

HELP & SHELTER



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

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INTRODUCTION

Help & Shelter is a non-governmental organisation whose mission is to contribute to bringing about a society where attitudes to the use of violence and practices of violence have been transformed. Our Mission, Goals, Objectives and Areas of Action are set out in our Governance, Policies & Procedures Manual, which was developed during 2007 and adopted in September, and is available on our website – www.sdn.org.gy/hands.

We are a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. The members in general meeting elect our board of directors annually and day-to-day operations are carried out by a combination of paid staff and project personnel and volunteers (who may be, but are not necessarily members of the company).

Since its establishment in November 1994, Help & Shelter has become a recognised leader in the fight against violence in Guyana, particularly in the areas of domestic, sexual and child abuse. Domestic violence takes a heavy toll on the individual's emotional and physical health and has high social and economic costs for families, communities, workplaces and the country as a whole.

This report is intentionally as concise as possible, to save on photocopying costs. Project agreements and reports, statistics, media statements and other relevant information are available on our website

OUR PEOPLE

Our Volunteers

Although past experience has shown the drawbacks of relying on volunteers to carry out the core activities of Help & Shelter (here today but gone tomorrow, either abroad or to employment or family commitments), volunteers, both new and old, have continued to provide valuable contributions to our work in many ways, such as assisting with public education, particularly IDEVAW activities, raising funds and visiting the shelter.

We held two orientation sessions for new volunteers during the year and skills training sessions continued to be a regular part of monthly volunteers' meetings.

Our Members

All members of Help & Shelter are expected to play an active part in our work and applicants are required to have demonstrated a commitment to us before being admitted to membership. Ten new volunteers became members in 2007, bringing total membership to 63.

Inevitably however, given the realities of life in Guyana, people who had the time and energy to contribute yesterday frequently have neither tomorrow. In order not to have our register clogged with people who have been inactive for a long time, we occasionally invoke the by-law power to revoke the membership of those who have been requested to resume contributions to our work within a specified period of time and not done so. Having last done this in 2004, we began a fresh process in May 2007, which would run until early 2008.

Our Staff & Project Personnel

In view of the drawbacks associated with reliance on volunteers, we were also fortunate in that as a result of government support, donation, fundraising and project funding, we were largely able to employ/contract the services of sufficient qualified people to carry out our core work throughout 2007.

In addition to work for which they were paid, most of our staff and project personnel also provided voluntary services.

Our Board

As our board is comprised entirely of volunteers, it is subject to the same circumstances that apply to volunteers generally. As such, there were several changes in the board as a result of members finding that they were unable to continue to make the necessary contributions. We were however fortunate in that others were willing to serve.

A list of those who contributed to our work during 2007 is at Appendix I.

OUR WORK

The principal activities of Help & Shelter during 2007 continued to be the provision of counselling and support services, public education, networking and lobbying, the maintenance of the shelter and raising funds.

Finding sources of project funding has generally presented a challenge, but in 2007 we were approached for proposals by the Women's World Day of Prayer German Committee, UNFPA and CRS.

Counselling, Public Education & Advocacy, Networking, Shelter, Administration & M&E Support Funded by the USAID-GDCCR Project (1/6/06 – 31/7/07)

In 2007 this, the second grant under the USAID-GDCCR Project, continued to cover shelter operations and our public education programme, with special emphasis on incorporating awareness of and support for victims of trafficking in persons. Administrative and M&E support was also covered.

As the funds were not fully expended by the end of July 2007, we obtained an extension of the agreement to 30 September and the account was closed off at the beginning of November.

The final narrative and financial reports are available on our website, as are the human trafficking public education print materials developed, produced and distributed.

USAID/Guyana HIV/AIDS Reduction & Prevention Project (GHARP)

The HIV/AIDS and Domestic Violence Counseling, Education and Referral Project that had begun in July 2006 was succeeded by a Training and Counseling on HIV/AIDS and Domestic Violence Project, which began in October 2007.

The objective of this project is to continue to provide counseling, referrals and training, all aimed at strengthening of services that provide the link between HIV/AIDS issues and domestic violence. Three technical areas to be implemented during the project cycle are the Prevention–Other, Prevention A & B and Project Management.

The objective of Prevention–Other programme is to increase knowledge of HIV/AIDS prevention methods among 1245 persons accessing Help & Shelter's services in Region 4 by September 2008 and the objective of the Prevention A & B programme is to increase knowledge of HIV prevention and child sexual abuse among 250 in school youths (ISY) in 3 secondary schools and to increase knowledge of HIV prevention methods and domestic violence among 45 out of school youths (OSY) in 3 communities in Region 4 by September 2008.

The objective of project management is to develop and maintain quality leadership and management systems and provide resources to effectively implement proposed activities within Help & Shelter.

