



Engage Newsletter

May-June 2023

Cases: May & June

2023	UPOLU	SAVAII	TOTAL
JAN	30	13	43
FEB	29	10	39
MAR	32	10	42
APR	35	10	45
MAY	18	13	31
JUNE	24	8	32
TOTAL	168	64	232

MAY: Of the 31 cases lodged with SVSG, 18 cases were lodged at the Apia main office and 13 at the Tuasivi (Savai'i) office.

Upolu:

- 2 instances of child abuse
- 1 welfare case
- 1 maintenance case
- 4 general assistance cases
- 2 sexual assault cases
- 3 domestic violence cases
- 2 cases involving troubled teens
- 3 custody disputes

Savaii:

- 3 cases requiring police assistance
- 4 counselling sessions
- 2 custody disputes
- 1 assault case
- 1 maintenance case
- 1 Interim Protection Order (IPO)
- 1 welfare case

JUNE: Of the 32 cases lodged with SVSG, 24 cases were lodged at the Apia main office and 8 at the Tuasivi (Savai'i) office.

Upolu:

- 4 instances of child abuse
- 2 maintenance cases
- 6 general assistance cases
- 1 threatening case
- 1 included insulting words
- 4 sexual assault cases
- 3 domestic violence cases
- 1 defamation
- 2 custody disputes

Savaii:

- 2 instances of physical abuse
- 1 involved the use of insulting language
- 3 counselling sessions
- 2 mediations



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Talofa from SVSG President, Siliniu Lina Chang

With warm greetings, I extend heartfelt wishes on behalf of the expanding SVSG family.

On 22 May 2023, SVSG launched its three-month online fundraising campaign, *Saving Lives*. The three-month campaign focussed on attracting donations that would help us to continue delivering SVSG support services to those most in need. Priority areas for the donations were the Campus of Hope, SVSG Helpline, and increasing the number of case management staff. It didn't take long for the community to show their love and support for the work of SVSG.

Thank you to our long-term supporters, Robert and Lote Scanlan Silivelio and Imoama Avei who set up a cupcake stall at the front of SVSG' office. Over a 6-week period, they baked and sold hundreds of cupcakes and donated proceeds to the campaign.

In May and June, we opened 63 new cases, received 393 Helpline calls, and cared for an additional five (5) children who were referred to the Campus of Hope. We continued to deliver rehabilitation programs for offenders of violence referred by the Family Courts. Our advocacy and community awareness work included hosting a session on SVSG support services to more than 100 youths of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints from Nu'umau Stake Sauniatu. Just before Mother's Day, we were blessed with the arrival of a new-born baby who is under the care and protection of SVSG.

Thank you Ms. Donna Webb, a Child Protection Specialist from Australia, for conducting a workshop with staff and volunteers as part of the review of SVSG's Child Protection Policy. This review is part of the Samoa Gender Partnership Program of the *Tautua - Human Development for All Program*, an initiative of the Governments of Australia and Samoa.



During these challenging and uncertain times, we continue to turn our focus to the divine, finding comfort and reassurance in the unwavering presence and assistance of our Heavenly Father. We find inspiration and guidance in the words of Psalm 121:1-2: *I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.*



Community awareness-raising & advocacy

More than 100 youths of the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints from the Nu'umau Stake Sauniatu, gathered for an awareness session on the support services offered by the Samoa Victim Support Group.

The awareness program forms part of the Youth Camp for adolescents 12 – 18 years old. We are grateful to the community for taking the initiative to raise awareness on gender-based violence, and how we, as a collective, can work together to address it.



Rehabilitation programs

Forty-nine (49) offenders of violence referred to us from the Family Court attended rehabilitation programs SVSG offices in Apia and Tuasivi (Savai'i) that take place every Monday to Thursday.



Projects



EVE research project: The Evidence for Violence Prevention in the Extreme (the EVE Project) is a research study conducted in partnership with local villages to develop an indigenous approach to preventing violence against women in partnership with the University College of London. During May and June, the project trained the EVE project coordinators who implement the initiative within the selected villages. The project also held a two-day community intervention event at Faleasi'u. This highly successful event was attended by community leaders, including speakers, reverends, dignitaries, and the wives of these individuals.

