Last but not the least, SVSG would like to acknowledge the belief, the heart and the support from its established partners. Thank you for supporting SVSG, and thank you for being engaged with our work:

Mari’s Bakery

Ola Fou Clinic

Saleufi Medical Clinic

Pacific Heart

TO ENGAGE IS TO INSPIRE
TO ENGAGE IS TO COMMIT
TO ENGAGE IS TO VOICE WHAT NEEDS TO BE VOICED
TO ENGAGE IS TO CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS EACH OTHER

Sponsored by:
SVSG acknowledges the support from the Little Angels Foundation of New Zealand towards welfare assistance for our vulnerable children.

Faafetai! Faafetai! Faafetai tele lava
FINANCIAL & IN KIND DONATION

The extent of SVSG’s support services for the people of Samoa attest to the genuine and durable partnerships we have established.

As such, it is a normal process that we acknowledge all the donations – financial and in kind – received from our partners and network of supporters. For June, SVSG acknowledges with sincere appreciation the following donors:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donors</th>
<th>Donation for:</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peace Chapel Christian Fellowship</td>
<td>Court Office Support</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alauni Cafarelli of Vaoala</td>
<td>Campus of Hope</td>
<td>200.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kind:

A special thank you to SVSG’s ongoing partners assisting with their daily caring:

- To Toleafoa Elon Betham and the team at the Le Aute Gas for 2 x monthly gas refills for the House of Blessings;
- Georgina Lui and the family at CCK Trading for supplying coffee for the children’s tea
- To Felise Sam Chong and the team at Origin Energy for the gas refill for the House of Hope and your prompt response for our call for assistance;
- To Greg & Maria Meredith for the children’s daily supplies of bread;
- To Alan Grey and family for the supply of bread and margarine in June
- To Tuato & Anna Ryan for the children’s Sunday toanai & bread supplies
- To Elder Meliula Fata, and the LDS Office for coordinating the regular donations of food, the ongoing maintenance of the Campus and the volunteer support for the children’s rehabilitation programs.
- To Uncle Johnny for the children’s ice cream supply every Sundays.
  Thank you Robbie & Myrtle Rankin
- To the churches, villages and individuals that donated food and miscellaneous supplies to assist with the children’s daily needs.

But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.
1 Chronicles 29: 14

Talofa Lava

Working half way through 2018, SVSG’s work has been transformed as told through the stories of the children survivors of violence, the battered mothers being rescued, the attempted suicide fathers being saved.

It has been further transformed by supporters as individuals, as families, as congregations, as villages or as business communities, taking ownership their responsibilities to support to our people in need.

In this June edition of the ‘Engage’, we hear the voices of the rehabilitated child, of the successfully reintegrated young girl survivor of sexual abuse, of the empowered nofotane women, of the strong advocates for violence free families and communities, and of our strong support network.

This is SVSG’s story; a story of hope; a story of transformation. And to God be the glory always.

We look forward to embracing July with renewed strength as we prepare for the official closing of the Nofotane Project with UN Women Fund for Gender Equality; to farewell one of our young girl survivor of sexual abuse as she journey to New Zealand for training opportunities; and to continue saving lives through our work.

Thank you so much to SVSG’s Family of supporters for your prayers, for your encouraging words, for your time and for sharing your blessings with us.

Until our next Edition, stay blessed everyone.

Georgina Lui
Chair, SVSG Board
1. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SVSG assisted a total of 50 new cases in June (42 for the SVSG Apia main office and 8 for the SVSG Tuasivi Office in Savaii). Majority of the assistance at 66% was for family violence cases involving women and children. And as a support service organisation for the abused and the most vulnerable in Samoa, any abused women and children are inclusive of SVSG’s mandate.

It was therefore comforting to know that while statistics on family violence continue to escalate, more and more members of the community are made aware of the support services available, as noted by the increased number of calls received through the SVSG 24-hour Free Help Line, in addition to the walk-in clients at its Apia and Tuasivi offices. Highlighted below are some of the cases SVSG supported during June:

Silenced by fear
A 13 year old victim of sexual abuse was left to deal with the situation on her own, when she sought her mother’s help but to no avail. The mother was more afraid of her husband’s wrath than her daughter’s safety. The perpetrator was the father. When the mother finally had the courage to speak out, she sought SVSG’s help for her daughter who was immediately referred to the Police while SVSG applied for an Interim Protection Order; the father is now in custody.

