

HELP & SHELTER
in collaboration with
WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER GERMAN COMMITTEE

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT
April 2008 – March 2011



REDUCING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE
in
Den Amstel, Good Hope, Covent Garden and Kaneville
Guyana

Project #: 5302

September 2011

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1. Executive Summary

Project Aim & Objective

The aim and objective of the Help & Shelter/Women's World Day of Prayer German Committee Project April 2008 - March 2011 was to reduce gender-based violence by significantly increasing the level of awareness of violence against women, girls and children through public education and advocacy initiatives applied for direct sensitisation in four communities within two administrative regions in Guyana.

Project Activities, Management and Community Profiles

In order to achieve the overall aim of the project, 14 activities were identified and implemented. These included setting up of community-based steering committees to oversee implementation of the project, meeting with key stakeholders to discuss the situation of GBV and possible solutions, conducting assessments of GBV in the communities, forming pressure groups to advocate for changes, organising awareness sessions and workshops for peer educators and religious leaders, providing basic training in counselling for community members and networking with other agencies in the delivery of services and skills for increased capacity building.

A project management team comprising the project coordinator, M&E officer, accountant, community educators and mobilisers was responsible for implementing project activities over the three year period, with community educators and community mobilisers responsible for the roll out of project activities in the communities.

The four selected project communities were semi-rural with populations ranging from 2,507 in Good Hope, the largest community, to 905 persons in Covent Garden, the smallest community. The communities chosen reflected the ethnic make-up of the Guyanese population following the pattern of villages being predominately inhabited by persons from one major ethnic group with varying minorities. Social issues identified by communities at the start of the project were domestic violence and child abuse, school drop outs, youth unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse and gambling, robberies and other crime.

Evaluation Objective, Scope and Method

The primary objectives of the evaluation were (1) to assess: whether the aim and objective of the project had been realized; the effectiveness of key strategies; how community members benefited from the project; if behaviour change occurred and how; community support for the project; successes/challenges of the project, and (2) to make recommendations. These formed the basis of the main questions posed in the interviews and focus group discussions.

In conducting this evaluation there were two main focuses. The first included a summary review of project activities including quantitative project data over the 3 year period of the project. The second focused on the findings of a series of interviews and focus group discussions with community educators, community mobilisers, community residents and beneficiaries. Altogether a total of 145 persons participated in both focus group discussions and interviews, with 82 females and 43 males participating in the 10 focus group discussions.

Findings & Conclusions

During the three year span of this project an overall total of 12,982, persons were reached across the four project communities, with some spillover into adjoining communities. Of the 12,982, 48% were newly reached persons. One of the most widely used strategies for direct sensitisation on gender-based violence and child abuse was the use of awareness sessions. A total of 342 such awareness sessions were held, targeting schools, faith-based organizations, health centres, youth groups and other community-based organizations. House-to-house visits and community walkabouts reached a total of 1,567 residents. And in the last year of the project, a total of 146

counselling visits were made to families in the project communities as community educators and community mobilisers intensified their efforts to reduce incidents of domestic violence, gender-based violence and child abuse.

In evaluating strategies used, community mapping and stakeholder meetings were seen as effective in sensitising community residents to the existence of the project, raising awareness on issues of gender-based violence and child abuse, gaining acceptance by communities, understanding the physical layout, socio-economic status and problems facing communities. Through mapping and stakeholder meetings, influential members of communities and key stakeholders were also identified and met with. They were also used to introduce the project to residents, receive feedback on project aims and activities and for interfacing with key community organizations.

Through steering committees residents came together not only to discuss the project and project activities but also other issues affecting communities outside of the project's mandate. In evaluating steering committees, some members felt that the bulk of the project's work should be left to the paid community educators and mobilisers. There was quite a high turnover of steering committee members during the project period due to persons becoming bored with and tired of meetings. Some residents were also critical of the narrow focus on reduction of gender-based violence as they considered other issues deserving of similar attention.

House-to-house visits and community walkabouts were seen as effective in sensitising and raising awareness about gender-based violence, including domestic violence and child abuse. The privacy of house-to-house visits created a more conducive environment to receive and address problems of abuse and violence within communities. Reports about unusual incidents, domestic violence, child abuse, the identification of families at risk, and other social issues affecting communities were gathered through house-to-house visits and community walkabouts. It was also one of the more effective ways of reaching men as they were reluctant to participate in the more structured group activities such as awareness sessions and workshops.

In evaluating awareness sessions as a strategy to sensitise communities, it was noted that these were most successfully organised in communities among homogenous and established organizations, institutions and groups that had buildings to facilitate such sessions. Some of the other main challenges for the hosting of awareness sessions were issues of scheduling and suitable venues.

Awareness sessions were seen as an effective means of imparting knowledge and raising consciousness among all the beneficiaries taking part in the focus group discussions and interviews, as individuals outlined particular topics which resonated with them. For students and young people the sessions on anger management, adolescence and puberty, sexuality, relationships, sexual and reproductive health and other taboo subjects such as homosexuality were of particular importance. Recognising the damaging effects of child abuse, and in particular child sexual abuse, and the need to report such incidents were frequently cited not only by adults but by adolescents and youth in the focus group discussions. A statement made at one of the focus group discussions perhaps best captures the impact made in the lives of participants when one young woman said that awareness sessions stopped her from committing suicide and changed her life.

In evaluating the impact of the project on the community and behaviour change, participants said there was an increase in awareness as more people were able to acknowledge abuse and access the necessary help. This resulted in a decrease in child abuse and domestic violence. Women in particular were empowered to stand up for their rights and take action against domestic violence.

and abuse. New knowledge of support services for survivors of domestic violence and child abuse and how and where to access these was gained. Parents identified improved parenting and parent-child communication in families and in the community. As a result of sensitisation, nursery school teachers curtailed verbal abuse of children in the classroom. Alcohol use and abuse were reduced among parents as a result of sensitisation talks and sharing of information of the possible removal of children from their parents if alcoholism leading to child neglect and abuse did not stop. Getting family members, friends and others in their communities to change their behaviours was something that young people and adults also testified to.

The benefits to the community from the project were identified as the gaining of new knowledge and awareness on domestic violence and available support services and a decrease in incidents of domestic violence and child abuse as a result of increased reporting of such matters. Community based organizations (CBOs) evolved from three project steering committees and have been working to improve community development. One of these CBOs was able to obtain their own funding for a community-based parenting project. Another CBO through advocacy actions was able to successfully lobby for a new access road and potable water for their community. More cohesiveness and better community spirit and pride are now evident in some communities. Improved relationships between community residents, community development groups and local government bodies have also occurred.

Community support for the project was measured through the number of community institutions which supported the project, such as schools, health centres and FBOs that not only allowed access to and use of their buildings but also access to persons attending such institutions. Community members also opened up their bottom houses for the holding of project activities and businesses supported community-based fundraising activities. Participation by 12,982 community members in the various project activities over the 3 year period was the best indication that there was community support for the project. As is to be expected, not everyone in the communities supported the project; some persons said that there were those in communities who “resent and hate change especially those who have become accustomed to having their own way.”

Major successes of the project assessed by community educators and mobilisers were seeing persons leave abusive situations due to their successful interventions; witnessing adults and children taking legal action and having successful outcomes and witnessing perpetrators being given prison sentences for being abusive to spouses; the work done in schools and in churches to raise awareness; the empowerment of women to make better decisions and choices; reporting of cases of abuse of spouses and children to the police, and referring cases to agencies such as Help & Shelter and the Ministry of Labour. According to one mobiliser “Success is looking back from where I was to where I am now in terms of being empowered, knowledgeable and knowing I am not alone and am a heroine for the work I am doing in my community to reduce violence.”

Major challenges identified by community educators and mobilisers were getting community residents to recognize the link between reducing and combating domestic violence and improved quality of life and community development; abusive husbands and neglectful parents; religious prejudice and suspicion; lack of or poor community infrastructure hindering access by project personnel to communities and participation by residents in project activities; the need to provide not only information and sensitisation but also practical assistance so that survivors of domestic violence have the means to move on with their lives and getting persons to accept that domestic violence is wrong.

