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**Farmer to Farmer Benin  
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ210
Country	Benin
Country Project	Cashew subsector
Host Organization	Agrifinance (IMF)
Type of Volunteer Assistance	<b>Organizational Development (O)</b>
Type of Value Chain Activity	<b>Information and Input support services (S)</b>
Assignment Title	Human resources management (HRM) improved techniques and tools
Assignment preferred dates	June-July, 2019
Objectives of the assignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a quick audit of the existing manual, procedures, techniques and tools of the Agrifinance human resources management</li> <li>• Define the relevant weaknesses and the capacity building needs of the staff</li> <li>• Train the human resources management staff on the required topics to reinforce their capacity</li> </ul>
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert in human resources management audit,</li> <li>• Practical experiences in human resources management</li> <li>• Practical experiences in human resources management staff training and coaching</li> <li>• Experiences with a microfinance institution HRM is an asset</li> </ul>

**A. BACKGROUND**

The Agricultural Finance Cooperative (AgriFinance) is a decentralized financing structure, created in 2012. It is a Microfinance Institution (MFI) based on the achievements of the microfinance component of the Organization for Sustainable Development, Strengthening and Self-promotion of Community Structures (DEDRAS) which is a Non-Governmental Organization created in 1979 with a confessional identity of a social and non-profit nature. DEDRAS-ONG is an instrument of development of the Union of Evangelical Churches of Benin. By opting to support the institutional, organizational and operational reinforcement of AgriFinance through technical and financial support for its implementation, DEDRAS-ONG wishes to establish a bridge of partnership with the institution in the framework of the achievement of its main objectives.

The microfinance activities were launched in 1990 by DEDRAS-MICROFINANCE, with the support of Tearfund of England with small loans granted to women in the communes of Ouèssè, Tchaourou, Parakou and Nikki and ICCO of Holland for the development of agriculture and agricultural value chains while ensuring food security. The need to comply with the requirements of Law No. 2012-14 of March 21, 2012 bearing the regulation of the Decentralized Financial System (SFD) in Benin constrained DEDRAS NGO to bear another initiative that leads to the creation of AgriFinance which involved farmers and other actors in the rural world. AgriFinance is established as a Mutualist Savings and Loan Institution (IMEC) which collects rural and peri-urban savings and provides credit to its members. The choice of AgriFinance as the new structure responsible for the microfinance component indicates the willingness of DEDRAS-ONG to (i) specialize in financing inclusive in general and in agricultural financing in particular. The head office of Agrifinance is in the northern zone of Benin, its current area of intervention.

AgriFinance's vision is "to be an autonomous, viable and competitive financial institution serving agricultural entrepreneurship for bottom-up economic development". Its mission is "to support the people of Benin, particularly in rural areas, in a process of sustainable economic and social development by offering local financial services adapted to their needs". So, AgriFinance intends to serve mostly rural and suburban populations, low income and especially those who invest in the promotion of agricultural sectors. AgriFinance's activities currently cover Eleven (11) communes, namely: Ouèssè, Tchaourou, Parakou, N'Dali, Bembéréké, Sinendé, Pèrèrè, Nikki, Kalalé, Banikoara and Djougou where it has settled a local agency in each Commune.

## **B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Agrifinance is employing about 28 permanent staff, all involved in the microfinance activities. Indeed, they have a human resources management manual. But they lack qualified staff to manage the HRM component. Then, the implementation of the manual's procedures is still unclear and don't look efficient and many complains come from the workers and sometimes difficult to handle.

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

The main objective of this assignment is to help to improve the Agrifinance human resources management system. Especially, it intends to:

- Make a quick audit of the existing manual, procedures, techniques and tools of the Agrifinance human resources management
- Define the relevant weaknesses and the capacity building needs of the staff
- Train the human resources management staff on the required topics and tools to reinforce their capacity

**D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

The contribution of Agrifinance to this assignment will consist of mobilizing, supporting the commuting, the lodging and the feeding fees of the participants to the training sessions. In addition, it will provide conference room for the training sessions. Finally, Agrifinance promises to take in charge the roundtrip commuting of the volunteer from his or her hotel to its headquarter every day.

