

Subject: AVI-Additional information requested at public hearing held on 3 September 2014

Importance: High

- AVI Annual Reports - <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/about-us-/publications/annual-report.aspx>
- AVI Research Briefs - <http://www.australianvolunteers.com/about-us-/publications/research.aspx>
- Attachments: Three volunteer position description in Indo-Pacific region.
- Attachment: Briefing to DFAT on increasing private partnership participation within the AVID program.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MENTOR & TRAINER - DISABILITY

Same, Timor-Leste

AVI has negotiated this assignment in good faith with the Host Organisation, and the information contained was correct at the time of acceptance of the request. However, while AVI takes responsibility for matters under our direct control, all assignments and arrangements are subject to change due to the inherent low levels of predictability in developing country environments. This assignment may be amended or withdrawn to reflect changes in circumstances.

General Details

Assignment Title	Organisational Development Mentor & Trainer - Disability
Host Organisation	Fuan Nabilan ba Matan A'at
Website of Host Organisation	N/A
Duration of Assignment	18 months
Start Date	15 February 2015
Pre-departure Briefing Date	10-12 December 2014
AVI Assignment Code	10532696
Australian Partner Organisation	Nil

Host Organisation Overview

Fuan Nabilan aims to work alongside blind and visually impaired people in Timor-Leste to:

- Facilitate and advocate for access formal and non-formal education;
- Eliminate illiteracy;
- Develop livelihood skills to enable access to job opportunities and independent living.
- Advocate for the rights and recognition of challenges faced by blind and partially blind people including through networking and public education.

Founded in 2001, Fuan Nabilan first operated in the capital Dili and included district members. Education was identified as the most urgent need and a small Braille teaching program was established. Over time their program expanded and the organisation formally established as Fuan Nabilan (Shining Heart).

There is a small, dedicated team of staff members, though numbers can fluctuate pending resources. When at current full potential there are 8 staff (4 full time and 4 part time)

Main activities include:

- Literacy training in Braille; orientation/guidance and mobility.

- Capacity building of trainers and teachers in Braille, orientation/guidance and use of mobility aids.
- Facilitation of inclusive education for blind students via capacity building of teachers and trainers for the public school system in Braille, orientation/guidance and mobility
- Facilitate independent living and job opportunities through training in livelihood skills (eg. in massage and reflexology, production of musical recordings, handicraft production).
- Generation of job and business opportunities for blind people.
- Organise other specialised trainings such as specific teaching for teachers in Indonesia; training on use of guide dogs for mobility from an Australian trainer.
- Community education and advocacy

Assignment Overview

CONTEXT: Like many local organisations in Timor-Leste, Fuan Nabilan has developed through the hard work and dedication of its founders and supporters. They have achieved much, filling a critical niche for blind people in Timor-Leste and have a clear vision to the future.

However, they now need support to strengthen the organisation to become sustainable – challenges include administration systems, capacity and human resources required to access ongoing funding, particularly in light of changing donor landscape.

Assignment Objectives

1. Strengthened organisational capacity (organisational development)
2. Strengthen the viability and resilience of Fuan Nabilan to develop capacity to access sustainable income sources.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Volunteer

In consultation with their line manager and relevant stakeholders, Volunteers complete a work plan in the first three months of their assignment. The duties below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives:

Objective 1: Strengthened organisational capacity (organisational development)

In collaboration with management and staff the volunteer will develop a work strategy and plan. Indicative tasks may include:

- Organisational capacity needs assessment to review and identify strengths and needs in management and administrative capacity at organisational and individual levels.
 - Review and update existing strategic plan and development of an action plan
 - Improve administrative systems and staff capacity
- Strengthen existing management capacity (including strategic planning, organisational and program management).

Objective 2: Strengthen the viability and resilience of Fuan Nabilan by working with staff to develop capacity to access sustainable income sources.

Work closely with management to:

- Develop short and longer term funding strategies. This should include immediate follow up of existing funding opportunities that may be unpursued.
- Develop staff skills in promotion and networking, advocacy, communications and business management.
- Identify funding opportunities and mentor staff to develop funding proposals.
- Assist development of English language skills to enable donor engagement.

Assignment Information

Line Manager: Director and Deputy Director as a team.

Hours & Days of employment: 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday

Leave entitlements

20 days per year accrued at a rate of 5 days per 3 months worked.

All Government declared public and religious holidays

Sick leave: available as needs, does not affect annual leave, medical doctor's certificate must be submitted.

Other Conditions

Occasional out of hours work may be required to meet deadlines.

