



**SEXUAL & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
PROTOCOLS TRAINING  
FOR MAGISTRATES' COURT STAFF AND  
SOCIAL WORKERS/COUNSELLORS**



**Facilitators:-**

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Camp Street, Georgetown.

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**Facilitators' Report  
2010**

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## **Background**

The Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Governance Enhancement Project (GGEP) organized a workshop for staff from the Magistrates' Courts and social service providers from the governmental and non-governmental sectors on Thursday, June 24 and Wednesday, June 30, 2010. These agencies recognized the need for officers from different sectors to be informed about the appropriate response to cases of sexual and domestic violence as set out in existing protocols, each articulated for a specific sector. They considered it apposite to introduce the protocols to persons from four sectors whose responsibilities are complementary but who often operate alone.

Help & Shelter prepared Sexual and Domestic Protocols for Magistrate's Court Staff, Police Officers, Police Prosecutors and Social Workers/Counsellors under a project funded by the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM). It then presented the Protocols to the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security for use by the relevant agencies; the use of the Protocols is to be monitored by the Ministry's Domestic Violence Unit.

The purpose of the workshop was to improve the response to domestic violence reports through the introduction of participants to the Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocols. These protocols describe the nature of sexual and domestic violence, set out the context in which these offences occur and articulate procedures to be followed by officers of different agencies.

The objectives of the workshop were that, by the end of the workshop, participants should have:

1. Increased knowledge about and clarified their attitudes to sexual violence and domestic violence;
2. Increased their ability to respond appropriately when intervening in sexual violence and domestic violence cases; and
3. Clarified their roles as explained in the Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocols.

## **Methodology**

In order to achieve the objectives, the facilitators ensured that the workshop was conducted in a participatory/interactive manner and used the following methods:

- Presentations;
- Small Group Discussions;
- Plenary Discussions;
- Individual Reflections; and
- Participant Review of Material and Submission of Questions during the period between the two workshop days.

Each participant received a document containing:

- National Policy on Domestic Violence;
- Household Guide to the Domestic Violence Act;
- Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocol for Magistrates' Court Staff;
- Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocol for Social Workers and Counsellor;
- Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocol for Police Prosecutors;

- Sexual and Domestic Violence Protocol for Police Officers;
- Sexual Offences Act (Sections 1-10); and
- Selected Forms from the Domestic Violence.

## **Content**

The topics selected for examination sought to introduce new information, promote the consideration of different perspectives on some issues and lay the foundation for a common and/or complementary approach to responses to reports of sexual and domestic violence. Some planned topics could not be addressed because of the unavailability of the resource person previously identified.

Among the topics addressed were:

- Self and Personal Attitudes to Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence;
- Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence;
- Experiences of and Challenges Faced by Participants Related to Domestic Violence; and
- Examination of the Domestic Violence Policy.

The completed agenda appears in Annex 1.

## **Participants**

A total of 29 persons were present on Day 1 and 26 on Day 2, with 18 of those present on Day 1 returning on Day 2 and 8, including the Clerks of the Magistrates' Courts, attending for the first time on Day 2. They represented the following organisations/agencies:

- Ministry of Human Services and Social Security – Probation and Social Services Department (Regions 2, 3, 4, 6, 10);
- Guyana Police Force – (Headquarters, Regions 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10);
- Non-governmental organisations – Help & Shelter, Every Child/Childlink, Women Across Differences; and
- Magistrates' Courts – Georgetown, Vigilance and Vreed-en-hoop/Linden.

The experience of the participants with domestic violence training ranged from the comprehensive training received by some in the NGOs and Guyana Police Force to none.

The list of participants and attendance register appear in Annex 2.

## **Day 1**

### **Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Mr. Abbas Mancey, Head, Domestic Violence Policy Unit, Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, extended a warm welcome to those present. He stated that the Ministry was pleased to co-host the workshop which was timely. He expressed appreciation for the support from the collaborating agencies.

The opening remarks were delivered by a panel of representatives from the partner organisations. Mr William Cartier, Chief of Party of ARD, implementing agency of the USAID Governance

Enhancement Project, gave a background to the project and indicated that it is designed to give support for improvement in the delivery of legal services in Guyana. Ms Patrice La Fleur addressed the commitment of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to the work to end gender-based violence in Guyana and the impact which gender-based violence has on development. Mr Trevor Thomas, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, restated the Ministry's commitment to working with different agencies to deal with gender-based violence, especially domestic violence.

### **Introduction of Facilitators and Participants**

The facilitators introduced themselves, sharing biodata as well as the nature of their involvement with domestic violence issues. The participants shared biodata and information on their agency they represented and the position they currently hold.

### **Participants' Expectations**

The expectations of the participants could be grouped under these broad themes:

- Increase knowledge about domestic violence and sexual violence;
- Learn ways to assist victims of domestic violence;
- Be equipped to share knowledge with peers;
- Learn about the work of other agencies;
- Network with persons from other agencies;
- Learn how to respond to a child who reports sexual abuse;
- Acquire personal skills to deal with domestic violence;
- Understand the role of the police;
- Increase knowledge about the Domestic Violence Act and whether men could be protected; and
- Learn how to deal with perpetrators.

The list of expectations is in Annex 3.

### **Self and Personal Attitudes to Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence**

Participants explored a series of questions designed to promote a deeper understanding of self. They were challenged to consider the relationship between themselves as individuals and as service providers with a view to increasing awareness of how personal perspectives influence performance in a professional setting. They examined the difference between sex and gender and how these and other characteristics affect their self-definition as well as the image they have of others. They also discussed the importance of self care, personal history and the ability to identify the feelings, personal experiences and emotions when dealing with people in abusive relationships. Some participants shared their own experiences of abuse. (The outline of the issues discussed appears in Annex 4.)

The vignettes in Annex 5 were used as part of the discussion on personal attitudes to sexual violence and domestic violence. They also served as an introduction to the nature and dynamics of sexual violence and domestic violence.

