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.

Sponsored by:
The One Sky Giving Circle
CA, United States of America
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:

Lavetanalagi Seru is with Lina Chang @ the EJA Convening, Nadi, Fiji March 31 ·

The highlight of this last week was meeting this extraordinary, inspiring & amazing Samoan woman - Lina Chang.

Lina - founded the Samoa Victims Support, an organization that works to protect and support victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse & rape, single mothers, children abandoned by their parents and young people at risk. This she began with a support of her team, with little core funding. Today they have a campus that continues to see blessing pour in from Government, Faith Groups, Private Sector and individuals alike from Samoa and abroad.

She shared her work with young people, transforming lives and bringing change and hope to families by claiming their own agency. They fundraise and work to provide educational materials, water tanks, visiting the sick in hospitals and many more.

These young people AND Samoa are blessed and fortunate to have her amidst them, a woman of great conviction, dedication & passion.

Elizabeth V Kitè Indeed. Her dedication and loyalty to the cause and her people is just out of this world. Powerful

Vao Lo Tam A wonderful Woman of GRACE. Your cup is over flowing. Love Peace and Joy be yours always

Epenesa Pouesi Young WELL SAID SIR AND COULDN’T AGREE MORE ABOUT THIS WONDERFUL SAMOAN WONDER WOMAN WHO HAS ACHIEVED SO MUCH FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION OF SAMOA
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 twice a week;

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;

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;

Motuipuaa Dr. Aisoli Vaai of the Saleufi Medical Clinic, for the children’s free medical consultation; and

Taulealeausumai Dr. Titi Lamese of the Ola Fou Clinic, for the children’s free medical consultation.

Talofa Lava

I trust this third Edition of the Engage Newsletter reaches you and your families in the best of health.

Thank you to those who took the time to read and commented on the previous edition. It surely encouraged us to continue being transparent with our work while remaining accountable to our donors. Thank you also to those who have come to learn of SVSG’s work, and advocated accordingly thereby raising awareness amongst the community of why we exist.

March brought along its own set of challenges and rewards. We have SVSG village representatives actively participating in being the informal social welfare mechanism for our community in need, and in seeking justice. The extent of alleged incest cases brought forward through the SVSG village reps. speaks volume of their advocacy role.

Then we have children who are continually being abused and found refuge at the Campus of Hope. SVSG’s partnership with the Police addresses the gap in the system in this area.

And in response to violence and the effects of gender inequalities on the vulnerable members of our community, SVSG’s primary prevention programs look more towards mentality change in social norms and masculinity views that perpetuate violence in the homes. SVSG’s participation in regional convening and international seminars on these areas highlighted the Group’s commitment to continuously improve staff capacity, to enable the effective and efficient implementation of its programs.

So as we have gone past the first quarter of this year, we remain grateful of the partnerships we have established along the way and the achievements we have made. To God be the glory always.

Warm regards

Georgina Lui
Chair, SVSG Board
1. FAMILY VIOLENCE

A total of 44 new cases were lodged with SVSG during March: 29 cases with the Upolu Office and 15 cases lodged with the Savaii Office. February recorded a total of 43 cases lodged with SVSG, so there is an increase of 1 case in March compared to February.

Of the total 44 new cases:
- 10 were cases directly involving children ages 2 – 16 years old; 4 sexual, 3 child abuses, 2 welfare assistance and 1 attempted suicide;
- 12 were domestic violence cases involving mothers;
- 9 were maintenance and custody cases;
- 5 were mediation and counselling support related; and
- 8 were welfare assistance

SVSG continues to apply for Protection Orders for the abused mothers and children. In March, there were 4 mothers and 8 children in which SVSG assisted with their applications for Court protection orders.

At the Family Court where family violence matters are heard, the SVSG Court Officer always encountered the ugliest side of violence; where children gave evidence against their fathers after witnessing near death experiences for their mothers; where brothers and sisters were against each other over continuing violence in their families.