Travel to local communities may be required to understand Fuan Nabilan business

Language skill and level required

Medium level in Tetun

Language support

AVI provides 80 hours intensive Tetun classes during the orientation period. There will be additional resources available for further development later in the assignment if required.

Living as a Volunteer

Same is the capital of Manufahi District and is approximately 4/5 hours south of Dili by private vehicle/public bus and one hour from the south coast. Climate is tropical monsoonal but milder than Dili and there are extended dry seasons.

Picturesque Same is located in the southern foothills of the central mountain ranges of Timor-Leste in an area of karst limestone geology which makes for stunning vistas and sweeping views.

Although Same is the District capital, it is classified as rural/urban and the local economy is subsistence-based agriculture. In common with most of Timor-Leste, there are limitations in infrastructure and facilities but this is improving rapidly with the roll out of the national electricity grid providing near 24/7 power. Mobile phone and internet coverage (via USB modem) is available in Same town and increasingly in rural areas. Given the steep topography and climate, road conditions can deteriorate considerably during the rainy season.

There are local government services such as a basic hospital and clinics, an airstrip, police, telecommunications and local government administration.

Local markets provide organic fruit and vegetables and basic household goods, however regular trips to Dili are recommended to restock, for social outlets and for touching base with western culture.

Outside of Same, the majority of Manufahi District is rural and facilities variable. Roads are generally in poor condition; public transport is via mini-bus or open truck and can be subject to weather conditions. However, note that Luta ba Futuru has adequate vehicles for work.

Recreation and social support: a number of NGO workers and others live or work in Same and there are several local restaurants and small guest houses and tourists visit the area. The central mountain area of Timor-Leste is known for its stunning natural beauty and cooler temperatures and there are many opportunities for outdoor recreational activities.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- For volunteers intending to bring own laptops and other e-ware on assignment it is highly recommended to pre-purchase high-grade and genuine anti-virus & security software in Australia before arrival. Internet speed in Timor-Leste makes it difficult to download software and locally purchased versions are not reliably genuine.
- Volunteers intending to drive vehicles, including motorbikes must have the relevant full Australian driver and/or rider licence.
- Bicycle and motorcycle riders (including passengers) must bring an Australian standard helmet; these are not generally available for purchase in Timor-Leste.

Other Requirements

Selection Criteria

Please click [here](#) for more details about preparing your application.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about the personal competencies required to be a Volunteer.

Personal Circumstances Constraints

We are NOT able to accept applications from people with the following personal circumstances due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions in this location.

- Applicants with criminal offences.
- Applicants with accompanying children due to limitations in local conditions and support structures
- Applicants with accompanying same-sex partners.

First-Aid Competency

Apply First Aid Certificate (HLTFA 311A) or equivalent course dated within 3 years of the start date of the assignment

Qualifications

- A Bachelors Degree in Social Science/Health/Management sector discipline or relevant qualifications coupled with extensive experience in a similar role.
- Record of continuous professional development

Essential Skills & Experience

- Substantial experience and well versed in organisational strengthening strategies and methodologies, preferably in an NGO capacity.
- Demonstrated skills and experience in developing funding strategies and proposals and related skills such as promotion and networking
- Strong people development skills in training, capacity developing and mentoring colleagues.
- Demonstrated experience in consulting with stakeholders and facilitating the work of others to achieve an agreed outcome
- Experience working in disability sector or with disability organisations.
- Previous experience in working alongside and building the skills of others through formal and/or informal training and coaching.

Desirable Skills & Experience

- Pre-existing Tetun or Indonesian language skills a particular advantage
- Prior experience working with people with visual disabilities
- Prior experience working in Timor-Leste
- Experience working in a developing county context

Allowances & Support

These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in country. They will be reviewed periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to

the allowance level.

Living Allowance

AVI AUD 1500 per month

Host Organisation AUD 0.00 per month

Accommodation Allowance

AVI AUD 600 per month

Host Organisation AUD 0.00 per month

Housing

The Volunteer can expect to find simple, comfortable and safe accommodation in Same, with electricity and running water. Options include guest houses or sharing with other expatriates in a fenced, multi-bedroom, brick house, often with tiled floors, verandah and tin roof. Air-conditioning may or not be available but electric fans are generally sufficient. Furniture may or not be provided, there is generally no expectation on a landlord to provide furniture.

