



Spotlight Initiative

ANNUAL NARRATIVE PROGRAMME REPORT

PROGRAMME TITLE: SAMOA SPOTLIGHT

PROGRAMME START DATE: 01 JANUARY 2020

REPORTING PERIOD: 01 JANUARY 2021 – 31 DECEMBER 2021



<p>Programme Title & Programme Number</p>	<p>Priority regions/areas/localities for the programme</p>
<p>Programme Title: SAMOA SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE</p> <p>MPTF Office Project Reference Number:¹ 00119126</p>	<p>Nationwide programme</p>
<p>Recipient Organization(s)</p> <p>UNWOMEN UNICEF UNESCO UNDP UNFPA</p>	<p>Key Partners</p> <p>Government Ministries/Corporations Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (Community Sector), Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration (Law & Justice Sector), Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, Samoa Law Reform Commission, National Human Rights Institute, Samoa Bureau of Statistics</p> <p>CSOs Samoa Victim Support Group, Faataua le Ola, Samoa National Council of Women, Samoa Umbrella for NGOs, Samoa Family Health Association,</p> <p>Academia National University of Samoa</p>
<p>Programme Cost (US\$)</p>	<p>Programme Start and End Dates</p>

¹ The Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).



Total Phase I budget, and (where OSC approved) Phase II budget as per the Spotlight CPD/RPD: 3,505,489 USD

Phase I and (where OSC approved) Phase II Spotlight funding:² 2,900,000 USD

Agency Contribution: 605,489 USD

Spotlight Funding and Agency Contribution by Agency:

Name of RUNO	Spotlight Phase I (+ II, where OSC approved) (USD)	UN Agency Contributions (USD)
UNWOMEN	522,699	32,988
UNDP	893,130	84,144
UNICEF	186,180	112,000
UNESCO	749,999	170,613
UNFPA	547,992	205,744
TOTAL:	2,900,000	605,489

Start Date:
01 January 2020

End Date:
30 December 2023

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² The Spotlight Contribution refers to the amount transferred to the Recipient UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#).



Table of Contents

Contents

Table of Contents..... 1

Acronym List 1

Executive Summary 1

Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status 2

Programme Governance and Coordination 3

 a) *National Steering Committee* 3

 b) *Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG)* 4

 c) *Inter-agency coordination, technical committees and other governance mechanisms* 6

Programme Partnerships 10

 a. *Government* 10

 b. *Civil Society*..... 13

 c. *European Union Delegation* 16

 d. *Academia* 17

Results 17

Capturing Change at Outcome Level..... 20

 Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework..... 20

 Outcome 2: Institutions..... 21

 Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change 23

 Outcome 4: Quality Services 29

 Outcome 5: Data 31

 Outcome 6: Women’s Movement and CSO Engagement..... 32

Rights Holders (“Beneficiaries”) 38

Challenges and Mitigating Measures 39

Lessons Learned and New Opportunities 40

Innovative, Promising or Good Practices 42

Communications and Visibility 43

Next Steps..... 50

ANNEXES 51



Annex A: Results Framework	51
Annex B: Risk Matrix	51
Annex C: CSO Engagement Report.....	51
Annex D: Innovative, Promising or Good Practices Reporting Template	51
Annex E: Annual Work Plan	51

Acronym List

ADRA	Adventist Development Relief Agency
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education
CSF	Clarence Sebastian Foundation
CSNRG	Civil Society National Reference Group
DHS/MICS	Demographic Health Survey/ Multiple Index Cluster Survey
DV/IPV	Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence
EVAWG	Eliminating Violence Against Women and Girls
FAST	Faatuatua I le Atua Samoa ua Tasi (Political Party)
FBO	Faith Based Organisations
FLE	Family Life Education
FLO	Faataua Le Ola / CSO focusing on suicide prevention
FPNSW	Family Planning New South Wales
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoS	Government of Samoa
HFRSA	Health Facility Readiness Service Availability
IESG	Interagency Essential Service Guide
IP	Implementing Partners
IPPF	International Planned Parenthood Federation
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude, Practice
KBB	Knowledge, Beliefs and Behaviours
LGBTQI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex
LJS	Law and Justice Sector
LNOB	Leaving No One Behind
LSC	Life Skills Coach
MCIT	Ministry of Communications and Information Technology
MCO	Multi Country Office
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MJCA	Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health
MTA	Mid Term Assessment
NCC	National Council of Churches
NGO	Non-Government Organisations



NHRI	National Human Rights Institution
NOLA	Nuanua o le Alofa (Council/ National Body for Persons with Disability)
NPF	National Prevention Framework
NUS	National University of Samoa
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Resident Coordinators Office
REACH	Rights, Empowerment And Cohesion
RUNO	Recipient United Nations Organisations
SBS	Samoa Bureau of Statistics
SEN	Samoa Education Network
SFA	Samoa Fa'afafine Association
SFHA	Samoa Family Health Association
SLRC	Samoa Law Reform Commission
SOE	State of Emergency
SOGIESC	Sexual Orientation Gender Identity and Expression and Sexual Characteristics
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SRC	Samoa Red Cross
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SUNGO	Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organisations
SVSG	Samoa Victim Support Group
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
UN	United Nations
VFSC	Village Family Safety Committee
VFSP	Village Family Safety Programme
VR	Village representative



Executive Summary

The Spotlight Initiative (Initiative) has been the leading advocacy platform for joint European Union, United Nations, Government of Samoa and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) to eliminate domestic violence and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV). Samoa has remained in a State of Emergency (SOE) since it was first declared on 22 March 2020, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, albeit with reduced restrictions in country but tighter border controls with regards to COVID19 prevention measures. Civil Society Organizations reaching communities at the grassroots, are key partners of the programme. The value addition they bring with their outreach and access to the most vulnerable groups is acknowledged by the programme and a motivation to establish meaningful partnership to reach grassroot communities.

The year 2021 was another challenging year. General elections in April 2021 led to a political stalemate and impasse, causing delays in passing the national budget and a new development plan for the country. In addition, to the COVID19 prevention restrictions as well as national vaccination roll out that hindered the effective implementation of the programme.

Despite these challenges, the Spotlight Initiative made important progress. Aligned with UN Reform, the Initiative worked under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and capitalized of participating agencies' mandates and comparative advantage to ensure a coordinated and coherence implementation of the programme. Leveraging agencies' existing partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, while capitalized on the gains made in previous years of programme implementation to expand its outreach and impact in the lives of the most vulnerable populations of Samoa, including LGBTQTI, persons with disabilities and women living in rural villages while contributing to the elimination of VAWG in the country. The ongoing legal review, being supported by the programme, prioritize the inclusion of gender equality and human rights principles, including the principle of non-discrimination. The process is expected to produce inclusive legal tools focused on promoting and protecting the rights of all, especially those at further behind. The partnership with SVSG, the only CSO support to survivors of violence showed to a significant value added as it provided a unique opportunity for the programme to ensure that the rights and need of vulnerable group were met including in hard-to-reach areas.

In 2021, the Mid Term Assessment (MTA) for the Spotlight Initiative was also undertaken to take stock of Phase 1 of the Initiative to produce recommendations for improvement and inform the UN reflections and strategies for a more coherent and effective implementation of Phase 2 of the programme. The MTA report has been finalized and will be the guidance tool for Government,



CSOs and UN's Phase 2 joint planning. Some of the key recommendations for the Initiative to take forward include:

- Stronger focus on strengthening women's organisations and strengthen engagement with Faith Based Organisations / National Council of Churches
- Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation capacity through dedicated sessions with RUNOs and implementing partners on the Theory of Change and links to indicators and targets.

The Initiative is committed to ensuring mechanisms developed and interventions implemented are aligned with and mainstreamed through national priorities and processes for EVAWG, supporting the sustainability of results.

Results achieved during the reporting period, further elaborated below, include:

- Completion and launch of the Samoa Law & Justice Sector Plan 2021-2025 with DV/IPV aspects incorporated to ensure better integration of services going forward
- Health systems strengthening through completion and launch of the SGBV Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to enhance GBV clinical response including Clinical Management of Rape; training of senior health workers on survivor-centred clinical response and referral pathways for additional services to victims of violence. It has enhanced the capacity of the nurses and health workers on procedures and protocols during instances of rape and violence.
- Development and implementation of Village Family Safety Plans and Village Bylaws in partnership with village family safety committees.
- Enhanced village engagement and awareness on DV/IPV using culture, arts, song and dance. For instance, the My Village My Pride campaign.
- Strengthened access to support services for survivors and victims through the helplines.
- Development of a guide to respond to survivors of violence within the law and justice sector.
- Development of a guide for CSO gender mainstreaming in program management.
- Draft National Prevention Strategy for Samoa developed
- VAWG's 16 Days of Activism Orange Samoa campaign implemented
- Commencement of multimedia campaign development with a focus on child protection.

Contextual Shifts and Implementation Status

Contextual Shifts



On April 9, 2021, Samoa held general elections in line with their 5-year electoral cycle of parliament. The initial results of the election provided no clear electoral majority. The events that unfolded post-election and on July 23rd, 2021, when the Court of Appeal the court challenge and declared Faatuatua I le Atua Samoa Ua Tasi (FAST) to be the lawful new Government, underlying the value of abiding by the rule of law as the guiding principle for good governance.

The number and complexity of the petition cases arising from the election significantly delayed the formation of the government and the sitting of parliament. A court ruling in July 2021 enabled the FAST party to form a government. However, delays in sitting the new parliament prevented the country from formalizing a national budget before the previous budget elapsed. This forced the government to operate on emergency provisions until September 2021 when the full new parliament was finally sworn in, and a new national budget approved in October 2021. In addition, the political stalemate also led to the postponement of new Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS). This is currently under review by the Government to reflect the priorities and manifesto of the new Government. As of reporting time, the new national plan was just launched on 25 February 2022, under the auspices of Pathway for the Development of Samoa FY2021/2022 – FY2025/2026.

As with the rest of the world, COVID continued to impact Samoa, with preparedness and prevention the focus of Government efforts since 2020. The government implemented a nationwide State of Emergency (SOE) in March 2020 with a national lockdown restricting movement, gatherings and closure of businesses barring essential services.

The Initiative has regularly monitored the political situation in Samoa and addressed potential risks to the programme through regular communication with implementing partners (IP) on progressing the activities, escalating any major challenges and delays to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for decision and revising the workplan to address the delays. While, as noted in the MTA, significant challenges remain (particularly with funds that were transferred via Government systems due to the political situation), these steps enabled the SI team to address challenges with implementing partners.

Programme Governance and Coordination

a) *National Steering Committee*

The Samoa-UN Joint Steering Committee (JSC) was set up in 2020 and is co-chaired by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) and the UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) for the Samoa Multi Country Office (MCO). The CEO of MFAT is also the





Chair of the National SDG Taskforce which monitors and reports on Samoa's progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), supporting alignment to the National SDG Taskforce which leads on SDG mapping and reporting.

The JSC for Samoa reviews and makes decisions on Samoa specific joint programmes including the Spotlight Initiative which includes EU and the CSO National Reference Group (CSNRG) as members. It provides advice and guidance for all the UN joint programmes, and ensures the interventions are aligned closely with national development plans and with the principle of UN Reform – the oversight and responsibility lie with the Resident Coordinator's Office. It also provides an opportunity for a comprehensive overview of ongoing efforts in the country to Eliminate VAWG.

The JSC met twice in 2021, in March and September respectively, with decisions made on the following areas:

- Approval of the budget revisions for the RUNOs in adapting to COVID as well as national requests
- Endorse the MTA process for Samoa
- Approval of 2020 Annual report
- Endorse a Pacific request to the Secretariat for six months no cost extension to June 2022
- More communication and information to be shared with partners on the Initiative and challenges
- Endorse knowledge sharing platform with other Pacific countries on Spotlight lessons learnt and best practices

b) Civil Society National Reference Group (CSNRG)

The Spotlight initiative continues to benefit from the engagement and collaboration of a diverse Civil Society Reference Group. The CSNRG continues to be inclusive and with representatives of people with disabilities, youth groups, faith-based organizations, feminists, and women human rights advocates, supporting the Initiative's efforts to ensure that no one is left behind. The Spotlight Initiative has the privilege to benefit from the support of knowledgeable and experienced individuals in the implementation of the EVAWG agenda in Samoa.





In 2021, the role of the CSNRG was expanded from a Spotlight Initiative platform to a more holistic and strategic one aimed at promoting CSOs' engagement with the wider UN system in the country. This included the CSNRG facilitating the community consultations for the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA). The representatives mobilized their networks and facilitated the sessions in partnership with the UN team in Samoa. In addition, they were consulted as the NRG by the Government as part of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) for Samoa and had the opportunity to also contribute to the initial phase of the process of development of the National Prevention Framework and ensure that the needs and priorities of all Samoans, especially that most vulnerable groups were heard. As a result, the process is expected to result in a NPF policy tool, aligned with the key priorities of the country and with gender and human rights principles, including the principle of equality and non-discrimination well reflected.

In 2021 the Initiative supported CSRG engagement at technical and strategic levels. CSRG members held regular meetings with UN agencies and engaged in strategic discussions with the Spotlight Steering Committee where they had the opportunity to express their concerns and discuss opportunities to improve collaboration and programme implementation. CSRG appreciated the opportunity, and their commitment, to continue representing most marginalized and grass root organizations and showed concerns about the lack of clarity about their role in the programme and the limited availability of a budget to support CSNRG activities.

