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

Faafetai! Faafetai! Faafetai tele lava

THE VOICES OF SVSG’s SUPPORTERS

Good Morning Lina,

So sorry for the delay in email but now that I am back home and have settled I just wanted to write to you and express my gratitude for allowing me to visit the Campus Of Hope.

It was truly a humbling experience and to say I was blessed is a total understatement. The work you guys do for the kids is truly amazing and really touched my heart.

Sam was the best host - such a humble and caring man to say the least, he has a heart of gold and the children really respect him.

I want to continue to be a part of the Campus of Hope family and have a few ideas in mind in terms of donations and other things to keep myself a part of the family which I would love to discuss with you.

Thank you so much again for the experience, one I will truly cherish and will definitely drop by every time I am in Samoa.

Keep up the good work & God Bless

Thank you & Kind Regards,

Hope Ysabelle Foa’i
A special thank you to SVSG’s ongoing partners assisting with the children’s caring:

- To Toleafoa Elon Betham and the team at the Le Aute Gas for 2 x monthly gas refills for the House of Blessings;
- 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 Epi Smith for the children’s bread supplies;
- To Tuato & Anna Ryan for the children’s Sunday toanai & bread supplies;
- Lote Lam Yuen of Siusega donating bread for the children;
- 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;
- To the churches, villages and individuals that donated food and miscellaneous supplies to assist with the children’s daily needs;
- To Mark Tofilau of Sydney Australia for $300 per week donation towards the children’s food and allowance for the Security Guard at the Campus;
- Maurice & Elanit Mitry of Australia for the monthly donation towards the Campus water rates;
- Carolyn Rogers of Abu Dhabi for the monthly donation towards the salary of the Head Matron at the Campus

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’

- Acts 10:35 -

Talofa Lava

Greetings and welcome to our first Newsletter Edition for 2019. I trust you and your families are well as we start on this new year’s work.

And as we head on to 2019, we acknowledge with humility the magnitude of work being accomplished in 2018. On this 14th year of SVSG’s service to the people of Samoa, we will remain on this journey together with the God of Miracles.

It is our prayer that each and everyone of our families will continue on this blessed journey, loving each other as we love ourselves as per God’s second greatest commandment.

We look forward to embracing 2019 as we acknowledge with gratitude the continuing partnerships with international donor agencies and organizations such as the UNICEF Pacific, the Canadian Government through the Canada Fund for Local Initiative, the International Labor Organization, the ECPAT International and the One Sky Giving Circle of the United States of America; the local community from the government to the churches to the villages, Faafetai, Faafetai, Faafetai tele lava.

To the Global Family in New Zealand, Australia and American Samoa thank you for the heart to help the people of Samoa through the SVSG Family.

One Family, One Heart, we pray for God’s guidance for the sustainability of our service through partnerships.

God bless!

Georgina Lui
Chair, SVSG Board
1. **FAMILY VIOLENCE**

SVSG’s work to support victims of family violence in January was marked by close to a 100% shift in the majority of victims seeking help with SVSG, to children.

According to SVSG’s casework database, out of the total 26 cases handled by SVSG in January, 21 of these cases or 80% were cases involving children. 2 of the cases involved sisters (3 siblings) and (2 siblings), sexually abused by relatives; 1 involved a 15-year old with disabilities who was raped and was pregnant. The shift in the majority of the victims to be mainly children is therefore a huge concern to SVSG and its child protection role.

SVSG applied for 7 Interim Protection Orders for the protection of the 6 mothers and 62 children affected by family violence. Overall sexual abuse cases make up 80% of family violence cases lodged with SVSG in January compared to domestic violence cases of 20%.

Highlighted below are some of these cases singled out due to the horrific nature of the sexual connection and or violation experienced by the young victims:

**11.01.19: Sexual Violation (2 siblings)**

In 2016, two step sisters age 14 and 13 were raped by the same man and continued in 2017. For the older sister, the perpetrator was her own biological father; for the younger sister, the perpetrator was her step-father. It was a sad case of a father turning on her own daughters, and a mother opting to stand by her husband, leaving the two step sisters without any support. The step sisters sought refuge with the church minister in their village and it was the church minister who became the step sisters’ voices and contacted the Police Outpost closer to their village for help. It was late on a Friday night when the Police referred the step sisters to the SVSG shelter facilities for their safety while their case is under investigation.