Despite these ugly realities, SVSG is grateful that our people are starting to condemn the social norms surrounding violence as a family matter; that children do not challenge parents’ decision; and in its place, we see a community more aware of violence as a crime; children standing up for justice against their parents; and that violence is not to be tolerated.

Highlighted below are some of the cases of domestic and sexual violence reported to SVSG in March:

04.03.19: Domestic Violence
A 50 year old mother of 3 children ages 13, 10 and 2, has been battling the physical, emotional and psychological abuse from her husband for years. It was not until his eldest son saved her, while being strangled by the husband, that makes her realised the severity of the situation.

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

Financial:

<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</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex &amp; Jill Stanley</td>
<td>SVSG Office</td>
<td>1,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kind:
- Aotearoa Pesamino – 5 bags of clothes
- Sefo Vaotua – 2 boxes of clothes, 1 bag of shoes
- Fuimaono & Kisa Rimoni – 9 bunches of banana/1 box ripe bananas
- Dr. Pamela Dagley & Family of Melbourne Australia – assorted stationery supplies
- Leuaina Hatier – children’s clothes
- Fetu Sakaria – children’s clothes and books

“And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.”
- Hebrews 13:16 -
New Zealand Musicians Performed for the Children
A group of musicians from New Zealand took time out while visiting in March to entertain the children at the Campus of Hope. There was excitement as the musicians were introduced and there was admiration as they danced to the music.

Through the Engage Newsletter, SVSG acknowledges the contribution from the following artists:

Ventry Parker a.k.a Poetik (Samoan)

Lucky Lance (half Samoan) Team Dynamite

Israel Starr (New Zealander) Maori - Second generation reggae star and rastaman in NZ

Lion Rezz (New Zealander) Maori - Rungtinz family

KP - DJ and owner of sound systems in New Zealand

Jasmine Ziedan, Managing Director of BaseFM New Zealand & owner of new radio station Island BaseFM in Samoa

The children really enjoyed the variety of music performed for them, especially the treat of candies afterwards. The entertainment surely encouraged the children as music is healing unto itself. Thank you Jasmine for coordinating the visit; and the musicians for the performance and for the donation of $400.00 for the children.

The mother and the distraught children sought SVSG’s assistance for a Protection Order for her and her children against the husband; refraining him from their home, the children’s school and the mother’s work place. The matter was heard in the Family Court and adjourned to early May for the 2 older children to give evidence against their father. The mother and her older children have been undertaking counselling sessions with SVSG’s counsellors.

15.03.19: Sexual Abuse
A 15 year old college student from the village but lives closer to Apia for schooling, was sexually abused by her 80 year old grandfather. The victim lives with her grandfather and other relatives during the week and only goes home to her parents at the village on the weekends. When the victim told her mother about the incident, the mother together with 2 of SVSG village representatives lodged the complaint with SVSG against the grandfather. The matter was immediately referred to the Police for their investigation while the victim is now back with her parents in the village.

19.03.19: Rape
As a family friend and a high chief of the village, a 60 year old married man frequently visited a couple and their daughter. There is only one child in the family, a 16 year old adopted daughter who attended college in the village. It was during one of these visits that the high chief found the daughter alone at home and he raped her. The girl never told anyone out of fear that no one will believe her story against the high chief. Unfortunately, the rape resulted in the girl being pregnant, and that was when the parents found out and lodged a complaint with SVSG against the high chief. The girl was 2 months pregnant when she was admitted to the shelter for her safety while her case is being investigated by the Police.

