

**BENINCAJU
MIDTERM EVALUATION
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

TechnoServe Inc. is seeking qualified firms to participate in this competitive solicitation for the following services for TechnoServe Benin.

These Terms of Reference (ToR) will guide the Midterm Evaluation process for the BeninCajù project, which is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and implemented by TechnoServe and Catholic Relief Services. The performance period to be evaluated considers 30 months, from September 2015 to March 2018. Its impact areas are four departments of Benin: Collines, Zou, Borgou, and Donga.

I. Program Overview

| | |
|---|---|
| Program Name | BeninCajù |
| Program Location | 12 communes in 04 departments |
| Program Budget | \$23,650,000* |
| Program Start | September 2015 |
| Issue Program Addresses | Improve returns for the major crop of cashew for smallholder farmers and for Benin's economy as a whole |
| Program Goal | Expand Trade of Agricultural Products and Increase Agricultural Productivity |
| Implementing Agency and Partners | TechnoServe's Bénin and global leadership teams, USDA and other USG agencies, CRS and local government and program partners |
| Evaluation Type | Mid-course |
| Evaluation time frame | June 25, 2018 to October 15, 2018 |
| Final Report deadline | October 15, 2018 (Final Report Loaded to USDA-FAIS) |

II. Background

TechnoServe is an international non-governmental organization that promotes business solutions to poverty in the developing world. TechnoServe's mission is to work with enterprising people in the developing world to build competitive farms, businesses and industries. It does this by linking people to information, capital and markets. Active in Benin since 2015, TechnoServe is registered in the US as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation and headquartered in Washington, DC. Its staff of over 1,000 employees operate from 30 country offices in Africa, Latin America and Asia. For more details on TechnoServe and its work see: <http://www.technoserve.org/>

Implemented by TechnoServe (TNS) in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), BeninCajù is a five year program funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) Food for Progress (FFP) program. BeninCajù encompasses a sector-wide value chain approach that will grow the cashew sector in Benin into a more productive, diversified, and inclusive economic growth engine for Benin and its people, and set it on a sustainable course for continued growth.

Annex I presents the project results framework. The main overarching goal of BeninCajù is to increase financial benefits for cashew processors and farmers. Two specific objectives are defined to achieve this goal:

1. Increase Agricultural Productivity in cashew value chain by increasing the use of improved agricultural techniques and technologies through trainings and strengthening of producer groups, expanding producers access to credit for inputs and improving post-harvest handling techniques that will engage producers more directly with the market
2. Increase trade of cashew and cashew apple products by increasing investment and processing infrastructure and technologies, strengthening trade associations and public sector market actors and launching a real-time market information system specific to cashew.

TNS has outlined five main activities to achieve these objectives over the five year program period:

1. *Capacity building and improved access to finance for producer groups/cooperatives.* This Activity aims to improve producer yields and incomes and has 4 sub-activities:
 - a. Producer training & certification program
 - b. Other tools/initiatives, including access to genetic resources, extension services, demonstration plots, and market information
 - c. Increases producer access to finance through community groups, MFIs, and buyer (processor) financing
 - d. Capacity building for farmer-based groups (FBG) especially at the communal level
2. *Trainings on improved farm management and improved post-harvest handling.* Modules on these themes are incorporated into the producer training and certification program described under Activity 1.
3. *Infrastructure, capacity building and market development of processing sector.* The program will catalyze investment in physical infrastructure and improve the management capacity for three categories of market actors:
 - a. New and existing medium and large-scale industrial processors, mainly

- nut processors, but potentially also juice, cashew nut shell liquid (CNSL) and/or shell cake producers
 - b. New small-scale satellite nut processors linked to industrial processors;
 - c. New small-scale cashew apple processors.
4. *Increase access to finance and investment for processing sector.* This includes efforts to familiarize the financial sector with the needs and opportunities in the cashew industry as well as facilitating the capacity building of cashew value chain actors (1) to identify and connect with financial mechanisms and institutions most appropriate for a given finance need, and (2) to become credit-worthy and the submit high-quality loan applications. BeninCajù will also set up an Innovation & Enterprise Development Fund (IEDF) as a co-investment mechanism whereby entrepreneurs across the value chain can apply for matching grants where investment capital is difficult to achieve.
 5. *Capacity building of trade associations and public sector agencies.* BeninCajù will work directly with the key trade associations and Government of Benin entities to implement organization strengthening initiatives that allow these entities to better support the development of and investment in the Beninese cashew value chain.

As its main audience, BeninCajù supports smallholder cashew producing households, producer groups, and cashew processors in the following 12 communes :

- Department of Collines: all 6 communes
- Department of Zou: Djidja commune
- Department of Borgou: N`Dali, Parakou and Tchaourou communes
- Department of Donga: Bassila and Djougou communes

In order to accurately measure program results, a baseline study was conducted from June to August 2016. The baseline study collected data from the three target beneficiaries of the program: cashew producing households, producer groups, and cashew processors. Details on how each of these beneficiaries were included in the baseline study are below:

- Cashew Producing Households made up the primary component of the BeninCaju Baseline Study. 900 smallholder cashew farmers were interviewed. These 900 farmers comprised of two distinct subgroups: 452 farmers were located in villages where BeninCaju intended to work (treatment) and 448 farmers lived in villages where BeninCaju did not intend to work (control). Data was collected using a questionnaire. Information collected included: demographics, cashew plantations and holdings, cashew production, yield and disposition, cashew expenses, cashew sales and income, cashew production training and good agricultural practices, changes in cashew harvest quantity and quality, producer associations/cooperatives, availability, access to, and use of credit, and a poverty score card. Given that a key component of BeninCaju's interventions focus on female cashew producers and ensuring that they reach parity with male producers in terms of income from cashes, all income data was disaggregated by gender.
- Producer Groups - 403 members of producer groups were also interviewed during the baseline study. These 403 members comprised of two distinct subgroups: 205 members located in villages where BeninCaju intended to work (treatment) and 198 members lived in villages where BeninCaju did not intend

to work (control). Data was collected using a questionnaire. Information collected included: demographics, member roles, and management.

- Cashew Processors were included in the baseline study in two distinct ways:
 - All six BeninCaju partner cashew processors were interviewed as part of the study. Information collected included: size, operations, etc.
 - 150 employees from the six BeninCaju partner cashew processors were also interviewed as part of the study. Information collected included: demographics and satisfaction.

Details on sample sizes and sampling procedures, used during the baseline study, for each of these program beneficiaries is included in Annex II.