Other Allowances & Support

All AVID Volunteers receive the following:

- Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne
- In-country Orientation on arrival
- Pre-departure vaccination expenses
- Visa expenses
- Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance
- Return airfare to country of assignment
- Psychological and medical advice and support services
- Re-entry Support services
- Settling in allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)
- Re-settlement allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)

How to Apply

Should you wish to apply for this position please visit www.australianvolunteers.com.

Select the assignment you are interested in and follow the prompts at the end of the page.

This assignment is part of the Australian Volunteers for International Development program, an Australian Government initiative.

www.australianaidvolunteers.gov.au/

Fair Trade Market Development Mentor

Somosomo, Taveuni, FIJI



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General Details

Assignment Title	Fair Trade Market Development Mentor
Host Organisation	Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom), SPC
Website of Host Organisation	http://www.spc.int/lrd/the-pacific-organic-a-ethical-trade-community-poetcom
Duration of Assignment	2 years
Start Date	10 Feb 2015
Pre-departure Briefing Date	3-5 Dec 2014
AVI Assignment Code	10533180

Host Organisation Overview

The organisation believes that organics and ethical trade is the key contributor to sustaining our cultures and communities; improving farmer livelihoods, people's health and the environment in the Pacific. Through coordination, information sharing, networking, capacity building and establishing a regional certification scheme, the organisation can grow the organic and ethical trade movement and contribute to a productive, resilient, sustainable and healthy Pacific Island region.

The organic movement in the Pacific recognized one of the major challenges facing Pacific Island organic producers is the high cost of certification, auditing and compliance involved in meeting importing country organic standards and/or international standards.

The project POETCom is the second of 2 projects set up to address the issue mentioned above. The project is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

In 2009, the Regional Organic Task Force (ROTF) recognized the need to evolve from a technical body to a representative peak body for organics and fair trade in the region and so POETCom was formed. In early 2012 a position for POETCom Coordinator was

Fair Trade Market Development Mentor

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established and the secretariat moved to SPC in Fiji since that time the governance structure has been established, Board elected from the regional membership (which now stands at 30 members in 13 Pacific Island countries), several capacity building programmes in the region have been instigated and a regional certification scheme for organics has been launched.

The main activities of the organisation are coordination and information sharing, advocacy and awareness raising, capacity building in organic and fair trade, developing and managing appropriate certification schemes for organic and fair trade, facilitation certification.

There are currently 2 full time staff for the project, based in Suva. The volunteer will be based in Taveuni in a shared office space with an NGO. The assignment project will be based in Taveuni and internet access is available although it may be slow and a little unreliable.

Assignment Overview

To date there are no handicraft producer groups in the Pacific islands that are fair trade certified. This assignment was developed in collaboration with a Women's community group and a private organisation involved in arts and crafts to develop the first fair trade certified products from Taveuni.

With limited opportunities for employment on Taveuni, the development of local arts and crafts ranging from woven handicrafts to jewellery and textiles is seen as an opportunity for women to earn a reliable income. Further challenged by geographic isolation, the ability to tap into local, regional or international markets provides further challenges the sale of these items.

While previous volunteer assignments in Taveuni have supported the development of products with women's groups, further support is required to improve quality and consistent supply of products as well as provide support to the development of fair trade certification.

This assignment requires someone with understanding of export markets, consumer expectations and an understanding of fair trade systems for handicrafts. Such expertise does not exist yet in the region.

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Assignment Objectives

- To support the Women's groups in Taveuni achieve WFTO certification in conjunction with local businesses by identifying and developing products that have potential for WFTO certification.
- To mentor and train the Women's groups in Taveuni to maintain the certification independently, by understanding market expectations and producing consistent quality products so they can earn regular incomes from their crafts.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Volunteer

In consultation with their line manager and relevant stakeholders, Volunteers complete a work plan in the first three months of their assignment. The duties below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives:

- Maintain and assist with WFTO certification requirements
- Develop group capacity to manage the certification themselves in to the future
- Facilitate training and skill development for consistency of product
- Support the development and design of products in line with market demands in collaboration with the women
- Maintain quality control systems
- Develop marketing opportunities for the arts and crafts products

Assignment Information	
Line Manager	The volunteer will report directly to the Project Coordinator, Suva and on a daily basis to the Coordinator - Taveuni Women's Empowerment Group, Taveuni
Staff supervision	NA
Hours & Days of employment	Due to the nature of the assignment, flexibility around working hours will be required. The expectation is that the volunteer will work the equivalent of a 5 day week to a maximum of 40 hours per week
Leave entitlements	Same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays. However, as a minimum, Volunteers will accrue 1 weeks leave for each 3 months of work.
Other Conditions	The volunteer may be required to occasionally work out of hours if there is an activity such as a festival where the women's group may need support in the area of the fair trade handicrafts

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Language skill and level required	The volunteer does not necessarily need to know the language before beginning the assignment however the volunteer will be encouraged to learn the basic words that is used on a daily basis.
Language support	Basic language classes in Fijian and Hindi will be covered during orientation. If further language classes are needed, volunteers can access a language grant of up to AUD400.