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**FINANCIAL & IN KIND DONATION**

The extent of SVSG’s support services for our community in need attest to the genuine and durable partnerships we have established. As such, it is a normal process that we acknowledge all the donations received from our partners and network of supporters.

For January, SVSG acknowledges with gratitude and appreciation the kindness of the following donors:

<table>
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<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>Myers Richard</td>
<td>Campus of Hope</td>
<td>1,408.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**In Kind:**

- Pastor Lui Seve of the AOG Falelauniu – 2 bags of breadfruit, 30 coconut
- Tuisugaletaua Sofara Aveau, SVSG Patron – 20 bunches of bananas
- Palepa & Family – 3 bags of taro
- Rose Tupuola - 1 bag clothes
- CCK Trading – 3 bags of clothes
- Sam & Esther of Auckland NZ - baby supplies (wipes, golden Farley, diapers etc)
From the visit, the BIAE offered the older girls at the Campus and the SVSG volunteers scholarship opportunities to undertake Community Services studies at the Institute.

SVSG therefore acknowledged the partnership with the Bradford Institute of Advanced Education and the donation of $1,000 presented during your visit. Thank you also to Timothy and Tony for personally donating $700 for the children at the Campus.

Nuuausala Manase of Luatuanuu and Wellington
Long-time member of the SVSG Juniors, Ms Nuuausala Manase from Luatuanuu spent time in January helping out at the Office and with the Buddy up program for child vendors. Nuuausala was home visiting families as she is now living in Wellington New Zealand. Thank you Nuuausala for always making time to help out at the office or at the shelter whenever you are home.

Priyanka Jashnani of Australia
Ms Priyanka Jashnani from Australia, visiting families and friends in Samoa stopped by the SVSG office to inquire about an opportunity for her to volunteer for SVSG. Thank you so much Priyanka. We look forward to seeing you in June when you return to volunteer for 4 weeks.

Hope Ysabelle Foai of Melbourne Australia
A young lady who heard of the Campus from a family member visited the children in January. Accompanying Hope was her mother and sister. According to Hope, “I had no idea that Samoa offered these facilities to women who have experienced sexual abuse, mental health and women who have nowhere to go.”

Thank you so much Hope for spending time with the children. Thank you also for the donation of stationeries you presented during the visit.

25.01.19: Rape
A relative of a 15 year old girl with disabilities sought SVSG’s shelter assistance for the safety of her niece. The child was raped late in 2018 and had given birth early January. The perpetrator is alleged to be the girl’s brother. The parents have been covering up the incident until the victim gave birth at home, which prompted the relative to contact SVSG for help. The victim has since been admitted to the Campus of Hope for her safety while her case has been referred to the Police for further support.

25.01.19: Sexual Connection (3 siblings)
For 2 years since 2016, three biological sisters have been the victims of sexual connection by their 70 year old biological grandfather. The sisters age 8, 10 and 13 at the time, were living with the grandfather at their mother’s family. Their parents have divorced; the mother has remarried and live with her husband’s family; the father has also remarried and live with his wife’s family. The 6 children (3 girls and 3 boys) were left with the mother’s family. The 3 sisters sleep with the perpetrator while the 3 brothers sleep with their other relatives in a different house.

According to the 3 sisters, it has been 2 years of suffering and torture as the grandfather used a stick nearly every night to sexually abuse them. The eldest of the sisters, now age 15 ran away from home and sought refuge with her biological father and his wife. The 2 younger sisters confided to their biological mother when she visited them for Mother’s Day in 2018, but she didn’t do much. It was not until the 2 younger sisters visited their biological father for Christmas holidays in 2018 they were able to confide to someone that saved them. It was the stepmother that referred the matter to the Police and in turn, the Police referred the 3 sisters to SVSG for shelter care while continuing their investigation of the case.

For immediate support, please call the 800-7874 Help Line. It is FREE and it is a 24-hour service.
2. CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Child protection is the protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides for the protection of children in and out of the home.

In Samoa, the Child Care and Protection Bill has been gathering dust at the Parliament House since 2013. Six years later, the National Child Protection Policy is still under construction. All the while, SVSG has been taking in children whose rights have been violated. Because if SVSG had to wait for the Bill to be passed into legislation, or the Policy to be finalized, where would all these abused and vulnerable children be?

Yet, in January, the Education Amendment Bill 2019 which gives secondary school teachers the power to use “reasonable force” on students was passed into law, despite public opposition. As an advocate for children’s rights, the passing of the Bill was a hard blow to SVSG and its work with children in Samoa. However, we knew that we must remain strong and continue with the work.

