



SAMOA

Stakeholder Submission to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review 26th Session of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, Human Rights Council

Joint Written Statement submitted by Nuanua O Le Alofa & Senese

Nuanua O Le Alofa (NOLA) is the national advocacy organisation of & for persons with disabilities in Samoa. Established in 2001 to advocate and promote the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities. The organisation is managed and governed by persons with disabilities. NOLA has a vision of an inclusive and barrier free Samoa for all persons with disabilities.

SENESE Inclusive Education Support Services (SENESE) is a Non-Governmental Organisation that, in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture (MESC), supports the inclusion of children with disabilities into the education system. SENESE is governed by a Board of Directors and managed by a Director, in collaboration with Coordinators of various programmes such as Early Learning, Primary, Secondary, Audiology and Deaf Services.

A. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. Samoa is a State Party to four of the core Human Rights Conventions - the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CED), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).¹ In 2011, Samoa appeared before the Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review Process. It received a total of 145 recommendations. It accepted 131 and noted 14. Of the recommendations directly linked to persons with disabilities, more than half called for Samoa to become a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities. Others included a recommendation for increased support for the work of organisations devoted to promoting accessibility and the rights of persons with disabilities.

B. PROGRESS TO DATE

2. Significant milestones have occurred during the report period (i.e. the period since July, 2011 and the date of this report) which continue to build up a platform conducive to strengthening the enabling environment for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities in Samoa.

- a. Samoa becoming a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities in September, 2014 is a strong testament of the commitment of Samoa to improve inclusive disability efforts at the national level.
- b. The establishment of the Samoa National Human Rights Institution in December 2013 through the enactment of the Ombudsman Act in 2013 expanded the roles and functions of the Ombudsman to include a Human Rights Mandate. The office must be commended for its efforts in publishing its first Human Rights Report in August, 2015.
- c. Using the Washington Questions when undertaking the Demographic Health Survey in 2014 signified a genuine effort to include the human rights based approach to collecting disability related data.
- d. Engaging with two Human Rights Treaty Bodies – the CRC and the CEDAW Committees. During the report period, Samoa appeared before the CEDAW Committee during its 52nd Session held in July 2012

¹http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx?CountryCode=WSM&Lang=EN

whereupon the Committee called for results-oriented measures, including through the implementation of the National Policy on Persons with Disabilities and Plan of Action, to eliminate multiple forms of discrimination against women with disabilities and to protect their human rights and dignity.

- e. The enactment of the Family Safety Act 2013 which has strengthened the legal framework for the protection of victims of domestic violence. The Act provides under section 15 that every "Police Officer who receives a report of domestic violence by any person shall at the earliest opportunity render such assistance to the complainant without any discrimination on any ground such as ... disability or other status and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection as may be required in the circumstances."
- f. The enactment of the Crimes Act has increased the maximum penalties for most sexual offences and establishing offence of sexual violation, which includes rape and unlawful sexual connection.
- g. The establishment of a Disability Unit within the Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development in 2015. This is a positive step towards strengthening the implementation of the national disability policy and also means better coordination of resources and efforts converging on the effective implementation of inclusive disability developments in the country.
- h. We acknowledge a joint effort by the government of Samoa and Australia through the department of foreign affairs and trade to support Samoa's efforts to ratify the convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, raise awareness on the rights and abilities of persons with disabilities and improve access to services through the Samoa Disability programme.
- i. Having in place the free medical scheme to provide better access to health services by persons with disabilities
- j. Congratulates the Government of Samoa for its commitment to review most of the existing policies and legislations. Most importantly considering disability matters in the process

SPECIFIC RIGHTS

Right to Education

3. SENESE aspires to create an enabling education environment that promotes inclusive education throughout Samoa at the Early Childhood Education stage up to the Primary Education Level to ensure self-sufficiency and independence amongst persons with disabilities. The rationale behind this is to ensure that each child has a sense of belonging to his or her community, regardless of whether or not he or she has a disability. Teachers who are trained from recognised training institutions acquire relevant skills and knowledge to teach and impart knowledge on able students. Their skills and the availability of appropriate resources to cater for the needs of children with disabilities is an area that needs attention.

4. Samoa in partnership with the Government of Australia through the Samoa Inclusive Demonstration Programme and NZAID through the small scheme programme provide an enabling environment for children with disabilities to access mainstreamed education with the ongoing support of service providers.

C. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. We commend the Government of Samoa for the efforts made thus far to improve the situation of the rights of its people with disabilities during the report period and recommend as follows:

- a. That the Government of Samoa completes the CRPD legislative compliance review [before the next UPR review cycle](#).
- b. Complete and implement recommendations of the CRPD Implementation Costed [Plan](#)
- c. That the Government of Samoa implements progressively its obligations under article 4 of the convention and ratify CRPD by 2016.
- d. That the National Human Rights Institution takes the necessary steps to ensure it is Paris Principles compliant.

