


VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Business, Governance & Organisational Development Advisor
Assignment Modality	Blended Modality
Assignment Number	42162
Country	Samoa
Location	Upolu
Partner Organisation	Samoa Farmers Association
Duration	12 months (with the option to extend)
Sustainable Development Goals	

1. Partner Organisation Overview

The Samoa Farmers Association (SFA) was initially established in 2006 as the Samoa Crops Cooperation Association (SCCA). Later, the name of the Association was changed to the Samoa Farmers Association to correctly reflect the spread of its membership and farming interests. SFA is Samoa's largest farmer organisation with over 1000 members, 300 of whom are active members across both Upolu and Savai'i. SFA is a member of the wider Pacific Island Farmers Organisation network (PIFON).

SFA exists to empower Samoa farmers, enhance agricultural sustainability, and cultivate a prosperous future for our nation. SFA is committed to promoting the welfare and success of our agricultural community. SFA's core business is helping commercially orientated smallholder farmers to grow their businesses. This is achieved by providing access to key services, inputs, and technical expertise.

2. Assignment Overview

SFA's core business is helping commercially orientated smallholder farmers to grow their business, which is achieved by providing access to key services, inputs, and technical expertise. This VSA assignment builds on the initial investment made by VSA and the Tindall Foundation to explore the barriers to farmers' production and identify means to support production and remove barriers. Following extensive collaborations and research, SFA is set to establish the farm equipment hire business. It has been identified as an effective and impactful long-term strategy for SFA to both support the goals of the organisation, while also creating a revenue stream that can then be invested back into the support provided to farmers.

SFA's biggest challenge is to try to increase production levels for its Samoan farmer members. The main limiting factor for production is a lack of access to agricultural equipment/machinery to convert unproductive land into continuous, viable horticulture operations. Farmers have land but cannot utilise it to maximise its potential. This challenge has also been exacerbated by the reduction of farm workers from labour mobility schemes such as RSE. The plan is for SFA to establish a farm machinery hire business, which would be aligned with the association but operate as a separate business. The business will lend equipment to SFA farmers for a discounted fee.

Members will also be trained in the operation of the machinery. Non-SFA farmers will also have access to the equipment, though they will be paying full commercial fees for hire.

This volunteer assignment will assist SFA in establishing the business and provide mentoring and advice to a working governance group set to lead the initiative in its first year. The volunteer will be an active member of the governance group for the duration of the establishment phase.

3. Goal/Outcomes/Outputs

Goal

Support the Samoa Farmers Association (SFA) Board and Pasifika Hire Governance Working Group to: Establish a Samoa-registered farm equipment hire business, affiliated with, operated by, and for the benefit of SFA and its members.

Outcome 1

Mentor and work alongside the Working Group to develop and implement a business development plan for SFA's Pasifika Hire business.

Remote Volunteering:

- Meet weekly with the Working Group (online).
- Assist in the development of a Project Plan for the establishment phase (12 months).
- Assist in the development of the Business Plan.
- Provide advice and mentoring as required to support implementation of the plan.
- Connect and enable collaboration between SFA and relevant NZ organisations to support the implementation of the Business Plan.

In-country Volunteering:

- With the Working Group, attend meetings with key stakeholders in Samoa to garner support for the initiative and ensure alignment and complementarity with other government investments and plans.
- Meet with farmers to monitor the implementation of the Plan and its impact on the ground.

Outcome 2

Pasifika Hire is a fully operational, registered business in Samoa.

Remote and in-country:

- Support the Working Group through the registration process with the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour (MCIL).
- Capacity building - provide advice and mentoring as required.

Outcome 3

Farmers increase in skills, knowledge, and access to machinery, enabling an increase in production on their land.

Remote Volunteering:

- Work with counterparts to identify key horticulture training needs of farmers. Develop a Professional Development/training plan. This will be a sub-section of the Project Plan.
- Identify specific training needs for machine operators and mechanics that could be sourced locally. If they cannot be sourced locally, explore resourcing needed from NZ.
- Work with counterparts to develop a machinery use and maintenance training programme.
- Provide advice, mentoring, and support to farmers who can connect remotely.

In-country Volunteering:

- Arrange, and where within scope, deliver training to key SFA staff that will champion the training of other farmers using a 'train the trainer' model. This will cover both horticulture practices for farmers and machinery-related training for use and maintenance.

- During the visit, identify key areas in the horticulture space that could be further strengthened.
- Tailor the training programme (remotely) to be delivered on the next visit.

4. Reporting, Working Relationships and Capacity Building

The capacity and capability building and strengthening will take place through a variety of activities, both through online interactions and in the field. These include training sessions (with farmers or SFA Board members), hands-on experience in the field, mentoring and working with the working Group to complete set tasks, coaching, collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the sharing of experiences, best practices (from Samoa and New Zealand), and lessons learned.

Capacity building will take place at the organisational and governance level with the SFA Board and members (farmers). The outcome of the Assignment will be the establishment of a viable Samoan-based equipment hire business. The impact of the initiative will be an increase in productivity, commercial viability, export ability (mainly for Taro), and a better economic outlook for farmers. Increasing local production will also positively impact the local market, which has seen an increase in the price of staple root crops, coconut, and vegetables, because of a decrease in local production of certain food crops in recent years.