In evaluating the success of the project in reaching men, responses were varied. Some felt that there was some success as men became aware of changing attitudes and started to access information themselves. Others said that due to increased awareness about gender-based violence,

men started to complain about their wives' attitudes, felt that their control was slipping away and some of them were genuinely shaken by this development. Some persons felt that men moved from not recognising domestic violence as a form of abuse to becoming more conscious and understanding that there are consequences to abusing one's wife/partner. Some were of the view that generally men never saw the whole issue of domestic violence as warranting their time or effort. The general consensus was that there was some success in reaching men and some success in raising awareness of gender-based violence, while at the same time recognising that more effort could have been put into finding effective strategies to reach them.

Recommendations

In coming up with recommendations and next steps, beneficiaries wanted to see the extension of the project and/or ongoing activities in communities. Community mobilisers were asked to continue the work they have been doing in the communities. Having the flexibility to modify project outputs was seen as important to achieving success, as situations and circumstances change on the ground from a project management perspective. The need for planning and establishing better base line data from which to measure success was seen as important, as was having a core of other organisations established at the beginning at the project to improve networking and capacity building. Most importantly, the reduction in domestic and sexual violence and child abuse cannot be separated from the physical, social and economic environment and development of the community.

Lessons Learnt

1. Detailed project planning is important for the successful implementation of projects.
2. Consultations and involvement by community members using appropriate strategies should be given the highest priority.
3. Sustainability and plans to achieve this should be seen as part of a project's outcome.
4. More emphasis needs to be placed on ways and means of encouraging community ownership of the project and building capacity.
5. Establishing baseline data at the start of the project will help to track and measure the progress made in achieving project goals and aims.
6. Innovation and networking with other agencies to address community needs will help to ensure a more holistic development process.

2. Description of the Project

The aim of the project was to reduce gender-based violence in four - selected Guyanese communities, Den Amstel, Kaneville, Covent Garden and Good Hope. The project was implemented over a 3 year period beginning in April 2008 and ending in March 2011.

The project objective was to significantly increase the level of awareness thereby reducing the high incidence of violence against women, girls and children through public education and advocacy initiatives applied for direct sensitization in four communities within two administrative regions in Guyana.

With a view to realising the project aim a list of fourteen project activities was drawn up, which included:

- 1) setting up of community-based steering committees to oversee implementation of the project
- 2) meeting with key stakeholders to discuss situation of gender-based violence and possible solutions
- 3) conducting an assessment of gender-based violence in the communities
- 4) forming pressure groups to advocate for changes in the community

- 5) organising awareness sessions and community-based workshops for peer educators and religious leaders on domestic and sexual violence and child abuse
- 6) providing basic training in counselling for community members and networking with other agencies in the delivery of services and skills for increased capacity building.

The intended beneficiaries of the project were generally residents of the four communities and specifically members of faith-based organisations, school students, teachers and parents, residents attending pre- and post-natal health clinics, health workers, police attached to community police stations, key community stakeholders and decision makers.

Key persons involved in the implementation of the project were members of the project management team comprising the project coordinator with overall responsibility for coordinating and implementation of project activities including disbursement of funds; an M&E officer with responsibility to ensure accurate and timely monitoring and evaluation of all project activities; an accountant whose task was to ensure the accuracy of financial records of project expenditures; 4 community educators and 4 community mobilisers who were responsible for the roll out of project activities in communities.

Community Profiles

Good Hope

The community of Good Hope with a population of 2,507 persons, predominately of East Indian heritage, is located in Region 4, on the East Coast of Demerara. The community is divided up into two sections, North Good Hope and South Good Hope. North Good Hope is sparsely populated with approximately 12 households and 6 medium sized businesses, including sawmills, a furniture factory, an industrial engineering company and auto sales businesses. South Good Hope on the other hand is densely populated with approximately 1,000 households. A number of small scale or family run businesses serve this community, including taxi services, community shops, grocery stores and rum shops.

Basic infrastructure in the form of roads, water and electricity exists in this community, but these tend to be somewhat run-down with residents complaining about the state of the roads and available water supply. There are no schools, post offices, police outposts, community or health centres located within the community.

There are five faith-based organisations located within Good Hope: one Hindu mandir, one Muslim masjid and three Christian churches including a Baptist Church, a New Testament of God Church and a Corner Stone New Testament Church.

Den Amstel

The community of Den Amstel is located in Region 3, on the West Coast of Demerara. It is one of the older established communities in Guyana with a population of 1,242 persons predominately of African heritage and a minority of persons of mixed heritage (Guyana Census 2002).

Den Amstel is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean at the northern end and farmlands at the southern end. It has five Christian churches with active women and youth groups, two privately run day care establishments and a community centre with a sports ground. Located within this community are one State-owned and- run health centre, a nursery and primary school, police station and an industrial training centre for juveniles. There are also small individual and family-run businesses, grocery shops and restaurants.

Kaneville

Kaneville, the most recently established - of the four project communities, is located in Region 4,

on the East Bank of the Demerara River (EBD). The community is accessible through an access road from the East Bank Highway, which at the start of the project was in a deplorable state. This community is the most underdeveloped and neglected of the project communities. There are approximately 1,000 households in the community. Kaneville is divided into four sections, called fields, with the most developed being the First and Second Fields. No data on ethnic composition and population was available on this community in the 2002 Guyana Census. The community is multi-ethnic reflecting the heritage of Guyana's peoples.

Kaneville has three established FBOs, two Christian churches - the Full Gospel Church and the Pentecostal Church - one Muslim masjid and two Sunday schools, which are branches of churches in nearby communities.

This community has a number of small bottom house grocery and all purpose shops. There are no schools, health or community centres, police stations or any other social, educational or service institutions established in this community. At the start of the project there was no potable water supply system in the community. Many of the house lots in the community are still to be regularised.

Covent Garden

Like Kaneville, the community of Covent Garden is located in Region 4, on the East Bank of the Demerara River and is bordered on the eastern side by the East Bank Highway and on the western side by the Demerara River. Covent Garden has a population of 905 persons, 75% of East Indian heritage, 11% of African heritage and 15% of Mixed heritage (Guyana Census 2002).

This community has two Christian churches - Assemblies of God Church and Full Gospel Fellowship Church – State-owned and -run nursery, primary and secondary schools and a number of small business establishments such as barber shops, an internet café, taxi service, restaurants, a private medical doctor's clinic, rum shops, gutter-making shop and a number of small grocery shops. A well owned and operated by the Guyana Water Inc. is also located within the community.

Social Issues Identified in the Project Communities

Social Issue	Covent Garden	Den Amstel	Good Hope	Kaneville
Domestic violence & child abuse	✓	✓	✓	✓
Child labour	✓		✓	
Alcohol abuse	✓	✓	✓	
Drug abuse	✓		✓	✓
Teenage pregnancy	✓	✓		✓
Youth unemployment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Delinquency	✓			✓
Gender discrimination against women	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lack of activities for men	✓		✓	✓
Gambling, robbery, crime,	✓		✓	✓
School drop outs	✓	✓	✓	✓

As can be seen from the table above, there was quite a wide range of social issues affecting project communities. The general consensus of the communities was that while they recognised gender-based violence, and in particular domestic violence and child abuse, as societal ills that needed to be addressed, other social issues also needed attention. Besides social ills, all the communities tended to suffer in varying degrees from a poorly functioning local government system, which due to a lack of funding and the absence of local government elections has led to inadequate community development, including in some communities a lack of social services and basic infrastructure. In most communities the only functioning community-based organisations for the most part were the faith-based ones.

3. Evaluation

Scope and Objectives

There are two main focuses for this evaluation. The first includes a summary review of project activities including quantitative project data over the 3 year period of the project. The second focuses on the findings of a series of interviews, focus group discussions and documented case studies carried out with community residents and beneficiaries, which are qualitative in nature.

The primary objectives of the evaluation were (1) to assess: whether the aim and objective of the project had been realized; the effectiveness of key strategies; how community members benefited from the project; if behaviour change occurred and how; community support for the project; successes/challenges of the project, and (2) to make recommendations. These formed the basis of the main questions posed in the interviews and focus group discussions.

Approach and methods

Quantitative and qualitative summary yearly evaluation reports of project activities were used in this report to present an overview of project activities over the 3 year period. These yearly evaluation reports were presented and discussed at yearly evaluation meetings of the project team.