23.03.19: Incest
A grandfather raped his 16 year old granddaughter and she became pregnant. Out of shame and fear of being banished from the village, the family blamed a relative’s husband (faiava) for the offence despite the victim’s confession that it was the grandfather who raped her. An informer became the victim’s voice and reported the matter to SVSG for assistance. The case was immediately reported to the Police for their usual assistance; the victim and her 3 months old baby are now under SVSG’s shelter care. As for the wrongly accused faiava, the second victim in this case, the result of the Police’s investigation will clear him of the allegations.
**26.03.19: Attempted Suicide**
The stigma associated with being sexually abused and having the offender being released from Police custody was just too much for a 16 year old and she attempted to kill herself. Fortunately, she was caught while in the act, and the village mayor called SVSG via the Help Line for assistance. The SVSG staff evacuated the victim from the village and referred her to the shelter for her safety. She has been undergoing one-on-one counselling and she is slowly coming around. This is the sad reality of how violence can kill and would kill if we are not on the alert.

**Kristin Bibbs of Canada:**
Hard to believe it's been 6 years and the Svsg Samoa Help-Line is still going strong! Having received funding from UN Women and ongoing sponsorship from Digicel and Bluesky. I am so proud to know this service is helping save lives in Samoa!! Thanks to all who continue to volunteer and provide this amazing support.

**27.03.19: Inappropriate Touching**
One of the seven female students, alleged victims of inappropriate touching by a retired teacher, lodged a complaint against the offender with SVSG. Speaking on behalf of the other student victims, the 13 year old talked about the humiliation of the inappropriate touching by the offender, which he resolved to as a disciplinary measure.

The victim confided that she would rather be disciplined physically, rather than being pinched on different body parts. The SVSG village representative brought the matter to SVSG’s attention for assistance, as she feared that there could be more victims of this sexual offending as the retired teacher has been teaching at the school for 30+ years. SVSG immediately referred the case to the Police for their usual investigation. The offender has been remanded in Police custody to await his court appearance.

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

**Hannah Poynter, Speech & Language Therapist, Great Britain**
The children with disabilities at the Campus of Hope had the opportunity to be supported by Hannah Poynter, a Speech & Language Therapist from Great Britain. Hannah was originally placed with Senese, but as she learnt about the needs in the community for speech and language support, Hannah requested to spend part of her time at the Campus.

It has been an experience she thoroughly enjoyed as much as the children. Thank you Hannah for your heart to help our children with disabilities; we will keep in touch.

Before Hannah left, she wrote a detailed report on each of the children she worked with, and acknowledged the opportunity presented by SVSG to enable her to reach out and help:

Thank you for the opportunity to spend time at the shelter and get to know some of your amazing children. The three I worked closely with will hold a place in my heart, always. Although my time in Samoa is almost up, I would be happy to stay in touch via email if you have any questions or comments about what I've said in this message. You can email me on this address and I will be sure to respond as soon as I can.

Thank you again for the experience, and please know how much I admire the work that you and the rest of the SVSG team are doing for this group of vulnerable children. You're doing an amazing job!

With best regards, Hannah

**Formulation of an Interagency Services Guide**
SVSG was represented at a consultation coordinated by the Ministry of Women as part of the Ministry’s initiative towards the formulation of an Interagency Essential Services Guide.

According to the Ministry, the Guide will inform and improve the referral pathway between government and non-government organizations and community, to ensure the pathway for survivors between agencies are effective and concise. From SVSG’s experience, a similar attempt at an interagency arrangement for survivors has been looked at in the past but never went past the planning stage due to the different mandates governing the work of the agencies.
A Beautiful Donation

Japanese lei maker Mr. Yukio Otani and artist Ms. Miki Kawachi conducted an exhibition at the US Embassy Residence in March where a variety of different creations were on display and for sale. Before the artists left Samoa, they visited the Campus and donated $837.00 for the children, the proceeds from the sale of their lei and necklaces sold at the exhibition.

Thank you Yukio and Miki for such a beautifully thought out donation; thank you also to the US Charge de Affaire’s wife Mrs. Izumi Greubel for coordinating the visit.

Pacific Women Technical Mission:

SVSG had the privilege to be part of the first mission to Samoa by the Pacific Women’s Support Unit’s Team Leader, Ms. Kymberley Kepore and the Program Officer Mr. Laisenia Raloka.