Advocate for violence free families
At 72 years of age, this high chief walked in to SVSG office seeking help for young girls in his village who have been sexually abused. The matter has been reported to Police where some of the perpetrators are now imprisoned. The elderly continued to advocate for justice for the other girls whose cases are progressing in court. Despite having difficulty walking, the elderly ensured that he became the voice for the victims of sexual offending in his village.

Attempted Suicide
A man in his 50’s gave up on life and was suicidal. In his last attempt to seek help, he called the Helpline where he was assured of help; all he needed to do was to report to SVSG’s office. Thankfully he did, and through counselling support, he confided to the counsellors about his family problem. Talking abut his situation and assuring him of help, our suicidal victim was all smiles when he left SVSG while SVSG worked on getting him a permit and airfare to attend to a family commitment in American Samoa.

To pay tribute to the departing Judge Tagaloa Su’a Nua Su’a, SVSG is re-printing herein one of her poems as part of her contribution towards advocating for violence free families:

Victim’s Moment of Freedom

When I fell unconscious, an Angel caught me
Showed me love, care and tenderness – all for me to see
The Moon with ears so big that heard the pain in my stories
And glittering stars extracting all my encumbering worries
In another world of peace and tranquillity
Happiness abound and soul in blissful liberty
When I woke to realisation – alas, but it was only a dream!
Beside me.... his red face beamed
Those ugly marks on my body!
And, his volatile attitude remains shoddy
The constant hurt and tears stingingly fell
Surely he could tell........

Dedication to Victims of Battered Wives

Written by Su’a Tagaloa Nua Su’a
As Judge Tagaloa Su’a Nua Su’a went through her farewell functions as a departing Judge of the Lands and Titles Court in June, she spared some time to visit SVSG, not only as a Judge, but in our eyes, as a Women’s Right Activist.

According to Judge Tagaloa Su’a, she loves reading the daily newspapers. And it is through newspapers that she has been confronted with the pressing issues affecting our people, which weigh heavily on her heart; issues such as the violence and the sexual abuse, the inequality, the poverty and more recently, the ugly reality of incest relationship between a brother and a sister.

To advocate for an end to these social issues, Judge Tagaloa Su’a penned her thoughts into poems and amongst the ones read during her visit to SVSG in June, titled:

- Tagi le Nofotane …. Aue …. Ta Lelava Pologa
- Aisea, Aisea Ea?
- Victim’s Moment of Freedom - dedicated to victims of battered wives
- Letter to Perpetrators of Abuse and Violence - a personal letter to the perpetrators of abuse and violence;
- Ua Soli le Feagaiga - in light of a recent incest case that highlighted the loss of the sacredness of the relationship between a brother and a sister

Judge Tagaloa Su’a sat there with her SVSG family, amongst them were the nofotane women, the women survivors of violence and the volunteer facilitators of the Tina Faufautua Advocacy program, reading her poems and calling for a community effort to address these pressing issues affecting our families.

Accompanying Judge Tagaloa Su’a was Misiluki Su’a and Father Paulo Filoialii from Christchurch NZ, who led the gathering in prayer, and encouraged the SVSG family to enjoy its work for God is always in control.

Poverty

A young mother of 26 years old live with her husband and children aged 9, 7, 1 and a two weeks old baby, at her husband’s family; she is a nofotane woman. The two older kids do not go to school. The couple is not in a stable situation, they kept moving and are unemployed. They are currently staying close to Apia with the mother’s cousin and continued to struggle to live.

