

# VSA Assignment Description

<b>Assignment Title</b>	Policy Adviser
<b>Country</b>	Samoa
<b>Location of Partner Organisation</b>	Upolu Island
<b>Partner Organisation</b>	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
<b>Duration</b>	1 year (review for extension)
<b>Sustainable Development Goals</b>	



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## 1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries' role and functions are mandated under the authority found in at least 9 Acts of Parliament and related regulations. Given the diverse nature of the Ministry's role and functions in a continuously changing environment, the legislation(s) serve to:

- Facilitate the development of subsistence and commercial agriculture and fisheries
- Promote conservation and development of natural resources, plant and animal genetic diversity
- Regulate and control fishing practices
- Regulate and control the movement and spread of pests and diseases that could cause significant damage to human beings, animals, plants, other aspects of the environment and economic activities
- Regulate and control pesticides
- Issue licenses and grant permits
- Provide policy advice to the Minister
- Conduct wide stakeholder consultation

The Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP) 2016 – 2020 is under review as Covid19 impacts and change of government last year, caused significant delays. This key document provides the framework to guide coherent programs and actions from key stakeholders to achieve the goal of increased food, nutrition and income security in Samoa. A primary aim of the plan is to strengthen government partnerships, particularly with the private sector, Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) and development partners, to leverage agriculture's potential to promote enhanced health, prosperity, job creation and resilience. Successful implementation of the plan will contribute to achieving the national vision of improved quality of life for all and to advancing Samoa's attainment of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

MAF's current strategy focuses on:

1. Sector coordination improved and investment in food security and inclusive commercial agriculture and fisheries production systems increased
2. An increased supply and consumption of competitively priced domestically produced food
3. A sustained increase in production, productivity, product quality, value adding and marketing of agriculture and fisheries products
4. Sustainable agricultural and fisheries resource management practices in place and climate resilience and disaster relief efforts strengthened.



## 2. Assignment Overview

The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has identified the need for support in the identification of policy issues and the formulation of evidence-based policies to guide and support the development of the agriculture and fisheries sector and in the developing of specific sub-sector policies (e.g. crops, livestock and fisheries). The provision of a volunteer for this assignment will help enable better understanding and bigger confidence of the staff members in developing policies/strategies relevant to sector. Currently, in-country trainings on policy areas coordinated by the Samoa Public Service Commission are insufficient to build capacity for the Policy and Planning staff of MAF. Therefore, hands-on application and guidance on how-to is required to actively build the capabilities of the staff.

## 3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

### Goal

The Policy, Planning and Communication Division (PPCD) at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF) has increased their capacity to create and monitor strategy, policy and procedures; showcased through a range of new, evidence-based agricultural and fisheries policies in place to deliver the Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP).

### Outcome 1

Improved PPCD staff capability in developing and analysing evidence-based policies within MAF

- Provide training for PPCD staff on;
  - policy identification
  - policy development and analysis
- Produce a Policy and Procedures Manual for guidance in the identification, analysis and development of policies.

### Outcome 2

Using a sector-wide perspective and an inclusive participatory approach, review and revise where necessary cross-sectoral policies.

- Review cross sectoral policies outlined in the current Agricultural Sector Plan
- Recommend changes for consideration

### Outcome 3

Staff at MAF are trained in how to use new agricultural and fisheries policies to delivery the Agricultural Sector Plan and implementation is actively monitored.

- In partnership with MAF, establish a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for the Agricultural Sector Plan
- Establish tools for new staff to learn about the policies relevant to them, and how they can use and deliver them

## 4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

The volunteer will report directly to Taimalietane (Tai) Matatumua – ACEO of the Policy Division and will be accountable to the CEO David Hunter. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominately work with the 3 Senior Policy Officers & Principal Policy Officers, and secondarily with the Principal Officers of the relevant divisions in the ministry.

The volunteer and PO will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA Programme Manager and Country Programme Co-ordinator 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 on arrival 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

- A degree in Agriculture, Agribusiness, Economics or a related field
- Proven experience in reviewing, analysing and developing agricultural policies
- Demonstrated ability to undertake research and provide recommendations to develop/support policies for agricultural development)
- Strong verbal and written communication skills

#### Desirable

- Experience in facilitating studies such as surveys and questionnaires
- Experience in engaging with a wide variety of stakeholders
- Familiar with Microsoft software

### Personal specification (personal)

#### Essential

- Ability to communicate clearly and effectively through many mediums (email, verbally, training, etc)
- Eager and willing to add to the existing knowledge base and skills of the PPCD staff
- Demonstrate ability to undertake applied economic research /studies and identify policy issues concerning the agriculture and fisheries sector
- Ability to work with confidence and in harmony (team work) with all MAF staff
- Be determined to achieve the assignment goals and perform to the best of his/her ability

#### Desirable

- Demonstrated ability to assist in the preparation of policy briefs to the CEO/Minister of MAF as requested
- Trustworthy to work professionally to meet the assignment objective(s)
- Determination to go the extra mile in order to achieve what needs to be done

## 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
- An ability to facilitate learning through skills exchange



## 7. Country Context

For more information about Samoa, see;

- [VSA in Samoa.](#)
- Samoan government website: <http://www.samoagovt.ws/>
- Economic overview: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/samoa>
- New Zealand Aid Programme in Samoa: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/aid-and-development/our-work-in-the-pacific/aid-partnership-with-samoa/>

### Additional information

#### Residency status

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

#### Pre-departure briefing

As part of the volunteer's contract, successful candidates will be required to take part in a pre-departure briefing course run by VSA in Wellington and complete all required pre-reading.

