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Assignment Description**Senior Advisor – Tax Reform**

Employer	Ministry of Finance, Government of FSM
Location:	Palikir, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM)
Background	<p>This assignment is aligned with the Government of Australia's partnership for development agreement with the Government of FSM to progress reforms in support of budgetary and economic self reliance.</p> <p>FSM is party to discussions on regional trade agreements (Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union, Pacific Island countries Trade Agreement (PICTA) with Pacific Island nations and Pacific Agreement for Closer Economic Relations (PACER) with Australia and New Zealand. Conclusion of these agreements will see a significant reduction in revenue from import duties for FSM. The combined effect of reduced import revenues and reducing Compact of Free Association funding from the United States prompted FSM to review options for alternative sources of domestic revenue.</p> <p>The State Governments and National Government of FSM have different constitutional taxing rights and currently operate independently of each other. Following the establishment of a tax reform task force the Governments collectively agreed to a fundamental tax reform program. The agreed program will see the introduction of enabling legislation, a national net profit (income) tax and presumptive tax, a nation-wide VAT, changes to import duty and changes to the wages and salaries taxes. The constitutional taxing rights necessitate a significant degree of policy complexity for the proposed reforms: to minimise operational complexity a single unified semi-autonomous Revenue Authority will be established for administration of all tax revenues. The URA will have responsibility for customs and tax and will implement the new tax regime.</p> <p>The legislation establishing the URA has been passed by the National Congress with an operational date of 19 April 2012. Legislation for the Net Profit Tax and VATs will be progressively passed by the respective jurisdictions during 2013 and 2014.</p> <p>A Senior Advisor is needed to work closely with the Executive Steering Committee and the Project Manager in progressing legislative amendments to the enabling legislation and in passing the further legislative changes required across jurisdictions to provide the framework for the tax reform agenda. The Advisor will also need to provide advice and support during the transitional stage of the URA, and subsequently once the URA is established.</p>

	<p>The Advisor will be required to support the transition of the Executive Steering Committee to the establishment of a Board of directors and an incoming CEO, once appointed by the Board. Assistance will also be needed in a wide range of areas, including organisational establishment and policy development (FMIS, HR, Finance, procurement, IT, stakeholder engagement, taxpayer education and corporate culture). Additional tasks include overseeing implementation of the new taxes and sourcing assistance at key phases of the implementation. Effective stakeholder engagement and coordination of the interests of both National and State stakeholders will be critical.</p>
Assignment objective(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work closely with key stakeholders in creating the framework to establish a Unified Revenue Authority for collection of revenues for the State and National Governments of the Federated States of Micronesia. • To modernise the FSM fiscal framework including a net profit income tax, a consumption tax, changes to excise taxes and salaries and wages taxes – this requires assistance in policy development, legislative changes, changes in policies, processes and systems from an organisational perspective as well as support in capacity building (increasing skills through training, coaching and mentoring) and taxpayer education. • To improve revenue collections and voluntary compliance by introducing modern revenue administration principles and concepts to the activities of the URA.
Length of assignment:	The assignment will commence as soon as possible for a 24 month period.
Reports to:	The Senior Advisor will report to the Vice President as Chairman of the Executive Steering Committee & the Project Manager and ultimately to the CEO and URA Board of Directors once the transition period is completed and the URA is fully operational.
Duties and responsibilities:	<p>The Senior Advisor will be responsible for:</p> <p>Providing advice and assistance to the Executive Steering Committee and the Project Manager in developing policy changes and progressing legislative amendments to the enabling legislation and in passing the further legislative changes required across jurisdictions to provide the framework for the tax reform agenda.</p> <p>Providing advice and support during the transitional stage of the URA, and subsequently once the URA is established.</p> <p>Supporting the transition of the Executive Steering Committee to the establishment of a Board of directors and an incoming CEO, once appointed by the Board – this will include advice on governance mechanisms and reporting protocols.</p> <p>Developing and supporting the stakeholder engagement strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment and effective operation of the Unified Revenue Authority including the design and development of core functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Finance and Procurement * Human Resources * Corporate Services

- * Legal
- * Internal Audit
- * Information Technology
- * Organisational Design and Strategy
- * Planning, Monitoring and Reporting
- * Customs Operations
- * Tax Operations
- * Corporate Communications

To achieve this the Senior Advisor will be required to:

Planning

- Develop a URA scoping plan prior to transition for approval by the Executive Steering Committee.
- Develop a URA Project Plan and budget for the transitional period post the scoping exercise for approval by the Executive Steering Committee.
- Develop the URA corporate strategy, business plan and budget for ratification by the URA Board of Directors.

Transition & Implementation

- Provide advice and support in ensuring that BAU revenue collections continue during the transitional period prior to the URA becoming fully operational.
- Manage the transition of staff, assets (and liabilities) and accommodation from the existing state and national tax offices to the new URA.
- Engage and liaise with technical assistance providers where specialist assistance is required.
- Provide assistance to the Project Manager in managing the URA transitional budget.
- Provide advice in sourcing additional funding for the establishment of the URA, including from the international donor community where necessary.

Monitoring, Reporting & Communications

- Provide periodic reports to the Vice President and Steering Committee, reporting against the scoping period and the subsequent Project Plan.
- Communicate and liaise with National Government and State Government stakeholders at all levels.
- Communicate ongoing developments to existing and transitioning staff.
- Assist the Project Manager in implementing the stakeholder engagement strategy and the communications strategy.

