

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Advocacy Mentor
Country	Solomon Islands
Location	Honiara
Partner Organisation	Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions
Duration	12 Months
Sustainable Development Goals	

41758

1. Partner organisation overview

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) is responsible to maintain a safe and just Solomon Islands supported by a constitutionally independent public prosecutions service under the rule of law to deliver an independent, fair and effective prosecution service. The main functions of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions are executive management, prosecution services, sector strengthening and reform, and prosecution for “*stretim pipol lo place.*”

The ODPP provides legal advice to the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force and all Solomon Islands Government ministries. Regarding prosecutions, the ODDP works in the Court of Appeal, High Courts, Magistrate Court, and Provincial Courts. Their cases include general crime; family-related crimes such as domestic violence; sexual offences; corruption, fraud, and all economic crimes; and offences under the penal code and other legislations. On behalf of the people of Solomon Islands they undertake prosecutions for other ministries. The ODPP also provides legal awareness and education about their office and the laws of the country.

2. Assignment overview

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has a mix of experienced and inexperienced lawyers who provide legal assistance for those seeking redress within the Solomon Islands. While most senior prosecutors have gained experience and skills in how to effectively advocate for their clients, the younger and more junior lawyers do not have that. And unfortunately, due to the heavy workload carried by each lawyer, there is insufficient time for experienced lawyers to mentor junior ones in advocacy. The challenge for the Office of the DPP is finding someone with the skills, experience, and knowledge in advocacy to support lawyers who need these. A VSA volunteer could support the lawyers who need these skills.

A volunteer is being sought to support lawyers who need mentoring and coaching in advocacy. Working alongside team leaders, the volunteer will support with identifying gaps in skills and knowledge of advocacy and find ways to support lawyers.



3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

Goal

Lawyers from the Office of the DPP are advocating effectively for their clients.

Outcome 1

The Office of the DPP understands current barriers to effective advocacy for their clients.

- Work alongside lawyers to understand their process for preparing for court cases;
- Review notes from court proceedings to understand level of advocacy by lawyers;
- Attend court hearings with lawyers to observe their work; and
- Write report with recommendations on what could be done to increase skills and knowledge in advocacy and plans to be put in place for training of lawyers as they start work.

Outcome 2

Lawyers at the Office of the DPP have improved skills and confidence in advocacy.
Working alongside team leaders;

- Develop a training and development programme for lawyers;
- Develop training resources to be used for inhouse training in advocacy;
- Develop and deliver internal training and development programmes in response to skills gaps identified;
- Support ongoing mentoring of lawyers.

Outcome 3

Clients of the Office of the DPP are well-served in court.
Working alongside lawyers;

- Support lawyers in their preparations for court hearings;
- Attend court hearings and provide feedback to lawyers.

4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

The Advocacy Mentor will work with the ODPP staff team, in a manner that supports shared learning in advocacy. They will report directly to the Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions.

The volunteer will design and deliver initiatives that support ongoing learning, mentoring and coaching to relevant staff as agreed to with team leaders.

The volunteer and the ODPP 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 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

- LLB
- Current practicing certificate
- Experience in both defending and prosecuting cases in District and High court
- Experience as an advocate
- Understanding of judicial standards
- The ability to analyse files and direct further enquiries and preparation
- Experience drafting court applications and submissions to a high standard
- Experience providing legal training to colleagues
- The ability to work in low-resource environments
- The ability to work alongside lawyers some of who struggle to use analytical skills
- Experience in prosecuting homicide, sexual offences and corruption

Person specifications (personal)

Essential

- Willingness to learn pijin.
- Ability to work with people from different backgrounds and culture.
- Flexible and comfortable with ambiguity.
- Great negotiation skills.
- Self-motivation, enthusiasm and results-focussed.
- Pragmatic and solution-oriented.
- Committed to high standards and continuous improvement.
- Ability to move between big picture and detail.

Desirable

- Flexibility
- Experience living and working in a Melanesian country/low resource setting
- Commitment to empowerment of local people

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.

6. Living Situation

Honiara is the business centre of Solomon Islands and as such is a melting pot for people from all the island groups that make up the diverse nation. A hot and dusty place, Honiara



offers most facilities albeit in a rudimentary form. You are strongly encouraged to build relationships in the local community and socialise with Solomon Islanders at every opportunity, as this will enrich your experience of living in Solomons. However, entertainment options are few and far between so there is also a very active expatriate social scene. There are various clubs and social groups in Honiara, which you will get to know with time.

VSA will provide basic, furnished accommodation with gas facilities for cooking. In Honiara, you will have access to power (although power outages can occur), phone, internet, piped water, restaurants, a variety of shops and a large expatriate population. Public transport is very cheap within Honiara. The local bus service is provided by a plethora of vans, and some larger buses. A single fare of SBD3 applies, regardless of the length of the trip. Taxis charge a moderate fare (currently SBD10 per kilometre) but it is wise to establish a fare before commencing a journey.

Most volunteers feel safe in Solomon Islands, but it is important to know the risks and take personal responsibility for your safety. As in many countries, foreigners tend to be the target of petty crime, so always be alert and take precautions. In general, there are no problems moving around the majority of Honiara during the day, but it is not safe to walk or catch public transport alone in Honiara after dark.

For more information, see <https://vsa.org.nz/what-we-do/countryregion/solomon-islands/>.

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 that partner is also a VSA volunteer), VSA will pay an establishment grant of NZ\$1,100 per couple.
2. For two-year assignments, the volunteer will receive a rest and respite grant of NZ\$1000 on completion of the first year.
3. 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.
4. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of SBD 7,000.

Accommodation

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA. For security purposes volunteers in Honiara should expect 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 prior to departure.