The finalization of the Programme Cooperation Agreement with UNICEF to provide funding support for SVSG’s child protection work for the next 2 years was therefore received with much appreciation.

In January, 3 of the sheltered girls had their cases heard in the Supreme Court. The results have been successful:

- A 15 year old victim of sexual abuse by her step-father – the step-father has been convicted and sentenced to 17 years in prison. The Court further ordered the Prosecution to look into the mother’s involvement in the case and prosecute her accordingly. For the survivor herself, she wants nothing to do with her family and does not want to go back home. SVSG is looking for a College to enrol her in while she is still cared for at the Campus.
- 2 sisters who were also victims of sexual abuse had their cases in January and the offender was found guilty. We are still awaiting the sentencing.

There were 6 children admitted into the Campus of Hope shelter facility in January with one being successfully reintegrated.

To be part of the programme also gave me a fantastic opportunity to get a glimpse and learn about the Samoan life. I immediately feel in love with the happy spirits of the Samoan people and the passion for traditional music and dancing and the joy it brings. But I also saw big problems and challenges in the Samoan society with child vendors and abuse. Thankfully the people of Samoa have an organisation like the S.V.S.G. For me it is terrible thinking about how the lives of these vulnerable children and woman would look like without the hard work and support from S.V.S.G.

I have also spent a lot of time at the Campus. I have a big class with kids with different ages and different needs. And right from the start I really loved spending time with the kids and we have lots of fun together.

Many times I have been so moved by their stories and I am full of admiration over how strong and brave these kids and young women are. I feel very proud to be a part of the S.V.S.G. team and I will always remember this experience and do my best to keep on supporting the S.V.S.G. when I go back to Denmark.

Thank you so much Kristina for being part of the SVSG family of supporters. Despite being oceans away from home, you blended in well with the Team here at SVSG. Wishing you all the best as you return home.

Bradford Institute of Advanced Education

The Director of the Bradford Institute of Advanced Education (BIAE) in Samoa, Vaaaoao Alofipo accompanied members of the Institute from Australia to visit the Campus of Hope in January.

The BIAE is delivering a course on Community Services in Samoa. From the local students’ assessments, SVSG’s services have been referenced, and this prompted an interest by the Institute to visit SVSG and its work.
7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

International Peace Youth Group of New Zealand

Two representatives of the International Peace Youth Group from New Zealand met with the SVSG President in January.

The meeting discussed the invitation to attend the International Women’s Peace Conference in Sydney in February.

Thank you so much to the coordinator of the Sydney Conference for the invitation extended to SVSG. We look forward to exchange knowledge and experience at the Conference.

Kristina Andersen from Denmark

To be part of S.V.S.G has been a great experience for me. I am already close to the end of my 9 weeks of volunteering and have had so many wonderful experiences.

When I arrived I was very lucky to be part of the big “BUDDYING UP” project for child vendors. During the two weeks of the program I met some incredible sweet and strong kids and young people.

The S.V.S.G made it possible for the kids to go to places they have never been before and it was so rewarding to see the happiness and excitement in all their faces. They found joy and appreciation in small things, which many kids back in Denmark are taking for granted.

After ending the project it has been such a joy to go around town and met up with some of the kids again.

Especially one meeting at the bus station made me so happy - here I met one of the small girls from the program, standing in her new school uniform with her new schoolbag and both her and her mother looked so proud and happy.

2.1 Campus of Hope

A total of 81 children have been cared for at the Campus of Hope during January; 5 babies, 59 girls and 16 boys, with the children’s ages ranging from 7 months to 19 years old.

One of our 18 year old rape victim who has been hospitalized since November 2018 remained in the hospital throughout January. She continues to fight for her right to live despite all the abuse her tiny body had endured for years.

SVSG has to source out funds to cover the subsistence allowance of the 24-hour carer that looks after our sick child.

There are 5 children with disabilities cared for at the Campus; 3 boys and 2 girls age 7 – 18 years old. Caring for the children with disabilities continues to be a challenge given the lack of proper resources to cater for their specific needs. We do the best we can with what we have received through donations.

Despite the challenges, the children of hope started the New Year well and continued throughout January. The outpour of love and support from SVSG’s family of supporters attested to God’s love and His blessings on the Campus and its residence:

Mamea Family Reunion

Through Dr. Malik Fuimaono of Mt. Vernon Washington, Sauano & Tepora Mamea family included the children of hope in their Family Reunion celebrated on New Year’s Day.

