

# Samoa Victims Support Group

## Strategic Plan June 2019 – July 2021

### Vision

**Victims of crime and those in need are well supported to be safe and in control of restoring their lives through quality service.**

### Mission

To be recognised in Samoa as the main community organisation:

- (a) providing access to an integrated, personalised and professional service to all survivors of crime and those in need;
- (b) advocating for the rights and interests of survivors of crimes and those in need;
- (c) supporting those at risk of becoming victims;
- (d) advocating for violence free families and communities;
- (e) provision of safe and secure shelters for survivors;
- (f) championing the interests and rights of persons with disabilities;

### History

Samoa Victims Support Group (SVSG) is the result of the dream of a young lawyer. She worked as a Prosecutor within the Attorney General's Office and realised that on a daily basis she was dealing with victims of sexual crimes. She observed that most of these cases were incest and she saw how difficult it was for the victims to stand up for themselves, especially when the support from family members was more often given to the offenders. The victims were lonely and very emotionally disturbed. She saw that there was no place of refuge, nor support for the victims.

Her compassion for the victims led to her decision to take a stand and make a difference to the lives of these all too often neglected victims. She approached ex-police officers and members of the criminal team at the Attorney General's Office to see if they would work together to form a community group that could support and counsel victims. Thus SVSG was born with three courageous, passionate and determined ex-police officers at the helm.

With compassion and commitment, although no resources, SVSG started to provide assistance. Meeting under the shady trees around town or in their vehicles, their goal was to ensure that there was someone available to respond to victims' needs. With determination and courage, SVSG negotiated an office space in the Government Building and their first office was officially opened by the Attorney-General in 2005.

## SVSG Today

Since these early beginnings SVSG has grown and now supports victims in a wide range of circumstances, as well as working to target the root causes of crime and related social issues. SVSG remains passionate about its vision to advocate, to support, to care for and to protect all victims and strives to ensure that no-one is ever turned away.

SVSG's comprehensive support services for victims and those in need include:

- support and care to empower victims and those in need;
- provision of safe houses and shelters;
- assistance with legal processes;
- counselling and mediation;
- for victims in criminal matters, referrals to police and assistance with Police procedures;
- support for schooling and educational programs;
- welfare services including the provision of basic needs;
- support services for persons with disabilities;
- court support and referral programs (Men, Women and Youth Advocacy);
- community awareness & empowerment programs;
- active networking with the community through SVSG village representatives;
- supporting the SVSG Juniors programs;
- promote empowerment programs for child labour;
- collaborative partnership with local stakeholders;
- established support through global SVSG sub-groups overseas;
- membership of international bodies;

## Programs

SVSG supports a diverse range of programs to provide the best possible support to people in need. SVSG operates on a policy of responding to all requests and never turning away people that ask for assistance. However, in some cases there is little that SVSG can do apart from providing comforting words or practical advice.

The first critical step in SVSG's work is to provide an assessment of every request so that an appropriate course of action can be taken. After the initial assessment, the client may be entered into one of SVSG's programs, referred to another program if they can provide better support, or provided with advice.

SVSG's ten (10) main programs are described below along with targets for the next three years of operation.

To ensure that all these programs are well coordinated and receive the support they need for their timely and successful completion, emphasis has been given in this Strategic Plan to strengthening the Support Services Unit within the SVSG Office.

## **1. CASE WORK**

Case work is SVSG's critical response mechanism for primary interface with the public. This is the process whereby SVSG receives requests from the public, or referrals from organisations such as the Police, evaluates and determines how to respond. Criminal matters are immediately referred to the Police.

Support is provided by SVSG for victims through the legal process. It involves informing clients of general legal information and their rights under the law and providing assistance to familiarize victims with the court process so that they can be prepared when they enter the courtroom.

In the past SVSG has been requested to assist the courts with Victim Impact Reports. SVSG would like to train its case workers in preparing these reports and have this capacity formally recognised by the Attorney-General's Office.

SVSG currently uses a system of paper files for each case received. Key details are retained on a basic excel spreadsheet 'database'. It is SVSG's aim to develop a secure electronic database that will increase efficiency with case management and data collection.

