



# SAMOA OASP REPORT

DECEMBER 2023

*A summative report for the SAM 23/01 OASP Governance Samoa Swimming Federation Inc and the SAM 23/2 OASP Water Safety and Talent Identification Project.*

# OASP SAM 23/1 AND SAM 23/2 END OF YEAR REPORT

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## Highlights

Samoa was successful in receiving a USD 25,000 grant to support swimming activities as outlined in the OASP proposal. Two projects were funded, Improved Governance and Policy Development and Water Safety and Talent Identification. We are very grateful for this funding opportunity and wish to report on the project's progress, success, and future opportunities.

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## World Aquatics OASP SAM 23/1 PROJECT

This report covers the SAM 23/1 Project targeted at Improved Governance and Policy Development which was allocated 25% of the funding was allocated.

### CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Samoa Swimming Federation Constitution has undergone two (2) changes since its inception in the 1980s, the last one being done in 2007.

The Samoa Swimming Federation in line with the international body of swimming World Aquatics has changed its name to **Samoa Aquatics**. This was done with the assistance of our Samoa Swimming Federation Inc lawyer Patrick Fepuleai. There were additions to include gender equity and the Athlete's Commission. The new proposed Samoa Aquatics constitution is currently sitting with World Aquatics awaiting approval. A copy has been attached for your information.

### POLICY DEVELOPMENT

With the need to bring the Samoa Swimming Federation into line with the governance policies of World Aquatics, we have developed three Policies. These are all attached.

1. Athlete Commission Policy.
2. Member Protection Policy. (Safeguarding including Code of Conduct)
3. Antidoping (Safe Sport) Policy.

All policies are gender equity inclusive and contain all areas pertinent to our Domiciled, Regional, and International competitions. These policies are "**living policies**" that will change as needed with the environment of our Sports today. They are a great start to our previous nonexistent policies and while we have not yet included all areas under our Member Protection Policy, we will continue to work towards that but for now, those immediately pertinent to us have been covered.

### WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Our website has been developed and while it's still in its infancy it is still a work in progress. Once World Aquatics has approved our constitutional change, we can then launch our website. However, it is available for you to look at: [www.samoaaquatics.com](http://www.samoaaquatics.com)

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Our OASP funding did not reach our accounts until late September 2023 which meant we could not start our policy and website development until mid-October. Given the late start, we have managed to produce three policies and a website in this short time which is a testament that the Samoa Swimming Federation is

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making efforts to be compliant with World Aquatics. We have yet to complete our financial policies and you can be assured this will be done by the next round of OASP funding for 2025.

## OUTCOME

1. Three (3) policies have been developed that will grow and improve with time.
  - Athlete Commission Policy.
  - Member Protection Policy. (Safeguarding including Code of Conduct)
  - Antidoping (Safe Sport) Policy.
2. Website has been established ready to launch. [www.samooaquatics.com](http://www.samooaquatics.com)
3. Our Constitutional changes have been made pending World Aquatic approval.

This has been a successful outcome and as we move into 2024 additional governance will be implemented.

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## World Aquatics OASP 23/2 PROJECT

This report covers the SAM 23/2 Project targeted at Water Safety and Talent Identification which was allocated 75% of the funding.

### HIGHLIGHTS AND PROJECT OVERVIEW

#### WATER SAFETY HIGHLIGHTS

452

The project programmes reached a total of 452 people in the peri-urban and rural areas of Samoa. While there is only one Government swimming pool, most activities centered around this facility though outreach programmes were offered at seafronts, village pools, and beaches. The National Council of Early Childhood Education Samoa spearheaded “Safety First” week for all ECE centers within Samoa. Water safety was heralded at this week-long event making inroads into the ECE curriculum and delivery for all children enrolled at ECE centers. Two primary schools participated in Water Safety Days marking a successful template for future roll out.

#### Swim Instructor Highlights

13

We were able to train 13 instructors using a strong shadow approach. This on-site practical training offered 14 people to get on-the-job training at the pool and community sites in water safety instruction, teaching principles, group management, lesson delivery, and technique correction.

#### Talent Identification Highlights

50

With the influx of participants for the 2023 swimming calendar, we were able to launch our Junior Development Squad by identifying keen, skilled, and eager young swimmers. 50 swimmers in all participated in the Junior Development Squad training and activities with 28 further identified on the Race Ready track. These swimmers are targeting their first regional competition by the end of 2024.

