


VSA Assignment Description

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| Assignment Title | Management and Governance Mentor |
| Assignment Modality | Standard |
| Assignment Number | 42175 |
| Country | Solomon Islands |
| Location | Gizo, Western Province |
| Partner Organisation | Mabuzu Rural Training Centre |
| Duration | 12 months |
| Sustainable Development Goals |  |

1. Partner Organisation Overview

Mabuzu Training Centre is a vocational skills centre that was established in 2012. It is registered as an education provider under the western provincial authority. Currently the centre has about 60 students who are aged between 10 and about 35 years of age. The training centre was founded to address a need for vocational training for young people who drop out of school or who would like to learn a trade.

The centre uses process-based curriculum where the way education is delivered is the focus. Students at the centre are mostly young people who dropped out of school or were not able to attend school for a variety of reasons. The subjects taught include plumbing, carpentry and home economics. Students who can afford it are able to go on to do further studies, apply to do seasonal work, or start their own contracting business.

The management at Mabuzu Training Centre are finding it challenging to operate in a manner that results in the school having sound management practices in place. They would like to enhance their skills in school leadership so that the school is run in a more professional way ensuring that there are sound financial systems and processes in place. The skills to prepare basic project proposals and tender documents are basic. The skills at governance level are also basic and the board would like to improve their skills in this area.

2. Assignment Overview

A VSA volunteer is being sought to support staff and the board to understand their roles and what they need to do to succeed in their planned activities. The volunteer could provide coaching and mentoring to school leader and put in place policies and procedures that guide decision making and organisation effectiveness.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

Mabuzu staff and Board understand the steps they can take to become a strong organisation and are making good decisions.

Outcome 1

Mabuzu staff and Board understand the steps they can take to become a strong organisation and are making good decisions.

Working alongside staff:

- Gain an understanding of the current governance and management arrangements of Mabuzu;
- Spend time observing staff and board practices;
- Workshop and discuss ideas of what the organisation needs to grow; and
- Provide a written report with recommendations to the board and staff on steps they can consider taking to help strengthen the organisation.

Outcome 2

Mabuzu has a strong board and has a strategy to follow.

- Conduct an audit of skills on the board;
- Provide training and mentoring to board members on appropriate governance practices; and
- Work with board and staff to develop a three-year strategic plan.

Outcome 3

Mabuzu has sound administration and management practice systems, processes and procedures in place.

- Train, mentor and coach Mabuzu staff and board members on good management practices;
- Establish sound administration and financial management systems, processes and procedures and train staff in these;
- Work alongside staff to ensure that all legal and administrative systems are being followed, identifying any further areas for improvement and training; and
- Work with staff and the board to re-establish and strengthen relationships and partnerships with development partners.

Outcome 4

- Provide ongoing coaching and mentoring to staff and board members; and
- Provide additional capacity development as needs are identified.

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The volunteer will work with the management team to assess skills and expertise of current staff and provide capacity development as required. This may include training, coaching and mentoring. The volunteer will also work with the board to increase their capacity. Workshops and mentoring may be appropriate in this case.

The volunteer will report directly to the principal and will be accountable to the Board Chairperson. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominately work with the Management team and staff.

The volunteer and Mabuzu Rural Training Centre 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 reviews and reflects on the Assignment Description throughout the Assignment to ensure the best development outcomes are being achieved.

5. Selection Criteria/Position Requirements

Professional Specifications

Essential

- At least two years' experience in management and administration at mid-level
- At least two years' experience working in a leadership role
- Prior experience in financial management
- Sound understanding of the role of governance and how boards work

Desirable

- Experience working in vocational skills centre
- Experience mentoring and coaching colleagues at senior level
- Experience in policy development
- Experience in or familiarity with facilitating workshops/trainings
- Ability to find no- to low-cost solutions

Personal Specifications

Essential

- Willing to learn and speak Solomon Islands Pidgin
- Ability to live and work in an environment where internet services are unreliable
- Friendly and be able to cope with living in rural areas
- Be willing to travel by fibreglass boats with outboard motors
- Be able to cope with the SI weather
- Flexible and creative
- Results-oriented

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. Living and Working 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. The main international airport is in Honiara.

Gizo is the capital of Western Province and is the second largest town in Solomon Islands. It is located on Ghizo Island and is west-north-west of Honiara. It is a five-minute boat ride from Nusatupe where the airplane landing strip is located.

Gizo has a population of just over 7,000 residents. It is a tourism centre with diving and surfing being popular activities. There is a thriving market where you can buy fresh fruit, vegetables and seafood every day. 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 Solomon Islands.

VSA will provide basic, furnished accommodation with gas facilities for cooking. You will have access to power (although power outages can occur), phone, internet, piped water, a few restaurants, a few shops and a few expatriates. Public transport is relatively cheap.

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 in Gizo.

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. The volunteer may be entitled to an establishment grant to help them set up in their country of assignment, and a location grant for rest and recuperation (R & R) purposes. These grants depend on the length and location of the assignment. The volunteer's contract will specify any grant entitlements.
2. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of SBD 7,500.

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.