

Assignment Title	Library Adviser
Country	Cambodia
Location	Phnom Penh
Partner Organisation	The National Library of Cambodia (NLC)
Accountable to	Director, Department of Books and Reading, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts
Reporting to	Director, NLC

1. ASSIGNMENT PURPOSE

The National Library of Cambodia (NLC) achieves its goal to encourage use of its collections through offering and promoting a greater range of services.

2. ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND INDICATORS

Objective 1

All NLC staff are competent in the use of the new PMB¹ library system.

Activities

Work with the Director, NLC, and relevant staff to:

- Support staff to implement the Circulation and OPAC² modules of PMB
- Support staff to set up circulation module parameters and to use the online circulation system
- Provide on-the-job training to staff in advanced searching techniques of the OPAC
- Provide on-the-job training to selected staff on library systems and conversion of records from one library system to another e.g. using UNIMARC³

Indicators

- The PMB online circulation system is operating effectively
- NLC staff in Lending Services and Reader Services are confident in using the PMB circulation system, the OPAC, and can teach library users to use the OPAC
- NLC staff are able to convert records from one library system to another using UNIMARC standards

¹ Pour Ma Bibliotheque — For My Library

² Online Patron Access Catalogue

³ Universal Machine Readable Cataloguing

Objective 2

NLC publishes a National Bibliography of Cambodia.

Activities

Work with the Director, NLC to:

- Complete and publish the first phase of the National Bibliography of Cambodia (Years 1950-1975)
- Complete and publish a full National Bibliography covering pre-1950, and possibly from 1980 to present, subject to funding availability
- Disseminate the National Bibliography of Cambodia to relevant stakeholders

Indicators

- The first phase of the National Bibliography of Cambodia is published and available
- A full National Bibliography of Cambodia is published and disseminated when funding permits

Objective 3

The content of the NLC website is improved, regularly updated and maintained

Activities

Work with relevant NLC staff to:

- Identify appropriate information to be posted on the website
- Develop the content of the information for posting
- Use software such as Dreamweaver to maintain and update the NLC website

Indicators

- NLC staff are supported to choose and develop information suitable for posting on the NLC website
- The NLC website is independently maintained and updated by its staff
- The NLC website is improved and up to date

As needs on the grounds may change over time, the volunteer on arrival is encouraged to review and update the assignment description in consultation with the partner organisation.

3. REPORTING AND WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

The volunteer will report on a day to day basis to the Director, NLC, and is accountable to the Director, Department of Books and Reading, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts (the Ministry has administrative oversight of the NLC).

In addition to the Director, NLC, the volunteer will work closely with three main NLC staff — the Deputy of Binding and Conservation, the Deputy of Cataloguing, and the Head of Binding and Conservation. The volunteer is also expected to provide on-the-job training and support to

other NLC staff. There will also be opportunities to interact with other library and resource centre institutions and networks within Cambodia, and with volunteers from VSA and elsewhere.

The volunteer will liaise with the VSA Programme Officer in Phnom Penh in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting and personal support.

4. SKILLS EXCHANGE/TRANSFER

The volunteer will provide on-the-job mentoring, advice and the modelling of best practice in enabling NLC staff to improve their skills and knowledge in IT, website development, and library systems.

5. PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Professional

Essential

- Library Qualification or a relevant IT qualification eg. Information Management
- Minimum of two years experience as a Systems Librarian
- Proven experience in updating and maintaining websites using software, particularly experience with Dreamweaver
- Experience in mentoring or on-the-job training of library staff

Desirable

- Reading knowledge of French
- Experience in compilation of Bibliographies
- Cataloguing experience

Personal

Essential

- Self-directed, adaptable and flexible
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Good problem solving skills
- Ability to work with scarce resources
- Willing to work in an environment where only basic English is spoken

Desirable

- Experience of working and living in a different culture, preferably in Asia
- Understanding of issues facing developing countries

6. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and preferably have lived in New Zealand for at least two years.

Partner Organisation

The volunteer's partner organisation will be the National Library of Cambodia (NLC).

Length of Assignment

This assignment is for a period of two years.

Pre-departure briefing

As part of our contract, the volunteer will be required to take part in a pre-departure course run by VSA in Wellington. Dates are indicated in the document titled ***Instructions on Applying for a VSA Assignment*** (downloadable from our website).

Final Appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances, partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the VSA Briefing course.

Family Status

Families with accompanying dependent children can be considered for this assignment.

