opportunities for employment for the local community with increased pressing and marketing operations,
* Create a competitive edge in the market for Alumalum cold pressed oil and increase its market share, and
* More farmers engaged in sunflower production because of the assured market and reasonable returns to sunflower production.

The anticipated deliverables include:

* Trainings conducted and people trained
* Business /Marketing plan strategy developed
* Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment
* Field trip report and expense report
* Outreach activity, press release or a media event in US and Uganda

1. **SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN UGANDA**

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| **Day** | **Activity** | |
| Day 1 | Arrive in Uganda; check into hotel |
| Day 2 | At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff (George or Robbinah) and thereafter go to CRS office for introductions and briefings including host brief, logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Hand-outs and other study materials will be prepared at CRS offices. Travel to Gulu |
| Day 3 | Meeting between host, CRS F2F and volunteer, evaluate assignment tasks and develop a work-plan; |
| Days 4-6 | Define the Company: Mission statement, goals and objectives, the target market, Core strengths, competencies, and other significant challenges the company is facing as well as long term plans for the business, operation plans and organization management |
| Day 7 | Day off |
| Days 8- 9 | Facilitate the management of Alumalum in defining key products and services from the company and customer perspective |
| Days 10-11 | Carry out a market analysis for vegetable oils in Uganda |
| Day 12 | Day off |
| Days 13- to 16 | Facilitate the development of a market plan |
| Day 17 | Facilitate the preparation of a comprehensive Business Plan for Alumalum company |
| Day 18 | Facilitate the development of an implementation strategy for the plan with key milestones |
| Day 19 | Exit meeting between volunteer, CRS F2F and host and travel back to Kampala |
| Day 20 | Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff.  Volunteer will finalize his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well finalize advances and expenditures with finance. |
| Day 21 | Depart for USA  Outreach event in the US TBD  **Note:** This is a draft schedule that will be finalized based on volunteer actual dates of availability, Sundays are typical rest days and working on Saturday is, per the host’s request |
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1. **ACCOMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Kampala, the volunteer may stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa ([www.fairwayhotel.co.ug](http://www.fairwayhotel.co.ug))

In Gulu, the volunteer will stay at Dove’s Nest hotel which is located within Gulu town. The volunteer will work accompanied by Alumalum staff in rural areas where farmers groups are located.

CRS will pay for hotel accommodation and provide the volunteer with per diems to cover meals and other incidentals. The volunteer may get an advance which has to be cleared before departing Uganda. For more information, please refer to the Uganda country information that will be provided.

**F. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

* CRS-F2F designs assignments with the assumption of some pre-field departure preparation by both the US and local volunteers. CRS relies on the volunteers to assess the tasks outlined in this SOW and to make their own judgment about how much and what kind of preparation is needed prior to field travel.
* The volunteer should prepare materials which can be printed at the CRS office in Kampala before commencement of the assignment. Flip charts, markers, and masking tape can also be obtained at the CRS office.
* CRS strongly recommends that the volunteers become familiar with [CRS programs in Uganda](https://www.crs.org/our-work-overseas/where-we-work/uganda), especially the agribusiness country project description.

**REMOTE/LOCAL VOLUNTEER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (if the assignment is carried out by a remote pair)**

Both volunteers participate in a call to discuss the assignment’s objectives and their approach to collaboration at the start of the assignment. Collaboration platforms vary depending on the type of assignment and degree of connectivity. The most frequently used platforms are MS Teams and WhatsApp.

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).

Remote 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 dedicate 4-8 hours per week, depending on the nature of the assignment and degree of collaboration.

**G. 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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| **Host Organization:** | |
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1. [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.  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)