#### Final appointment

Final appointment will be subject to satisfactory medical and immigration clearances (costs covered by VSA), partner organisation acceptance, and successful completion of the pre-departure briefing course.

#### Family status

VSA supports partners to accompany volunteers on assignments of six months or longer. However volunteers with accompanying dependents will not be considered for this assignment.

#### Fundraising

Volunteers are encouraged to fundraise at least \$1000 with the support of VSA's fundraising team. Accompanying partners are encouraged to raise the same amount. All funds raised will help VSA keep its programmes in action and support future volunteers.

#### 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. VSA covers the cost of any required vaccinations.

#### Children's Act

While on assignment, VSA volunteers may be required to work with children and/or may choose to participate in informal activities in their own time that involve interactions with children (such as coaching teams or teaching English). 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.

#### Volunteer package

The volunteer's package includes the following:

##### *Reimbursements and grants*

1. Volunteers will receive an establishment grant of NZ\$750 to help them set up in their country of assignment. For volunteers with an accompanying partner (whether or not that partner is also a VSA volunteer), VSA will pay an establishment grant of NZ\$1100 per couple.



2. A resettlement grant of NZ\$200 will be paid for each month the volunteer is on assignment. This is payable on completion of the assignment.
3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of \$1800 SAT.

#### *Accommodation*

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. In some circumstances volunteers may be asked to share accommodation.

#### *Airfares and baggage allowance*

VSA will provide the volunteer with economy airfares to and from New Zealand for their assignment plus a baggage allowance.

#### *Insurance*

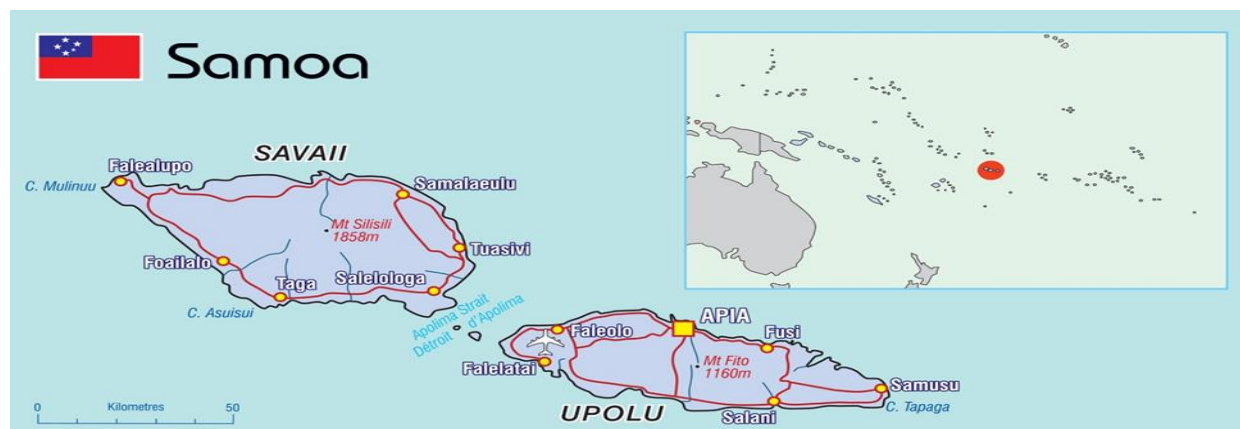
VSA will provide travel insurance to cover baggage and personal property, and non-routine medical expenses for the duration of the assignment. Further details of the insurance cover will be provided during the volunteer pre-departure briefing.

#### *Utilities*

VSA will reimburse volunteers reasonable expenses for household utilities while on assignment.

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

### **Additional Information on Samoa**



Migrants from Southeast Asia arrived in the Samoan islands more than 2,000 years ago, and from there settled the rest of Polynesia further to the east. Contact with Europeans began in the early 1700s but did not intensify until the arrival of English missionaries and traders in the 1830s. At the turn of the 20th century, the Samoan islands were split into two sections. The eastern islands became territories of the United States in 1904, and today are known as American Samoa.