Among the issues raised during the discussions were:

- The question of sex and the entitlement of husbands/wives to sex from their partners.
- The need for social workers to refer cases when they are familiar with the parties involved.
- The importance of ensuring that faith-based organizations which are intended to provide support subscribe to an ideology that the individual's well-being is more important than the relationship or the preservation of the family.
- A complaint mechanism needs to be in place in each agency to respond if clients feel dissatisfied with the way in which they have been treated.
- The role of the police is important, especially when it concerns the security of any person making a report of domestic violence or sexual violence.
- The service provider must use the information available when working with a case and refrain from making and acting on assumptions about the client and his/her circumstances.

It was also evident that many social workers had limited or no training in domestic violence interventions and this has had a negative impact on their ability to deliver appropriate services. The question was asked about the ideology of preserving families rather than working on individuals and the response was that the social workers should not be endangering any person experiencing abuse or that their intervention should not be seen as a message to the victim that he/she is responsible for the abuse.

### **Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence**

The presentation on the Web of Abuse led into a discussion on Entrapment. The participants brainstormed and discussed the following reasons why women are trapped in abusive relationships:

- Age – too old to start over;
- Children;
- Constant threats/fear;
- Culture;
- Disability;
- Family pressure;
- Good sex/power of the crotch;
- Hope for change;
- Lack of education;
- Lack of skills;
- Love;
- Low self-esteem;
- Maintenance of social status;
- Nowhere to go;
- Poverty/financial constraints;
- Pressure to stay;
- Promise of migration;
- Religion; and
- Security – valuing things that they have such as their home as important.

A brief role play helped participants to visualize the experience of a person who is entrapped and attempts to escape from an abusive situation. It enabled the participants to better appreciate that

several forces work against that escape, with the person being required to use different strategies in the process. It also brought to the fore that the efforts made are not always recognized by persons outside the situation and service providers need to be less judgmental and more supportive of survivors. This, too, challenged the participants to confront their attitudes and beliefs, with some of them acknowledging that they now had a better understanding of some of the dynamics of domestic violence.

### **Challenges Faced by Participants in Dealing with Reports of Domestic Violence**

Participants shared some of their personal and professional experiences with domestic violence. Those who revealed their status as survivors contributed valuable perspectives.

Among the challenges encountered were:

- Frustration when the victim goes back despite other interventions and offers of support were the person to stay away from the abusive partner. This occurred in both personal and professional situations.
- Frustration when the victim does not follow through with police report.
- Request for a warning to be issued to the perpetrator but no charge to be made.
- Social workers who believe that the police are referring cases which they should be handling.
- Perpetrators not willing to undergo behaviour change counselling, believing that they are right in what they do.
- The judicial system not giving enough punishment for domestic violence assaults and, therefore, perpetrators not being sufficiently sanctioned for their abusive behaviour.
- Knowledge that abuse is taking place among persons in the community but being reluctant to make a report to the police for fear of retaliation.
- Lack of effective communication among agencies such as Probation and Social Services and the police.

### **Dealing with Perpetrators**

Participants acknowledged that dealing with perpetrators is challenging. The social workers spoke of the reluctance of perpetrators to engage in counselling for behaviour change. The police noted that they were expected to warn perpetrators but that they had no mandate to do that. Some perpetrators who are “big ones” would also be problematic. There was frustration at the light sentences which were meted out for domestic violence offences. Participants were encouraged to ensure that, in their intervention with perpetrators, no further harm could come to the victim.

### **Participants’ Feedback on the Proceedings on Day 1**

The participants addressed what they liked and did not like about the proceedings. They all gave favourable comments, though one participant cautioned about the time management and not belabouring some points at the expense of others.

Participants indicated what they appreciated as follows:

- Honesty in the sharing of experiences.
- Dynamics, hearing other colleagues' experiences.
- Informative, interesting.



- Interactive sessions, use of the scenarios to help deal with situations.
- Learnt a lot, especially to use when older persons come to the Police Station and they think [I] am too young to deal with their matters.
- Widened knowledge on how to deal with domestic violence; would be able to give better advice on reports of domestic violence.
- Met people who I can refer people to.
- Good to see so many men.
- Gave me a new perspective on working with clients, am better able to understand clients.
- More excited to address the laws.
- Grateful to be a part of the workshop.
- Like how everyone gave their views and shared experiences.
- Enjoyed hearing from the police.
- Confirmed that we need a multi-agency approach to domestic violence.
- Having to move across the room. I had to confront my own reluctance to change; [did not move far]. I could not understand why women stayed in an abusive situation. For the first time, I got to understand what a woman is going through.
- Really good to get a different approach to dealing with self and domestic violence with parents at Tutorial. Entrapment part was the most enlightening session.
- Reinforcement that I am the most important person in my life.
- Knowing that there are 12 other males carrying the torch.

## **Day 2**

### **Introductions**

Persons attending the workshop for the first time stated their expectations of the day and shared an experience or thoughts about domestic violence. Most of the new participants had had some experience in intervening to help someone in an abusive relationship. Some of them raised questions about domestic violence.

### **Expectations of the New Participants**

The participants who were attending the workshop for the first time shared their expectations as follows:

- Enhance knowledge and refresh what I know and to share;
- Gain as much information on domestic violence;
- Gain knowledge and share views; need to learn more about child abuse;
- Gain new knowledge on how to respond and types of abuse/emotional problems;
- Gain some more knowledge to be better able to deal with members of the public, giving assistance and making referrals;
- Learn more about domestic violence and sexual violence; want to know how to encourage mostly females to follow through;
- Learn more about verbal abuse and share views; and
- Never too old to learn; here to continue with learning process.

## **New Participants' Views, Experiences and Questions on Domestic Violence**

Some Magistrate's Courts receive reports of domestic violence every day. They receive requests for assistance with applications for Protection Orders from women in the main. They usually refer people to Help & Shelter or Legal Aid.