Vaccination Requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be inoculated, prior to departure, in accordance with the instructions of VSA's medical adviser.

Volunteer Package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

- **Reimbursements and Grants**

1. The volunteer will receive an initial establishment grant of NZ\$1000.
2. The volunteer will receive a rest and recreation grant of NZ\$1000 on completion of the first year of assignment (note this grant applies to a two year assignment only).
3. A resettlement grant of NZ\$250 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on the completion of the assignment.
4. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of US\$500.

- **Accommodation**

For this assignment, basic accommodation will be provided by VSA.

- **Airfares and baggage allowance**

The volunteer will be provided with economy airfares at the beginning and end of the assignment, plus a baggage allowance.

- **Insurance**

VSA will provide insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and medical and additional expenses.

Attachments

Appendix 1. BACKGROUND TO THE ASSIGNMENT

Appendix 2. LIVING AND WORKING SITUATION

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Introduction to Cambodia

Cambodia is in the process of transitioning from a state of reconstruction to development. Economically, Cambodia faces major significant issues. The economy was virtually destroyed by decades of war and is still in slow recovery. For the last decade, foreign aid has consistently been around 20 to 30% of GDP and comprised a majority of the government's development budget.

Cambodia essentially remains a rural economy with approximately 80% of the population living in rural areas. Rural Cambodians are disadvantaged in terms of health, education, income, and access to infrastructure resources compared to their urban counterparts. Girls and women are particularly disadvantaged in terms of maternal mortality, lower school enrolments, literacy, and the labour market. The gender gap begins at school with girls comprising only 46% of children enrolling and only 16.5% expected to graduate from a five year primary education. Only 16% of tertiary students are girls. Women face discrimination in the labour market where they earn 30 to 40% less than men with comparable qualifications.

The National Library of Cambodia (NLC)

Established in 1924 by the French colonial administration, the National Library of Cambodia (NLC) intends to:

- Collect, preserve and provide access to the Nation's documentary heritage
- Provide information and documents to support education, government and research in Cambodia
- Promote public library services and support the work of other libraries
- Coordinate resource-sharing and inter-library loans between all types of libraries in Cambodia

Since its reopening in 1980, after the Khmer Rouge genocide, NLC has struggled to re-establish its services, with few professionally qualified staff and without any budget for the purchase of books or supplies.

On a day-to-day basis, NLC receives a diverse range of support. It has a close relationship with the Department of Books and Reading, Ministry of Culture and Fine Arts, which administers it, and is funded by the French Project Valease, and UNESCO respectively, for the development of its website, new library system, and the National Bibliography of Cambodia. The Cambodian King, foreign embassies, libraries and commercial businesses have been routinely called upon for book donations and other support.

NLC has also received capacity building support from a variety of consultants and volunteers. The French Government's Project Valease has supported the NLC with a consultant to assist the digitisation of old French books and the development of the website, whilst the German government has provided administration support for staff training. NLC has also hosted several volunteers from Australia and New Zealand.

At present, NLC has only one professionally qualified librarian, and a staff with qualifications in document preservation, supported by a VSA Volunteer Library Adviser. The VSA volunteer will complete her extended assignment in May 2009. The NLC staff recognise that they continue to have gaps in their capacity to use IT, library systems and websites in their day-to-day work. They would like to receive follow-on support to administer and further develop the circulation and OPAC modules of the newly installed PMB library system, setting up the National Bibliography of Cambodia and in developing and maintaining the NLC website.

VSA in Cambodia

VSA has worked in Cambodia since 1992, under an umbrella agreement with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which proposed a cross-sectoral community development programme focusing on Kus Commune in Tram Kak District, Takeo Province. Using the Ministry of Education as a focal point, VSA agreed to place volunteers in teacher training, primary health care and agricultural extension assignments.

From 1992 to 1999 volunteers were based in Takeo working to support and improve primary teacher training, community health initiatives, primary school education and agricultural infrastructure at Kus Commune. This involvement drew to a close late in 1999. Starting from 2002, VSA volunteers supported the Takeo Teacher Training College and the Provincial Office of Education, Youth and Sport (PoEYs) in teacher training and administration. A volunteer recently completed a one-year assignment as an Adviser at the Takeo Teacher Training College in February 2008.