### **GOAL:**

#### **To improve the efficiency in responding to cases lodged with SVSG**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Secure funds and recruit Case Management Team Leader	Funding sources for Case Management Team Leader salaries secured by end of 2019
	Case Management Team Leader recruited during strategic plan period
Recruit and maintain qualified and experienced Child Protection Officers for Upolu (and 1 for Savaii)	Vacant casework positions filled by end of 2019
	Number of complaints against caseworkers during strategic plan period
Encourage capacity building through professional development	Guideline & procedures developed by end of 2019
	Number of trainings attended per year
	Types of trainings undertaken during strategic plan period
	Number of successful funding secured for capacity building
Provide necessary resources for Case Officers	Turnaround time in handling cases daily
Update and strengthen existing systems	Casework database software installed by end of 2019
	Number of missing case files noted per year
	Number of successful cases through to court during strategic plan period
	Number of successful cases received through Help Line during strategic plan period

	Number of complaints received pertaining to the Help Line service
Maintaining the confidentiality of information of cases	Number of complaints received per year

## **2. COUNSELLING**

Counselling takes place when SVSG sees a client in a private and confidential setting to explore a difficulty the client is having, distress they may be experiencing or their dissatisfaction with life, or loss of a sense of direction and purpose. Counselling is a way of enabling choice or change or of reducing confusion. It does not involve giving advice or directing a client to take a particular course of action.

SVSG is aiming to have access to qualified volunteer counsellors who can be available to SVSG clients and also conduct training and counselling at SVSG shelters.

### **GOAL:**

**To effectively support clients through counselling utilising SVSG village representatives**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Recruit qualified counsellors who volunteer their time to provide this support	Increased number of qualified counsellors recruited by the end of 2019
	Establish a core group of trained volunteer counsellors selected from SVSG representatives and located throughout Samoa who are able to provide 24 hour-a-day service.
Additional space available at the main office for counselling services	Allocated space made available by mid-2019
Maintaining the confidentiality of information of counselling support provided	Number of complaints received per year
	Number of successful cases through to court during strategic plan period

## **3. SVSG REPRESENTATIVES**

In 2010 SVSG launched its “Say No to Rape and Indecent Acts” campaign and held a public march, where hundreds of Samoans walked in support of ending sexual crimes in our country. As a result of the Campaign, SVSG has been able to recruit a large number of volunteers in rural Samoa to assist as SVSG representatives.

It is SVSG’s vision that each district will have a contact person to whom other members of the village will feel safe talking to about the threat or existence of sexual crimes, and who can organise support, counselling and police intervention (where applicable).

### **GOAL:**

**Improve the capacity of SVSG village representatives to effectively carry out their roles as SVSG representatives in village communities**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
<b>Recruitment of village representatives:</b>	
* Conduct awareness programs to entice potential village representatives	Number of awareness programs annually
	Number of village reps participating in programs per year
<b>Training programs:</b>	
* Regular workshops on different aspects of SVSG work (eg: cases, disability, shelter etc)	Number of training workshops for village representatives per year
* Village representatives capacity building through counselling training	Number of Village representatives attending and successfully completed counselling trainings per year
* Report writing and data collection	Monthly reporting and data collection
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation:</b>	
* Regular assessments of SVSG Village representative performances	Quarterly performance assessments per year
* Recognition of SVSG representatives work (SVSG Village Reps Day)	Number of Village Representatives recognised per year (SVSG Village Rep Database 2015 as basis)
<b>SVSG Village Representatives Core Group:</b>	
* 6 members to be selected from SVSG village representatives (3 for Upolu/3 from Savaii)	Establish SVSG Village Representatives Core Group lead by the Village Representative Coordinator by the end of July 2015
* Develop and implement a system of utilising village representatives to support SVSG work	SVSG Village Representatives System developed and implemented by the end of October 2015

#### **4. ADVOCACY PROGRAMS**

In 2013, a Men's Advocacy Program was initiated as part of SVSG's awareness campaign on ending violence.

Because of the success of the program and in the absence of any service provider that deals with rehabilitation of offenders, the Family and Youth Courts have tasked SVSG with advocacy programs for men, women and young offenders.

#### **GOAL:**

**For SVSG to have a synchronized system that incorporate all court referrals and related services**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Develop and maintain relevant systems and manuals for each program;	Number of re-offenders
* Awareness programs to identify suitable Program Facilitators;	Number of suitable Program facilitators selected

* Trainings provided by SVSG President, lawyers, and other relevant training providers	Number of trainings provided per year
	Types of trainings provided during strategic plan period
* To establish an SVSG Court Management Group including President, Men's Advocacy, Women's Advocacy, Youth Advocacy & Caseworker	SVSG Court Management (SCM) Group established by July 2019
* Regular meetings to discuss cases and for case manager (president) to make decisions	Weekly meetings of the SCM Group
* Maintaining the confidentiality of information of cases	Number of complaints
Advocacy Alumni as part of the Program Facilitators and support network	Number of Advocacy Alumni sharing their stories and part of the Program Facilitators

## **5. SHELTERS**

Shelters are temporary accommodation provided by SVSG to ensure that victims are safe and well cared for when/if a victim may be exposed to further abuse when they return to their home or no longer have a home to return to. Shelters are currently located on leased land from Government.