“Be strong, courageous and firm, fear not nor be in terror before them, for it is the Lord your God, who goes with you, He will not fail you or forsake you.”
Deuteronomy 31: 6

Child Abuse

The mother of a 12 year old indecent assault victim became her daughters voice and sought SVSG’s help. The perpetrator is none other than the biological father. SVSG applied for an Interim Protection Order for the daughter against her father, which was granted. However, the father breached the Protection Order and given a one month imprisonment term. The indecent assault case against the father is pending at the Supreme Court. In the meantime, the 12 year old survivor is under SVSG’s care at the Campus of Hope.
2. CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

There is more to child protection services than meets the eye. From SVSG’s experience:

- there are child protection systems; then
- there are the relevant stakeholders to the child protection systems, the most important, being the child.

But looking at the reality of issues affecting children today, some directly, some indirectly through their parents and/or caregivers, SVSG believes that it is only through a community-wide approach, that everyone will be involved in the provision of child protection services to our children in need. It is not just SVSG’s responsibility, it is a community responsibility.

According to Justice Vui Clarence Nelson, “We have to listen to so much heartbreak. Stories that our community never gets to listen to. This is the room (his courtroom) you have a 10 year old girl telling me about being raped by her father. You will have a 6 year old boy telling us how his uncle sexually abused him. 6 years old! You will hear stories of incest where a father repeatedly commits sexual intercourse on his own biological daughter. At one time, there were three cases on rape. In my courtroom, it is the rape of a 14 year old niece by her 60 year old uncle. In the court next door, it is rape by a 30 year old man on his 14 year old neighbour. In the court room next door it is the rape of a 17 year old boy by a 55 year old. This is our reality.”

One only needs to look at some of the highlighted cases of abuse affecting children lodged with SVSG in June, to realise the reality of the situation as alluded to by Justice Vui.

And SVSG and its family of supporters can only do so much. You as a neighbour, as a concerned citizen, as a matai or as a pastor, can be the voice for the voiceless. Do not turn a blind eye. Saving a child’s life is just a phone call away on SVSG’s Free Help Line number 800-7874.

7. SVSG (Junior)

The SVSG (Junior) continued with its community outreach on youth empowerment and its literacy program in June.

Coordinated by the youth for the youth, the SVSG (Junior) have its volunteer members helping out at the office, at the Campus and the School of Hope, or taking the children residence at the Campus for community outings.

During June, youth members from the New Methodist Youth Group of Vaitele namely Tupu, Sina and Jaemima volunteered at the office, translating the success stories from the nofotane earners of the Nofotane Project; or visiting the newly self-employed nofotane women in villages to assess how their new business ventures were progressing.

In these day and age, there a lot of social issues affecting our youth, which is why the SVSG (Junior) and its programs continued to empower the youth to stay positive, encouraging them to channel their energy to more positive activities like helping others.

And the SVSG (Junior) members and volunteers acknowledge the support from the church leaders, the school principals, the church youth groups and the students from colleges around Apia, who have been doing community work with the SVSG (Junior) during June.

If you wish to become a volunteer for the SVSG (Junior), please visit our Facebook page on: https://www.facebook.com/SVSGJNRS/

Help us make a difference in someone else’s life as an empowered youth with the SVSG (Junior).
6.7 SISDAC at the Campus

Since 2010, SISDAC has been supporting SVSG’s work and community programs. They have been donating food and clothes for the shelter while it was operated from government houses at Mo-tootua and at Moamoa, and supported the SVSG (Junior) Family Fun Day programs.

In June, the leaders of the SISDAC continued this support as was evidenced by their visit at the Campus to fellowship with the children, while lending a helping hand to support SVSG in looking after the abused children under its care.

Thank you so much to the SISDAC Women’s Fellowship in Samoa, le faletua ia Lasi Masipau and le faletua ia Fono Laulala and the women’s fellowship, for continuing to support SVSG’s work for our people in need.

Thank you also for the donation of $5,000 presented during your visit, to support SVSG’s shelter operations.

6.8 A Visit with the Good Lady

SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang had the opportunity to catch up with the Good Lady of the American Samoa Governor, Cynthia Moliga during the President’s visit to the territory in June.

Governor Lolo Moliga is the Patron of the SVSG (American Samoa), and the Governor and his Good Lady are strong supporters of SVSG’s work not only at the territory, but also in Samoa.

