

VSA E-Volunteer Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Organisational Development Advisor
Country	Tonga
Location of Partner Organisation	Nuku'alofa
Partner Organisation	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry in partnership with the Vanilla Growers' Association of Vava'u
Duration	6 months, part time
Sustainable Development Goals	

41611

1. Partner organisation overview

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (MAFF)

The Ministry's vision and priorities are to pursue development activities that maximise the contribution of the agriculture sector towards sustainable economic growth and food security.

Addressing these issues in practice is the focus of MAFF's work as it implements the following four work programmes:

1. A climate resilient environment.
This can be considered as a "protective outer reef, or shell" which acts to ensure that Tonga's key natural resources (healthy soils, secure and sustainable water supply, diverse farming systems, and adaptive communities) are preserved, with a focus on building knowledge of the underlying environmental conditions that are required to support the development of climate-resilient agriculture.
2. An enabling environment.
This focuses on improving the environment in which Tonga's agriculture sector operates (governance, regulations and compliance, service delivery, quarantine, finance, etc.).
3. Sustainable Livelihoods and Healthy Foods.
This focuses on improved farmers' knowledge, and technologies for climate-resilient and diversified crop and livestock production, along with the marketing of these products.
4. Sustainable Growth and Foreign Exchange Earnings.
This focuses on increased exports, as well as greater import replacement

The Vanilla Growers Association of Vava'u

Vava'u is a group of more than 40 islands, part of the South Pacific Island nation of Tonga.

The Vanilla Growers Association of Vava'u (VGA) was established in 2013.

Its purpose is to develop a sustainable vanilla industry that minimises the risks for growers by securing profitable markets for generations of vanilla growers to come.

VGA focuses on the long-term viability, growth, development and sustainability of the vanilla industry in Vava'u, supporting and encouraging vanilla growers to continually improve their vanilla plantations.

VGA works in partnership with MAFF Tonga, the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research, and the New Zealand Aid Programme's Vanilla Project, to monitor vanilla crop progress on a regular basis and support farmers to develop world class vanilla produce using global best practice methods.



2. Assignment overview

While active in the early stages of establishment, several years without vanilla production and the loss of key personnel has resulted in the Vanilla Growers' Association losing momentum and direction.

The association is working hard to resume its activities.

A key challenge to the stability of the Association is its organisational systems and processes and building the capacity of staff to address certification/compliance (Fairtrade) requirements and to manage record keeping.

A VSA volunteer will work alongside the VGA staff to assist them to manage the requirements of Fairtrade certification (compliance-based documents), and the day-to-day running of the organisation. Key capacity improvement activities for the manager include:

- Improving computer literacy
- Improving understanding of the requirements of certification
- Improving financial record keeping
- Record keeping and database management

This assignment forms part of a wider VSA commitment to supporting vanilla production in Vava'u, alongside the Tonga Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, the New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research, and the New Zealand Aid Programme's Vanilla Project.

3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

Goal

The Vanilla Growers' Association of Vava'u has the internal capacity to drive organisational growth, with staff who are confident and competent in their roles and responsibilities.

Outcome 1

VGA staff have the confidence and skills to carry out core responsibilities and to conduct compliance and business requirements.

Alongside current staff and Fairtrade ANZ:

- Assess the current level of skills and knowledge amongst VGA staff in areas relating to compliance and business requirements
- Identify gaps and make recommendations regarding the necessary training and mentoring to address those gaps
- Support the Manager to provide training for staff in business responsibilities and compliance

Outcome 2

VGA has improved record keeping systems and processes.

Alongside current staff:

- Assess the current record keeping practices of VGA
- Identify gaps and make recommendations regarding the necessary record keeping practices to address those gaps
- Develop and produce a record keeping systems and processes manual
- Provide coaching and mentoring for staff in working with the new systems and processes
- Provide ongoing mentoring and advice to staff who will be engaging with the record keeping systems and processes



Outcome 3

VGA staff are supported to manage systems, processes and business and compliance requirements.

- Provide ongoing mentoring and advice to staff who will be engaging with business and compliance requirements

4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

Capacity building will be achieved through one-to-one mentoring with key staff, which will also strengthen the experience of VGA members.

The volunteer will report directly to, and be accountable to, the manager of VGA.

On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominately work with the manager and identified board members.

As Fairtrade ANZ have been instrumental in supporting VGA and this assignment, they are also available to the volunteer for any assistance or clarification the volunteer may require.

The volunteer, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry, and the Vanilla Growers' Association will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA programme manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice, and personal support.

As needs on the ground may change over time, the volunteer is encouraged to review and update the Assignment Description in consultation with the partner organisation and VSA Programme Manager. By their very nature, development situations can involve significant change, so it is advisable that the volunteer periodically review and reflect on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection criteria/position requirements

Person specifications (professional)

Essential

- Experience developing operational policies and processes
- Organisational development experience
- Strong communication, administration, and organisational skills
- Experience mentoring and training staff
- High attention to detail and accuracy

Desirable

- Experience in supporting agricultural cooperatives or SME's
- Knowledge of supply chains and export requirements
- Experience with remote data collection apps (e.g. koBo humanitarian toolbox)

Personal specification (personal)

Essential

- Creativity
- Patience



- Strong interpersonal skills

6. VSA Essential Attributes

- Commitment to volunteering, to VSA and to the partner organisation
- Cross cultural awareness
- Adaptability and a willingness to approach change or newness positively
- Able to form good relationships, both personally and professionally, with work colleagues and in the community
- Resilience and an ability to manage setbacks
- Initiative and resourcefulness
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange

7. Country Context

For more information about Tonga see vsa.org.nz/about-vsa/countryregion/tonga

Additional information

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status, and currently living in NZ.

Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory VSA clearances, and partner organisation acceptance.

Children's Act

VSA is committed to the protection of vulnerable children and adults, which also includes meeting our commitment under the Children's Act 2014.

The information requested during the application process is necessary to assist VSA to determine applicant suitability to work and/or interact regularly with children and is part of a series of pre-selection checks undertaken on all applicants for VSA assignments.

E-Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

Reimbursements

Volunteers will receive a monthly honorarium of NZ\$90 for a part-time assignment. This amount is expected to reimburse the volunteer for costs associated with undertaking the assignment.

Final terms and conditions relating to the specific volunteer assignment will be confirmed in a personalised volunteer contract.

