



SAMOA VICTIM SUPPORT GROUP TOOMAGA MO E PUAPUAGATIA

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MEDIA RELEASE

UNDP Market for Change commits \$30,000 USD to SVSG Market Vendors Awareness Programme

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Apia, Samoa

The Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) today took its awareness efforts directly to the heart of the community, as SVSG Village Representatives headed to Fugalei Market to conduct one-on-one awareness workshops with market vendors under the \$30,000 USD UNDP Market for Change funded project for Market Vendors Awareness Programme.

This six-month programme, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Market for Change in partnership with the Government of Samoa and the Australian Government, aims to strengthen understanding of domestic violence and abuse, promote safeguarding practices, and ensure market vendors are informed of the support services available to them and their families.

Recognising that markets are not only centres of economic activity but also vital community spaces, SVSG's trained Village Representatives engaged vendors through personalised discussions, creating safe, respectful spaces for learning, reflection, and open dialogue. These one-on-one interactions allow vendors to connect the information shared to real life experiences, while also helping SVSG better understand the challenges faced by families within these communities.

The programme is led by two teams of trained SVSG Village Representatives, a total of 20 representatives, who will continue delivering awareness sessions and collecting data across all market places in Samoa especially in the rural areas.

Speaking on the importance of the initiative, SVSG President Siliniu Lina Chang said, *“Market vendors play a vital role in our economy and in our families. By bringing these conversations directly to where people work and earn their livelihoods, we are ensuring that knowledge about safety, rights, and support reaches those who need it most. Awareness is the first step toward prevention, and empowered communities are safer communities.”*

This initiative builds on SVSG's long-standing commitment to protecting women, children, and vulnerable members of society through a human-rights-based approach, including case management of abuse, psychosocial support, court support, residential care through the Campus of Hope, and community awareness programmes.

The Market Vendors Awareness Programme aligns with Samoa's development priorities and regional commitments under the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, particularly

the goal of improving the health and well-being of all Pacific peoples, while supporting ongoing efforts to promote gender equality and end violence against women and girls.

SVSG remains committed to working alongside communities and partners to ensure that no individual experiences violence in silence and that help is accessible to all.

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Ensuring that victims of crime and those in need are well supported to be safe and in control to restore their lives

2016: With and for Girls Award – Star Foundation of London

2017: Innovation & Excellence Team Award – Samoa Public Service

2018: Finalist, International Children's Peace Prize 2018 – Kids Right Foundation of Amsterdam, Netherlands

2018: Human Rights Champion in Samoa – UNESCO

2019: Innovation for Sustainable Development Award – Commonwealth Secretary-General

2020: Nominated Person(s) of the Year – Samoa Observer

2021: Outstanding Contributions to Human Rights Promotion & Protection – Samoa Office of the Ombudsman/NHRI

2023: Healthy Islands Best Proposal Award – World Health Organization

2026 Noble Peace Prize Nomination