In addition, CSNRG technical collaboration with RUNOs was strengthened through regular meetings. In March 2021, a UN and CSNRG workshop was organized where each agency had the opportunity to present information on ongoing work with CSOs. This was an opportunity for a joint review of the 2020 CSRG work plan and a reflection of the progress of agreed actions and the development of a CSRG communication and advocacy strategy. A total budget of approximately USD\$10,000 was allocated for CSRG activities in 2021 with RUNOs and the RCO contributing additional funding support. Going forward, a more coordinated approach by the Initiative to fund the CSNRG's workplan will be implemented, one taking into considering the lessons learned in 2021 and developed in close collaboration with CSNRG.

CSNRG members also had the opportunity to attend and advocate for stronger CSO engagement and strengthened political will in addressing the needs of vulnerable women and groups affected by violence in some of the Spotlight programs and strategic planning sessions implemented by the government through the law and justice sector. The group also contributed to the process of development of the National Prevention Framework for Samoa by engaging in strategic discussions with the government and by acting as resource persons and human rights advocates. This helped





to ensure that human rights-based approach and gender equality lens guided policy decision making.

Another key engagement that counted with the contribution of the CSRG was the Spotlight Initiative mid-term assessment where CSRG reflections and recommendations for programme improvement were captured and systematically considered, strengthening the programme further.

A guidance note for the remuneration of the CSNRG was approved by the Spotlight Secretariat in 2021 and will be reviewed by the Initiative in Samoa as part of the Phase 2 design and planning.

c) *Inter-agency coordination, technical committees and other governance mechanisms*

RUNO Technical and Coordination meetings

As part of the SI programme document, and in the spirit of UN Reform, the RUNOs have a monthly technical and coordination meeting. Interagency collaboration is strengthened through these meetings, with the RUNO's various planning, implementation, and monitoring activities discussed and coordinated. This meeting is also an important opportunity to assess progress, discuss alignment and partnerships, contributing to programme coherence. For 2021, while meetings were less frequent due to extenuating factors including the vacancy in the Technical Coherence Advisor role, the team managed to coordinate and progress on the Spotlight work.

Family Life Education Multistakeholder Committee (FLE MSC)

The FLE MSC was established as a recommendation of the FLE Situational Analysis Report undertaken by the programme in efforts to strengthen the teaching of FLE for in-school and out-of-school young people. The programme strengthened delivery of CSE/FLE through the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC), and the multi-sectoral CSE committee comprised of (Samoa Family Planning Association, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women, National Human Rights Institute and CSOs Samoa Family Life Association, Samoa Red Cross, Samoa Education Network, Faataua le Ola (Suicide Prevention), and Apelu Sports, FPNSW, IPPF). The FLE MSC is comprised of three (3) subcommittees - *Curriculum Sub Committee, Teacher Training Committee, and the Out of School CSE subcommittee*, facilitated the development all the Seven (7) CSE modules: 1). Sexual Reproductive Rights and Health; 2.). Gender and Sexuality; 3). Values and Rights, 4). My Body and Its Development, 5). Healthy Relationships, 6). Safety: Yours, Mine, Ours, 7). Life Skills and Healthy Living. While through DFAT funding, in-school CSE integration into years' 9-12 curricula was completed and will be rolled out in 2022 using the Spotlight funding. A master class out of school CSE ToT of the eight agency leads was conducted and, training of 80 secondary school teachers was postponed to 2022 due to the national lock-down and Covid-19 mass vaccination exercises.



The FLE MSC is comprised of three (3) subcommittees - *Curriculum Sub Committee, Teacher Training Committee, and the Out of School CSE subcommittee*. A masterclass Train of Trainers with seven agencies for the Out of School CSE was completed using seven course modules customized and localised by the group. The Spotlight Initiative is progressing next steps whereby agency leads will now train 70 more community-based youth leaders to create a core mass of youth trainers to rollout the training nationwide.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) Admin Data technical committee

The Spotlight has provided the platform for development agencies engaged in GBV data collection, analysis and utilization to work together. An inter-sectoral working committee co-chaired by the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSO) and the Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS), was strengthened by Spotlight support. The data technical committee is charged with coordinating the data work on VAW/G including the undertaking of prevalence surveys and harmonising of administrative data systems. The committee is comprising of the MWCSO, SBS, Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration (MJCA), the Samoa Police Service (SPS), Samoa Red Cross (SRC), Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) and the Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA) are the main VAW case managers and service providers of services to survivors of violence and GBV. This committee provided the much-needed oversight over the undertaking of the Samoa DHS/MICS launched in 2021 with funding from the TA and will continue to (1) bring together best practices and guidance/resources for countries, (2) ensure consistency in standards and approaches and (3) provide technical advisory services to national governments and frontline service providers, in line with their priorities to strengthen national administrative data systems. This work includes revision of data collection tools, standards and facilitate information sharing protocols and agreements, in line with international best practice, and capacity building of national level partners to develop and maintain the systems.

RUNO Bi-monthly coordination meetings

To ensure good coordination between implementing partners but also to enable exchange between partners, some RUNOs host dedicated sessions for engagement with implementing partners. For instance, UNESCO organises bi-monthly coordination meetings with all its partners engaged in the Spotlight Initiative. The coordination meetings include implementation updates from each partner and a thematic discussion related to various topics from the Initiative's visibility and branding guidelines to specific areas of synergies. Other SI RUNOs are also invited to the meetings as are the CSO-NRG chairs. These meetings have allowed partners to build synergies between activities and exchange views and lessons learnt.



Civil Society Organization (CSO) / Samoa Umbrella of Non-Government Organizations (SUNGO) Taskforce

To address coordination and implementation challenges faced by CSOs engaged in areas of gender-based violence and gender equality, an assessment was conducted by SUNGO. This led to the development of the CSO Taskforce with support from the Spotlight Initiative, chaired by and with secretariat functions by SUNGO. The taskforce is an important coordination and engagement mechanism that was organized by the CSOs for CSOs with the aim to bring together non-government organizations that work within the EVAWG space. To coordinate within and across the partners to improve and promote CSO peer training and learning, resource mobilization and joint training and programming during and after the EU funded Spotlight initiative. The membership consists of thirteen (13) CSOs, six representatives from Samoa National Council of Women, Samoa Victim Support Group, Faataua le Ola, METI, Samoa Faafafine Association, SoulTalk Samoa, and three (3) government agencies, namely Ministry of Police, Ministry of Justice Courts & Administration and Ministry of Women Community & Social Development Ministry of Finance. Spotlight Initiative supported the setup, development and implementation of specific training activities under the work plan. Including meeting support costs for the taskforce to develop their plan.

The CSOs play a significant role in service delivery in EVAWG and GBV space. The key challenges identified were the lack of core funding, lack of operational and technical capacities as well as competition amongst each other leading to fragmented and sometimes duplication of work. The taskforce idea aimed to address and reduce the above challenges as a new way of working. SUNGO instigated the idea as a result of their implementation role for the CSO capacity assessment and they have a policy and advocacy mandated role to support CSO governance and leadership for any development issue concerning the wellbeing of Samoan citizens at the national and grassroots levels. The taskforce convened 2 meetings in 2021 which led to strengthening of the following coordination and implementation arrangements:

- Joint capacity response plan approved³ which is one of the activity deliverables under Spotlight which aims to provide skills and knowledge training to increase capacities of CSO service providers to better implement EVAWG and GBV prevention and response initiatives.
- Implementation of key trainings identified in the plans. These included three trainings on understanding gender-based violence, psycho-social support and psychological first aid to 50 community-based trainers and non-government organizations.

³ Based on the 2020 CSO Capacity Assessment in relation to GBV



The training evaluation results noted an increase in skills and knowledge of participants on advocacy and prevention of violence. The practical test was the application of the learning after the training. As result of the community trainer advocacy with the village council, the meetings now include women in discussions and decision making, with a stronger enforcement of village laws on prevention of intimate partner violence which is something that had never happened before in the village of Nu'usuatia. Sports educators trained integrated prevention of VAWG messages in the rollout of their women in sports leadership and outreach programs which targeted 200 males preparing for employment under the recognized seasonal employer program in the village of Poutasi.

An opportunity was created for selected taskforce members from SUNGO and SVSG to attend the regional GBV working group zoom meeting held in August by a special invitation from the CEO MJCA (a member of the taskforce) also, the co-chair for the regional working group funded under the EVAWG Pacific Partnership program. To observe and listen in to other pacific countries sharing their best practices on locally honed solutions on addressing GBV was an opportunity to learn from others to support implementation efforts where relevant.

UN Pacific Strategy Outcome Group 2: Gender Equality

As noted in the 2020 report, the UN Pacific Strategy (UNPS) 2018-2022 is the strategic framework that outlines the collective response of the UN System to the development priorities of 14 Pacific Island countries and territories. There are six outcome areas with Outcome 2 focusing specifically on Gender Equality.

The UNPS Outcome Group (OG) 2 leads on gender related initiatives and Spotlight contributes strategically under the EVAWG umbrella during the monthly meetings and annual reporting. The intention is that DV/IPV/ GBV are not looked at as projects but rather embraced as integral components that interconnect and impact on a country's development.

a. Use of UN Reform inter-agency tools

The Initiative is looking at ways to enhance UN Coherence and UN Reforms through its activities. As recommended in the Mid Term Assessment, the One UN approach requires strengthening and more focus by the RUNOs. To address this, the Initiative will engage with the Samoa Operations Management Team to identify areas in the Business Operations Strategy that can support the work of the Initiative in Samoa.



Programme Partnerships

a. Government

The Initiative was designed in close consultation and collaboration with government, CSOs, private sector and the UN agencies. Implementation and reporting are conducted through a multisectoral, cross sector and inclusive approach to engage all stakeholders. The draft MTA noted that all the interviewed government partners agreed that the Initiative’s activities complemented national programmes and efforts to end VAWG⁴. The concerns for more united engagement and information sharing with government is an area for improvement by the Samoa programme. The key government ministry partners of the programme are outlined below:

Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development (MWCSD)

The programme partners with the Ministry as the leading government entity, responsible for inclusive development, promotion of gender equality, eliminating GBV and all forms of violence against children in country. Recently approved public policies namely the National Policies on Gender Equality and Rights of Women and Girls, Family Safety, and Child Care and Protection 2021-2030 underscore the coordinating role of MWCSD in multi-sectoral efforts to prevent and respond to GBV and Child Protection issues. The Ministry is well placed to implement prevention and early intervention services across Samoa through its formal network of village mayors and women representatives in all villages, while its partnerships with civil society organizations help augment gaps in the delivery of critical social services through the latter’s consortium of community volunteers.

In 2021, the Spotlight Initiative worked in close collaboration with the Ministry in the following activities:

- Development of the National Prevention Framework for Samoa.
- Implementation of advocacy initiatives during the 16 days of the activism campaign including the Orange Samoa torch relay.
- Lead on the development of the National Public Information campaign significantly contributing to the country’s evolving child protection system, which will eventually sustain efforts under Spotlight.
- Lead on the GBV Administrative Data Group across multiple sectors

⁴ Draft Samoa Spotlight Mid Term Assessment report, 2021, Spotlight Secretariat and HERA





MWCSD is a common partner to all UN agencies participating in the Spotlight Initiative. To ensure effective coordination and technical coherence, a joint Spotlight Initiative and MWCSD annual work plan was developed including interventions to be implemented by different UN agencies and information on resources needed and available to support implementation. This plan is the reference tool for UN engagement with different divisions of the MWCSD.

The partnership of the Ministry with SVSG on the national public information campaign is critical to the country's evolving child protection system and GBV, which will eventually sustain efforts initiated under Spotlight. Such partnership also comes at a time when seminal restructuring takes place within MWCSD. As a result of advocacy and technical guidance from the Initiative, the campaign has been effectively integrated as one of the key performance indicators of the new unit dedicated for Prevention and Early Intervention under the Ministry's Division for Social Development, while the capacity of staff under the soon-to-be established Division for Communications has been enhanced through a series of training and on-the-job coaching sessions on social marketing and behaviour change communication delivered as part of the process for co-developing the campaign.

Ministry of Health (MOH)

The Ministry of Health (MOH) coordinates and facilitates implementation of GBV clinical and SRH interventions under pillar 4. In 2021, MOH coordinated and mobilized its senior health staff to develop and validate Samoa SGBV Standard Operating Procedure, including referral systems/pathways with external agencies/organizations, and conduct training on the SOP using contextualised WHO clinical guidelines sessions and Interagency Essential Services Guidelines (IESG). MOH will facilitate training and roll-out of the GBV SOPs country-wide over the next 6 months of the carry-over work plan for Phase I to ensure survival-centred care is available in all health facilities, even in outlying and remote islands, aligned with the principle of leaving no one behind.

Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC)

MESC as the policy and planning authority of the Government of Samoa on entire education sector, takes the responsibility of providing oversight and facilitating implementation of the FLE including the roll out of multimedia curriculum for comprehensive sexuality education/ family life education, adapted to the context of COVID-19 to support increased access for young people to information on SRHR on how to prevent and respond to GBV, challenging social and gender norms perpetuating GBV, sexuality and respectful relationships. Implementation under MESC was delayed due to human resources non-availability, the limited number of staff in MESC are





equally involved with other RUNOS implementation, besides other competing projects. To mitigate this, and in line with UN Reforms, Spotlight consolidated work plans in addition to joint calendar of events for ministries will be developed going forward to reduce the burden of management and engagement by ministries with several RUNOS. This will also enhance ownership and further understanding of the Spotlight rather than in pieces.

National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)

NHRI was re-awarded with an A accreditation status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions and is a key implementing partner for the programme under Pillars 1 & 3. Initiated out of the 2018 National Inquiry into Family Violence (NIFV) recommendation 20, the signature intervention for outcome 3 involves working with village councils in 6 villages identified from the NIFV, to recognize violence is an issue and to actively prevent violence against women through the pilot village family safety program. In 2020 after several community conversations and capacity building processes with traditional leaders, village safety committees were established, and plans to guide prevention activities developed. In 2021, a local technical advisor worked with the village council to guide the planning process, drafting bylaws, capacity building and mentoring and reinforcing gender equality and human rights considerations. The bylaws which incorporate prevention and response actions in addressing domestic violence, were launched in the respective villages during 16 Days of Healing campaign marking a significant step forward for behaviour change activity in the realization of village- led advocacy identified in their plans.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT)

MFAT as the Co-Chair of the JSC plays a critical oversight and coordination role for the programme on behalf of the Government, like the role of the RC Office. They play a key role in providing oversight on the programme, helping to ensure the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness as well as sustainability of Spotlight. As the Chair of the National SDG Taskforce, MFAT is a critical player in ensuring that the work is captured and aligned to the SDG initiatives, ensuring Spotlight's work helps to advance the SDGs. It is also responsible for national reporting including the Universal Periodic Review report 2021.

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT)

MCIT facilitates, leads and implements the Government of Samoa's vision for Communications development. In the framework of the Spotlight Initiative, the programme has partnered with the National Broadcaster 2AP Radio which is a government owned Samoan station. The national radio has a nationwide reach and is responsible for sharing information when natural or any national disaster strikes, while at the same time providing a wide range of community services programs,





both from the Government and the private sector communities. The 2AP radio is most widely accessed by the elderly and people living in rural communities, with radio critical to ensuring these communities are reached.

MCIT is involved in efforts to promote gender-equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours and through engaging with media houses that develop measures for redressing DV/IPV. In this context the partnership with MCIT/2AP Radio is focusing on increasing capacity of media broadcasters but also to engage with survivors of DV/IPV and allow their voices and messages to be heard. They were instrumental in hosting radio talk shows in the Samoan language during the 2021 16 Days of Healing campaign.

Ministry of Justice Courts & Administration (MJCA)

The Spotlight program strategy emphasised the need to strengthen legislative frameworks and multisectoral and monitoring coordination mechanisms built on already existing structures and frameworks to support effective implementation of domestic violence laws. With this focus, working with the law and justice sector coordinated through the strategic leadership of the MJCA was reported in the mid-term assessment as a very relevant and effective partner for the Samoa program. The MJCA administers 6 core family laws including the Family Safety Act 2013 and the Infant's Ordinance Act 1961. Capitalising on the existing strength of the law and justice sector, the program is working with a sector of 15 key frontline service providers from the justice, social and security agencies with the collective responsibility to prevent and respond to violence according to each individual agency and government of Samoa sector wide approach programming mandates. This was evident in the development of the law and justice sector plan with a commitment to addressing VAWG and gender-based violence, mapping and roll out of the legal services awareness raising (adapting the REACH model) which not a single sector nor an agency can solve violence on its own.

Samoa Law Reform Commission (SLRC). The review of legislation frameworks in line with Samoa's Constitution, cultural landscape and international human rights in Samoa is an official mandate of the Samoa Law Reform Commission. The review of family laws through the conduct of public consultations led by the Samoa Law Reform Commission was supported by the Spotlight Initiative through pillars 1 and 2.

b. Civil Society

Civil society partners were selected based on their official mandates, reach and scope of work as a service provider. The programme partnered with grass root organizations working with marginalized





group had access to programme financial and technical resources. The RUNOs regularly updated a Partner matrix (Annex C) to ensure there was coordination of work with the CSOs.

Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG)

SVSG has been on the frontline paving the way for communities to discuss sensitive issues such as GBV and Child Protection (CP). They have been working with several RUNOs on the Spotlight Initiative activities given they are the leading CSO in this area.

The partnership with SVSG also expanded into the CSO's work with communities, supporting the Initiative's efforts to reach marginalized populations, and village councils. Building on an ongoing research project the CSO is carrying out in partnership with University College London (UCL), the use of culture and of performing arts in promoting gender –equitable norms was piloted in 10 villages across Samoa.

The Spotlight Initiative partnered with **Faataua le Ola (FLO)**, a very distinct non-government organisation with a focus on mental health particularly suicide prevention services for over 15 years. The program under its COVID19 response support under Pillar 6 partnered with FLO to offer counselling services through 24 hours lifeline, post counselling interventions at the family level and outreach awareness raising in the villages and through different forms of media outlets. In the Samoan society, family connections are of utmost importance and the severing of this connection is a significant risk factor for suicide.

Samoa National Council of Women (SNCW) was established in 1953 and is the oldest traditional non-government organisation founded by women for women in Samoa. The main objective for the set-up of the SNCW was to have a forum for women to support the village council governance and decision making, which is perceived as the inroad for the needed force to support and advance the roles of women within the family, communities, district and their collaboration with the village council and at the interagency and government level. The Spotlight Initiative partnership with SNCW is funded under Pillar 6 using an integrated approach to the women in leadership transformational leadership tool and the Spotlight Initiative EVAWG to strengthen its primary prevention advocacy and services at the village level.

Samoa Umbrella for Non – Government Organisation (SUNGO) is a key partner of the Spotlight Initiative supported under pillar 6 given its role as an umbrella organisation to advocate to government and other bodies on behalf of civil society and vulnerable groups on wellbeing, law and justice, community and governance issues of concern. SUNGO is an accredited service provider offers capacity development support through trainings that is accredited with the Samoa





qualifications authority. and other support services based on the Spotlight Initiative capacity assessment for NGOs on EVAWG implemented in 2020. SUNGO also has a sustainable network of qualified community trainers on a retainer basis who were part of the series of Spotlight trainings on psychosocial support and psychological first aid. To date, it has over 200 non-government and community-based organisations members with numbers growing and is also the coordinating arm for the newly established CSO taskforce mechanism to nurture peer knowledge and information sharing, best practices to advance the gender equality agenda.

The **Tiapapata Art Center (TAC)** is a creative centre based in Samoa with an extensive archive of historic photos and audio-visual footage. The Center contributed to the creation of audio-visual material that aim to contribute to attitudes and behaviours' change at community and individual levels and prevent violence against women and girls. The TAC developed, in an inclusive approach, a series of five short videos based on proverbial expressions and cultural constructs highlighting the respect accorded to women and girls in traditional Samoan society.

The **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)** Samoa was started by the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Church as the church's humanitarian arm. To this end ADRA works with people in poverty and distress to create just and positive change through empowering partnerships and responsible actions. A consortium of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) was invited by the programme to design and implement a Samoa contextualized initiative to End Domestic Violence and Intimate Partner Violence (DV/IPV). The consortium met and resolved that the two NGOs that would be involved in the project would be ADRA Samoa, acting as the lead CSO for the consortium, and **Samoa Education Network (SEN)**. SEN is the education support arm providing support and oversight on the education initiatives in country.

The **Samoa Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee Inc. (SASNOC)** is an organization belonging to the Olympic Movement, undertakes to respect the provisions of the Olympic Charter and the World Anti-Doping Code and abides by the decisions of the IOC. SASNOC undertakes, in accordance with its mission and role at national level, to participate in actions to promote peace and women in sport. SASNOC also undertakes to support and encourage the promotion of sport ethics, to fight against doping and to demonstrate a responsible concern for environmental issues. Spotlight has partnered with the Samoa Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee (SASNOC) with the aim to reach the sports federations in Samoa and support them to review and develop policies that address DV/IPV and promote positive behaviours and role modelling.

Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA)





IPPF and its Member Association - **Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA)** supports implementation of Pillars 3 and 4. IPPF works closely with MESC to train TOT for Out of School Family Life Education and MOH to roll-out the GBV SOP for the health sector. In addition, IPPF facilitates regional implementation of CSE for which Samoa is engaged through mobilisation of youth networks, political leadership and ensuring Samoa representation in regional CSE events including knowledge sharing and customisation of CSE materials.

Family Planning NSW's implementation of Pillar 3 as a Technical Assistance Organization to the development of both the In-School and Out-of-School CSE curriculum and teacher guides.

SPC/Nossal and UoM facilitate implementation of Pillar 5 as a Technical Assistance Organisation to Samoa on the implementation of Population Based Surveys- the Multiple Indicators Cluster Surveys including secondary analysis, harmonisation of administrative data systems and ensuring capacity building of stakeholders on administrative data systems and through the KnowVAW data course.

EyeSpy Radio Samoa was founded in 2019 and has built on the creativity and innovation of the EyeSpy station. The Radio station promoted local talent, local issues, is focussed on the Samoan community and promotes youth, women and broader community awareness. It has captured a wide local audience and is seeking to use the power of various media platforms to send a clear and very positive message to its mass audience. The Spotlight partnership with EyeSpy Radio was focused on linking the celebration of Jazz Day with the opportunity to address DV/IPV in the local music industry and beyond, as well as explores how performing arts can contribute to DV/IPV prevention. International Jazz Day represents a perfect opportunity to further the discussion about the ongoing issues of DV/IPV, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. As a music genre jazz has been at the nexus of musical expression and social justice.

c. European Union Delegation

The European Union (EU) Delegation in Suva, Fiji have been actively engaged in the Samoa Spotlight Initiative through the Joint Steering Committees, CSO National Reference Group meetings as well as participating in national events such as the CSO Workshop by SUNGO which the Honourable Ambassador participated from Fiji.

The Spotlight Initiative will better engage with the EU delegation in Fiji to ensure they are regularly informed of the progress of the programme and, critically, have more opportunities to contribute to





the implementation of the Samoa programme, strengthening the programme. In addition to Spotlight, the EU also support Gender Based Violence initiatives with CSOs through the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) which also funds CSOs supported by Spotlight. For example, SVSG is one of the partners supported through EU for the Nofotane Project (empowerment of women) and they are also a key CSO implementing partner for the My Village My Pride and the Helpline support through Spotlight. This enables strong alignment and coordination of activities to ensure they complement each other.

d. Academia

The **National University of Samoa (NUS)** was established in 1984 by an Act of Parliament. NUS is the higher education institution best placed to provide support of activities under the Spotlight Initiative related to Social Sciences and to conduct of participatory evaluations in both targeted and control-group facilities on knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence.

Results

Capturing Broader Transformations Across Outcomes

The Spotlight Initiative supported existing national as well as creating new DV/IPV interventions, ensuring sustainability through, inter alia, integration into national/district and community plans.

The facilitation of the Demographic Health Survey Domestic Violence (DHS/DV) module as part of the hybrid Demographic Health Survey/Multi Indicator Cluster Survey (DHS/MICS) in 2019/2020 has made a significant contribution to understanding the current rates of violence in Samoa. This survey will be transformational in enabling RUNO as well as other stakeholders and partners, to design and implement effective and targeted programmes.

Samoa is one of the few countries in the Pacific to ensure that all health facilities have at least one staff member trained in health response to SGBV. The Director General of Health recognized the importance of survivor-centred health response to GBV in the Foreword to the GBV SOP: *'The Health Facility Readiness and Service Availability report in December 2018 showed that GBV/SV services are available in eight of 14 (57%) facilities. I believe that with the completion of WHO Curriculum for training health care providers on SOP GBV/SV, Samoa will have 100% GBV/SV*





services available in all health facilities. I encourage all health facilities to use this SOP as guidance and tool to provide appropriate health services for survivors of gender based and sexual violence problems referred to the Ministry of Health in Samoa’.

The use of cultural arts, dances and songs is an effective platform to advocate and convey targeted messages to local audiences. SI partnered with creatives, culture brokers and relevant CSOs with the aim to make traditional leaders, youth and artists take courageous and creative actions to end domestic and intimate partner violence. The main objective was to challenge deep-rooted inequalities between men and women, as well as the broad acceptance that violence is a part of everyday life. With status and gender roles being entrenched early in life, negative social norms are perpetuated and silently reinforced by community, faith and cultural practices. Therefore, the multi-faceted application of culture and traditional expressions with the aim to foster change in perceptions and behaviours has proven to have a promising effect in Samoan society enabling a better reach and engagement with communities. Engaging cultural messages and practices that encourage the elimination of violence against women and girls have been employed through the engagement with multiple partners and stakeholder groups. The roll out of a nationwide initiative where communities participated and addressed issues of DV/IPV through the performing arts was recognized by participants to be both healing and empowering. The use of theatre, dance and spoken word created a safe space for difficult topics to be addressed and shared with the community. In some villages, specific cases of DV/IPV were explored through performances providing an opportunity for community healing and strengthened social cohesion.