The major findings of the study pertaining to the first objective “Increase Agricultural Productivity in cashew value chain” include the following:

Relative to income and productivity, the surveyed BeninCaju households derive, on average, 23.7% of their annual income from cashew. The average gross income received from cashew is US\$ 569 (304 282 FCFA) and the average net income is US\$ 391 (208 461 FCFA). The overwhelming majority (77%) reported they have formal access to credit and 40% have gotten at least once a credit since 2011. They have on average 4.1 ha of cashew plantation with 701 cashew trees. The average cashew yield is 225 kg per ha or 2.81 kg per tree. The producers’ total estimated production of the campaign directly preceding the survey averaged 697 kg.

Regarding good agricultural practices, 39% of surveyed producers reported receiving direct (face-to-face) and 63% indirect trainings on good agricultural practices (GAP) from 2010-2016. 84% of the plantations have been pruned at least once and 87% of them have been weeded in the last 12 months preceded the survey. Despite the producers reporting that over 40% of their total cashew plantations had been burned by bushfires at least once, only 87% of plantations were protected against bushfires. Relative to harvest and post harvest methods, 39% of the surveyed producers reported receiving training on harvest and post-harvest (HPH) methods and fifty-six percent (56%) reported drying their Raw Cashew Nuts (RCN) before packaging them, using different methods to determine when the RCN are fully dry. Further findings on producers are presented in detail in the baseline reports.

These results pertain to the 452 producers who formed the treatment group of the baseline survey sample. With few differences, the results obtained on 448 producers of the control group are roughly similar to those for the beneficiaries.

The major findings of the study pertaining to the second objective “Increase trade of cashew and cashew apple products ” include the following:

All six processors identified in the intervention area at the time of the baseline study were asked to provide key pieces of information about their processing capacities, staff size, sales volumes, operations, etc. The results suggested that these processors already had a strong base of training on processing techniques and technologies, meaning BeninCaju could start directly with more advanced training focused on addressing more sophisticated issues. In contrast to this, only three (50%) of the surveyed processors had received training on marketing. Similarly, while the processors had attended different numbers of international trade events, the numbers

of contracts resulting from these events were uneven and typically low. Also, four (67%) of the processors report that potential buyers had asked for improvements in the processors' (post-harvest) operations. Further findings on processors are presented in detail in the baseline reports.

It is important to note that the baseline study included some limitations:

- The study heavily focused on producers and production activities, which means there is a lack of baseline data and data analysis related to the processors (both cashew nut and cashew apple) and institutional actors.
- Project monitoring activities, such as the production yield survey conducted only a few months after the baseline study, produced findings that tended to contradict those of the baseline study.

In addition to the baseline assessment, BeninCajù has also collected routine monitoring data showing progress against program results. Emerging results, based on routine monitoring data, are listed below.

Objective 1: "Increase Agricultural Productivity in cashew value chain":

- In total, 15,669 farmers or farm workers, including 24.4% of female were trained on various main topics since the beginning of the project. At the end of 2017, 58,759 ha of cashew farms had already been impacted by the technologies and innovations promoted by the project.
- The annual yield survey relative to the agricultural campaign 2017-2018 is ongoing. The report is expected by June 2018. According to the results of the yield survey on the last campaign (2016-2017), the average yield of cashew nuts achieved 295 kg per ha and 3.28 kg per tree. Each producer sold on average 703 kg of cashew nut for an average amount of US\$ 823 (438,465 FCFA). Note that in 2017 the market price of raw cashew nut (RCN) was particularly high. The yield survey revealed that several improved agricultural and post-harvest techniques and technologies were widely adopted by the producers trained through the project period. To date, 314 producers (including 60% female) obtained a total of US\$ 82,958.5 (FCFA 44,190,000) as formal campaign credit provided by microfinance institutions.
- 1,705 trainings sessions were provided to BeninCaju producers. Demonstration plots (47 in total) were established across the 12 major cashew producing communes. These plots are used to demonstrate and ensure continued application of improved practices. To date, 188 Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) groups have been created with a total of 5,405 members, of which 73% (3,926) of females. Cumulative savings by them reached US\$ 273,053.10 (FCFA 150 179 200), which is available as credit to members. In total, 1,446 training sessions were organized for SILC group members since project inception. Several activities were carried out to promote linkages between the "Federation nationale des producteurs d'anacarde (FENAPAB), the national network of cashew producers' cooperatives, and microfinance institutions (MFI).

Objective 2: "Increase trade of cashew and cashew apple products ":

- Through December 2017, in total 2,585 metric tonnes of cashew kernel were exported by five processor partners of BeninCaju for a total amount of US\$

24,795,922. In total, 10 processors of cashew apple juice were supported. They produced and sold juice for a total amount of US\$ 12,738.

- Through this timeframe, US\$ 2,616,904 were mobilized as bank credit in benefit of two cashew kernel processors. Two others processors are in the process of obtaining credit for the current campaign
- Around 700 processor and business service provider staff were trained on various topics related to their needs: business and financial management skills, processing techniques and technologies, etc. Several events were organised or supported by the project in order to promote cashew sector development and trade :
 - the national workshop on cashew sector development organised by the Agence de Promotion des Investissements (APIEX)
 - the drawing up of a decree on cashew management and the national cashew development program
 - the national plan for cashew sector promotion

VI. Purpose of the evaluation

The midterm evaluation is primarily intended as an internal management tool to assess project progress to date and identify needed course corrections, thereby guiding project management to achieving project objectives and the most effective use of project funding. In addition, the midterm evaluation presents an opportunity to resolve any inaccurate or incomplete measurements produced by the baseline study, in order to provide a more complete and relevant baseline that will allow management to more accurately measure the program's impact.

The midterm evaluation will help TechnoServe (and USDA) staff optimizing the allocation of project funding to achieve BeninCajù results through the remaining implementation period. It will be consistent with the following criteria, as outlined in the USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy: Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact and Sustainability. TechnoServe and CRS will incorporate findings and conclusions from the midterm evaluation to refine and, if necessary, adjust project activities to affect mid-course corrections required to achieve project goals and objectives.

VIII. Overall key questions and methodology

The evaluation is intended to measure progress against output and outcome indicators and address issues regarding efficiency of resource use and quality of implementation. Overall, reflecting the criteria noted above, the midterm evaluation will focus on the following key questions.

Relevance

- To what extent is the program (as articulated in the results framework, indicators, assumptions, program design and project activities) responsive to the needs of the participants and local conditions?
- How well aligned is the program strategy and activities with government strategies and with USDA and US. Government's development goals, objectives and strategies?

Effectiveness: Questions around the extent to which the project is contributing to the expected results or objectives are outlined, by Objective, in section X.

- To what extent are the program activities contributing to expected results (as outlined under Objective level questions and methodology)?
- What internal and external factors have influenced the ability of the project to meet expected results and targets?
- What key successes should be replicated or key improvements should be made to the implementation to maximize the results?

Sustainability: Questions around the sustainability of the expected results or objectives are outlined, by Objective, in section X.