Some participants receive reports of sexual abuse from friends or parents of victims. They recognize that some people are afraid or ashamed to report domestic violence.

The incidence of domestic violence is high in Bartica, with lots of abuse occurring in public places. Many women there are financially dependent on the money coming from the interior.

Concerns were expressed about the response to domestic violence thus:

- I find that the females have more rights when it comes to domestic violence reports. [There is need to recognize that] both males and females are abusive.
- Concerned with women feeling that this is the end of their world when they get married. They give up their power. Some believe that if they have contributed to the building of a house, they can't leave. Find that. In some cases, both parties are not mature. The man expects the woman to blossom out while she sees being a housewife as an end. This leads to beating. Some women don't see themselves as taking responsibility for personal development. They need to think beyond the man and see themselves as independent.

Other participants' experiences include working with children and awareness that two men have brought charges in East Coast.

Domestic Violence forms were distributed to all police stations and Magistrate's Courts yet staff say that there are no forms. There is need for investigation of the system.

### **Key Learning from Day 1**

Those participants who attended the workshop on Day 1 shared some of the information gathered and lessons of significance. A summary of their contributions follow. The list of lessons appears in Annex 6.

Exploring self was of significance for several participants. One participant noted that the activities helped her to realize that she needs to "sort out myself before I can help others." Others recognized that self-knowledge and self-definition are important and that they should reduce their reliance on others to define their world. Another shared the understanding that "I am the most important person in my life."

Learning about entrapment and the range of factors which keep people in an abusive relationship helped to change perspectives. The fact that it has been found that women try to leave 19 times was new knowledge for most. This knowledge also led to increased tolerance which should be transferred to the work situation.

There is need for a multi-agency approach to domestic violence. Doctors, nurses, the Guyana Prison Service, Guyana Fire Service and the Guyana Defence Force all need to be involved in the effort to reduce domestic violence. An example of the need for education and training on the issue was offered: when health workers fail to complete medical reports properly, it is difficult to prosecute domestic violence cases.

The police cannot take action if the person says that he/she doesn't want to take action. In such a case, they are likely to refer the person to a social worker for counselling. This reinforced the importance of networking among agencies such as the police and other service providers.

Social workers need to continue engagement in introspection. One participant shared that this process has led to a different approach to working with clients. They also need to examine their self-perception, self-assumption and self-presumption, and make efforts to divorce themselves from making assumptions and presumptions about people. The interaction has helped to change the view of the police held by many and led to the advice that if one police station does not respond appropriately to their request for assistance, they should call another police station.

Men are becoming more aware and involved rather than sitting on the sideline looking on. This was welcomed by all.

### **Experiences after Day 1**

Participants shared their experiences after the first day of training. They engaged in intense discussion of how to follow up and deal with situations.

- A child victim of sexual abuse told the court that the statement she gave to the police is not true. There was no evidence. The victim was referred from the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security to the police.

Discussion: The group agreed that the officer needs to have an investigation afterwards to find out why the child did not go through with the case. The perpetrator is the stepfather.

- I used to counsel people not to go back. I learnt that it has to be the client's decision and that if she wants to go back home, I could help her make a safety plan.
- I have been working on my attitude. I looked in the mirror and saw some things which I need to change.
- I learnt that two boys in my class were being abused but I didn't know. The Schools Welfare Officer came in but she said there was no evidence even though evidence was there. Parents said the children play rough that's how they got the bruises.

Discussion: The teacher was urged to contact the Child Care and Protection Agency and to ensure that the case was followed through. All participants were reminded of the Hotline and the mandatory requirement for teachers and others working with children to report incidents of abuse. This led to some discussion about the role of the Schools Welfare Officer of the Ministry of Education and the role of the Child Protection Officer of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.

- A woman in Berbice has died after being in and out of hospital as a result of domestic violence. The last time when she went to the hospital with a fractured skull and died. Once, the police rank broke down a door to get the woman out of the house. She was hospitalized for a couple of days, then took her own discharge at the urging of her husband. She tried to get the police rank charged for breaking down the door. The woman got licks every day and got a baby every year. She refused to give a complete statement to the police. She would begin giving a statement, then ask to go to the toilet but would leave the station.

Discussion: The officer was commended for dealing with the frustration and helplessness of trying to help someone who was still trapped in an abusive relationship. Concerns were expressed for the children. The Social Worker for the area left immediately to call his colleagues to get protective custody for the children. The group also discussed whether circumstantial evidence could be used to bring matters to the attention of the court.

- A woman felt locked in by her husband and his mother. She wanted her in-laws to be more hands-off. She called her husband a terrorist. The social worker spoke with man and did not find any terrorist traits. The man admitted his abusive behaviour and said he would change.

Discussion: The social worker has to be careful of abusers who promise to change and who do not change. There are indicators of behaviour change which could be measured by discussion with the woman and other family members.

- A couple was referred by the court for counselling. The social worker told them that she needed to visit their home to speak with the children. When the social worker was outside of her office, hell broke loose. The woman had said that she had already packed a bag, though her husband did not know she had done that. She was told that it was her decision whether she stayed or left. She told the magistrate that she would give him another chance.

Discussion: The social worker was cautioned about ensuring her own safety in future in situations such as this. The group discussed the pros and cons of “couples” counselling and to ensure that the victim was not further abused in the process. The police talked of the letter they had seen from a woman who talked of her experiences of being further intimidated in couples counselling.

- A couple had lived together for 25 years and had been married for 16 years. Since 2004, they have had problems. Anything she brought into the house, he destroyed. The social services agencies did nothing. The woman went to the police station to make a report. The rank at the desk had an attitude and told her that she is a married woman and should go home. The Cadet Officer overheard the response and spoke with the woman, asking her what she wanted done. The man was charged and the matter is before the court. The Commander has asked the Cadet Officer to arrange training for ranks in the Division.

Discussion: The Cadet Officer was commended for his intervention. The facilitator sought to get an immediate commitment from the Felix Austin Police College to do some training in the police division.