The western islands became known as Western Samoa (now the Independent State of Samoa), passing from German control to New Zealand in 1914. New Zealand administered Western Samoa under the auspices of the League of Nations and then as a UN trusteeship until independence on the 1st January 1962 (celebrated on 1st June every year). Western Samoa was the first Pacific Island country to gain its independence. Samoa celebrated 60 years of Independence in June 2022.

In July 1997, the Constitution was amended to change the country's name from Western Samoa to Samoa (officially the "Independent State of Samoa").



Western Samoa had been known simply as Samoa in the United Nations, since joining the organisation in 1976. Samoa graduated from a least developed country to a developing country in 2014. This upgrade in status had been delayed for some years after the devastating tsunami in 2009.

Since independence, Samoa has operated on a British based parliamentary system, which has been revised to accommodate local customs. Each village is comprised of extended families headed by a chief called a matai. In 1990, universal suffrage was adopted but up until then only matai were allowed to vote in elections. Matai (who can be male or female) represent the family on the village council. As this council is responsible for law enforcement in their village, discord can occur between the traditional system and the western system which is followed by national government.

The Fa'a Samoa, or traditional Samoan way, remains a strong force in Samoan life and politics. Despite centuries of European influence, Samoa maintains its historical customs, social systems, and language, which is believed to be the oldest form of Polynesian speech still in existence. Christianity has been incorporated into Samoan tradition since the early 19th Century and forms an important and strong part of daily life.

Samoa has traditionally been dependent on agriculture and fisheries, but once-significant export crops of bananas and taro have declined in volume and value with overseas aid and remittances becoming more important as mainstays in the economy. Samoa has a large trade deficit. Tourism is the largest single activity, more than doubling in visitor numbers and revenue over the last decade and accounts for 25% of the GDP, prior to Covid19. A large proportion of the population is employed informally and works in subsistence agriculture or low-level commercial ventures. Over the years and more significantly since the pandemic, there has been a marked increase in the number of seasonal workers to NZ and Australia as people look outside for opportunities to financially support their families.

## **Apia - Living Situation**

Samoa's capital Apia is situated 14 degrees south of the equator on the main island of Upolu. It has a population of around 40,000 people with public transport being supplied by buses and taxis. Apia is a relaxed, safe town to live in with a wide range of recreational and sporting facilities available and a varied cultural and nightlife.

The Apia CBD has the usual amenities to service the local people: a post office, banking services with ATMs that accept international bankcards, cafes and restaurant. It is also serviced by an international airport at Faleolo (a 40 to 50 minute drive from the CBD). Apia is surrounded by many small-urbanised villages spreading west down the coast.

The climate is warm all the year round with a hotter, wetter season occurring from November to April. Drier and comparatively cooler weather occurs in the remaining months. The temperatures range from 20 to 38C, depending on the time of year and location. The windward shores of Samoa get about 5000mm of rain each year but the capital, Apia, receives only about 2900mm. Samoa lies squarely in the notorious cyclone belt of the South Pacific and has received a number of devastating blows over the years.

The national hospital in Apia is well equipped to deal with tropical diseases and minor injuries; however, you cannot expect to find the equivalent equipment and expertise that is available in New Zealand.

VSA will provide the volunteer with a furnished house located in Apia. The house will have 24-hour electricity, running water, an indoor bathroom and cooking facilities.



## Work Situation

The volunteer will be based at the Quarantine Office at Matautu-Tai in the CBD. Wired internet is available and WiFi option can be made available upon request to our MAF IT section. The office is located at the main Apia wharf and is in close proximity to other government agencies, shipping agencies and restaurants are nearby. Transport is provided only for our teams working at the Faleolo airport. There is a bus service on the main Cross Island Road however, the office vehicle can pick up and drop off if necessary. There is a taxi service right outside the office and other taxi operators can easily be accessed. Taxi fare to town from the Quarantine office is SAT \$5.00.

Walking to and from the main office is usually safe during the daylight hours. It is fairly safe to walk the streets as in the early evening as restaurants are along the way however it may not be safe later on into the night as this area also has night clubs along the way and rowdy drunkards and street vendors. The office does not have a night watchman but it is fenced and secure with the security for the Samoa Ports Authority nearby.

## VSA in Samoa

VSA's association with Samoa dates back to 1963, when its first volunteer took up an assignment in Apia. Assignments were initially focused primarily on education. In 2012, VSA began resending volunteers, who work in areas such as agriculture, small business development, tourism and special education. The Samoa programme has an in-country office with a Programme Manager who oversees the local programme, assisted by a Programme Co-ordinator who will support the volunteers during their assignments.

## General Security

Volunteers are required to be security conscious and adhere to the advice of their partner organisations, VSA, and the NZ High Commission in Apia on security matters. If there is a major emergency, or should security deteriorate, VSA has established emergency procedures and volunteers will be fully supported by staff in Apia and Wellington. The VSA field staff will go through the ground security measures with the volunteer on arrival in country and develop an individual security plan.

