

UN WOMEN MULTI-COUNTRY OFFICE - CARIBBEAN

HELP & SHELTER PUBLIC EDUCATION & COUNSELLING PROJECT **SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT 1 OCTOBER TO 31 DECEMBER 2014**

1. Project Title & Number: Public Education & Counselling Project, BAR/PCA/14UNWOMEN/03
2. Reporting Period / Implementing Agency / Country: October to December 2014, Help & Shelter, Guyana
3. Project Outcomes
 - Increased capacity of communities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence and child abuse in communities;
 - Changed attitudes and behaviours in communities in relation to gender-based violence and child abuse;
 - Survivors/victims of gender-based violence and child abuse are empowered to develop necessary coping skills, access support services and build confidence and self-esteem so as to rebuild lives free from violence and the threat of violence.
4. Progress Under the Reporting Period

A. COUNSELLING

The counselling (face-to-face and hotline) activities continued during the reporting period with four counsellors working 75% of their time up to October. When a court support counsellor proceeded on leave that was extended to no pay leave for 2 months, the others worked full time for the remaining period.

Output Indicator: 360 persons provided with counselling and referral services.

Project Outcomes

Survivors/victims of gender-based violence and child abuse are empowered to develop necessary coping skills, access support services and build confidence and self-esteem so as to rebuild lives free from violence and the threat of violence.

Results

- A total of 72% of all adult female face to face clients and 69% of all adult male clients experienced some form of spousal abuse with physical abuse being the most prevalent for females and physical and non- physical being the most prevalent for males. Intra family abuse was experienced by 25% of female face to face clients and 26% of male clients with psychological and non- physical being the most prevalent among females and psychological being most prevalent among males. One (1) female experienced intra family rape. Among hotline callers 54% of females and 1 male caller experienced spousal abuse; 36% of female hotline callers also experienced intra family abuse.

- Within the period October to December 2014, a total of 70 clients, 66 adult women and 26 adult men received face to face, hotline and court support services
- During the same period 4 female children also received face to face counselling services
- A total of 54 referrals were made for clients with referrals for legal aid & court services topping the list. Other referrals made were to the police, probation & welfare services and employment services
- Court support services, including counselling, attending court hearings and educating clients and family members about court processes, rules and procedures benefitted 13 clients, 11 adult women and 2 adult men.
- In addition 7 women including 10 of their dependent children were also referred to H&S Ixora Shelter for battered women through Help & Shelter's Crisis Centre.

5. Challenges and Opportunities:

The counsellors had no major challenges.

6. Results

Below are examples of cases seen during the reporting period and outcomes

- A 17year-old teenager was referred to H&S for assistance on behalf of another NGO. The 17 year-old was given a warrant to serve on her partner for child maintenance. H&S counsellor accompanied client to the La Grange Police Station and spoke to the ASP who requested a police constable to accompany client to the residence of client's partner for the warrant to be served. On arrival, the officer was told the defendant was not at home, but was expected to return shortly. Information and a summons was given to the defendant's mother indicating the date the defendant should attend court. The 17 year-old client was grateful for the help she received from H&S and the La Grange Police Station. Client case information was given to H&S court support counsellor to follow up.
- Client's partner neglected her for five years, took the money from out of their joint savings account, migrated to Suriname and started a new family. During those years client's partner never supported her, and whenever she tried to contact him he ignored her telephone calls. In the last quarter of this year, client received a call from her former partner saying he was sick, in hospital, about to do surgery and wanted to ask her forgiveness and if it was okay for him to return if he survived the surgery. Client agreed to this request and partner returned after one month. However, the very night of his return they ended up at the police station. Client said ever since the return of her partner, life has been very stressful as he wants her out of the home that she developed after he left. Counsellor discussed the DVA with client and was referred to the Guyana Legal Aid Clinic and the Magistrate Court. She was successful in getting a lawyer to represent her in her DVA application and having the DVA protection order enforced against her partner who was also placed on a 2 year bond to keep the peace. Two clients were granted DVA protection orders against their partners after they were referred to the Magistrate Court for filing of DVA applications. One of the clients, who was granted her PO, discussed with counsellor the possibility of building her own home on a plot of land that she received from Ministry of Housing. Client

was referred to Ministry of Housing for assistance in accessing the Turn Key home offers. Client was also encouraged to inquire at one of the commercial banks about loans for house construction.