Other activities applied have created opportunities for engagement with different partners based on their contexts and spheres of and the interventions have been specifically designed to complement existing areas of work or to enhance and address apparent gaps. For example, mobilizing Samoa’s traditional Matai system the orientation of 159 chiefs to advocate against violence against women and girls (VAWG) through Life Skills training was achieved. Further building on these 5 televised public discussions were broadcasted to increase awareness of the issues relating to domestic violence and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) in Samoa.

Working in line with UN Reform, has helped to achieve results beyond specific outcomes. For example, leveraging technical expertise across RUNOs through inter-UN Agency collaborations, have been utilized throughout the implementation of the Spotlight Initiative. This way of working has been instrumental in achieving impactful community engagements and in identifying lessons learnt.

The collaborative relationship forged between MWCSD and SVSG through the national public information campaign is seminal in strengthening the child protection system in Samoa, with SVSG





endorsing the Inter-Agency Essential Services Guide (IESG) for Responding to GBV and Child Protection Cases, co-developing case management practice standards and guidelines with MWCSD and advocating for the review and enactment of the Child Care and Protection Bill 2020 by the Attorney General and the Parliament. These work streams effectively cover all aspects of the Child Protection programming framework of prevention, early intervention and response.

The review and reform of Samoa's family laws will result in the inclusion of DV/IPV and the specific rights of the most marginalised women and girls and boys including fa'afafine, fa'afatama, LGBTIQ, women and girls and boys with disabilities, and sex workers. Similarly, the inclusion of domestic violence and gender-based violence components and issues in the new Samoa Law and Justice Sector Plan 2021-2025 ensures sector-level priority efforts and coordinated response to EVAWG. Plan development included inputs from CSOs, women's organisations, youth groups, persons with disabilities, LGBTIQ, fa'afafine, fa'afatama, and male and female community representatives. (MTA Samoa Report 2021).

The village family safety committees established in partnership with the NHRI and village leaders to promote favourable social norms, attitudes and behaviours at the individual and village levels to prevent violence. This was hailed as a gender responsive, transformative and inclusive approach given the composition of the committee involving village chiefs, untitled women and men who also contributed to the development of village plans and by laws incorporating domestic violence prevention.

Programme support for frontline CSOs (SVSG and FLO) to provide essential counselling services using digital platforms (free helplines) has enhanced the institutions capacity to increase the accessibility of services for GBV to women, children, and vulnerable individuals/groups in a safe manner during the SOE. The free helplines have facilitated access to assistance for 1587 people (656 women; 159 men; 497 girls; 176 boys; and 37 boys/men with disabilities; 62 girls/men with disabilities) in 2021. The DV/IPV survivors interviewed for the MTA referred to the helpline as being crucial in facilitating a free connection to organisations for help or removal from distressing environments. The training and mobilisation of 250 youth social animators on women's rights and prevention of violence is a way to ensure that their voices, representing the grassroots communities, are heard. The SNCW women leaders' transformational development leadership tool training empowered 300 women in advocating for EVAWG (MTA Samoa Report 2021).

Reporting on the implementation of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)



As highlighted in the Mid Term Assessment, the Monitoring and Evaluation component for the Initiative is an area that need to be improved for the remainder of Phase 1 and in planning Phase 2. The RUNOs have already discussed the opportunity to recruit a Spotlight M&E position to lead and support the team in all aspects of M&E in Samoa, including the use of participatory monitoring and evaluation. While RUNOs have incorporated some of the PME strategies and methodologies in their respective work, it has not been done in a coordinated manner across the whole programme. This will be addressed in Phase 2.

Capturing Change at Outcome Level

Outcome 1: Legal and Policy Framework

Review of Family Laws

Spotlight Initiative enabled the Samoa Law Reform Commission (SLRC) to complete phase 2 of a three-phase comprehensive reform process in progress for six core family legislations administered by the MJCA. Collaboration amongst the Law and Justice Sector (LJS) steering committee⁵ facilitated in-depth consultations with village stakeholders in Upolu Island, essential to ensuring those most directly affected by this law were engaged. Under phase 2 of the reform framework adopted for this review, the continuation and completion of public stakeholder consultations on laws' that impact the 'family as an institution' and to advance the reform process have been difficult due to recent setbacks, including the measles epidemic, COVID19 lockdown, and preparations for the general elections followed by the political transition (post elections from April to November 2022 have contributed to new timeframes for completion)⁶. However, the Initiative is continuing to support the development of the final report, which is the phase 3 outcome of the reform process. This is considered a significant step forward for the realization of gender equality and human rights commitments, with the aim for it to be completed in June 2022 and tabled in parliament.

A National Guide to Respond to Survivors of Violence Against Women and Girls for the LJS developed in partnership with MJCA. Working with and building capacities of the MJCA and LJS partners, Spotlight helped to support the implementation of response efforts at the ministry and sector policy and programming level. Inputs were gathered from survivors of physical and sexual violence through SVSG, key stakeholders from women's committees and disability stakeholders, civil society organizations, government ministries, cabinet ministers, judiciary, faith based and

⁵ Includes National Council of Churches, Ministry of Police, MJCA, MWCSO, Cabinet Ministers, SLRC Management

⁶ Explanation on the laws under review: The laws - Family Safety Act 2013, Family Court Act 2014, Infants Ordinance 1961, Marriage Ordinance 1961, Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Ordinance 1961, Maintenance and Affiliation Act 1967 need to be improved with 4 very outdated. The laws are being reviewed concurrently, with individual attention and analysis to ensure it responds to the needs and rights of women and girls.



LGBTQI. The guide was developed in the frame that it works in parallel to support the operationalization of the Interagency Essential Service Guide (IESG) and draft National Prevention Framework (NPF) by MWSD and assist members of the LJS to prepare and respond to VAWG within their respective mandates. Based on the principles of survivor centered and do no harm, the guide recognizes a multifaceted approach that is dependent on improved coordination and collaboration to maximize the use of limited resources and recognizes the multiple forms of violence experienced by women girls, disabilities, LGBTQI and those in vulnerable situations because of their socio – economic status. Training for relevant staff on how to use the guide is planned for early 2022.

Outcome 2: Institutions

Education Sector DV/IPV Research

Research on the impact of DV/IPV on the education sector is in progress with consultations commencing in 2021. The partnership with MESC focuses on promoting a better understanding of how issues of DV/IPV affect the education sector and in developing prevention measures by engaging teachers and supporting students. The aim is to assist in identifying possible institutional solutions that would help prevent and respond to issues of DV/IPV. While internal recruitment processes led to some delays in commencement of research, the required technical experts were mobilized. The initial stage included the design and planning of the research to be carried out in schools where students, teaching and non-teaching staff participated and helped in a better understanding of the impact of DV/IPV. The research also explored knowledge, beliefs and behaviours (KBB) of students and staff on issues of gender equality and DV/IPV. Finally, it was designed to identify ways through which students and staff can be supported within the education system providing a safe environment.

The research team engaged with 37 children, 33 principals, 34 teachers and 48 non-teaching staff from 60 primary and secondary schools in Savaii and Upolu. The outcome and recommendation from this research will inform the research allocation and programming to address DV/IPV in education institutions and on required support for children impacted by family violence. A training package is developed based on the research results and the produced Training Needs Analysis (TNA). The TNA made use of the research outcomes to help the trainer identify the individuals' current level of competency, skill or knowledge in the area of Gender Based Violence (GBV) Domestic Violence (DV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in school context. The TNA will also inform the needs assessment and policy decisions for the protection of children in school environment.



The findings and recommendation of the research project also informed the development of a training package for Training of Trainers which aims to build the capacity of teachers and non-teaching staff to improve their understanding of children’s family context in terms of DV/IPV, and the ability to engage with them and alert contact points in their social protection systems.

To improve coordination within the law and justice sector (LJS) to address DV and GBV/VAWG/IPV the **National law and Justice Sector Strategy was developed** through a comprehensive process in consultation with 246 key stakeholders⁷. The opportunities identified from the strategic analysis addressed the proactive engagement of government leadership in the LJS Steering Committee to a culture of collaboration and ensure high level governance and policy quick decisions are followed through in addressing DV/VAWG in this sector. A *new* technical group is recommended to be made up of essential service providers different from the LJS Steering Committee to ensure a strong cohesiveness focus on joint implementation and high- quality service delivery as opposed to working in silos. The Spotlight Initiative supported the review, and this new strategy comes timely with the new change in government and the urgency for action, placed on responding to crime prevention, peace and security of Samoa. The openness of the government through the LJS Steering Committee to have an institutional review of its existing coordinating mechanism and to implement the changes based on the recommendations from the review are critical first steps to improving multi-stakeholder buy in identifying new opportunities for communication, collaboration and coordination. The MJCA and LJS as an important institutional arm of government in achieving national commitments identified under the Spotlight initiative supported the development of key policy tools namely the LJSP 20 of LJSP 2020/21 – 2024/25, Samoa 2040 Agenda and Fiscal Budget Policy 2021 – 2022 for long term sustainability.

The initiative contributed to an increase in knowledge and capacity of staff of the Law and Justice Sector, on gender mainstreaming and human rights through capacity building and mentoring sessions on gender (GBV/VAWG) and human rights mainstreaming provided to LJS staff. The law and justice sector coordination unit have the responsibility to interact with line ministries and other sectors. In addition, to coordinating the integration of cross cutting issues such as gender, disability inclusion within the sector in line with the LJS plan. This was an effort to promote national ownership by the LJS coordination unit, in preparation for the Rights, Empowerment and Cohesion (REACH)⁸ campaign rollout and future joint partner initiatives. Nineteen (19) staff & partners from the LJS were

⁷ Judiciary, Prime Minister & members of Cabinet, Attorney General, Ombudsman/NHRI, civil society, government ministries, village representatives, women’s committees and groups, disability groups, LGBTQI/SOGIE, government sectors- environment, agriculture, water/WASH, social, finance & planning, public administration, health - national council of churches, Spotlight CSO reference group and female victims/survivors

⁸ An initiative to promote peacebuilding, social cohesion and inclusiveness





targeted, composition reflected 41% females and 69% males. An indication of the high numbers of men working in this sector and selected to attend the trainings and partner community outreach. This was an inclusive activity as twenty-Four (24%) of participants were of PWDs whose presence and insights provided significance context to ensuring an inclusive approach to the practical provision of 'services from a right- based approach for the marginalized groups, are realized and promoted.

The LJS is considered one of the significant entry points for sector and national level coordination of VAWG and was selected to implement a multisectoral program on ending violence against women, using the REACH model. The program rolled out in selected rural remote locations in partnership with LJS and the Community sector focused on delivery information on prevention through addressing gender inequitable norms and social practices, and access to justice – protection orders, maintenance support for women and children, as well as men, understanding the laws, where and how to seek help on domestic violence, human rights in relation to gender equality and marginalized populations. It reinforced cohesiveness amongst 5 selected multiple partners from MJCA, MOP, Ombudsman Office, MWCSO, NOLA (PWD) Samoa Fa'afafine Association (SFA), Village representatives from Manono and Tufutafoe. The Orange Samoa Torch of Hope relay across the country capitalized on the REACH program to increase visibility and engagement during 16 Days of Activism Orange Samoa. There is no doubt, that the LJS REACH multisectoral program made positive impacts, by creating shared programming and resource opportunities for service delivery partners, and increased access to information and services for the rural population of approximately 1000 residing in Manono Island and Tufutafoe in Savaii. From the outset, the Spotlight initiative revitalized the REACH Model to mirror the sector wide approach for programming (SWAP) of the Government. The program brought on board new partners as allies from the civil society sector with experience and knowledge to work with persons with disabilities (diverse disabilities, sign language interpreters) and LGBTQI ensuring LNOB principle in relation to addressing violence. These would be the same partners that will carry the program forward in these specific areas.

Outcome 3: Prevention and Norm Change Out of School Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

In 2021, despite challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic, implementation of CSE in Samoa continued to gain momentum since the virtual launch of the 2020 International Technical and



Programmatic Guidance of Out-of-School CSE/FLE (Guidelines). In collaboration with partners⁹ – the Initiative continued to strengthen mechanisms for operationalization and delivery of CSE for in and out of school youth, through the establishment of a multi-stakeholder CSE committee that provides programmatic oversight, coordination, and advocacy. Through these mechanisms seven (7) CSE modules were developed: (i) Sexual Reproductive Rights and Health; (ii) Gender and Sexuality; (iii) Values and Rights; (iv) My Body and Its Development; (v) Healthy Relationships; (vi) Safety: Yours, Mine, Ours; and (vii) Life Skills and Healthy Living. The aim is to facilitate life skills building for girls and young people out of school to stay safe from violence, unwanted pregnancies, and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Two (2) multi-media lesson plans on gender norms and healthy relationships produced by MESC as a digital media platform was utilised, to enable continuity of CSE secondary education during the COVID-19 Samoa State of Emergency period.

The Out of School (OOS) CSE committee convened and chaired by Samoa Family Health Association with the focus on community-based youth training on FLE. Members of the committee comprised of MOH, MWCSD, NHRI, SFHA, Samoa Red Cross (SRC), Samoa Education Network (SEN), Faataua le Ola (FLO/Suicide Prevention), and Apelu Sports (Women in Sports). A masterclass Train of Trainers of the eight agency leads was completed in November with planned rollout to further educate a cadre of out of school community-based youths starting in 2022. A master class training of Trainers of the eight agency leads was completed in November on the out of school FLE curriculum with planned rollout to further educate a cadre of out of school community-based youths starting in 2022 as part of the technical preparations for the community roll-out and engagement on social and gender norms, SRHR during the 6-months carry over work.