A participatory approach was used to plan, design, implement and document the findings of the community-based evaluations. This participatory approach included project evaluation team meetings to agree on methodologies and tools to be used for the collection and documentation of information. Invaluable help and technical advice were received from Dr. Janice Jackson and Ms. Elsie Croal in their capacity as trainers for a capacity building workshops for Help & Shelter staff and network partners on monitoring, evaluating, documentation and dissemination. The facilitators for the participatory evaluations were members of the project evaluation team including community educators and mobilisers, the M&E officer and a National United Nations Volunteer (NUNV), who worked voluntarily with the project during the last project year

The evaluation activities were carried out during the months of May to July 2011. Components of these evaluation activities included reviews of yearly evaluations, internal reports and monthly and yearly reports, which were used mostly for presenting statistical and quantitative data for this report and a series of focus group discussions, individual and group interviews for recording qualitative data.

A series of 10 focus group discussions involving a total of 125 participants, 82 females and 43 males, were held spanning the 4 project communities. Groups and organisations represented included students from primary, secondary and remedial schools, teachers, members of faith-based youth and women's groups, steering committee members, community educators, mobilisers and community residents. Additionally, 20 interviews were done with community residents, project educators and mobilisers

As previously mentioned, the questions posed to the focus group discussions and interviews

followed a similar pattern, even though some questions such as male involvement, successes and challenges did not extend to students.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was done of internal yearly evaluation reports for tracking of project activities over the 3 year project period. Quantitative data collected from yearly project reports (all available on Help & Shelter's website) were used to prepare charts reflecting:

- Total and disaggregated numbers of persons reached during the project
- Number of awareness sessions held and among which organisations and groups
- Numbers of persons reached through house-to-house visits
- Number of counselling visits carried out in communities
- Number of community steering committees meetings held
- Attendances at peer educator and religious leader workshops

Qualitative data was gathered from focus group discussions and individual interviews representing a cross-section of beneficiaries from the project communities. These were summarised to capture how participants benefited, the impact of this on their lives, behaviour change and what they would like to see happen now that the project has ended. It is felt that the accuracy of these findings are supported by the number of persons participating in the focus group discussions, the relatively wide cross-section of persons involved and the recurring themes or areas commented on.

Some gaps were however evident in this evaluation. These included somewhat limited access to persons who attended the religious leaders workshops and persons who participated in awareness sessions at health centres. In carrying out this evaluation there were some obvious challenges, such as limited time, difficulties in getting people together for some of the focus group discussions, scheduling for the one-on-one interviews and cancellation of some of the planned focus group discussions due circumstances beyond our control, such as power outages.

One of the main challenges in attempting this evaluation was that apart from a broad project aim, post-project proposal objectives formulated and a set of project activities, there were no other mechanisms identified in the project proposal, such as indicators, to measure progress or success of the project. As such, the evaluation had to come up with its own ideas as to how to measure and evaluate the outcomes of the project.

4. Findings - Evaluation of Project Activities

Activity 1: Identify community facilitators who will coordinate community-based activities

- Community educators were identified for all 4 project communities and coordinated and implemented community based activities

Activity 2: Meet with key members of the community, including community organizations, religious organisations to discuss problems & possible solutions to GBV

- 26 meetings with FBOs and 12 meetings with regional and local government bodies were held during the first project year and meetings continued in years 2 and 3
- Meetings were also held with head teachers, classroom teachers, health workers attached to health centres, officers and ranks at police stations in project communities and adjoining communities.
- Meetings were also held with community-based business owners, taxi drivers and CBOs

Activity 3: Work with identified members in the communities to mobilize and conduct an assessment of the situation of GBV among women, girls, men, boys including the cultural aspects of the issue

- A survey on GBV was conducted in Year 2 with 101 women between the ages of 18 to 65+ from the 4 project communities. The average number of women interviewed per community was 25
- Focus group discussions on GBV were held in 2 project communities with 36 men in year 3

Activity 4: Gather information on traditions & values in communities to facilitate the involvement of community members

- 11 Community mapping exercises were done in the 4 project communities in year 1 to gather information on the physical layout and socio/economic situation in the communities
- Meetings with key stakeholders, house-to-house visits and community walkabouts were used to further gather information about the community, including traditions and values, over the 3 year period

Activity 5: Form Steering Committees made up of representatives of all key organizations and community leaders (FBOs, CBOs, health centres, NDCs etc) to come up with a planned programme for GBV reduction and to oversee implementation with community educators and mobilisers

- All 4 communities established steering committees which met regularly
- Full representation of all key leaders, organisations and groups were not achieved on steering committees.
- Key needs/challenges of the communities were identified and plans initiated to meet some of these challenges. Some were however outside of the project's remit
- Kaneville, Den Amstel and Covent Garden have developed their own CBOs out of project steering committees and all 3 are now registered as CBOs with the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport
- DARC (Den Amstel Residents for Change) was successful in accessing funding for a parenting project in 3 communities

Activity 6: Form pressure groups to advocate & lobby for changes in communities

- In year 1, the community of Kaneville and steering committee members spearheaded a campaign to collect signatures for petitions to the Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Education with reference to land earmarked for the community centre and the nursery school respectively
- In year 2, networking and advocacy activities included two community marches, one in Good Hope to advocate for a violence- and alcohol-free community and the other in the Kaneville/Grove area to mark International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (IDEVAW). Both of these marches proved to be successful in raising consciousness and sensitising residents to issues of GBV prevention. The March Against Domestic Violence in Kaneville/Diamond had as its slogan 'Save the Children, Stop Domestic Violence' and 'Youth in Unity Against DV'.
- The community of Kaneville has through advocacy actions been instrumental in the obtaining the repair of community access roads, installing of pipes for potable water and the developing of a community playfield. Some of these activities were a direct result of the M&E/Advocacy workshop.
- Identifying names and signboards for names of streets in one community were initiated. Permission for these to be erected is still pending from the Ministry of Works

- A successful walk against DV in year 3 and a candle light vigil to bring attention to the issues of GBV and child abuse were held in Kaneville. Participants were students from secondary schools, teachers, residents and Kaneville community educators and mobilisers
- The Covent Garden steering committee met with the NDC re garbage disposal and other issues
- Re-painting of a community pedestrian crossing for school children was done

Activity 7: Organise community workshops on gender-based violence, including child abuse, to raise awareness among different sectors of the community

- A total of 342 awareness sessions were conducted over the project's 3 year span.
- Organizations and groups that benefited were FBOs, schools, health centres, youth groups, community groups, steering committees, sport clubs, CBOs, recreational centres etc.

Activity 8: Train peer educators to advocate & raise awareness about GBV & child abuse

- A total of 238 students and community members attended the 24 peer education workshops held in project communities
- In each community 6 workshops were held and a total of 793 persons including students and residents of communities were reached through the implementation of peer educator community action plans to reduce GBV and child abuse
- Activities implemented by the peer educators included awareness sessions, skits, house-to-house and community sensitization visits, designing of posters and distribution of leaflets. Peer educators worked in groups to carry out their action plans.

Activity 9: Provide basic training in counselling for community members

- 23 persons from the 4 project communities, participated in 4-day workshops in basic counselling. The community of Covent Garden was not able to participate in the first joint workshop, so another 4-day workshop was held for this community. The requirement was that participants had to attend all 4 days of the workshop before they could assist with lay counselling in their communities
- As a result of the workshops, counselling, especially of women and children, has increased quite dramatically as have reports of domestic violence and other family conflicts
- In year 3, 133 house-to-house counselling visits and sessions - residents and students and referrals were made to the police, the Childcare & Protection Agency, Help & Shelter and children's homes

Activity 10: Network with other NGOs & agencies in the delivery of services & skills training to increase capacity building in communities

- The Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport facilitated 2 men's forum activities
- Medical outreach activities supported by the Ministry of Health and local health workers from both the public and private sectors were held in communities
- Support from the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport was given for the Secondary Schools' Prepared Speech Competition
- A representative from the Guyana Association for the Blind visited one community
- Help & Shelter conducted capacity building workshops in counselling, advocacy and M&E in year 2
- Donations from business places were received to support community based activities

Activity 11: Monitor and evaluate all community-based activities and training

- Community-based activities were monitored through the submission of monthly reports

from community educators and mobilisers, participants' attendance sheets, monthly M&E reports and yearly project reports

Activity 12: Target male abusers and men who are willing to be advocates to work towards the elimination of the common causes of gender-based violence

- The Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sport facilitated 2 men's forum activities
- Focus group discussions on GBV were held in 2 project communities with 36 men in year 3
- Visits made to pool shops, gyms, playfields and street corners where young men congregate in order to engage them in discussions on GBV

Activity 13: Generally, empower women and girls to consolidate their social, psychological and economic standing through networking and referral activities

- Vacation programmes where life skill programmes were taught was accessed for a few young people through the project
- Empowerment of women and girls took place generally through project activities
- Through lay counselling women, girls and boys benefited from referrals to places of safety and received socio/economic assistance

Activity 14: Use banners to advertise the project in each community

- Banners were prepared for all project communities and in some communities community members painted the banners

Quantitative Data from Yearly Reports

In the three year span of the project an overall total of 12,982 persons were reached across the four project communities, with some spillover into adjoining communities. Of the 12,982, a little less than half (48%) represented newly reached persons from years 2 and 3. As can be seen from the charts, there was quite a dramatic rise in the number of persons reached between both years 1 and 2 and years 2 and 3.