The celebration started with singing and dancing then there was sharing and fellowship which all ended with an emotional farewell.
For the baby of the Mamea family, she paid tribute to the children through her Samoan Siva.

Thank you so much Dr. Malik for always coming making time to visit the children of hope whenever you are in the country. You even brought your whole family to celebrate the New Year’s with the children.

Thank you also for the donation of $1,000 presented to the children during your visit.

**Sisters of Hope**

The Sisters of Hope, the older girls who have been successfully placed back to the community following their court cases, returned to the Campus on New Year’s Day.

They put up a powerful rendition of Céline Dion - I’m Alive - in celebration of God’s favor on their lives.

Pictured here is one of the Sisters, Judy congratulating Leilua Lino and Feagaiga Stowers for their being nominated for the Samoa Observer’s Person of the Year 2018. Judy now has a family of her own with 2 beautiful children.

Thank you to the Sisters of Hope for inspiring the children that ‘if you can go through your different trials and come out stronger, they can too.’

**CCCS Fasitoouta Youth practicing the Ava Ceremony for the Men Engage Initial Meeting**

**Vaiusu Youth showing off their Buddy-up t-shirts.**

**SVSG Junior partnership performing the Ava Ceremony to welcome the delegates to the Men Engage Initial Meeting.**

**The SVSG Junior Executive Committee Hard at work**
6.3 Book Drive for Foailuga Savaii Library

With January being such a busy month for the SVSG Juniors and its programs, the youth volunteers still have time to sort out the books from its Book Drive for the Foailuga Library.

The initiative was in response to a request from the community at Foailuga Savaii, for a library to assist with the children’s reading.

The youth volunteers had fun sorting out the books and arranging them in boxes ready for shipment to Savaii.

Thank you so much to our local friends and supporters from overseas for donating the books towards the Book Drive.

6.4 Acknowledging the Partnerships

St. Andrew Youth Group of the Catholic Church Faleula performing during the farewell event for the Men Engage Conference

The one and only violinist in Samoa, Tipaso Aukusitino, SVSG Junior volunteer from the Samoa National Orchestra

CCCS Luatuanuu Youth Group taking part in the Buddy-up program with the child vendors

Assembly of God New Lynn

Close to 30 members of the AOG New Lynn from Auckland New Zealand spent time with the children at the Campus in January.

Lead by Pastor Lamositele and Falefua Lauesi Mao Lamositele, the Group encouraged the children to pray consistently to God for anything and everything.

The visit was coordinated by Pastor Lui Seve of the Assembly of God Falelaunui.

Thank you so much Pastor Lamositele and faletua for including a visit at the Campus as part of your Mission while in Samoa. SVSG also acknowledges Pastor Lui Seve for liaising with SVSG in coordinating the visit for the AOG New Lynn.

Fia Tasi Taito of Seattle America

Fia Tasi Taito and her mother Miriama visited the Campus of Hope in January and were overwhelmed by the love of God for the place. They donated goods for the children and $500 to assist with the children’s daily needs.

After hearing about the work of SVSG, she testified on the blessing that came from actually meeting the children and fellowship with them.

Fia was here to see the area where they will be building the extension to the School of Hope Library this coming July on a project called ‘Lend a Hand’. As a woman of faith, Fia shared on how God puts it in her heart to assist the children of hope with their school.

A team of more than 25 people will be visiting the Campus in July to start on the ‘Lend a Hand’ Project. God bless your giving heart Fia. We look forward to seeing you and the team in July.
Lome Feo Pele of Melbourne Australia

SVSG received this box of gifts for the children for Christmas put together by Lome Feo Pele, family and friends all the way from Melbourne Australia.

As part of the SVSG (Melbourne) sub-group, Lome and her family first visited the children during Christmas of 2017.

Thank you so much Lome Feo Pele and family, friends, for the wonderful Christmas presents for the children at the Campus.

You came and saw the need, and for the last 2 years you continued to fulfil your wish of giving the children of hope a smile every Christmas. We love your heart and we wish you and your family a prosperous 2019.

Eli & Wyndi Tagi of WE Accounting New Zealand

It was such an honour to meet up with this lovely couple Eli & Wyndi Tagi from New Zealand.