The 2006-7 project report is available on our website.

Joint Red Thread/Help & Shelter Project in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women Funded by UNIFEM VAW Trust Fund

The aim of the project was to document sexual abuse and violence against women and girls in the racial/ethnic/political conflict in Guyana.

Project activities were begun following receipt of funds in April 2005 but it proved impossible to complete them either as originally planned or within the period originally envisaged, as was explained to UNIFEM in October 2007. At the end of the year, it was anticipated that the final project report would be submitted to UNIFEM in early 2008.

The project proposal and grant agreement are available on the website.

Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative: Community/Police Outreach and Rehabilitation of Male Perpetrators (January 2004 – February 2007)

Funded by UNIFEM as administrator of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

The final activity in this project was in the form of the contributions made to developing the National Domestic Violence Policy which was submitted through the Domestic Violence Task Force to the Minister of Labour, Human Services and Social Security in January 2007. The project ended in February 2007.

Our project proposal, grant agreement and project reports are available on our website.

Ending Domestic Violence in Guyana's Administrative Regions (24/8/07-24/8/08) - UNIFEM Micro Grant

In June 2007 we submitted a proposal to UNIFEM for a project to significantly increase the level of awareness and thereby reduce the high incidence of violence against women through public education and advocacy initiatives applied in training and capacity building of 3 NGOs working with community-based groups in different regions, namely Linden Care Foundation in Region 10, New Vision Santa Rosa in Moruka, Region 1, and Hope for All in Suddie, Region 2.

The grant agreement was signed in late August, the first workshop was held in Linden in November and at the end of the year arrangements were in hand for the second Linden workshop to be held in February 2008.

The project agreement (with the proposal annexed) and November workshop evaluation are available on the website.

4th Form Awareness-Building Project

Funded by the British High Commission

Our 2006 application for a grant to support domestic violence awareness among fourth form students was approved in early 2007 and work began in April on the development of a curriculum dealing with the dynamics of abusive relationships and, at the request of the Ministry of Education (which had readily given approval to the project), prevention of suicide and of alcohol and drug use. Facilitators from the regions were then identified and trained and arrangements made for sessions to be conducted in the identified schools.

The project aims to deliver the curriculum to 1500 students in 22 schools across the ten regions of Guyana but by the end of the year trained facilitators from Regions 2, 4, 6, 9 and 10 had conducted sessions with over 2000 students.

The project proposal and November 2007 progress report are available on our website.

Increasing Domestic Violence & Child Abuse Awareness at Health Centres

Funded by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives

In January 2007 the agreement for the grant for which we had applied to the Canada Fund in November 2006 for a 12 month project to increase domestic violence and child abuse awareness at health centres was signed.

The aims of the project were to train 24 health centre care workers to identify the signs of domestic violence and child abuse and to equip them with the tools for assisting victims, to raise awareness of domestic violence and child abuse among pre- and post-natal mothers and fathers through a series of short workshops and distribution of educational leaflets at health centres, and, in order to reach the wider general population to develop and broadcast a public service announcement on child abuse and to develop, produce and distribute a poster.

The first months of the project focused on establishing the relationships with the Ministry of Health that were necessary for the involvement of the health centres. Workshops were conducted with selected health care workers from the health centres, and then with the facilitators who were to visit the health centres. Between September and December work was done at 12 health centres.

The application, project agreement and December 2007 progress report are available on our website.

Strengthening Policy Frameworks and Social Services, Public Education & Advocacy to Reduce Gender-Based Violence Project (31/12/07-31/12/09)

Funded by UNIFEM as administrator of the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

In November 2007 we submitted a proposal to UNIFEM for funding from the VAW (Violence against Women) Trust Fund for a project to make a significant contribution to the reduction of gender-based violence in Guyana by working to strengthen the legal and policy framework through participating in the development of new sexual offences legislation and taking the lead in developing a protocol for front line workers to effectively implement relevant legislation, strengthening social support services through training of front line workers including the police on the dynamics of gender-based violence and how to effectively implement relevant legislation by delivering quality social support services, and advocacy and awareness to change public attitudes by a national media campaign against gender-based violence and outreach sessions with target groups.

The proposal was accepted and the grant agreement was signed on 1 December 2007 with project work to begin on 31 December.

The proposal and grant agreement are available on the website.

Gender-Based Violence Reduction Project (1 April 2008 – 31 March 2011)

Funded by the Women's World Day of Prayer - German Committee

In early 2007 we were contacted by the Women's World Day of Prayer German Committee and invited to submit an application for a domestic violence reduction project. The committee was very keen to fund a project in Guyana as its World Day of Prayer workshops were to be held here (and we were the grateful recipient of the offerings from the workshops) and as we were unable to meet the first deadline for proposal submission due to pressure of current work, kindly agreed to extend the deadline.

