

Impact Report:

South Pacific

Bringing Hope and Healing to Women



Project Update

Since 2021, when the World Day of Prayer celebrations were hosted by Vanuatu with the theme: "Building on a Strong Foundation", Bible Society of the South Pacific (BSSP), in partnership with World Day of Prayer, has taken a holistic approach to bring healing and hope to the women of Vanuatu. The World Day of Prayer Project has been implemented by BSSP by advocating for and empowering women who are victims of domestic violence. This project is providing training and healing sessions in unreached communities. Educational awareness programs are also being planned, and learning materials are being developed for communities to use.

After a slow and difficult start to the project due to the impact of COVID-19, in 2022 a new program manager was appointed, and as of December, the new manager had met with 14 leaders from churches and relevant agencies to begin implementing the project. By the end of March 2023, five domestic workshops had been held for representatives from churches, women's groups, and other agencies. A total of 91 people have been reached with the training. In February, the training workshop conducted by BSSP General Secretary and the Trauma Healing Master Facilitator had a mix of experienced and seasoned church leaders and prominent lay members. The Program Manager received the training so she could conduct future sessions.

The workshop identified five potential partners and co-facilitators that the Vanuatu Mission Branch Domestic Abuse project could call upon to facilitate on a volunteer basis and for collaboration purposes. Participants were eager to take the training to their own communities to share the knowledge and healing with their own people. Eighteen participants were awarded the Apprentice Facilitator Certificate at the end of the training and advised that they co-facilitate for the next 24 months.

A subsequent training workshop was held in early March, which was sadly disrupted by the tropical cyclones, with the initial date rescheduled, and many unable to attend. Nevertheless, those who attended were privileged and blessed to be part of the training. There were lively discussions during group discussions and sharing sessions, and the sharing of hurts and grief greatly helped the participants to heal. Three Domestic Violence Training workshops were also held in March, at the Presbyterian Church in Santo. The first was attended by 25 women; the second by 12 men; and the third by 23 youth.

From April to June, communities will be visited in Ambae, and workshops will be held together with The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA). From July to September there are plans to hold further workshops in Port Vila.

72%

of women in Vanuatu have experienced some form of violence. Domestic violence of women and children are embedded in gender and power relations in Vanuatu.

145,000

(approx) is the current population of women in Vanuatu

5

Domestic Workshops have been held and 91 people trained to facilitate workshops by March 2023,

100

copies of the 'Healing the Wounds of Trauma' booklet were distributed



Impact

The training conducted in the first quarter of 2023 has had a big impact. It has educated and informed participants of the issue of domestic violence, and addressed preconceived ideas which are brought to the group. The opportunity to read God's word in the training groups has led to a greater understanding of what God says about relationships in a couple and in a family. This has helped address previous misinterpretations of God's word around submission which has led to violence.

So far, 13 communities have been reached with this program; 8 in 2022 and 5 so far in 2023. As the year continues, the hope is that the issue of domestic violence will be brought out into the light in more communities, and as people's awareness of it increases, it will be stopped.

Project Testimony

"The workshop has helped me. I am ready to help our women in the community who are facing domestic abuse. I am thankful ... for this workshop," said one of the men who attended a workshop in 2022.

Expenditures

2022:
Staff costs: \$725
Scripture costs: \$1,604
Facilitator Allowance: \$422
Travel: \$2,713
Workshop Costs :\$5,571
Laptop: \$1,373
Total: USD \$12,408

2023: (Jan-Mar)
Staff costs: \$3,826
Scripture costs: \$200
Travel: \$3,894
Workshop Costs: \$4,973
Total: USD \$12,893