Fa’a fetai i lau Afioga i le Faletua, for the time spent to update you on the work of SVSG, especially the nofotane project which had now empowered the unemployed women in Samoa. Pictured here is the Good Lady with some of the products from the nofotane brand.

Thank you also for the donation of $500 presented during the visit.

2.1 Campus of Hope

The success of SVSG’s rehabilitation program continued to influence the recovery process for the current residence of the Campus. From any outsider, the Campus is merely a safe haven to 70 abused and abandoned children it looked after in June.

However, within the compound, there is more to it than just a shelter over their heads, clothes on their bodies or food in their tummies.

- There is security, provided by the secured fence and manned by security officers 24/7
- There are rules to govern the visitors and volunteers at the Campus
- There is healing through the rehabilitation programs coordinated by volunteers who oversees the children’s livelihood and spiritual workshops;
- Counselling support as a group and on a one-on-one basis
- Continuing education through the School of Hope and extra tutorials
- There is a ‘family’ atmosphere of love, care and support; and
- Then there is the “Hope Sisters” made up of successfully reintegrated girls who returned as volunteer helpers

In June, we share with you some of the children’s stories and those who were confident enough to tell theirs:

Love and Support Heal Nita

Her parents love was behind their decision to entrust SVSG with Nita’s care 2 years ago. Nita was born with a disability that confined her to a wheelchair. And as she grew older, it was hard for her parents to care and provide for her needs and so they brought her to SVSG for shelter care.

Today, Nita’s smile emanates her resilience and her confidence in her new found skills, to walk and to communicate with others.

SVSG President met with the parents during the visit and reiterated the importance of families coming together to visit the children while in residence at the Campus, as it forms an important part of their rehabilitation. Thank you for the donation of food supplies as well as $200.00 to support the daily needs of the children.
Abandoned & Alone

At 10 years old, I was taken away from my family when my stepfather did something terrible to me. My mother left us after tolerating the abuse from my stepfather for so long. She escaped and I didn’t have the chance to ask her to take me with her. I was left on my own with my stepfather. To me, this was my home; I have nowhere else to go.

And then the abuse started.

I was sleeping when my stepfather tried to rape me when I woke up. I screamed but he threatened to kill me if I make another noise. I was scared and confused. I felt dirty. The next day, I went to school as usual, my stepfather went to work. I don’t know if the neighbours heard my screams the night before, because a little after I got home, a Police car turned into our house. They said my name, and told me to come with them. I was taken to my aunty’s house where I spent the night.

The next morning, my aunty took me to the Police station where I spent a long time telling the Officers about what had happened. I was later referred to an office next door to the Police, the Samoa Victim Support where I was told about a place full of children, some older, others younger than me. It was true; it was a very big place, with lots of children. For the first time since my stepfather tried to rape me, I slept soundly and woke up to the sound of children singing. They were saying their morning devotion. I knew then that I was safe.

I have been back and forth from the Campus to the Police a number of times, again answering questions about what had happened to me. But at the end of the day, I will return to the place I now call home, the Campus of Hope.

“Fear not for I am with you. Do not look around in terror and be dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen and harden you to difficulties.” Isaiah 41:10

- Thank you Moefaauo Salale Moananu of the SSFA for granting approval for the tree cutting work.
- Thank you also to Vui Lance Lameko and the team at the Top Tree Trimming & ES Company for doing this work for free. In an email from Vui, “On behalf of Lafaitele J Pereira and staff, this tree cutting and clearing work by our company, “Top Tree Trimming & ES Company” is free of Charge to support our Victim Support Organisation who is providing a loving care for the children of Samoa.”
- A big faafetai to the EPC General Manager Tologata Tile and the Manager Vaitele Asiata Tafu for the assistance in providing the Hiab truck which assisted the tree cutting works; and
- Last but not the least, thank you Pepe Fiaaletoa for coordinating this additional support to ensure that the Campus of Hope compound is secured.

6.6 The Brave Heart Supporter Visited

Yes, our hero is none other than Sandra Falesita from the SVSG (Sydney) sub group, who took a courageous act in 2015 and shaved her hair in a fundraising drive for the babies cared for at the SVSG Nursery Shelter.