Living as a Volunteer

Taveuni is a small and fairly isolated place so the volunteer will need to be fairly self-reliant and resourceful. There are ferries to Suva at least twice a week with daily flights to Nadi and Suva.

The local people are friendly and hospitable and it is not uncommon to be invited for tea or a meal when walking past a house. Because of its small size, people immediately recognise new comers to the island and will be naturally curious about personal details.

The context is more rural with only 2 main shopping areas on the island, Naqara and Wairiki. There is one main supermarket on the island however there are many smaller convenience shops scattered across the island. The main airport is approximately 30 minutes from the host organisations office.

The food is good and there is a fresh supply of local vegetables and fruits every day at the food market and also at small stalls by the road. Most of the offices belonging to government are located closely to the hospital at Waiyevo and is within walking distance.

There are public transports available on the island, buses and taxis. However accessing transport after working hours can be difficult. Buses only run until early evening.

The host organisation has access to electricity, water and internet and much of the area between Naselesele and Wairiki have similar access. Electricity cuts are common. Mobile network is not consistent across the island; however there are certain areas that have very good access.

There are a lot of recreational activities for the volunteer to do on the island as well as water sports. Taveuni is becoming a popular destination for tourism, however most tourists are confined to the resorts. There is the ability to meet other volunteers from other organisations and countries that are currently residing on the island. Good restaurants are also available however it may be quite a distance from Waiyevo.

Most of the locals are Christians and belong to the Methodist or Catholic denomination.

Fair Trade Market Development Mentor

Somosomo, Taveuni, FIJI



Other Requirements

Selection Criteria

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Personal Circumstances Constraints

We are NOT able to accept applications from people with the following personal circumstances due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions in this location.

These could include:

- Same sex partners who wish to accompany applicants as part of the AVID program may face issues in applying for and being issued with a visa
- Applicants with criminal offences

First-Aid Competency

First Aid Certificate (HLTFA 311A) or equivalent course dated after 2012

Qualifications

- A degree or diploma in business or community or international development OR equivalent in business experience

Essential Skills & Experience

- Experience of small business start up, marketing and quality control
- Experience in the development and writing of funding proposals
- Understanding of fair trade principles, protocols and practice
- Experience in fair trade certification agreements.
- Previous experience in working alongside and building the skills of others through formal and/or informal training and coaching
- Previous experience in consulting with stakeholders and facilitating the work of others to achieve an agreed outcome

Desirable Skills & Experience

- Experience working in a developing country or remote/rural location
- Knowledge of, and interest in, working with handicrafts and producers, especially weaving, textiles and jewellery making.
- Good sense of humour

Allowances & Support

These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in country. They will be reviewed

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periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to the allowance level.

Living Allowance	AUD 850 per month
Accommodation Allowance	AUD 650 per month NB: If accommodation is provided by the Host Organisation or the program, this allowance will be reduced to zero.
Housing	There a few houses available for rental but may not be within walking proximity to the office. AVI and TTT staff will assist the volunteer in locating appropriate housing. A short term accommodation has also been identified that has a room available for short term rental on arrival of the volunteer.
Other Allowances & Support All AVID Volunteers receive the following:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne • In-country Orientation on arrival • Pre-departure vaccination expenses • Visa expenses • Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance Return airfare to country of assignment • Psychological and medical advice and support services • Re-entry Support services • Settling in allowance (assignments longer than 6 months) • Re-settlement allowance (assignments longer than 6 months)

How to Apply

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Business Development Officer Honiara, Solomon Islands

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General Details

Assignment Title	Business Development Officer
Host Organisation	Solomon Islands Small Business Enterprise Centre (SISBEC)
Website of Host Organisation	-
Duration of Assignment	2 years
Start Date	27 th Jan 2015
Pre-departure Briefing Date	3 - 5 December 2014
AVI Assignment Code	10532934

Host Organisation Overview

Solomon Islands Small Business Enterprise Centre (SISBEC) was established in Solomon Islands in 1998 with funding from NZAID. Its establishment resulted from a need to assist small/medium businesses throughout Solomon Islands and to provide relevant support in terms of training, business advisory and mentoring.