The meeting between SVSG and the Technical Mission established the first ever official relationship between SVSG and the Pacific Women Support Unit, and credit goes to the Team Leader Ms. Kepore for reaching out to include SVSG in the space available in the Pacific Women program for the economic advancement of nofotane women.

The Pacific Women Support Unit based in Suva, Fiji provides logistical, technical and administrative support to the Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development program. Its aim is to improve opportunities for the political, economic and social advance of Pacific women.

2. CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

The highlighted cases of sexual abuse reported to SVSG in March, is a reminder of our collective responsibility as a community towards child protection.

Most notable from the sexual abuse cases were the offenders control over the victims; 2 were incest committed by the grandfathers against their granddaughters, 1 committed by a retired teacher and 1 high chief. SVSG commend the village representatives and members of the community who spoke out on behalf of the victims, against the social norms surrounding sexual violence being shameful and the stigma associated with it. Two of the victims have fallen pregnant because of the sexual abuse.

There were five new admissions to the shelter facilities during March included 3 sexual abused victims, a 3-months old baby, and 1 attempted suicide victim.

Without UNICEF Pacific’s funding support for the Child Protection Team as well as the rehabilitation and reintegration programs for the children, SVSG will not be able to effectively provide much needed psychological support for our children.

There were also successful court cases recorded for the children in March; 1 sexual abuse case at the Supreme Court involving a 17 year old attempted rape by the biological father. The father is now convicted of the offence and will be sentenced in May 2019.

The 4 child abuse cases at the Family Court found the family relatives involved guilty of the crimes and most of them are undergoing anger management counselling with SVSG’s Advocacy Program.

The next stage of SVSG’s child protection work is preparing the children for their reintegration; a process which requires working together with the children’s family for a smooth transition back into the community.
2.1 Campus of Hope

The Campus remains the only shelter facility available in Samoa for children survivors of gender based violence and neglect.

Sometimes, people questioned the rationale behind the setting up such a facility. However, whenever we get a new admission, therein lay the answers. Because where will these children be if there was no shelter; if they are no longer safe in their homes.

SVSG’s standing remains, that the Campus of Hope is merely a temporary shelter for the children’s safety and rehabilitation while pursuing justice for the wrongs committed against them.

At the end of the day, the children will be placed back to the community, whether it will be with their immediate or extended families.

During March, there were 4 new admissions to the shelter plus a 3 month old baby. By the end of March, 3 sisters have been successfully reintegrated leaving a total of 80 children; 10 boys and 70 girls, ranging from the ages 3 months to 19 years old.

Providing for the daily needs of the children and implementing the relevant rehabilitation programs have been made possible through local and overseas donors, as well as UNICEF Pacific.

Equality & Justice Alliance Convening: Nadi Fiji

SVSG President was invited to the Pacific Civil Society Convening from 27-29 March in Nadi Fiji, coordinated by the Equality and Justice Alliance (EJA).

The EJA is a 4-member alliance: the Human Dignity Trust; Kaleidoscope Trust; Sisters for Change and the Royal Commonwealth Society - working on a 2-year pan-Commonwealth project to advance equality & equal protection before the law to secure the rights for Commonwealth citizens without discrimination.

The President was able to establish networks with the participants at this regional convening to continue the conversation on gender equality, especially amongst youths.

U.S Ambassador Scott Brown Visited the Campus

"I look back on my life now though, and I can honestly say that there isn’t one thing I would change; not the arrest, not the violence, not the hunger ……………..those years and that life made me the man I am today."

Spoken as a true survivor himself, Ambassador Scott Brown was in his comfort zone when he spent time with the children of hope during his visit to Samoa in March.

He talked to the children as a father and a mentor. He assured them that despite the difficulties, they will come out victorious. “I want to let you know that I understand what you go through. Not a single day goes by that I don’t remember, but I tried to move past it, and so should you.”