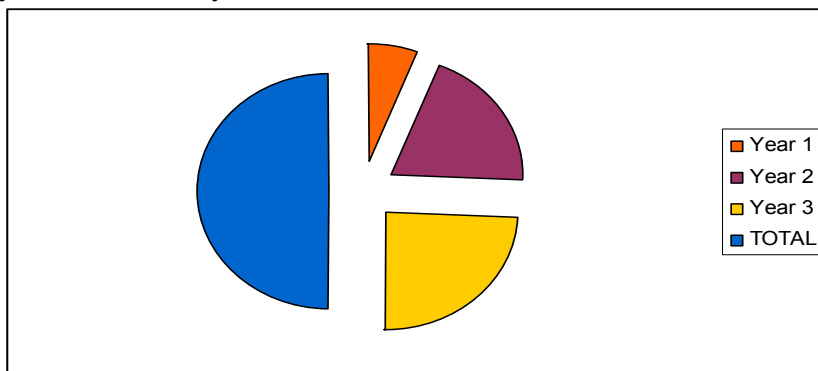


Fig 1.Total # of Persons Reached

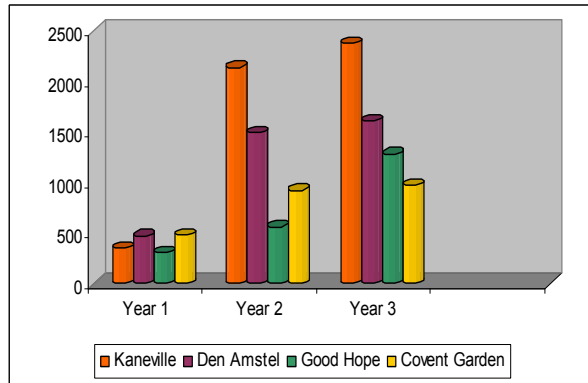


Fig 1 (a).Total # of Persons Reached by Community

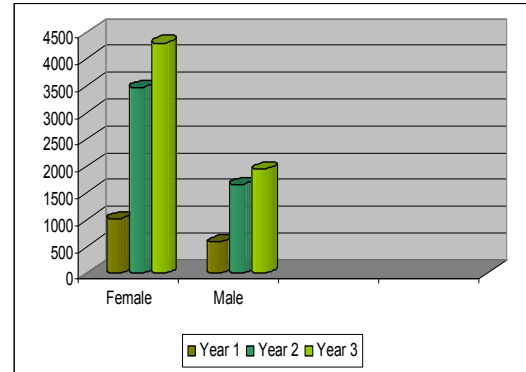


Fig 1 (b).Female/Male Ratio of Total Reached

During the course of the project and more particularly in year 1 as a way of introducing the project to communities and getting feedback, support and guidance from key stakeholders, a series of meetings were held which included local government officials, representatives of FBOs, police officers, taxi drivers, heads of schools, teachers and staff at health centres. An important feature of these community-based consultations were participatory community mapping exercises targeting a cross-section of community residents and stakeholders.

One of the most widely used strategies to raise awareness on issues of gender-based violence within communities was the holding of awareness sessions. As mentioned, a total of 342 sessions were held spanning the 4 communities. As can be seen from the charts provided, the spread of organisations remained the same but the frequency of sessions changed.

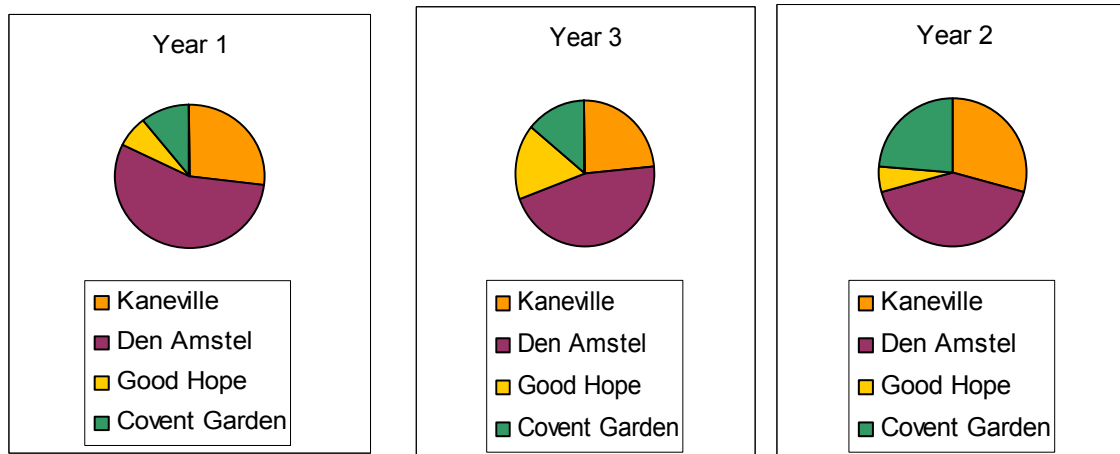


Fig. 2..# of Awareness Sessions Held in Communities

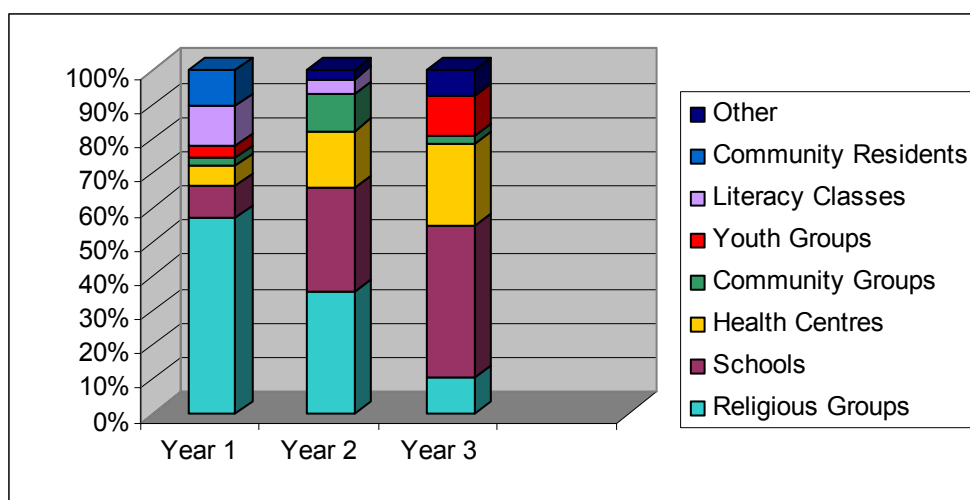


Fig.2 (a). # of Awareness Sessions by Groups

House-to-house visits and community walkabouts were used as effective strategies to continue the process of sensitising community residents to the existence of the project as well as raising awareness about issues of gender-based violence and child abuse. A total of 1,567 persons were reached through these strategies.

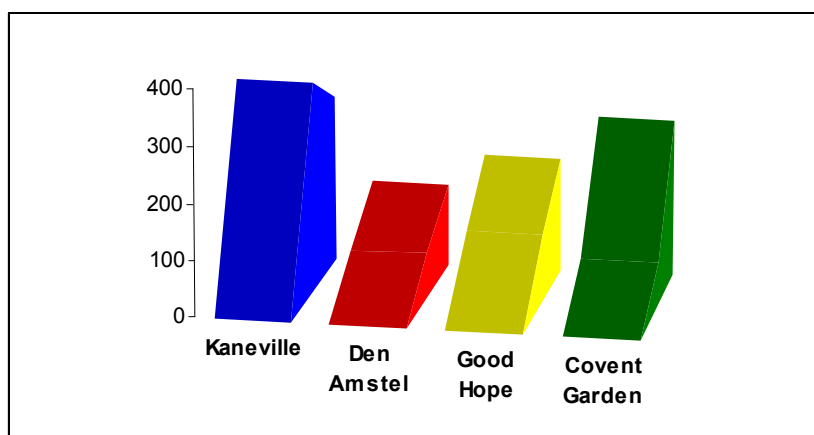


Fig.3. # of Persons Reached Through House-to-House Visits & Community Walkabouts

In year 3 a total of 146 counselling visits were made to families in the project communities as both community educators and community mobilisers intensified their effort to reduce incidents of gender-based violence and child abuse by home counselling visits and referrals.