- To what extent is it likely that benefits generated by BeninCajù will endure after completion of the project?
 - Producer level: Agronomic Techniques, Harvest and Post-harvest handling, SILCs, Farm and Plantation Management
 - Producer Groups and BDS: Market information, group sales, availability of high-quality inputs.
 - Access to Finance: Institutional lending and financial management
 - Processors: Financial and technical capacity, strategic vision and profitability
- What are the biggest risks to the sustainability of benefits generated by BeninCajù?

To answer these questions, the midterm evaluation will utilize a mixed methods, difference-in-differences, approach that includes: a program document review, quantitative and qualitative data collection.

Program document review

The midterm evaluation will be informed by a program document review, including planning documents, program documents, reports, annual monitoring surveys, other monitoring records, and baseline data.

Quantitative data collection

Quantitative data will be collected through household surveys of cashew producing households, producer groups and cashew processors to assess their current agricultural and post-harvest practices, crop productivity, use of inputs, use of financial services, and exposure to project activities.

The following approach will be refined and approved by USDA and TechnoServe in the final work plan. Participant households will be selected randomly from the list of participants at the time of the midterm assessment, ensuring a stratified sample that is spread across the target geographies proportionate to the number of participants. The sample size will be representative of each value chain at the 95% confidence level. The evaluator should review the sampling approach used for the baseline study (provided in Annex II). Since the midterm evaluation is using the difference-in-difference approach, comparison households will be selected from the same comparison group used at baseline. Comparison households selected and interviewed must meet the minimum selection criteria for project participation. The evaluator will use the *Avoidance of Contamination Methodology* (Annex III)

documented at baseline to identify potential instances of contamination and implement measures to reduce contamination.

The project will compare the outcomes of the participants to that of the comparison households to demonstrate attribution of any change to the project using a difference in difference statistical approach. Specific outcomes of interest are: increased rate of applying improved practices promoted by the project, increased productivity and income for farmers; increased volumes and percentage of processed cashew kernel; and increased sales volumes of cashew byproducts. This approach accounts for external factors that may have affected both the participant and nonparticipant households by subtracting the change in key outcomes found in the comparison households from the change found in the participant household. However, the comparison households are likely to be different from the participant households. To account for this, the evaluation will add a regression to the difference of differences approach to control for key observable characteristics of the households. The selected evaluator will also articulate hypotheses and research questions for each specified outcome.

In addition to the primary quantitative data collection, the midterm will also use direct observations from visits to program sites, monitoring data and crop production survey data collected twice a year at planting and at harvest from a sample of participant farmer households.

Qualitative data collection

Qualitative data will be collected as part of an outcome mapping exercise through focus group discussions with farmers in the target geographies to understand their participation in the project, factors that influenced their change in agricultural and post-harvest techniques, and use of financial services. Given that a key component of BeninCaju's interventions focus on female cashew producers and ensuring that they reach parity with male producers in terms of income from cashes, focus group discussion will include women-only focus groups to understand their perspective and experiences. Key informant interviews will be conducted with processors (including satellite processors, cashew apple processors, and larger cashew processors), producer group leaders and input suppliers; intermediaries and exporters; business development service providers; financial institutions; trade associations; and with government officials from agencies including APIEX and ATDA4, and public services (ministries of agriculture and trade) and local leaders. Qualitative data collection is especially important to evaluate the program's impact on non-producer stakeholders as these groups tend to be too small to be appropriate for statistical analyses.

X. Objective-level questions and methodology

To better understand the relevance and effectiveness of the program's design, the following questions and methodology have been identified. They are neither exhaustive nor fixed, and can be adjusted, as appropriate, by the evaluator.

Objective 1: Increase Agricultural Productivity in cashew value chain by increasing the use of improved agricultural techniques and technologies through trainings and strengthening of producer groups, expanding producers access to credit for inputs and improving post-harvest handling techniques that will engage producers

more directly with the market

Key questions to answer

- Given the current levels of results (farmers trained, hectares grown under improved techniques and technologies, volume of cashew produced etc.) is the project on track to achieve its targets ?
- Which improved techniques and technologies are most readily adapted by producers? Which are least readily adapted?
- How likely are producers to continue using improved techniques and technologies in the absence of the project? What factors are contributing to or hindering the likely sustainability of these practices?
- What is the average margin between farm gate price and end product price for selected value chains and how is it shared along the value chain?
- How can the project better measure the income generated by cashew production ?
- To what extent do the SILC groups and finance linkage facility (between producers and formal credit service providers) increase investment in farms?
- To what extent are the institutional reforms in the agricultural sector (Agence Territoriale de Développement Agricole, Direction Départementale de l'agriculture, taxes sur les exportations de noix de cajou) affecting the implementation and results of the project? Will the project strategy need to adjust to these reforms?

Suggested methodology

The evaluator will measure the impact on adoption of improved practices, and yields on farmers who have received trainings compared with those who have not received training.

The sampling considerations used during the baseline study are included in Annex II. For the midterm evaluation, the hired evaluator will update this design as follows:

1. Participants of the treatment group will be selected from the farmers who have actually received training.
2. Participants in the comparison group will be selected from the same comparison group established at baseline. This is to ensure that the comparison households surveyed at midterm have the same characteristics (observed and unobserved) as the comparison households surveyed at baseline. Careful attention must be paid when selecting participants for the comparison group, as geographic proximity to the treatment group and other project factors create an environment susceptible to contamination.

The evaluator will use the baseline survey tools to develop comparable tools for the midterm evaluation, especially for questions that seek to measure changes in outputs and outcomes over time. These tools will be used to test interim outcomes and early indicators of success. Data must be collected using ITC and digital tools (i.e. deploying forms on mobile devices connected to a server) and accessible to BeninCaju staff.

Midterm results of the treatment and control groups will be compared to provide an initial estimate of the impacts of different trainings, access to nurseries, finances, market information, and other inputs.

Objective 2: Increase trade of cashew and cashew apple products by increasing investment and processing infrastructure and technologies, strengthening trade associations and public sector market actors and launching a real-time market information system specific to cashew.

Key questions to answer

- Have the attitudes of actual and potential private sector financial institutions changed due to BeninCajù's financing support activities?
- How have processor business skills (management practices, use of business/marketing plan...) changed compared to the benchmarks established during the baseline ?
- Are supported processors likely to remain financially viable absent project support?
- To what extent has the project been able to facilitate public-private partnerships for cashew sector development?
- Given the current levels of results (volume kernel sale, expansion of processors markets, policies and regulations formed, application of new technologies or management practices etc.) is the project on track to achieve its targets ?
- Given the seasonal character of the sector's activities, how can the project better assess the employment generated by beneficiary processors?

Suggested methodology

The external evaluator will examine project records and survey participating processors to determine the extent to which firms have made investments in resources (personnel, technology, trainings, etc) necessary to extend their processing capacity and improve the quality of products. This progress will be compared against the benchmarks determined in the baseline (where possible). For this purpose, the evaluator will use both qualitative and quantitative methods as possible.