The VSA programme in Cambodia is currently undergoing a strategic review. A new five year country programme strategy is being designed with the expectation that VSA will continue to support the education sector, with linkages with Cambodian educational entities at the provincial level in southern Cambodia. VSA's partnership with NLC goes back several years with support for the Library and the Research Department provided. This assignment has been developed to build on the work of the volunteer currently supporting NLC as a Library Adviser.

Appendix 2. LIVING AND WORKING SITUATION

Phnom Penh

The assignment is located in Phnom Penh. Phnom Penh is flat, lush and tropical, noisy and crowded in parts. It is situated beside the Mekong River. Main roads are sealed but many side streets are unpaved. The climate is hot (around 36 degrees most days, rising to 40 degrees in the hot season). There is rain during the monsoon season for part of the day. Travel is predominantly by motorbike taxi which is cheap and readily available. There is a range of public facilities and amenities, such as restaurants, hotels and cultural entertainment venues, however more than occasional use of these is not affordable on the VSA allowance. Exercising at a gym or pool is expensive in Phnom Penh and generally outside the scope of the volunteer allowance.

There are considerable numbers of volunteers in Phnom Penh from British, Australian, Japanese, Swedish and United Nations volunteer sending agencies. The conditions for volunteers vary widely with VSA volunteers receiving an allowance at the middle range of the spectrum. VSA volunteers maintain a standard of living that is good compared with local Khmer, but lower than that enjoyed by other expatriates. The VSA allowance is adequate, provided locally produced and sourced goods and services are used.

Living

Accommodation in Phnom Penh is of a reasonable standard, though rental prices have increased sharply over recent months. Volunteers enjoy self-contained accommodation, usually one to two bedrooms, which may comprise part of a larger house or an apartment or flat. Landlords may frequently live in the part of the property that is not offered for rent. Some older style wooden housing is available, but most rental property is of reinforced concrete with tiled floors and fans. Volunteers are required to cover their own utility costs from their allowance and these costs are highest during the hot season.

It is important for selected volunteers to retain as much of the VSA establishment grant as possible as this will be needed to set up a house in Phnom Penh. Most houses come equipped with basic furniture including beds, tables and usually a fridge. Volunteers are responsible for their own cleaning and cooking arrangements.

VSA volunteers receive 20 days minimum holiday allocation. Most organisations allow a large number of Khmer public holidays to be taken in addition to this. However the volunteer allowance does not provide volunteers with sufficient disposable income for extensive personal travel. Volunteers would need to draw down funds from New Zealand for overseas holidays, frequent western style dining and entertainment. It is possible to eat a good diet of predominantly Khmer food cheaply and a wide range of exotic fruit and vegetables are easily available at markets. Diets of rice, fish, or chicken or pork and vegetables are healthy and affordable.

Working

The volunteer will have a desk within the office of the Director of the NLC, which has both fan and air-conditioning. The volunteer will have access to a computer, the Internet for work purposes, a photocopier, fax, printer, scanner and basic work stationery.

Current staff include:

- A Reference Librarian (who has worked at the library since 1984) in the Patrimonial Section, with cataloguing experience, some IT skills especially in using Windows and Word. The Reference Librarian speaks French and some English
- An experienced cataloguer (who has worked at the library since 1988) and conservator who speaks some English
- One employee who worked initially in administration, conservation and legal deposit, and more recently has been responsible for foreign serials, the ISBN service and conservation. This employee is currently focusing on the ISBN service and conservation.

General Security

Although the situation in Cambodia is calm, volunteers are required to be security conscious and adhere to the advice of their partner organisations and the VSA Cambodia Field Office on security matters. Although it is unlikely that there will be a repeat of past civil instability, VSA now asks volunteers to sign a security protocol as an addendum to their contracts. The protocol provides advice for volunteers to follow in the unlikely event of further political instability and general security guidelines for everyday situations and for travel away from assignment locations. Provided travel advice is followed, there is very little danger to foreign residents travelling within Cambodia. It remains good practice to secure belongings and valuables out of sight and not move about alone at night. In general, foreigners are not targeted but may be assaulted if they resist demands for goods or cash.

Health issues may be a potential risk, although this is more a concern for those volunteers based outside Phnom Penh. Volunteers going to Cambodia should ensure that their health is good. Avoidance of mosquitoes and rigorous attention to personal and food hygiene will protect most people from illness. If there is a major health or security problem, VSA has established evacuations procedures, and volunteers will be fully supported by the field staff in Phnom Penh. The VSA field staff will go through the ground health, emergency, and security measures with the volunteer on arrival in Cambodia.