**E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

With volunteer technical assistance, all the management of Agrifinance activities and its decision-making process will greatly be improved. Especially, It will also help to set up some clear and more efficient human resources management policies and procedures as well as updating their existing manual. In addition, the technical assistance of the HRM staff will also be more efficient in their work and the complains of the employees will be handled in a better way

**F. DELIVERABLES**

The deliverables expected from this assignment are the follows:

- Audit the current human resources management system of the Agrifinance microfinance institution,
- Define the required capacity building needs of the human resources management team,
- Train and coach the human resources management staff on the relevant themes and tools,
- Debrief with USAID and in country group after assignment
- Provide activity report

**G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY (DRAFT)**

Day	Activity
Day 1	Travel from home to US international airport
Day 2	Arrival at Benin International Airport, picked up and check in at Livingstone Hotel
Day 3	At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter go to CRS office for introductions and orientations (briefings including host brief), logistics

	and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Any necessary hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices and Travel to Parakou and check in Soleil d’Afrique Hotel
Day 4	CRS Benin F2F team introduces the volunteer to DEDRAS NGO and Agrifinance staff. Together with F2F staff and agrifinance management team, the volunteer will review and finalize the work-plan. The action plan should include group presentations to be done after the assignment.
Day 5-6-7	Make an audit of the human resources management system of Agrifinance Microfinance Institution (MFI)
Days 8-9	Share the audit results and define the required needs of training and coaching of the HRM staff
Day 10	Report elaboration and training materials preparing
Day 11-12-13	Train and coach the HRM staff on the required themes and tools to reinforce their capacity
Day 14	Wrap up the meetings and debriefing with Agrifinance responsible and CRS Benin F2F staff, actions plan and recommendations review and travel back to Cotonou
Day 15	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 and depart for USA
TBD	Outreach event in the US

**H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS**

As described above, the volunteer we are looking for this assignment must have relevant professional skills and practical experiences in Human Resources Management. He or she must:

- Have practical experiences in human resources management
- Have practical experiences in human resources management staff training and coaching
- Have experiences with a microfinance institution is an asset
- Be used to adult training
- Opened to sharing knowledge and it experiences

**I. ACCOMMODATION AND OTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS**

In Cotonou, the volunteer will stay at Livingstone Hotel, whereas in Parakou, the volunteer will stay at Soleil d’Afrique Hotel. In Benin, CRS will pay for hotel accommodation and a local network SIM card will be provided to the volunteer at his or her arrival in Cotonou. In Parakou, CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer’s work and Agrifinance will contribute to the volunteer ‘commuting as well as mobilizing and supporting its members for training sessions. The Agrifinance Executive Director will work closely with the volunteer, during the preparations and the training sessions, to ensure that key persons are trained and that the assignments goal are achieved.

**J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

## 1. Training Materials

The volunteer should prepare materials for hand out which can be printed at CRS office in Benin before his arrival. Flip charts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained at Agrifinance office in case the volunteer wishes to make some illustrations. If possible for the assignment, the volunteer could bring a laptop with him, but a spare computer can be obtained locally. For the presentations, Agrifinance can provide a projector for PowerPoint presentations.

## 2. Working Environment

Parakou is in the North of Benin from about 450 km of Cotonou. Agrifinance is headquartered in the city of Parakou where most of the sessions will take place. But some commuting could be required around Parakou and in some remote areas where the some Agrifinance local agencies are settled if required. The volunteer will work mainly with Agrifinance' staff, and the members of its administrative board as well with DEDRAS NGO executive staff. In Parakou, the volunteer will meet both Muslims and Christians and the main languages are dendi, bariba and fon. People are open to collaborate with foreigners.

## 3. Recommended Reading

We strongly recommend that the volunteer becomes familiar with this SOW, the cashew subsector country project description prior to arrival in the country as well as country information that will be provided. The volunteer can read some books or reports on Microfinance in rural areas in Benin. Anyway, some orientations will be given to him or her before his departure to the field.

## 4. 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 25 to 42 Celsius degree. It is also a sunny weather with some rains fall from May.

## K. KEY CONTACTS

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