Community Steering Committees

One of the key project activities was the formation of community-based steering committees to come up with planned programmes of activities for addressing the problem of gender-based violence and overseeing its implementation. As can be seen from the chart below, a total of 88 community steering committee meetings were held in the 3 year span of the project; 31 in year 1, 33 in year 2 and 24 in year 3.

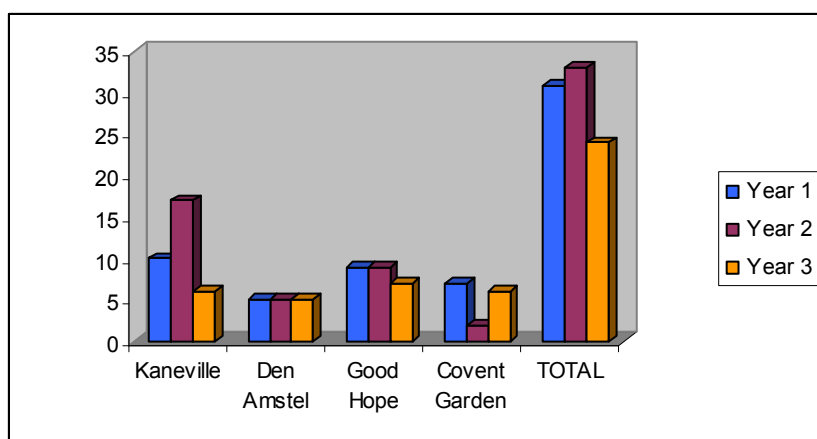


Fig.4. # of Community Steering Committee Meetings

Peer Educator Workshops

Over the project period a total of 238 students and community members attended the 24 peer education workshops held in project communities. Six workshops were held in each community and a total of 793 persons, including students and residents of communities, benefitted from peer educator community action plans to reduce gender-based violence and child abuse. Activities included awareness sessions, skits and house-to-house and community sensitisation visits, designing of posters and distribution of leaflets.

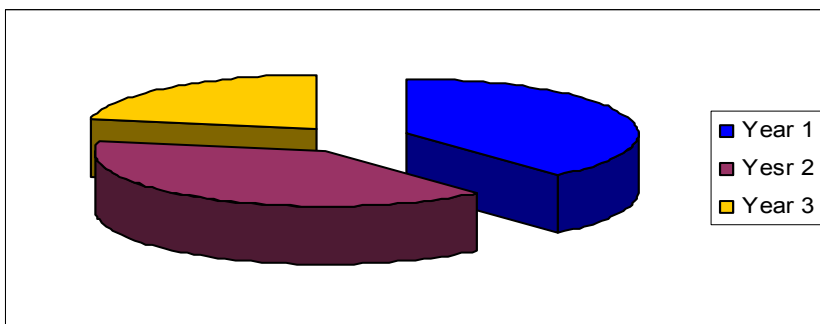


Fig.5. Attendance at Peer Education Workshops

Religious Leaders Workshops

During the 3 year project period a total of 71 religious leaders and members of Faith Based Organizations within project communities attended 2 day workshops specifically organized for them. The spike in attendance in Year 2 was as a result of separate workshops held in three of the project communities in contrast to joint workshop held in Years 1 and 3.

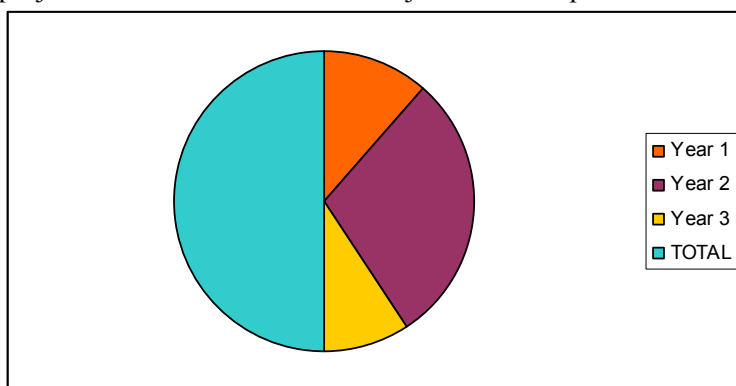


Fig.6. Attendance at Religious Leader's Workshops

5. Findings - Focus Group Discussions & Interviews

Was the overall aim of the project to reduce gender based violence and child abuse achieved?

- The overall consensus was that even though levels of community awareness of gender-based violence increased through the project's public education and advocacy initiatives, this did not take place uniformly across communities or among all community residents
- Similarly, even though changes in behaviour and attitudes of community members to domestic violence and child abuse occurred, this was not evident uniformly across communities and among all community residents
- According to one participant "Domestic violence has not stopped, but it has quieted down a bit. It is hard to come out of a domestic violence situation"
- Another persons responding to this question said "Yes there are now more people out there who know right from wrong"
- Participants had some difficulty in answering this question due to its somewhat abstract and wide focus, so for the most part they identified particular and quantifiable examples of benefits, some of which were better placed within the context of responses to other questions

What were some of the successful strategies used to implement project activities?

(i) Community mapping/stakeholder meetings

- Community mapping and stakeholder meetings were important for gaining acceptance by the community
- They assisted in understanding the physical layout of communities, the socio-economic status of the communities, ethnicity, social and economic problems and challenges, hangout spots, number and type of organisations and groups and health and educational facilities within communities
- Identified key stakeholders to link with
- Brought residents together around a common interest, namely their community. Most community members had never done community mapping before and it helped them to see their community in a different way, to learn more about their community and work together to achieve a common objective
- Were a forum for introducing the project to residents and receiving feedback on its aim
- Different groups identified particular issues of concern to them, e.g. children spoke of the fear they felt on hearing gunshots in their community
- Interfacing with faith-based organisations was seen as important in gaining acceptance in the community
- Meetings with local government bodies were instrumental in identifying key community contacts and stakeholders

(ii) House-to-house meetings/community walkabouts

- House-to-house meetings and community walkabouts were successfully used in sensitizing and raising awareness about domestic violence and child abuse issues on a one-to-one basis. Residents were more open and honest about their own problems in a one-to-one setting
- Assisted residents in preventing and finding solutions to domestic violence and accessing available support services
- Through house to house visits, project team members and peer educators on many occasions received reports or witnessed actual incidents of domestic violence, child abuse and neglect
- Allowed for greater privacy and confidentiality for lay counselling and discussing sensitive issues

- Helped in learning about problems and challenges that residents were facing outside of the project's remit
- Were means of touching base with community members on a regular basis
- Were means of informing residents about the project and project activities and events
- Helped build trust, acceptance and confidence between community project workers and residents
- Reached groups and categories of community residents who would not be accessed through more organised activities e.g. young men at Wrong Turn in Kaneville, or groups of youths hanging out on street corners or at community entertainment spots
- Were means of receiving reports about unusual incidents, domestic violence, child abuse or identifying families at risk
- Were a means of reaching men. Most men and out of school males were reluctant to participate in group activities so it was easier to interact with them through house-to-house visits and community walkabouts
- According to one resident as a result of the home visits "my husband now comes home straight from work with his pay, he just takes out a small piece for himself"
- Another resident in assessing the house-to-house visits felt these were useful and said that these resulted in more reports being made, more women being able to share their stories and to get advice
- According to another resident, more children are now going to school and a lot of people have stopped cursing and fighting
- Through house-to-house visits the project mobilisers and educators were there "to explain things, share flyers and give good information"

(iii) Steering Committees

- These were successful and resulted in 3 of the project communities now have their own community-based organisation
- The steering committee meetings brought residents together and as they evolved they became more interested in planning for community development activities within their communities rather than just concentrating on domestic violence and child abuse matters
- When a steering committee's functioning was sporadic, it was felt by some members that since the project's community-based workers were being paid, they should do the bulk of the project work on reducing GBV and child abuse. Other members continued to be supportive and active
- It was a challenge to sustain continuity of the committees over the 3 years as some members got bored with and tired of meetings

How did the awareness sessions help you and or the community?