1 Participants at the masterclass training on OOS CSE training in Samoa.

National Prevention Framework (NPF)

⁹ MESC, Family Planning New South Wales (FPNSW), International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Samoa Family Health Association (SFHA)





The Initiative partnered with the Government through MWCSO and supported the development of a new National Prevention Framework for Samoa. A draft NPF has been developed with identified key areas of prevention intervention based on the recommendations from the National Public Inquiry into Family Violence released in 2018. The Spotlight Initiative ensured that technical resources were available to support the government, by making available a resource person (consultant) to work closely with the Ministry, advise on gender and human rights issues, support in the implementation of the defined road map for the process, facilitation of consultation meeting and report writing. A comprehensive and inclusive process that included a context analysis and engaged multi-stakeholders at both national and community levels was implemented. It included consultations with government sectors, community leaders, CSOs including marginalized groups and grass root organizations, and the private sector. The process is in its final stage, a draft NPF is available and under review by the government.

National Public Information Campaign

For the national public information campaign, SVSG mobilised churches and leaders to participate in community dialogues, where faith leaders and members of the communities' exchanged views on how power dynamics as well as elements of the Samoan culture can perpetuate or eradicate violence against women and children. They strategically selected seven (7) villages representing the urban/rural communities in both islands for the community dialogues. Community members provided crucial inputs to the key messages and creative concepts being developed by the campaign team and helped set baseline information in terms of community members' knowledge, attitude and practices with regard GBV and CP that will help track the impact of the campaign.

The media campaign will be part of a three-year behaviour change communication strategy that will be implemented in partnership with the MWCSO with support from partners and communities. As this is a multi-year endeavour, it is imperative to solicit the buy-in of key implementing partners both with the government and civil society as well as the community members themselves. The team has successfully advocated for the inclusion of the campaign in the Ministry's annual management plan as well as SVSG's strategic plan for the coming years, thereby ensuring sustainability. The technical competency of Ministry and SVSG staff on social marketing and behaviour change communication has significantly increased based on results of pre and post tests used during training and coaching sessions as well.

Life Skills Training (LST)

Capacity of community chiefs to advocate and influence change within the EVAWG space was increased through the LST program provided in partnership with Adventist Development and Relief





Agency Samoa (ADRA) and SEN. The training was delivered at the village level providing orientation to 159 matai (chiefs) through the LST program. To further strengthen the important role of chiefs in guiding their communities selected chiefs were engaged following the training to participate in five televised panel discussions aired on two major networks, which (combined) have been viewed over 37,400 times

The training on village chiefs together with media appearances influenced changes at the village council level regarding decisions on perpetrators of violence. The orientation of chiefs through the LST program, and media activities had significant outreach and benefitted the ten (10) participating communities (6 in Upolu, 4 in Savaii) with a combined total population of more than 11,600 people. An impact from the training led to the village of Satapuala enacting new village by-laws to prevent and address DV in their community. As mentioned by the village representative on a discussion panel aired on 08 October 2021, he stated that since the training he has been able to offer support to those who have been empowered by the training to seek help from their community leaders. The willingness of the VR to accept this training in the village is a critical success factor in his capacity to now provide support and advocate against VAWG in his community.

The engagement with the media campaign has been highly positive. Awareness raising activities include the televised discussion panels, radio program, and key messages shared on social media and in billboards located in prominent roadside positions in Upolu and Savai'i. At the time of report the televised panel discussions, which were aired on two major networks, have been viewed nearly 37,500 times. The social media campaign, which coincided with the final week of the 16 Days of Activism, reached a global audience of nearly 9,000 people. These numbers are expected to increase given their online availability and ability to be shared further.

On a broader village level, the LST program was carried out in ten villages around Samoa. During this period, a total of 326 people participated. Three of these villages completed training for all four target groups within the reporting period. To ensure all activities were completed within the project timeframe, the LST delivered to the three communities that started late (Fusi, Lotofaga and Foailuga in Savai'i) was modified by reducing the number of training groups for each community from four to two. This was achieved by combining the women and female youth groups into one group, and matai and male youth/untitled men into another. In addition to delivering training to 10 communities, the initial two weeks of the four-week Life Skills Coach (LSC) training took place between 8 and 19 November 2021. The LSC trainees were selected from the most outstanding LST course participants, two from each village, especially from the Youth group, one male and one female. As such, 12 trainees participated in the training.



My Village My Pride Campaign

Communication campaigns on EVAWG were implemented, with the aim to make use of the positive, transformative potential of culture and creativity within communities. The Initiative partnered with SVSG to carry out a tradition/culture-based artistic communication campaign. The campaign was based on Creative Performances by the communities based on the artefacts or traditional stories selected by each community. These selected artefacts or traditional stories provided a channel to highlight messages related to the pride of the communities in their traditional values and Christian beliefs and were used in messaging to end domestic violence and intimate partner violence against women and girls. Information sessions were held with each individual community to engage the village male elders in the campaign and identify the creative ambassadors that would work together with the youth artists in using creative performances for social messaging. Following the information sessions, screening sessions of the creative performances were carried out by the SVSG Juniors Youth Artists. It was an opportunity for the SVSG Juniors Youth Artists to work with the different communities in ensuring that the messages were clear and highlighted the theme of ending intimate violence and domestic violence against women.

It was evident from the screening sessions that the villages really rallied behind creating performances. According to Folasaitu Beyonce Faailo, the SVSG Junior President and leader of the Youth Artists, *“it was a humbling experience to have male village elders accepting our advises on how to improve on areas of their performances, for instance, where there was an excessive use of violence, or where the theme was not portrayed well through the performances.”*

The Creative Performances were carried out for each village, with traditional leaders and communities present in the audience. An organized schedule of Performances in each village allowed for a rotating jury was engaged including RUNO and CSO-NRG representatives. The contemporary performance by the winning Youth Group at the Satittoa event was based on a true story of a domestic violence that resulted in the death of a woman. This winning performance is one of the selected Creative Arts for the Knowledge Sharing Event to officially close off the project. Faleu Manono held its Creative Performance event on the Monday holiday for Father’s Day, with male leaders honouring their responsibility to raise awareness on DV/IPV affecting women and girls. There is a plan to showcase these performances as a culmination of the campaign to showcase the village ownership and thematic performances on DV/IPV.

Radio Jazz Festival

On its 10th Anniversary, the International Jazz Day was celebrated by raising awareness about domestic and intimate partner violence against women and girls with a live radio show on Eye Spy





Radio including a panel of five male, female and non-binary musicians, artists and other creatives from Samoa. The discussion focused on the important role performing arts can play in addressing DV/IPV topics, raising questions such as have their creative environments been supportive and safe spaces for female artists; and the role of performing arts in domestic violence and intimate partner violence prevention. The event culminated with an inclusive Jazz jam with both live and online public enjoying locally fused jazz with a social messaging on eliminating violence. The partnership enabled the Initiative to target youth and those living in the urban/ town area given the target audience of Eye Spy Radio.

Village By Laws – Village Family Safety Programme (VFSP)

In 2021, significant progress was achieved with six (6) village bylaws developed through an all-inclusive process with support from a legal technical advisor. The bylaws were launched as part of the 16 Days of Activism Orange Samoa and Human Rights Day with the Honourable Prime Minister commending the village council for being champions and promoting zero tolerance against violence. The inclusion of violence bylaws recognizes the pivotal role and commitment of village leaders in family violence prevention and the protection of women and girls at the village level. The program is under review, with the draft report identifying Vaie'e, Saleia and Taga as violence free model villages because of the VFSP.

Some key challenges encountered by NHRI in managing this program related to human resource shortages with heavy workload carried by the 3-project staff who were expected to perform other priority office activities. The Spotlight Initiative supported a temporary senior project officer in 2020 however funding for this position could not be sustained in 2021 as resource priorities budgeted for under the approved AWP shifted to scale up village level activities based on NHRI's request. Some delays were due to the planning processes requiring longer timelines to support village implementation given working under COVID restrictions and the political situation because of the 2021 general elections. Despite these challenges, NHRI managed to produce the expected output results with the Samoa Phase 1 draft Mid Term Assessment (MTA) hailing the Village Family Safety Committee (VFSC) model as a best practice community prevention model through strong partnerships amongst village council, government, CSOs and UN partners emanating out of Spotlight Initiative's signature interventions. The leadership and partnership with village council when supported well can produce positive results with a more sustainable full-time funding available for implementing partner personnel to increase efficiency of implementation modality support to continue support to village council.



The **16 Days of Healing Campaign** is the unique contribution of the Spotlight Initiative to the 16 Days of Activism global movement to ending Violence Against Women and Girls. In Samoa, without reinventing the wheel and building on from the 16 Days of Healing 2020 momentum under the theme **ORANGE THE WORLD**. The campaign re-ignited national, regional and global conversations advancing the visibility of the Initiative country program with multiple levels of proactive engagements and partnerships involving the Prime Minister of Samoa, EU Ambassador to the Pacific, Cabinet Ministers, sporting bodies, male advocates, village representatives, government, civil society and private sector actors. To reach the widest audience possible, a localized multimedia campaign using digital and social media was launched. This was done with the video statement by the Prime Minister of Samoa as a high-profile influencer followed by televising of community conversation messaging videos throughout all the main national television stations, social media platforms (UN, Spotlight, TV stations) and the government owned radio station 2AP. The COVID19 pandemic and in times of crisis has taught us, the use of accessible and localized multimedia mediums is critical to raise awareness and engage communities on the risks of VAWG. The campaign reached over 100,000 viewers and engagements on social media platforms.

Utilizing local radio talk back programmes on **‘Prevention of VAWG’** was supported to provide information on addressing root causes of violence and how to prevent it from happening. These programs featured members of the CSO National Reference group, gender and male advocates against violence and was made possible with a partnership amongst government 2AP radio station and Spotlight Initiative. The selection of this radio was its national reach and use of the Samoan language in all its programmes.

Outcome 4: Quality Services

Health System GBV Strengthening

The Spotlight Initiative has supported a systematic approach to health system strengthening in partnership with the MOH. In 2021, the process involved identifying key senior clinicians¹⁰ in the MOH who are likely to see survivors of GBV and rape to lead in the development of the **Clinical GBV Standard Operating Procedure** (known as a Clinical Guideline) for GBV and Sexual Violence (SGBV), which also includes a section on dealing with child survivors¹¹. The SOP provides the foundation for the health systems strengthening approach to capacity building of health workers on

¹⁰ Clinicians from the emergency rooms, obstetrics/gynaecology, psychiatry, primary/public health facility doctors, nurses, midwives as well as the Ministry of Police Domestic Violence unit staff, CSOs and Samoa Victim Support Group

¹¹ Based on the latest World Health Organisation guidelines, WHO/UNFPA/UNWomen Clinical Handbook (2014), Manual for Health managers (2017)





survivor-centred clinical response and strengthening of the referral systems/pathways and alignment of case management to the IESG. The SOP identifies ‘who can do what’ when a SGBV case is presented at different facility levels and align with Samoan regulations and practices, internal and external referral pathways for additional services, within the framework of

the Samoa IESG.

Given travel restrictions which impacted on technical specialist’s ability to conduct face to face trainings, MOH senior health clinicians were trained virtually on the WHO (2019) curriculum *Caring for women subjected to violence and to undertake role plays/simulation exercises* clinic and district hospital outpatient/ Emergency department. Some of the key issues covered in the SOP and training included first-line care, psychological first aid, clinical examination and treatment, referral to a safe place, confidential data collection, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, and access to legal and support services. The locally driven training targeted 15 nurses covering all 13 health facilities in Samoa, as initial steps to the nationwide roll-out in 2022. As part of health worker capacity building and awareness of GBV magnitude, analysis of the DHS/MICS data was undertaken on prevalence, and attitudes towards violence; many participants were surprised by the high levels of violence in the country. Accordingly, help seeking behaviour was included in the training sessions.

This activity also enabled collaboration between the RUNOs in terms of expertise and to ensure that response to violence against children and adolescents was integrated into the GBV Clinical SOPs. This is given the high rates of violence¹² against children is reported in the recently launched (November 2021) DHS/MICs for Samoa. In addition, GBV in Emergencies was included in the SOP and TOT training, given the frequent natural disasters and political unrest leading to disruption and displacements.

Community outreach was also strengthened by ensuring that through the MWCSD and the District Development Plans, awareness on GBV was included as part of an integrated health information and service alongside other health issues including Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH), Family Planning, STIs, wellness and well-being. Information Education and Communication (IEC) on SRH

¹² 90.8% of children age 1-14 years reported experiencing any violence discipline method, 82.3% reported experiencing any physical punishment with 19.9% reported experiencing severe physical punishment.

and GBV were developed and distributed through the Ministry and support from Spotlight ensured that 1,000 community members were reached.