- Counsellor accompanied a client, who was severely chopped by her reputed husband, from the Georgetown Hospital to the Ixora Shelter. Client was fortunate to survive this brutal assault as her ex-partner had chopped her mother, son and male friend; who was at the home at the time, to death. Counsellor was called by the social worker at the hospital to take client into H&S care for safe keeping, due to the fact, that at the time, her partner was on the run.
- Hotline caller disclosed that she was living in an abusive relationship, but due to financial constraints experienced as a university student and having to pay back a credit union loan she took to purchase a car for their convenience, she stays and tries to cope. Client was reassured that she does not have to remain in the relationship and endure her partner's abuse in order to complete her studies. The DVA was discussed with her ; she was encouraged to seek further counselling and given direction to H&S Crisis Centre.
- A client legally married and living with her husband explained that a previous reputed husband whom she lived with for 9 years and from which union she had a son and a daughter, attacked her and threatened her life. Counsellor advised the client to apply for a Protection Order and to also report the matter to the police station. Since this client resided in a different administrative region of Guyana counsellor referred her to a nearby Domestic Violence Counselling Centre for counselling and court support as she was not aware of the existence of that NGO and its services.

B. Public Awareness in identified Communities-

Output indicators

Estimated 1800 persons (1300 women and girls, 500 men and boys) in communities directly and indirectly reached through community social mobilization efforts focused on the prevention of gender based violence and child abuse and the availability of social support services.

Results

Awareness sessions on GBV were conducted in the communities in Bell West, Vive La Force, Canal # 2 and Patentia.

This table represents the target groups and the number of sessions held with them.

Names of location CBOs/FBO'/schools health centres/
H/centres: Good Intent H/C; Wales Dispensary; Canal #2 Polder H/C; Belle West H/C ;Vive La Force H/C
Schools: Patentia Primary; Wales Primary; Vive La Force Primary; Patentia Nursery
CBO: Belle West policing group; Patentia;; Vive La Force; Canal Polder (Belle West)
FBO's: Free & Easy; Church of Christ

Nos. and sex of participants

Age range	12-18		19-25		26-40		41-60		60+		
Sex	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	17	M	
Participants	18	10	40	43	66	75	37	43	18	11	

Project Activity: Reproduction and dissemination of IEC materials to community members, schools, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, youth groups, police and community policing groups

Outputs: Dissemination of IEC materials including posters and brochures will increase awareness and knowledge of gender-based violence and child abuse.

Output indicators: Increased knowledge & awareness of GBV and child abuse issues including accessing of available GBV services.

- **Target** - approximately 2,000 persons reached through dissemination of IEC materials
- **Target** - 25 persons accessed GBV prevention services

Leaflets/posters//other ICT materials distributed name and quantity	Activity & location (w/shops; house-to-house awareness sessions etc.)
Domestic Violence Resource Brochure	50+
Children & Drugs	150+
Anger Management	100+
Gender Based Violence	80+
Domestic Violence Act	300+
Sexual Offences Act	200+
Protection of Children Act	200+

Name of referral service	# of females referred(indicate if adult or child)	# of males referred
Help & Shelter	2 adults; 1 child	1 adult
Child Protection Agency	2 adults	
Guyana Legal Aid Clinic		1 adult

Activity: community level dialogues on gender based violence

Outputs: Groups including CBO, FBO, schools, health centres and other key stakeholders sensitized to understand the dynamics of gender-based violence and child abuse and empowered to take action for its prevention through community social mobilization initiatives.

Knowledge and access to available support services for survivors/victims of gender-based violence and child abuse

Output indicators: Number of persons in communities directly and indirectly reached through community social mobilization efforts focused on the prevention of gender based violence and child abuse and the availability of social support services.

Results

Community Outreach

A community outreach session was conducted on the 18th October, 2014 in the Patentia area. The session commenced at 4:00 pm and concluded at 5:45pm. A number of households were visited and the team interacted with over 35 individuals throughout the community. During interactions persons spoke of their personal experiences as well as the problems the community was experiencing. The major issues/ challenges identified by community members were pregnancy, suicide and the use of illicit drugs and alcohol particularly among teenagers. Many persons denied any prevalence of domestic violence occurring in the community, while others opined that even though it exists, those affected choose to cover it, rather than confront the issue and seek help. Persons also complained of the poor response of the police to reports. While engaging the men, it was raised by some that there exists no justice for men in Guyana and in spite of what was said or what organizations try to do, this situation was not going to change. While many persons were aware of H & S, yet some were not informed of our services or that of other helping agencies. Persons were informed of available services to address various issues that were discussed and a confirmed six (6) persons were encouraged to visit Help & Shelter for counselling, while two men were encouraged to seek the services of alcohol anonymous. Men were also encouraged to attend the male engagement group sessions at Help & Shelter.

KAP Survey

The Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey was conducted in the month of October, there was a total of 76 respondents which included 66 females and 10 males between ages 18 – 55+. The survey was conducted in Belle west – Canal # 2 Polder, Vive La Force, Patentia and Sisters Village. During the interviews it was revealed that some persons interviewed were experiencing domestic problems, these individuals were encouraged to seek the services of Help & Shelter.