Vision – To be a catalyst for the development of successful businesses in Solomon Islands.

Purpose – To design and deliver appropriate, quality training and business advisory, support and mentoring to small business owners and operators.

The main activities of SISBEC is to:

- Provision of “Start your own Business” training, including bookkeeping, financial management, marketing and customer service, costing and pricing, etc.
- Provision of business advisory
- Mentoring and coaching
- Partnering with Solomon Islands government in providing financial literacy training to rural areas in Solomon Islands

There are currently seven(7) local staff and one AVI volunteer (until November 2014)

Assignment Overview

SISBEC is currently looking into practical ways in which it can provide financial assistance to potential entrepreneurs who are based in the rural areas but have no access to credit. Accessing credit to start their businesses is one of the biggest obstacles faced by people who are trained by SISBEC.

Professional and technical help from an experienced business person is needed to assist staff to further develop Solomon Islands Small Business Enterprise Centre (SISBEC) so it can achieve its mission of helping local businesses and thus contribute to the economic development of Solomon Islands as a whole

SISBEC has developed a close partnership with the Solomon Islands Government especially with the Ministry of Commerce to conduct Financial Literacy training in the fifty constituencies throughout Solomon Islands. This partnership has great potential in bringing about tangible benefits to potential and existing entrepreneurs through training and mentoring services.

The centre is also in need of identifying ways that it can be self-sustaining as donor funding may come to an end in 2014.

Assignment Objectives

- To support the implementation of the organisational strategy and goal to become self reliant and strengthen the activities under this model.
- To continue the work of developing the capacity of staff to further enhance SISBEC training and effectiveness.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Volunteer

In consultation with their line manager and relevant stakeholders, Volunteers complete a work plan in the first three months of their assignment. The duties below are an indication of the type of work that may be involved in meeting the Assignment Objectives:

- Help implement and review the SISBEC strategic plan
- Provide expert guidance to further improve current business operations
- Provide guidance and support in exploring additional business opportunities
- Support the need for capacity development of SISBEC staff
- Assist to further develop the honey business
- Explore other business opportunities for SISBEC.

Assignment Information

Line Manager

General Manager

Hours & Days of employment

From 8 am to 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday

The expectation is that the volunteer will work the equivalent of a 5 day week to a maximum of 40 hours per week

Leave entitlements

Same conditions and terms as local colleagues apply, including national holidays. However, as a minimum, Volunteers will accrue 1 weeks leave for each 3 months of work.

Other Conditions

Out of hours work may be required

Language skill and level required

Medium: Able to converse about non-technical issues

Language support

Volunteer must be willing to learn Pijin. Medium level Pijin language skills required for work place

Living as a Volunteer

In recent years the Solomon Islands has been divided by ethnic tension and violence. In 2003 the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was deployed to help the Solomon Islands Government restore law and order. The mission, called 'HelpemFren' was successful in restoring security across the country enabling people to go about their lives free from the fear of violence and intimidation.

Despite recent conflicts, the people of the Solomon Islands are warm and friendly, many living a lifestyle almost unchanged for hundreds of years. It is a fascinating country with more than 80 different languages and incredible marine and terrestrial biodiversity. The third largest archipelago in South Pacific, the Solomon's comprises 992 islands.

The influence of Christianity has had a greater impact on society and people than other institutions. Missionaries managed to curb ancestor worship to some extent but non-Christian beliefs still persist and coexist with Christian concepts. The churches play a very strong role in communal life, especially in rural areas. Virtually every village has a church building or leader and prayer or church services are held once or twice a day, and 95% of the population are professed Christians.

The volunteer will be living in Honiara, which is the urban centre of the country

Shopping options:

The local market is great for fresh fruits and vegetables. Supermarkets in Honiara also stock other limited goods; canned, frozen, etc. However goods are expensive and not available all the time.

Social and recreational:

- Multi-purpose gym (Honiara); Circuit classes, Yoga classes
- Pacific Casino Gym (Honiara)

- Heritage Park Hotel gym (Honiara)
- Swimming at various Hotel pools and beaches, pay for access to them all
- Tri Club meet at Kakabona 6am on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Diving and snorkelling (lots of places)<http://mundadive.com/home.htm>
- Hiking and bush walking (lots of places)
- HHH (Hash House Harriers) meet Monday nights between 5-6pm at various locations in Honiara
- Join a sports club – soccer, basketball, AFL, netball

Other Requirements

Selection Criteria

Please click [here](#) for more details about preparing your application.

Please click [here](#) to learn more about the personal competencies required to be a Volunteer.