Thank you so much Ambassador Scott Brown and Gail Brown for a very inspiring visit. You immediately identified areas where your office can help us along and we are appreciative of genuine interest to lend a helping hand.

Peone Fuimaono of Apia Thanks for the heart to keep on keeping on. Everyone knows the value of your service even if they don’t acknowledge it. Malo le galulue! God bless the works of your hands always xoxo
Zumba Fundraising

There was even time in March for the youth to exercise and caught up with its youth partners during its Zumba fundraising which raised $420.00.

Thank you to our families and friends, as well as members of our youth groups who joined us for an evening of fun exercise while raising funds for our community projects.

Thank you also to Ms. Sinead Mahood, the Volunteer/Project Coordinator for Projects Abroad in Samoa for getting the volunteers behind the fundraising event.

Community Outreach

The youth program for March reached the Assembly of God at Satapuala. The AOG Satapuala is one of the registered youth members of the SVSG Juniors, and it is always good to catch up with Reverend Sale Uelese and the youth at Satapuala.

Thank you for the inspirational sharing Rev. Sale and we look forward to seeing members of the youth team from AOG Satapuala during our Career Counselling Train the Trainer Program in May with the International Labour Organisation.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

International Women’s Day with BSP

SVSG was the recipient of the donation by the staff of the Bank of the South Pacific (Samoa) as its giving back to the community initiative for the International Women’s Day 2019.

Thank you so much Taituuga Maryann Lameko Vaai, Country Head of the BSP (Samoa) for the kind gesture and for BSP’s ongoing work in partnership with SVSG.

Antioch Assembly of God – Ilili American Samoa

Rev. Sale Uelese Amosa of the Assembly of God Satapuala accompanied the visiting team from the Antioch Assembly of God of Ilili American Samoa at the Campus in March. Sharing on the word of God, the visitors encouraged the children to always remember God’s love when feeling down and depressed because His love never fails.

Thank you so much Ofira Johansson and the team for visiting the children, the in kind and monetary donation of $500.00 to assist with their daily needs. God bless!

Aiga Manuia Group of the Malua Theological College

Representing their communities in Australia, Tokelau and Samoa, students (a’oa’o) and wives of the Aiga Manuia Group attending the Malua Theological College continued with their usual Pastoral program for the children of hope in March.

Thank you to the Aiga Manuia Group for always being creative with your programs which the children thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you also for the donation of food supplies you have put together whenever you visited the children. We wish you all the best as you worked in completing your studies at the College.

LDS Aleisa Upolu Stake

Elder Malo Ape, Elder Frank Chang Wang and Sister Simeamative Chang Wang of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints represented the Aleisa Upolu Stake when they brought over bulk food supplies such as rice, sugar, flour, taro, banana, toiletries and clothes as part of their contribution towards the daily caring for the children of hope.

Having the different Stakes of the LDS church donated to the Campus forms part of the Churches commitment to its partnership with SVSG for the children’s welfare. Thank you so much to the Elders, the Sisters, the Bishops and the congregation of the Aleisa Upolu Stake for all that you have sacrificed to support the children survivors under our care.
LDS Aleisa Stake & Tapatapao Ward

The generosity from member of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints continued in March with Bishop Ah Hoy and the Tina o le Aualofa of the Aleisa Stake and the Tapatapao Ward presenting food supplies, toiletries and other necessities for the children at the Campus.

God bless each and every one of the families that have sacrificed their own daily needs for the children of hope.

Pastor Jeremy & Shelley Faumuina of Christchurch New Zealand

It is always good to catch up with Pastor Jeremy and his lovely wife Shelley Faumuina during their scheduled visits to SVSG every year.

Pastor Jeremy is the Director of the SVSG (Christchurch) who joined the SVSG family the first time he visited the Campus of Hope.

