



SUNGO NEWSLETTER

Issue 4



SUNGO and its member organizations gathered for its 25th Annual General Meeting

1st December 2023, Ti'afau Fale, Millenia Hotel, SOGI - SUNGO and its member organizations approved all resolutions submitted at the 25th Annual General Meeting.

- All resolutions approved.
- Appointment of Mr Saena Penaia as Vice President
- Election of Executive Council Members

The Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations' 25th Annual General Meeting took place on the 1st of December 2023, at the Millenia Hotel's Ti'afau Fale at Sogi. The Meeting was officially opened with a word of encouragement by Pastor Luteru Junior Luteru, who highlighted Psalms 23, emphasizing the importance of patience no matter how far or how long it will take, but the Psalmist guaranteed that there will be greener pastures for the herd. The Meeting was chaired by SUNGO's National President, Tofa Lavea Peseta Lua Nafoti. With a quorum of 51.28%, the meeting approved all the resolutions submitted. These resolutions pertained in particular to the adoption of AGM Minutes for the financial year 2022, approval of the President's Report 2022 – 2023, approval of the financial and Auditor's Report 2022 – 2023, as well as the approval of the annual workplan and budget for the 2023 – 2024 financial year. Mr Saena Penaia from the Samoa Federated Farmers Incorporated's Nomination is appointed as SUNGO's Vice Pres-

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ident. And for SUNGO's Executive Council 2024, we welcome Ms Amituana'i Dr Cecilia Alailima from the Independent Water Scheme Association, Mr Tofilau Raymond Voigt of the Beekeepers Association of Samoa, Mr Leatinuu Sylvester Hagerdorn from Vailoa Faleata's Projects Committee, Mr Papalii Su'a John Ryan from the Samoa Cancer Society, Ms Naomi Eshrahgi from the Goshen Trust Mental Health Services, Ms Mary Collins from the Samoa Social Welfare Fesoasoani Trust and Ms Funemalafai Ono from the Samoa Institute of Directors.

SUNGO is hoping to work collaboratively with its member organizations, to ensure that our mission to deliver capacity building research, opportunities, information sharing, advocacy and support for civil society in Samoa. is accomplished through the work that we do.



SUNGO Advocacy and Knowledge Sharing Meeting

15th December 2023, SUNGO Office, Vaitele Tai - The Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations – SUNGO continues to work together with its members, to end violence against women and girls. This sensitive matter was brainstormed during a meeting between SUNGO, and its member organization representatives namely the Samoa Social Welfare Fesoasoani Trust, Faataua le Ola, Tofasinasina Incorporated, Goshen Trust Mental Health Services, Mothers of the Future, Vailoa Fale-

ata Projects’ Committee, and the Gualo-fa Ministry representatives. The main objectives behind the gathering, is to further raise awareness on Gender Base Violence.



“Break the Silence, End the Violence”

Stakeholder Engagement and Preparation Meeting ahead of the Samoa Agreement



13th November 2023, SUNGO Office, Vaitele Tai - In a pivotal gathering hosted by the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations, in collaboration with the European Commission representatives, stakeholders from diverse sectors around the Pacific convened to discuss and strategize on the impending Samoa Agreement, previously called the Post Cotonou Agreement, between the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). The meeting, held at SUNGO office, served as a crucial forum for participants to delve into the intricacies of the new Partnership Agreement, emphasizing the need for open and transparent mechanisms for structured

consultation with stakeholders, as highlighted in Article 95 of the agreement. This commitment to inclusive participation was reiterated in Article 7 of the Agreement’s Pacific Regional Protocol, underscoring its relevance for the Pacific region. Organized in collaboration with the European Commission and facilitated by SUNGO, the meeting aimed to gather insights and recommendations from Pacific civil society and youth on their engagement in the new Partnership. The event provided a platform to discuss the way forward, ensuring that the voices of all stakeholders are considered in the implementation of this historic agreement. The event successfully raised awareness and fostered dialogue, setting the stage for a more inclusive and participatory approach in the implementation of the Samoa Agreement. The insights gained from the meeting played a pivotal role in steering the course towards a more inclusive and people-centered agreement. SUNGO expresses gratitude to all participants, moderators, and the European Commission representatives for their active involvement and commitment to advancing the principles of openness, transparency, and collaboration.