Personal Circumstances Constraints

Whilst we accept applications from people with the following personal circumstances due to security, cultural, legal or visa restrictions in this location they may not be successful through the recruitment process.

- Same sex partners who wish to accompany applicants as part of the AVID program may face issues in applying for and being issued with a visa
- Applicants with partners to whom they are not legally married and who wish to accompany applicants as part of the AVID program may face issues in applying for and being issued with a visa
- Applicants with criminal offences including a recent DUI may find it hard to get a visa to work in the Solomon Islands

First-Aid Competency

Apply First Aid Certificate (HLTFA 311A) or equivalent course dated within 3 years of the start date of the assignment

Qualifications

- Degree in Business or equivalent experience

Essential Skills & Experience

- Demonstrated success in business development or change management
- Applied knowledge of strategic planning
- Experience building social enterprises
- Reputation for strong managerial and supervisory skills

- Experience in organising fund raising activities and writing applications
- Demonstrated success in building the skills of others through formal and/or informal training and coaching
- Demonstrated success in consulting with stakeholders and facilitating the work of others to achieve an agreed outcome

Desirable Skills & Experience

- Demonstrated success in private business sector
- Demonstrated success in building on business operations

Allowances & Support

These allowance levels are based on the Cost of Living in country. They will be reviewed periodically and may increase or decrease. Volunteers will be given notice of any change to the allowance level.

Living Allowance

1100 AUD per month

Accommodation Allowance

900 AUD per month

Housing

Housing will not be provided by the employer.

Housing in Honiara is expensive, many volunteers share.

AVI will assist the volunteer to find suitable accommodation during the in country orientation program. Most houses are semi furnished, screened and have access to electricity and water.

Other Allowances & Support

All AVID Volunteers receive the following:

- Pre-departure Briefing in Melbourne
- In-country Orientation on arrival
- Pre-departure vaccination expenses
- Visa expenses
- Pastoral care, assignment monitoring and security guidance
- Return airfare to country of assignment
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How to Apply

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AVID Program engagement with Private Enterprise: Promoting 'Economic Diplomacy'



Submission from Australian Volunteers International 15 May 2014

Effective collaboration with the private sector will be an essential element in responding to the development challenges of the 21st century. The large, intractable challenges of poverty will require far broader and more effective collaboration between the public and private sectors than we have seen in the past. No single sector on its own has a monopoly on the potential solutions. Private, public and civil society organisations need to become increasingly aligned in purpose and approach, leveraging the unique access and capabilities that each sector offers.

It has been increasingly recognised that private sector development prompted by business drivers can complement development promoted by social drivers. This contrasts with a corporate social responsibility model, where the community engagement may be considered an add-on to the company's core business. Private enterprise is a valuable source of finance, innovation, knowledge, and good practice. All of these will be needed to address the tasks of infrastructure development, employment creation, domestic resource mobilisation, and improved service delivery required to pursue poverty reduction and sustainable economic and social development.

Australian Volunteers International (AVI) has a long history managing activities that promote the growth and the development of the private sector in overseas communities and that support the participation of private sector organisations in overseas volunteering for international development. This paper aims to profile the contribution that these activities have made in the areas of **trade**, **economic growth**, **investment**, and **business** and, more broadly, to the construction of an enabling environment for private sector development. It also suggests ways that Australian private sector organisations can be engaged more effectively as partners to the Australian Volunteers for International Development Program, leveraging their networks, knowledge, and resources to build the technical and non-technical capacity of organisations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Programming to support private sector growth:

Well targeted volunteer assignments can enhance the capacity of countries to participate in international **trade**. The provision of English Language Training in a number of countries has been oriented to provide for greater participation in the global institutions, processes, and activities that comprise global trade. Support provided to the Hunan University of Finance and Economics, for example, has included lecturers in law, finance, economics, and business, who delivered English language training in context. By lecturing to classes of tertiary students in the language of international business, these volunteers were able to build capacity in areas relating to global banking, international trade, marketing, economic development, and international tax law.

Volunteer assignments have also fostered **economic growth** by targeting bottlenecks, including human resource constraints. In addition to supporting the creation of a healthy and skilled workforce generally, through the provision of health and education services, volunteer assignments

have contributed to specific industry skills development via vocational education. In Kiribati, for example, AVI has partnered with the Marine Training College to provide a source of skilled workers to the maritime industry. In Vietnam, AVI has supported the Long Bien Vocational College, which is owned and operated by Garco 10, the largest garment manufacturer in Vietnam. The college provides quality vocational training in the areas of industrial sewing, fashion and design, business management, business finance and accounting, and information technology. As such, it is a major supplier of skilled labour to both local and national companies and to the region. The college provides opportunities for disadvantaged youth (including a large proportion of women) from all over Vietnam, enhancing labour mobility and productivity by supporting economic participation and inclusive growth.