Their visit in March was to discuss with President Lina further development with the SVSG (Christchurch) support programs for the older girls at the Campus, as well as ongoing support for the office.

We wish you well Pastor Jeremy & Shelley as you are faced with support work for the community in Christchurch following the terrorist attack in March.

Church of the Nazarene Ululoloa

Members of the congregation as well as theological students of the Church of the Nazarene Ululoloa, visited the Campus in March bearing food and toiletry supplies for the children of hope.

Included in the visitors were some of the students from the Nazarene Theological College who were at the Campus for the first time, and commented on the blessed feeling being at the Campus. Thank you so much to the church leaders, the congregation and the theological students of the Church of the Nazarene Ululoloa for your continued support.

7. SVSG JUNIORS

The youth members from the 15 Youth Groups currently registered under the SVSG Junior umbrella, continues with its community projects and international engagement in March.

Breaking the Cycle: Men & Boys Engage to EVAW: Seminar in New Delhi

Franziska Sione, the SVGS Junior Coordinator and Mane Su’a, the SVSG Youth Court Officer attended the Seminar in New Delhi coordinated by the Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ) from 12 – 16 March 2019. The Seminar is part of the project to engage men and boys to end violence against women in which SVSG is partnering up with 5 other international organizations.

Book Drive for Faleapuna Library - Upolu

The community continues to support the SVSG Junior’s book drive in March for the Faleapuna Library. Amongst the supporters were:

Aeau Chris Hazelman and family, donating a variety of children’s books to assist with the book drive.

Thank you Aeau for supporting the children’s literary as per the objective of this initiative.

Fetu Sakaria, Aaone Tanumafili and many others who have dropped off reading books for this project.

Lastly, we acknowledge the hard work of our volunteers, Junko Hoshino and Stevannah Ah Ching who were tasked with sorting the books when they are brought in. Well done girls!
6. ONE SKY GIVING CIRCLE

The Positive Movement

The Campaign continues to gather momentum in March both locally and internationally. Primary schools were visited as well as the National Council of Churches. The International Children’s Peace Prize Award finalist, Ms. Leilua Lino is fronting up the Campaign.

Meanwhile, representatives from Netherlands, Madagascar, Sri Lanka, India and Samoa Victim Support Group attending the ‘Breaking the Cycle of Violence: Men & Boys Engage’ Seminar in New Delhi in March, taking time out to be part of the Positive Movement Campaign.

Members of the NCC welcomed the Positive Movement Campaign and the rationale behind it. Speaking during the session with the NCC, Chairman of the National Council of Churches, Deacon Kasiano Leaupepe commended Leilua Lino for her bravery in sharing her story, to save a life. Together, the church leaders pledge to support the positive thinking and living for a better Samoa.

Iben is a volunteer from Denmark working at SVSG... She said that she wanted to be an inspiration for her children to help other people in need by becoming volunteers.....Iben says if she can do it anyone can too.

During March, the Positive Movement Campaign had reached 3,500 of our local people; 1,400 college students, 980 primary school students, 45 taxi drivers, 30 church leaders, and 1,045 of the general public.

Thank you so much to the One Sky Giving Circle of San Francisco California for the grant which enabled SVSG to carry out the Positive Movement Campaign.

Elder & Sister Cameron Farewell Visit

March saw Elder Scott Cameron and Sister Pamela Cameron of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, visiting the Campus for the last time before returning home in May.

Accompanying Elder and Sister Cameron was Hans Sorensen, the LDS Pacific Welfare Manager who finally got to meet the children benefiting from the Churches welfare support. Thank you so much Hans Sorensen for immediately identifying the need for continued partnership.

Elder & Sister Cameron have been missionaries to Samoa and for Sr. Pamela Cameron, she has been the contact person at the LDS Charities for much needed supplies required for the children’s daily provided by the Church under its partnership support for SVSG.

During the visit, Elder & Sister Cameron presented bulk food and toiletry supplies for the Campus and acknowledged SVSG’s role in caring for the children.