The goal for this Strategic Plan period is to have new shelters for people with disabilities, women survivors of domestic violence and a community centre.

### **GOAL:**

#### **To ensure availability of safe and well equipped shelters**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Establish fully equipped Disabilities & Women's shelters	Shelters built by the end of the strategic plan period
Strengthen security systems in place	Number. of complaints from the shelters per year
	Number of unauthorized entries per year.
Develop & implement relevant rehabilitation programs to assist with restoring lives of survivors	Relevant rehabilitation programs developed by end of 2019
	Number of rehabilitation programs implemented during strategic plan year
	Types of rehabilitation programs implemented during strategic plan year
	Number of children participating in the rehabilitation programs during strategic plan year (SVSG Shelter database 2015 as basis)

Develop & implement relevant reintegration programs	Number of successful reintegration during strategic period
Develop & implement effective recruitment process for qualified & experienced staff	Recruitment process developed, approved and implemented by end of 2019
	Number of complaints from the shelters during strategic plan period
Securing funding to sustain shelter management and operations	Number of successful funding proposals per year
Develop and implement policies & systems for the shelters	Shelter policies & systems developed by end of 2019
	Number of shelter policies & systems implemented during strategic plan year
	Types of policies & systems implemented during strategic plan year
Secure future direction for the survivors	Number of support from network secured during the strategic plan year
	Sisters of Hope Reunion by the end of 2019
	Number of children gone through the system during the strategic plan year (SVSG shelter database 2015 as basis) Number of new partnerships formed for the children's future direction.

## **6. WELFARE WORK**

In recent years SVSG has expanded its operations to fight against the root causes of violence and social problems in our community: poverty and lack of education. SVSG's welfare assistance includes immediate relief such as accommodation, food and clothing on a temporary basis.

SVSG is particularly concerned at the link between poverty and crime, domestic violence and other social problems. Breaking the poverty cycle is therefore a key goal in a partnership that SVSG has entered into with Women in Business Development Incorporated (WIBDI), as a sister organisation to assist families of victims through promoting educational, training and income generating opportunities.

### **GOAL:**

**To facilitate access of people to relevant assistance to alleviate urgent needs.**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Develop and implement policies and systems for welfare assistance	Welfare policies & systems developed by end of 2019
	Number of welfare policies & systems implemented during strategic plan year
	Types of policies & systems implemented during strategic plan year
Secure financial donations for relevant welfare assistance	Total amount of Givealittle donations per year for welfare assistance
	Total amount of local donations per year for welfare assistance
Secure funding for livelihood training programs	Number of successful funding proposals per year
Establish community support network to assist with welfare support	Number of partnership agreements signed with local organisations during strategic plan period.
Assist families break out of poverty cycle	Number of support from network secured during the strategic plan year
	Number of families successfully completing livelihood programs during the strategic plan year (SVSG welfare database 2018 as basis)
	Number of families using skills from livelihood programs to generate income during strategic plan year (SVSG welfare database 2018 as basis)
	Number of nofotane earners that continued in business at the end of the strategic plan years
	Number of street vendors under Hot Soup program progressed on as earners and/or return to school
	Number of unemployed youths under the SVSG Junior program to secure employment at the end of the strategic plan years

## **7. AWARENESS RAISING AND ADVOCACY**

Critical to SVSG's mission is raising public awareness on the human rights of everyone in the community that have been violated, and that crimes such as incest, rape, sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence are illegal and will not be tolerated in the Samoan community.

Being aware provides the impetus needed for victims to come forward and seek assistance, to change the behaviour of perpetrators, to change social norms surrounding violence, and improve the laws and services providing support to survivors of crimes.

**GOAL:**

**Develop and strengthen community awareness and advocacy as preventative measures against domestic and sexual violence**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
Community awareness and training on changes in relevant legislations	Number of people seeking support with SVSG on domestic and sexual violence
Develop and implement awareness and advocacy programs on domestic and sexual violence	Awareness and advocacy programs & manuals developed by end of 2019
	Number of awareness and advocacy programs implemented during strategic plan year
	Types of awareness and advocacy programs implemented during strategic plan year
Secure funding for awareness and advocacy programs	Number of successful funding proposals per year
Effectiveness of awareness and advocacy programs	Reduction in the number of domestic and sexual violence cases lodged per year (SVSG casework database 2018 as basis)
	Number of Help Line callers received per year on domestic and sexual violence issues (SVSG Help Line database 2018 as basis)
	Awareness of the nofotane women, the nofotane brand, the nofotane shop etc
Sisters of Hope as part of the Advocacy Team	Number of ambassadors sharing their stories as part of the awareness program

## **8. CHILD LABOUR**

In previous years, SVSG dealt with the child labour issue as part of its welfare support for the underprivileged members of the community through the Homeschooling program.