Volunteer assignments, such as those providing avionics and engineering support to Air Kiribati, can also assist countries to meet national and regional infrastructure needs, whether in transport, water and sanitation, or tourism development. The volunteer support provided to Air Kiribati enabled it to meet its aircraft maintenance obligations and comply with the necessary regulatory requirements to stay in operation. Support to a number of Pacific Island Countries in the area of water and sanitation has been fundamental in improving service delivery to citizens, but has also provided the basic infrastructure to promote new tourism enterprises and economic growth more generally.

Volunteers can also make very significant contributions to the creation of an environment that promotes and facilitates **investment** activities that will, in turn, stimulate further economic activity and growth. Much of the work that volunteers do in the area of governance contributes directly to improving the attractiveness of countries to foreign and domestic investors. Transparent and effective government administration and regulatory processes are crucial to the promotion of direct investment. Whether it's through AVI's partnership with Transparency International, or through its work with government departments in public sector reform, volunteer assistance in the areas of customs and taxation reform, fair trading and consumer affairs, and labour relations, all make a significant contribution to the development of a more conducive investment environment.

Indeed, the important role of consumer organisations and the need for greater transparency and better regulatory frameworks will only increase, as many of the countries in which the AVID program operates move towards 'middle income' status. With the emergence of an increasingly prosperous and growing middle class, consumption will become an important driver of economic growth, and consumer safeguards along with market watchdogs will assume a greater significance.

AVI has also directly fostered the growth of **business** in partner countries by supporting volunteer assignments in the private sector, assisting small and medium enterprises with product development and market promotion, for example. Volunteer assignments have also promoted micro-finance schemes and 'social enterprises', where development NGOs and other community-based organisations use business principles to improve economic livelihoods. AVI's work in this area includes assisting small livestock production enterprises in the Pacific and in Africa, providing women access to micro-finance opportunities in Bougainville, and supporting the promotion and development of savings clubs for women in the Solomon Islands.

Partnering with Australian Business Enterprises:

Programming volunteer activities that provide direct assistance to private sector organisations or that support the growth of an environment supportive of, and attractive to, private sector investment and development is only part of the picture. It should be complemented by an approach that promotes the strong engagement of Australian businesses in the AVID program as Australian Partner Organisations.

Creating or fostering organisational relationships between Australian private sector organisations and organisations in partner countries can take a number of guises. Organisational ‘twinning’ provides a relationship-based form of capacity development that is eminently suitable to the AVID program.¹ It provides a mechanism for individual corporations, industry peak bodies, chambers of commerce, etc. to establish, or further, strong partnerships with like overseas organisations. Organisations similar in structure and purpose would be able to exchange knowledge, personnel, and resources, building on recognised strengths and drawing on shared experience. Specific twinning activities include staff exchange, short and long term placements, advice or consulting services, information sharing, study tours, mentoring, and training.

Broader forms of partnership are also possible. Australian businesses and their staff can make valuable contributions to organisations in developing countries and emerging economies. Whether through short-term secondments or longer-term assignments, staff members and executives can be made available to local partner organisations such as NGOs, social enterprises, state or parastatal organisations, small and medium-sized industry promotion associations, private businesses, or education facilities.

Their expertise can be utilised to provide advice and guidance on strategic and operational aspects, economic analysis, change management or technical assignments focusing on strengthening organisational management. They are also able to make specific contributions to private sector development itself, whether working with micro entrepreneurs to help them innovate and create jobs, or with small and medium enterprises to improve financial management, sales, and marketing and business planning. The private sector and business skills they possess could also be used to support the establishment and development of social enterprises, which deploy business methods and commercial strategies to pursue social and environmental outcomes.

Through the establishment of these bilateral relationships, the local partner secures access to a range of benefits, skills, and good practice that will help them manage complex processes and projects, leading to enhanced capacity and delivering better outcomes. However, the benefits also accrue to the Australian business enterprises engaged in the partnership. Increasingly, international businesses are trying to situate themselves within the broad processes of globalisation. This includes the growing trend of cross-sector convergence, where business opportunities are increasingly aligned with the need to demonstrate positive social, economic or environmental impacts on global development.

