

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

On Wednesday, October 27, 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/Guyana) through its Governance Enhancement Project (GEP) awarded grants in the amount of US\$58,600 to three Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), to implement domestic violence issue-based activities in Regions 4, 6 and 8. The grantees are Red Thread, Help and Shelter and the Roadside Baptist Skills Training Center

Addressing the grantees, at the grant award signing ceremony held at the Georgetown Club, Ms Carol Horning, Mission Director, USAID/Guyana, affirmed the commitment of USAID to work with the Government of Guyana and civil society to address domestic violence through programs focusing on the reduction of domestic violence incidents.

"Domestic violence," Ms Horning said, "stretches beyond the victims and affected families and strategies to address these heinous acts should be focused on transforming those social norms and structures that are the root causes of domestic violence."

The grants complement existing GEP community based and other activities to train local officials to deal with domestic violence and domestic violence court protocols. GEP training programs assist social workers, local leaders and court personnel to learn how to address specific incidents of domestic violence more effectively and sensitively. An important by-product of these grants will be a better awareness of how this issue affects the community at large, not just the individual victims and their families.

The grant to Red Thread will fund a program of empowerment in Region 8 for victims of domestic violence and enable them to advocate for change at the community level.

The grant to Help and Shelter will advocate for improved counselling services for victims; strengthen community based services and provide a broader understanding of the rights of victims of violence in Region 4.

Roadside Baptist Skills Training Center will train local counsellors; undertake a community awareness campaign; and, establish a men's empowerment program to assist them to deal with stress, anger and other contributors to domestic violence caused by men. The expectation is that the men participating in this program will be advocates for change in their community over the long term. This project will be undertaken in Region 6.



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Funding announced today is the first phase of the GEP small grants program. Additional grants will be made available to Guyanese Civil Society Organizations at a later date.

October 27, 2010

Georgetown, Guyana