



To express interest in this assignment please email [emily.keast@crs.org](mailto:emily.keast@crs.org)

**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program  
In-Person Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

Summary Information			
Assignment Code	BJ2103		
Country:	Benin		
Country Project:	Soybean		
Host Organization:	The Organization for Sustainable development, Reinforcement and Self-promotion of community Structures (DEDRAS-NGO)		
Partner:			
Date of baseline data collection:	08/31/20		
Date of host agreement signing:	09/01/20		
Number of previous volunteer assignments:			3
Volunteer recommendations given (Total):	13	Volunteer recommendations applied (Total):	7
Assignment Title:	Formulation of layer feed (with soya) and technical support for better egg productivity		
Objectives of the assignment:	Improve the productivity of the egg production (poultry) unit at the CIPEMA school farm Specifically: - Set up a layer feed formulation according to the different ages to improve the poultry productivity (formulation, input processing, safety and quality control) - Improve the technical and, if possible, financial management of the Unit - Support the plan for 20,000 layers		
Assignment preferred dates:	October 2022		
Desired volunteer skill/expertise	Expert in chicken feed composition according to the different type and subject's development stage		
Type of Volunteer Assistance	Technology Transfer (T)		
Type of Value Chain Activity	On Farm Production (F)		
PERSUAP Classification <sup>1</sup>	Type III		
Number of people to be trained	Men	Women	Youths
	10	2	2
Will the assignment address gender gaps?			No
Will the assignment address climate change?			No

<sup>1</sup> 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.



## 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 support is usually provided in-person by American volunteers but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, currently, some missions are carried out by pairs of volunteers; a volunteer recruited locally paired with an American volunteer remotely. The F2F project has been implemented in Benin since September 2018 by CRS to support the cashew and soybean value chains over 5 years.

The Organization for Sustainable Development, Strengthening and Self-Promotion of Community Structures (DEDRAS NGO) is a faith-based organization that has been active since its creation in 1979 by the Union of the Evangelical Churches of Benin (UEEB) with goal of poverty alleviation. It intervenes in several fields including development of agricultural sectors and food security, nutrition, community health and reproduction, youth employment, protection, education and sponsorship, water, hygiene and sanitation, humanitarian action and peace. In its plan to have a training center for young people in agricultural activities, DEGRAS set up a farm in agricultural training in Serarou. This is the Center for Initiation and Advanced Training in Entrepreneurship and Agricultural Professions (CIPEMA). The vision is to annually train and support least 30 young entrepreneurs in agricultural activities through the acquisition of technical, managerial and professional skills and entrepreneurial skills. The various components developed are vegetable production, poultry farming, the fattening of small ruminants, fish farming, rabbit breeding, beekeeping, professional plant nurseries and agricultural products processing. The farm is situated on 28 hectares of land, distributed as follows:

- 13 hectares of mango, cashew, honey and teak plantations
- Two hectares of lowlands
- One hectare for infrastructures (shops, office, dormitories, water retention, modern chicken coop, sheepfold, and training room)
- four ha under development for market gardening
- Eight hectares of rich and cultivable land for the production of various crops (Soybean, corn, tomatoes, peppers, etc.) and table eggs (layers production), culled hens, bottled sheep, etc.

In addition to the training, there is also commercial on-farm production from the different enterprises highlighted above. The poultry unit (egg production) is the major enterprise which generates finances to support the farm. The eggs produced in the center are fully marketed by collectors in the city of Parakou and the surrounding area who in turn organize distribution in restaurants and markets. There is still a potential market not yet satisfied that CIPEMA must conquer.



## **B. ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

Since feed cost in poultry production accounts for about 70% of total production costs, it is a major factor affecting egg production on the farm. This has led the CIPEMA farm to adopt feed cost-saving mechanisms, particularly own-feed formulation, and mixing. In general, feed is a point of convergence and a vital input in layers' productivity and income.

