

FCO STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FUND AND BILATERAL PROGRAMME FUND

HELP & SHELTER M&E REPORT 1 JULY – 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

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 July to September 2015, a total of 61 new clients, 47 adult women and 14 adult men, received face-to-face, hotline and court support services. A total of 77 adults, 68 women and 9 men, also returned for face-to-face follow up counselling services, bringing the total number of clients counselled during this quarter to 138, of which 115 were women and 23 were men.
- During the same period a total of 3 new girl children received face-to-face counselling services for physical and non-physical abuse and 7 returning child clients, 5 girls and 2 boys, also received follow up counselling service, bringing the total number of child clients seen during this quarter to 10, of which 8 were girls and 2 were boys.
- 90% of the new female face-to-face clients and 85% of the new adult male clients had experienced some form of spousal abuse, with physical and non-physical abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and non-physical being the most prevalent for 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.
- 9% of new female face-to-face clients and 1% of the new adult male clients also experienced some form of intra-family abuse, with physical abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and non-physical being the most prevalent for male clients.
- As part of the healing and empowerment process, clients are counselled on the 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 orders.
- During this reporting period H&S saw clients who were fleeing from abusive relationships and who would have left their villages in search of promised employment or a better life only to find out that the arrangements had fallen through or were not as had been promised. Having nowhere to go, they were referred to H&S for services, including shelter services. Many clients accessing H&S counselling services are fearful for their lives, depressed and without resources. Counsellors assist clients through the process of self-development, self-esteem building, anger management and conflict resolution..
- Counsellors also counselled men experiencing abuse. In one case the wife was unfaithful and became pregnant for another man, and the client was able to end the relationship in a

cordial way and signed over one of the houses to his the ex-wife. Counsellors also helped clients to adopt new communication patterns and visitation arrangements with their spouses as well as their children as they went through separation or divorce proceedings so as to reduce stress and psychological pain, especially for the children. Clients who recently experienced broken relationships were helped to understand the psychological benefits for the children in encouraging and maintaining a healthy relationship with their father, regardless of the parental issues and separation.

- Adjusting and helping clients to deal with the stress of unfaithfulness after years of marriage has been of great assistance and comfort to some clients. Couples have also benefitted from counselling sessions on effective communication, good parenting skills, anger management, conflict management and understanding gender socialization patterns as they seek to improve their intimate partner relationships. In one case a female client who had accessed the services of Help & Shelter 3 years ago and was successful in getting a protection order, returned to seek help in obtaining another order against her nephew who had chopped his brother. She was referred immediately to the Georgetown Magistrate's Court and obtained an order the following day.

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 25 adult female clients and 2 adult male clients. Four child clients also received court support services
- The majority of adult court support clients were survivors of domestic violence pursuing assault charges (10) Domestic Violence Act protection orders (9); child maintenance (4); threatening language/abusive behavior (3); custody (1); attempted murder (1) (NB some clients sought assistance for several matters.) Continuing court cases were attended to, resulting in case dismissals, DVA protection orders granted, offenders found guilty of assault and sentenced to imprisonment and fines and maintenance orders for dependent children.
- The 4 child court support clients were survivors of sexual offences: buggery (1); indecent assault (1); carnal knowledge (1) and assault (1) .
- Outcomes of court support cases resulted in: 5 DVA protection orders being granted to clients; child maintenance granted to 4 clients with spousal maintenance also granted in 1 case; 2 defendants placed on bonds to keep the peace with 1 also ordered to pay a fine; 1 client granted full child custody; 1 accused found guilty of a sexual offence against a child and sentenced to 4 years imprisonment and 7 cases dismissed, some after court-required H&S counselling ordered by the magistrate. 10 cases are continuing.
- As a result of a court support counsellors' participation in a capacity-building workshop on the Domestic Violence Act convened for magistrates by the chancellor of the judiciary and funded by UN Women, for the past 2 years, magistrates have been referring domestic violence cases to Help & Shelter for counselling and feedback on results of counselling before making decisions on outcomes of cases. Clients often expressed appreciation of counselling services and support received from Help & Shelter

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 42 referrals, 37 given to women and 5 to men. Referrals were given for legal aid services (13); magistrates courts (9); the police (6); job recruitment agency (6); health services (2); Ministry of Social Protection (2) and others (4).
- In addition, 8 adult women and 17 of their dependent children were also referred by Help & Shelter's Crisis Centre to Help & Shelter's 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.
- Clients are also referred to the Ministry of Housing for assistance in securing house lots or other housing services and also helped to secure employment through referrals to the official employment agency. Follow-up to track clients' success in gaining employment is also done. 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 were 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 22 client referrals to legal aid and the magistrates courts for DVA protection orders etc.
- Help & Shelter continues to make necessary representation on behalf of clients to relevant persons in authority on non-compliance with the legislation and to this end, meetings have been held with the Minister of Social Protection, the Childcare & Protection Agency and the Guyana Police Force. Help & Shelter has also facilitated capacity-building training sessions with newly appointed police officers and new police inductees to the Guyana Police Criminal Investigation Division on gender-based violence, domestic violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment and TIP.

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