To evaluate access to finance, the evaluator should examine project records as well as surveying both processors and financial institutions to determine what financing has been achieved by the activities, how attitudes of financial institutions have changed (due to the trainings and sectoral informations received from the project), and how this compares against benchmarks.

The evaluator should also examine if the activities implemented with the public sector, institutional non governmental and private actors are able to strengthening their capacity to promote cashew sector. For these topics, qualitative methods of evaluation, such as focus groups and individuals interviews with keys informants, should be prioritized.

Additional questions

- How can the strategies implemented improve female participation in project activities and benefits ?
- How can the M&E system better account for the climate and weather-related impacts on yield, so as to better measure project impact?
- In its current design, is the M&E system able to efficiently and accurately provide relevant information needed to measure project progress? What tools

and procedures could be improved ?

VII. Audience

The main audiences for this midterm evaluation are TechnoServe Benin and global leadership teams, the USDA, CRS and other USG agencies, and local government and program partners (in particular, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fish, APIEX, Ministry of Commerce and Industry)

VIII. Key activities and dates

The evaluator should use the USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy as a guide for all activities. All activity should be led in consultation with TNS, specifically the BeninCajou M&E team. Key activities include the following :

1. Develop the overall Midterm Evaluation Inception Report, including primarily :
 - Design of sampling activities, including definition of sampling methodology, frame and size
 - Quality Assurance Plan
 - Data contamination avoidance measures
 - Survey questionnaires
 - Institutional assessment templates
 - Process for Focus Group Discussions for relevant stakeholders
 - Process for outcome mapping for relevant stakeholders
 - Data collection, compilation, and analysis plan
2. If the evaluator has existing or proposed partners capable of providing local enumerators this should be included in the cost and technical proposal. If the proposal does not include this, the evaluator will be responsible to develop a Scope of Work for and assist in selection and oversight of a local Beninese M&E firm to undertake data collection, as outlined above. The SOW should specify the timeframe (which will impact the number of enumerators the Beninese firm will need to hire) and type of enumerators and their qualifications and the requirement that data will be gathered electronically for immediate uploading to an online database.
3. Meet with USDA in Washington to discuss key elements of the MidTerm Evaluation SOW and any other M&E issues. This is subject to the request of USDA. If not possible to meet in person, the Evaluator will be available to discuss with USDA by teleconference.
4. Prepare and plan for the evaluation, consulting with BeninCajou staff as necessary and appropriate, such as for sampling issues and avoidance of potential data contamination, operational issues regarding the evaluation, such as hardware and software, survey languages, etc.
5. Prepare the enumerator training course syllabus for the various data collection and processing methods to be used in the midterm Evaluation.
6. Deliver the enumerator training course, including pilot of data collection tools.
7. Oversee data collection, including data quality checks
8. Manage data analysis and cleaning.
9. Prepare and submit the draft midterm evaluation report.
10. In collaboration with TNS, respond to any USDA comments or requests until USDA approves the report.
11. Present the final evaluation report, if requested and approved by USDA, to

USDA in Washington or by webinar, and/or to USDA-approved stakeholders in Benin.

The dates below present an approximate timeline. TechnoServe anticipates a total lead evaluator level of effort of approximately 45 workdays.

| Estimated Dates | Activity |
|----------------------------|---|
| June 25 - July 13 | BeninCajù document review, methodology planning, data collection tool design, fieldwork preparation, training of enumerators, piloting of tools |
| July 16 - August 10 | Primary research and data collection |
| August 13 - August 24 | Data cleaning and initial analysis |
| August 24 | Presentation to BeninCajù key staff and feedback |
| August 27 - September 7 | Analysis, report-writing, remote interviews and secondary research as needed |
| September 7 | Draft evaluation due to TechnoServe |
| September 7 - September 21 | Finalisation of draft report based on TechnoServe comments |
| September 21 | Final draft evaluation due to TechnoServe and USDA |
| October 5 | Response to USDA comments due (drafted in collaboration with TechnoServe) |
| October 15 | Final midterm evaluation upload to FAIS |

IX. Logistics

The external evaluator will be responsible for:

- Managing the evaluation process;
- Developing, testing and applying any instruments/questionnaires
- Designing and conducting training for enumerators
- Leading the interview process (TNS to provide field assistance); TNS/CRS staff will facilitate the process rather than assume direct involvement, i.e identify and introduce key individuals
- Analysis of data;
- Preparing and presenting all draft and final reports.

The independent evaluator will be free to draw their own conclusions free from organizational or political pressure.

TNS-Benin and CRS staff will be responsible for:

- Providing the evaluator with copies of all TechnoServe background documents (proposal, grant agreement, reports, work plans, training materials, etc.)
- Identifying and introducing to the evaluator key stakeholders as needed
- Assisting with logistics. Unless otherwise agreed, all travel and logistical arrangements will be arranged by TechnoServe business advisors and administrative staff, however TechnoServe will not accompany evaluators/enumerators on data collection.

TNS-DC MEL Advisor for East and West Africa will be responsible for:

- Providing technical support
- Providing review of, and final approval of evaluation deliverables

X. Deliverables

All deliverables shall be submitted electronically, in both MS Word and PDF files. As possible, all photographs or other graphics/figures in the reports will also be submitted as separate editable files. The evaluator shall also submit the final cleaned dataset used to inform the analysis.

Evaluation Report Structure

The evaluation report must include the below information, following the outline as appropriate. Modifications to report structure or content must be approved by TNS. The report must be provided in English.

- Title Page
- Executive Summary (maximum three pages)
- Program description (including goals, objectives, and outcomes)
- Underlying program strategies that were used to achieve the program's goals
- Maps of program geographies
- Evaluation purpose, methodology and approach, including strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the methodology
- Evaluation findings, with reference to documented evidence. Use of exhibits and specific examples, anecdotes, and photographs to illustrate key points is desirable.
- Conclusions: insights into the findings; reasons for successes and failures; innovations
- Lessons learned, barriers to success
- Industry challenges and opportunities going forward
- Recommendations (based on evidence and insights) for both the Project Team and the USDA. Recommendations should cover efforts to improve the project, midcourse corrections if necessary, and efforts to improve the project M&E framework, including indicators.
- Annexes to the evaluation report
 - Terms of Reference for the evaluation
 - Evaluation work plan with timetable
 - Sampling strategy
 - Data collection tools, including questionnaires, interview guides, and other tools as appropriate

- List of individuals interviewed and of stakeholder groups and/or communities consulted
- List of supporting documentation reviewed

Final dataset

All field data is to be collected electronically and finalized in a database accessible to TechnoServe on the platform used by the evaluator and as a clean dataset in MS Excel.