- A woman got a visa, went overseas, worked and sent money home. She returned and found that her husband had divorced her. He told her that he had not wanted to marry her but her mother. He threatens her. She called for advice on how to deal with the divorce. She was advised to go to the police station to make a report and to seek assistance from Legal Aid.
- A parent had made four attempts at suicide. She has no friends. Her children are her world and her friends. She is now employed at a catering establishment. A change in attitude is evident in a week. The husband is being uncomfortable. Work has to be done with the husband.

- A child is abused by her stepfather. Her mother supports the stepfather. The child is still being abused. The abuse started when the child was 9 years old. The child is currently 11 years old. The participant finds it difficult to understand why a mother would take the side of the stepfather and criminalize the child. The mother is in the next room when the child is being abused. A 6-year-old is in the home.

Discussion: The social worker was urged to ensure that the Child Care and Protection Agency is informed and that the investigation is followed through.

- A grandmother brought a child who was burnt on both hands by her father because she ate her stepmother's food to the social worker. Another sibling was also burnt because she stole something from a shop. The stepmother has 5 children of her own. These children are not properly fed. The social worker tried to make contact with the father and stepmother without success. She told the grandmother to keep the child. The father went to the grandmother's home and took the child away. The matter was referred to Child Care and Protection Agency. The teacher did not see that the child's hands were burnt. The Schools Welfare Officers need to be involved in similar training.

### **Summary of Key Concerns**

The following is a summary of key concerns emerging from the foregoing discussions.

- There is need to follow up with the Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to the use of circumstantial evidence to bring matters of domestic violence to the attention of the court.
- More work should be done with PTAs to discuss parenting and child abuse as teachers are seeing signs of abuse. The PTA members should be encouraged to monitor what is happening in their communities, especially after cases are reported.
- There is a need to clarify the roles and procedures for the Schools Welfare Officers and the Child Protection Officers. It was reported that one Schools Welfare Officer told a Head Teacher that she has to build a case before the Schools Welfare Officer can take action.
- The recognition that domestic violence is a personal issue and that many of the persons who have to help would have had their own experiences in one way or another.
- There is a need for social workers to have therapeutic support so as to avoid burnout.
- Magistrates are handling domestic violence cases in an inconsistent manner. They are in need of training.

### **Presentation on the Domestic Violence Act**

The presentation was done by Assistant Superintendent Angela Harding who discussed the various aspects of the Act and its provisions.

### Serving of the Domestic Violence Orders

The Domestic Violence Act requires the Magistrate's Court to provide a copy of a Protection Order to the relevant police station. This action is taken where the Magistrate's Court is in close proximity to the Police Station, this being in areas outside of Georgetown. In the case of Georgetown, however, the Clerk of Court receives one copy of the Protection Order from the lawyer representing the complainant and retains that as the record for the Magistrate's Court. As a consequence, the Clerk of Court in Georgetown has not been fulfilling the mandate of his office. It was acknowledged that the Domestic Violence Act is the only legislation of its kind in the way in which the Magistrate's Courts are expected to deal with a Protection Order.

It was recommended that the Clerk of Court in Georgetown should provide the Brickdam Police Station where the Commander of "A" Division is located, with a copy of the Protection Order for dispatch to the relevant police station. This would parallel the action taken with respect to the serving of Warrants. To comply with this action, the Clerk of Court would need to obtain two copies of the Order from the lawyer.

The response of the police to inquiries by social workers and court staff is sometimes unsatisfactory. In such cases, social workers and court staff should the Officers-in-Charge of the police station, the Sub-divisional Commanders or the Divisional Commander to seek resolution of the matter.

### **Experience with the Protocol: Role Play and Plenary Discussion**

Working in four groups, participants analyzed a scenario and represented it through a role play. They discussed critical issues as these related to the victims, perpetrators, other characters and the service providers. The scenarios appear in Annex 7.

#### Scenario 1: Gloria (woman going to Magistrate's Court for assistance)

The key issues which were identified in the presentation were:

- The pressure from others to remain in the abusive situation has to be countered with information and other supportive interventions.
- More engagement needs take place with faith-based organizations to ensure that victims of domestic violence are not encouraged to "pray and stay."
- If one officer does not respond appropriately, don't give up. Go to another who may be willing to assist or raise the matter with higher levels of authority.

#### Scenario 2: Amanda (woman going to Probation Officer for assistance; the Probation Officer knows her husband)

- The perpetrator may be well known and a "big one," so nobody wants to help. There was no resolution of this issue since many of the participants felt powerless.
- The fear for personal safety at times prevents service providers from taking action when the perpetrators are thought or known to be publicly violent without impunity, e.g., some members of the security forces.
- The issue of referral re-surfaced and the group agreed that they should not refer without some personal contact to ensure that the client was assisted and that there is adequate documentation when doing the referral.

#### Scenario 3: Gaitree (Going to police for them to warn husband, and then referred to social worker)

- The participants agreed that if the woman decides she wants to go back, they would discuss safety planning and let her know that a warning might is not enough to stop the abuse.
- Social workers and others service providers should deal with burnout and frustration and learn how to separate self from client's issues and when to refer.
- Participants were encouraged not to promise any person "You ain't got worry about nothing. I gun take care of everything. I gun look after you." since there are limitations as to how the assistance could be provided and unreal expectations could be established.

#### Scenario 4: Edith (suspects her granddaughter is being sexually abused)

- Participants talked about how disclosures of child sexual abuse are handled, and how children are sometimes intimidated further and conflicted by the various threats – the abuser will say that bad things will happen, the person who is trying to help would say “I gun beat you.”
- There is a need to use empathetic language when speaking to the child and to be careful of suggestive language.
- The need to support non-abusive caregivers who are dealing with shock and might want to blame the child.
- The need to understand that the child is a client, and that the non-abusing caregiver(s) would also need support.
- The participants noted that they were careful to let the child know when the police were going to be involved. There was a discussion about what happens when there are no female ranks to accompany client for medical; the recommendation was to call the police hotline for assistance or to consider using rural constables and community police who would be willing to go to court to give evidence.
- The definition of sexual violence appearing in the protocol was discussed briefly.

