

VSA Assignment Description

Assignment title	Science Teacher Mentor
Country	Bougainville
Location	Buin
Partner organisation	ABG Department of Education – Buin High School
Duration	12 Months



41346

1. Assignment goal

Buin High School (BHS) has fully functioning science laboratories to compliment the robust science curriculum

2. Assignment outcomes

Outcome 1

BHS has a set of Laboratory Protocols

Outputs

In conjunction with Science Department teachers:

- Support the development of a set of lab protocols
- Use the national curriculum and current science practical modalities to write a practical science curriculum for BHS
- Provide on the job training and mentoring opportunities to embed the use the science practical curriculum within the teaching and learning experiences

Outcome 2

BHS science students attend science labs lessons, receiving effective practical lessons that link to the curriculum

Outputs

In conjunction with Science Department teachers:

- Assess the current status of the science labs and provide suggestions for improvement
- Implement the necessary improvements to enable the science labs to be fully functioning
- Provide training and mentoring to the designated lab technician

Outcome 3

BHS Science teachers confidently teach the science curriculum, offering both practical and theoretical teaching and learning experiences for students

Outputs

In conjunction with Science Department teachers

- Assess the level of skills and confidence of teachers to deliver the curriculum
- Provide on the job training and mentoring to improve the Teachers' confidence in the use of practicals in their teaching



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.

3. Reporting and working relationships

The volunteer will work alongside and mentor the BHS Science Teachers alongside the Senior Subject Master. The volunteer will also have interaction with the BHS Principal.

The volunteer will report to the Head of the Science Department and will be accountable to the BHS Principal and the Secretary of Education, ARoB. The volunteer and the Department of Education will have an ongoing relationship with the VSA programme manager in terms of assignment monitoring, reporting, professional advice and personal support.

4. Capacity building

Individuals: Science Department members will have expertise to set up all labs as per protocols, plus have the confidence to teach practical science

Organisation: BHS will see an improvement in national rankings for practical science

Person specifications (professional)

Essential

- A degree level qualification in Science or a related subject.
- At least two years' experience teaching Science at intermediate/ secondary level
- Experience working in a school or university lab
- Experience including practical lab work into a curriculum
- The ability to mentor and coach others

Desirable

- Experience working in a secondary school
- Experience training and/or mentoring others
- Experience working in a low-resource environment

5. Person specifications (personal)

Essential

- Excellent communication and relationship management skills (Ability to relate well to people from different backgrounds and cultures)
- Sociable and outgoing with a 'can do' attitude'
- Respectful of the local culture
- Patient and flexible



Desirable

- Approachable, adaptable, and open to new ways of working
Work or volunteer experience in a developing country context
- Understanding and experience living in Papua New Guinea or Melanesia
- A willingness to learn and use Tok Pisin

Additional information

Residency status

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

Partner organisation

The volunteer's partner organisation will be the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) Department of Education (DoE).

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.

Vulnerable Children 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 Vulnerable Children 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, for up to a maximum of 24 months.



3. The volunteer will receive a monthly living allowance of PGK 1,810.
4. A location grant of NZ \$2,000 will be paid if leave is taken out of Bougainville after 6 months. We do encourage you to do this.

- **Accommodation**

Basic, comfortable furnished accommodation will be sourced by VSA.

- **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.

Attachments

Appendix 1: Background to the assignment

Appendix 2: Living situation

Appendix 3: Bougainville



Appendix 1: Background to the Assignment

Partner organisation

Before the crisis of 1988-1998, ARoB had one of the top education systems in PNG with high performing international and Catholic mission schools and technical training colleges. In 1988 ARoB was ranked second lowest in terms of the proportion of population without any schooling. However, the almost decade long crisis meant the loss of a large portion of educated adults and resulted in a "lost generation" of children who have not received any formal education at elementary, primary and secondary school levels. While some makeshift schools with untrained teachers existed during the crisis, many schools were burnt down and teachers fled, leaving scarce resources behind to rehabilitate the education system post-crisis.

Despite these challenges, ARoB education indicators give a positive picture in comparison to national averages. The National Statistical Office Census reports shows ARoB literacy rates are well above the national PNG average (ARoB: 76.70%, National: 56.20%). However, when compared to other countries, PNG's adult literacy rate is regarded as one of the lowest in Asia and Pacific.

The ARoB literacy rates figures above do not give a true picture of educational outcomes. Today some schools remain understaffed and under-resourced. Large portions of the illiterate 'lost generation' have been unable to access social support or alternative education options or benefit from external resources and opportunities and are left to face the economic challenges resulting from years of civil strife. While the younger generation have more educational opportunities today, many still do not attend school.