XI. Dissemination

With USDA approval, TechnoServe intends to disseminate key Midterm Evaluation (MTE) findings through: 1) direct email to key project stakeholders (local government, program partners, etc.); 2) posting of MTE findings on the TechnoServe website; and 3); an in-country presentation of MTE findings with key stakeholders, including a question and answer session. The disseminated reports will be free from proprietary and personally identifiable information.

XII. Selection Criteria/Profile of the Evaluator

The ideal candidate to lead the external evaluator will demonstrate :

- Strong relevant experience in designing and leading multi-faceted program evaluations with experience working in private sector agri-industry;
- Background in international development and poverty-reduction projects;
- Ability to facilitate and relate to stakeholders at multiple levels (e.g., TechnoServe leadership and field staff, private sector business owners and managers, senior and junior government staff, program participants, community leaders workers and farmers);
- Strong skills and experience in quantitative (econometrics/statistical analysis), qualitative and participatory evaluation methods;
- Experience planning and conducting quasi-experimental designs
- Data analysis and presentation skills;
- Sensitivity to cultural/historical contexts. Additional training or expertise in anthropology, sociology or historical research viewed favorably;
- Knowledge of English necessary and French language helpful.

XIII. Criteria for selection

The evaluation of each response to this TOR will be based on the requirements set out in the solicitation and any addenda thereto. At the sole discretion of TNS, the top proposals may be selected for follow-up questions or to provide an oral presentation.

The following weighting and points will be assigned to the proposal for evaluation purposes:

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Technical Proposal –60% | | 60 total points |
| Project Approach/Methodology | 30 points (maximum) | |
| Quality of Work Plan | 10 points (maximum) | |
| Project Schedule | 10 points (maximum) | |
| Project Deliverables | 10 points (maximum) | |

| | | |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|
| Management Proposal – 30% | | 30 total points |
| Project Team Structure and Internal Controls | 10 points (maximum) | |
| Staff Qualifications/Experience | 10 points (maximum) | |
| Experience of the Firm | 10 points (maximum) | |
| Cost Proposal – 10% | | 10 total points |
| TOTAL | | 100 points |

TechnoServe reserves the right to award the contract to the organization whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of and most advantageous to TNS and the Donor.

TechnoServe will not award a contract to any bidder where there is indication of a lack of business integrity.

The Organization with the winning proposal will be notified in writing. Those who were not selected may or may not be notified, at the sole discretion of TNS.

XIV. Terms and Conditions

1. The Request for Proposal is not and shall not be considered an offer by TechnoServe.
2. All responses must be received on or before the date and time indicated below in XVI. Schedule of Events. All late responses will be rejected.
3. All unresponsive responses will be rejected.
4. All proposals will be considered binding offers. Prices proposed must be valid for 60 days after the proposal deadline noted below in XVI. Schedule of Events.
5. All awards will be subject to TNS contractual terms and conditions and contingent on the availability of donor funding.
6. TNS reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal or cancel the solicitation process at any time, and shall have no liability to the proposing organizations submitting proposals for such rejection or cancellation of the request for proposals.
7. TNS reserves the right to accept all or part of the proposal when award is provided.
8. All information provided by TNS in this TOR is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time, and all bidders will be provided with notification of any changes. TNS is not responsible or liable for any use of the information submitted by bidders or for any claims asserted therefrom.
9. TNS reserves the right to require any bidder to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.
10. The bidders are solely obligated to pay for any costs, of any kind whatsoever, which may be incurred by bidder or any third parties, in connection with the

Response. All responses and supporting documentation shall become the property of TNS, subject to claims of confidentiality in respect of the response and supporting documentation, which have been clearly marked confidential by the bidder.

11. Bidders are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential Conflict of Interest.

XV. Form/Content of Response

All proposals shall:

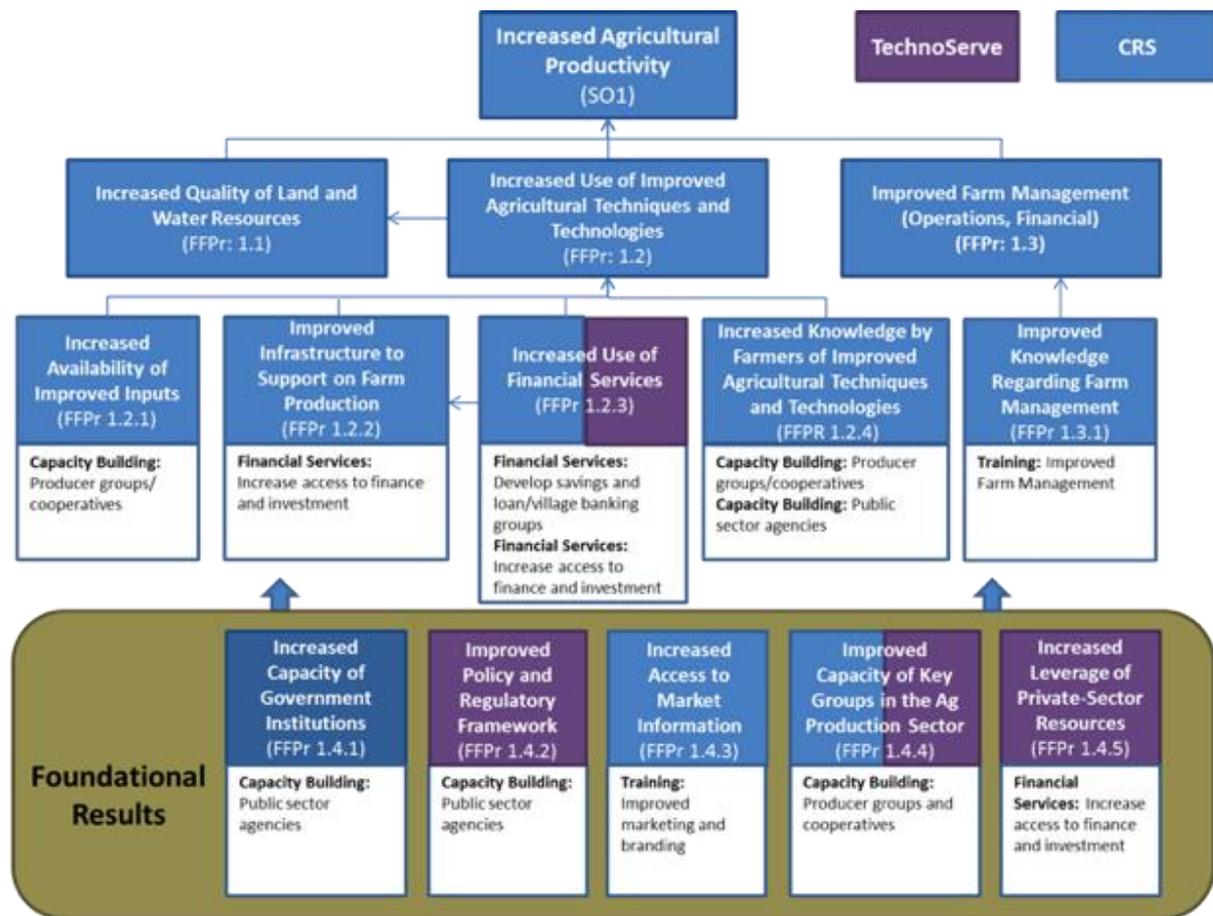
1. Be in the English language.
2. Include an estimated evaluation budget, including the applicant's daily rate, required additional non-TechnoServe personnel, etc. Costs should be detailed in US Dollar, with applicable Tax/Charges clearly identified.
3. Provide requested payment terms and conditions.
4. Describe the qualifications, experience and capabilities of the firm in providing the type of services being request by this TOR. Resumes or CVs of "key personnel" shall be submitted as an attachment.
5. Include a contact name, email address, and telephone number to facilitate communication between TNS and the submitting organization.
6. A brief outline of the organization and services offered, including:
 - a. Full legal name, jurisdiction of incorporation and address of the company
 - b. Full legal name and country of citizenry of company's President and / or Chief Executive Officer, and all other officers and senior managers of the company
 - c. Year business was established
7. A descriptive of a proposed evaluation design, methodology and general evaluation approach
8. List of 2 referees who can attest to the applicant's experience and expertise as it relates to this project and this ToR
9. One to two examples of the applicant's work