#### **Domestic Violence Policy**

Due to time constraints, the Head of the Domestic Violence Policy Unit, Mr. Abbas Mancey, did a short presentation on the Domestic Violence Policy and the role of the National Oversight Committee.

#### **Participants’ Final Reflections**

The participants shared their views of their workshop experience. They completed an evaluation form which is analysed by USAID. Their oral reflections appear below.

- Most of my expectations were met. However, knowledge is good so you never stop learning. I am glad that my knowledge can be enhanced as society is evolving. I am open to extra material.
- Never too big to learn. Whatever I learnt I will take back to my station and put it into practice.
- I am more informed and enlightened. I think that Janice and Vidya did a wonderful job. I also hope to interact with other stakeholders so that I could be further enlightened.
- I didn't want to come. But when I came and we had the discussion, I realized how important it was for me to be here. What I learnt I will take it back and share with my colleagues.
- I am more knowledgeable about domestic violence and sexual violence.
- It was a good session. At first I was a bit confused about the whole thing. I have to read up on it. I will share it with other persons.
- It will enhance my counselling and I will be able to network with my colleagues.
- I will take it back to my community and have sessions there.
- I am new to domestic violence. I have been recently employed and been working along with Abbas. This training was enlightening for me. I didn't know much about domestic violence. The session has given me the knowledge to work.
- I was looking forward to a representative from the DPP's Chambers addressing the Sexual Offences Act.

- This has taught me something. I am not a skit person but I enjoyed it. It was a good experience for me.
- What I like about this particular gathering is that we were able to tell each other about our work. We were able to sort things out. I am disappointed about the Sexual Offences Act.
- When I came the first day, one of my expectations was that I would gain new knowledge. The intervention on how to process the orders, that was enlightening for me. As a gazetted social worker, I will do lots more for the clients. I have networked with the Clerk at Vigilance so he will see many more clients from me.
- This will help me since some of the parents are involved. I will be able to share more information.
- Friendly and relaxed atmosphere. I feel better after all the interaction. This has awakened in me some of the things I may have forgotten. It made me feel better about the police. I have a better picture of the police. How the policemen treat the men [who make reports] is not appropriate.
- Some of the knowledge is not new. It was bringing back to memory what you would have known. This Protection Order thing is still confusing for me. The knowledge was appropriate for this day and time.
- I didn't want to come since I had similar training. I've learnt a little more. I want to network with others.
- I learnt new things today even as a police. Some things the police can do I learnt and I'm grateful for that.
- I wanted to hear what the others had to say. It will help me fill in the gaps.
- This programme is very informative. This is my first domestic violence workshop. I have knowledge so I can go back and deal with my clients more professionally.
- I enjoyed the method of instruction. All in all, domestic violence is a habit. Take out the "h" and you're left with "a bit". Take out the "a" and you're left with "bit". Take out the "b" and you're left with "it".
- I appreciated that I was able to benefit from most of it. I learnt so much from the cross conversation from one agency to another. It helped me to understand the challenges. I am glad that persons were so honest.
- More than having the protocols, each agency having an understanding what the others do. The aspect of self. The interaction was richer than I thought it would be.
- How issues are dealt with by various institutions came out in the role plays. They demonstrated the realities of living and functioning of organizations.

## **Closing Remarks**

Ms Dhanmattie Sohail expressed thanks on behalf of USAID to all the participants.

## **Recommendations**

### Implementation of the Domestic Violence Act

1. The Domestic Violence Policy Unit should discuss with the Registrar the mechanism for the serving of the orders and monitoring this system to ensure that the police receive copies of the orders from the Court as mandated in Section 31 of the Domestic Violence Act.
2. The courts should ensure that the application forms are available, and staff know how to and do assist complainants in making applications, even though many applications are done through Legal Aid.



3. The Domestic Violence Policy Unit should discuss with the Chancellor the training of Magistrates, especially as regards the use of affidavits and the need for victims to use the services of lawyers.

### Police

1. Subdivisions should identify female community police and rural constables who could assist victims and understand the rules for giving evidence and court procedures.
2. The public should be encouraged to deal with the Officer-in-Charge of a police station or more senior officers if there are concerns about how the police are dealing with domestic violence matters.
3. The Commissioner of Police or Divisional Commanders should issue proper guidelines for the posting of the Protection Orders in force so that the police on duty would have easy access to those orders in case there are breaches.

### Inter-agency Collaboration

1. The Guyana Police Force should consider initiating the formation of a committee/mechanism in Sub-Divisional level to foster collaboration among key stakeholders such as health care system, Neighbourhood Democratic Councils and civil society organizations. This should lead to more appropriate responses and better results.
2. The Schools Welfare Division and the Child Care and Protection Agency should develop a protocol to enable effective and consistent responses to child abuse.

### Future Training

1. Training should continue to be offered over two non-consecutive days. This would enable the participants to apply some of what they have learnt and report on results and/or challenges on the second day.
2. Discussions with participating agencies should emphasize the need for the same persons to attend both days of training.
3. Consideration should be given to in-house training in shorter period to enable all staff of the different agencies to participate. Since some agencies are short of staff, persons who attended on Day 1 did not participate on Day 2. Those agencies were represented by a different person.

### **Concluding Comments**

The objectives of the workshop were satisfied as they relate to domestic violence. However, sexual violence was not thoroughly explored. Therefore, the discussion on sexual violence and sexual offences should be offered to those persons who attended this workshop.

The approach of offering training to staff of different agencies was excellent. It allowed the development of greater appreciation of the work of each agency, reasons for some actions and the need for inter-agency collaboration. It also enabled clarification of misconceptions, sharing of appropriate strategies for dealing with domestic violence issues and the offering of recommendations aimed at improving communication and services provided.

