



Samoa **Red Cross** Society

Annual Report 2023



Bringing Communities HOPE



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What We Stand For

The Fundamental Principles

The "Fundamental Principles " are the expression of our humanitarian values and experiences to protecting lives, health and dignity of our people affected by the impacts of disasters and climate change that, when applied judiciously on the ground, they carry the power for more humanitarian effectiveness amidst the most challenging crises of our times. The Principles are a precondition for building and maintaining **Trust** with public authorities at the core of our humanitarian approach in securing access to helping vulnerable people whose lives, health and livelihoods are affected by the negative consequences of climate change, natural disasters and pandemics.

By making the Principles and its Values come alive in our peoples' behaviour, the individual perspective also enables Red Cross staff and volunteers to inspire a change of mindset and behaviour towards a culture of non-violence and peace. It is therefore very important that, the SRCS decisions and actions through the humanitarian nature of its obligations, bring consistency to the broad range of life saving activities it undertakes locally, nationally and internationally.

Humanity: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of the desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life & health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation & lasting peace amongst all people

Independence: The RCRC Movement is independent. The National Societies (NS), while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their respective governments & subject to the laws of their countries, must always maintain their autonomy so they may be able at all times to act according with the fundamental principles of the RCRC Movement.

Universality The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide

Impartiality It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious belief, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality: In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Voluntary Service: It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity: There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.



Acronyms and Definitions

ACRONYMS	DEFINITION
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AoG	Assembly of God – one of the church denominations in country
CBHFA	Community Based Health and First Aid
CCCS	Congregational Christian Church of Samoa – another church denomination in country
CFA	Community First Aid
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPR	Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation
CSE	Comprehensive Sexuality Education – a curriculum-based process of teaching and learning about cognitive, emotional, physical and social aspects of sexuality.
DRM	Disaster Risk Management, encompasses all aspects of managing disasters and risks, from prevention and mitigation to preparedness, response and recovery.
ERT	Emergency Response Teams
FLE	Family Life Education – an important subject to learn about as young people can learn skills they can use in life (e.g. consent, boundaries, health/unhealthy relationships)
FLE/OOS	Family Life Education for Out-of-School (young people)
FLO	Fa’ataua le Ola (Value Life) An NGO that works to coordinate a suicide free Samoa
IDA	Initial Damage Assessment
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
MESC	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MWCSD	Ministry of Women Community and Social Development
NCD	Non Communicable Diseases
NFI	Non Food Items (relief supplies)
NGO	Non Government Organisations
NHRI	National Human Rights Institute
NOLA	Nuanua o le Alofa-A Disability Advocacy NGO governed and led by persons with disability
ODeSI	Operational Research and Decision Support for Prevention, Control and Elimination of Infectious Diseases
PFA	Psychological First Aid
RWHT	Rainwater Harvesting Tanks (water source)
SaMELF	Surveillance and Monitoring for Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis and Scabies in Samoa
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEN	Samoa Education Network – a small young coalition aiming to work with communities and marginalized groups to identify and give voice to the education challenges facing them and advocate for education policies and programs that address these challenges.
SFHA	Samoa Family Health Association
SG	Secretary General
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SRCS	Samoa Red Cross Society
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach program of government encompassing 14 development sectors.
VNRBD	Voluntary Non Remunerated Blood Donation
WASH	Water and Sanitation and Hygiene
WASHE	Water and Sanitation and Hygiene Education
WBDD	World Blood Donor Day
WFAD	World First Aid Day

Message from President and SG

Hon Leiatuaalesā Jerry Brunt
National President



Namulau'ulu Tautala Mauala
Secretary General

In the fuss of our daily lives, where the pursuit of our personal success often takes center stage, it is easy to overlook the profound impact and significance of the ongoing community health services by the Red Cross staff and volunteers, working in auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field. Yet, at its core, they contribute to a myriad of humanitarian services of the SRCS, representing the **heartbeat of humanity**, aimed to build community resilience when basic health needs of our vulnerable groups and communities are met through health and safety education in first aid and CPR, blood donation, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) promotion, food and nutrition, NCD, STI, SRHR, DRM, shelter and livelihoods and other public health needs in emergency, including access to public health and environment systems, care & resources, bringing comfort, hope & light when our vulnerable people needed them most.

