

**Farmer to Farmer East Africa**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

**NOTE: SCOPE OF WORK AWAITING FINAL EDITS**

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| **Summary Information** | |
| Assignment Code: | UG89 |
| Country: | Uganda |
| Country Project: | Maize Country Project |
| Host organization: | Nankoma Rural Producer organization (RPO) |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance: | Sustainable Land Management Practices **(C)** |
| Type of Value Chain Activity: | **On Farm Production (F)** |
| Preferred assignment dates: | May-August, 2016 |
| Objective: | The overall objective is to enhance the capacity among farmers of Nankoma RPO to use and conserve land/soils through sustainable land management practices. |
| Desirable Volunteer qualifications, Knowledge and Skills: | * Soil scientist with practical hands-on experience in soil conservation management practices. Specialized expertise in soil management practices for crop production under tropical conditions is a plus. * Formal qualifications in Crops Agronomy/Soil Management and Plant growth conditions (preferably cereal/grain crops) * Wide experiences in cereal/grain crops production (including maize) acquired through either own farming activities or working with farmers/farms * Other knowledge/skill areas may include soil fertility and productivity management in tropical conditions; good field/extension experience with excellent- hands-on training and communication skills gained with mixed adult (rural) audiences (women, men, youths) |

1. **BACKGROUND**

Nankoma Rural Producer Organization (RPO) is a member of Nankoma Area Cooperative Enterprise (ACE) which as an apex organization has 5 Rural Producers Organizations (RPOs) that includes Nankoma RPO. Nankoma RPO has 110 members; 60 women and 50 men. The members are organized into farmer groups (20-30 members) each. The entire RPO membership is governed by a board that makes RPOs decisions in consultation with members. It’s the supreme organ of the RPO. They also monitor the activities of the RPO. They organize meetings and advocate for farmer friendly policies at the district level. They accounts to the general assembly. The board has a chairman, a treasurer and a secretary and are all signatories of the bank of accounts. The chairman who oversees the general day to day activities is deputized by the vice chairman. The secretary maintains general operation records while the treasurer maintains financial records. There is a manager who report to the board. She mobilizes resources, looks for market of the produce, training farmers on records keeping and also in charge of custody of the assets of the organization. She also plans and budgets in consultation with the board and monitors project activities. The accountant reports to the manager and maintains the books of account and advises the manager on financial issues. There is a production officer who gives extension services to the members and trains the production committees and advice on new varieties

The RPO members are involved in production of maize, groundnuts and cassava. Maize is the intervention point for CRS and is used for food and markets. The average land holding is 1 acre of maize, cassava and groundnuts each.The RPO services offered to the members include: farmer trainings, input supply to farmers at subsidized rates, bulking, marketing of farmers’ produce and setting up demonstration plots.

There are several constraints identified in the maize value chain, which limit the productivity and hence the ability of smallholder farmers to earn incomes from maize farming. The constraints include lack of producer knowledge on farming as a business, poor agronomic practices, and poor natural resource management with little or no emphasis on control of soil erosion, inappropriate post-harvest handling practices, weak leadership and little regard for gender mainstreaming. Nankoma RPO received prior volunteer assistance in farm business skills, resource mobilization and business plan. This technical assistance will focus on sustainable land management.

**ISSUE DESCRIPTION**.

Soil is a critical component of crop production. Crops depend on soil for both physical support and physiological purposes whereby the soil provides the water and nutrients necessary for best possible performance. Soil management is critical for optimum soil productivity and is therefore a key element in crop production. A major problem facing the areas already under cultivation is soil degradation and loss of soil fertility due to indiscriminate misuse of agricultural lands, forest and grazing lands. Routine crop production practices involving removing weeds, mixing soil with amendments like fertilizers, shaping the soil into rows and making furrows for irrigation and preparing the surface for seeding. These practices are associated with negative effects in relation to soil building properties. These include, among others, increased evaporation rates, increases in water runoff and soil erosion, reduction in organic matter content, reduced biological activity in the soil and increased soil compaction.

In Bugiri district, where Nankoma RPO is located, several practices in both crop and animal farming have resulted in misuse and degradation of previously fertile land. Bad cropping patterns such mono-cropping, permanent use of land, bush burning in effort to clear the land, cutting down trees to burn bricks, overgrazing where animals are left to graze on same land utilized for cultivation. All these are mostly responsible for the present situation of soil degradation, especially loss of organic matter, is probably widespread. The result of this is low soil productivity hence low yields and the rising changes in climate required an immediate technical intervention. Soils cannot support a health plant growth; only stunted discoloured plants survive for a short time before dying out leaving a bare ground.

Nonetheless, introducing the concept of SMART agriculture such as a combination of cultural practices like crop rotation, intercropping, use of compost manure, mowing/slushing, cover crops and use of herbicides (to increase successful weed control) offers a possibility for soil conservation.