#### Water Safety for Schools Highlights

6

Our programmes reached preschools, primary schools, village schools, and University students. These Water Safety Days promoted Safe Water Skills and learn-to-swim elements.

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The scope of this project was to increase grassroots water safety and swim instructors within high-risk villages to increase water safety skills and swimming competency within coastal villages; this will have an additional outcome to increase our talent identification for competitive swim pathways.

Currently, we are in partnership with Samoa Red Cross and Regional Disaster Management and Legal to address water safety, climate change, and rising sea level issues for our coastal communities. This collaboration is working with the Red Cross to create water safety awareness and learn to swim lessons for the identified villages that are high risk due to beach access, rising sea levels, flooding areas, and other natural environments that pose water safety issues.

Presently, two former national swimmers are employed at the Samoa Red Cross delivering First Aid and Disaster Management programmes within the local constituencies. The SSF reinforced this partnership by employing the Head Coach to train community Water safety and swim instructors who delivered the swimming programmes within the communities.

Coupled with the water safety education and swimming competency program was a talent identification process to assist in identifying new participants throughout the Upolu and Savaii Island communities who were invited to join the competitive swimming pathways.

## PART 1: Water Safety Instructor Development

### RATIONALE AND INSTRUCTOR TRAINING OVERVIEW

The core component of the project was dependent on acquiring, training, and retaining Swim Instructors. The Head Coach led this component and used a shadowing strategy to ensure Swim Instructors in training received hands-on, practical, and relevant teaching experience. Feedback and evaluation were given in real-time as the Head Coach worked alongside every instructor daily. The end of the year was targeting a formal swim instructor training, to be delivered by Oceania Aquatics lead education trainer. This was pushed back until 2024 due to scheduling issues.

### TRAINED INSTRUCTORS

1. Jelani Freesir-Wetzell
2. Andrea Schuster
3. Gideon Mulitalo
4. Urlin Mulitalo
5. Jonathan Schuster
6. Matthew Schuster
7. Dr Nina Domashneva
8. Jordan Stowers
9. Larafina Stowers
10. Jamal Tamasese
11. Theresa Strickland
12. Rohane Salanoa
13. Brandon Schuster

Instructor Trainer: Dr Suzie Schuster, Head Coach, Sr Lecturer, Teacher Training and Education  
Development, Health and Physical Education, National University of Samoa

Qualifications:

*PhD University of Waikato, Sport and Human Performance*

*Master of Public Health, Nutrition*

*Bachelor of Art, Sport Science, and PE*

*Certificate Level 4 in Teaching and Assessment*

*Bronze level ASCTA Swim coach certification*

*Head Coach since 2008*

*Instructor Trainer in Swimming, Water Safety since 1992*

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All instructors who were recruited are accomplished swimmers, competitive for age and open level, and have continued to participate in swimming and teaching swimming. Water safety and Learn-to-Swim instructor training (2 formal days plus on-site training) was ongoing training at the pool and sea. This met Objectives 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 of the OASP Project.