## **Annex 1: Agenda**

### **Day 1**

Registration (people are encouraged to think about their expectations of the two days)  
Welcome and Opening Remarks – USAID, UNFPA, Ministry of Human Services & Social Security  
Introduction of Facilitators and Participants  
Objectives and Process  
Participants' Expectations  
Self and Personal Attitudes to Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence

### **BREAK**

Self and Personal Attitudes to Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence (cont'd)  
Nature and Dynamics of Domestic Violence

### **LUNCH**

Experiences of and Challenges Faced by Participants Related to Domestic Violence  
Dealing with Perpetrators  
Participants' Feedback

### **Day 2**

Opening Remarks  
Introduction of Participants  
Review of Day 1 and Reflections  
Review of the Domestic Violence Act

### **LUNCH**

Examination of the Protocol to Guide Domestic Violence Interventions  
Mechanism for Monitoring the Use of the Protocols  
Brief on the Domestic Violence Policy  
Participants' Feedback and Evaluation  
Closing Remarks

## Annex 2: List of Participants

Name	Agency	Location	Position	Day 1	Day 2
Anthony, Coleen	Probation & Social Services	Georgetown	Officer	✓	✓
Atherly, Sharon	Magistrate's Court	Georgetown	Legal Clerk	✓	-
Beharry, Kapildey	Magistrate's Court	Vigilance	Legal Clerk	✓	-
Brusche, Clement	Probation & Social Services	New Amsterdam	Officer	✓	✓
Caesar, Shallon	Domestic Violence Unit	Georgetown	Admin/Research Asst	✓	✓
Chase, Kean	Every Child Guyana	Georgetown	Counsellor	✓	✓
Choy, Ann	Probation & Social Services	New Amsterdam	Officer	✓	-
Deonarine, Roopa	Magistrate Court	Vreed-en-Hoop	Legal Clerk	✓	-
Douglas, Kaiesha	Every Child Guyana	Georgetown	Counsellor	✓	✓
Fordyce, Monica	Help and Shelter	Georgetown	Counsellor	✓	✓
Griffith, Andrew	Guyana Police Force	Turkeyen	Corporal	✓	-
Harding, Angela	Guyana Police Force	Credit Union	Asst. Supt.	✓	✓
Jobe, Keith	Guyana Police Force	Linden	Constable	✓	-
Lagan, Hymattie	Women's Affairs Bureau	Georgetown	Administrator	✓	-
Mansell, Stephen	Guyana Police Force	Fort Wellington	Dep. Supt.	✓	✓
Matthews, Orlene	Probation & Social Services	West Demerara	Officer	✓	✓
Mickle, Arnold	Probation & Social Services	Georgetown	Asst. Chief Social Worker	✓	-
Munroe, Claudia	Probation & Social Services	Georgetown	Officer	✓	✓
Nicholson, Colin	Women Across Differences	East Coast Demerara	Teacher	✓	✓
Nunes, Kenneth	Probation & Social Services	East Coast Demerara	Officer	✓	✓
October, Eglá	Probation & Social Services	Corentyne	Officer	✓	✓
Pilgrim, Roger	Guyana Police Force	Linden	Cadet Officer	✓	✓
Ramanand, Silochanie	Probation & Social Services	Anna Regina	Officer	✓	-
Roland, Anthony	Guyana Police Force	Linden	Constable	✓	-
Sancho, Yvette	Guyana Police Force	Criminal Investigation Dept	Officer in Charge, CRO	✓	✓
Sookdeo, Goolsaran	Magistrate's Court	Georgetown	Legal Clerk	✓	-
Stephen, Yonette	Guyana Police Force	Felix Austin Police College Region 6	Inspector	✓	✓
Thomas, Marva	Help and Shelter	Georgetown	Counsellor	✓	✓
Whall, Judy	Probation & Social Services	Triumph	Officer	✓	✓
Shaw, Karen	Help & Shelter	Georgetown	Counsellor	-	✓
Talbot, Sylvia	Guyana Police Force	Bartica	Constable	-	✓
Phoenix, Donette	Guyana Police Force	Bartica	Corporal	-	✓
Imran, Mohamed	Supreme Court	Georgetown	Clerk of Court	-	✓
Bacchus, M. Z.	Magistrate's Court	Georgetown	Clerk of Court	-	✓
Wilson, Sandra	Magistrate's Court	Georgetown	Snr Legal Clerk	-	✓
Duke, Collis	Guyana Police Force	Bartica	Constable	-	✓
Persaud, Khemraj	Supreme Court	Vigilance	Clerk of Court	-	✓
Boyce, Marva	Probation & Social Services	West Demerara	Officer	-	✓