The proposed VSA Assignment will support SFA achieve its goal of establishing and operating the hire business in several ways:

1. ***Provide governance mentoring and support.*** VSA Volunteer will be part of the working Governance group at the establishment phase of Pasifika Hire. He/she will also be the group's secretary. The group meets weekly.
2. ***Connect SFA with NZ organisations supporting SFA goals and initiatives.*** The Volunteer Assignment will see SFA connecting with NZ businesses and organisations that can support the Pasifika Hire establishment and roll out directly, (such as the Hire Industry Association NZ (HIANZ) and The Tindall Foundation (TTF), as well as enabling skills exchange and, technical expertise and resources from New Zealand to support farmers practices as they work to raise productivity.
3. ***Expertise in horticulture and agriculture practices.*** The VSA Volunteer on this Assignment will be a horticulture expert. Through his/her engagement at the governance level, as well as interaction with farmers directly when in-country, he/she will contribute to the enrichment and adaptation of farming practices to positively impact crop management, yields and quality of produce.
4. ***Training on the use and maintenance of farm machinery.*** The Assignment will enable work with HIANZ, first to source and import machinery, and then to establish a professional development programme for SFA members, ideally through the VSA process and additional volunteer support.

The volunteer will report directly to the Deputy Chair of the Samoan Farmers Association (SFA) Board and will be accountable to the Chair of the SFA Board. On a day-to-day basis, the volunteer will predominantly work with the SFA Board, selected members, and key stakeholders such as the Hire Industry Association NZ and The Tindall Foundation.

The volunteer and SFA 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 the 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

- Highly experienced in Business, Governance, and Organisational Development.
- Project Management / Coordination experience (preferably in the Pacific context).
- A qualification in Horticulture, Agri-business, or a related field.
- A good grasp of the agricultural landscape and context in Samoa.
- Relevant work experience in agriculture-related enterprises or projects.
- Ability to provide both online and hands-on coaching and mentoring.
- Experience developing and delivering training programmes in a variety of settings (online / in person, formal and non-formal) and audiences.
- Excellent presentation and communication skills, with the ability to engage and inspire.

Personal Specifications

Essential

- A positive can-do attitude, supportive and understanding.
- Resourceful and sound problem-solving skills.
- Excellent relationship management skills (ability to relate well to people from different backgrounds and cultures).
- Strong organisational and time management skills.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team.
- Ability to work collegially and collaboratively.
- Patient and flexible.


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 Samoa, see [VSA in Samoa](#)

Refer also to the following links for greater context;

- Untold History of Samoa: [Untold Pacific History | Episode 3: Samoa - NZ's Colonisation of Samoa & the Mau Movement | RNZ - Bing video](#)
- New Zealand Aid Programme in Samoa: [MFAT NZ & Samoa-4YP.pdf](#)
- Samoa Government Website: [Government of Samoa \(samoagovt.ws\)](#)
- Samoa Tourism Authority: [Samoa Tourism Authority - Corporate Website](#)
- Pocket Guide of Samoa: [A Brief History of Samoa](#)  - [Samoa Pocket Guide](#)
- Samoa Pocket Guide: [Samoa Pocket Guide - Samoa's #1 Travel Guide](#)
- Beautiful Samoa: [Uncover the History of Beautiful Samoa | Samoa Tourism](#)

8. Living and Working Situation

The VSA Samoa office will source basic, safe, and comfortable furnished accommodation before the volunteer arrives in the country. On rare occasions, the volunteers may be asked to share accommodation. This can be discussed more when the volunteer has been selected and has initial contact with the Programme Manager and Country Coordinator.

The Volunteer will have two locations to work from, as well as spend time in the field. The first SFA office is near USP Alafua Camps. This location is easy to reach with a short taxi ride and is quite central. Only 5-10 minutes away from central Apia.

The second office on premises where the Pasifika hire business will operate from during the first year of its setup (at Tofilau's farm). This location is a little further inland and will require either a taxi or an SFA member to shuttle the volunteer. SFA will ensure that there is always transport available or arranged for the volunteer to commute between his/her destination/s.

SFA will ensure that the volunteer has a safe, secure, and comfortable workspace, which includes: a desk and office chair, a computer screen to connect the laptop to (preferably), and internet access.

The SFA office is equipped with all necessary modern office facilities for the volunteer and SFA staff to be comfortable. The SFA is committed to creating a professional working environment that meets occupational health and safety standards, ensuring the volunteer can work efficiently and comfortably throughout their assignment period.

Additional Information

Blended assignment

Residency status

VSA volunteers must be New Zealand citizens or have New Zealand permanent residency status and currently live 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 is not able to support partners or dependent children to accompany volunteers on assignment during the in-country portion of their assignment.

Fundraising

VSA funding stakeholders are both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and donors. We ask volunteers to fundraise to help cover the cost of sending volunteers throughout the Pacific and beyond. Fundraising can be as simple as doing something you enjoy with a group of friends, and our Fundraising team is available to help you every step of the way.

Vaccination requirements

Potential volunteers are advised that VSA's insurers require volunteers to be vaccinated before 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 in determining 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

The volunteer will receive a daily living allowance of SAT \$70 during those times they are in-country, and a monthly allowance of NZD \$90 during those times they are e-volunteering. In addition, during those periods in-country, the volunteer will receive the following:

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 for 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.