

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment Title	Tourism Development Advisor
Country	Timor-Leste
Location of Partner Organisation	Dili and Maubisse District
Partner Organisation	The Asia Foundation (TAF)
Duration	15 months (with the option to extend to two years by mutual agreement)
Sustainable Development Goals	



41211

1. Partner organisation overview

The Asia Foundation (TAF) is a non-profit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, TAF work across the region to address five overarching goals—strengthen governance, empower women, expand economic opportunity, increase environmental resilience, and promote international cooperation.

Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a [network of offices](#) in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from a diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

2. Assignment overview

While tourism is very much in its infancy, the development is a strategic area for the Timorese government to diversify the economy and provide employment opportunities. A vital aspect of the national strategy is tourism development that respects the country's natural and cultural environment with an "ethos of small, gradual and sustainable". In October 2019 the New Zealand Government signed a \$5-million implementation partnership with The Asia Foundation.

Maubisse is a historic town situated in the country's mountainous interior, approximately two hours drive from the capital Dili. The town and its surrounds offer attractive mountain vistas, organic coffee, sacred sites and mountain hikes (including the islands' highest peak – Mt Ramelau at almost 3000m). However, as an emerging industry accommodation and tourism operators face significant challenges, including: a low enabling environment and awareness internationally of Timor-Leste as a tourism destination. Specific challenges include very limited English language knowledge, poor understanding of international tourism expectations and little hospitality knowledge. Air access to Timor Leste is a key challenge to tourism arrivals. In the Maubisse area this is exacerbated by difficult terrain and infrastructure, and poor coordination / collaboration between operators.

This assignment will suit someone who is interested in getting involved at the grass-roots level and has experience with new or emerging tourism destinations. Timor-Leste has a solid sustainable tourism policy, but this is not always implemented by all stakeholders. This assignment offers the unique



opportunity to assist Maubisse to implement excellent sustainable tourism management from the beginning.

3. Goal/outcomes/outputs

Goal

There is a functioning Destination Management Organization (DMO) in the Maubisse region of Timor-Leste, supported by The Asia Foundation (TAF)¹

Outcome 1

Key public, private, and community stakeholders are engaged and work towards establishing a DMO that collaboratively advances sustainable tourism development in Maubisse and Aileu

- Identify and engage key public, private and community stakeholders in Maubisse and neighbouring Aileu
- Develop a strategic plan with aforementioned stakeholders to guide development of a DMO
- Outline the steps required for the initial development of the DMO and support the implementation in Maubisse-Aileu
- Facilitate linkages between the newly established Maubisse-Aileu DMO and national DMO, national industry associations, Ministry of Tourism and other relevant stakeholders

Outcome 2

DMO members/stakeholders work together; connecting tourism products in Maubisse and Aileu and creating tourism experiences.

Support Tourism stakeholders to:

- Map Tourism activities in Maubisse (e.g. hiking, walks, cultural sites and events)
- Develop tourism publicity materials for hotels, guesthouses and information focal points (in Dili, Maubisse and Aileu), including maps for them to become local access points for itineraries.

Outcome 3

Tourism supply and demand grow simultaneously through partnerships within Maubisse, and between Dili and Maubisse.

Assist TAF staff to:

- Develop a Maubisse-Aileu Tourism Marketing and Tourism Services Training Plan to ensure ongoing sustainability of developed itineraries and service quality in Maubisse and Aileu
- Link Maubisse and Aileu accommodation and tourism operators with industry associations and Destination Marketing Companies (DMC) in Dili, who can provide ongoing promotion
- Network with industry associations and the Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry to promote Maubisse-Aileu tourism activities and itineraries as part of marketing for Timor-Leste as a tourism destination

¹ The DMO will be a public-private partnership body comprised of local government administrators, private sector actors, and community representatives that fosters communication, cooperation, and knowledge exchange for sustainable tourism development.



- Assist local operators to develop strategies for increasing the quality of tourism supply and the quantity of tourism demand, utilising DMO, while strengthening public-private partnerships for tourism development

4. Reporting and working relationships and capacity building

The volunteer will report to the Team Leader, Tourism Development Program within The Asia Foundation. On a day to day basis the volunteer will work with the Deputy Team Leader and Program Officers within The Asia Foundation Tourism Development Programme, the Ministry of Tourism, Commerce and Industry and with tourism stakeholders in the Maubisse-Aileu region.

Maubisse Accommodation and Tourism Operators

The volunteer will support capacity building through the development and delivery of tourism service-delivery training modules to various Maubisse Guesthouses, tour guides and district administrators that engage in the tourist economy. Working alongside tourism stakeholders in the Maubisse-Aileu region the volunteer will exchange and transfer skills relating to business development and product marketing, towards the establishment of a Destination Management Organisation. The volunteer will also train local trainers from the Asia Foundation and Hotel Association to deliver the modules and provide on-going mentoring and coaching.

The volunteer and The Asia Foundation 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

- Extensive experience in destination management and/or product development
- Experience providing training, mentoring and business development support to tourism providers
- Experience creating tourism packages and taking these to market
- Experience developing marketing material, collateral and promotion strategies including, using social media for tourism

Desirable

- Bachelor or Masters Degree in Tourism, Hospitality and/or Business Development (or significant knowledge and work experience in hospitality training and tourism business development)
- Experience connecting public and private tourism stakeholders
- Experience with best practice for community tourism
- Experience managing a Destination Management Organization



Personal specification (personal)

Essential

- Ability to establish and maintain effective and friendly working relationships across a diverse range of stakeholders from the village to the boardroom
- Flexible approach to the unpredictable nature of tourism as a developing industry in Timor-Leste (it is a very new sector)
- Open mindedness towards the diverse culture, challenging economic conditions and difficult history experienced by individuals in Timor-Leste
- Willingness to travel to remote areas for short periods of time
- Willingness to learn basic Tetun

Desirable

- Experience living in a developing country or with other cultures
- Interest in hiking and responsible cultural tourism
- Motorbike licence

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 visit the [Timor-Leste](#) page on the VSA website

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\$1,000 per couple.
2. For two year assignments, the volunteer will receive a rest and respite grant of NZ\$1,000 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 USD\$960.

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.