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Civil Society and Youth in the Pacific Engagement



14th November 2023, Taumeasina Island Resort, Moataa - The eagerly anticipated meeting on Civil Society and Youth Engagement in the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement kicked off with a short prayer and a warm welcome from SUNGO President, Lavea Lua Nafoi. The event, graced by the presence of Her Excellency Jutta Urpilainen, the European Commissioner, saw significant enthusiasm and engagement from approximately 60 participants, both in-person and online.

In her address, Her Excellency Jutta Urpilainen emphasized the critical need for a robust mechanism to promote youth engagement in dialogues and discussions addressing cross-cutting issues at the National, Regional, and international levels. Her remarks underscored the commitment to ensuring that the voices of the youth are not only heard but actively shape the discourse on matters of global significance.

Participants, comprising representatives from civil society, youth groups, and

various sectors, engaged in robust discussions highlighting the tangible effects and implications of the Samoa Agreement on their respective domains. These insights serve as a crucial foundation for shaping the collaborative and inclusive implementation of the Agreement. Key points raised during the discussions included **Inclusive Decision-Making**: Participants underscored the importance of inclusive decision-making processes, emphasizing the need for mechanisms that ensure the active involvement of diverse stakeholders. This inclusivity, they argued, is vital for the Agreement's success and its ability to address the unique challenges faced by different groups. **Youth Empowerment**: Youth representatives expressed their aspirations for increased opportunities and empowerment within the framework of the Partnership Agreement. They highlighted the importance of creating platforms for youth to actively contribute to policy discussions and implementation strategies. **Community Impact**: Civil society organizations shared insights on the potential impact of the Agreement at the community level. They stressed the need for localized approaches to implementation, considering the unique needs and contexts of different communities. **Resource Allocation**: Stakeholders sought clarification on the allocation of resources, expressing interest in understanding how funds would be distributed among different regions and sectors. The transparency and equity of resource allocation were identified as critical factors influencing the success and fairness of the Agreement. **Access to Funding for Youth Initiatives**: Given the emphasis on youth engagement, participants were keen to know about the specific provisions and mechanisms in place for youth-led initiatives to access funding. Questions revolved around the criteria, application processes, and support available for youth-driven projects.

SUNGO Chief Executive Officer stressed the two main aspects for a better Blue Pacific.



27th October, Nadi, Fiji – At the STRATEGIC FORESIGHT & PIMER: PIANGO engagement on 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organization’s Chief Executive Officer, Afioga Fuimaono Vaitolo Ofoia stated that he believes that Passion and Courage, are the two pillars to advance the work of PIANGO to the Blue Pacific.



FALE Pasifika Inaugural Meeting Marks a Pioneering Moment in Humanitarian Action

27th October 2023, Nadi, Fiji – In 2019, the Pacific Humanitarian Journey embarked on a transformational voyage, igniting a beacon of hope across the Pacific region.



The Inaugural Meeting of FALE Pasifika took place on the 26th of October 2023, at the Duavata Conference Room at Tokatoka Resort in Nadi, Fiji. SUNGO’s National President, Afioga Lavea Peseta Lua Nafo’i, and SUNGO Chief Executive Officer, Afioga Fuimaono Vaitolo Ofoia, attended the PIMER Meeting. This historic event solidified a steadfast commitment to locally led humanitarian action in the

Pacific. By encouraging the coordination and synergy of efforts among humanitarian actors, FALE Pasifika aims to prevent duplication and enhance efficiency.