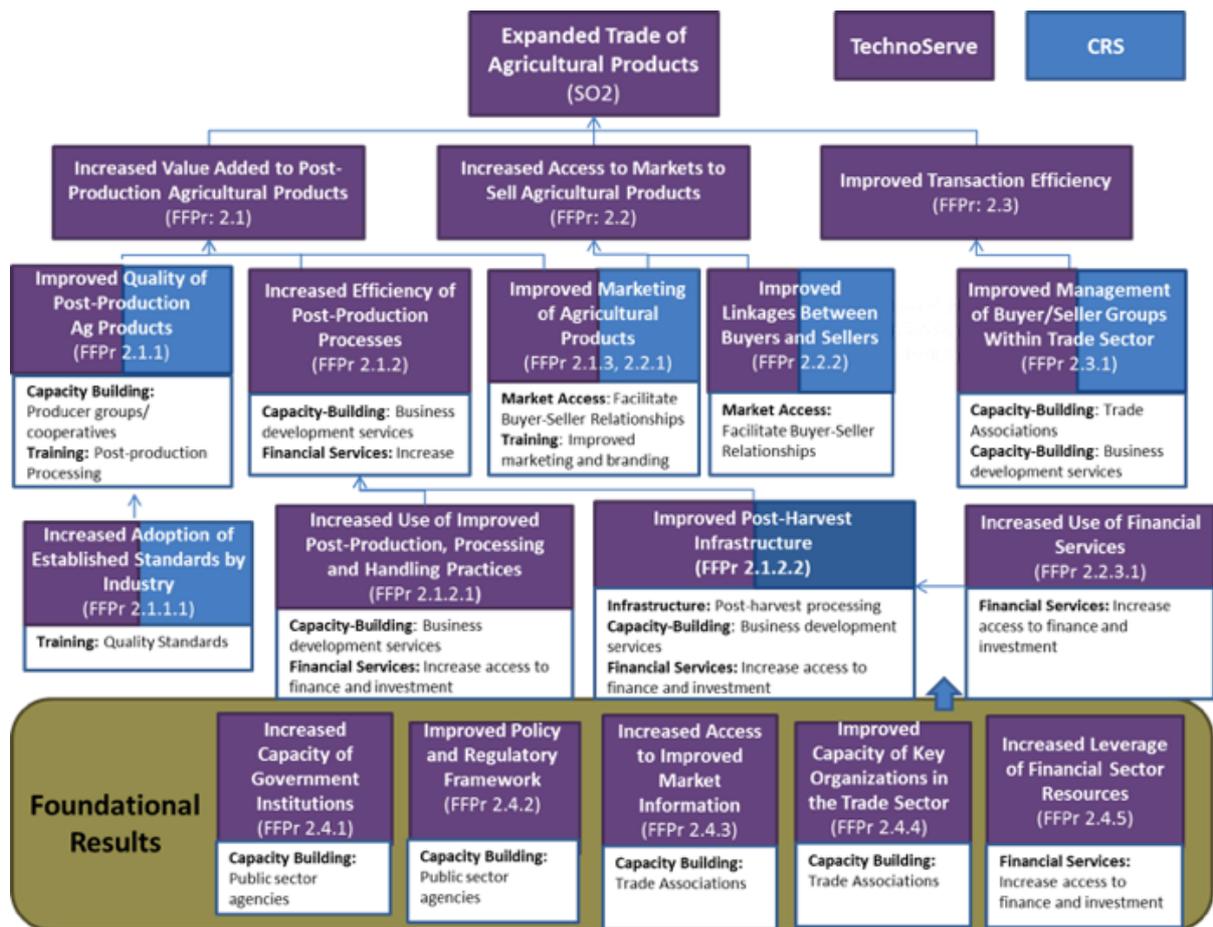
XVI. Schedule of Events

Evaluators meeting the above criteria are invited to submit a proposal via email to TechnoServe at offresbenin@tns.org (Use the subject line "Application and Proposal for Cashew Evaluation").

1. Questions regarding this request must be received no later than May 15, 2018. Responses to questions will be distributed to all interested parties no later than May 18, 2018.
2. Proposals are due from interested parties that meet the requirements by May 30, 2018.

Annex I: BeninCajù Results Framework





Annex II: BeninCajù Baseline Sampling Considerations

Background

The Baseline study (May – June 2016) of BeninCaju was primarily implemented using questionnaires developed from reviews of pertinent literature relating to other projects on cashew and other surveys of organizational management and employee satisfaction. Specifically, the *producer questionnaire* is largely based on the Baseline and yield survey questionnaires primarily developed by the baseline evaluator for the African Cashew initiative (ACi) and used in Benin, Cote d' Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Mozambique and on the assessments and analyses of the collected data by this same evaluator. The *producer group questionnaire* was derived primarily from other questionnaires and focus group discussions guidelines developed in large part by the baseline evaluator for ACi, the Competitive African Cotton Initiative (COMPACI), and the Coffee Partnership for Tanzania (CPT). However, the section of group management (good governance) borrowed heavily from *The Good Governance Test* found at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/The_Good_Governance_Test_Fall_2011. Finally, the *processor employee questionnaire* was developed in part by the baseline evaluator based on similar work on the above-named projects and also borrowed from *The Employee Satisfaction Survey* (Scott Smith PhD, February 2013, at: <https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/employee-satisfaction-survey/>).