“The thank you Lina and your staff for offering a safe and caring place for the children in Samoa, you do so much good.”

The children of hope wish Elder Scott and Sister Pamela Cameron all the best on your next missionary work.

Policewoman from Melbourne Australia

Jo Mirkana from Melbourne Australia promised to visit the children of hope and she did. Dubbed as Samoa’s most prolific tourist, Jo Mirkana is always in Samoa to help the community.

In March, Jo Mirkana stopped by the Campus and surprised the young ones with fire engine trucks. God bless you and your family for all that you have done for our people.
Third Year Students of Malua Theological College

The second group of students from the Malua Theological College to carry out their Pastoral program at the Campus in March, represented their families and communities from New Zealand, Tuvalu, Australia and Samoa.

Rather than being cooped up indoors, the team took the children for an outdoor program of reading, fellowship, games and light snacks. Even the matrons and the carers looking after the children appreciated theological students and their wives taking over the children for most of the morning. The third year students also put together donations of food supplies for the children and enough sweets for everyone. Thank you so much Reverend Ma’afala Limā, the Principal of the Malua Theological College for continuing with the Pastoral program at the Campus of Hope as part of the students Pastoral Field Work Education Programme.

2.2 School of Hope

Three months into the 2019 school year, the School of Hope had been providing continuing education for 74 children survivors of violence and sexual abuse cared for at the Campus of Hope. There were 8 male and 66 female inclusive of 4 children with disabilities and 2 pregnant girls.

Despite the delay in receiving the annual funding from the government through the Ministry of Education, to assist with the teachers and trainers salaries, the school has been in session. The teachers and volunteer teacher aides have been doing a great job with the limited resources available.

With the increase in the number of children attending the school while the older children outgrow their uniforms, we therefore need assistance with the children’s school uniform. Please feel free to contact our office on 25392 or email svsginsamoa@gmail.com if you are able to help us with this specific need.

Digicel Business Initiative

Digicel’s support for the nofotane women saw the launching of a business initiative in January for the nofotane women to make reusable bags in the wake of Samoa’s recent ban on plastic grocery bags and other single-use plastics.

The initiative saw nofotane seamstress and fabric painters working hand in hand to produce reusable bags for all of Digicel’s outlets.

The first order was produced and delivered in March earning a group of nofotane women $3,000 to support themselves and their families.

University of Michigan

Six research students from the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan sought an opportunity to meet with SVSG in March. The objective of the meeting was for the research students to learn more on the Nofotane Project in terms of the economic empowerment of women, and how the concept can be used to address youth unemployment.

SVSG was happy to share on the successes and the challenges of the Nofotane Project knowing that it will help with the youth empowerment programs.

The research team of graduate students were in Samoa to support the UN in identifying youth entrepreneurship and employment opportunities to inform the next phase of the One UN Youth Employment Program.
The Canadian diplomat said he and his delegation were impressed with the results and progress of the Nofotane Women's Project.

“It is such a good chance to witness that the money that our parliament votes every year for international assistance has been put into good use.”

The project achievements far exceed expectations. Out of the 460 self-employed nofotane women reached by the project:

- 85% have increased access to resources for productions;
- 42% have diversified their production to create new products using other natural resources available in their backyard;
- 96% have secured support networks from within their families with their husbands and children in addition to network with other women under the program; and
- 100% have improved self-esteem, going from being unemployed to breadwinners

And to further promote the celebration of the International Women’s Day 2019, Ms. Yasmin Rantasi, M.P., Chair, CPA Canadian Branch who was one of the parliamentarian delegations commended the coming on board of men as agents of change towards women empowerment.

According to Ms. Rantasi, “when we empower a women, we empower a nation.”

Thank you so much Nicolas, Lorenz, Faka’iloatonga and the team at the CFLI in Wellington New Zealand for supporting us through the implementation of this very important project for the nofotane women.