We submitted an application and project description in September and the agreement was signed in November with a start date of 1 April 2008.

The objective of this project is to educate and empower both males and females to adopt peaceful and non-violent means for resolving conflicts in their lives. Its aim is that through community-based initiatives awareness about gender-based violence and its root causes and initiatives for resolving these issues will be developed and that as a consequence the level of violence against women and girls will be reduced.

The four target communities identified are Den Amstel in Region 3 and Good Hope, Kaneville and Covent Garden in Region 4.

The project documents (application, project description, agreement & project implementation schedule) are available on our website.

Pickney Project

In collaboration with EveryChild Guyana

Following the acceptance of our concept note in late 2006, discussions continued in 2007, as a result of which the concept note was revised, a project proposal and budget were developed in conjunction with EveryChild and funding for the first year was obtained.

The aim of the project is to improve the lives of children using a community-based approach, with the first phase of the project in Sophia At the end of the year, it was anticipated that the project would start in April 2008, to be preceded by a baseline study of knowledge, attitudes and practices on the prevention of child abuse and support to abused children in Sophia.

The concept note is available on the website.

The Shelter

Shelter operations continued to be supported under the USAID/GDCCR Project grant until September. In anticipation of the end grant agreement, efforts were begun early in the year to find further funding. It soon

became apparent that the government was the only possibility, and on Christmas Eve we received the good news that the sum of \$5m would be disbursed early in 2008.

The shelter managers continued to receive the advice and guidance of the shelter committee in the running of the shelter and regular residents' evaluations, which had been introduced in late 2006, continued to be administered with a view to improvements in shelter operations being made when necessary.

In August 2007 we applied to UNICEF for funding to enable us to retain the services of a full-time professional counselor at the shelter. Funding for a 12 month contract was approved and a counsellor began work in November.

During 2007, 109 female victims of domestic violence/human trafficking and their children were given refuge at the shelter. The length of stay ranged from 1 to 187 days. Shelter intake data for 2007 is available on our website.

Efforts continued to be made to keep expenses to a minimum by soliciting regular donations of foodstuffs and other supplies from private enterprises and planting fruits and vegetables in the garden. A pilot small scale poultry rearing project began in December with the aim of producing chickens for own use.

A shelter manual was developed during the year and adopted in November. It is available on our website.

OUR STATISTICS

We keep and regularly update statistics relating to the various aspects of our work and have periodic analyses prepared, all of which are available on our website.

In 2007, 1709 people sought our help (more than the total that had done so during the previous 3 years combined) and provided counselling to 739 clients, an increase of 34% over 2006 and 78% over 2005. It is probable that the increase in the demand for our services was in some part due the radio and TV PSAs broadcast with USAID/GDCCR Project grant funds.

Between November 1995 and December 2007, we provided counselling services to over 7,500 people of all ages and ethnicity, over 90% female and, as in previous years, significantly more from rural than urban areas.

OUR FINANCES

We continued to adhere to high standards of financial transparency and to be always ready to account to our funding partners and donors for all moneys received.

Our garden party in June was a great success, raising in excess of \$1m from ticket sales, a raffle, bookstall and contributions by other stallholders. We also received donations at the request of Mr. Anand and Ms. Natasha Beharry in lieu of wedding presents and at the end of the year were anticipating a further substantial sum from the proceeds of the Old Year's Night party organised by Denise and Dennis Dias and Michael & Elizabeth Perreira.

Our audited financial statements for 2007 appear at Appendix II.

During 2007 there was a significant change in the fixed assets of the company as a result of the acquisition of 1 projector and 1 Toshiba laptop computer valued at a total of \$317,700.

The company did not issue any shares or debentures during the period 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2007.

Help & Shelter is deeply grateful to all those who in any way helped us in our work during 2007.

Appendix I

The following persons contributed to our work as volunteers and/or staff and project personnel during 2007:

- Petal Baboolall
- Carol Inniss-Baptiste
- Patricia Caleb
- Dennis Cuffy
- Denise Dias
- Monica Fordyce
- Afna Garnett
- Karen Gomes
- Patricia Gray
- Julian Haynes
- Isha Husain-Singh
- Yvette Joseph
- Patricia Noel
- Renita Noel
- Navindra Persaud
- Yvonne Quintin
- Danuta Radzik
- Colleen Reis
- Hemwattie Roopnarine
- Hamala Sharma
- Josephine Whitehead

The following persons also served as directors during 2007:

- Patricia Caleb
- Denise Dias
- Afna Garnett
- Patricia Gray
- Isha Husain-Singh
- Patricia Noel
- Navindra Persaud
- Yvonne Quintin
- Danuta Radzik
- Colleen Reis
- Hemwattie Roopnarine
- Hamala Sharma
- Josephine Whitehead