It was therefore a privileged for the SVSG team to meet our hero in person during an emotional gathering of the staff, volunteers, SVSG President and Sandra at the SVSG main office in June.

A person of a few words, Sandra’s acknowledgement was brief, but to the point. “I came here to thank all of you for looking after our people, our children. Let us all thank God.”

Thank you Sandra for your bravery and for keeping her promise to one day visited us here in Samoa.
6.4 Manu Samoa’s ‘Giving Back’ Initiative

Before the Manu Samoa played the Germans at the Apia Park late June, the boys in blue visited the Campus of Hope.

The visit was part of the Manu Samoa’s ‘giving back’ initiative for the work of SVSG. According to the Manu Samoa Manager Vaaelua Alo Alesana, “we train across the road from the Campus at the High Performance Unit (HPU), we have played in various parts of the world, seeing millions of people, yet we have never visited the Campus to show our support.”

Rugby balls and close to $1,500 cash collected from the Manu Samoa’s Siva Tau and personal donations were presented to assist SVSG with looking after the children. Thank you for making this once in a lifetime opportunity for our children a reality. Your visit reminded the children that you care.

6.5 A network of supporters

No job is too big or too small for the network of SVSG supporters.

This was highlighted in June during the coming together of the Ray of Hope Foundation under the leadership of Pepe Fiaailetoa Christian Fruean, the Samoa Sports Facility Authority, Vui Lance Lameko of the Top Tree Trimming & ES Company and the EPC to cut and remove two large trees endangering 2 houses on the Campus of Hope, namely the House of Blessings for the babies, and the Ray of Hope for the pregnant girls.

The ease with which this support was coordinated is greatly appreciated:

June’s Success Story from one of the ‘Hope Sisters’

My name is Melekuini, but my siblings at the Campus call me Mele.

I am 18 years old but I spent the last 8 years of my life under the loving care of the Samoa Victim Support Group. I have 2 other sisters and 4 brothers, all of whom SVSG took under its care since 2009. Our parents are serving a life imprisonment sentence for a crime they committed against one of my sisters.

Today, I share my story of hope, because I would not have come this far if I have given up on hope a long time ago when I was without parents.

In June, I managed to start on my first job as a young adult. This positive experience is all new to me. I am an Office Assistant for a company in town. I am now a registered member of the formal labour, having my National Provident Number and my own Bank Account. Yes, here I am with my own Bank Card. It is such a humbling experience, and most of the times, I have to hit myself hard on the head, to realise that I was not dreaming.

On Saturdays after work, I will help out at the Campus, cooked for the children, helped them clean up the compound, wash the dishes or just hang around with the older girls and find out how they are doing.

On Sundays, I joined my other Hope Sisters for church, thanking the God Almighty for without Him, where would I be right now.

With God on my side and SVSG as my family, I have conquered the impossible and live each day to share my story of hope.
2.2 School of Hope
Out of the 70 children cared for at the Campus in June, 66 attended the School of Hope, the rest were babies cared for at the Nursery Shelter.

The School is well coordinated by a School Coordinator, who is responsible for overseeing the full time teachers, the livelihood skills trainers and the volunteer teacher aids that assisted at the school and with the extra tutorials in the evenings.

In June, the students attending the school hand painted a poster for the Manu Samoa as to wish them luck as they prepared to play its last qualifying match in Germany for the 2019 Rugby World Cup. These are all part of what they learnt at the school, to draw, to read and to write, and they did really well.

As simple as it seems, we believe that the boys in blue were encouraged by this poster drawn up by the children attending the School of Hope.

It is in this connection that SVSG acknowledged the additional supporters behind the children’s education. Thank you so much to Lefaoalii Unutoa Auelua-Fonoti for the girls Maths tutorials after hours. Thank you also to the English tutors who wished to remain anonymous.

If you would like to be a part of the difference we are making in the lives of these very special children, please give us a call on telephone 25392, email svsginsamoa@gmail.com for further information or complete a ‘Buddy Application’ on our website.