### Annex 3: Participants' Expectations – Day 1

- “To have a wealth of knowledge in Domestic Violence and to know the various ways in which I can assist persons affected by the same”
- “Increase my knowledge of my roles and responsibilities”
- “More knowledge, a clear understanding of what is domestic violence and what is sexual violence, forms of domestic violence, more about the shelter at Help & Shelter, and become better able to handle cases of violence”
- “Find alternative ways to assist persons who are abused. To learn new information on processing DV matters”
- “At the end of the seminar, it is expected that I will be better able to deal with issues of DV and be able to impart my knowledge to my peers, so that they may be able to deal with DV matters effectively”
- “To increase my knowledge and to better understand my role to respond appropriately to cases of sexual and domestic violence”
- “To learn more about DV and develop effective ways of assisting victims of domestic and sexual violence”
- “What should be done when a case of sexual violence is reported to a counsellor by a child”
- “To receive new knowledge about sexual and domestic violence that would assist me in better delivery service to clients and also establish new networks”
- “The duty of a police man when domestic violence is reported at the police station; how can a victim of DV be protected; is the DVA help men who have been abused by women; what guarantee someone who has been a victim of DV be protected”
- “To learn from others about their difficulties and have a broad understanding of DV dynamics”
- “To obtain a wider knowledge/understanding about Sexual & Domestic Violence, and to use what I have learnt”
- “At the end of the workshop that I will have more knowledge and be empowered in dealing with victims of domestic violence”
- “I expected to be learned and educated in relation to domestic violence”
- “To have more knowledge on how to deal with persons facing DV”
- “To be empowered with information to be better able to deal with persons who are victims of DV”
- “To be able to really help the victims in another way apart from counselling; to truly empower victims to help them understand that there is home for them, they should not just stay helpless in abusive relationships”
- “To discuss scenarios in relation to sexual and DV and to deal with them; to learn the effects on DV on the family, especially the single parent family; to get recommendations on how to curb domestic and sexual violence in the household;”
- “To get a better sense of the protocols; to learn from the participants; to be clear about the sexual offences legislation”
- “That I'll be more informed as regards to protocols in relation to sexual and domestic violence”
- “To be well informed about domestic violence and how to help persons who are physically abusive”
- “To learn more about domestic violence and to help persons who are victims of DV”
- “By the end of the workshop there will be a defined protocol enabling smooth relation between staff of judiciary and related agencies in the processing of DV cases”
- “At the end of this training programme I should be in a better position or better equipped to deal with victims of DV; to assist in changing negative behaviour”

- “Networking , meeting with new people How I can use the new laws to help clients, and to learn about limitations, penalties”
- “To learn more about DV and how to help persons or victims of DV”
- “Acquire more skills and knowledge on the aspects of DV:
- “Create collaboration with other agencies in the fight against DV and sexual violence”
- “Have a better understanding of the laws of Guyana as it relates to DV and sexual violence.
- “Get additional info so I can better help individuals I am working with who may suffer from abuse
- “An overall greater understanding”

## **Annex 4: Topics Related to Self and Personal Perspectives on Sexual and Domestic Violence**

### Searching Questions

Who am I?

What do I know about myself?

What don't I know about myself?

How can I learn more about myself?

How does self-perception affect my relationship to and expectations of others?

### Some Defining Characteristics

Sex

Gender

Age

Birth order

Values

Attitudes

Expectations

## **Annex 5: Vignettes for Examination of Personal Attitudes to Sexual Violence and Domestic Violence**

Martha raised her grandson and two granddaughters from the time their mother was incarcerated for trafficking in drugs. Now that she is in her late 70s and has had a stroke resulting in limited mobility, Martha was depending on her grandson and one granddaughter for her care. However, her grandson often demanded money from her and neither he nor his sister paid much attention to Martha's food needs or hygiene. Martha was hospitalized for one week and no one came to visit her.

\*\*\*\*\*

Jeremy and Angel were lovers for the past four years. Angel had recently become attracted to someone else but didn't know how to break the news to Jeremy. He found himself avoiding Jeremy more and more but always said that everything was all right when Jeremy asked why he was behaving like that. One night, Jeremy had sex with Angel even though Angel said he wasn't interested and showed much resistance.

\*\*\*\*\*

Azeez appeared to be a loving husband and father to Aisha and their three daughters. Aisha noticed that their 11-year-old daughter was becoming rude to her father and was very upset while Azeez only laughed when she talked to him about the situation. When she was 14 years old, Aisha blurted out to her mother that she hated her father, that he had sexually molested her over the past three years and had threatened to hurt her and her sisters if she told anyone. Aisha beat her daughter claiming that she was lying on her father.

\*\*\*\*\*

Bibi, who had been married for 30 years, told a group of women that she had taken her licks from her husband for all those years and never complained to anyone. She said that, at her wedding, the Pandit had said that a man must beat his wife from time to time. She also said that her parents had told her that she couldn't go back to them once she was married. Bibi told the group it was too late for her to leave her husband and she would put up with the abuse until one of them died.

\*\*\*\*\*

Gregory was a hard worker, who was appreciated by his employer. Suddenly, Gregory began coming to work late and seemed distracted. When his employer spoke to him about the change, Gregory told him that his wife was very ill and he had to help more around the house and with the children. one day, Gregory came to work with a big bruise on his forehead. He told his employer that he had fallen down the stairs.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thelma went to a social service agency to seek help since her husband was preventing her from seeing her children and slandering her name. The social worker told her that she must have done him something for him to treat her like that. She asked her what kind of woman was she who couldn't satisfy her husband. As soon as Thelma left the office, the social worker called the husband whom she knew to tell him what had transpired, that she had dealt with Thelma and he should not worry.

\*\*\*\*\*

Arnold went to the police station to make a domestic violence report. As soon as he began relating his story, the police rank began to laugh. He called out to his colleagues, saying that a half-a-man was complaining that his wife abused him. He told Arnold that he should be ashamed to be making a report and should have hit "the woman" a good blow. He said that would shut her up. Arnold wanted to pursue the matter but felt ashamed and left the police station.

\*\*\*\*\*

Gail was tired of hearing her neighbours abusing their children and the father abusing the mother. She wanted to do something but was afraid to speak with them. One day, Gail thought that someone was going to die so she called the police. When the police arrived, the noise stopped. The police spoke with the father who said that everything was all right in the house. The police warned him that if they received another complaint, he would be arrested. Thinking that the police had left, the father shouted that he was going to deal with the "nosey Parker" who had called the police. He said that he was the man for the house and nobody could tell him how to run is family.



