

JOB DESCRIPTION

VSLA & Agribusiness Project Officer

Position title	VSLA and Agribusiness Project Officer
Location	Ainaro(3Positions),Ermera(3Positions) and Manatuto(1Position)
Reports to	Senior VSLA and Agribusiness Project Officer
Grade	4 Step 1
Salary	US\$595 per month
Position type	One Year
Start date/timeframe	1 st April 2023

1. Background

1.1 About CARE

CARE is an international development and humanitarian organisation that has been working in Timor-Leste since 1994. With programmes that extend across all parts of the country, CARE works with partners to save lives, defeat poverty, and achieve social justice.

CARE works with remote, rural communities and civil society partners to combat gender inequality, as this has been shown to be one of the most effective ways to create sustainable development outcomes.

Ensuring well-being and a voice for women and girls in rural, disadvantaged areas is at the heart of CARE's work. This is achieved in four priority areas of Education, Women's Economic Empowerment, Health, and promoting Women's Voice in society through development and humanitarian programmes.

1.2 About the programme

CARE International in Timor-Leste will implement an extension to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) funded HATUTAN Program, to build a partnership between schools and their communities to improve literacy, learning, health and nutrition for children and adults in the municipalities of Ainaro, Ermera, Oé-cusse and Manatuto. The program partners with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEJD) as the lead Ministry to strengthen pre-school and primary school performance in literacy, health and nutrition and support the full implementation of the government school feeding program. The HATUTAN Program also works closely with the Ministries of State Administration, Health, Agriculture and Fisheries.

2. The role

The VSLA and Agribusiness Project Officer position will support the program to increase the economic capacity of households to provide safe, healthy and happy homes for their families' growth and success. Enable families to understand and practice good nutrition and hygiene at home in a space free of fear and violence. Enable families to invest in the education for their children and boost farmers' ability to mobilize capital and expand their production. This involves mobilizing and training community members, particularly women, to form or strengthen Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in school communities, including continuing school communities targeted by HATUTAN.

The key purpose of the position is to develop and implement all VSLA activities including guidance and training to successful formation of VSLAs, Rapid Appraisal of Income Generating activities, beneficiary training on small business / income generating skills. The VSLA and Agribusiness Project Officers will ensure regular visits to monitor activities and conduct timely reporting. This position is based in Ainaro (3), Ermera (3) and Manatuto (1) with travel to Dili and other program sites.

MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:

Facilitate planning, organizing and management of agribusiness and VSLA related activities (25%)

- Conduct awareness on VSLA and income generation activities among school communities and local leaders at program related near school communities.
- Develop work plans to ensure effective implementation of both agribusiness skills training and VSLA trainings and related activities.
- Motivate individuals to form in VSLA groups and facilitate the identification and formation of VSLA groups directly linked to the target primary school communities.
- Facilitate the identification and formation of income-generation groups among program participants.
- Identify opportunities for youth to start their own VSLA and/or agriculture production group.
- Keep up to date with development issues and trends with regard to income generation, small business, VSLA, community development in Timor-Leste.

Technical advice and skill development (30%)

- Facilitate establishment of village saving and loan groups among beneficiaries.
- Train beneficiaries on VSLA methodology, including group governance and leadership, rapid appraisal of income generating activities.
- Organize and monitor the establishment of VSLA groups with particular focus on women's participation and leadership.
- Oversee and monitor the VSLA groups on share purchases, social contributions, borrowing and repayment of loans to ensure proper documentation and recording of VSLA procedures.
- Ensure timely procurement of and delivery of right quality and quantity of VSLA kits.
- Identify technical capacity and challenges for beneficiaries, skills and knowledge they have in income generation, livelihood activities, VSLA and business activities.

- Identify and train Community Based Trainers at community level to teach and mentor VSLA members.
- Assist in solving any conflicts within VSLA group members and motivate people to advocate for themselves.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Reporting (30%)

- Conduct regular follow up visits to VSLA groups and their income-generation groups to ensure application of good practices and provide technical advice and mentoring.
- Track progress of the VSLA groups, income-generation groups and keep records.
- Participate in monitoring progress in any discriminatory social and gender norms.
- Carry out quarterly meetings with beneficiary groups to assess performance at the community and program level.
- Facilitate data collection on groups, members to VSLA, and manage the information flow to the Senior VSLA and Agribusiness Project Officer and Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.
- Support the preparation of VSLA and income-generation groups' monitoring plans to measure their own progress.
- Consolidate and compile monthly, quarterly and annual reports, inclusive of success stories and lessons learned.
- Review monitoring data or field reports to reflect on lessons learned and make improvements to HATUTAN's support for VSLA members or farmers' groups.
- Share experiences with other organizations or groups promoting VSLA practices.
- Communicate learnings highlighting key achievements with a focus on the outcome/impact of VSLA on marginalized group members.

Networking and Other Tasks (15%)

- Facilitate and link VSLA and income-generation group members to trainings on life skills such as basic literacy and numeracy, household financial affairs, financial literacy, risk management and planning.
- Facilitate and link lenders and VSLA or income-generation group members to economic development and income generating activities.
- Make sure there is balanced gender representation amongst program participants, and that women, youth and people with disability are included.
- Liaise with Livelihood staff and partners for Business skills training, income-generation activities, VSLAs and livelihoods
- Represent HATUTAN in the Livelihoods, Resilience and Food Security sector working groups at Municipal or Regional level.

OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES (15%):

- Take on other duties as assigned by supervisor.
- Engage in emergency preparedness and assist in any emergency response as required.
- Promote a safe and secure work environment; foster a culture of safety and security awareness and consistently follow all CARE safety and security policies, procedures and directives.
- Demonstrate an ongoing commitment to gender equality, diversity and child protection.

3. Selection criteria

- Bachelor's degree in Community Development, Business management, Agribusiness, Rural Development or similar with at least 3 years of professional work experience in agriculture related to income-generation and business promotion. (Alternatively completed secondary school with at least 5 years of relevant work experience.)
- Strong Experience in VSLA methodology, livelihoods, microfinance and income-generation group methodology.
- Experienced facilitator and trainer, with training material development skills.
- Understanding of potential gender barriers in agribusiness or household savings.
- Good oral communication skills in Tetum.
- Ability to speak local languages in the target areas is an advantage.
- Willingness to travel and live in rural and remote program locations with poor access roads, sometimes walking.
- Ability to work with minimal supervision and achieve results and to motivate others.
- Experience working with non-governmental organizations and local communities, authorities and NGOs.
- Ability to use standard computing packages.
- Good math and numeracy skills.
- Ability to use a motorbike in remote rural areas and hold a valid driver's license.