6.2 SUGA Magazine Editor @ the Campus
The children at the Campus were blessed by Cecilia Sagote’s visit early June.

As the Editor of the SUGA Magazine, Cecilia has been playing an important role in raising awareness on SVSG and its work through the SUGA Magazine.

Thank you so much Cecilia for being a valuable supporter of SVSG and for being an inspiration to the children at the Campus during your visit.

6.3 The Greiner Family of Wyoming USA
Growing up in Casper Wyoming USA, Elana Atasi Greiner had always felt the warmth and love of her adoring parents Julie and Peter Greiner along with her other siblings.

Miles away from the mountains of Wyoming is the cool sea breeze of the heart of Polynesia, Samoa. There you will find Elana’s biological parents Aukuso and Mativa who have been anticipating meeting their biological daughter after fourteen (14) years.

Julie and Peter Greiner embraced the Samoan way of life and our culture, ensuring that Elana knew her cultural background despite spending her whole life in USA.

SVSG acknowledged the Greiner’s for connecting with SVSG in arranging the family reunion. Thank you also for the donation of $2,900.00 for the Campus of Hope.
Elana Greiner from the United States visited Samoa with her parents Pete and Julie Greiner in June and bought some souvenirs from the Nofotane shop inside SVSG’s office for families and friends in the USA.

Thank you Elana for buying the nofotane brand and supporting the empowered nofotane women of Samoa.

SVSG’s Brave Shave hero, Sandra Falesita (second from left) from Sydney Australia took home with her some of the products made by the nofotane women during her visit to Samoa in June.

Thank you Sandra for supporting the newly self-employed nofotane women through buying their products.

6. VISITORS & SUPPORTERS
6.1 Seventh Day Adventist Church of Lalovaea
One of SVSG’s Board members Felise Sam Chong coordinated a visit by the SDA Lalovaea at the Campus in June.

The SDA Lalovaea’s Children’s Ministry hosted a Sunday morning service with the children, sharing on God’s word from I Corinthians 13, which speaks through-out about LOVE. “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.”

Not only were there Sunday school teachers and classes but the Director of the Children and Women’s Ministries in Samoa, Pelenatete Siaki as well as the Director for Children’s Ministries Lalovaea, Apolo Tagai were also present, making the occasion a memorable one for all involved. Donations of food and miscellaneous supplies were presented by the SDA Lalovaea to assist SVSG with the daily needs of the children in residence at the Campus. In addition, $2,000 was donated to help SVSG maintain its shelter operations for the abused and the neglected children finding refuge at the Campus.

2.3 Child Vendors – The Hot Soup Skill Building Training
While SVSG’s Hot Soup Skill Building Training to address the child vendor problem in our community continues to be self-funded through donations, June saw progress being made in SVSG’s advocacy role for funding.

This was when SVSG was invited by the ILO National Coordinator in Samoa to take part in the World Day Against Child Labour 2018 by being one of the panellist during the ‘Ete Silaffa Program’ on national television, to present on SVSG’s work to address child labour in Samoa.

Thank you Tomasi Peni, the ILO National Coordinator for accepting our invitation to meet to discuss how we can better support these children and their families, to ensure that the children are educated rather than being exposed to life on the streets at such young age.

2.4 With and For Girls Award (WAFG)
As SVSG continued to rehabilitate young girl survivors of abuse so that they could successfully return back into the community, these young survivors have in turn become ambassador of peace in the community.

In June, SVSG nominated an 18 year old incest rape survivor who remains a residence at the Campus of Hope, for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018 coordinated by the Kids Right in Amsterdam.

SVSG later received an email from the Kids Right informing us of the Expert Committee’s interest in the ‘Young Survivor’s story, her nomination had progressed through the next level.

With funding support from the NoVo Foundation Fund of Tides Foundation as an award winner for the WAFG 2016, SVSG’s work with the older girls at the shelter have therefore reached new heights. The positive progress for the ‘Young Survivors’ nomination for the International Children’s Peace Prize 2018, attest to the successful rehabilitation programs these young survivors are undertaking while at the Campus of Hope.
SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang attended the 7th ECPAT International Assembly in Bogota Colombia from 5 – 6 June 2018. The Summit focused on Child Protection in Travel and Tourism and hosted by the Government of Colombia.

