

At this point there are three permanent volunteers who attend to clients daily while others work on a pro-bono basis. The organisation is now registered under the umbrella of the Fiji Council of Social Services and the Department of Women and Culture. AusAID Program Support Facility donated a table, 3 office chairs and a few other materials for the office. Staff of home of hope visited the office for a meeting to work collaborate. Purple rose group provided material assistance clients who had just moved in to new accommodation.

Counselling and Community Work

As usual the activities for this quarter apart from providing counselling services and client support were as follows:

- Moral support to women to attend court and filling of the forms.
- Several home visits to some of the clients-Saweni, field 40, lomolomo village, lovuhart and Lovu Seaside, (clients who are amputee's, homebound-sick and stressed, moving in to accommodation found and mentoring support) including a hospital visit.
- Field visit taking Mental Health nurse with us to Lovu Seaside for Mental health support
- Referrals to other services such Social Welfare, hart home, police and Health Services.
- Therapy sessions with families.
- Working on partnership with Medical Services, Social Services, Police and Court House.
- Case referrals from VHSC continued – few clients
- Staff Debriefing and supervision continued.
- Community outreach with Veseisei Sai Health Screening team at Lomolomo Village – 3 days
- Engaged with Home of Hope to work collaborate to support single mums trying to start living independently after release from the home.
- Networking with Purple Rose group and Lovu Hart for support for clients that needed emergency accommodation and materials needs.
- One workshop conducted on Women's Empowerment – healthy v/s unhealthy relationships
- Group mentoring session with teenage girls – also a session on anger management.
- Attended Almanu graduation celebration in support of our clients and also upon invitation
- Mentoring support and private tuition for disadvantaged children during holidays
- Distribution of food packs, new curtains and Christmas packs prior to Christmas
- Assisted with school uniforms, bags, shoes and books for the needy children who did not receive any assistance from elsewhere prior to start of school.
- A one-day trip to Vatukoula as a staff get together.
- Yavusania Village Church Youth group – 2-day workshop by Mereoni

Community Awareness Programs

1. Yavusania Village Youth – Gender, Division of labour and messages we get while growing up.
2. Yavusania Village Youth – Domestic Violence
3. Human Rights Day & Celebration of the last day of 16days of Activism to End Violence Against Women – Awareness on Human and Ending Violence Against Women.
4. Group session with teenagers – awareness on the “impact of Anger” and “building healthy relationships”.
5. Women's empowerment workshop – on healthy v/s unhealthy relationships

Up to December 2019, BIRTH Fiji saw 113 new cases of which were: (ANNUAL TOTAL)

- 28 stress cases
- 20 domestic violence cases
- 43 others (relationship issues, socio economic issues etc.)
- 11 child abuse cases
- 1 child Protection/support
- 8 phone counselling (domestic violence)
- 2 male clients (Stress/Panic Disorder)

All the above cases have been provided with ongoing counselling and social work/advocacy support. Home visits were done for those in need, children of vulnerable families were given support with tuition for the children, mentoring support was given for those who needed to build on their life-skills and programs such as healthy relationships, anger management for them. There are plans to do a workshop on communication skills, conflict management and healthy relationships for the group of women who have been networked to support each other in Lovu Hart in the coming year.

Staff movement and Staff Capacity Building

1. Supported to organise the horticulture meeting with Lautoka Flee market Association.
2. Staff took time out to do capacity building sessions on pre-marriage counselling, role plays and supervision on counselling skills
3. Case management consultations were ongoing to provide quality care
4. Counsellors went out for a lunch get together and another day trip to Vatukoula
Staff attended Almana Hope Centre graduation

Achievements So Far

1. A young girl who had given up hope for ever to return to school has been assisted and is now in university doing her second semester at foundation studies.
2. Some single mums were assisted with accommodation – homes at Lovu Hart and Koropita Housing
3. 5 children were assisted with education needs and moral support – one of them will now be entering University on a scholarship
4. Marked improvement in the health, well-being and quality of life reported by clients attended to with stress related cases. One good story was that of a client who came up at the health centre to the counsellor to tell her that she could now sleep after for many years of struggling of not able to sleep at night. This has a big impact on her and her family.

Challenges

1. Finances – to provide for expenses for volunteers especially while attending to clients
2. Volunteers spending out of pockets can get exhausting and loss of interest in work
3. Transport for home visits and family therapy.

Future Plans

1. Continue to review and develop policies and procedures manuals
2. Financial manual to be adapted and set up
3. Work at proposals for funding to sustain the services
4. Programs to be developed to provide for community awareness

5. Promotion of services once the setup is satisfactorily completed
6. Toys for children to make the environment more child friendly

Good Story

Birth Fiji marked the end of “16days of Activism” and “The Human Rights Day” by providing lunch to the families of single mum who were struggling financially in bringing their children up. The program had lunch, awareness on domestic violence, games, dance and treats such as ice-cream and chocolates for the children.

A client who had benefited from counselling and therapy for panic attacks and anxiety disorder donated towards this day and also attended the program. Dr. Swaran Naidu, Shakuntla – the area Advisory Counsellor, and AusAid Facility Officer – Asenaca Vakacequ joined the women for lunch and activities. A young timid girl who was very shy, was encouraged to do a solo dance in front of everyone. She gained a lot of confidence. All had a lot of fun especially joining the women for the dance.