

MEDIA RELEASE

SVSG Enhanced Mental Health Awareness of Fa'asaleleaga Nofotane women and School Communities.

02 October 2025

Apia, Samoa.

On September 16th and 17th, SVSG conducted community education sessions in Savaii, enhancing the understanding of Nofotane women in the villages of Salelologa, Tafua, and Maota. Within two days, participants learned about mental health issues and the growing link between drug addiction and gender-based violence (GBV).

SVSG also engaged secondary students in the district, extending the educational opportunity to Don Bosco College and Tuasivi College with afternoon sessions at both schools. More than 80 Nofotane women from the Fa'asaleleaga district participated in the two-day event, while over 100 students took part in the school-based programs.

This community education initiative was funded by the Canada Fund, supporting SVSG's efforts to raise awareness about the serious threat of drug abuse in Samoa. With recent cases reported to SVSG indicating a rise in violence and drug abuse as contributing factors, the partnership with the Canada Fund allowed SVSG to reach and educate community members about these pressing issues.

Siliniu Lina Chang expressed her gratitude to the Canadian government for making this important work possible. She noted that the involvement of drugs in recent rape and incest cases involving young children highlights the urgent need to educate mothers and Nofotane women about drug addiction, mental health issues, and available therapies.

SVSG will continue this project, reaching 10 communities across Upolu and Savaii, as well as school communities and young people.

Together, let us protect Samoa and safeguard our families and communities from the dangers of mental health challenges and drug abuse!

END.

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

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

2017: Innovation & Excellence Team Award – Samoa Public Service

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

2018: Human Rights Champion in Samoa – UNESCO

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

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

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

2023: Healthy Islands Best Proposal Award – World Health Organization

