

FCO STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FUND AND BILATERAL PROGRAMME FUND

HELP & SHELTER M&E REPORT

1 APRIL – 30 JUNE 2016

Project Title: Counselling, advocacy and referrals for the alleviation of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse.

Project Purpose/Objective: The reduction of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse through provision of essential counselling, advocacy and referral services to survivors/victims of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse, thereby empowering them to recognize and develop coping capacity, change negative behavior patterns, enhance personal growth and overcome abuse and violence in their lives.

Output 1: The provision of counselling (face-to-face and hotline) to 250 survivors/victims of violence

Results

- During the period April to June 2016, a total of 81 new clients, 68 adult women and 13 adult men, received face-to-face, hotline and court support services. A total of 61 adults, 47 women and 14 men, also returned for face-to-face follow up counselling services, bringing the total number of adult clients counselled during this quarter to 142, of which 115 were women and 27 were men.
- During the same period a total of 7 new girls children received face-to-face and hotline counselling services for behavioural problems, physical and other forms of abuse. A total of 3 teenage girls also received court support services bringing the total of child clients receiving counselling services to 10.
- 82% of the new female face-to-face clients and 45% of the new male clients experienced some form of spousal abuse, with physical and non-physical abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and male clients. However, the severity of the spousal abuse experienced by female clients was far greater, more frequent, more intensive and life threatening than that experienced by male clients.
- 17% of new female face-to-face clients and 54% of new adult male face to face clients also experienced intra-family abuse, with physical, psychological abuse and ‘other’ forms of abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and physical and ‘other’ being the most prevalent for male clients. One female adult clients was also counselled for non-spousal rape.
- As part of the healing and empowerment process, clients are counselled on the dynamics of domestic violence, cycle of abuse, self-esteem, and the importance of being independent. Many clients are routinely informed about the DVA and how to access DVA protection and maintenance orders as well as other options available based on their individual cases.
- During this reporting period H&S counsellors were able to assist clients with accessing DVA protection and maintenance orders from abusive intimate partners, some of whom were also refusing to financially support their children. One client who had been physically abused by her partner reported the matter to the nearby police station and while investigation the DV matter, cocaine was found on the premises and client’s partner was also found to be illegally in Guyana. Partner was arrested and imprisoned and people in the village where she and former partner lived, informed her that the former partner was due to be released soon and that her life was at risk. Client was referred to H&S from the Ministry Of Social Protection for her safety and her newborn baby’s safety. Client came, assessment was made, she was counselled and referred to the Ixora Shelter and is still there presently. Two (2) clients were successful in getting help from Habitat for Humanity to do repairs to their homes for the sum of two hundred and seventy thousand dollars, and two other received house lots from the Ministry of Communities after being referred by H&S Counselor. The counsellor also

helped one client to prepare letters which the organizations requested and they are working together to accelerate constructing a home for her. A female client returned to share her gratitude for the assistance and referral she would have gotten from H&S two years ago. Client had been referred to Ministry of Housing for a house lot, and to Legal Aid Clinic to file for divorce and division of property, client was successful with her referrals and now has completed building her own home, has started a small business at her home and has never gone back to her abusive perpetrator. H&S counselor helped a former client of H&S to recognize the urgency of reporting to CPA about parental abuse of her nieces and to inform the said agency that she is willing to be the care giver of these children, especially since the neglectful parent is HIV positive. Another counselor helped her client to recognize that even with a DVA protection order in place, she still needs to be vigilant in her movements to and from home, since it is known that the respondent can be very malicious. A male client who had previously accessed the services of H&S said that he was having arguments with his wife over his adult son who has been mentally challenged from childhood, he further stated that he does not believe that his wife is feeding the young man enough. A letter was sent inviting his wife in to H&S, the wife came in and was very upset that she had to come to H&S and was reluctant to participate in the discussion. However, counselor went on with the session and enquired about the young man's health and recommended that he take his son to the nearby Health Centre to do a general check up on his health. Client's wife took the young man to the health centre and it was found that the young man's blood count was low. The parents were encouraged by the counselor to ensure that the young man is given a balanced and nutritious diet.