Through their network of supporters in New Zealand, Eli & Wyndi put together boxes of sports uniform for the children at the Campus.

And while in Samoa, they have blended in well with SVSG and its programs. Firstly, they attended the official opening of the Buddy up program with child vendors at the Campus, then they joined in the ava ceremony to officially welcome the delegates to the Initial Meeting of the Breaking the Cycle of Violence Project: Men and Boys Engage.

6.2 Breaking the Cycle: Men & Boys Engage

The Initial Meeting for 5 global alliances lead by the Centro Rural Joven Vida (CERUJOVI) in Spain, and including the Emancipator in Nethelands, the Youth First in Madagascar, the Foundation for Innovative Social Development in Sri Lanka, the Centre for Health and Social Justice in India and Samoa Victim Support Group, Samoa was hosted by the SVSG Juniors from 21 – 25 January at the Travellers Point Hotel, Apia.

The alliance gathered as part of a year-long project called Breaking the Cycle: Men & Boys Engage to end violence against women co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

For 5 days, the participants discussed and shared on best practices and on strategies to better engage men and boys to be a part of the solution to end violence against women. https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/17735

At the end of the Initial Meeting, there were milestone achievements:

- There was a sharing on changing masculinity views to address the problem, as alluded to by the Director of the Emancipator from Netherlands, Jens van Tricht; and https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/16036
- There was a strengthening of the partnership between SVSG and the alliances to the project through the signing of Memorandum of Associations

The next meeting will be in New Dehli in March, and our SVSG Juniors will be representative our team.

Thank you so much Kaska and the team for choosing SVSG as your working partner in the Pacific.
The Program was a success. [https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/15274](https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/15274)

We started off with 30 child vendors and upon completion of the program, 13 or 43% of them have been assessed as eligible for primary school education. The SVSG Juniors then worked together with our supporting partners to secure sponsorship for each child. And we did it. By the time we go to print, all of the 13 children are now attending the Vaigaga Primary School and the Aele Primary School. [https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/6685](https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/6685)

One of the first recipients of schooling sponsorship was Faustina Aperaamo, a 10 year old girl missed out on school for the whole of 2018 as her parents could not afford her school fees and other school requirements. She became a child vendor.

Faustina attended the Buddy up program and her story captured the attention of a visiting couple from New Zealand – Eli & Wyndi Tagi - who became her sponsor. The girl has returned to school, away from the danger of the street as a child vendor. [http://www.samoaobserver.ws/en/31_01_2019/local/40686/Child-vendor-gets-school-fee-support.htm](http://www.samoaobserver.ws/en/31_01_2019/local/40686/Child-vendor-gets-school-fee-support.htm)

Thank you so much Tomasi Peni, the ILO Country Coordinator for supporting the funding proposal of $5,000 that was approved to carry out this Program.

Thank you also to all the companies and organizations that hosted the children during their workplace tours. A special mention of the media’s role in raising awareness on the issue and for following the journey of the child vendors under the program, to where they are today.

Last but not the least, we acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the sponsors, both here and abroad, that enabled us to remove 13 less children out of the streets and enrolled them in relevant Primary Schools.

Before returning to New Zealand, Eli & Tagi stopped by the SVSG office to present yet another donation, this time, it was a full year scholarship worth $1,000 for one of the child vendors under the Buddy up program to return to school.

Thank you so much Eli & Wyndi for reaching out to support the work of SVSG not only through your attendance and participation in our relevant programs, but also through the monetary and in kind donation.

**Maurice & Elanit Mitry of Sydney Australia**

The couple in charge of paying for the Campus water rates every month, Maurice & Elanit Mitry, took time out from their holiday in January to pop in at the Campus to see the children.

Bearing donations of food and toiletry supplies, Maurice & Elanit always encourage us with their ‘can do’ mentality. Thank you so much Maurice & Elanit for continuing to believe in the work of SVSG and for your kind hearts.

**Yewon Church of Auckland New Zealand**

Pastor Easter and Brother Sam from the Yewon Presbyterian Church in Auckland New Zealand visited the children while in the country in January.

In September 2019, SVSG partnered up with the Yewon Presbyterian Church of South Korea in providing medical clinics for the children at the Campus.