SUNGO Staff Joins Torch of Peace Initiative to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Girls

10th November 2023, Mulinuu, APIA – On the 10th of November 2023, the Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organisations (SUNGO) proudly announces its active participation in the Torch of Peace Initiative, a groundbreaking awareness program initiated by the Samoa Victims Support Group (SVSG) aimed at eliminating violence against women and girls.



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SUNGO staff, in solidarity with the Samoa Victim Support Group, took part in carrying the Torch this morning, marking a significant step towards fostering a safer environment for women and girls in our community. The Torch of Peace Initiative, spearheaded by the SVSG, is a beacon of hope and a call to action against the pervasive issue of violence faced by women and girls. Through this initiative, the SVSG aims to raise awareness, challenge societal norms, and promote gender equality, ultimately striving for a society where women and girls can live free from fear and violence. SUNGO, as a dedicated advocate for social justice and gender equality, is honored to support this vital initiative. By joining forces with the SVSG, we reaffirm our commitment to creating a world where every woman and girl can thrive without the threat of violence.

Furthermore, SUNGO is proud to announce its role as an implementing partner for the Spotlight Initiative Project, generously funded by the European Union through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This partnership underscores our shared vision of empowering women and girls, addressing the root causes of violence, and promoting gender-responsive policies and services. Through our collaboration with the Spotlight Initiative Project, SUNGO continues to work tirelessly to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. As we take part in the Torch of Peace Initiative, we urge the community to join us in this crucial mission. Together, we can create a society where respect, equality, and safety are the cornerstones of our interactions. Let us stand united against violence and strive for a brighter, safer future for every woman and girl.



SUNGO Coordinates Capacity Building Activities Under the European Union and the United Nations Spotlight Initiative Samoa Country Program.



12 - 13 October 2023, TATTE Building, Sogi - The Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations (SUNGO) is pleased to announce its pivotal role in coordinating Capacity Building activities funded by the joint EU and UN Spotlight Initiative Samoa Country Program through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under Pillar 6: 'Support for Women's Movements and Civil Society

Organizations (CSOs).

The EU & UN Spotlight Initiative is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. In Samoa, SUNGO has taken the lead in organizing and implementing Capacity Building activities designed to empower women's movements and CSOs. These initiatives are a vital component of Pillar 6, which focuses on enhancing the capacity of local organizations and amplifying the voices of women and girls in the community.

The Training of Trainers program was officially opened with a motivational message by Reverend Papali'i Sonja Hunter. Program was led by Chief Executive Officer Fui-maono Vaitolo Ofoia and SUNGO Trainers (Faapito Opetai, Lemalu Shirley Auele, and Letunu Penetekoso Te'o.) The training of trainers was attended by eighteen participants from various eight CSOs. SUNGO expresses its gratitude to the EU and UN Spotlight Initiative for their unwavering support and commitment to creating a safer and more equitable society for women and girls in Samoa. Through the generous



funding provided by

the EU and UN Spotlight Initiative, SUNGO has been able to develop tailored training programs, workshops, and resources aimed at strengthening the skills and knowledge of women's movements and CSOs. These activities are geared towards promoting gender equality, fostering social inclusion, and preventing violence against women and girls. This direct fund support to CSOs focuses on institutional strengthening support for SUNGO to enhance the core technical and functional capacities of CSOs who play a key role in implementing prevention and



response initiatives, advocating with decision makers on positive change in laws and policies, as well as maintaining accountability of right holders on domestic violence issues. The Capacity Building activities facilitated by SUNGO include Leadership Workshops which focuses on empowering women leaders with effective leadership skills, strategic planning, and decision-making abilities. Another activity is Advocacy Training, which is more into enhancing the advocacy skills of women's movements and CSOs to influence policies and promote gender equality. Networking and Collaboration Events is another activity, which aims at facilitating platforms for networking, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing among women's movements and CSOs.