Output 2: The provision of in-court support to 25 victims of violence

Results

- Court support services, including counselling, attending court hearings and educating clients and family members about court processes, rules and procedures benefitted 5 new adult female clients and 1 adult male.
- The majority of adult court support clients were survivors of domestic violence pursuing Domestic Violence Act protection orders(16); child maintenance orders(5); assault(3); threatening language(2); custody (1); attempted murder(1); breach of DVA P.O.(1) (NB some clients had several court matters)
- Outcomes of court support cases resulted in: (4) DVA interim/final protection orders were granted to clients; (3) child maintenance orders granted to clients, (1) murder case was committed to High Court for trial (1) rape case was committed to High Court for trial, (1) variation of child maintenance order was struck due to absence of offender from hearings. A further 2 cases were continuing.
- Court support counsellors made a difference in the lives of 2 elderly clients (husband and wife) who visited H& S seeking help to deal with their abusive son. Clients said that their 50 year old son who is addicted to marijuana and cocaine curses them, chops the beams of their home at nights causing them not to sleep and had threatened to burnt down their house. Clients had made several reports to the nearby police station and their son was charged and placed before the court. Clients were present at court on the day of the court hearing, however the case was never called and on enquiring about the case, they were told that the matter was finished. They clients were counseled on DV and options that are available to deal with the matter. Clients decided to apply for DVA Occupation and Protection Orders which were granted by the Court. Another client was guided on their right to legal representation and about making a request to the Court for time for time to acquire such legal representation before the case proceeds any further. A client who had a rape case at the magistrate's court was advised what it meant when she was told in court that the accused in her case was committed to stand trial at the High Court and she will hear from them. Client needed clarity as to what this meant. She was informed by counselor that the case will now be a trial at the High court and she will be informed by the DPP office when they are ready to start the trial. Another client was helped to understand the need to provide an affidavit to support her application for a DVA

Occupation Order. The application was made out by the clerk of the court registry and as such had no supporting data for the DVA occupation order.

Output 3: 100 victims/survivors of domestic and sexual child abuse are informed of the legal, health, educational, housing, employment, financial and other services available to them and supported in accessing these

Results

- Clients benefitted from a total of 51 referrals, 44 for women and 7 to men. Referrals were given for legal aid services(11); magistrates' courts(20); the police(3); Guyana Public Hospital Corporation (GPHC) (3); Salvation Army (4); Childcare & Protection Agency(2); Ministry of Social Protection(1); Food for the Poor (1); Other services(6).
- In addition, 12 adult women and 14 of their dependent children were also referred by Help & Shelter's Crisis Centre to Help & Shelter's Ixora Shelter for abused women. Abused clients who have no safe place to live are referred to the shelter where they can access counselling and other free services for themselves and their dependent children for a period of up to 6 months or longer depending on individual circumstances. Counsellors also sometimes accompany clients for DVA protection orders and magistrates' courts have become much more responsive in expediting the hearing of applications.

Output 4: Ongoing advocacy for effective implementation of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Acts

Results

- During the face-to-face, hotline, and court support counselling process clients are informed of the provisions of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Acts and encouraged to utilize these laws for their protection, prevention of abuse and access to justice. This resulted in 20 client referrals to the magistrates' courts for DVA protection orders etc.
- Help & Shelter independently and in collaboration with other NGOs have been active in advocating for full implementation of the Sexual Offences Act including the re-convening of the Sexual Offences Task Force and appointment of special judges to address the backlog of sexual offences cases. Nationwide programmes for sensitization, introduction of protocols for service providers, DVA & sexual offence police units with trained personnel etc.
- Representation was made to the Ministry of Social Protection for the reconvening of the Domestic Violence Policy Oversight Committee and the Task Force on Sexual Offences.

Danuta Radzik
M&E officer