Thank you so much Pastor Easter and Brother Sam for encouraging the children on the word of God. Thank you also for the donation of food and supplies for the babies.
Joe & Tamalii Tufuga and family of Brisbane Australia
This kindhearted family visited the Campus in January with miscellaneous donation of food supplies for the children while holidaying in Samoa. In addition, $100 was presented to support the children’s daily caring. Thank you Joe Tamalii Tufuga for your support. Thank you also to Angie Scanlan and Tehani Scanlan for accompanying the Tufuga family.

2.3 Child Vendors – The Hot Soup Skill Building Training
January saw the coordinators of the Hot Soup Skill Building carrying out preparation work for the start of the new school year.

There was enrolment for the child vendors new to the Program. The new students and their parents met with the SVSG President and the trainers to go over the skill building program. The meeting was also to gauge the support of the parents in allowing the children to attend the training during school hours instead of selling goods on the streets. There were 9 new students enrolled in the Program in January (6 boys and 3 girls).

Out of the 45 students that attended the training program in 2018, 8 of them have been enrolled for the first time in the mainstream education in January (2 boys age 9 and 10 / 6 girls age 7 – 10). Five have been enrolled at the Vaigaga Primary School and three at the Aele Primary School. Both schools are closer to the Tafaigata land fill and Nuu-fou where the children and their families live.

This is an achievement for the skill building program as we saw the young children that have never been to school before, progressed on to become full time students, with their education being fully sponsored by members of the community. The remaining 37 students plus the 9 new enrolments for January takes the total roll to 46 for this new school year.

Thank you so much Antone (Tony) Gruebel and the US Embassy in Samoa for supporting SVSG’s work to address the growing child vendor problem in our community. We are slowly making progress in getting the child vendors out of the streets and into the classrooms where they belong, during school hours.

6. SVSG JUNIORS
6.1 ‘Buddying up’ with Child Vendors
The SVSG (Juniors) started its first activities for 2019 with its Buddying up Program with Child Vendors.

Funded by the International Labour Organisation, 30 child vendors from Vaiusu, Tafaigata, Falelauniu and Nuu-fou were buddied with SVSG (Junior) youths from the Luatuanu CCS Youth, the Fasitoo-uta Youth, the Shrine of the Three Hearts Youth the SVSG Youth Empowerment Program, and the Sisters of Hope.

Out of the 30 child vendors participating in the Buddy up Program age 7 – 17 years old, 95% of them have never been to school before, and as such, needs a lot of help with writing their names, reading the basic learning. The ‘Buddy Up Program gave some of Samoa’s child vendors a glimpse of hope. [http://samoaobserver.ws/en/23_01_2019/local/40411/Glimpse-of-hope-for-child-vendors.htm](http://samoaobserver.ws/en/23_01_2019/local/40411/Glimpse-of-hope-for-child-vendors.htm)

The aim of the program was to get the children back into the classrooms and away from the danger of the streets during school hours.

For 10 days, the child vendors were introduced to life out of the streets to and the importance of education. At the Samoa Observer, the Editor, Mata’afa Keni Lesa appealed to the youngsters to believe in themselves and the power of education to change one’s life. “Don’t look down on yourselves,” he said. [https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/26436?cont=true](https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/26436?cont=true)

- they visited workplaces such as the Samoa Observer, the TV3, the Radio 2AP, the Taumeasina Island Resort, the Samoa Rugby Union;
- they carried out some skills training at the Hot Soup centre at the Campus of Hope;
- they played and danced together with their youth buddies; and
- they gave back to the community by cleaning up at downtown Apia towards the Black Sand Beach. [https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/25976](https://www.samoaobserver.ws/category/samoa/25976)
5. ONE SKY GIVING CIRCLE

Taking on a positive mentality towards life in general is the message behind the Positive Movement referred to as the ‘We Can, You Can’ Campaign.

The ‘We Can, You Can’ Campaign is an idea born from the female survivors of gender based violence, who were once residence of the Campus of Hope, and now called themselves, the Sisters of Hope. It was their way of sharing their story that If We Can rise up and live on, You Can too!

The whole idea behind the Movement is for everyone to think positive, live positive and influence others in a positive way; because from SVSG’s experience, a positive mentality saves lives.

The International Children’s Peace Prize Award 2018 finalist Ms. Leilua Lino is leading the Positive Movement with the assistance of the Sisters of Hope.

Thank you to the One Sky Giving Circle for the grant to support SVSG’s work to address family violence, which now enabled the Sisters of Hope to carry out its Positive Movement.

Finalist of the International Children’s Peace Prize Award 2018, Leilua Lino campaigning for a positive movement for survivors of gender based violence.