With the economies in most Pacific islands relying a lot on the tourism industry, the International Summit provided an opportunity for a collective action to address the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. It was interesting though that the Pacific was only represented by Samoa Victim Support Group from Samoa and the LEAD Centre for Not for Profit Leadership in New Zealand.

Following the Summit, SVSG and the LEAD Centre, with the assistance from Mark Kavenagh, Head of Research and Policy, ECPAT International in Bangkok, Thailand are working on drawing up a simple practitioner survey of Pacific frontline workers on Sexual Exploitation of Children. This should hopefully provide useful information on the lack of awareness on SEC in the Pacific.

3. ADVOCACY PROGRAMS FOR OFFENDERS OF VIOLENCE

June started with only 14 men and 10 women in the respective Advocacy groups for men and women.

During June, 3 men were referred by the Tuasivi Courts to the SVSG Advocacy program at Tuasivi while 12 men and 4 women were referred from the Family Court at Mulinuu to the SVSG Advocacy program at the main office in Apia.

There were 2 couples who undertook couple counseling in June as referred from the Family Court. The program covered “Positive Parenting skills and Strengthening Family Relationship”. These special Programs are highly recommended by the Family Court for husbands and wives in dispute. The counseling programs are administered by qualified volunteer counselors Fiu Leaupepe and Sister Schwenke every Tuesday and Thursday at 10am – 11am and in the afternoon at 2pm to 3pm. The Advocacy program continues to be self-funded by SVSG.

‘I AM VALUABLE’ – NIUALI TUPAI OF LUFILUFI

Commercial cooking

Niuali Tupai, an unemployed nofotane woman learned commercial cooking from the Nofotane livelihood training when it reaches Lufilufi in January this year.

Today, Niuali is a self-employed nofotane woman, earning $100 a day, from selling pork buns at the school canteen, at the bingo games, at village meetings etc. When we visited Niuali, she proudly showed us her products with a confident smile of an empowered woman.

A later visit found her cooking happily with her husband as her cooking assistant.

According to Niuali, the livelihood training, the self-esteem module and the support from village leaders, enabled her to realize how valuable she is. “I am a valuable woman. My strength is in my hands. As a nofotane, I have a unique purpose in my family.” It is success stories such as that shared by Niuali Tupai of Lufilufi that highlighted the achievement of the project goal in which SVSG and the UN Women FGE have anticipated for the Nofotane Project.

Some of the unique production lines of the nofotane entrepreneurs have reached American Samoa, New Zealand, Australia, the United States of America and Europe, through orders placed with the SVSG office, or through sales from visitors to the Group during June.

Cecilia Sagote, Editor of the SUGA Magazine visited Samoa in June and took time out to see for herself the magnificent work of the nofotane women.

The SUGA Magazine continued to feature stories of the Nofotane Project which raised awareness in the social media on the empowered nofotane women. Thank you Cecilia for your contribution towards the Nofotane project.
A WOMAN WITH A VISION – MARETA VAEAGI OF SAAGA SIUMU

Vegetable Garden & Handicraft

Born at Tufutafoe Savaii, Mareta Vaeagi lives at Saaga Siumu at her husband’s family as a nofotane woman. At 50 years old, Mareta knew that it is never too old to learn and learn was what she did at the Nofotane training held at Siumu early November 2017.

Mareta knew how to weave, she is also a planter, but she never thought of using these skills to earn an income for her family. She always wove and planted for her family’s daily needs.

The Nofotane program changed how Mareta looked at her skills. It expanded her vision from being a subsistence farmer to a self-employed woman.

Mareta started her vegetable garden after the nofotane training. With some of her handicraft products, Mareta’s husband Vaeagi Moe built a small market in front of their house, so that she can sell her products.

Starting from scratch is not easy, but Mareta vowed that “anything is possible with God, if you put your heart in it.”