The organization responsible for implementing these surveys (with in the field BeninCaju team oversight during the entire surveys) was *Programme Analyse de Politique Agricole (PAPA)*, using enumerators from the Beninese cashew producers association (*Federation Nationale des Producteurs d'Anacarde du Benin (FENAPAB)*) and some additional enumerators familiar to PAPA. These organizations were selected by BeninCaju for these surveys because of their directly applicable experience in implementing the annual Africa Cashew initiative (ACi) yield surveys in Benin. The TNS BeninCaju team implemented the processor key informant interviews and the survey of processor employees.

The BeninCaju Baseline Study was, in its entirety, conducted through the use of quantitative surveys, key informant interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). This baseline study report details the findings of the quantitative surveys of producers, producer group members, and processor employees as well as the data collected from key informants regarding the processors.

Sampling Considerations

The sample sizes and sampling procedures for this Baseline Study varied according to the target population being considered and the available sample frame(s). The sample of producers selected for the producer part of this baseline study was selected as a true random sample. While it is currently expected that the BeninCaju Endline survey will interview the same producers that were interviewed at Baseline, this decision has not been taken by TNS and/or USDA. Therefore, in order to not burden the Baseline study with the much larger sample sizes that a longitudinal study with Treatment (BeninCaju) and Control groups using double-difference evaluation methods would require, the Baseline evaluator determined the sample size based on ensuring that with 95% confidence, for any continuous or pseudo-continuous variable such as yield, income, percentage of producers adopting any particular

good agricultural practice, etc, the average value calculated from the sample of producer responses would be within + 7% of the “true” average value that would have been obtained if all possible producers had been surveyed. The value of 7% was selected as a compromise between 5% which would have required a much larger sample size with significant cost implications, and 10% which would have provided results deemed to be too imprecise. Two-stage sampling was used to minimize logistical and costs and survey implementation time. With these constraints, the minimum required sample size was determined to be 375 producers.

At completing of the baseline study, it was possible (although not yet decided) that, at Endline, the same BeninCaju and Control producers interviewed at Baseline would be interviewed again, therefore 20% oversampling was done to ensure that, with attrition, at least 375 of the same producers would be available for interviews at both Baseline and Endline. This led to an overall target sample size of 450 BeninCaju and 450 Control producers. Note that if the sample size had been designed for an assured double-difference evaluation, the overall sample size would have been roughly double this size. If at Endline, the decision is made to interview the same producers in both the Treatment and Control groups, a larger Endline sample size may be required.

As noted, for logistic and economic reasons, two-stage sampling was used, meaning that a subset of villages was first selected from the list of all possible target villages in the target communes. The Baseline evaluator decided that the 450 interviews for both BeninCaju and Control producers would be generated by selecting 15 producers from 30 of the appropriate villages. The specific villages were selected using *probability- proportional- to- size* (PPS) where the “size” of each village was determined by the number of agricultural households in that village as given in a Government of Benin report. (Prior to selecting the villages to be surveyed, the numbers and names of cashew producers in each village were not known, so the number of agricultural households in the villages was used as a proxy for the number of cashew producers.)

Once the BeninCaju and Control survey villages were selected, lists of names of the cashew farmers in each selected village were obtained and the farmers to be included in the survey sample were chosen by random selection. Finally, 10 “replacement” farmers were also randomly selected for each survey village to be interviewed if any of the planned sample farmers were unavailable or preferred to not participate in the survey.

In order to have the possibility of correlating results from the producer survey with those from the producer group survey, and in the interests of cost-effectiveness, the decision was made to conduct the producer group survey with group members in villages already selected for the producer survey. It was not possible to get lists of producer group members in advance to select a random sample of producer group members. Therefore, the sample of producer group members to interview were selected by asking interviewed producers if they were members of any producer groups and, if so, to name the other group members in their villages who were then identified and approached for the group member survey. This resulted in a non-random total of 205 group members in BeninCaju villages and 198 group members in Control villages being interviewed for the producer group survey.

Because only six (6) cashew processors are working with BeninCaju, all six of them were approached to provide key data about their size, operations, etc.

Finally, employees of all six of the BeninCaju-related cashew processors were surveyed. Again, it was not possible to get advance lists of employees and managers in each section of the processor factory, so instead, for each processor, in each section the first employee encountered was interviewed. A form of “nearest neighbor selection” with suitable skips was used to randomize the selection of the next employee to interview throughout that processor section was then used to select a total of ten (10) workers in each section (that had at least 10 employees) including the manager of that section. The manager of each work section in each processor was systematically included in the sample.

Annex III: BeninCaju Baseline Study Avoidance of Contamination Methodology

Executive Summary

In early planning for the BeninCaju baseline study, it was decided that the collected baseline data should capture all cashew production, yield, and income data for the 2016 season. This required that the USDA-funded Technoserve Benin (TNSB) BeninCaju project baseline survey be delayed until the end of the 2016 cashew harvest and sales period. This in turn raised the possibility that startup of BeninCaju activities and interventions in some villages might occur *before* the baseline survey in those villages was conducted.

USDA's justifiable concern about this plan was the possibility that implementation of *any* BeninCaju activities in any selected village before the survey might affect the surveyed producers' (farmers') responses to questions about their cashew farming practices, their knowledge of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for cashew, and their responses to other questions or even the 2016 harvest, thereby "contaminating" the baseline data by farmers reporting knowledge, opinions, or cashew farming practices that were solely due to the startup of the BeninCaju activities.

TNSB, together with the BeninCaju Baseline Coordinator, developed a plan to schedule startup and other activities in the surveyed BeninCaju villages after the baseline survey was completed in those villages. This plan, which was correctly implemented, ensured that no BeninCaju activities of any kind were undertaken in any of the surveyed BeninCaju villages. In fact, as of 29 September, 2016, to further ensure that baseline contamination from any project activities could not possibly take place, all project producer activities thus far undertaken have occurred in other project villages.

Background

The BeninCaju baseline data collection recall timeframes described were selected to produce the best and most valid starting points for BeninCaju based on annual production, processing and institutional reporting cycles. Using these recall timeframes will give the best picture of BeninCaju's impact and will help to inform implementation adaptations during the Life of Project (LOP).