Male Engagement Group Sessions

These sessions are conducted at the office of Help & Shelter for perpetrators of domestic violence who are referred by the court. They are engaged in a total of seven (7) compulsory education sessions over a seven week period. During the reporting period nine 9 new persons were referred to the sessions and are presently engaged in the process. There was a two week break in the sessions due to the holiday season. Sessions will re-commence on the 8th January 2015.

IDEVAW

In observance of the 16 days of activism, the documentary “Break the Silence, Stop the Violence” was shown in Vive – la – force, Free and Easy and Belle west, this was followed by discussions surrounding domestic violence. It was shown to males only, females only and one combined group.

A statement was prepared and featured in the Stabroek Newspaper and was also sent to our partners.

A group of 40 women from QUALFON – an international call centre, visited Help & Shelter on 25th November 2014. The coordinator engaged them with a discussion on DV and allowed them to talk freely about their experiences on DV.

Workshop for Police Officers

On December 11–12, 2014, H & S collaborated with the guidance and counselling department of the Ministry of Education department, Region 3 to conduct a two day domestic violence training workshop for police officers. Twenty three (23) persons attended which included; the divisional commander, officers attached to the police welfare department, other ranks and members of the community policing groups within the region. The training focused primarily on creating awareness of the effects of domestic violence on the family, issues of the law and promoting and enhancing relationships between police officers and community member.

Other Activities, such as awareness sessions, were conducted at the health centres, community centres, churches, residents and PTA's in the target communities during the period.

Assessment of Activities

1. How did your distribution of IEC materials increase knowledge & awareness of the laws, GBV & Child Abuse?

- Materials that were distributed contained relevant information on the issues that were being discussed. Copies of the resource materials were also given to the participants to peruse in their own time.
- Through these materials, many persons for the first time were made aware of these laws, how they work and their responsibilities in upholding same.
- Clarity was given to misconceptions of laws and policies and advice given where necessary.
- Participants are more aware of how the laws can be used to aid solutions to problems and prevent fatalities

2. How did your distribution of IEC materials lead to referrals for GBV & Child Abuse services?

- Included in the materials were contact telephone numbers for H & S, and participants were encouraged to call or visit the office if further clarification or assistance was required for any matter that may have arisen from the discussions.
- Content of materials distributed was discussed with the participants and they were allowed to ask questions and share their views and opinions from personal experiences and examples from within their respective communities. Based upon the discussions persons were encouraged to seek help/assistance and were directed to helping agencies.

3. Do you know if person(s) referred accessed services?

Of the persons referred to H & S, reports suggest that two (2) women and one (1) man have so far accessed counselling at H & S.

And what were the outcomes?

- One client has since filed for a protection order and is presently a resident at the Ixora Shelter. Her partner is presently being counselled through H & S and is also attending male engagement group sessions.
- The other client is also a resident of the Ixora Shelter, where she is receiving counselling. She also successfully applied for a restraining order against her partner.
- The male who sought counselling required legal assistance to address the problems he was encountering and was encouraged to seek the assistance of a private attorney or visit the legal aid clinic.

4. Topic(s) Discussed

- Gender-based violence
- Domestic violence forms and causes
- Domestic Violence Act
- Sexual Offences Act
- Protection Of Children's Act
- Services and helping agencies

5. Tools/materials/ electronic media, educational curricula and participatory techniques used

The techniques used were small group discussions, one to one interactions and question and answers. Information discussed was gathered from H & S resources (manuals, brochures, etc.), print media, documentary, personal knowledge and knowledge of the group and individuals.

How topics discussed have sensitized participants in understanding the laws and dynamics of gender-based violence and child abuse

- About 80% of persons indicated that it was the first time they were ever exposed to the information and articles which were covered within the various Acts presented.
- Persons are better informed of the provisions under the various acts.
- They are more aware of who can get help under the laws, where and how to access help they need and how their rights may have been violated.
- Coming out from the sessions, we have had three persons seeking counselling at the Crisis Service Centre thus far. Feedback from individuals indicates that such information is important and is needed in the communities. There is some degree of willingness to assist in organizing groups for us to conduct sessions.
- Family members and teachers have sought the intervention of the CPA in a matter involving four children after learning of this agency. Reports indicate that the children who were living in separate households have since been united with their parents and plans are afoot to have the family access counselling for the challenges they are experiencing.
- Persons who were exposed to the Acts for the first time agreed to use the laws and encouraged others to do likewise.
- Persons are now knowledgeable that they have a civic duty to report cases of abuse.
- Some persons acknowledged responsibility and willingness to cater for the safety and wellbeing of children within their communities.