On 29 April 2014 the Bougainville Education Act was passed, which, in conjunction with the Bougainville Public Services Act (2014) saw the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG) Division of Education become the Department of Education and meant that the Papua New Guinea Education Act no longer applied to ARoB. The DoE is guided by the Bougainville Education Plan, Sustainability and Self Reliance (2007-2016) which presents the outcomes for education in ARoB and the strategies used for achieving them from 2006 - 2015.

Assignment focus

Many education providers in the ARoB face difficult challenges, but Buin High School (BHS) is particularly disadvantaged given its remoteness near the southern tip of Bougainville island. Buin district was cut off from some services via the eastern truck highway from 2008-12 due the Konnou crisis that effected the southern districts of Bougainville island. Despite these challenges, BHS has become one of the leading high schools in the ARoB, with a reputation for superior teaching standards and infrastructure.

Currently there is no laboratory technical expertise on the teaching staff. Teachers are teaching science theory only. A VSA volunteer science mentor would provide assistance and coach science teachers or a specific Laboratory Technician to set up Lab Practicals.

Buin High School scores highly in Science on PNG National Secondary Schools academic rankings

However, with no functioning school laboratories BHS pupils will not progress in a forever advancing world

Working situation

The Buin High School (BHS) is located on the edge of town and was established in 1968. It is located on a large land holding on the north west edge of Buin town centre in South Bougainville. The school has 700 students and 34 teaching staff. It is a boarding school.

Relative to other high schools in the autonomous region, BHS offices and general infrastructure is in good condition. The volunteer will be stationed at the main admin block alongside the financial manager and finance administrator. There is a generator but no air-conditioning.

The Upper Secondary (grades 11-12) teach the following subjects:

- English, Mathematics A, Mathematics B, Physics, Chemistry, Biology
- History, Economics, Accounting, Business Studies, Geography, Physical Education

The Lower Secondary (grades 9-10) teach the following subjects:

- English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Commerce, Home Economics, Business Studies, Religion, Arts, Personal Development.



Appendix 2: Living Situation

Buin

Buin town is located in Buin district and is the capital of South Bougainville. It is the southernmost city in the ARoB and is a short boat trip from the Solomon Islands. Buin town is approximately 125kms by road south of Arawa and is 12kms north of Kangu Wharf.

In the town there are many trade stores and there is a growing range of groceries (including milk and frozen foods), meats, hardware and clothing. Fresh vegetables and fruit are constantly available and of a reasonable variety. Buin has a few guesthouses, new and second-hand clothing stores, a few basic takeaway food stores and retail beer outlets. There is a BSP Bank rural branch, but no ATMs. The NZ Police (based in Buin) make regular trips to Arawa for supplies and the volunteer will be able to join them.

Buin briefly attained worldwide attention when on 18 April 1943 an aircraft carrying Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, then on a tour of forward bases, was shot down near there. The architect of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor which brought the USA into the war, Yamamoto was commander in chief of the Japanese Navy. The ambush was carried out by P-38 Lightnings operating off Guadalcanal. Yamamoto's airplane crashed just north of the later site of Buin and his death was a major blow to Japanese military morale during World War II.

After the war, the present day town of Buin was established inland to the north from its original location. In the late 1960s Buin became the centre of government, commercial, and education activity in Southern Bougainville.

From the 1960-90's Buin was often depicted as a backwater. Road access to Buin was via Panguna and Siwai districts, although a road over Santos pass was eventually constructed. Although large cocoa and copra plantations were established from Arawa north along the north-east coast to and including Buka, such activity did not occur in the Buin region. Further, while the Panguna copper and gold mine brought prosperity to many in central Bougainville and facilitated the development of a modern town in Arawa, Buin did not receive any substantial investment.

When the Bougainville crisis commenced, many public buildings were destroyed, massive craters were dug out of the local airstrip with bulldozers to ensure PNG forces could not land there, and the local goal was literally torn apart and carried down the main street of Buin and dumped in front of the council buildings. During the crisis Buin saw some particularly fierce combat, including the 1996 Kangu Beach massacre, which began a chain of events leading to the ceasefire and signing of the peace agreement.

Today there are no commercial air services to Buin, although a disused airstrip on land owned by the Catholic Church is located approximately one kilometre north of the town. The Buin District Centre occupies 280 ha. of land between the Sikibai, Uguirio and Roluru Rivers.