## Annex 6: Key Learning from Day 1

- Entrapment – the different things that keep people in an abusive relationship.
- Self – who am I. I have to sort out myself before I can help others. Help the survivors that they come first. The rest of the family cannot function without them.
- Too many of us are hooked in a world defined by others. We need to know ourselves and define ourselves.
- Participation of men – men are becoming more aware and not sitting on the sideline looking on.
- Each person's defining characteristics – the significance of attitude in counselling and working with people. Most of the time we want to see things happen. When this doesn't happen, we become frustrated. Learnt that we have to deal with self-determination and help people become empowered.
- Understanding that I am the most important person in my life.
- Colleagues learnt that the police don't just send clients to them. They learnt that the police cannot take action if the person says that he/she doesn't want to take action. There is a need to network more. If one police station doesn't respond appropriately, call another for assistance.
- Looking at the process of the workshop since this is to be replicated in other areas. Some young women indicated that they had moved from where they were when they came in. One said that for the first time she understood that it takes more to move out of an abusive situation.
- Cycle of violence; multi-agency approach to domestic violence. There is need for doctors, nurses, the Guyana Prison Service, Guyana Fire Service and the Guyana Defence Force to be involved in working to reduce domestic violence.
- Health workers need to be on sessions like these. It is difficult to prosecute DV cases when medical reports are not properly completed. Sometimes, there is difficulty uplifting the medical report.
- Self-perception, self-assumption and self-presumption; need to divorce ourselves from making assumptions and presumptions about people.
- Learnt that women try to leave 19 times.
- Believed that DV was beating and verbal abuse. Learnt that financial abuse and xx is DV. Deal with many situations where women are only given limited \$ enough for them to buy food and get the children to school.
- Importance of individual counselling. Used to do couples counselling. Breaking point – persons coming to you time after time remaining in the abusive situation and this would hurt as a counsellor. Realized that when a person reaches breaking point, he/she would make the decision.
- Introspection – when I went home reflected on the question – do you know your self. Began the journey of self-understanding and am still on that journey. Began to explore my values and beliefs.
- Self-perception and how it affects relationships. Have begun to make some changes re counselling and clients.

## **Annex 7: Scenarios for Role Play**

### **Scenario 1: Gloria**

Gloria had been abused by her husband for several years and had reached the point where she felt she had to get out of the home. She had listened to her relatives and friends who told her that it was her responsibility to keep the home together.

When her arm was broken, Gloria had said that she had fallen down the stairs. She had accepted blame for all her husband had accused her of over the years. She had even gone for counselling with her pastor on more than one occasion but always left unsatisfied.

Gloria attended a workshop on domestic violence in her community. At the end of the workshop, she asked the facilitator for more information on how someone (a friend) could get out of an abusive relationship. Armed with the information and brochures she received, Gloria began planning for the day when she could leave.

That day arrived and Gloria went to the Magistrate's Court to apply for a Protection Order. The Clerk told her that she would have to get a lawyer to do that for her as that wasn't her job. Another person who had gone to the office on another matter overheard the Clerk and said that she was wrong. He said that the Clerk was supposed to assist Gloria. The Clerk replied that he didn't know what he was talking about and he should mind his own business.

The man insisted that it was the Clerk's duty to assist Gloria. He refused to let the matter rest and asked another Clerk to intervene. The second Clerk said that the staff of the Magistrate's Court should assist with the completion of the application and offered to help.

- How has Gloria's abusive experience developed?
- What action should be taken with respect to the first Clerk?
- How should the second Clerk proceed to assist Gloria?
- What additional information could the second Clerk provide Gloria?

### **Scenario 2: Amanda**

Amanda was advised to go to the Probation and Social Services Department for assistance. She met with an officer who listened to her story attentively then asked her why she wanted to leave her husband. Amanda said that she was tired of being physically abused, called names and denied the opportunity to have a job. She pointed out that she has a degree from the University of Guyana but her husband, a policeman, doesn't want her to work, is often away from home and that different women call her home either to speak with her husband or to abuse her. She added that she had already told the officer that she was afraid for her life and was concerned about the welfare of her children.

The officer said that she knew Amanda's husband and that he is a good man. She told her that she should know that it is better to stay with the man you know than to leave for what you don't know. She asked Amanda if she wanted her to speak with her husband to find out what was going on. Amanda replied that she hadn't gone there for that. She said that she had been to the Police Welfare Department and the officer there said that she couldn't do anything about the situation.

- What was Amanda's life like that led her to approach the Probation and Social Services Officer?
- How should the officer proceed after Amanda comes to see her?
- What action should the officer take since she knew Amanda's husband?
- How can Amanda be further helped in this situation?

### **Scenario 3: Gaitree**

Gaitree went to the police station to make a domestic violence report. She related her story but told the police rank that she didn't want any trouble. She said that all she wanted was for the police to warn her partner. Gaitree had done this several times and the police rank was reluctant to take her report. He told her to go home, cool off and make up with her partner. As Gaitree was leaving the police station, another police rank recognized her and asked why she was there and what had happened.

Upon learning that Gaitree was told to go home, the second rank asked her to accompany him into the station and proceeded to deal with her matter. Afterwards, he told her to go to the Social Worker or Help & Shelter for help.

Gaitree decided to go to see the Social Worker and said that the police had sent her. Not knowing why the police had sent her, the Social Worker told her that the police were always doing this rather than handling the matter themselves. She was frustrated because she felt that the police were dumping on her all the time and that she had other more important things to do.

- How should the second police rank deal with Gaitree?
- What should be done about the first police rank?
- How should the Social Worker proceed with Gaitree's case?
- What follow up action should the Social Worker take with respect to the police?
- How could Help & Shelter assist in such a case?

### **Scenario 4: Edith**

Eddie often took care of his grandchildren when they came home from school since his wife was still working. He was fond of the children and enjoyed playing with them. He began looking at his granddaughter differently when she was around five years old. Jenny loved to sit on Eddie's lap and play with his chin and the hair on his chest. From time to time, she would tell him she loved him.

Eddie became aroused, particularly when Jenny reached out to him. He began fondling her breasts and progressed to her vagina. He told her that this was their little game and that she should not tell anyone. Eddie continued doing this for a year or so than moved on to having intercourse with Jenny.

Jenny's grandmother, Edith, became suspicious and questioned Jenny who said that Eddie wasn't doing what Grandma said. Edith was still uncomfortable and when to a Social Worker to discuss her fears.

- How should the Social Worker progress with Edith?
- Which other agency should she interact with and how?