Our Red Cross staff and volunteers continue to live and work in harmony with vulnerable groups in the communities and those living in the remotest corners of the country with the most challenging health and affected environmental contexts. Together, they serve and rise in unity as pillars of hope and resilience. Every day, they keep humanity alive by providing comfort to people in desperate need. In emergency situations such as the 2023 flash floods that hit parts of Fa'asaleleaga district in Savai'i due to heavy downpour which completely destroyed homes and infrastructure, our community based ERT, were among the first responders to provide immediate life support, evacuated and rescued people in harm's way, tended to the injuries and listened to their stories of survival while ensuring protection and respect of human dignity. They held the fort until additional help arrived among their bravery and dedication which shone through every challenge they faced.

The President and members of the SRCS sincerely wish to acknowledge the Government of Samoa through the SWAp configuration for the commitment in coordinating members of the respective Sectors SRCS work with, to empower communities to take charge of their lives and livelihoods by addressing priority needs, as we unite in our shared commitment to provide **people-centred services**, further promoting their health and wellbeing. Our work is rooted in the principles of **neutrality, impartiality and independence**. Even in the darkest moments, every act of kindness is a beacon of hope, promising a brighter tomorrow.

Let us continue to work together to keep Humanity alive

Leiatuaalesa Tai'i Jerry BRUNT
NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Namulau'ulu Tautala MAUALA
SECRETARY GENERAL

Achievements at a Glance

SEXUAL REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & RIGHTS

36,500 condoms distributed
428 CSE/FLE trained youth
1,500 dignity kits beneficiaries

WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE

3,230 ppl trained on WASHE disease prevention, transmission, vector control
19,124 beneficiaries of RWHT basic water treatment

TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE

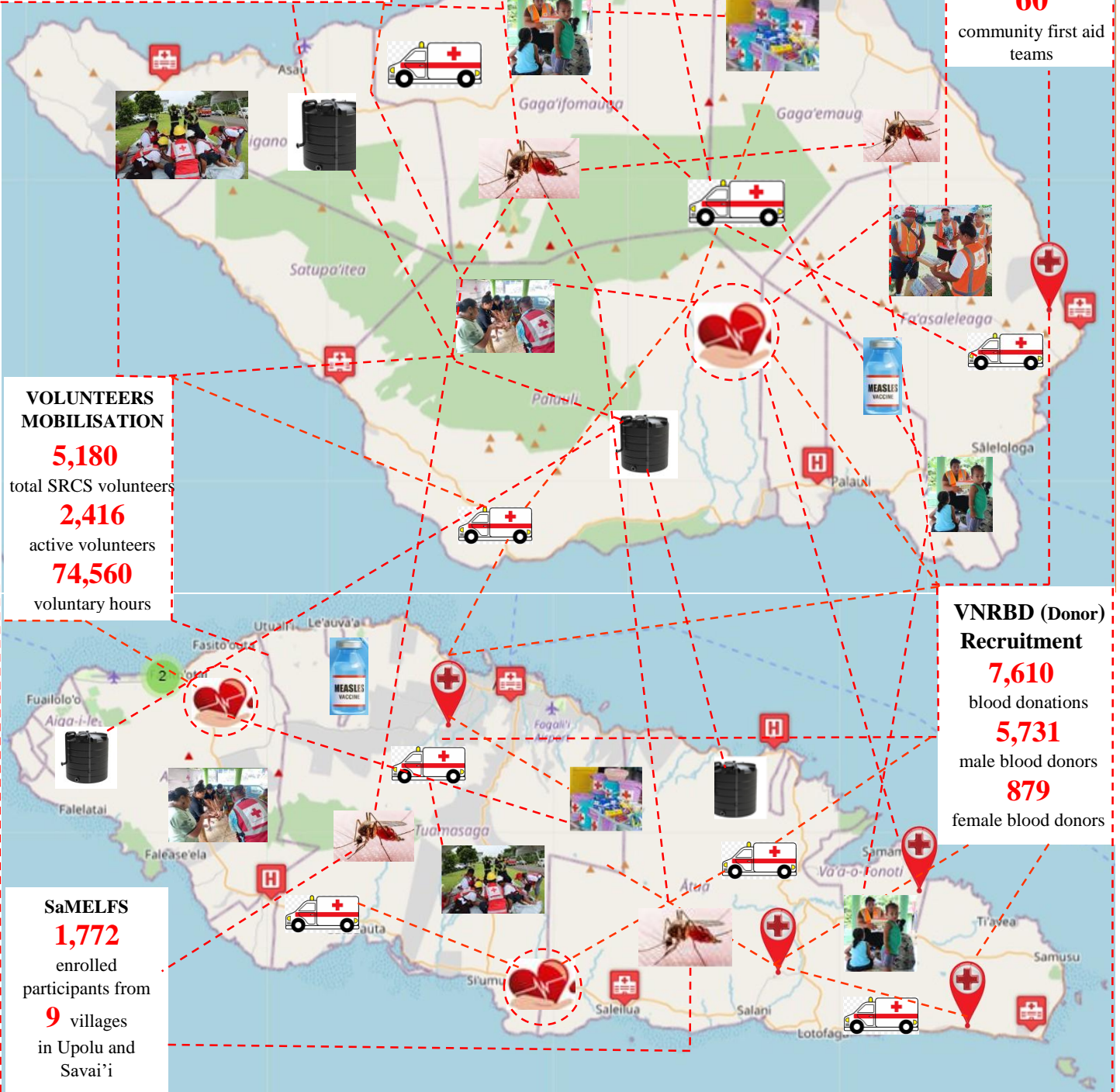
1,210 return trips for **44,890** beneficiaries