Public Motor Vehicles (PMVs) ply the coastal highway to and from Arawa most days, except Sunday, and costs fifty kina each way. The trip takes three to four hours or longer depending on the state of the road.

There is currently no town power service and electricity will be supplied via generator. Digicel offer mobile phone and 3G (mostly) internet services. Telikom has recently introduced very competitive internet and rates and a 4G Lite internet service in Buka an Arawa, however, Digicel has the most extensive coverage in the ARoB. The Buin Urban Council in its infancy and provide few services. There is no town water supply or reticulated sewage collection.

Buin has some fascinating attractions that have been seen by few outsiders, including Lake Loloru, a crater lake north-east of Buin, where south Bougainvillean people believe deceased souls live; Little Tokyo, an underground military base that the Japanese Forces, who held Bougainville for much of WWII, wanted to resettle a larger number of civilian Japanese; several pristine island islands boarding the Solomon Islands; and of course Admiral Yamamotos crash site.

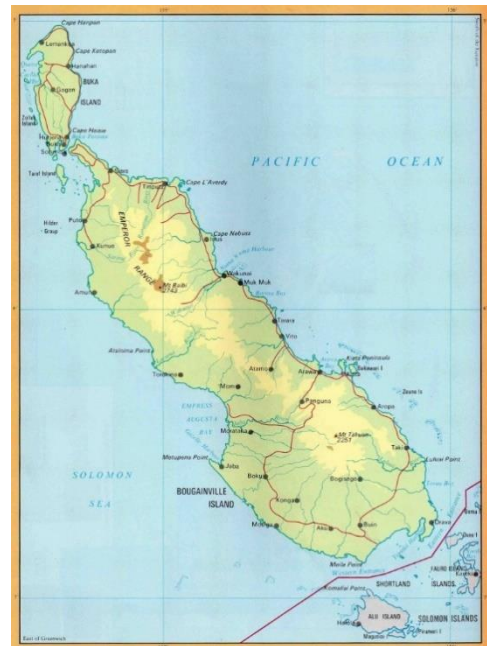
On the whole, Buin is a quiet town. With the sorts of sensible precautions applicable to any town almost world-wide, Buin is a safe community.



Appendix 3: Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea

The ARoB emerged from nine years of civil conflict in 1998, suffering social trauma and with much of the island's infrastructure in tatters. The process of re-building and determining the region's political future follow a difficult and uncertain path. It will continue to take a combined effort, supported where appropriate by funding and technical assistance from international sources, to emerge as a fully functioning society. The ongoing desire of some for independence and the scarcity of development funding from Papua New Guinea create a challenging political and developmental environment.

While the autonomous region has had a particularly difficult colonial and post-colonial history, the people of Bougainville continue to demonstrate tremendous resilience in the face of these challenges. Bougainvilleans are a hardworking, proud and happy people, and continue to display innovation and strength in spite of complex political and social challenges.



For more information on ARoB, see:

- ABG Website: www.abg.gov.pg
- Bougainville Travel: www.bougainville.travel
- Bougainville News: www.bougainvilnews.com
- Radio Broadcasting Service: <http://www.bougainville.typepad.com>
- New Zealand Aid Programme in PNG: <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/aid-and-development/our-work-in-the-pacific/aid-partnership-with-papua-new-guinea/>

VSA in the ARoB

New Zealand, from the signing of the cease-fire in April 1998, has indicated a willingness to help the people of the ARoB help themselves. VSA, with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) New Zealand Aid Programme, has been involved in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase of the ARoB's recovery since May 1998.

Since 1998, VSA has built up a programme involving project management and volunteer placement in sectors including health, construction, education and governance. VSA volunteers are currently based in Buka, Arawa and Buin and they are supported by a field office in Buka and a sub-office in Arawa. The Programme Manager and Programme Officer are based in Buka and travel approx. 4 to 5 weekly to Arawa and Buin

General security

The physical, psychological, and cultural damage resulting from a decade of civil strife will take many years to heal. The peace process is still fragile and it will take time before people gain confidence and build trust within their communities and with outsiders.

Volunteers must be aware of, and accept the heightened risk, and adopt behaviour that reflects due caution. This includes taking precautions such as not moving around after dark alone, keeping the house secure and keeping items of value out of sight. All VSA volunteers to the ARoB must sign a set of security protocols that set out behaviour, designed to minimise risk.

VSA has confidence in the peace process and a commitment to the people of the ARoB. The Programme Manager is constantly monitoring the security situation. VSA has found the people of Bougainville to be incredibly hospitable, friendly and keen to watch over VSA volunteers as needed.