We look forward to your support in the future for SVSG’s on-going program for the community, in particular, the nofotane women.

2.3 Child Vendors – The Hot Soup Skill Building Training

The children attending the Hot Soup Skill Building training at the Campus were treated to a visit from the U.S Ambassador Scott Brown in March.

The Ambassador was so impressed by the creativity and the talents as evidence by the products on display during the visit.

An Open Day is planned for August to showcase the many products the children have created while in training.

The Hot Soup Skill Building training for the child vendors is funded by a grant from the U.S Embassy Apia.

2.4 ECPAT International

SVSG completed surveys with 12 frontline workers in Samoa in March to assist ECPAT International with assessing the scale, scope and context of the sexual exploitation of children in the Pacific region.

SVSG therefore acknowledges the participants that represented service providers for people with disabilities, the Health Sector, the Law & Justice Sector, the community sector and the education sector.

March also saw a request from ECPAT International in Bangkok through its Communications Associate Josefin Hagström, to use Leilua Lino’s photo in a story they have posted as highlighted in the 2nd Edition of the Engage Newsletter. Leilua is the International Children’s Peace Prize Award 2018 finalist and a residence of the Campus of Hope.
3. ADVOCACY PROGRAMS FOR OFFENDERS OF VIOLENCE

SVSG’s Advocacy Program for March started off with a total of 32 participants: 6 youth, 7 women and 19 men.

There were 12 new referrals to the relevant advocacy programs in Upolu; 8 to the Men’s Advocacy, 4 to the Tina Faufautua program and 1 young offender to the Youth Empowerment Program. There were no new referrals in March from the Family Court at Tuasivi to the SVSG’s advocacy program in Savaii. A total of 44 participants attended the SVSG Advocacy Programs by the end of March.

SVSG’s involvement with the Breaking the Cycle of Violence: Men and Boys Engage to End Violence Against Women and to Promote Gender Equality Project has seen SVSG’s advocacy program working on changing mindsets in men about masculinity and getting them to become part of the solution.

This is challenging given the social norms of men living up to the expectations of masculinity where characteristics such as being tough, aggressive, dominant and strong, are accepted and promoted.

However, for the men, women and young offenders of violence who have been given a second chance through rehabilitation under the SVSG Advocacy Programs, changing mindsets is a stepping stone in avoiding inter-personal conflicts within their families.

4. SVSG VILLAGE REPRESENTATIVES

March highlighted once again the village representatives’ role as the strength behind the effectiveness of SVSG’s community engagement through:

- Their promptness in referring to SVSG matters that may compromise the safety of vulnerable people in their villages, usually women and children;
- Their boldness in being agents of change themselves as they continued to advocate for violence free families and support for women’s economic empowerment; and
- Their commitment to being facilitators of the SVSG Advocacy Programs for the courts referred offenders of violence.

The cases of family violence that SVSG needed assistance with in the villages were promptly dealt with due to the presence of the village representatives.

Even carrying out assessments of families requiring welfare assistance or families of children at the shelter undergoing preparation programs for their reintegration were made easier through the village representatives. Most importantly, they perform the monitoring and evaluation of SVSG’s community projects and programs.

The ease by which SVSG was able to coordinate nofotane women to the Nofotane Market to close off the project with the Canada Fund would not have been possible without the village representatives support.

SVSG therefore acknowledges with humility the commitment from its network of church and village leaders who are registered as SVSG village representatives.

5. THE NOFOTANE PROJECT WITH THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT (CFLI)

Closing Market Coincides with the International Women’s Day

“When we saw the project, we were impressed for the fact that it not only addressed like women’s rights but also combining economic opportunities for women and also work on discrimination faced by nofotane women in their daily lives,” Canadian High Commission counsellor Nicolas Sabourin.

Mr. Sabourin was accompanying a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians who were in Samoa to see some of the development assistance program they have funded, including the Nofotane Market Day.