VACCINATION SURVEILLANCE

1,156 people reached in areas with low vaccination coverage

FIRST AIDERS TRAINED

1,330 commercial first aid certification
2,500 community first aid trained
60 community first aid teams



VOLUNTEERS MOBILISATION

5,180 total SRCS volunteers
2,416 active volunteers
74,560 voluntary hours

VNRBD (Donor) Recruitment

7,610 blood donations
5,731 male blood donors
879 female blood donors

SaMELFS

1,772 enrolled participants from **9** villages in Upolu and Savai'i

Emergency Management

We cannot stop natural disasters but we can be armed with knowledge and skills to save lives.

1. In response to the devastations from the **flash floods** that hit part of Fa'asaleleaga district on Savaii Island, the SRCS emergency response teams, provided immediate actions to:

- evacuate affected families from the coastal settlements onto higher grounds;
- apply First Aid to the injured victims and psychological first Aid (PFA) where needed;
- conduct IDA to identify families who have totally lost their homes and/or damaged, with out access to WASH and basic health needs;
- distribute relief NFI, shelter kits, hygiene and dignity kits, mosquito nets, blankets, clothes;
- promote hygiene & vector control basic best practice against harmful vectors in both dry-loose dirt and water-logged areas;
- organize blood drives via VNRBD to meet hospital demand for blood & blood products transfusions;
- cart water to homes without water supply.

2. The **school athletics competition** returned on track after more than three years since COVID-19 lockdown, which did not allow the annual sporting event to continue. Hence, the SRCS ERT offering their usual humanitarian assistance, to :

- provide first aid service to exhausted, fatigue and injured athletes, requiring body strengths to continue in between their respective heats;
- advocate safety of injured athletes to sports' managers against putting pressure on them to continue play when the identified physical trauma to their bodies required hospital transfer for immediate medical attention.

3. **World First Aid Day** is celebrated on every second Saturday of September each year. This annual event helps highlight the need for first aid education, to ensure first aid knowledge is widely accessible and helps individuals and communities to come together and contribute by responding to crises and stressing its importance in saving lives.



National First Aid Training as Samoa celebrates World First Aid Day for Safety and Health at Work
Samoa Global News

4. Family Life (FLE) Education for Out-of-School Youth program, is right based, gender-inclusive and life skills-based, providing information, skills and values to enable young people to make informed choices about their health and family life in a rights-based and gender-sensitive framework. SRCS is part and parcel of this program, to ensure continuous access of its developing youth members to SRHR.

SRCS conducted CSE/FLE trainings in both Upolu and Savaii, targeting youth groups from all church denominations. Trained facilitators were invited to share their different expertise in SRHR, including: NHRI, MESC, MoH, MWCSO, SFHA, FLO, SEN, Apelu Sports, SRCS, NOLA, SVSG and others have coordinated themselves to assist in the delivery of the Seven-Modules package, covering identified topics specially designed for the program.

5. “Youth on Wheels” Health Project is a cost effective means of transportation for our youth peer volunteers’ mobility in their outreach activities to distribute condoms against STIs and unintended pregnancy; conduct household assessments and relief distributions. Cycling also contributes to reducing risks of heart and respiratory diseases and reducing our carbon footprints in our lifestyles further contributing to combating climate crises

6. The 16 Days of Activism annual campaign is run from the 25 November – 10 December, to oppose violence against women & children, with the following international days that fall within the season and further celebrating the commemoration of the year’s **Theme: Invest to Prevent Violence Against Women & Girls** being a cross cutting health issue in the gender diversity context.

