

**To express interest in this assignment please email** **Chi.Olisemeka@crs.org**

**CRS Farmer to Farmer Program**

**Volunteer Assignment Scope of Work**

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| **Summary Information** |
| **Assignment Code** | **UG2110** |
| Country: | Uganda |
| Country Project: | Livestock |
| Host Organization: | Kyeyo Farm limited  |
| Partner: | N/A |
| Date of baseline data collection: | February 8, 2019 |
| Date of host agreement signing: | May 15, 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): | 9 | Volunteer recommendations applied (Total): | 9 |
| Assignment Title: | Promoting best agronomic practices in Hass avocado production |
| Objectives of the assignment: | Help Kyeyo farm limited to understand the best agronomic practices in Hass Avocado production |
| Assignment preferred dates: |  January - February 2023 |
| Desired volunteer skill/expertise | Relevant professional skills and practical experiences in fruit plantations management. Strong knowledge and expertise in Avocado farming. |
| Type of Volunteer Assistance | Technology Transfer (T) |
| Type of Value Chain Activity | Information and Input support services (S) |
| PERSUAP Classification[[1]](#footnote-1)[1] | II |
| Number of people to be trained | Men | Women  | Youths |
| 63 | 33 | 52 |
| 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.

Uganda being a tropical country has perfect conditions for avocados and have well-established varieties growing in the country since the 1550s. Uganda has high-quality soil, a warm climate, and ideal rainfall patterns for growing avocados. In fact, Uganda has the most consistent rainfall pattern in the world. Ugandan avocado farmers have been growing avocados for centuries, so why incorporate the Hass avocado into their cultivar? Many locals prefer their “old avocados” and are skeptical about the possible impact Hass avocados could have on indigenous crops. Some worry the Hass variety will cause other avocado varieties historically grown in Uganda to go extinct. Other avocado varieties (called “ova” in Uganda) are also used for medicinal purposes, and herbalists fear the repercussions of reduced availability for their patients.

Some farmers avocado farming in Uganda have supported the expansion of Hass into Uganda, however. Hass avocados have a longer shelf-life and transport much better than other varieties, which is why that variety is so popular globally. Local Ugandan avocado varieties ripen in 3 to 4 days, whereas Hass takes 2 to 3 weeks to ripen at room temperature and 4 to 6 weeks to ripen if refrigerated. This shelf-life gives farmers and transporters plenty of time to harvest the superfruit and deliver it to almost any country in the world. Some avocado farmers also point out that to grow Hass avocados, the Hass branch must be grafted onto the rootstock of the native varieties, making the plant a symbol of the connection between the new avocado variety the old. The Ugandan government agrees with avocado farming in Uganda; the Hass has so many benefits for their country that it is here to stay. It isn’t strictly about the financial benefits, either. The Ugandan government supports and encourages their farmers to cultivate Hass avocado trees for environmental reasons as well. Planting more avocado trees helps battle deforestation, which causes irregular dry seasons, longer drought periods, and unpredictable heavy rainfalls, all of which are disastrous for other crops in the country. In mountainous areas, the strong roots of the avocado trees can combat erosion and landslides too. There is an on-going national campaign for increased avocado growing launched last year in Mayuge District by the Minister of Agriculture, Vincent Ssempijja. He laid more emphasis on the Hass avocado variety because of its bigger export market but generally avocados are good fruits for all of us to eat due to their high nutritive value. They are now viewed as the new crop whose production could alleviate poverty and malnutrition.

Dr Barbra Mugwanya Zawedde the director of research at Mukono ZARDI, indicated that Hass avocado has become a highly demanded fruit on the international market and that Mukono Zardi has been charged with production of the fruit’s seedlings for farmers to plant. Mr Owen Sungura the avocado project research officer at Mukono ZARDI revealed that their target is to produce 600,000 grafted seedlings every year. We want to emphasize good agronomic practices and to ensure that the farmers meet the expected international hygienic fruit production standards. Our other goal is to link them to avocado exporters and, where possible, get them into contract farming. We are not by the way putting all our eggs into one basket. We are still promoting farming of other avocado varieties and researching on them as well so that if in future we discover some with high oil content or better taste we can take advantage of them as well. We want to have the biggest number of avocado varieties in East Africa,” Dr Zawedde says.