However, the child labour problem in Samoa continued to grow, despite the Compulsory Education approach taken by government to encourage primary level students to attend schools. SVSG's support for these children and their families is now addressed through a specific child labour program encompassing the whole family in income generating trainings and skills development.

**GOAL:**

**To promote the empowerment of underprivileged children through skill building and basic education programs**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Establish network of relevant stakeholders for empowerment of children	Number of MOU with relevant stakeholders signed per year
* Develop and implement skills training programs	Skill training programs for children developed by the beginning of 2019
	Number of skills training programs implemented during the strategic plan period
	Types of skill training programs implemented during the strategic plan period
	Number of children successfully completed skill training programs during the strategic plan period
	Number of children under the program successfully placed back into the mainstream education
* Establish a meeting/gathering place for children to socialize	Established a meeting/gathering socialising place for children by the end of 2020

## **9. DISABILITIES**

Disabilities support for the community with disabilities was originally part of SVSG's welfare program. However, due to the increase demand from our people for support services for people with disabilities as well as capacity building for caregivers, SVSG's disability support is now branched out as a separate program.

Services for people with disabilities include:

- Assessment of the families of the people with disabilities – usually carried out by the Disability Welfare Coordinator and the SVSG Village Representatives;
- Provision of supporting equipment such as wheelchairs, walking sticks etc through donation from the community;
- Monitoring the progress of the people with disabilities in their homes;
- Physio therapy programs for people with spinal injuries;
- Evacuation of abandoned children with disabilities for shelter assistance;
- Advocate with other service providers for people with disabilities such as the Loto Taumafai (Early Intervention Program), Fiamalamalama School (Education Program) for collaborative support services required;
- Referrals to and/or advocate with the National Hospital for the required medical attention for critical cases;
- Training for caregivers of people with disabilities in partnership with international support network;
- Funding proposals for the operation of disability services with local and international donors.

**GOAL:****For SVSG to have an effective and quality disability support services**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Recruit and secure funding for Disability Coordinator	Disability Coordinator recruited and funding secured by end of 2019
* To build a well equipped disability team;	Number of disability support workers by the end of strategic plan period
* To identify the demand for disability services utilising village reps network;	50% national coverage by the end of 2019 (SVSG Disability Database 2015 as basis)
* To secure financial support for the implementation of different programs and services for persons with disabilities;	Number of successful proposals for disability programs per year
	Number of disability programs implemented by the end of the Strategic plan period
* To provide effective disability services to empower persons with disabilities to become champions and be advocates themselves;	Number of persons with disabilities to access employment by the end of the strategic plan period (SVSG Disability Database 2018 as basis)
	Number of persons with disabilities to access education by the end of the strategic plan period (SVSG Disability Database 2018 as basis)
	Number of persons with disabilities to access community participation by the end of the strategic plan period (SVSG Disability Database 2018 as basis)
* Provide trainings for disability support workers, persons with disabilities and village representatives with APTC, local and overseas health professionals	Number of trainings for disability support workers per year
	Number of trainings for persons with disabilities per year
	Number of trainings for village reps on disability services per year
	Types of disability trainings held in a year
* Develop and implement empowerment programs for persons with disabilities	Empowerment programs developed by the end of 2019
	Number of empowerment programs for persons with disabilities implemented per year
* Separate disability database from the welfare database	Separate Disability Database by end of 2019
* Maintain & update a database of all disability resources (eg. assistive devices, equipments etc)	Quarterly reporting on resource level.

## **9. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & GENDER**

Given the high prevalence of domestic violence as reflected in the increase in the referrals for men and women advocacy programs, there is a need for a specific program to promote violence free families and communities.

### **GOAL:**

**To promote violence free families & communities as a holistic approach**

<b>Strategies:</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Implement appropriate awareness programs (prevention)	Number of awareness programs carried out per year
	Types of awareness programs carried out
	Number of people attending awareness
* Implement effective educational programs for those at risk (couples counselling)	Number of educational programs carried out per year for those at risk
	Number of domestic violence complaints
* Improvement in rehabilitation and empowerment programs	% reduction in the number of re-offending by end of strategic plan period (using SVSG 2015 men's advocacy database as basis)
* Effectiveness of casework assistance	Number of domestic violence complaints progressed through to court per year
* Accessing support through the Help Line	Number of domestic violence complaints received through the Help Line per year
* Effectiveness of men and boys engage programs to address domestic violence	Number of successful cases assisted by village, church and youth leaders under SVSG's programs
* Village representatives as eyes and ears of SVSG in villages	Number of domestic violence cases referred from village representatives per year

## **10. SVSG JUNIORS**

SVSG Juniors is the succession plan of SVSG to ensure sustainability and continuity of its services.