- 25 November: International Day of No Violence Against Women
- 29 November: International Women Human Rights Defenders Day
- 1 December: World AIDS Day
- 3 December: International Day for the Disabled
- 5 December: International Volunteer Day
- 10 December: International Human Rights Day

SRCS participated collaboratively with their local partners in celebrating, **16 Days of Activism, 2023.**



Working Committee and Facilitators of CSE/FLE Program in Samoa



Preparations for the CHOGM

7. Whilst Samoa's **preparation** in advance to host the **CHOGM event** in 2024, a team of experts and observers from, Australia, NZ and Great Britain arrived in the country to assess and evaluate the level of readiness of members of the National Security and Medical Taskforce for the CHOGM. Hence the organized drill-exercises to test capacity and readiness of member agencies' ERT according to the following scenario:

- i) run motorcade operations, transporting heads of governments on arrival (King Charles of England), to their allocated accommodations, when protester's march blocked motorcades' exits from the airport.*
- ii) an emerging 9.0 magnitude earthquake generated tsunami waves, devastating CHOGM guests staying at the Taumeasina Hotel, quickly demanded an immediate search and rescue operation for the missing wife of one head of government who went swimming before the disaster hit.*

Members of the ERT have clearly illustrated level of readiness in response to the organized drill exercises, according to the shared mandates incumbent on them in **security** and **health**. SRCS community based volunteers' visibility in almost every village, has implicated on their continuous presence at local level through strong community health network, providing first aid and CPR to drowning casualties and PFA to disturbed victims. A debriefing session led by the visiting experts, took place at the Ministry of Police Conference facility for participating ERT members to hear outcomes of the exercises, with lessons learnt for further improvement & effective actions in future

8. **CDCRM Training** for Tokelau public servants and community ERT on CFA, CPR, PFA, WASH, Relief, Shelter management, mainstreaming GBViE as a serious and pervasive phenomenon affecting women and girls' SRHR. Following classroom learning on basic community health, was a comprehensive hands-on practical training which took place in a dark forest setting at Lepā village over the weekend, to further test team's acquired knowledge and skills in emergency and community health management.



CDCRM Practical training at Lepa village

9. Community First Aid (CFA)

Leveraging the power of humanity, SRCS CFA program mobilised first aid trained and certified volunteers to equip them with lifesaving expertise. All communities benefit from the presence of trained first aiders, particularly those in remote areas where access to medical help is limited.

Dedicated to the lifesaving cause, volunteers of the CFA program continue to adopt a proactive and disciplined approach by providing first aid coverage during church denominations' annual meetings (CCCS, Methodist, Roman Catholic and AoG); the Samoa Independence Day and all-year-round national and international sports' events.

Meantime, Samoa is gearing up to host the CHOGM event, with or without a hazard situation occurring as we approach the start of the cyclone season in Samoa.

10. Regular Health Checks

SRCS has included retired medical experts in their health team to help deliver its mandates to support an improved community health system towards a healthy Samoa. Providing regular health checks in the workplace every morning has helped promote health and safety in the workplace commitments by members of the health sector. They offered a host of benefits from the early detection of health issues to enhanced productivity, support mental health and encourage healthier lifestyles.

Expanding essential regular health check service for everyone and anyone who needed it, especially in local and national mass gathering events where Red Cross is engaged in. A relevant strategy for detecting and treating NCD early, to allow for medical help to quickly facilitate effective therapy that provides greater chances of survival.

11. World Blood Donor Day celebrated annually on June 14, marked “**20 years of celebrating giving**” thanking all blood donors for their life-saving donations over the years. It is also a timely moment to address continued challenges and accelerate progress towards the future where safe blood transfusion is nationally accessible. The Theme for this year, “**Give blood, give plasma, share life, share often**” focusing on patients needing life-long transfusion support & underlines the role every single person can play by giving the valuable gift of blood or plasma.



21% reduction in BP results from 80% as reported in our annual health report to MoH, 2022-23

33% reduction in glucose level from 80% (ditto).

Results of a huge drop in both BP and glucose levels are successful implications of our active and regular health activities, engaging our Red Cross team, every start of the day before their hard days at work.



Our Community Reach

1. First Aid Program

As we continue to learn and practice **first aid**, we become guardians of health, to mend wounds, both physical and emotional, from sprains and strains to heart stopping moments. We are empowered to take charge in our life's unforeseen emergencies.