The mother of 5 children now enjoys having money in her purse to cater for her family needs. According to Mareta, being empowered is such a good feeling and I am willing to share my story so that it will encourage another unemployed nofotane mother out there, that it is never too late to start.

4. SVSG VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES

As the Nofotane project winds down to its last 3 months, May has been record-ed as one of the busiest months for the SVSG village representatives not only in assisting SVSG’s support services, but also in coordinating the livelihood training for the Nofotane Project.

As a strong volunteer network in the village community, the SVSG village repre-sentatives are hereby acknowledged for their commitment to go that extra mile to save a life:

Case Referral

Family Violence: SVSG’s village representative from Faiaai Savaii, Leulua’i Pepese alerted SVSG via the Helpline on a family violence situation where bush knives were used in the fight.

The Tuasivi Police was immediately contacted to assist, which resulted in the situation being settled without any lives lost.

SVSG is grateful to Leuluai Pepese for being prompt in being the voice for family in dispute. Malo le fai o le faiva Leuluai Pepese!

Acknowledgement:

For June, SVSG acknowledges with appreciation the commitment from one of its long serving SVSG village representative, Vui Pule from Lago Savaii.

Vui continues to be vocal during meetings and when SVSG rolls out community programs in villages.

Thank you so much Vui Pule for being a proud SVSG village representative, volunteering your time to offer assistance and advocating for welfare support for member of your village in need.

Fa’afetai le alofa i nai o tatou tagata puapuagatia Vui Pule!
5. THE NOFOTANE PROJECT
The empowerment stories of the nofotane women speaks volume for the positive results the Project had achieved to date.

Empowering Nofotane women continue to reap results

Source: Samoa Victim Support Group

APIA, SAMOA – FRIDAY 08 JUNE 2018: The 27th livelihood training for the Nofotane Project centered at the Methodist Church Hall of Saloga, Salelologa highlighted once again, the theory of change behind the economic empowerment of nofotane women in Samoa. It is based on how change initiatives lead to desired goals being achieved.

For the nofotane project, the change initiative relates to the nofotane woman, and how the empowerment program ensures that she will have improved access to sustainable employment and increased participation in domestic and community matters. However, at Saloga, the expansion of the project reach to include faiava (married men living with their wife’s families), and youth, both as trainees and as trainers, highlight an expansion of the theory of change to the whole of community.

While the project focus is on the improved access to sustainable employment and the economic empowerment of nofotane women, the continuous expansion of the project reach beyond the most vulnerable group of women to include unemployed married men and youth is the uncalculated effect of the economic empowerment component of the project and the theory of change.

To SVSG, this uncalculated effect of the project is part of the holistic approach the organization is taking to address family violence through encompassing the whole family in its program. The majority of the participants were unemployed nofotane women at 71%, and similar to the previous training sessions, the participants were not only empowered economically through livelihood skills such as elei printing, commercial cooking, flower arrangement and handicraft, but also socially, through the self-esteem module SHINE, which is now proven popular with the nofotane women.

According to Rev. Samuelu of the Methodist Church of Saloga “this program will definitely bear positive results for the family, church & village as a whole, as it includes a spiritual aspect to it through the SHINE self esteem module.”

With the continuous expansion of the project reach at this stage to include unemployed faiava and youth, the SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang is grateful that the theory of change has embraced male as much as female. However she still maintains that “A nofotane woman will always be a nofotane; the project is not attempting to change this cultural aspect of the FaaSamoa. The project merely aims to improve the economic empowerment of women and to increase their participation in domestic and community matters, as these are some of the most important contributing factors to achieving gender equality.”

http://www.talamua.com/empowering-nofotane-women-continue-to-reap-results/

In June, support network meetings were held at the SVSG Office for groups of empowered women established for the Project.

Inspirational speakers from women in leadership roles were invited to present to the support network groups on how to sustain their income generating activities.

Pictured here was Mataafa Tamasailau, a business woman of Vailoa Palauli who encouraged the newly self-employed nofotane women not to give up easily as their new business ventures experience some teething problems in the beginning. Highlighted below are some of the stories of behavioural and attitudinal changes in the women and their families brought about by the Nofotane Project: