



To express interest in this assignment please email to emily.keast@crs.org
CRS Farmer to Farmer Program
Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	BJ290
Country	Benin
Country Project	Soybean
Host Organization	Circle of Reflections and Actions for a Flourishing World (CRAME-Benin)
Assignment Title	Farmers' Association strengthening through leadership and management
Assignment preferred dates	May 2022
Objectives of the assignment	<p>Strengthen the management and the functioning system of farmers' associations of local support committees, leaders of agricultural associations, economic interest groups and agricultural enterprises supported by the host for growth and sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train farmers' association and community leaders on management, association life, leadership and crisis management • Train agro-entrepreneurs' group leaders on economic interest groups management • Train participants on financial management in the context of agricultural organizations. • Facilitate the SWOT process of group leaders and group members to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for improved management of the Association
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural expert with experience in rural sociology and organizational development. • Solid experience in supporting agricultural organizations, farmers groups, associations, cooperatives other rural community organizations. • Be familiar with farmers' and agro-entrepreneurs' groups governance and management tools participatory training approach.
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Organizational Development = O
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

A. BACKGROUND

The Farmer-to-Farmer (F2F) program is an USAID funded program 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. Technical support was traditionally provided by American volunteers, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, CRS adopted the remote paired volunteer model, where the local volunteer is recruited locally and is paired with a remote American volunteer, and together they conduct the assignment. The F2F project has been implemented in Benin since September 2018 by CRS, to support the cashew and soybean value chains for over 5 years, both approved by the USAID mission in Benin.

The Circle of Reflections and Actions for a Flourishing World (CRAME-Benin) is a non-profit and Non-Governmental Organization created in February 2011. It is active in civil society organizations and other associations. Its mission is to participate actively and effectively in reflections or actions of common interest carried out at all levels in order to guarantee sustainable development to grassroots communities by promoting: (i) access of professional agricultural organizations (OPA) and women's groups to basic social services and the OPA' development; (ii) increase number of agricultural enterprises; women's activities development and; (iii) the development of income-generating activities and agricultural production. The NGO also carries out activities related to nutrition and human health, environment protection and education. To improve operational efficiency and visibility, the NGO has headquarters in Houegbo, in the department of Atlantique, and has annexes in the communes of Allada, Kpomassè, Tori-Bossito and Zè where it has been supporting farmers, farmers associations, agro-entrepreneurs and their groups, as well as children and other community households. Since its creation, the NGO has been working with networks of producers and processors of agricultural products, including the pineapple, soybean and vegetable crop sub-sectors. It also campaigns for agricultural entrepreneurship and youth self-employment in the target municipalities. About 3,700 households benefit from its support and services in all the communes of intervention. It works in close collaboration with the Communal Units of the Territorial Agricultural Development Agency (ATDA).

B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION

CRAME NGO supports more than twenty associations and networks of agricultural producers and processors in the various municipalities in Benin. To reach the target beneficiaries and achieve its objectives, CRAME-Benin has set up operational structures closer to the communities. Despite this, the units continue to face a challenge of governance and management in the activities' implementation and in the support to farmers, processors and their associations. These problems are rooted in the lack of knowledge, skills and information of the community relays and OPA's leaders on leadership and management of associations. The immediate effects are dysfunctional organizations, ceasing to operate

review and designing, business plan development and strategies development and **Type IV** as assignments associated with other USAID projects and collaborators.

for some, division and separation of partners. Faced with these problems, CRAME-Benin struggles to achieve its qualitatively and quantitatively objectives.

C. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The objective of the mission is to strengthen the capacities of the members of the local support committees, the heads and leaders of farmers and processors' associations and agricultural enterprises on associative life and association management. It will strengthen the management and the functioning of farmers associations and agricultural entrepreneurs' groups supported by the host for growth and sustainability.

The assignment is specifically designed to:

- Review the existing constitution that guides these associations
- Train participants on organizational management, associative live, leadership and crisis management.
- Train agro-entrepreneurs' group leaders on economic interest groups management.
- Train participants on the education and financial management in context of agricultural organizations.
- Facilitate the SWOT analysis process of group leaders and group members to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for improved management of Association.

D. HOST CONTRIBUTION

The contribution of the CRAME NGO to this assignment will consist of mobilizing, supporting the commuting, the lodging and the feeding fees of the participants to the training sessions. It will also provide a conference room and working materials.

E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT

Through this volunteer technical assistance, at least 102 local support committees, association leaders and enterprise groups in pineapple and vegetables sectors and technical staff of CRAME-Benin will gain knowledge and skills on association management for sustainable growth. This will also contribute to the success rate of farmers and processors' groups, as leaders will develop better management and governance and members participation and engagement to activities will also increase. They will also help members have a better understanding of the groups' incomes management for a better resource use and investment plans.

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 simplified management tools.
- Debriefing with USAID and F2F country staff.

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 Allada and checking in at hotel.
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction of the volunteer to CRAME NGO by CRS Benin F2F team.• Volunteer will review and finalize the work-plan and discuss with host on any other arrangement for the assignment• Make a quick diagnosis to better understand the issues related to the participants
Day 3 to 6	Hold training sessions at Allada
Day 11 to 14	Hold training sessions at Toffo
Day 15	Travel to Ouidah and checking in at the hotel
Day 16 to 18	Hold training sessions at Kpomasse
Day 19	Debriefing with CRS Benin F2F staff, actions plan and recommendations review
Day 20	Volunteer returns to Cotonou

H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

The desired volunteer for this assignment is expected to have:

- Agricultural expert with experience in rural sociology and organizational development. Solid experience in supporting agricultural organizations, farmers groups and other rural community organizations.
- Be familiar with farmers' and agro-entrepreneurs' groups governance and management tools participatory training approach.
- A good knowledge of pineapple sector (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

For this assignment, the volunteer will work in 3 communes which are Allada, Toffo and Kpomasse in the southern region of Benin. The work will be done in the town center of each commune. In Allada and Toffo, the volunteer will be accommodated at the hotel CAF GERME, while in Kpomasse he/she will stay at DJEGBA Hotel located in commune of Ouidah. CRAME NGO's Executive Director will work closely with the volunteer, during assignment implementation, to ensure that goals are achieved in good conditions. Electricity is available at the hotels and in training halls.

J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS

▪ Targeted Trainees' Description

The participants in this assignment will be composed of the staff and members of CRAME, local support committees, association leaders in pineapple and vegetables sectors. In addition, for the success of this mission, the volunteer must prepare to face a mixed group of people composed of men and women with very low education. But they have a minimum educational level to follow training and use basic tools

properly. However, translation in local languages may be needed sometimes and translators will be found among participants.

- **Training Materials**

The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to arrival. Flipcharts, markers, masking tapes can be obtained from CRS offices in the event the volunteer wishes to do illustrations. If possible for the assignment, the volunteer can bring a laptop. For PowerPoint presentations, CRAME NGO can provide a video projector.

- **Electricity, internet, cellphone signal, key security, health issues**

In general, electricity supply, internet connectivity and cellphone 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 cellphone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available in the country.

As for security, 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 volunteer take necessary precautions like coming along with their usual medicines, to prevent health issues.

- **Working Environment and culture**

The localities are in the south of Benin, around of Cotonou city in the department of Atlantique. Historic and religious town, Allada is located at about 44 km from Cotonou while Kpomasse and Toffo are respectively located at about 57 km and 80 km from Cotonou. In all localities two mains local languages are spoken (*fongbé* and *aizo*) and the people are Christians, Muslims and animists. Other spoken languages can be recorded (like *Tori* and *Adja*). The people there are very nice and respectful, especially towards foreigners; they are social and open to collaboration with strangers.

- **Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer becomes familiar with this SOW, read documents on organization management in Benin, the different actors and stakeholders in the agricultural sectors (pineapple; vegetables and soybeans). The volunteer may read some documents on pineapple vegetables and soybeans organizations in Africa.

- **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.

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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