First aid is a humanitarian act which is vital to supporting healthy and resilient communities. It is accessible to everyone without discrimination and SRCS continues to offer training, education and first aid services, making an annual reach of:

1,330 commercial first aiders certification.

2,500 community first aiders trained.

60 community first aid teams trained.

2. VNRBD - Blood Donor Program

The SRCS Blood Donor Program works to recruit, retain & recognise blood donors and blood mobile organisers, championing voluntary unpaid blood donations as a cornerstone of sustaining a safe blood supply. Our collective efforts has reassured further security to procurement of ample blood supply that is free of transmissible transfused infections, to meet blood needs in the hospitals.

However, working closely with church groups, school institutions and the national workforce is an opportunity to further promote the importance of blood donation while dispelling misconceptions and myths about this act of love and care giving. This, our consistent efforts have paved the way for more young blood donors among the identified support groups to embrace regular blood donations as part of their healthy lifestyle whilst growing up to become healthy future leaders.

6,610 blood donations

5,731 male blood donors

879 female blood donors



Community First Aid Service – Saving Lives – Changing Minds



3. WASHE Program

The inspiration for the program development came from success stories told through accountability of affected population following the devastations from several disasters which had seriously affected Samoa's water infrastructure in the past decades. Hence, our determination to be more involved in promoting improvement on health and wellbeing of our vulnerable groups and individual households through, WASHE, which included:

- personal hygiene and handwashing;
- disease transmission;
- disease prevention;
- vector control;
- water conservation;
- household water treatment, and
- water storage.

The continuing rollout of the WASHE program, is to respond to the vulnerable needs and contributing to achieving the SDG health KPI and targets.

3,230 people trained on basic water treatment

5,884 people trained on hygiene promotion
beneficiaries of hygiene kits and PPEs

19,124 beneficiaries of water supply

4. SRHR Program

Adolescents & youth sexual reproductive health & rights is characterized by high rates of adolescent pregnancies and a high proportion of unmet family planning needs. The low levels of knowledge among adolescent and young people in this area along with the limited access to and usage of these services and contraceptive methods make it essential for the national coordination team of government agencies, SRCS and NGO to provide quality comprehensive sexuality and family life education (CSE/FLE) for out-of-school youth and ensure access to quality SRHR services, as young people often do not know where and how to access these services, in the first place.

The CSE/FLE for out-of-school youth program is right based, gender inclusive and life skills based, providing information, skills and values to enable young people to make choices about their SRHR.



36,500 condoms distributed

428 CSE/FLE trained youth

1,500 beneficiaries of dignity kits

5. SURVEILLANCE MONITORING for ELIMINATION of LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS and SCABIES in SAMOA (SaMELFS)

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The 2023 SaMELFS survey took place from the 25th July to 17th August. This is the fourth survey of the program, which has previously conducted surveys in the community in 2018, 2019 and 2023. The program is led by The University of Queensland’s Operational Research and Decision Support for Prevention, Control and Elimination of Infectious Diseases (ODESI) group, in collaboration with the Samoa Ministry of Health (MoH), with the ongoing support and experience of the Red Cross (SRCS) field teams. The results of the survey will be provided to the MoH to inform their strategy for eliminating lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem in Samoa.

This year, Red Cross teams tested residents aged five years and older from participating households in 9 villages, and also assisted in setting mosquito traps at selected houses. Field teams were again guided by Red Cross team leaders Nixon Norman Mataia, Brenda Koon Wai You, Alesi Mataia and Calvin Malilfa, whose experience with previous SaMELFS surveys has proven invaluable for the program’s success. For each participant, Red Cross teams collected a finger prick blood sample and demographic data using smartphones and an Epicollect questionnaire form. A crucial component of this year’s questionnaire is a coverage survey that will allow the MoH to estimate how many Samoans had access to, and participated in the 2023 mass drug administration. Blood samples were tested in the field lab set up at Hotel Millenia. The field lab was managed by experienced lab technician Shem Lepale of the Red Cross, who has participated in multiple SaMELFS surveys. Any participants whose test showed they might be infected were contacted by the Red Cross who then accompanied MoH staff to administer treatment. Any potentially infected participants not yet treated will be contacted by the MoH for treatment.