- e. Invest in the development and strengthen institutional mechanisms to rehabilitate persons with disabilities who are victims of violence.
- f. provide non-discriminatory provisions within the court system to ensure the justice system is available, accessible and responsive to the needs of persons with disabilities who continue to deny access to justice due to the unavailability of sign language, inaccessible physical environment and force sterilisation
- g. That government continues in its efforts to implement the [recommendations of](#) core human rights conventions Samoa is a party of.
- h. Take necessary measures strengthen the implementation of the national building code, disability accessibility guide lines and other strategies to improve access to services, transports, information, physical environment by all persons with disabilities
- i. Continue in its efforts to provide adequate resources to support the effective implementation of the national disability action task force and disability unit
- j. That Training curriculum for Samoan teacher trainees and other education/ training institutions be reviewed to include disability and are supported with the appropriate resources.
- k. Government to continue to support existing programmes by the National Disabled Persons organisation, disability service providers and their partners with the appropriate resources such as the provision of teacher aids in schools, counselling services, educational materials in accessible formats to improve the effective participation of children with disabilities in the education system.
- l. Necessary measures are in place to improve access to sexual reproductive health and rights services by all persons with disabilities.
- m. Continue to support the DMO unit of the ministry of resources and environment in partnerships with the local villages in their efforts to include persons with disabilities at all levels of disaster risk management processes.
- n. Support the ministry of statistics with the necessary resources to analyse and report on implementation of the demographic survey of 2015.

These recommendations were provided on the 21st September by:



Mataafa Faatino Masunu Utumapu

Office Manager [Nuanua O Le Alofa national advocacy organisation of & for Persons with Disabilities]



Iulieta Pelenato

Coordinator SENESE Inclusive Education Primary Programme

ANNEX 1: NOLA BROCHURE

NOLA ACTIVITES



Any Persons with Disability, their families and friends wanting to support the work of NOLA is eligible and welcome to join the organization



For further Information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

NUANUA O LE ALOFA

Pat Ah Him, Nia Mall Building
 Saleufi, Apia
 P.O Box 6235
 Phone: +685 21147
 Fax/Ph: +68525243
 E-mail:
disabilitycouncil@samoa.ws



Samoa 53 Years Independence Day



Small Business Enterprise Training

WHAT IS NUANUA O LE ALOFA?

A voice of and for persons with disabilities. Established in 2001 to advocate for recognition of all persons with disabilities and their human rights in all aspects of society

VISION:

“An inclusive Samoan society that is responsive, culture sensitive, and ensures the promotion and protection of the rights of all persons with disabilities

OUR MISSION:

“To improve the situations of persons with disabilities in Samoa by empowering members to engage fully in all aspects of developments through advocacy and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.



Polokalame
Fa'alauliloa
totonu o Aoga

BACKGROUND:

In 2001, a group of people with different disabilities, including long term physical, intellectual, sensory and mental impairments established a national advocacy organization: Nuanua o le Alofa (NOLA) - the National Advocacy Organization of and for Persons with Disabilities in Samoa.

MEMBERSHIPS

- NOLA's membership is made up of a total of 400 members and associate members who participate in NOLA activities; however NOLA recognizes there are many more persons with disabilities in Samoa, in particular in rural areas, which face many barriers to participation.
- Members are persons with disabilities including those with long term physical, sensory, intellectual and mental impairments.
- Associate members are families including parents of persons with disabilities, and others within the wider community.
- The organization is governed by a board of 7 members and is elected by the organization every 2 years at the annual general forum.
- NOLA has a staff of 7



CORE OUTCOMES:

Outcome Area 1: Government of Samoa ratifies and implements the international convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (CRPD).

Outcome Area 2: Reduced poverty and enhanced work and employment for persons with disabilities.

Outcome Area 3: Enhanced community inclusion through increased access to the built environment, information, services and assistive devices.



Basic Literacy Training



SENESE BROCHURE



Group photo of Manu Samoa Team with SENESE, at the HPU GYM! - Official handover of Mural Painting Project for our Manu Samoa heroes, by the SENESE Secondary Deaf Students and SENESE volunteers and supporters of SENESE.



SENESE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICES

P.O. Box 1068 Apia, Samoa
Motootua Office: 685 27532
779 9989 / 776 0306
Vaitele Campus: 685 27531
Samoa Vision Centre: 21109 / 7701512
Email: senese@samoa.ws
Web: <http://www.senese.org>



SENESE

Inclusive Education Support Services

"Providing inclusive education services in Samoa"



Who are we?

SENESE is the only non-Governmental organisation, providing inclusive education services and support to children attending regular schools in their communities.

We focus on empowering all children with disabilities, their families and their communities to support the full inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in all aspects of their communities.

Programmes and services

Early learning – the earlier a child is detected the better the chances of successful inclusion. (For children 0-5 years)

Primary programme, (for primary school students)

Secondary programme - supporting children in secondary level and their transition into adulthood

Audiology – testing and assessing your hearing

Deaf services – empowering persons who are deaf through sign language and deaf awareness

Samoa vision – your vision is your gift, providing optometry services and quality glasses at affordable prices in partnership with National Health Services

Specialist services – occupational therapy, speech therapy and Audiological services.

Who do we support?

Children with physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities (hearing and vision), and their families
We coordinate support services for over 240 students in over 60 pre-schools, primary and secondary schools.

Our partners

WE are grateful to the support of the following partners:

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,
Government of Australia

National Health Services

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Women Community and Social Development and many other local and international agencies including the corporate services.



Child protection policy

SENESE is committed to ensuring the safety of children under our programme, and all staff are bound by our child protection policy – protecting children where they live, learn and play.



Find out more about our services by logging on to our website www.senese.org, or by liking us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/.../Senese-Inclusive-Education/34435826563>

For more information please contact us on +685 27532 or via email senese@samoa.ws