NAME	BACKGROUND	EDUCATION	TEACHING STRENGTH	STATUS
Jelani Freesir-Wetzell (20)	National Swimmer, National Record holder, Medalist; Assistant Coach, NZ Coast Club	High School Diploma	Beginners, Advanced Beginners; Adult	Active
Andrea Schuster (21)	National swimmer, national record holder, Medalist, LTS Instructor, and Jr Coach at Hamilton Aquatics	Bachelor of Fine Arts 3 <sup>rd</sup> year student	Pre-Beginners, Baby-Parents; Advanced Beginner, Jr Squad	Active
Gideon Multalo (20)	National Swimmer, National Triathlete, Community Swim Coaching	Bachelor of Computer Science, 2nd-year student	Advanced Beginners, Sea Training, Land Training	Active
Urlin Multalo (18)	Junior National Swimmer, Age Record holder, Triathlete, Community Swim Coaching and LTS	Foundation Graduate; University 2024	Pre-B, Beginner, Intermediate, Jr Squad	Active
Jonathan Schuster (17)	Swim helper since age 14 alongside Head Coach and Teaching staff	High School Graduate RHEMA Diploma entry 2024	Pre-B, Beginner, Games, water acclimation, fitness	Active
Matthew Schuster (23)	National Swimmer, Age record holder, Club Jr Coach, Hamilton Aquatics, Club instructor, Tanifa	Bachelor of Molecular and Cellular Biology Science/Maths teacher VBS	Jr Coach, adult, water safety, water polo, games	Active
Dr Nina Domashneva (62)	Master swimmer, Russian; LTS teacher, Russia	Medical Degree, Dentistry	Pre-B, Beginners, Adults	Active
Jordan Stowers (18)	Junior Development Swimmer; Swim Teacher helper since age 15	Foundation Graduate; University 2024	Beginner, Adv Beginner, Jr Squad, water polo	Active
Larafina Stowers (20)	Junior Development Swimmers; Swim Teacher helper since age 16	Bachelor of Science, 2nd-year student	Beginners, Adv Beginners, Water Safety, games	Active
Jamal Tamasese (27)	National Swimmer; LTS helper since age 16	Foundation Graduate; full-time work	Games; Junior squad	Active during holidays
Theresa Strickland (21)	National Swimmer; Nat Age Record Holder,	Early Childhood Education Teaching Certificate; full-time work	Babies; pre-b, beginner	Active
Rohane Salanoa (31)	National Swimmer; LTS instructor, Australia	Foundation Graduate, Full-time work	Pre-Beg, Beginners, Advanced, babies	Active
Brandon Schuster (25)	National Swimmer; NR holder; Medalist; NCAA D1 Coaching; TOLV Jr Coaching and LTS instructor	Masters Biomedical engineering Fulltime work	Pre-Beg, Beginner, Adv, Jr Squad, Adult, Squad, Games, Water polo	Active

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All instructors attended a two-day session covering the Let's Swim curriculum (Oceania Swimming Federation/Oceania Aquatics material). In addition, material from the Samoa Swimming Federation, Australian Swim Teacher training, and NDPA Professional toolkit.

## TRAINING PROCESS

DESCRIPTION	FOCUS	CONTENT	PRACTICAL	STATUS
Attend 2-day practical swim instructor training	Pedagogy & management	LTS lesson process for 4 levels (Pre-B, B, AB, Adv)	Deliver lessons in situ in the pool	Completed 20 May 2023
4-week shadow teaching	Water safety alongside Head Coach	Beach, ocean, pool safety	On deck delivery	Completed 23 June 2023
2-week holiday immersion teaching	Water acclimation & safe practices alongside Head Coach	Games Land-based rescue Water environment awareness	Delivery in pool	Completed 6 July 2023
7-week shadow teaching (cont.)	Co-teaching classes with on-site supervision by Head Coach Access to co-leading Water Safety Days for schools	Pedagogy, group management techniques; behaviour issues; water safe games	Delivery in pool	Completed 14 October 2023
9-week solo teaching	Co-teaching and teaching lessons with minimal supervision by Head Coach Access to independent opportunities to deliver Water Safety & Learn to Swim sessions to community and schools	Lessons format for 4 strokes; focus on progress of student; introducing load to improve technique	Delivery in pool	Completed by 22 December 2023
3-day intensive Swim Instructor Training	Oceania Swimming Funded Instructor trainer to deliver full instructor training	Pedagogy, management, water safety strategies, games, lessons, using materials, classroom approach	Delivery at pool	Scheduled 19-21 December 2023 Postponed due to funding and scheduling

## OUTCOME

- All 13 instructors committed between 3 – 10 hours per week on site working alongside the Head Coach.

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- Full-time work and school commitments remain challenging for instructors to offer more instructional hours.
- Some instructors were able to offer private LTS services due to their progress and improvement of teaching within the training programme
- Visibility of swimming and water safety lessons was heightened due to the breadth and depth of instructors on deck and in communities.
- Most instructors engaged in either the holiday intensive programme or the School Water Safety sessions in addition to the ongoing coaching and teaching lessons from May – December 2023.
- Prior skills and knowledge of swimming, water safety, stroke techniques, and training concepts are critical to having a successful Instructor training cohort.
- Creating employment opportunities for the instructors was recognized as a motivating factor in instructor recruitment and retention.

## PART 2: Water Safety and Talent Identification

### Programmes offered within the project

The project was to work alongside the Samoa Red Cross, Ministry of Lands and Environment, and Disaster Management Office to orchestrate an overarching Water Safety Council and identify vulnerable communities who need water safety education.