Under USDA M&E policy, projects are normally not allowed to initiate activities before the Baseline Evaluation is approved. The timing of the start of BeninCaju between two cashew seasons has required some adjustment both to have the best baseline data and simultaneously not to delay project activities. For this reason, USDA originally agreed that project activities can start once baseline data has been collected (scheduled for the end of July, 2016) and before the Baseline Evaluation report has been fully approved. However, for BeninCaju to meet the project goals, it was critical to begin some key project activities even before the end of baseline data collection. BeninCaju carefully examined what activities were critical to begin and how implementation could be undertaken to avoid data contamination. In addition, in order to avoid data contamination, BeninCaju developed some methods for the Evaluator to use to adapt the geographic rollout of project activities so that the sample of producers selected to be part of the sample for the Baseline survey was not included in any BeninCaju activities nor otherwise impacted by them until after completion of the Baseline data collection activities in their villages

While actual implementation of the selected project activities before collection of the baseline data required USDA approval, this approval was ultimately granted and was, to a very large extent, based on USDA's acceptance of the ability of BeninCaju and the Evaluator to work together to ensure that no contamination would take place. In any case, the Evaluator was responsible for ensuring that data contamination does not occur.

The proposed select project activities fall under three categories:

1. Producer support activities: begin training and access to finance
2. Processor support activities: begin technical assistance, access to finance, food safety, product diversification
3. BeninCaju communication activities: develop BeninCaju communication plan

1. Producer support activities: begin farmer training and access to finance

BeninCaju collected producer baseline data collection starting in April 2016 and completed collection by the end of June, 2016. BeninCaju proposed to USDA that they approve starting two producer support activities in March, 2016. Although there might have been some risk of contamination, BeninCaju and the Evaluator planned and implemented the measures necessary to ensure that there was no contamination by either the start of SILC training/facilitation or the start of Gold and Silver farmer training. Following is a description of each of the two producer activities proposed, with information on how contamination of the baseline data was avoided.

- Gold and Silver farmer training programs, which are the “flagship” (i.e., most comprehensive and intensive) farmer training programs. Both of these programs will extend over many months and begin with 10 days of agronomic training, including information on weeding, spacing, grafting, etc. BeninCaju asked USDA to allow starting the Gold and Silver packages with the *first 2-3 day training session in July, 2016*, which, in the event, turned out to be after the last baseline date were collected. This schedule was necessary to ensure that the farmers can receive the 10-days of agronomic training followed by the harvest/post-harvest contents of the course in time to impact cultivation and harvesting for the 2017 harvest season.

Anti-Contamination Strategy and Update: To ensure that there was no risk of contamination, the consultant and BeninCaju team identified the list of 30 Intervention villages and 30 control villages for the baseline survey. Each village was then mapped with a radius of 10km for intervention villages and 5km for control villages. Trainings did not begin until August 2016. No activities have been done in any of the baseline villages (intervention or control) to date or within the respective radius set. No activities will take place within 5km of the control villages for the duration of the project.

- Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) training and facilitation, to provide better access to capital for farmers during the cashew season.

BeninCaju requested that USDA approve starting the initial training and organization for the SILCs in March, 2016. This was agreed by USDA. Most of the time during which

the baseline survey was conducted through the completion of baseline data collection in June involved forming the initial SILC groups and training and recruiting stakeholders.

This approval was granted because it was known that the SILCs would not be in a position to actually provide financing until well after the baseline. In addition, it was not anticipated that farmers would seek financing at that time, since they would have recently received their revenues from the recently completed cashew harvest. As such, the SILC training was not expected to have an effect on the results of the 2016 harvest or on the BeninCaju baseline survey and evaluation.

Anti-Contamination Strategy and Update: There have been no SILC training or groups organized to date as staff is still being recruited and trained, thus there was no opportunity for any contamination to occur from these activities.

2. Processor support activities: technical assistance, access to finance, food safety, product diversification

BeninCaju collected baseline data for the six existing processors based on their status as of December 31st, 2015. These data captured the results of the 2015 harvest and post-harvest processing. The processor data were collected and processed by the end of May, 2016.

USDA approved BeninCaju starting two processor-support activities before the completion of all baseline data.

The two processor support activities with their starting month(s) are:

- Food safety technical assistance (April)
- Diversification into cashew juice (August)

Following is a description of each proposed processor activity to provide information to the Evaluator for designing the Baseline Evaluation to avoid any contamination of baseline data.

- *Food safety.* BeninCaju hired a consultant to conduct an initial assessment for one of the factories. This report was received in July. While the assessment was done prior to baseline collection, no specific actions were put into place. The full time Food Safety specialist started in September and will be moving forward with the action plan proposed by the consultant.
- *Diversification into cashew juice.* BeninCaju began the process of developing juice processing by bringing an international volunteer consultant in August, 2016. The volunteer's focus is on analyzing the market for cashew apple-based products in Benin and the region. This has no impact on the processor baseline data.

3. BeninCaju communication activities

With USDA approval, BeninCaju began the following specific communication activities before completion of the baseline data collection:

- Hiring of local Communications Specialist

- Development of annual Communications Plan
- Development of BeninCaju branding & marking policy compliant with USDA requirements
- Preparation of BeninCaju communication materials, including logo, flyers, banners, website, social media, etc.
- Implementation of certain communication initiatives in support of approved project activities, including launch events in Cotonou and Parakou.
- Participation in key national, regional, and international cashew industry conferences and events

These actions had no impact on baseline data collection, as these activities do not directly relate to any of the agreed project indicators.

Contamination Avoidance

The principal risk of contamination was posed by BeninCaju startup activities and interventions changing the knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) and, as a remote possibility, the cashew harvest results (production, income) of the surveyed project cashew farmers. As noted above, the geographic rollout of any and all BeninCaju activities was carefully planned and scheduled to avoid any activities in any survey villages until after all survey activities in those villages were completed. In fact, as of this date, all project activities of any kind have taken place in non-surveyed villages at the greatest possible distance from the survey villages as a conservative measure to further ensure that no contamination could take place.

Table 1, below, presents the start and end date of baseline survey activities in the surveyed BeninCaju villages. This table shows that the survey was completed in all selected villages prior to the end of June, 2016.

Table 1: Survey dates in surveyed BeninCaju villages

| BeninCaju Survey Villages | Survey Dates (DD/MM/YYYY) | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
| | Start | End |
| <i>ADJANTE</i> | 05/06/2016 | 09/06/2016 |
| <i>AFFIZOUNGO</i> | 04/06/2016 | 06/06/2016 |
| <i>AMOU</i> | 03/05/2016 | 04/05/2016 |
| <i>AOTRELE</i> | 05/06/2016 | 05/06/2016 |
| <i>ASSANTE</i> | 03/06/2016 | 06/06/2016 |
| <i>ATCHAKPA</i> | 05/06/2016 | 05/06/2016 |

| | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>BIGUINA</i> | 05/06/2016 | 07/06/2016 |
| <i>BOUYEROU</i> | 03/06/2016 | 07/06/2016 |
| <i>DARINGA</i> | 02/06/2016 | 06/06/2016 |
| <i>DOKOUNDOHO</i> | 31/05/2016 | 03/06/2016 |
| <i>EKPA</i> | 03/06/2016 | 04/06/2016 |