- Awareness sessions were used most successfully in communities among homogenous and established organisations, institutions and groups
- The biggest challenge for some communities was the lack of a suitable venue for the holding of sessions
- With established groups and institutions there existed a ready-made audience of participants and these often also had a building in which they met and carried on their activities e.g. schools, FBOs, health centres and some CBOs.
- In those communities where there were few established groups or institutions it was difficult to mobilise disparate members of the communities to attend sessions
- Agreeing on a suitable and convenient time for the holding of awareness sessions in communities with no organised groups also proved to be challenging
- When asked how they benefited from the awareness sessions, beneficiaries said that these helped them personally to make "right decisions and to know what is wrong from right".

For others they helped to raise self-esteem and self-confidence and made them feel “proud of themselves” as they were able “to talk and give advice to other people” on issues

- Beneficiaries reported that they were able to expand their knowledge about a range of issues and that their awareness “of what was going on in society” was raised
- For many participants learning how to recognise if they or someone they knew was being abused was of significant importance
- Recognising the damaging effects of child abuse and in particular child sexual abuse and the need to report such incidents were frequently cited as important benefits, not only by adults but by youths and adolescents in the focus group discussions. For example, “I learnt that if a child is being sexually abused you should take a report and seriously look into the situation”
- Awareness sessions were described as “an educational forum” as they allowed residents to discuss sensitive and sometimes “taboo” subjects. One young man from one of the community faith-based youth groups commented on the fact that through the awareness sessions he was able to talk about sensitive issues like homosexuality and that this was new for him and allowed him to understand more about this normally hidden topic
- The anger management sessions resonated profoundly across age groups but especially among youths and adolescents as they said they learnt not only how to control anger but why it was important to do so. As one participant said: “learning to control anger by self control, controlling myself and my anger, thinking over things, examining if things are being done on purpose or not. I learnt that when somebody gets you angry you can lose control”
- For adolescents and youths the discussions on puberty and understanding the process of maturity, including the physical and emotional changes their bodies go through was another subject of significant importance. Many of them had not had the advantage of having this process of change explained to them. One youth highlighted “understanding the changes in us and not being afraid of these”
- Many younger beneficiaries were strongly influenced by topics on sexuality and sexual reproductive health. As one participant put it, they benefited by “not wanting to rush into sex” and according to another adolescent, “learning about safe sex was important to me, as friends in class were having sex”. For other participants “understanding the difference between infatuation and love and the importance of love versus infatuation” and “learning about the different types of STI, some of which I never knew about before, also about teenage pregnancy” were significant
- Participants also identified with the topics of leadership, including learning about the qualities of leaders such as “being a good listener, a good role model, being able to take advice and setting a positive example for others to follow “
- For some youths, being made aware that name calling, insults and cursing was considered a form of child abuse was new to them.
- A statement made at one of the focus group discussions perhaps best captures the significant importance of the impact made in the lives of participants by the awareness sessions. She said that these “stopped me from committing suicide; the sessions changed my life”
- Other issues singled out as resonating with beneficiaries were trafficking in persons and domestic violence prevention

(iv) Peer Educator Workshops

- Finding new persons in the communities to attend and participate in peer educator workshops became increasingly difficult each year as older and more mature residents found it challenging to find the time in their busy schedules to attend workshops

- Peer educator workshops were found to be more successful in some communities than others. Some communities only had church buildings in which to hold such workshops and some persons did not want to attend workshops in churches which also had their own activities
- Working people and parents with small children could not find the time to attend these workshop consistently
- In one community people were seen to be always interested and eager to share information on topics with others. In others peer educator workshops were not seen as altogether successful since genuine interest in the activity was not always evident
- Some participants whose education level was low were clearly challenged to keep up with the workshop sessions
- Even though during and for a period after the workshops peer education activities were successfully implemented, they tended to fall off and were not sustained as participants became involved in their studies, found work or had to hustle to survive and could not do the voluntary work
- In Some participants were also more interested in receiving certificates than passing on the information they learnt. In some communities there was poor attendance by community members
- Information shared during peer educator workshop clearly had an impact on many of the participants as during the focus group discussions they were able to recall many aspects of information shared, including definitions of domestic abuse and the different forms of abuse
- The workshops were most successful when students were involved as they were more enthusiastic and energetic and some passed on the information and continued activities with the other students in their schools and even in their communities. One 14 year old female participant described what she learnt in the workshops: “Johari Window, types of abuse, ground rules, about open self, inner shelf, hidden self, unknown self”
- Female peer educators between the ages of 14 and 15 said they benefited from learning about domestic violence and explained what they knew about this form of abuse: “domestic violence is abuse perpetrated by a person from the same household”; “physical abuse, hitting, slashing with a knife”, also “different types of abuse, like physical, financial, sexual”; “financial abuse, like when a person give you money and ask for it back, or everytime he give you money, you must tell him what you buy and the reason you buy it”
- One 15 year old girl describing the impact on her said “I use to beat my little sister and after the workshop I stop and talk to her instead when she do anything wrong”
- Another girl in describing how her behaviour changed had this to say: “Sometimes I want to knock my cousin and he would want to hit me back and cause a big fight, so we work things out by talking”
- A teenage boy shared how he was impacted and how he tried to influence others with what he learnt: “It help me to be a better person, a good leader, keeping the key for the Mosque, looking after the children when the teacher is not there”. And “once a girl that ‘lil’ wild use to play fresh with all them boys and I tell her that what she doing is wrong and tell her let she wait till she get married. I tell she be good and don’t wild about the place”
- Another 14-15 year old boy described how he was able to stand up for himself “I have a cousin that use to cuss and beat me up and I tell him its abuse and I will call the police on you and he stop. I know that it is wrong”
- Other testimonies given by male and female students who benefited from the peer educator workshops included speaking out against domestic violence and child abuse, “If small brother fighting me, I will tell him its child abuse”; “If I see my father beating my

- mother, I will tell him to stop it, it is wife abuse”; “Sometimes when I spend weekend by my uncle, he use to beat his wife and I told him to stop, that he can get jail for that”; “I will part the people fighting if they allow me, or I will call the police station for help, or I will advise them to go to Help and Shelter”; “ I use to behave bad, cuss my brother and all kind of thing but now I stop”
- According to an adult survivor of a brutal and deadly attack on her family the workshop “helped me and encouraged me to go on. Not because my husband and children died it was the end, there is always something in store for you. It made me a better and wiser person.”
 - Another participant said “First when I went to the workshop I learnt about self- yourself, your childhood days - and since I did not have a good one I learnt about abuse, physical abuse and I also learnt about financial abuse and even abuse of children- and I helped to spread this message to neighbours and pass this info on”
 - According to another adult peer educator “The workshop benefited me a lot. It improved my self esteem and I am able to advise persons who are going through a hard time, I am able to help them”
 - It was interesting to hear the perspective of young men and how the peer educator workshops influenced their thought and behaviours: “ Workshop, help me know about physical abuse, sexual abuse”; “I now understand right from wrong and that abuse is wrong, when father hits my mother”; “Not to cuss, not to take advantage of little children, not to abuse them, the workshop help me to be a braver person”; “ Helped me to be a respectful person, be kind to people, made me be a good facilitator and teacher”
 - Young men from focus group discussions also spoke about learning it was wrong and a form of child abuse to “take advantage of little children, to abuse them”. They also were more focused on recognising forms and types of sexual abuse: “don’t force a woman to have sex”, “don’t allow anyone to touch your private parts”

What was the impact of the project on the community? Did behaviour change take place?

- There is an increase in the numbers of residents who are acknowledging abuse in their homes and in their relationships and coming forward to access help
- As a result of the project child abuse and domestic violence have decreased in communities among some families and relationships have improved
- Beneficiaries identified improved parent-child relationships in their own families and in the community generally as a result of the project. As one participant put it: “I am better able to deal with my children in the home, to talk to them when they have problems, also with neglected children. I am more confident now to talk to their parents.” Another participant commenting on improved parent child relationships said that as a result of the project she learnt “to control my emotions when dealing with my children”
- According to members of one of the FBO women’s groups, “ behaviour change did take place in the community, we see something starting to happen- we see persons start to improve their lifestyle - some take up the challenge and have worked to improve themselves.”
- Women became more aware of their rights and were not afraid to use this knowledge according to one of the community mobilisers
- Alcohol use and abuse were reduced among parents as a result of sensitisation talks and sharing of information about the dangers of alcohol abuse and the possibility of having their children removed if the drinking did not stop
- Through community intervention by a faith-based group an example of positive behaviour change was reported “There was [a] case where a man used to treat his wife very badly and she died from a snake bite. Since then the group intervened in the situation and there has been improvement, the father now brings his children to Church, he now looks after them very well. He changed his lifestyle. The group went to meet the

family and with this intervention and other forms of support and attending Church there was a transformation.”

