

Study looks in villages for gender violence control

Adrian Fruean

With violence against women on the rise in Samoa, villages can now play an important role in prevention with a new research study.

"E le Sa'oloto" (Love is not...)

The study is being implemented by the Samoa Victim Support Group (S.V.S.G.).

A National Public Inquiry into Family Violence in 2017, found that 86 per cent of women said that they have been kicked, punched, slapped or harmed using a hard object by their husbands or partner.

The group is the largest provider of support services for women and girls experiencing physical or sexual violence in Samoa.

It has also revealed that the current COVID-19 global pandemic has made this situation even worse, as the stress of lockdown and accompanying financial pressure contributes to household violence.

But the good news is that villages can now play an important role in prevention.

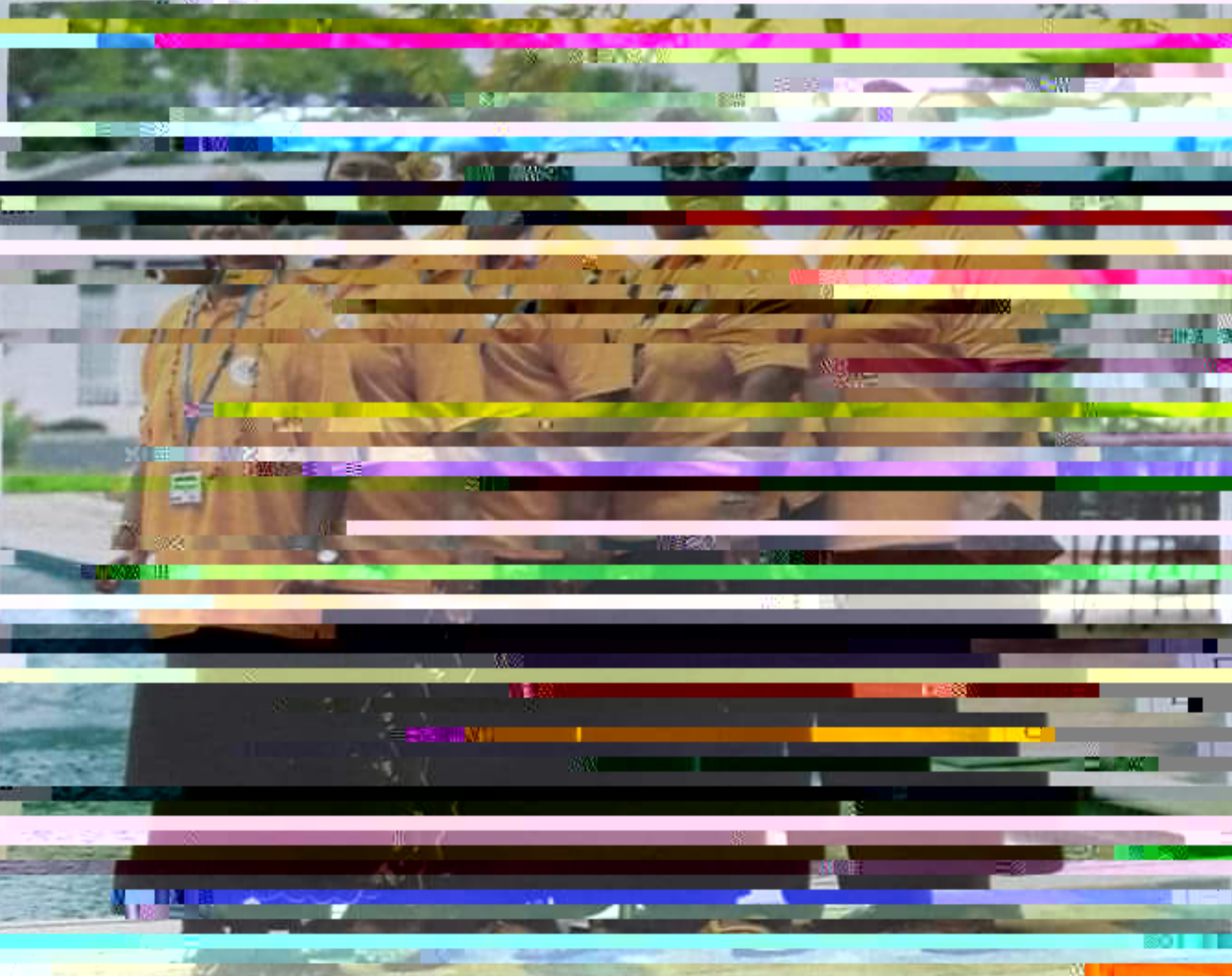
As part of this new study, S.V.S.G. is searching for examples of Samoan villages looking to address violence against women and providing them with an opportunity to discuss the progress they have made.

Victim support was selected to representatives from 10 different villages to collect data for the study, which is being led by a team of researchers at University College London (U.C.L.) in the UK, in partnership with the National University of Samoa.

In a joint media release from U.C.L. and S.V.S.G., it states that Dr. Jenevieve Mannell, who is based in the University College London in the UK, is the lead researcher.

She has said that the aim of the study is to understand what Samoan villages are already doing to support women and then use this to design methods to intervene to stop that work with the Samoan (Samoan way).

Dr. Mannell said they are hoping to learn things about preventing violence that can be shared with other villages.



With violence against women on the rise in Samoa, villages can now play an important role in preventing this. Photo: Photographer: Vaitogi A. Matafeo

the rest of the world.

The Victim Support Group has implemented several initiatives to address violence against women in recent years.

There was the 2016 nationwide Awareness Campaign Against Rape and Indecent Acts, which was fully funded by the Government of Samoa.

The 2016-2018 Strategic Community approach to end violence against women, through building a grassroots advocacy campaign, was funded by the United Nations Women's Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women.

From 2016-2018, the project was funded by the U.N. Women Pacific Regional Office, giving women survivors or violence and those at risk access to support at all times through a 24-hour toll-free helpline.

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The 2016-2018 Economic Empowerment of Women Survivors of Violence project with the U.N. Women and for Gender Equality and address violence against women through their economic empowerment. Many recently the Samoa Government has invested significant funds against women that is universal support efforts with the use of...

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This new study from S.V.S.G. complements these initiatives looking to communities for solutions to violence against women that are uniquely Samoan.

The study has been funded by the United Kingdom's Research and Innovation Agency, the next phase of the study will then involve village representative in exploring what Samoan villages are already doing and which strategies that are most effective in reducing violence across the 10 years of the study. It is a joint project with the Samoa Government and the Samoa Development Bank.

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