Empowered Nofotane women: The Nofotane shop has opened at the Sheraton Hotel at Mulifanua. Thank you to Sheraton Management for believing in the empowerment of Nofotane women. Another highlight was the visit by Hastings Mayor Sandra Hazlehurst and her delegation from New Zealand to one of the Nofotane market stalls. She was assisted by our wonderful volunteer, Victoria Solomona, a young woman survivor of violence and a former resident of the SVSG shelter refuge some 10 years ago. Victoria's volunteer work for SVSG is her way of giving back to the community, through advocating and promoting the economic empowerment of women survivors of violence.

Samoa Government financing assistance towards eliminating violence against women and girls: SVSG submitted the final project report to the Government of Samoa in June. This Government funding supported counselling, legal information brochures, advocacy programs for male leaders and young boys, Campus of Hope shelters, child labour (vendors), and welfare assistance. One key project highlight was removing 45 child vendors aged 6 to 15 years from the streets and enrolling them in five primary schools.

Samoa Gender Partnership Program: Forty (40) leading SVSG village representatives in Savaii received a two-day training on their role as first respondents to cases of gender-based violence in their communities. This is either through referrals from the Helpline, or referrals from members of their communities. Elderly village representatives made up the majority of the participants to the Savaii training. The targeted training is part of the activities implemented by SVSG through a project supported by the Tautua Program, a partnership between the Government of Samoa and Australia.



Examples of cases and helpline calls

Child abuse case: A concerned informant reported a distressing case of child abuse that had persisted for years. The informant provided explicit details regarding the ongoing mistreatment of the children involved, and tragically, the abuse had occurred again on the day of the report. In response, immediate action was taken, with the case being referred to the police for thorough investigation and assistance. As a result, the victims were promptly brought in to provide statements, and they were admitted to the Campus of Hope on the very same day.

General assistance case: A father of one child approached our office seeking assistance. He disclosed that he was prohibited from residing in his village due to his struggles with alcoholism. It was suggested that he relocate to his maternal family's residence, which he consented to, and the matter was resolved. This instance highlights the importance of community support and understanding in helping to address personal challenges such as alcoholism. By offering alternative solutions and facilitating a supportive environment, individuals can find help to overcome difficult situations and rebuild their lives.

Domestic violence case: A mother of two children sought assistance through the Helpline. She stated that she had been abused and subjected to insulting words by her husband, who also had a drug problem. Due to the unsafe environment, she came to SVSG for help. Case officers promptly addressed the situation, and she was provided with shelter the next day. An interim Protection Order was prepared to ensure her safety while she was at the Sakura House, awaiting further legal proceedings.

General assistance case: The women arrived at the office seeking assistance for herself and her daughter. She asked for help in putting an end to her daughter's involvement in an inappropriate relationship with her own uncle. SVSG reported the matter to the police. The SVSG team then provided the applicant with the necessary information to present her case before the village council. The complaint was resolved through the collaborative efforts of the police and the SVSG member, resulting in the victim's satisfaction and subsequent return home.

Helpline call: A concerned principal reached out to our helpline to report a sexual assault case. We promptly took action and referred the case to the Police Criminal Investigation Division (CID) for further investigation. To ensure the safety of the victim, she was immediately admitted to our shelter where she could find refuge and support during this difficult time.

Helpline call: We received another distressing call through our helpline regarding a case of child abuse. The informant bravely reported an ongoing history of abuse that had been occurring for several years. She provided crucial details about the respondent's abusive behavior towards the children. Disturbingly, the abuse had occurred again on the day of the report. Without delay, we referred the case to the police for a thorough investigation and necessary assistance. The victims were promptly brought in to provide their statements, and on the same day, they were admitted to our Campus of Hope, where they could begin their journey of healing and recovery in a safe and supportive environment.

Helpline call: An informant reported a case of child abuse by a neighbor. The matter was subsequently handled by Faleolo Police Post who issued a warning to the parents for their neglectful behavior of leaving their children at home and subjecting them to abuse.