8. How topic(s) discussed have increased awareness of the laws and social support services in participants

- The contact telephone numbers for some helping agencies were given to participants
- Persons were reminded that the laws are gender neutral and were encouraged to access the services available to them, when they are faced with a problem rather than make assumptions.
- Participants indicated their willingness to share information with other members of their communities.
- Persons now have literature in their possession about the laws.

Some participants' comments were as follows:

- The "old time" ways of raising children could be more effective.
- The sexual offences act is a complex piece of legislation.
- Men were more vulnerable for penalization, even with the low conviction in rape cases in the country
- Raising and communicating with children was becoming more complex perhaps because of all the information children now have about their "rights".
- Many cases of violence are allowed to continue because neighbours are reluctant to get involved or even report them.
- Sometimes when intervening, you may end up putting your life in danger
- Many helping agencies lack confidentiality and as such persons are reluctant to report problems
- Men felt that women were the greater beneficiaries of the provisions under the laws and are more favoured.
- Failure of police officers to take the reports of men seriously results in many fatalities, and the lack of action when reports of domestic violence are made is a concern of both men and women
- Love is lacking in homes.
- There exists a greater need for faith- based counselling.
- There will never be an end to DV due to the unfair treatment of males by the police.
- Police often fail to respond to reports of DV from the communities identified.
- Reporting to CPA was a waste of time, as nothing is usually done to address the situation.
- Mothers need to exercise their God –given duty and stop keeping secrets for their daughters.
- If we do not curb the situation in the home, the laws alone would not help
- Laws need to be upgraded and enforced.

Evaluation

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
How would you rate participation?		2	11	3	
Ask participants to rate their understanding of topics discussed?			8	8	
Ask participants to rate you as facilitator?		4	12		
Ask participants to rate the overall session?		13	3		

9. Challenges

- Some participants in our awareness sessions are usually very reserved in their responses to some topics being discussed.
- The political division in Belle West community has affected our work primarily with men, but we will continue to pursue every available opportunity as a need for the information exists. Efforts are afoot to engage the religious community and work will commence in the schools for the New Year.
- Due to the poor response from the Patentia area, we have made a decision to work with the secondary school and dispensary but move the community engagement to Parfaite Harmonie. We will however continue to pursue the sports groups due to some promises made.
- In the Vive la Force community we have a situation where persons are encouraging others to boycott our sessions, however, we have seen decent responses at recent sessions and as persons are made aware of our work the confidence is building so we are hopeful.

10. Successes

- Receiving the information on the laws seemed to give some participants more confidence that indeed there exists legal avenues to deal with potentially harmful and toxic intimate relationships.
- Persons are beginning to speak out, though the numbers are still few in comparison to the size of the affected population.
- Both the men and women expressed the notion that the information on the Act was very timely, not only for themselves as adults, but for the youthful populace, who they noted, were caught in many acts of sexual adventurism as they explore the tenets of sexuality.

Other matters

- The Pub Ed team is working on the content and design of the poster(s) which should be completed by January 31, 2015.
- Work in schools will commence in January 2015.

Reports made to facilitators

A 17 year-old reported that she was being physically abused by her 16 year old child father very often. The most recent incident was two weeks after giving birth. The baby was also hit because the infant was crying and the father said he was disturbed by that. She has since relocated to her parent's home, but he is still threatening and molesting her and she is very afraid of him. She has made reports to the police, he was arrested and placed before the court but was never sentenced and she is suspicious of the police's actions in the matter. The facilitator informed the participant of the DV Act and the protection available to her and encouraged her to visit the office for further assistance. Follow up meeting to be done on the progress made.

A young man reported that he was being abused by his partner; he indicated that he is locked up every time she visits the Wales Police Station; he had visible marks of violence, but was reluctant to report it even though an offer was made to accompany him to the police station. He is alleging that he had paid a police officer \$6,000 to be released without charge. He was encouraged to visit H & S.

A woman who is separated from her husband, but is being harassed by him shared that the police do not respond to her reports and her husband has connection in high places. Further, she said that she has been trying to get a restraining order against him, but was told that she needs evidence in the form of a videotaped recording or the like. She explained that he has visitation rights and took their four children and left them at a city hotel. He also threatened to burn the house down with her and the children inside. In addition, he even threatened to have sex with his eldest daughter and remarked that "me mek um and me go tek um". Information was also revealed that he has even made efforts to collect the child from school on several occasions.

Family members of a former shelter resident revealed that she is being further abused by her husband who is out on bail. He recently stabbed her and took her for medical care, and it was learnt that she lied about her injury. The family has decided not to provide further support to her, since she keeps going back to the perpetrator whom they are very afraid of due to threats they have received from him.

A male revealed that his wife is abusive; she consumes alcohol often and does not prepare any meals for him (he works as an estate foreman). They were counselled by the probation office, but nothing changed. He was advised to seek counselling at H & S.

Recommendations: None