1. **ISSUE DESCRIPTION**

The Kyeyo Farm limited has ventured in Hass avocado production and have an established 300-acre plantation and has more opportunities for expansion. However, Kyeyo is grappling with lack of expertise in avocado production in areas of best agronomy practices. Best management practices such as weed control, pest and disease control, soil fertility management, soil conservation practices, optimal use of appropriate inputs, and best harvesting practices are all lacking within Kyeyo Farm. Timely land preparation and planting to enable a growing crop to utilize all the rain that is available in the season is critical under the current climatic change crisis.

To help improve production and productivity levels, Kyeyo requests CRS Farmer-to-Farmer volunteer assistance to equip farmers with the technical knowledge on basic agronomic practices to be able to produce Hass avocado on a commercial scale to meet the export market. Best agronomic practices will help to ensure that the farmers meet the expected international hygienic fruit production standards. It is against this background that Kyeyo is requesting for F2F technical assistance to equip its field team with best agronomic skills in avocado production.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT**

The main objective of this assignment is to provide skills in best plantations management techniques to improve productivity. The assignment specific objectives include:

- Assess the ongoing practices and technologies of the Hass avocado plantations management about production practices including planting, maintenance and harvesting,

- Make a participatory diagnosis of the Hass avocado plantations problems,

- Discuss with the farmers some affordable improved practices and technologies,

- Train the farmers on the most important improved technologies and practices

- Make some recommendations that can help improved Hass avocado production

- Help design areas of new expansion for Hass cultivation

- Develop a manual guide on best agronomic practices

**Target Audience:** This will include all the farm team.

**Host contribution:** Kyeyo management has committed to mobilize its team of staff, field workers to participate in the trainings to be conducted by the volunteer.

**ANTICIPATED RESULTS FROM THE ASSIGNMENT**

Through the volunteer technical assistance, Kyeyo will adopt best practices that improve production and productivity of Hass avocado plantation. In addition, this assignment will extend skills to farmers surrounding Kyeyo farm, thereby expanding Hass avocado catchment area through trickle down effects.

The anticipated deliverables include:

* Trainings conducted and people trained
* Manual developed on best agronomic practices
* 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 | At 9.00 am, the volunteer is greeted at the hotel by CRS staff and thereafter go to CRS office for introductions and briefings including host brief, logistics and expectations and anticipated outcomes. Hand-outs will be prepared at CRS offices.  |
| 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 and thereafter travel to Kyeypo farm in Nakaseke  |
| Days 3-5 | Assess the ongoing practices and technologies of the Hass avocado plantation management about production practices including planting, maintenance and make appropriate recommendations |
| Day 6-7 | Make a participatory diagnosis of the cashew plantations problems and make appropriate recommendations |
| Days 8-9 | Discuss with Kyeyo team and interested neighbouring farmers some affordable improved practices and technologies and make appropriate recommendations |
| Days 10-12 | Train the farmers on the most important improved technologies and practices and make appropriate recommendations. Help design areas of potential extension for Hass avocado production. |
| Day 13 | Wrap up trainings and emphasize key concepts of assignment to entire team. Participants evaluate the training and together with the volunteer discuss final report recommendations. |
| Day 14-15 | Develop a manual guide on best agronomic practices  |
| Day 16 | 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 17 | Depart for USA |
| TBD | Outreach event in the US**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*** |

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))

While on the assignment, the volunteer may stay at farm house or any identified hotel in Nakaseke The volunteer will work accompanied by Kyeyo farm staff in the farm.

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 volunteer is highly encouraged to visit [CRS’s F2F Digital Resource Library](https://f2flibrary.crs.org/Presto/home/home.aspx?_ga=2.141716784.32617302.1616765386-2022794543.1567520784) and search for resources that they can use or customize for training. Upon completion of the 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).

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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| **CRS Baltimore** |
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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)