**Outcome 5: Data
GBV Administrative Data**

The Initiative is collaborating with the Pacific Community and the University of Melbourne on the coordination of GBV and Administrative data in Samoa. A GBV Admin Data group, a multisectoral mechanism has been set up to capture GBV prevalence data from different sectors, with the aim to inform policies and national decision making. The group is led by the MWCSO with membership from the Samoa Bureau of Statistics (SBS), MOP, MOH, SRC, MJCA, FLO, and SVSG. The group has been working towards standardised data collection templates and discussion around the special cases of addressing SOE lockdowns and disasters for data collection. The group shared their experiences on data collection, gender standards applicable to each agency, and to account for religion, ethnicity, education and employment. Child protection was significantly addressed when collecting information. Next steps in 2022 will be co-led by MWCSO and SBS in developing the on-line platform to manage data collection, identify data administrators by each agency, and prepare MoUs on data sharing if required. There will be further capacity building training on analysis and interpretation of data collected.



Figure 2: GBV Admin Data Group Training

Education GBV Data

Under the partnership with MESC, efforts are made to design and update instruments for the collection of data for the purposes of the statistical digest¹³. These efforts are streamlined with the Ministry’s current initiatives to improve on their overall data collection efforts. A technical expert has been engaged to work on review the current data collection tools and update the school’s data collection tools integrating metrics related to DV/IPV/GBV. Following this, trainings are planned for enumerators on the revised tools.

¹³ Samoa Education Statistical Digest published annually with data covering ECD to Tertiary/TVET levels

Outcome 6: Women’s Movement and CSO Engagement

Spotlight extended its financial support in 2021 to Samoa’s oldest women’s movement organisation, the **National Council of Women (SNCW)**, to increase capacity building trainings for its women members on good governance and leadership as a transformational tool to prevent violence and protect the rights of women in-line with its constitutional mandate. This was in support of institutional strengthening to unite the women and enable them to work together harmoniously for the benefit of the home, family, village and country a key constitutional function of the SNCW. Through the work of a local technical advisor, additional 300 women leaders identified from the same 14 villages in 2020, were trained in transformational leadership skills to help with their village advocacy in preventing VAWG and IPV. Bringing the new total of women leaders trained to 346, which is inclusive of young unemployed and untitledⁱ women from 16 – 35 years of age. The most noticeable achievements by the SNCW were the facilitation of the strategic mainstreaming of EVAWG concepts through Spotlight Initiative and Women In leadership program (WILS)¹⁴. The alignment of concepts and trainings ensured sustainability and reduced duplication of efforts for the maximum impacts on the ground. The training increased confidence and knowledge amongst the women to lead their own destiny in the prevention of violence, which is a true demonstration of gender transformational action as demonstrated by the Siutu village case study. It has strengthened the collective work by **Faletua, Tausi, Saoao ma Taulele’a**¹⁵ through monthly meetings to build their engagement in village development matters that is of concern to them.

Strengthening GBV Support Services for SVSG

The partnership with SVSG supported women’s networking in building knowledge and understanding of women’s rights in Samoa. Reviving the culture of respect is an attempt by the Initiative to bring traditional culture values to life, while empowering survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence to take charge of their lives. With the aim to identify gaps in the services to DV/IPV survivors, the Knowledge, Attitude & Practice Survey (KAP), relating to support services available to survivors of DV /IPV, was used to gather evidence for the effectiveness and efficiency of the support services available. The KAP Tool has been used by SVSG in its previous programs to help assess what specific members of the communities (parents, adolescents, community leaders) know and believe (Knowledge), how they feel about (Attitude) and how they behave (Practice) in relation to violence against children (VAC). A large part of SVSG’s support service programming is concerned with changing the attitudes and behaviors of members of the community to better protect the most vulnerable, usually women and children. The most notable gap in services

¹⁴ Women In Leadership funded by DFAT

¹⁵ Faletua & Tausi – wives of male village chiefs and orators. Saoao – daughters of the village regardless if married or not married. Taulele are wives of untitled men of the village. Untitled men – are men who do not have chief titles.





to survivors of DV/IPV as identified by the KAP Tool was psychosocial support especially since the government imposed the state of emergency restrictions in March 2020 due to the COVID-19.

SVSG is the only provider operating a privately funded domestic violence shelter for women and children in Samoa. In the last nine months financial assistance through Spotlight, evacuation and support services were supported for 139 cases for gender-based violence survivors, with majority of victims/survivors women and children. 115 of these cases required direct police assistance, 49 were awarded court protection orders and cared for temporarily in the shelters (36 mothers and 13 children). A new in-house domestic violence policy was supported putting in place new safeguards for the protection of women and children evacuated and cared for by SVSG at the newly opened shelters. SVSG recorded a total of 1,587 direct beneficiaries, not surprising the gender statistics reveal that 49% of the total beneficiaries comprises of women aged 18 years and above compared to 10% of men in the same age group. Girls aged 17 years and below make up 33% of beneficiaries with 11% of boys of the same age group assisted. This statistics against girls under the age of 17 years correlate with the high sexual assault incidents increased from 37 cases committed against young girls in 2020 compared to 49 in 2021. Future support recommended for Spotlight Phase 2 and parallel support required to tailor to this issue is the setup of a sexual violence/rape crisis centre to adequately deal with victims and survivors given the high demand for mental health services.

Spotlight Initiative has strengthened service response and referrals by creating direct linkages with helpline and the SVSG psycho-social team, Police and community respondents. A total of 1033 callers were assisted through the 24 hours helpline and referral system requesting assistance ranging from domestic and sexual violence to counselling, mediation, family disputes and welfare requests. SVSG documented a dramatic decline in callers compared to the previous year in 2020, in which 9 months statistics recorded twice the number for people seeking help via the helpline. Despite the decline, the helpline remains the most used form of medium between those seeking help and SVSG. Support for continuation of advocacy for SVSG village youth representatives through their Shine and other advocacy youth projects with a total of 1,294 indirect beneficiaries include the SVSG village representatives and the youths engaged in advocacy work and the SHINE workshops which was co-funded by the Samoa Spotlight Initiative and the Canada Fund for Local Initiative, in collaboration with the International Labour Organization and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry & Labour.

Youth Engagement

Evidence was generated on youth's perspective of respect. A #SamoaWithHer social media platform was established to serve as a tool to scope the youth's perspective of respect through on-line polling. It is encouraging to note that respect, is still very much a part of a parents teaching to





their children in the home, with 93% of the respondents noting that they have gathered most information about respect from within their homes. Further mapping online attitudes to DV/IPV, one of the norms associated with domestic violence most commented on was the bystander, whereby some members of the community, chose to stand back and watch as a violent situation occurs, with the mentality that it is a private matter. SVSG presented the outcomes of their work through the production of a comic book to present the analysis of the gaps in services and the mapping of online attitudes.

These initiatives form part of larger efforts made by SVSG who is maintaining a cross-border virtual partnership and exchange program with five countries spanning from Europe, Africa, Asia and the South Pacific with the SVSG Juniors being a member of the Breaking the Cycle of Violence alliance. In addition, the composition of the youth researchers ensured that there is sustainability of the knowledge shared after the end of the project, with the youth leaders from the selected 25 youth groups, being recruited and trained as researchers.

CSO Engagement

SUNGO as a key umbrella partner whose mandate is to advocate, mobilize and strengthen capacities of CSOs and communities convened two psychological first aid and psychosocial trainings for 20 organisations, 95% of these organisations are led and staffed by women. The specific training areas of concern were identified by the CSOs in the Spotlight CSO capacity assessment, with the highest demand of requiring services in and which CSOs lacked confidence in carrying out. The post evaluation conducted after the training reflected very positive results with all the participants stating increased knowledge and skills, confidence to be able to apply the new learning within their own respective workplace on prevention and response initiatives. hosted a **16 Days of Healing knowledge and sharing forum** for CSOs coinciding with the global 16 Days of Activism on 29 November. The forum brought together 187 representatives from: communities, non- government, faith based, survivors of violence, government, EU and UN to share and discuss what needs to be done to change the narrative and ensure the work around prevention of violence is sound and sustainable.

Participants consisted of 69% female representation compared to 31% male representation across 46 civil society organisations from both Upolu and Savaii. The average age of participants ranged from 12 to 59 years old, with a 34% child and youth representation between the ages of 6 to 35 years. The forum demonstrated a movement advocacy platform to showcase and discuss community shared good practices on the prevention of violence.

Overall summary of key messages from the forum:



- Working directly with traditional village leaders as the top leadership is critical to instigating gender transformative changes that will contribute to long term sustainability.
- Increase government, development and donor investment in village structures and community-based organizations if we are to be genuine about meaningful engagement with village organisations as equal partners to end violence against women.
- Prevention and intervention initiatives that are known to bear fruits are those that utilize concepts of Samoa tradition that are relevant to the diverse lived experiences of Samoan individuals, families and society groupings.
- Mainstreaming of cross cutting issues for priority areas such as gender equality, disability, climate change and disaster risk management.

Samoa Umbrella for Non-government organisations (SUNGO) is also a Samoa qualification recognised accredited service provider for CSOs in the formal and non- formal sector. SUNGO has a training curriculum on governance and project management and is a key service contractor under the Civil Society Support Program for the capacity building component that is also funded by the European Union. To increase the capacity of CSO's to design innovative projects to address violence against women and girls, a **CSO user guide on gender equality and gender mainstreaming toolkit** was developed in partnership with SUNGO with the taskforce and NRG input. It includes a training manual for staff on how to do gender mainstreaming in project design and management. A two (2) days training for a total of 12 participants which was facilitated by the external lead consultant and trainer provided for by Spotlight. Present were five (5) SUNGO key program and operational staff, four (4) SUNGO community trainers and three (3) selected civil society representatives currently managing projects. The composition of the training participation was 67% female compared to 33% male participation. Additional trainings on the use of the guide for SUNGO staff and relevant CSOs will be supported in future months, as the main aim for dissemination of the guide is to support CSO gender mainstreaming efforts in program management and proposal development for innovative programs on advancing rights of women and girls.

Faataua le Ola (FLO), a suicide prevention CSO has been offering a free lifeline available 24 hours for those suffering depression, anxiety, stress or suicidal thoughts triggered by family violence as a result of physical, emotional & verbal assaults. In the last 12 months, FLO with financial support from Spotlight, have assisted a total of 354 direct beneficiaries with indirect beneficiaries recorded at a total of 9,284 who were mainly engaged through the village outreach programs. Approximately 48% of the cliental most likely to seek support services are women aged 18 years and above followed by males in the same age group at 33%. Whilst not high however, still worth targeting for future preventive interventions are the girls aged 17 and below at 10% followed by the boys of the





same age at 6%. A staggering month that shows high case management and engagement by staff was in the month of January 2021, which documented 154 cases which is possibly a result of the pandemic with the high economic downturn and SOE restrictions.

In line with the LNOB principle, Spotlight supported the disability sector's consultation to develop **Nuanua o le Alofa's (NOLA)** strategic plan. The Spotlight Initiative supported the disability sector's consultation to develop NOLA's strategic plan that brings to the centre of attention a policy advocacy tool new and equal opportunities for all women and persons with disabilities to participate fully in all aspects of society that is guided by the human rights and equity principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The strategic process was co-facilitated by Spotlight coordinator who also supported the development of the strategic plan. Attended by 45 village members from Upolu and Savaii representing the four (4) disability subgroups namely, physical disability, blind & vision impairment, intellectual disability and hearing impairment.

The albino community in Samoa, whilst a minor community, is also a vulnerable population that face DV/IPV. Therefore, requiring targeted support and advocacy which was enabled through Spotlight. The **Clarence Sebastian Foundation (CSF) 'Voices from the Shadows'** project targeted a total of 106 direct beneficiaries who were able to shine the spotlight on the darkness and treatment of albino children and adults in Samoa so they can safely and freely come out of the shadows. Majority of the beneficiaries at 20% are boys under the age of 17 years with 19% of girls in the same age group. Considered important in this context is the engagement with the children at an early age to nurture 'good values, behaviour and responsible practices' within the family and community environment and break the gender misconceptions and beliefs that discriminates against women and persons with albinism. *"We are a family, a village, community and we are Samoans. Long after we are gone then our legacy will remain as testament to a time when we fought hard and long to remove us from the shadows (Reverend Siasia Salesulu CSF).* The CSF have produced for the first time in Samoa a promotional **'guideline which helps organisations deal appropriately and sensitively with females with albinism in communities and schools.** The guideline was launched on 30 September 2021 and attended by 30 people who witnessed a powerful testimony shared by a brave 15-year-old Hazel and representing government, mainstream school principals, academic institution, disability schools, civil society, youth groups, girls with albinism, church clergy and private sector and parents. The composition of the guests was made up of 30% women above the age of 18 years compared to 20% males in the same age group. With 33% comprised of girls below the age of 17 years.

Brown Girl Woke was supported to develop a youth friendly peer counselling service for youth relationships through gender- based violence prevention youth services. Direct support provided by



the Spotlight Initiative for smaller organisations like Brown Girl Woke to work with vulnerable young women and men and non-binary individuals in schools has been made possible through the small grant scheme initiative for non-mainstream organisations. While there has been increased acceptance of the unmarried youth relationships, commonly called dating in other countries, it remains a difficult subject to broach and discuss in Samoa. This affects utilization of family planning services, open discussion on healthy dating relationships, seeking counselling support and potentially reporting of violence to the police. Spotlight through the small grants programme, funded a twelve (12) weeks' training and certification of 11 peer/ youth counsellors by a qualified counsellor with the graduation carried out on the 2 December 2021. There were five (5) men aged 18 years and above, and six (6) women in the same age group. Upon the successful completion of the training the peer counsellors are expected to provide referral advice to unmarried youth in dating relationships and implement programs on healthy communication/dealing with anger and challenges in relationships. Six (6) of the graduating participants are connected to a school environment where they will be able to assist where relevant, four (4) are university students with two (2) secondary school teachers.