¹ The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned Beasley Intercultural to research and design an international partnership (twinning) framework for capacity development in APEC economies. See APEC, *Twinning Implementation Essentials – A Toolkit for APEC Fora*, Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Secretariat, 2008

Driven by growth opportunities in emerging markets, consumer demand in developed countries, and the increasing need for companies to demonstrate a social license to operate, the trend of cross-sector convergence is about re-thinking the traditional roles of the private sector in order to focus on new and innovative solutions to development challenges.² Participating as an integral part of the AVID program provides Australian businesses with a response to this trend that goes beyond corporate social responsibility programs and locates the private sector as a major contributor to the efforts to reduce global poverty and foster social and economic development.

Becoming a partner to the AVID program also has the benefit of providing the staff of the Australian business with opportunities for professional development, including the leadership skills development. Research³ jointly conducted by Monash University and AVI concluded that the skills highly valued by employers and well developed by international volunteers are:

- interpersonal, communication and teamwork skills
- cross-cultural communication skills
- organisational and management skills
- initiative, resourcefulness and adaptability
- problem-solving skills.

These skills are widely regarded as essential for leadership development in the public, not for profit and private sectors. By working with international volunteering organisations like AVI, organisations in all three sectors can leverage the benefits of international volunteering in career, personal and leadership development. It would also significantly expand the number of Australian organisations who become stakeholders with an informed interest in the Indo-Pacific region and Australian relations with countries in the region.

AVI is well placed to create and/or support these types of relationships. In 2012, AVI and ANZ worked in partnership to deliver support to organisations across Asia and the Pacific. The 'Super Regional Volunteer Program' was designed to provide organisational capacity development for partners working with local communities and to align with ANZ's 'super regional strategy' in the Asia-Pacific region. It provided ANZ with a 'licence to operate', by demonstrating care for and contribution to local community issues, and a better understanding of the communities in which they work.

This partnership recognised the:

- synergies gained from working in a spirit of mutual benefit
- potential to complement and build on each other's strengths
- importance of contributing to developing communities
- global benefits of building civil society
- importance of the reciprocal learning derived from volunteering in developing communities
- cross-cultural understanding that comes from working in partnership with peoples of other cultures.

² Bulloch, G., Lacy, P., and Jurgens, C., *Convergence Economy: Rethinking International Development in a Converging World*, Accenture, 2012.

³ The 2007 study by Australian Volunteers International and Monash University, Brook, J., Missingham, B., Hocking, R. and Fifer, D., *The Right Person for the Job – International Volunteering and the Australian Employment Market*, was the first study in Australia to document the skills developed by Australians who volunteer overseas and examine how these skills match the needs of Australian employers. See also, Fee, A. and Gray, S.J. 2011 'Fast-tracking expatriate development: the unique learning environments of international volunteer placements', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, vol. 22, issue no. 3, 2011, pp.530-552.

ANZ employees were given the opportunity to undertake a three month skilled volunteer placement to strengthen and build capacity of long established AVI partners across Asia and the Pacific. From the Bank's perspective, the program provided emerging leaders with a unique opportunity to develop personal capabilities, to enhance leadership skills and to develop 'wide angle lenses' as global citizens.

The program also provided invaluable outcomes for the partner organisations. Working with one Indonesian partner organisation, for example, one volunteer with marketing expertise supported the organisation to improve their sales by enhancing their website and providing for online credit card purchasing. In the Solomon Islands, an ANZ volunteer took her private sector expertise in Human Resource Management and applied it to assist the development of a major civil society organisation's human resource capacity.

A third ANZ volunteer was placed with the Pacific Island Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) in Fiji to assist them in their mission to support private sector development across the Pacific. He developed financial literacy materials and conducted two and three day workshops for small business owners in the Solomon Islands and Kiribati. Workshops were delivered to 50 participants in the Solomon Islands in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and Women's Business Association and to 35 small business owners in Kiribati supported by the Chamber of Commerce. The volunteer also produced two research reports, enabling PIPSO to identify further initiatives for development and implementation.

The AVID program provides the perfect mechanism for the Australian business sector to participate in global development and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development outcomes. There are very practical areas for collaboration. The volunteer program provides a forum to facilitate strategic dialogue with the Australian business sector, allowing them to learn from business experiences in developing countries and to help inform business views on the aid program and the value of Australia's work internationally. The program could seek input from business on relevant program design, through consultations with individual enterprises and bilateral business councils. It will ensure business is well-informed about private sector development activities in developing countries, particularly in creating effective institutions and improving governance, developing public infrastructure, improving health and education and extending financial services and expanding markets through trade.