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FARMER-TO-FARMER
The USAID John Ogonowski and Doug Bereuter Farmer-to-Farmer Program

**FARMER-TO-FARMER
VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT FORM**

Summary Information	
Assignment Code	TT79
Country	Trinidad & Tobago
Assignment Title	Application of Syntropic Agriculture to Cocoa Farming
Best dates for volunteer assignment	After 2023
Host Organization(s)	The Tri Valley Cluster is comprised of farmers, agro-processors, agricultural value-added agents, agro-tourism agents, and rural community development activists from the North-Eastern regions of Trinidad- Lopinot, Brasso Seco and Aripo. The group empowers stakeholders by leading and facilitating the development of rural community agribusiness, agricultural raw material production, product and service development and innovation, joint event marketing, fund raising, and awareness drives. Through various development initiatives, collaboration with industry stakeholders, and other support agencies, the Tri Valley Cluster’s main goal is to create opportunities for growth, diversification and sustainability of its members whilst ensuring adherence to international standards of quality, leading to improved value and globally recognized brands.
Assignment Information	
Objectives and Anticipated Results	Many of the cocoa farmers of the Tri-valley Cluster operate within a forested area. In their desire to grow their cocoa and other crops without disturbance of the natural environment and their goal to create growing systems which imitate forest ecology, they have chosen to embark upon a path of syntropic farming. Syntropic farming aligns with natural succession which is the tendency for nature to rehabilitate land, taking it from barren to fertile and densely vegetated. With this perspective in mind, the farm is seen as a unified, intelligent, living system which is meant to evolve over time. For this to happen there are complex interactions occurring between the plants (and animals) and every living being serves an important purpose in the process. When these cooperative relationships are promoted correctly by the farmer, the farm develops into a strong, healthy, living system. To do this, the farmer grows some forms of vegetation, which do not produce any usable crops, but that contribute positively to the farm. These are called “biomass” plants and trees. The farmer also “tucks in” plants and trees that produce a valuable harvest. These are called “target” plants and trees. This combination of vegetation is grown together closely, in a way that is mutually beneficial. The farmer also has a deep



	<p>understanding of how the vegetation responds positively to pruning and cuts it back at strategic times to promote rapid growth. After a few years, the system becomes partly autonomous. It can provide its own irrigation, fertilizer, crowd out undesirable plants and resist disease. It just needs some management from the farmer. The Tri-Valley farmers have no experience with syntropic farming and would like to learn more about this mode of farming. A volunteer is thus needed to provide training to Tri-valley cocoa farmers in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to syntropic cocoa farming • Review of existing syntropic cocoa farm models throughout the world • Management of syntropic cocoa farms <p>Through the volunteer technical assistance, the farmers of Tri-Valley will be able to introduce techniques of syntropic farming to their cocoa farms in order to maintain their ecological environment while increasing their productivity, marketability, profitability and sustainability in the global cocoa industry.</p>
<p>Expected Deliverables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syntropic cocoa farming techniques implemented on-farm during the training • Provide training materials to members for all subjects • Debriefing with country director and Purdue after assignment • F2F Assignment Report and F2F Recommendations Form to be completed at the end of the assignment (completed for debriefing with staff) • Sign-in sheets for training sessions (work with Field Coordinator) • One outreach activity (news article, interview, presentation, etc.) • If applicable, “like” the Purdue F2F Facebook and Twitter pages and share your experience
<p>Desired volunteer skill/expertise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years of experience in syntropic farming & cocoa farming • Experience training adults in low-income communities • Experience working in a developing country preferred • Flexibility • Language: Proficient in English
<p>Training Participants</p>	<p>About 7 participants who are Tri-Valley cacao members</p>
<p>Resources to be Contributed by Hosts and Local Partners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide in-country transportation, office space for meetings, and facilities for training and/or workshops; and • Provide supplies, equipment, and other resources for training activities. • Access to computer, projector, and screen
<p><i>Farmer to Farmer Objective(s)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Increase agricultural sector productivity and profitability <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Improve conservation and sustainable use of environmental and natural resources <input type="checkbox"/> Expand agricultural sector access to financial services



	<input type="checkbox"/> Strengthen agricultural sector institutions
<i>Type of Volunteer Assistance</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technology Transfer <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational Development <input type="checkbox"/> Business/Enterprise Development <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Conservation <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative
<i>Type of Value Chain Activity</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Information and Input Support Services (extension services, input supplies, veterinary services, etc.) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Farm Production <input type="checkbox"/> Processing (primary and final product transformation, storage, transportation, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing (branding, advertising, promotion, distribution, sales, etc.)
<i>PERSUAP – Volunteer Assignment Type</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Type 1 Volunteers provide direct assistance for the use or procurement of pesticides and are likely to recommend and/or provide advice on specific pesticide active ingredients or products. <input type="checkbox"/> Type 2 Volunteers provide indirect assistance for the use or procurement of pesticides; they are not expected to recommend or provide advice on specific pesticide active ingredients or products. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type 3 Volunteers are not expected to be involved in pesticide issues. <input type="checkbox"/> Type 4 Volunteers work on a separately-funded USAID project/activity which may have a PERSUAP governing its operations related to the use and procurement of pesticides.
Volunteer Information	
Recommended Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please thoroughly read and follow the instructions provided in the volunteer orientation packet. • Let field staff know if you need supplies for your assistance.



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Project Overview

Trinidad and Tobago is a two-island country of a diverse population with rich history and culture. As an island nation, it is under the constant mercy of changing climate that is affecting natural resources and agriculture. At present, it is a net food importing country forcing the government to refocus its attention on sustainable agriculture as a part of its 2030 country development strategy. The tropical climate and available natural resources, if used properly, can make the country self-sufficient in vegetables, root crops and some fruits with a provision to export value added products. It is an opportune time for F2F volunteers to engage with agriculture extension officers and farmers to impart knowledge and learn about the culture and endurance of Trinbagonians. The objective of the F2F Trinidad and Tobago Country Program is to improve food and nutrition security through productivity, safety, and profitability as well as strengthening the extension service through capacity building.