Partnership with **Samoa Fa'afafine Association** led to the implementation of Project RAHAB - lacing of the Scarlett thread, offered as a closed off session from the media and public given the sensitivities. The conversations around sex work for women, LBTQI and non- binary citizens, is normally a very sensitive and taboo subject in Samoa. It is associated with strong cultural and religious beliefs and practices. However, addressing the gender biases, discrimination and stigmatisation and understanding the root causes and circumstances of why these women engage in this space are usually the first steps to addressing the harmful practices and gender inequalities based on the leaving no one behind principle. The project with funding and facilitation support from the Spotlight Initiative, created a safe space that brought together 12 voluntary women employed in sex work to dialogue on their lived experiences, their paths shaped by childhood experiences of trauma, sexual exploitation, abuse, and neglect. Nina who was one of the participants shared her story. *'I started sex work when I was 16. I am now 19 and six months pregnant with my fourth child. All I want in this world is for my baby to be born healthy, but for now, I'm only after a place to sleep, food to eat and a place to clean myself daily. Life is a struggle, and my line of work is the only opportunity a woman like me can have. I don't know any other option,'* said another participant. Guided by the group of facilitators using the story of Rahab the heroine from the bible to inspire faith and self-worth amongst the women. Through the art of story- telling and dialogue depicted by weaving three strands of cloths (mirrored to the lacing of Rahab's scarlet thread) the women learned about self- worth and restoring dignity despite one's circumstances.



The Spotlight Initiative through the small grant scheme initiative supported a non-government organisation **Teen Challenge Samoa** to implement a 6-month rehabilitation and counselling services program. To reduce re-offending, counselling (psycho- social and spiritual healing counselling) and rehabilitation services were provided for 120 youth and adults; of this number 106 were males with 14 females. These are direct referrals from the Youth and family courts to the non-government organisations who without any budget support from government work with young and adult offenders including their families. From the 120 individual cases, 96 were gender- based violence primarily constituting of physical assault, with 99% males and 1% female. The 42 of the 96 are directly related to intimate partner violence, experienced between married couples with 23 of the offenders who are in de-facto relationships. There were 17 survivors of violence (3 males and 14 females) supported through the counselling and home visit support. A grant value of USD8,000 was awarded to provide counselling programs and home visit support, including establishing community support groups amongst church ministers, youth leaders and village women representatives) for reintegration of clients back into their family and community environment through **Teen Challenge Samoa program**. The Spotlight monitoring team were fortunate to observe some of the home sessions where substantial shifts in attitudes were noted and reflected upon. With the high number of males perpetuating violence, it does re-emphasise the need to increase programs for men/boys which has an impact on reducing and prevention of violence against women and girls.

Rights Holders (“Beneficiaries”)

Indicative numbers	Direct for 2021	Indirect for 2021	Comments / Explanations
Women (18 yrs. and above)	2,531	52,211	MWCSD reports on social marketing and behaviour change communication training, coaching and testing; reports from NHRI, SLRC, SNCW, MJCA, 2AP radio, ADRA, SVSG reports, MESC report
Girls (5-17)	1,032	4,851	Reports from NHRI, SLRC, SNCW, MJCA, SVSG reports, MESC report; MWCSD reports on social marketing and behaviour change



			communication training, coaching and testing
Men (18 yrs. and above)	2688	52,496	Reports from NHRI, SLRC, SNCW, MJCA, 2AP radio, ADRA, SVSG reports, MESC report; MWCSD reports on social marketing and behaviour change communication training, coaching and testing
Boys (5-17 yrs.)	676	4,735	Reports from NHRI, SLRC, SNCW, MJCA, SVSG reports, MESC report; MWCSD reports on social marketing and behaviour change communication training, coaching and testing
TOTAL	6,927	110,031	

Challenges and Mitigating Measures

Several challenges have been highlighted throughout the report, especially around COVID19 as well as the national general elections 2021, which impacted not only delivery but also priorities. The 3 months' long impasse and political uncertainty following the elections impacted national budget preparations and implementation of donor funded projects. Mitigating measures have been discussed throughout the report. Spotlight implementation in Samoa was also affected by government processes in channelling funds through the consolidated account to implementing ministries and CSOs. Important time was spent dialoguing with governments on alternative modalities of funds transfers and utilization.

Transformational change on social and gender norms, systemic and structural barriers to EVAWG take significant efforts and time to make an impact. Many of the activities implemented by the Initiative have been focused on processes and setting the foundations (data collection templates, plans, guidelines, advocacy). These are critical to ensuring a participatory and rights-based approach to programming that is sustainable. These processes include preparing the partners for implementation given their resource capacities (human resources, technical experts), recognizing



the availability of partners and the focus of their work, and managing the sensitivities around DV/IPV, sexual violence and CSE.

There needed to be a facilitating environment, and RUNOs have invested a lot of time and effort on getting the right Implementing Partners with capacities on board, as such the choice to engage regional partners and International CSOs, who unfortunately were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions to timely deliver interventions. At the same time, while impacting the rate of implementation in Samoa, building foundational structures and relationships- national partnerships, networks, and structures in government; supporting CSOs to engage across government sectors, supporting youth organizations - and fostering political acceptance take time though are critical for long term rights based sustainable results.

There have been challenges with the human resource constraints both at the Government, UN and CSO level. For instance, the CEO position for the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development has been vacant of July 2021. At the time of reporting, a replacement is yet to be named and the Assistant CEOs have since been taking turns as Acting CEO, and this arrangement, to some extent, presented challenges. The Initiative has adapted by designating a focal person within the Ministry in charge of updating the Acting CEOs on the progress of the campaign, as well as communicating to all senior management for ease of information flows.

Mobilising partners to deliver and implement programmes has been challenging for instance, attracting partners to deliver CSE interventions regionally and nationally.

Challenges are discussed in the internal RUNO technical team as well at the Joint Steering Committee meetings and the weekly UN meetings with Government, and solutions are considered.

Lessons Learned and New Opportunities

There are many lessons learned and opportunities not just for Spotlight but for targeted EVAWG initiatives to take on board to support, complement and strengthen national, district and village structures and interventions. The Mid Term Assessment also highlighted key areas for the Initiative to learn from and highlighted areas of competitive advantage to be enhanced.

a) *Lessons Learned*

- The multimedia campaign team have better appreciation of the broader impact that well-developed, sustained behaviour change communication strategies based on social



marketing techniques have, as opposed to the usual one-off awareness raising activities implemented by partners in the past.

- Regular technical coherence meetings to discuss alignment of interventions may help minimise duplication of parallel processes carried out by different RUNOs and better align with UN Reform. For instance, there are several media related activities that were implemented by different IPs in silos.
- It is best to build on and strengthen existing structures. For example, the rollout and implementation of the already approved IESG designating MWCSD and the Community Sector as lead coordinating bodies on matters relating to GBV and Child Protection should be supported instead of creating a similar coordinating structure in another sector.
- Meaningful engagement with key government counterpart should be ensured throughout program implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and UN agencies, to the extent possible, should refrain from duplicating activities carried out by implementing partners. RUNOs to work as One team not as individual agency when engaging with key government ministries. For instance, if one RUNO meets with an implementing partner, they should invite others to participate or advocate for the full Spotlight Initiative not the specific agency activity. This will ensure cohesion and stronger working relations. Moving forward, there needs to be clarity on who does what in terms of coordination and technical coherence across RUNOs to avoid confusion around roles.

b) New Opportunities

Building on opportunities highlighted in the 2020 annual report, 2021 lessons learned as highlighted throughout this report, as well the findings of draft Samoa Mid Term Assessment, multiple new opportunities exist not only for Spotlight but for all EVAWG initiatives in country. These will be considered for Phase 2 and beyond.

Implementation of policies and guidelines require national, sectoral and village ownership to ensure accountability and alignment of resources and results. For instance, the health system strengthening process takes some months and is an intensive time to build the knowledge and commitment of key health clinicians on responding to GBV and forming a core GBV 'team' to ensure that there is accountability to implementing the SOP. These key clinicians can reinforce the need for an appropriate health system response to GBV, which is a sustainable approach.

Through the integration of the national public information campaign into the key performance indicators and annual plan of the newly set up Prevention and Early Intervention Unit under the Division for Social Development of MWCSD, the campaign will effectively become a sustainable





undertaking with dedicated public financing fully owned by the implementing partner. Also, the collaborative relationship forged during the inception and development of the campaign allows for promising prospects for the strengthening of the broader child protection system, which will help address other issues affecting children in Samoa (e.g., neglect, children that are vending, adoption). The campaign is expected to build momentum for the review by the Attorney General and enactment by the Parliament of the pending Child Care and Protection Bill 2020, a legislative gap that has been flagged during the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Samoa in 2021. The initiative will also provide an opportunity to explore a more community-led child protection programming that will bring together formal and informal community-based networks.

The process of development of the National Prevention Framework offered an opportunity for cross-sectoral engagement and collaboration. VAWG is a cross-sectoral issue that requires the support and engagement of different partners. During the NPF development process, the programme engaged key government sectors and civil society organizations in different phases of the process including community consultations. The NPF offers an opportunity for the country to develop a comprehensive prevention tool, align with the existing IESG, addresses EAWG issues from different dimensions and recommends transformative interventions to change harmful norms and promote gender equality and a safe environment where women and girls can live free of violence.

Civil society organizations are key partners of the Spotlight Initiative. In addition to providing meaningful contributions through the implementation of programme activities, CSOs are also key agents of change, able to reach areas and support communities where government services are limited or non-existent. The evidence to date by the work of SVSG, FLO, Samoa national council of women, Samoa Fa'afafine association with the reach into families and communities especially the vulnerable populations has proven effective. The existing fruitful partnership with the CSRG offers an opportunity to promote the participation of most marginalized groups and equitable access to resources. In 2022, the programme will capitalize on this existing fruitful partnership to continue to reach marginalized population and access advise and support from the CSNRG to ensure that programme priorities and action continue to be align and to reflect the needs and priorities of CSOs in Samoa. RUNOs will continue to engage with the CSNRG and to provide a space where members can engage an, collectively reflect and agree on opportunities to improve programme implementation achieved planned results.

Innovative, Promising or Good Practices

Refer to Annex D: Innovative, Promising or Good Practices and Knowledge Production



Communications and Visibility

a) Overview

The silence over violence against women and girls in Samoa has been broken. Incidents of partner and domestic violence are now common on the social and mainstream media. People such as traditional chiefs, are now leading conversations on the severity of this issue and the need to address it at the village level are being translated into village by- laws.

Policy and decision makers both in the public and private sector are adamant in advocating for policy change and efficient coordination of collective actions to ending violence against women and girls at high level and community events. Church leaders are also now speaking and condemning such incidents as unchristian and unbefitting of a country founded on God.

Women, trapped in abusive relationships have found the courage to speak up and have the support and knowledge to report their cases and seek help from the essential GBV service providers.

The media has been instrumental in driving information for behavioural change. About 14 media houses in country, whom the Spotlight Initiative has engaged with, provided training for on Gender issues, since the start of the programme, have become more knowledgeable and supportive of the Spotlights Initiative Communications and Visibility objectives. In 2021, the media houses published and broadcasted over 30 news items on domestic and intimate partner violence reflecting the support and collaborations of the Spotlight Initiative delivering agencies and their implementation partners. It is estimated that these news stories have reached over 50,000 readers of 5 newspapers, listeners of 5 radio stations and viewers of 4 television stations.

The people, (from leaders to village residents) becoming informed of the issue and the need to resolve it, have created their own initiatives and messages to promote the Spotlight Initiative, advocate for ending violence against women and girls, and to empower and restore the respect for the rights and protection of women and girls.

b) Messages

The key messages outlined below were the main ones that emerged from community conversations and coined by the participants.

“END IT BEFORE IT BEGINS”



Ending violence before it begins was coined by a village chief in a consultation during a series of community conversations with rural villages. These community conversations were to develop the National Prevention Framework to ending violence against women and girls that was led by Spotlight with MWCSO

The message is premised on prevention. In these community consultations, the underlying expectation is that the village chiefs take responsibility to be at the forefront of prevention efforts. The message was a reminder for all chiefs (men and women) in the village council, to be more proactive and alert to risks and possible harmful behaviours that can endanger the lives of every person and importantly, the women. They must act to prevent violence before it happens.

However, the audience of this message was not limited to the village council. It extended well to the youth groups, men groups in the village setting who have become dedicated to spotting triggers of violence and ending it before it starts.

The significance of this message was adopted and amplified by other agencies in their programmes to strengthen a sense of commitment to spot the triggers or causes of violence and deal with them immediately.

“My Village, My Pride – it is no place for violence.”