- There was a decrease in incidents of women being forced out of their homes by their husbands
- People now know where and from whom they can access help if they are being abused or know someone who is being abused
- Community-based development groups are in existence where there were none before and are continuing to plan and execute projects to improve conditions in the community
- Members of the community have gained confidence and trust in community mobilisers and educators who continue to play an active part in the reduction of GBV, child abuse and community development activities
- The status of Help & Shelter in the communities has risen and men are not so suspicious of the organisation and misconceptions about Help & Shelter being responsible for the breakup of families have been corrected
- Residents have reported that they have stopped being abusive and reports of incidents of abuse have decreased
- Sessions with nursery school teachers have reduce verbal abuse of children in the classroom
- Physical abuse of children by parents has decreased and cases of abuse have been reduced considerably
- Stronger bonds have been forged between residents and community policing groups
- Teenagers and adolescents said that as a result of participating in the awareness sessions and peer educator sessions their attitudes and behaviour to the vulnerable in their communities changed as evidenced in these statements: “I use to make fun of sad people, but now I talk to them and ask them what happened”; “I learnt to be kind to people with disabilities and old people”; “I am proud of myself because I treat people better”; “I changed my negative attitude to positive and help people with the same problems.”
- Getting family members, friends and others in their communities to change their behaviours was something that young people were able to achieve: “I have a friend who is being abused by her mother and I shared the information and what to do. My friend shared the information with her mother and now the problem eased up”; “I have a friend who uncle use to give him rum and weed and I talked to him and he stopped”; “I give advice to my friends, about what is right and what is wrong and I corrected a friend who use to bully.”

How did the community benefit from this project?

The community benefited from the project in the following ways:

- New knowledge and awareness was gained on domestic violence and available support service agencies and organisations
- Increased reporting of domestic violence and child abuse matters led to a decrease in domestic violence and child abuse incidents
- Community-based organisations evolved from 3 project steering committees and have been planning and executing community-based projects for improved community development. Increased membership in some of these CBOs indicate these groups are having a positive impact in their communities
- One of the CBOs that evolved was able to successfully apply for funding for a community-based project of their own and has been implementing this in their community over the past 6 months
- A community petition for potable water and resurfacing of main access road was successfully presented to the relevant authorities for action. As a result, residents have

- benefited from a new access road and water is running through every tap in the community
- Members of the community development group attend monthly meetings of NDC, the local government body
- Residents were trained as peer educators
- The relationship between NDCs and community residents has improved and there have been some benefits to this
- There is more cohesiveness in communities and more of a community spirit and pride

Was there community support for the project?

- Some people in the community supported the project, some didn't and some persons resent and hate change especially those who have become accustomed to having their own way
- The schools were very helpful in allowing the project access to students, teachers to hold awareness sessions
- The NDC were generous in allowing us the use of the community centre for activities
- The health centre staff were also very supportive in allowing us access to persons attending various clinics for awareness sessions and talks
- Businesses in the communities supported fundraising activities
- The FBOs were gracious in allowing us the use of their building for project activities
- Community residents permitted the use of their bottom houses for community meetings
- There was community support because community members attended and listened to the discussions, the churches, schools were all involved

What are some other activities/strategies that could have been used?

- Regular awareness talks and sessions with men every 2 weeks at locations where they tend to congregate such as rum shops and street corners
- Family fun days
- Competitive sports activities for men and children
- Mini fairs
- Improved agency and organisation networking initiatives that can deliver concrete benefits and services to communities
- Game competitions e.g. dominoes competitions

What would you say were the project's major successes?

- A number of adults and children have taken their cases to court and had successful outcomes
- Referrals of counselling cases to Help & Shelter and the Ministry of Human Services & Social Security
- Access road repaired in the community as a result of community mobilization and advocacy
- Seeing persons leave abusive situation due to successful interventions by community mobilisers and educators
- Witnessing perpetrators being given prison sentences for being abusive to their spouse and adult parent or being warned by the police
- Reporting and giving statements to the police of abuse being perpetrated on spouses and children
- Major successes are looking back from where I was to where I am now in terms of being empowered, knowledgeable and knowing I am not alone and am a heroine for the work I am doing in my community to reduce violence
- Work done in schools and in churches to raise awareness

- Women are now empowered to make better decisions and choices
- Children now know where and how to get help

What would you say were some of the project's major challenges?

- Abusive husbands
- Neglectful and or abusive parents
- Overcoming religious prejudice and suspicion
- Unavailability of venues or suitable venues for activities
- Community members needing more than information and sensitisation but also food, clothing, building materials, house lots etc.
- Getting community residents to recognise the link between reducing and combating domestic violence and improved physical, financial and psychological quality of life and overall improving community development
- Lack of or poor community infrastructure hindering access by project personnel to communities and community residents participation in project activities
- Getting persons to accept that domestic violence is a crime
- Full attendance at awareness sessions and steering committee meetings
- According to one of the community mobilisers: “ I was able to overcome most of these challenges by persevering and working directly with individual husbands and parents to influence behaviour change and attitudes. Persuading parents to send their children to school as education holds the key for a better future and a way out of poverty. Sharing information with husbands about gender based violence effects and consequences”.
- One of the community educators said that “in showing respect and acceptance for all religious groups through reaching out and involving all FBO without prejudice or discrimination in project outreach activities helped her to gain acceptance in the community”
- Working with relevant agencies, individuals and groups to assist community residents in difficult circumstances to access material benefits and services was also identified by community educators and mobilisers as a way of overcoming challenges that survivors of domestic violence and child abuse faced

What were some of the unexpected results of the project?

- Resurfacing of one community's main access road
- Improved and new access to potable water in one of the communities after many years
- Important and useful links made with neighbourhood police stations and local government bodies
- Students gained valuable information through awareness sessions and peer educator workshops for their school-based assessment projects

If you had to do over this project what would be some of changes new things you would do?

- I would work to get persons in authority to erect a community centre so that persons in the community will be able to develop themselves through the acquiring of skills training
- Have more finances available and more resources for the community
- Engage authorities/responsible organisations/agencies prior to entering the community so that more resources are made available to the community
- Study and research the community before implementing a programme to ensure relevancy
- Work on getting more men involved on the steering committee and organise more workshops with men

Was the project was successful in reaching and engaging men?

- On a small scale. Men never saw the whole issue of domestic violence as warranting their time or effort
- Yes to a point but effect was limited. Some men are against domestic violence while some who experienced violence and abuse as a child tend to be abusive as a result of socialization
- The project was successful in reaching out to men. Through the project they became aware that things were changing and became curious and started trying to access information. As a result of raising awareness about GBV men started to complain about their wives' attitudes and felt that their control was slipping away, some of them were genuinely shaken by this development
- Yes, I find men are more aware. Before men did not recognize DV as a form of abuse- they are now understanding there are consequences
- Some of them were afraid to come and some of them are stereotyped, they think that they don't need to know about these things, so only the women come
- In order to reach more men we should have gone out more to where they are e.g. barber shops, roadsides

What would you like to see happen now that the project has ended/recommendations?