SVSG's work specifically for youth has branched out to the SVSG Juniors (the youth sub-group of SVSG), based on the identified need for a team of young mentors that other young people would be more comfortable relating to, confiding in and interacting with.

The idea was not to set up a different youth group but merely to build on and establish networks with existing youth groups from villages and churches, to strengthen the support mechanism in place for our young people.

### **GOAL:**

**To ensure succession plan of SVSG by strengthening the activities of the SVSG Juniors**

<b>Strategies:</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Recruit and secure funding for SVSG Junior Coordinator	SVSG Junior Coordinator recruited and funding secured by 2019
*Develop and strengthen youth services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of a strong SVSG Junior Executive Growth in youth volunteers</li> <li>• Recruitment of additional youth staff by the end of the strategic year.</li> <li>• Acquire a youth vehicle by the end of the strategic year</li> </ul>
* Develop youth empowerment program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth empowerment program developed by December 2019</li> <li>• National youth gathering of youth groups under SVSG Junior by end of 2020</li> <li>• Fully equipped and functioned Youth band by end of 2019</li> </ul>
*Develop standard membership guidelines and policies	Members compliance with guidelines and policies
* Membership drive to establish network with church youths	Number of church youth groups working with SVSG Juniors per year
* Linking SVSG Junior programs with SVSG programs	Number of programs executed together by SVSG Juniors and SVSG per year
* Breaking the cycle of violence through prevention programs	Number of partnership networks established
	Number of men and boys engage in breaking the cycle programs
*Implement rehabilitation programs for the sheltered children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of successful Buddies established and maintained during the year;</li> <li>• Number of mentor relationships established and maintained during strategic period.</li> </ul>
* Community programs to promote sense of self worth and confidence to become future leaders of the organisation	Number of community programs carried out per year
	Number of potential youth leaders identified by the end of the strategic plan period

## MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Key to underpinning the smooth operation of SVSG's activities is good management and administrative practices.

The following outlines some steps to be taken and/or goals in respect of key areas of SVSG's management and administration

### 1. Core Funding

SVSG needs to secure core funding to pay for salaries and wages for the rest of the staff (excluding the Child Protection Team), in order to be able to retain a core group of workers to carry out its work.

### 2. Program Funding

SVSG will also seek donor funding for its programs for this strategic plan period.

### 3. Fundraising Plan

SVSG to coordinate an annual fundraising event to support the rest of its operation not covered by project funding.

Revised the annual Mass Media Campaign conducted in May of every year to draw support from the local community.

## SUPPORT SERVICES

### GOAL:

**To ensure provision of the most effective and efficient support services**

<b>Strategies:</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>
* Secure funding sources for all programs;	Number of proposals submitted per year
	Number of funding proposals approved during strategic plan period
*Reclaim upstairs office to cater for the expansion of SVSG's work	Upstairs Police office reclaimed by the end of the strategic year
*Develop and implement all capacity building needs of SVSG	Annual Training needs analysis carried out with relevant training programs carried out/attended
*Full upgrade of office computer system with adequate back up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By end of strategic plan period</li> <li>• Weekly backup of server</li> </ul>
Website & facebook maintenance and update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SVSG Junior and Admin.</li> <li>• Website update by June 2019</li> </ul>
* Develop & coordinate fundraising activities;	Fundraising Plan developed by the end of 2015
	Frequency of fundraising activities during strategic plan period
* Formulate and strengthen systems, policies and procedures;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Systems &amp; polices to be in place by July 2019</li> <li>• Surveillance system in place for main office by end of strategic period</li> </ul>
	Annual review of systems and processes during strategic plan period
* Enforcement of approved systems, policies & procedures;	Number of breaches per year
* Procurement of required resources for all projects & programs	Resources procured in line with project plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camera/Video/Drone</li> <li>• Office vehicles</li> </ul>
	Number of successfully completed programs per year
* Coordinate availability of resources for various programs	Timely availability of resources
* Improve internal & external communication;	Weekly staff meeting
* Timely submission of financial accounts and project reports;	All project deadlines met
	Financial accounts to be audited 4 months after financial year
* Reactivate coordination of volunteering systems & processes	All volunteers to complete Induction program before placement
	Volunteer schedules in place