This is the message that was prompted by Spotlight and the SVSG as the theme for their community performing arts concerts to express the message of ending violence against women and girls through traditional songs and dances. Over eight villages from the rural communities participated in the concerts, and involved youth, women and village chiefs. The ‘My village, my pride – it is no place for violence’ message through songs and dances was showcased live on Facebook and it sparked great interest from the government and international partners during the 16 Days of Activism 2021.

This message targeted the communities – from leaders to parents to youth and children. At least two of these villages, (Savaia and Satitua) have integrated into their church youth programmes, dedicated sessions on gender and violence. This is to help the youth to understand the dynamics of the violence against women and girls and to mobilise them to be advocates of ending violence through modelling appropriate behaviours and messages.

“Community leadership is key in ending violence.”

This message came through strongly in CSO trainings for trainers and Forums organised by Spotlight and SUNGO. This message is an interpretation of a Samoan proverb - ‘*E afua mai mauga tetele manuia o nuu,*’ which refers to good leaders brings peace and prosperity to the people. The change in behaviours to end violence will never happen unless the leaders demonstrate their own commitment for everyone else to follow.



This was a call to encourage more support from church leaders, youth leaders and leaders of women village committees. While there has been so much involvement and commitment by traditional leaders and village councils, there are other sectors of the communities that needs to step up.

This was a topic debated and discussed in the SCO forum with so much feedback from the audience to agree while leaders is key in the prevention and ending violence, they also need the support of international partners, CSO partners and their own village people and families.

c) Media and visibility events

Launching of the National Prevention Framework

The National Prevention Framework for ending violence against women and girls was launched by the Minister of Women Community and Social Development and the Minister of Police and Prisons. The two leaders solidified herewith the partnership and collaboration of the two Ministries to support national efforts to prevent and end violence against women and girls.

The launch that was organised by the MWCSO was a soft launch that only also invited the participation of the Media. The MWCSO was supported by the EU and UN in the drafting of key remarks and press releases for this event.

CSO Annual Forum

The first CSO Forum that brought together over 100 participants from women's groups, youth groups, person with disabilities, faith-based organizations, fa'afafine and faafatama, women in sports and the media, academia and researchers to dialogue on progress of their programmes and interventions under the Spotlight Initiative and share best practises that are working to minimize the problem within their own communities. The Forum was addressed by the Honourable Prime Minister of Samoa, EU Ambassador for the Pacific and the UN Resident Coordinator.

d) Campaigns

Spotlight Initiative Torch of Hope

Within the 16 days of Activism Campaign, the Ministry of Women, and the Initiative launched the Torch of Hope. Over 200 villages participated in this exciting, all-inclusive activity. The Torch of Hope was transported across the country in true Samoan spirits, on small boats, horses, wheelbarrows, running with a lot of singing and dancing. Most importantly as the Torch reaches each village, there was opportunity for the participants to share messages on 'ending violence before it begins'.



The involvement of village people in this Campaign, reflects how people have become aware of this issue. It reflected how they are participating and supporting national efforts led by the government to tackle and address issues where it is happening and where people are most affected as victims and perpetrators.

Ta talanoa (Let's talk) Spotlight Radio Show

Spotlight launched this radio talk show campaign within the 16 Days of Activism. The radio show specifically targeted the elders in the village communities. The radio show provided a platform for members of the CSO National Reference Group to share their experiences and knowledge on the root causes of violence and their knowledge on solutions and measures to manage and transform behaviours.

e) Human interest stories:

Transformational impact story shared at the forum.

Male champions for gender equality. Saimasi Suataga, Village of Nu'usuatia Safata (Community Trainer under SUNGO, Sui o Nu'u, Village Chief) by *Louisa Apelu, UNDP Coordinator, Spotlight Initiative*

<https://www.ws.undp.org/content/samoa/en/home/presscenter/articles/2022/male-champions-for-gender-equality.html>

This is the 'Gender Equality today for a sustainable tomorrow' journey by Saimasi, a male champion of the village of Nu'usuatia on the southern coast of Upolu: "I am a son of Nuusuatia. I used to treat family violence as a private matter like how my father used to treat it. But I've learnt and now understand that violence against women is not private, it is everybody's business. I have a responsibility as I am connected to the issue". Saimasi Suataga is a Male Champion from the village of Nuusuatia, Safata, a deeply traditional rural village with a proud history of Samoa's culture and ways and home to 465 residents. Saimasi is a Community Trainer with the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Government Organization (SUNGO) under the Spotlight Initiative. He has undertaken trainings to help him understand gender-based violence, empowerment of women, psycho-social support and First Aid psychological trainings to address violence. Armed with his new-found knowledge, Saimasi testifies through the Samoan proverb, "E afua mai mauga manuia o nuú" – The blessings and prosperity of a village springs and flows from the top of the mountains. "I began to hold conversations with the village council as I have some influence, and as my entry point to head straight to the top of the village hierarchy. The development of a village where there is zero violence starts from its leadership. Our village never used to talk about these issues openly before. Now





when we gather to discuss issues, we would put violence against women and girls (VAWG) on the meeting agenda. As a result, the village council implemented a Village Safety Committee to investigate intimate partner violence (IPV) and VAWG. The committee has intervened in 10 cases of disputes between couples, which could have escalated had they not. The council have been convinced, and now they have reinforced a village rule, “No more hitting of women and children”. Furthermore, a historical village first has also occurred where women and the village council meet to dialogue on matters and bring solutions to the table in a collective collaboration.

“Bringing women into the decision-making forum is an empowerment milestone for our women. And as a result, after 35 years, the village council has instigated the goal of building a women’s center,” said Saimasi.

Saimasi attended four trainings coordinated by SUNGO, in partnership with UNDP and supported by UN Women and UNICEF. The trainings fall under Pillar 6 of the Spotlight Initiative with a strong focus on strengthening civil society engagement to address gender norms and behaviours to prevent violence against women. A total of 23 organizations including Saimasi, a trained male community facilitator under SUNGO, attended all the trainings.

Women’s leadership at village level paves way for gender equality

https://www.ws.undp.org/content/samoa/en/home/presscenter/articles/2022/women_s-leadership-at-village-level-paves-way-for-gender-equalit.html by Louisa Apelu, UNDP Coordinator, Spotlight Initiative

Gains made by women’s movement and leadership at the village level are significant when there are meaningful conversations and participation of women. This is demonstrated through the Samoa National Council of Women as seen in the village of Siutu on the southern side of the big island of Savaii. Siutu’s Village Women’s Leadership Team (VWLT), which consists of 10 women and three male high chiefs, were mobilized two weeks after their five-day training using the transformational leadership tool offered under the Women in Leadership Project (WILS) to address gender-based violence. WILS is a joint programme between the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Women. Participants of this training intervened and provided support for two young female university students who were disowned and physically assaulted by their families due to unplanned pregnancies. The VWLT provided shelter and care for the young women whilst simultaneously instigating dialogue with the parents and families, to inculcate for “compassion and support” for their pregnant daughters and to restore familial reconciliation and to further encourage the continuation of education. The VWLT connected the young women with counselling experts from the Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG) as part of their strong advocacy of ending violence against women and girls (EVAWG). Strengthening women’s confidence and visionary strategic thinking to problem-solving was also part of this intervention. Furthermore, the VWLT are now part of the village council



meetings, where the women leaders from the VWLT can sit with the male chiefs and dialogue on problems, but more importantly, solutions. This is a milestone achievement for women who are not originally from Siutu; they are only tied to the village by marital relations (that is, they married into the village). Although they are at the forefront of and drive village developments, they do not participate in village council meetings until now. The Siutu women leaders acknowledged that women’s leadership roles in their village is finally recognised and achieved. Five women leaders who are members of the Samoa National Council of Women (SNCW) from the village of Siutu attended two trainings which turned into an integrated women’s programme for the first time that merged the WILS Project and the Spotlight Initiative’s EVAWG campaign. This helped advance the advocacy and strengthen primary prevention to end violence against women and girls led by the SNCW in 2021. A similar achievement of women’s leadership roles in advocating for a sustainable tomorrow is also evident in the village of Vavau, Aleipata situated on the southern coast of the island of Upolu. The trainings involving SNCW members from Vavau’s village committee led to meaningful conversations and prevention interventions, spearheaded by the late Falenaoti Kolutia Ailuai and her committee, to end violence against women that are being enforced by both the women’s committee and the village council. The women persevered and kept raising the issue with their husbands, brothers and fathers who sit in the village council. To ensure a sustainable tomorrow with the results of the women’s movement today, the Vavau women’s committee president quoted: “where there is meaningful engagement in transforming village developments to stop violence, the women continue to encourage women to work together, amplify each other’s voices and continue to improve their knowledge through trainings”. The trainings for women members of the Samoa National Council of Women were supported by UNDP through the European Union and United Nations Spotlight Initiative under Pillar 6, which focuses on strengthening women’s movements.

f) Testimonials:

- *Ua tele le suiga o lo matou nuu ma e tatau lava ona faaauau pea le polokalame (I recommend continuing the program due to positive impact in the village. Continue this program because there are many good changes happened in the village)*
- *Ua le toe maua le fasi ava i totonu o le nuu ma e tatau ai lava ona faaauau le polokalame (Lately we rarely have any more cases of wives being beaten by their husbands in our village, therefore the program should be continued)*
- *E tatau ona toe aumai nisi polokalame ina ia malamalama uma ai tagata i le taua o le nofo filemu ma le saogalemu o le nuu (There should be more training on the program in the future enabling the villagers to understand its importance)*



- *Ese le manaia o le polomalame mo alo ma fanau ua le toe sasaina e matua* (This program is appreciated because it has allowed parents to refrain from beating their children)
- *Ua tatau ona lelei le faatinoina e le Komiti o le polokalame ina ia faaauau pea le leai o ni sauaga e toe tulai mai i totonu o le nuu* (The committee should now be well versed with the implementation of the program in the village for its success to continue)
- *Ua tele le suiga o lo matou nuu ma e tatau lava ona faaauau pea le polokalame* (I recommend continuing the program due to positive impact in the village)

g) **Photos:** [Link to photos](#) :

Captions

Photo 1:

Caption

Person with disabilities share their insights on challenges and solutions to inform the design of the National prevention Framework to end violence against women and girls.

Copyright: UN Samoa | Spotlight Initiative – Aterina Samasoni.

Photo 2:

Caption: Fagalima Tuatagaloa, is the voice of the SOGIEC community in the Spotlight Initiative CSO National Reference Group, advocating for the rights of fa'afafine and faatama and their contributions to end violence against women and girls.

Copyright: UN Samoa | Spotlight Initiative – Aterina Samasoni

Photo 3:

Caption

Traditional performances of expressive songs and dance to advocate the message of women deserves respect. Community led advocacy campaign under the Spotlight Initiative programme.

Photo 4:

Caption.

The Spotlight Initiative Torch of Hope campaign during the 16 Days of Activism gave children the opportunity to call for protection of every woman and girl.

Copyright: UN Samoa | Spotlight Initiative – Vaitoa Toelupe

Photo 5

Caption





'If we are to respect the rights of women and end violence against women and girls, it starts with us.' The message portrayed through the participation of young Samoan men in the Spotlight Initiative Torch of Hope Campaign.

Copyright: UN Samoa | Spotlight Initiative – Vaitoa Toelupe

h) **Videos:** Please submit the videos themselves via the [VIDEO SUBMISSION PLATFORM](#)

Next Steps

Key focus areas for the Spotlight to focus on in 2022 are the following:

- Completion of Phase 1 activities for the Spotlight Initiative.
- Preparation for Phase 2 with Government, CSNRG and UN.
- The national multi-media campaign to end family violence, along with the three-year behaviour change communication strategy to be officially launched by MWCSO. The campaign team will continue the coaching sessions on social marketing and behaviour change communication with MWCSO and SVSG staff and support them in monitoring and evaluation of impact of the campaign.
- The focus for 2022, will be to ensure the nationwide roll out of the GBV SOP and training of other critical cadre to ensure that all women in villages and the outer islands receive survivor centered clinical care. Support supervision will be strengthened, and service delivery monitored through the health facility readiness service availability (HFRSA) assessment to ensure that women and children receive quality care.
- Community dialogues to support the campaign are also being prepared and organized in specific villages by SVSG. This will continue until the end of programme implementation.
- The program will continue to engage with key government ministries such as the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development in policy development. Will provide technical support to the final stage of the process, including the validation of the findings of community consultations held in 2021 and the alignment of the draft NPF with existing and related policy tools before its final approval. According to the agreed 2022 timeline with the government, the NPF process should be finalized and approved in the first quarter of the year 2022 and consequently launched on International Women's Day. Priorities for 2022 include the rollout of the NPF and the development of communication tools to inform this process.
- The new guide for remuneration of CSOs will be a great resource tool for the programme's engagement with the CSRG soon. The Spotlight in Samoa will undergo a reflection on opportunities to improve engagement with the CSRG and on additional interventions that can be implemented in 2022 by this important platform.



ANNEXES

Annex A: Results Framework

Annex B: Risk Matrix

Annex C: CSO Engagement Report

Annex D: Innovative, Promising or Good Practices Reporting Template

Annex E: Annual Work Plan

ⁱ Untitled women refer to women who do not hold traditional chief titles. Whereas titled women refer to women who have been bestowed chief titles and participate in village council meetings as part of the council membership.