Also, in recent past, there is an increased adoption of conservation tillage management practices, such as minimum tillage and no-till (or zero tillage). These practices entail growing crops from year to year without or with minimal tillage related disturbances to the soil. It is worth noting that the trend towards conservation tillage practices has in the past years been enhanced by the growing adoption by farmers of the concepts of sustainable agriculture, notably organic farming.

Recognizing that the implementation of soil conservation programs requires special expertise covering many disciplines, and that this expertise is not normally available within an extension service, Nankoma RPO has requested F2F technical assistance to provide the necessary expertise to address the escalating problem.

1. **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The objective of this volunteer assignment is to provide a road map for Nankoma RPO members for addressing challenges of soil degradation in a sustainable manner using locally available resources at farm levels.

The specific activities will include technical support in the topical areas of:

1. Demonstration or Making compost manure using locally available materials and develop a manual for the procedures.
2. Use of intercropping in soil fertility conservation
3. Promote use of selected chemical fertilizers in maintaining soil fertility as farmers have negative perception of use of fertilizers.
4. Care for the vegetation cover or forested areas
5. Introduce minimum tillage as a measure to enhance soil conservation
6. Create awareness on other soil erosion control measures

The volunteer will provide training on the above mentioned topics to farmer groups and for sustainability purpose, the volunteer will provide more detailed training to farmer trainers’ personnel of each farmer group; these will act as ToTs to carry on with the training after volunteer assignment. The training will also include a total of 20 – 30 farmers per training day. It is anticipated that this activity will take about 2 days at each farmer group. The volunteer is expected to train at least 80 people. The farmer selection criteria will be based on their ability to train others.

The majority of training participants are illiterate or semi-illiterate, the volunteer is advised prepare training materials with this in mind. Focus will be on practical demonstrations, pictorials, illustrations and less theory. Training venues are usually at a school, in a local church or under the tree/shade or in the garden.

1. **ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

The session of couching ToTs and management of the RPO will help to achieve sustainability; farmers can receive more training in these topics and how they can apply the information for improved sustainable land use.

The anticipated deliverables include:

* Trainings conducted and people trained
* Compost manual developed
* A comprehensive manual covering all topics trained for use by ToTs for future trainings
* Debriefing with USAID and in country group presentations after assignment
* Field trip report and expense report
* Outreach activity, press release or a media event back in US

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

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| Day | Activity |
| Day 1: | Travel from home to US international airport |
| Day 2 | Arrival at Uganda Entebbe Airport, picked by hotel shuttle to Kampala and check in at Fairway Hotel. |
| Day 3 | At 9.00 am the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter taken to CRS office for briefing and finalise with logistics. Any necessary training material will be prepared at CRS offices before travel to the field. |
| Day 4 | Travel to Kamwenge district to commence the assignment. |
| Day 5 | In the morning CRS introduces the volunteer to the Nankoma RPO management team and board members.  Together with CRS and the management, the volunteer will review the SOW and develop the action plan. The host will give an update on previous volunteer assignments and farmer adoption of best practices.  In the afternoon, Visit some of the farmer groups making up Nankoma RPO. |
| Days 6-18 | Training farmer groups and RPO management on topics 1-6 |
| Days 19-20 | Train TOTS and management of the RPO and develop a training guide/ manual together with them for future trainings |
| Day 21 | Wrap up meetings, whilst emphasizing key concepts of the assignment. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations.  End of assignment presentation. |
| Day 22 | Travel back to Kampala |
| Day 23 | Debriefing at CRS office with USAID Mission and CRS staff.  Volunteer finalizes his/her reporting at CRS office and fill out all necessary M&E forms as well as finalise liquidations with finance. |
| Day 24 | Depart for the US |
| TBD | Outreach event in the US |

1. **ACCOMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Kampala, the volunteer will stay at Fairway Hotel & Spa (www.fairwayhotel.co.ug). In Bugiri, the volunteer will stay at Gilgal Hotel. The hotel has running water and electricity which is subject to local load shedding.

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

**Host contribution** – Nankoma RPO has committed to mobilize the RPOs members to attend the trainings. The host will also, avail key personnel to work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and actual trainings, to ensure that key staff are trained and will continue training other farmers even after the assignment is completed. The host will also provide translation services.

1. **RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATION**

* The volunteer should prepare materials for hand-outs, which can be printed at CRS office in Kampala before commencement of the assignment. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at CRS offices in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations. Depending on the training venue the volunteer may use a laptop and projector for power point presentations. However if the training venue is in the community, it will be difficult to use PowerPoint. In this case the volunteer will be expected to prepare training materials and have hand-outs printed at CRS offices for distribution to the participants.
* CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer becomes familiar with the maize country project description prior to arrival in the country as well as country information that will be provided.
* Knowledge on land management practices and soil types and acceptable pesticides use in Uganda or developing countries, in general, is also advised.

1. **KEY CONTACTS**

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