First stage: instructor training. The Head Coach was employed to train instructors to deliver a compendium of lessons, sessions, and programmes.

Second stage: coordination with multiple NGO and government ministries to advocate for safe water practices (water engagement). This is still ongoing as there has been a Ministerial reshuffle for the Minister of Lands and Environment to lead safety projects and also the formation of a new Sports Ministry. The Minister of Sport is being updated on each sport's initiatives and how it fits within the strategic framework for the government. This is ongoing into 2024.

With trained instructors, there were a large number of lessons, sessions, and programmes offered over the past 8 months. The Head coach focused on training community and water safety instructors. There was a total of thirteen (13) instructors who were trained on-site in water safety, lesson delivery, group management practices, and pedagogy. The instructors delivered village initiative programmes both at the Aquatic Centre and the village/sea. There were eight (8) programmes offered between May – December 2023. Specifically,

### AFTERSCHOOL SWIMMING PROGRAMME



After-school swim programme: Three long-term programmes (4-week, 7-week, and 9-week programmes) that focused on water safety (pool, river, and ocean), learn-to-swim skills, and introduction to competitive skills. OASP Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.7, 3.1, 3.2 were covered.



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## HOLIDAY WATER SAFETY AND SCHOOL PROGRAMME



Holiday intensive swim programme: A two-week holiday programme that offers 3-hour intensive sessions per day for enrolled students. The programme focused on water games, water acclimation, deep water safety skills, submersion skills, and competitive strokes. OASP Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3,

1.4 3.1, and 3.2 were covered.



## TALENT ID AND JUNIOR DEVELOPMENT SQUAD



With the success of the afterschool and holiday swim programme, a seven (7) week programme introducing the junior development squad programme was launched. The identification of potential competitive swimmers led to the creation of the Junior Squad. Within the programmes, the talent ID process was undertaken leading to the development of a national junior squad. This 50-member squad was between 8 to 15 years old and represented six (6) schools and 26 villages. They focused on developing water safety skills, shallow water rescues, all competitive stroke proficiency, aerobic training, and strength-based exercises. This squad is now an ongoing development programme targeting youth swimmers who wish to engage in competitive swimming, improve deep water skills and potentially step onto the Jr peer instructor pathway. OASP Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, and 3.2 were covered.

## COMMUNITY SWIMMING PROGRAMME



Instructors and the Head Coach offered LTS and Water Safety sessions at A'ana Alofi District 3 in Freshwater spring pools. On-site sessions were held at seashore areas where village clubs held swimming lessons and open water training. The Head Coach and swim instructors offered ocean-based swimming lessons and peer training to assist in conducting safe swimming activities in the sea. (Objective 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1)

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## CLUB ASSISTANCE



Head coach and instructors offered stroke technique sessions, water safety games, and cross-training plans for triathlon, rugby, netball, and community swim clubs. OASP objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1 were covered.



## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION WATER SAFETY DAY

ECE Safety Day was a successful Water Safety initiative that was the Early Childhood Education Council Safety Day. This was held at the Aquatic Centre introducing safe water entry, safe water play, supervision practices, and water acclimation games for over 300 3–5-year-olds from rural and urban areas. The SSF instructors were involved as additional supervision for the day (Objective 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)



## SCHOOL WATER SAFETY DAY

The Head Coach and 4 instructors conducted a Water Safety Session for Year 7 and Year 8 Primary School students. 52 students and teachers attended and participated in an interactive water safety session including deep water entries, deep water rescue, self-care in deep water situations; learning to swim, float,



currents, treading water, shallow water rescue, and water acclimation games. This template will be used for 2024 Primary School engagements. Due to limited pool access, two schools actively engaged in these Water Safety Days. The requirement of these educational days was a commitment from the school to have at least two teachers from the school engaged in the sessions. OASP objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 3.1, and 3.2 were covered.

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## TRIATHLON OCEAN AND POOL WATER SAFETY SESSION

The triathlon local club had a water safety skills at the Aquatic Centre. Concepts of swimming safely as an athlete included: lane swimming, sighting in open water, floating, tired swimmer skills, safe swimming distance, and hydration. The pool session also included competitive swimming skills such as flip turns, lane swimming, recovery swimming, and distance swimming in a pool. This was to support the challenges of Pacific Games triathletes having to compete in a swimming pool instead of the ocean. OASP Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 3.1 were covered.