FREE 24/7 HELPLINE: 800-7874

Campus of Hope

Ukuleles donation: Louisa Wall, from Global Women New Zealand, generously donated ukuleles to the children of Hope. Many of the children at the Campus of Hope are talented musicians, and thanks to Louisa Wall's donation, we were fortunate to receive these Ukuleles.



A heartwarming visit: Lafaele Fesola'i, the son of one of our staff members from Brisbane spent valuable time with the children.



Orange Day: The UniTE campaign has proclaimed Orange Day on the 25th day of the month to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls. On the 25th May, CEO of Samoa Stationery & Books, Tofilau Fiti Leung Wai, Aumua Ming and staff donated boxes of clothes and reading books as part of this monthly tradition by SSAB.



Faith City United Church: During their visit to SVSG, Pastor Tavaga Talani and his wife Sinu'u from the Faith City United Church in Australia. During the meeting expressed their desire to establish a partnership with SVSG to further support our services to the community.



Gospel Singer/Song Writer Lesa Lani Alo: Musicians Lesa Lani Alo and Livingstone Efu visited the children at the Campus for an afternoon of singing and rapping. They brought joy and inspiration through music; singing their famous song "Alo i ou Faiva" and challenging four children to stand up and show their rapping talent. The duo were truly touched by the children's gift of song that was sung at the end of the visit. Lesa and Livingstone are looking forward to their next visit to the Campus.



Digicel's Samoa's Change Maker's Day: Each year on the 5th of June, Digicel Samoa staff volunteer their time to make positive changes in the community. Fia'ailetoa Pepe Christian Fruean, Chair of Digicel Samoa, came along with management and staff to do gardening at the Campus grounds and a general clean up. Some of the staff also got to meet with the children.



Mapu Maia Delegation from New Zealand: The children turned their temporary safe haven into a traditional village setting, to officially welcome the Mapu Maia delegation from New Zealand. The delegation led by their CEO, Mrs Pesio Ah Honi, included counsellors and health promoters.



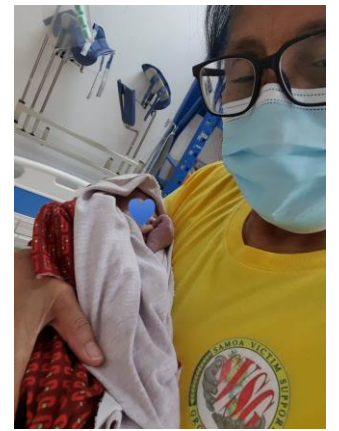
Longtime friends of the Campus visit the children: Sam Atoa, his wife and their team have been supporting SVSG for a long time. They travelled from Utah to visit our lovely island of Samoa and made time to bring gifts for the children and provide assistance for our ongoing fundraising efforts for shelter maintenance.



HOUSE OF BLESSINGS

House of Blessings is a place where young mothers can raise their children when they need a safe environment. The majority of the children who are raised in the nursery (until 3+ years old) are born from children who are survivors of rape.

New-born Blessing: A few days before Mother's Day, we were blessed with the arrival of a new-born baby who is under the care and protection of SVSG. This precious child will find a loving home at the House of Blessings, where they will receive the nurturing and support they deserve.



Volunteers: Mrs. Teuila Eteuati, the CEO of Pacific Forum Line (PFL), along with her daughters, graciously volunteered at the House of Blessing, dedicating their time to caring for our babies and offering much-needed respite for our caregivers. We are profoundly grateful for their support and the loving care they provided to our little ones.



