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GOVERNMENT OF SAMOA

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Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development

DIVISION FOR WOMEN

Men against Violence Advocacy Group **(MAVA)**

Report on MAVA Activities – 2009

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Introduction

Men against Violence Advocacy Group (MAVA) is, as its name suggests, a group of men who wish to play an active part in combating violence in all its forms but more specifically, domestic violence. The genesis of the concept & of the group occurred in 2008 as part of the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development national campaign to highlight National Women's Day. The group sees its major role as working through the Pulenu'u group initially to inform & in the end utilize the authority & influence of Samoa's village government system to combat gender based violence.

The idea started with a public meeting with the core participants being the Pulenu'u group or government representatives in village councils who are responsible for local government in Samoa. Pulenu'u appointees are members of the governing councils & as such hold key positions of authority & influence in their communities.

Having the Pulenu'u group at the heart of MAVA will lend considerable weight & force to the delivery of MAVA programs & in effecting a change of attitude & mindset on the subject of gender equality & gender based violence. **From the participants at the public meeting was selected a Steering Committee of fifteen (15) members which during part of 2009, has been engaged in building up capacity for the group to launch its program of activities against violence.**

Capacity Building for the Steering Committee

The focus of the group's work to date has been building the capacity for the members of the Steering Committee on the subject of gender equality & gender based violence. This has been done through a series of workshops where members have been exposed to the extent & nature of gender based violence. Apart from understanding the nature of GBV & its harmful impact, focus has also been on understanding prevailing attitudes on the subject especially among men & boys, finding ways to change them where necessary.

The workshops have also been an opportunity to develop a number of key documents that include; the group's constitution, key messages around which the facilitation package will be developed, and a draft Plan of Activities in 2010. 2009 ended with a presentation of the group's work and plans including these documents by the Steering Committee to the Upolu Pulenu'u membership. 2010 will start with a similar presentation to the Savaii Pulenu'u group.

Funding

Once MAVA's draft Activities Plan is finalized & financially supported there will be a cleared idea of any additional funding required at this stage. As of now, there is sufficient funding to implement a large part of planned activities for this year. Fundraising will be included in the group's work plan this year.

Appreciation

MAVA greatly appreciates the support provided by the Ministry of Women, Community & Social Development, & looks forward to the continuation of the partnership as the group becomes more firmly established.

MAVA has completed a range of activities since the group's establishment.

1. **9 Capacity Building Processes (2009)** – the aim of these processes were to build the capacity of members on the subject of gender equality & gender based violence. A series of workshops were conducted to expose members to the extent of gender based violence. Furthermore, apart from understanding the nature of this issue & its impacts, focus has been also been on understanding prevailing attitudes on the subject especially among men & boys & finding ways to change them where necessary.
2. Group's constitution as well as the significance of advocating the elimination of violence in the family. Furthermore, MAVA presentations **Development of Group Constitution & Key Messages (2009)** – within these CB processes the above mentioned were developed from within the group. Key messages are vital aspects included within the group's **Facilitation Package**.
3. **1 Public Meeting (2009)** – on the 27th of November 2009, members of MAVA conducted a public meeting to inform the country of the group's existence. From this event, MAVA conveyed to the public their Constitution as well as key messages embedded within their facilitation package, & activities that they intend to complete for 2010.
4. **8 Seminars (2010)** – MAVA has completed 8 seminars (4 Upolu & 4 Savaii) in which they addressed Village Mayors of the country. These seminars comprised of presentations of MAVA's findings in the context of gender based violence as well as information regarding CEDAW & CRC; both essential components that provide a solid foundation for the group's **own** constitution.
5. **Community Outreach Advocacy Program (2010)** – in commemoration of International Women's Day 2010, MAVA visited six (6) villages where they addressed village communities on their were based on the IWD 2010 theme, *Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities, Progress for All*. The villages visited were:
 - **Alamagoto**
 - **Saleilua**
 - **Toamua**
 - **Vailele**
 - **Salelavalu (Savaii)**
 - **Satuiatua (Savaii)**
6. **Media Campaign (2010)** – MAVA also utilized the benefits of the media by broadening the spectrum of public awareness & further informing the country of the group's existence & initiatives. This activity was also another commemorative effort for International Women's Day 2010. Activities include two (2) radio talkback shows on Talofa FM 88.5 & Radio 2AP, as well as a TV Panel Discussion on TV3. Furthermore, an article written by the Chairperson, Afamasaga Toleafoa Faamatala was published in the Samoa Observer during the implementation of IWD activities.
7. **Samoa Victim Support Group Campaign Against Rape March (26/03/10)** – MAVA also participated with the MWCSG in a march hosted by the SVSG as part of their **"Say NO to Rape"** campaign. It was imperative that MAVA participate in this event due to the fact that they are also advocating the

elimination of this form of violence within the family & country. It was also a perfect opportunity for the group to gain further recognition from other corporations as well as the general public.