The farm started poultry layers farming in 2018 with 1000 birds which was successful in low mortality rates but with low laying rate. At the end, the business was not profitable. The farm has resumed with 2000 layers, the start has been very difficult, and the current egg production is very low with an average laying rate of around 50% only. There emerges a problem related to low productivity of the entire egg production system. Following a brief diagnosis, the main causes of the problem are:

- The feed and feeding quality are not appropriate
- Lack of control over the production quality of feed for layers
- Lack of tools to monitor the layers' feeding
- The technicians do not have the skills required for the management of chickens
- Lack of tools to monitor layers performance
- The accounting system is manual and unreliable.

For the feed production, the host uses as input corn and soybean produced on the site, and buy other constituents such as cottonseed meal, other cereals products. However, the appropriate percentages and the required quality, as well as the processing ways of those main constituents are not mastered by the team.

In addition to these main causes, especially feed quality, other technical parameters related to the environment (habitat, lighting) could also be factors of low productivity of layers. The farm therefore needs quality technical support from an expert in poultry farming, specifically in table egg production, to improve current technical production practices, mainly feeding, and achieve a well-managed production unit. and working properly.

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

The main objective of this assignment is to increase the productivity of the layer rearing system in the CIPEMA farm. Specifically,

- Develop a feed formulation to raise the laying rate of chickens to 100%,
- Initiated in feed, feed formulation, on-farm feed processing,
- Improve the technical and, and the management of the records keeping of the Unit,
- Increase the skills of the agents in the conduct of the rearing of layers,
- Support the plan for 20,000 layers



**D. HOST CONTRIBUTION**

For the achievement of this assignment, DEDRAS will mobilize key and relevant staff who will work closely with the volunteer to ensure objectives achievements, as well as participants to the relevant working and training sessions. It will also ensure that the necessary venues, local training aids and other teaching and working materials are in place. They will also take in charge the roundtrip from the volunteer’s hotel to the working places every day. The host will also support the commuting, lodging and feeding of the participants to the working sessions. In case volunteer will need to be lodged in the farm, DEDRAS will also provide that.

**E. ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

After this assignment, the 6 technicians working on the farm will be better trained and skilled in poultry rearing management and specific layers feed production for high productivity as well as egg management practices. In addition, a better feed formulation and feeding plan, to increase the laying rate according to the different ages, will be defined and practiced in the farm. Thus, we are expecting the laying rate to increase from the around 60% to 97%. This will also contribute to the economic development of the farm that will be able to support more trainees and produce more eggs for the population.

**F. DELIVERABLES**

- Volunteer final report due BEFORE departure.
- Group presentation with local stakeholders at the end of the assignment
- Volunteer outreach activities in the US and in-country.
- Training manuals and customized tools developed,
- Training guidelines/manual developed; Feed formulation guidelines developed
- Standardized formulated feed formula shared with the host and any other tools developed for the assignment; Simple excel sheet designed for feed ration formulation
- Outreach on social media page (Facebook page)
- Assignment related photos

**G. SCHEDULE OF VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES**

Days (not date)	Activities
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel from the US and arrival at Benin International Airport, pick-up and check-in at Livingstone Hotel</li> </ul>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer’s welcome and orientation at CRS office in Cotonou for assignment and security briefing. Any necessary hand-outs will be prepared and printed at CRS offices.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel to Parakou and check at Le Pluriel Hotel</li> </ul>
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of the volunteer to the host organization by F2F team:</li> <li>• General orientation with the host</li> <li>• First-hand briefing on the main objectives and modality of the assignment; Detailed Work Plan covering all activities required.</li> </ul>
Day 4 – 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the poultry, egg production system and discuss with the feed production team</li> </ul>
Day 6-7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a plan for managing and increasing the productivity of layers</li> </ul>
Day 8-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formulation of a feeding and feed formulation plan</li> </ul>
Day 11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of agents and monitoring of the laying rate, and assistant in the poultry’s accounting system</li> </ul>
Day 14-15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in the extension plan development and work planning</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrap up meetings with F2F staff and management of DEDRAS, discuss the report and final recommendations,</li> </ul>
Day 16	Debriefing with CRS and USAID testing for COVID (if required) and material release, submit final documents
Day 17	Travel back

## H. DESIRABLE VOLUNTEERS SKILLS

As described above, the desired volunteer for this assignment should have formal qualifications and strong experiences in poultry production/management for egg production. he/she is an expert in:

- Modern and intensive poultry farming
- Formulation and manufacture of feed for layers on the farm,
- Alternative poultry production systems
- Poultry production environment control.
- Operations management and record keeping
- Health and veterinary care

## I. ACCOMMODATION AND ANOTHER IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

In Cotonou, volunteers will stay at [Livingstone hotel](#), near the CRS office and not far from the airport. In Parakou, the volunteer will stay at hotel Le Pluriel and will be going DEDRAS’s office in Parakou and to the the CIPEMA farm in Serarou (about 32 km from Parakou). The volunteer may need to be lodged for some day in the farm. DEDRAS has comfortable dormitories available for visitors where the volunteer will lodge in security. In the field, CRS will hire a local translator for the volunteer’s work. The management leadership 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. Travel



arrangements, adhering to COVID-19 safety precautions, will be made by CRS. Volunteers are encouraged to bring N95 masks and Covid-19 TDR tests with them if possible.

## **J. RECOMMENDED ASSIGNMENT PREPARATIONS**

### **▪ Targeted trainees' Description**

The main participants to this assignment who will be working closely with the volunteer are technicians working on the farm and some of the management members with at relevant academic education. Current trainees in the farm, will also be partially involved. These trainees are young people, most of them with low education level.

### **▪ Training Materials**

The volunteer should prepare documents that can be printed at the CRS office in Benin prior to travel. Flipcharts, markers and masking tape can be obtained from the host's office in case the volunteer wishes to do illustrations. If possible, the volunteer should bring a laptop with him/her. However, if it is not possible, CRS will provide a spare laptop for the volunteer to use during the assignment. For PowerPoint presentations, DEDRAS ONG 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 Parakou city. The hotels and DEDRAS's office have stable access to electricity and internet connectivity even though the internet signal is sometimes weak. The volunteer will also be given a cellphone with local sim card and data bundle that can be used to access internet when out in the field. Cellphone reception is good for both mobile networks (MTN and Moov) available.

Although security levels in Benin and Parakou are good, the volunteer will be instructed about security measures and safeguarding before going to the host organization. The volunteer is advised to bring along any regular medications they take, in order to prevent health issues.

### **▪ Working Environment and culture**

Parakou is in the North part of Benin at about 450 km from Cotonou. DEDRAS is headquartered in the city of Parakou but most of the working and practical sessions will take place in Serarou where the CIPEMA is settled.

In Parakou, the volunteer will meet both Muslims and Christians and the main local languages are Dendi, Nagot/Yoruba, Bariba and Fon. People are very nice and respectful, especially towards foreigners; they are social and open to collaborating with foreigners. More, CIPEMA is located on the edge of the Parakou-



N'Dali Inter-state Road where road traffic is significant to the northeast, southwest by a fence of the farm of the radio station TWR and northwest by a stream. The farm is 75% covered by citrus fruits, teaks, Gmelina and Acacia, in short a trendy arboriculture. Access from one speculation to another is possible thanks to a road. However, bodily protection is necessary to avoid any danger since it is on a farm that this assignment will take place.

- **Recommended Reading**

CRS strongly recommends that the volunteer become familiar with this SOW, read documents on the assignment areas: poultry farming and chicken layers rearing for egg production, feed composition and formulation, layers health and productivity management, in Benin and West Africa. We also recommend reading about the national policies regarding agricultural development. Volunteer is also encouraged to visit the F2F library for any relevant materials available. 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 Center of Benin, the weather is cool during the assignment period but may also be a bit hot and dry with some temperatures varying between 25 to 32 Celsius degrees. It is also a sunny weather with end of the raining season by October. It is currently the raining season and rainfall are often heavy in the region. Daily weather conditions in the department of Borgou can be found [here](#).



**K. 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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