Sponsors, Donors and Partners

Donor	Description	WST\$
Digicel Staff	Donation	\$1314
Mapu Maia	Donation	\$635
Fuamaniuia & Maria Tuala	Donation	\$1000
Penina Trust	Donation	\$500
Rebecca Byrnes	Campus	\$200
Rebecca Rubino	Campus	\$50
Sina Vaai	Campus	\$1000
Rotary Club Samoa	Campus	\$4106
Agalelei & Agaalofo Harpe	Campus	\$1136
Alii & Faipule Lalomauga	Fundraising	\$300
Fiu Leaupepe	Fundraising	\$200
Fifita Leota Mika	Fundraising	\$130
Nightlight	Fundraising	\$4049
Seiuli Lene Tanielu	Fundraising	\$100
Alii & Faipule Malie	Fundraising	\$500
Mapu Maia	Fundraising	\$500
FT Rev Enefatu & EFKS Tanoalei'a	Fundraising	\$500
Ritesh Prasad	Fundraising	\$250
Sai Motors	Fundraising	\$300
SIFA	Fundraising	\$500
Alii & Faipule - Saoluafata	Fundraising	\$300
Pastor Lokeni & EFIS - Vailima	Fundraising	\$200
NPF	Fundraising	\$1000
Central Bank of Samoa	Fundraising	\$1000
Rev Nuuausala & Apia Protestant Church	Fundraising	\$300
Cupcake sales	Fundraising	\$1090
Alii & Faipule - Siufaga	Fundraising	\$400
Gagaifo Lefaga Village Youth	Fundraising	\$500
Alii & Faipule - Mutiatele	Fundraising	\$500
Rev Falaniko & EFKS Mutiatele	Fundraising	\$300
PLT Consultant Ltd	Fundraising	\$1000
Fifita Leota Mika	Fundraising	\$145
Rev Tia & EFKS Tulalele	Fundraising	\$300
Katoliko - Samusu Uta	Fundraising	\$300
Swire Shipping	Fundraising	\$5405
Alii & Faipule - Gagaifo	Fundraising	\$1000
Rev Semikueva & EFKS Moataa	Fundraising	\$500
Rev Tuitoga - EFKS Faleula	Fundraising	\$1,000
Samoa Land Corporation	Fundraising	\$500
Faamaniuia & Maria Tuala	Fundraising	\$1000
Mane Su'a	Fundraising	\$105
Theodore Family	Fundraising	\$280
Kerry Godinet (Marketing Limited)	Fundraising	\$319
DAWG Professional Audio	Fundraising	\$20
Alii & Faipule Fusi Saoluafata	Fundraising	\$1000
Pacific Ezy	Project	\$1000
PFL Foundation	Project	\$20000
UNDP	Project	\$63847
British High Commissioner	Project	\$25000

Thank you to those who had it in their hearts to support SVSG's mission through monetary and in-kind donations. May God bless you and your families accordingly, for your giving hearts. SVSG would like to acknowledge the belief, the heart and the support of our sponsors, donors and established partners. Thank you for being engaged with our work.

Sponsors:

- Digicel Samoa for the free helpline services + miscellaneous sponsors.
- Vodafone Samoa for the free helpline services + miscellaneous sponsors.
- Toleafoa Elon Betham and the team at the Le Aute Gas for 2 x monthly gas refills for the House of Blessings.
- Felise Sam Chong and the team at the Origin Energy for gas refill for the House of Hope and your prompt response for our call for assistance.
- The Newton Family and the CCK Trading Limited for the supplies of clothing for the children.
- Faimalo Allan & Winonah Stowers and Pacific Ezy money transfer for a monthly donation of \$1000.
- Greg & Maria Meredith for the children's daily supplies of bread.
- Theodore Family from Sydney, Australia for monthly cash donation to the office.
- Marion Samoa at Siusega for the daily supplies of the children's bread.
- Luamanuvae Dr. Kapuana D Aiuu, 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.
- Uncle Johnny for the children's ice cream supply every Sundays.
- Motuipuaa Dr. Aisoli Vaai - Saleufi Medical Clinic & Taulealeausumai Dr. Titi Lamese - Ola Fou Clinic, for the children's free medical consultation.
- Zhenna Chan Mow-Fa'uauiga, Niu Pharmacy for free medication supplies.
- Lucky Seumanu and Neal Stephens of the Pure Pacific Water for sponsoring the water coolers for the Campus as well as the SVSG main office in Apia.
- Churches, villages, youth groups and individuals for their time as well as their monetary and in-kind donations.

Partners:

