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## MEDIA RELEASE

### 'Creating hope Through Action'

This week the Ministry of Health's Mental Health Team is conducting Suicide Prevention Awareness in certain schools and communities in Sanma Province to commemorate world suicide prevention day which commemorated each year, 10 September.

The important message for this year is 'creating hope through action'. This is a reminder that there is an alternative to suicide and aims to inspire confidence and light in all of us.



Vanuatu recently recorded increase number of deaths in the past years related to self-harm and suicide. According to WHO report, in 2020, fifty-four (54) suicide deaths recorded in

Vanuatu, which means of all deaths, 2.70% is caused by self-harm and suicide. The age adjusted death rate is 20.97 per 100,000 of population ranks Vanuatu 13 in the world.

Mental Health team visit and raise awareness in schools including, Santo East, Tata Secondary, Hog Harbour Secondary, Nanduitu Secondary, Matevulu College and Lycee De Luganville and their respective communities.

An estimated 703,000 people a year take their life around the world. For every suicide, there are likely 20 other people making a suicide attempt and many more have serious thoughts of suicide. Millions of people suffer intense grief or are otherwise profoundly impacted by suicidal behaviours.

Each suicidal death is a public health concern with a profound impact on those around them. By raising awareness, reducing the stigma around suicide, and encouraging well-informed action, we can reduce instances of suicide around the world.

By creating hope through action, we can signal to people experiencing suicidal thoughts that there is hope and that we care and want to support them.

It also suggests that our actions, no matter how big or small, may provide hope to those who are struggling. Building on this theme and spreading this message over the three years, a world can be envisioned where suicides are not so prevalent.

The Ministry of Health encourage better understanding about the issue, reach in to people who are struggling, and share our experiences. We can all **create hope through action and be the light.**

This year is the first ever event that team Mental Health will be hosting to commemorate that day.

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