Post Transition

The Senior Advisor will be responsible for providing close support to the Project Manager or CEO and the Executive Steering Committee or URA Board of Directors in managing the effective operation of the URA and implementing the wider tax reforms including:

- Introducing a net profits tax and presumptive tax;
- Introducing the national import duty and State VATs;
- Managing changes to the wages and salaries taxes;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the need for further legislative changes; and Introducing modern concepts, principles and practices for taxpayer assistance, return and debt collection, taxpayer audit and investigations, risk assessment and compliance management. <p><i>Other</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a report to AusAID through Australian Volunteers International detailing the work plan approximately 8 weeks after commencing in the position. Provide progress reports and a completion report to AusAID through Australian Volunteers International on implementation of the above. Carry out other duties as requested.
Selection Criteria	<p>Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An accounting, law or business tertiary qualification <p>Skills and Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience at senior executive service level in a revenue agency Good knowledge of organisation design and corporate strategies Good understanding of core and support processes and operating models of a modern revenue agency Experience in managing and coordinating a range of specialist senior staff including HR, IT, design and planning, finance, legal and corporate services, tax and customs operations Good knowledge of risk management principles and compliance improvement strategies appropriate to a modern revenue administration Ability to develop and implement compliance improvement strategies Ability to interpret revenue related legislation and provide constructive input into FSM's revenue reform agenda A good understanding of business computer systems (FMIS, HRMIS, Tax and Customs) and the ability to provide input into the computerisation of a tax agency Ability to implement and manage large scale change in a tax office of a developing country Proven ability to design, lead and manage a revenue authority or significant new line of business within an existing revenue agency Ability to develop novel solutions to deliver essential outcomes in an environment with limited resources (skills and funding) and divergent interests Previous experience living and working in a developing country, particularly in the Pacific or small island States (desired) Work experience at a senior level in a tax agency in a developed country (desired) Knowledge of customs activities would be an advantage (desired) <p>Personal attributes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High level interpersonal, leadership, representation and communication skills Ability to cope with a complex working environment Commitment to team work, coaching and mentoring other people Ability to cope with cultural isolation and a standard of living that may be different

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patience, tolerance and flexibility • Regular travel to and from the State and National Governments across the FSM will be required
Remuneration:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deployee will receive a local salary of US\$18,000 per annum, paid by the Government of FSM • In addition a supplementary allowance of AUD\$155,000 per annum will be provided to the deployee by AusAID via Australian Volunteers International; • The deployee and accompanying dependents, where applicable, will be provided with airfares at the commencement and completion of the placement, plus basic travel insurance and emergency evacuation insurance; • An additional allowance of AUD\$7,800 per annum for each dependent child (up to a maximum of 2 children). ~ • An establishment allowance of at least AUD\$7,200* will be provided to assist with pre-departure medical, vaccinations, relocation costs, passport fees and costs of setting up in-country; • A return allowance of at least AUD\$2,400* to assist with the return transportation of goods to home and return medical/s will also be provided; ~Allowance is set dependant upon the number of accompanying children. *Allowance will vary depending on whether deployees are single or accompanied.
Accommodation and utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The deployee will receive an Accommodation Allowance of US\$500 per annum, provided to the deployee by the Government of FSM • Utilities (gas, electricity, water and telephone) are at the expense of the deployee • An office car is available after hours – during work hours it is shared with the team
Work hours/days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official work hours are 8.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday • Sick leave provisions for FSM Government employees is 104 hours per annum • Annual leave provisions for FSM Government employees is 104 hours per annum • In addition, FSM observes 7 public holidays
Additional information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deployees and any accompanying dependents will take part in a pre-departure briefing run by Australian Volunteers International in Melbourne; • Additional support will be given to the deployee by Australian Volunteers International's Melbourne based PACTAM Project Coordinator for FSM. Apart from communications via letter, email, telephone and fax, the PACTAM Project coordinator will meet at least once with the deployee in country; • Confirmation of appointment is subject to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ <i>Formal approval from AusAID and the employer;</i> ➢ <i>Procurement of visa and work permits;</i> ➢ <i>A satisfactory medical examination for the applicant and accompanying dependants;</i> ➢ <i>A satisfactory criminal record check by the Australian Federal Police for the applicant and all accompanying adults;</i> • Professional Indemnity insurance will be discussed at interview.

PACTAM Background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Volunteers International is an Australian based non-government aid agency primarily involved with the provision of technical assistance to developing countries • The Government of FSM has asked for assistance in recruiting and supporting the above position through the Pacific Technical Assistance Mechanism (PACTAM) • PACTAM is funded by the Government of Australia through its official Aid Agency, AusAID, and is managed by Australian Volunteers International • PACTAM places skilled personnel to work with Host Organisations within the Pacific Region to assist in meeting their human resources needs, and to respond to emerging development needs
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Applications	<p>This assignment description contains information AVI has obtained from the employer at this point of time and is subject to change.</p> <p>Applications are preferred via our on-line application form. If you are applying by email, please type the position number in the subject line of your message.</p> <p>In your cover letter, please address the selection criteria outlined in the assignment description. A current curriculum vitae, including the names and contact details of one personal and two professional referees and copies of your formal qualifications should also be attached. Referees will not be contacted without prior consent.</p> <p>Posted applications should be addressed to:- Recruitment Services Australian Volunteers International PO Box 350 Fitzroy VIC 3065 Fax: (03) 9419 0976 E-mail: recruit@australianvolunteers.com</p> <p>Australian Volunteers International is strongly committed to protecting the rights of children. We adhere to laws in Australia and foreign countries regarding child exploitation and support Childwise and ECPAT International.</p>