## VILLAGE POOL WATER SAFETY

The Head coach and instructors introduced water safety at the village pool for interested parents and swimmers. Safe water entries, treading water, recognizing hazards, floating, and LTS skills were covered. OASP Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 3.1 were covered.



## NATIONAL UNIVERSITY WATER SAFETY SESSION

LTS and Water Safety sessions were conducted for NUS teacher trainees who are enrolled in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) and the HPE cohort. HPE senior students helped conduct and manage the swim classes which focused on basic swim strokes, floating, shallow water assists, water awareness, and identifying hazards. OASP objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 3.1, and 3.2 were covered.



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## UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES



Since the programme began in May, parent involvement in the programme has been increasing. Both the enrollment with the baby-parent classes had high engagement as well as adults enrolling in swim lessons. Parents and caretakers expressed a genuine interest in introducing safe water skills to babies and toddlers as well as increasing their water skills and safety knowledge.

Feedback from: Tusi Aliitasi Faasootau-Ale, Mother of 1 year old Netball Samoa Development Officer, Tuanaimato, Samoa

**Tusi Aliitasi Faasootau-Ale** 9 Jun · 🌊

Our little confident water baby 🌊

- 🌊 Loves to lie on back in the water with help from mummy & daddy
- 🌊 Has had a class with both mummy & daddy
- 🌊 Eagerly splashes and enjoys the feel of the water
- 🌊 Has gone under water 3 times
- 🌊 Loves her new swim class friends
- 🌊 Loves Ms Suzie and is fascinated by Suzie's son oi aue 🤔🤔🤔

Thank you Suzie, so happy that swim lessons for babies is available in Samoa 🇶🇲

23:51 📶 🔔 🔊 🔌

← **Nadya** Active 22 minutes ago 📞 📺 ⓘ

Living on a tropical island surrounded by water, it is essential for the safety of children to know how to swim. If they are ever put in a situation where they are not supervised, having the knowledge of how to take care of themselves can provide peace of mind.

Whenever my kids are invited to the beach or parties that include water activities, I know that they are confident in water.

Parent feedback was constant during the programmes. They expressed their gratitude for the lessons and education sessions and were relieved that a formal programme was back post-COVID. One parent summarized it well in her written comments:

*Nadya Va'a*  
 Mother of 3 active boys ages 1, 12, 15  
 Graphic Designer  
 Lotopa, Samoa

Another parent was impressed with the instructors' professional work:



My kids have been enjoying their swimming lessons so much. Btw Andrea and team have done an awesome job while you were away 😊

Anyways, have a good night and thanks again 😊  
 Cheers,  
 Angelica.

*Angelica Pereira-Levi, Mother of 3 (4-year-old, 6-year-old, 10-year-old)*  
 Full-time civil society employee  
 Government House

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## PROGRAMME SUCCESS AND FUTURE ACTIONS

The key performance indicators targets (expected) versus the actual numbers achieved depicted below show a high success rate.

<b>Number</b>	<b>Targeted (expected)</b>	<b>Achieved (actual)</b>
Number of athletes involved	10	452
Number of grassroots participants	80	122
Number of coaches	3	14 (13 plus Head Coach)
Number of officials	0	0
Number of sports events organized	0	0
Number of educational events organized	8	8 (22 weeks of engagement)

While the programme was successful in meeting the OASP objectives as well as achieving beyond the anticipated targets, it is important to acknowledge that the OASP funding, specifically funding for the Head Coach, to implement the aforementioned training and programmes was critical to the success of this project. Financial support for the Head Coach to undertake all of the outlined activities made it possible to recruit, train, mentor, and deliver much-needed programmes within the community.

Key stakeholders and the establishment of the Water Safety Council will continue to be an ongoing process into 2024. Furthermore, continuing to have a positive relationship with the Aquatic Centre, schools, community groups, sports organizations, and parents will assist in reaching a larger audience in the coming year.

It is also important to note that having a strong and long list of trained instructors is vital to programme rollouts. While all instructors are paid, there are not many established professional pathways for sports coaches and instructors thus we lose out on these qualified individuals as they seek full-time employment.

Nonetheless, since the suspension of swimming activities due to COVID and building maintenance, this 2023 project is deemed a success. A big fa'afetai lava to World Aquatics for supporting our vision.