In 2023, 19 Red Cross volunteers assisted with the 3.5-week survey, including a mix of new and familiar faces. A total of **1,772** participants were enrolled in Upolu and one in Savai’i (Figure 1). The University of Queensland and our partners are incredibly grateful for the ongoing support and friendship of our Red Cross colleagues who are instrumental in carrying out these crucial public

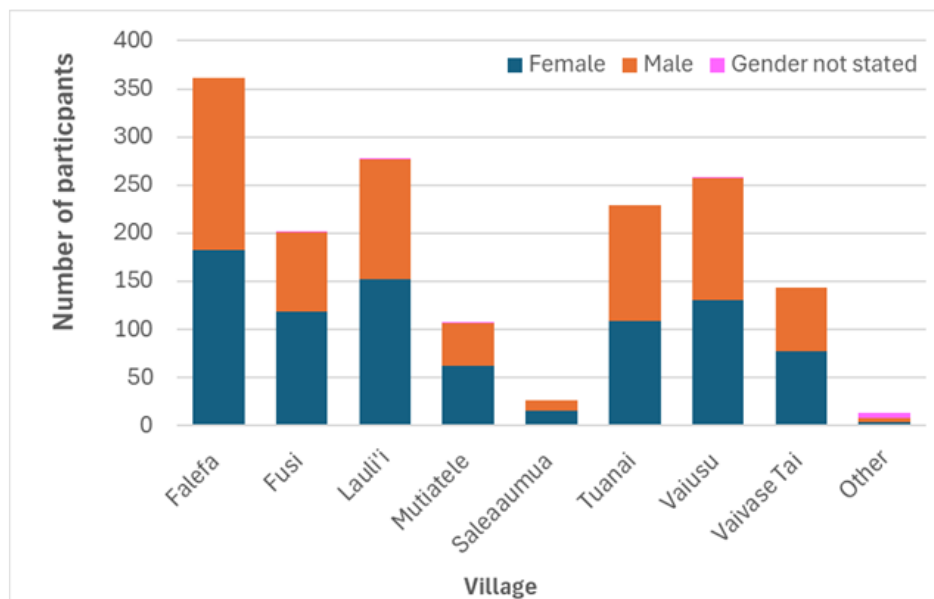


Fig 1: Number of participants enrolled by Red Cross teams in the 2023 SaMELFS survey

Contingency Plan for CHOGM

Emergency Response Mass Casualty Contingency Plan CHOGM



As a member of Samoa National Security and Medical Taskforce for the CHOGM, SRCS, whilst also endeavours in its auxiliary role to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, ensures that our wider Samoan community are trained on emergency response skills as a back up support in case of a mass casualty emergency affecting the country during the CHOGM event in the near future. Hence, the continuous rollout of our CBHFA training, encompassing First Aid (CFA, PFA), CDCRM, PHiE, WASH, GBViE, PGI and other humanitarian aspects of our life saving work.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The SRCS community based health work is guided by the IFRC world widely developed CBHFA toolkit, which is a Red Cross and Red Crescent community based approach that engages communities and volunteers in the use of simple tools, adapted to local context to address the priority needs and empower communities to be in charge of their own development. SRCS uses CBHFA toolkit as an integrated community-based approach for its volunteers work in the wider Samoan community on disease prevention, health promotion, first aid and disaster preparedness and response. With this integrated approach, different aspects of vulnerability are identified and addressed. Hence, recognizing the community at the centre of the process. The approach is a generic means to also promote behavioral change and raise public awareness about health priorities and their prevention and control, in support of our national goal towards creating a healthy Samoa. Creating a healthy community is a lifelong process, requiring constant nurturing and persistence and CBHFA commitment is therefore, a long-term engagement. Hence, SRCS supporting communities in preventing diseases, reducing emergency risks, establishing early warning and early action mechanisms, maintaining readiness for various emergencies and helping communities respond to them.

With our recommendations to strengthening sector's commitment on **community-centred approach** towards national health security through implementation of CBHFA for epidemic preparedness, will require:

- Our ability to act fast, engage communities, adapt to local needs and realities, and maintain unfettered access to the most vulnerable.
- empowering and engaging communities at the forefront of preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.
- strengthening community systems to better prepare for and respond collectively to future health crises.
- strengthening resilience and building capacity at all levels, including in communities, government ministries and agencies, Red Cross, NGO and civil societies.

The approval of the Blood Policy will further support our work in VNRBD by recruiting sufficient numbers of donors of blood and blood products that are vital in life saving therapy. Samoa needs a substantial increase in the number of people who are willing and eligible to donate blood in order to ensure a stable supply of safe blood and blood products that is sufficient to meet national health requirements.

Soifua ma Ia Manuia



Namulau'ulu Tautala Mauala
Secretary General
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