2.4 ECPAT International

ECPAT International (ECPAT) is a global network of organisations working together for the elimination of the sexual exploitation of children (SEC) in all its manifestations i.e. exploitation of children in prostitution, online child sexual exploitation, sale and trafficking of children for sexual purposes, sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism and some forms of child, early and forced marriage. The ECPAT Network currently consists of 104 members working at national and local levels in 93 countries.

SVSG became a member of the ECPAT International since 2014.

ECPAT Members are very diverse: some are small grassroots advocacy organisations; some are large social welfare providers; some members have activities covering a wide range of SEC issues while others concentrate on only one aspect. ECPAT Members are involved in the implementation of various initiatives to protect children at local levels.

In November, ECPAT launched the Sexual Exploitation of Children (SEC) in the Pacific Region Survey. The main objective of this project is to explore the scale, scope and context of the sexual exploitation of children in the Pacific region.

Specifically, this project aims at gather data from frontline workers that: Indicates the extent of SEC in the Pacific region; Provides information on country level trends in SEC; Measures the level of awareness of service providers and practitioners; and Explores the impact of cultural and social norms on SEC.

January therefore saw SVSG signing on a consultancy agreement with ECPAT International to facilitate the identification and the completion of on-line surveys by 12 frontline workers who are working directly with children.
3. **ADVOCACY PROGRAMS FOR OFFENDERS OF VIOLENCE**

With close to 2,500 referrals from the Family and Youth Courts to the SVSG’s Advocacy Program since September 2013, to date, the reoffending rate remains at 3%.

This fact alone highlights the effectiveness of therapeutic approach to addressing family violence as per the essence of SVSG’s Advocacy Program for men, women and young offenders of violence.

SVSG’s Advocacy Program for January started off with a total of 36 participants: 8 women, 15 men and 8 youth for the Upolu program; and 5 men for the Savaii program.

There were 5 new referrals to relevant advocacy programs in Upolu; 3 to the Men’s Advocacy, 1 to the Tina Faafautua program and 1 young offender to the Youth Empowerment Program. There were no new referrals in January from the Family Court at Tuasivi to the SVSG’s advocacy program in Savaii.

A total of 41 participants have therefore been attending relevant counselling rehabilitation coordinated by SVSG’s Advocacy Program.

4. **THE NOFOTANE PROJECT WITH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (CFLI)**

The Self-Esteem Workshops for the self-employed nofotane women continued in January with the CFLI project reaching more than hundred women at Salua, Lalovi, Satuimalufilufi, Fuailoloo, Apolima, Siumu, Saaga, Sapunaoa, Salani, Matautu, Saleilua, Salesatele, Satalo & Malamalu.

Despite having to travel quite a distance to the workshop venues, the women attended and completed the full workshop sessions. The workshops focused on improving the women’s self-esteem through the SHINE program as well as following up with their basic financial skills.

Some of the nofotane attended with their husbands as their supporters and partners in their new business ventures. Others had their young ones tagging along with them. The workshop sessions were more like family sessions, which was very unique.

And while the project team were out in the village communities working with the nofotane women, the office continues to work on securing partnerships to assist the self-employed nofotane women further.

Later in January, Digicel and the Nofotane women launched a business initiative making reusable bags that can be stashed in your compartment or handbag.

According to a press release from Digicel,

“**In the wake of Samoa’s recent ban on plastic grocery bags and other single-use plastics, the telecommunications and entertainment provider, in collaboration with Signs Studio at Vaitele, thought to capitalize on it and help part of the community earn wages by printing and sewing reusable bags for Digicel.**

“This has become the perfect opportunity for us to reach out to the community and help develop this group of women and their families by sewing and putting together reusable bags to be available for purchase at our stores, with 100% of the earnings going back to them and help with their wages” continues Mr Mohammed.

Digicel has held a special place in the midst of normal business operations for community based work, and this initiative has encouraged the Nofotane women to foray into their fields of creativity and to earn an income by creating what is seen as the best alternative to plastic.

“We are happy and grateful that Digicel had asked us to make these, not only will we be able to express and put our talents to good use but it is good to know that we are able to provide for our children and families from it.” Says Luisa Sauileao from Siumu, leader of the Nofotane Group.

The Digicel/Nofotane reusable bags will be available at all Digicel retail outlets in Upolu and Savaii for WST$15.00, all sales will go directly to the Nofotane Women Group (SVSG).