- A secondary school teacher who was also a beneficiary of the peer educator workshops had this to say about what he thought was needed now that the project had ended: "In the area of "Grove, Craig, Kaneville many youths are suffering from abuse and many of them are using drugs so we need a building on the East Bank so that people can go in and seek help and counseling. We need more activities to have the youths involved. Also, the parents of the youths need to be involved in sessions since problems in the home leads to the child bad behaviour, they need a place to go and seek help, and we can do this through the PTA. Maybe, someone can visit the school to help children who need help."
- Another recommendation was for Help & Shelter to assist in arranging for the use of the Diamond Community Centre on Saturday afternoons so that the children can have some recreational activities (sports & games) since they usually socialise and talk more at these events and you will get to hear about their problems
- Secondary school students had a list of things they wanted to see happen. These included "wanting to see positive changes in their community; wanting the violence to stop on the road and in the community; wanting step parents to stop beating their step children". This student knew of a family where this type of abuse was taking place. Other students wanted the project to continue so that it could "help more children and elders who are being abused and see peace and love and no abuse"
- Students also wanted "men to stop beating women" and for persons to "stop drinking rum, smoking and using drugs"
- One young man expressed the need for more peer educator workshops so that peer educators can continue the work started as there many people out there who still need help
- Residents also expressed the need for young people to become more involved in the work of the project so they "can speak to the youths who would more listen to persons in their same age group"
- Many of the participants in focus group discussions and interviews wanted to see the project continue as there was still "some alcohol abuse and gambling at street corners" and as the project benefited a lot of women who had abusive husbands the fear was expressed that some of the same men might start getting out of hand again if it stopped
- Participants also hoped that the community mobilisers would continue the work they had been doing in raising awareness, assisting people with their problems and giving advice

- One resident wanted to see what was taught by the project being put into practice, especially in relation to their children: “training their children the good way, to know right from wrong also sitting and talking to them so they can grow up properly”
- Participants also expressed their wish to see domestic violence and sexual abused stopped
- Nursery school teachers recommended that the facilitators make themselves available to do extended work where it was needed, continue the educational sessions and that a new programme should start
- Young students between the ages of 11 and 12 wanted to see better cooperation among each other, persons not beating children anymore and a better life and environment
- One FBO women’s groups recommended that the project to be extended so they could increase their knowledge and requested more workshop sessions with the youth group of their church
- “I would work to get persons in authority to erect a community centre so that persons in the community will be able to develop themselves through the acquiring of skills training”
- Have more finances available and more resources for the community
- Engage authorities/responsible organisations/agencies prior to entering the community so that more resources are made available to the community
- Study and research the community before implementing a programme to ensure relevancy
- Work on getting more men involved on the steering committee and organise more workshops with men

6. Conclusions

Overall, as outlined in the findings, there was successful implementation of almost all of the project’s 14 activities, apart from perhaps the gathering of information on traditions and values in communities to facilitate the involvement of community members. The project lacked expertise to undertake this as a separate activity but quite a lot of information about communities was gathered through close interaction within the communities on a regular basis, which allowed for an incident-free interface with all the project communities during the project. Although some progress was made in networking with other NGOs and agencies in the delivery of services and skills training to increase capacity building in communities, more could have been done, but time constraints, scheduling and suitable community venues were some of the challenges faced.

Community mapping and stakeholder meetings were used as effective strategies to continue the process of sensitising community residents about the existence of the project as well as raising awareness on issues of GBV and child abuse. They also helped the project team to gain acceptance by the communities, understand the physical layout of the communities, the socio-economic status and the problems facing communities. Key stakeholders and influential members of communities were also identified through these meetings. They were also used as a forum for introducing the project to residents, receiving feedback on project aims and activities and for interfacing with key community organisations.

Steering committees were set up in all four project communities, with some functioning more effectively than others. The fact that three of the project communities now have their own independently functioning community-based organisations, which evolved from project steering committees, can be seen as a measure of their success. Through steering committees residents came together not only to discuss the project and project activities but also other issues affecting communities outside of the project’s mandate. Some steering committee members felt that the bulk of the project’s work should be left to the paid community educators and mobilisers. There was also quite a high turnover of steering committee members during the 3 year period due to persons becoming bored with and tired of meetings. Some residents were critical of the narrow

focus on reduction of gender-based violence as they considered other issues deserving of similar attention

House-to-house visits and community walkabouts were seen as effective strategies towards sensitising and raising awareness about gender-based violence including domestic violence and child abuse. The privacy of house-to-house visits created a more conducive environment to receive and address problems of abuse and violence within communities. Report about unusual incidents, domestic violence, child abuse and the identification of families at risk were made mostly through house-to-house visits and community walkabouts. They were also effective ways of reaching men as they were reluctant to participate in more structured group activities such as awareness sessions and workshops. These activities also allowed community educators and mobilisers to address other social issues affecting communities and to keep in touch with community residents during the project period.

The effectiveness of awareness sessions in imparting knowledge was clearly apparent from the responses given in focus group discussions, as individuals outlined particular topics that had resonated with them. For students and young people, the sessions on anger management, adolescence and puberty, sexuality, relationships, sexual and reproductive health and other taboo subjects such as homosexuality were of particular importance. Recognising the damaging effects of child abuse and in particular child sexual abuse and the need to report such incidents were frequently cited not only by adults but by adolescents and youth in the focus group discussions. A statement made at one of the focus group discussions perhaps best captures the impact made in the lives of participants. One young woman said that they had stopped her from committing suicide and changed her life. In evaluating awareness sessions as a strategy to sensitise the communities, it was noted that these were most successfully organised in communities among homogenous and established organisations, institutions and groups that had buildings to facilitate sessions such as FBOs, schools, health centres etc.

Some of the other main challenges for the hosting of awareness sessions were issues of scheduling and suitable venues.

In evaluating the impact of the project on the community and behaviour change participants in the focus group discussions and interviews said there was an increase in awareness as more persons were able to acknowledge abuse in their homes and relationships and access the necessary help. This resulted in a decrease in child abuse and domestic violence. Women in particular were empowered to stand up for their rights and take action against domestic violence and abuse. One practical example given from one community was that fewer women were being forced out of their homes by their husbands. New knowledge of support services for survivors of domestic violence and child abuse and where and how to access these was gained. Parents identified improved parenting and parent-child communication in their own families and in the community generally as a result of the project. Nursery school teachers as a result of sensitisation curtailed verbal abuse of children in the classroom. Alcohol use and abuse were reduced among parents as a result of sensitisation talks and sharing of information on the dangers of alcohol abuse and the possibility of having children removed if the alcoholism leading to child neglect and abuse did not stop. Getting family members, friends and others in their communities to change their behaviours was something that young people were able to achieve.

The benefits to the community from the project according to participants were identified as the gaining of new knowledge and awareness on domestic violence and available support services. Increased reporting of domestic violence and child abuse matters has led to a decrease in domestic violence and child abuse incidents. Community-based organisations that evolved from 3 project steering committees have been working to improve community development. One of

these has obtained funding for a community-based project. Another CBO was able to successfully lobby for a new access road and potable water for its community. More cohesiveness and better community spirit and pride are now evident in some communities. Improved relationships between residents, community development groups and local government bodies have occurred.

Community support for the project was measured through the institutions such as schools, health centres and FBOs that supported the project by allowing access to students, teachers, pre- and post-natal parents and guardians, members of their congregations for awareness sessions and workshops, and the use of their buildings. Community members also opened up their bottom houses for the holding of project activities and businesses supported community-based fundraising activities. Participation by 12,982 community members in the various project activities over the 3 year period was the best indication that there was community support for the project. As is to be expected, not everyone in the communities supported the project, as some persons resent and hate change especially those who have become accustomed to having their own way

In evaluating major successes of the project, community educators and mobilisers articulated seeing persons leave abusive situations due to their successful interventions; witnessing adults and children taking legal action and having successful outcomes; witnessing perpetrators being given prison sentences for being abusive to spouses; adults and parents being warned by the police for inappropriate behaviour; the work done in schools and in churches to raise awareness; the empowerment of women to make better decisions and choices; reporting of cases of abuse of spouses and children to police; and referring cases to agencies such as Help & Shelter and the Ministry of Human Services & Social Security. Pride in the difference made to the lives of many residents is best summed up in the words of one of a community mobiliser: “one of the major successes is looking back from where I was to where I am now in terms of being empowered, knowledgeable and knowing I am not alone and am a heroine for the work I am doing in my community to reduce violence.”

Major challenges identified by community educators and mobilisers were getting community residents to recognise the link between reducing and combating domestic violence and improved quality of life and community development; abusive husbands and neglectful parents; religious prejudice and suspicion; lack of or poor community infrastructure hindering access by project personnel to communities and participation by residents in project activities; the need to provide not only information and sensitisation but also practical assistance so that survivors of domestic violence had the means to move on with their lives; getting persons to accept that domestic violence is a crime.

In evaluating the success of the project in reaching men, responses varied somewhat with some persons of the view that the project was successful in reaching out to men, as they became aware that things were changing they became curious and started to access information. Others felt that as a result of raising awareness about GBV, men started to complain about their wives' attitudes and felt that their control was slipping away and some of them were genuinely shaken by this development. Others assessed that as a result of the project men moved from not recognising DV as a form of abuse to become more conscious and understand that there are consequences while others felt that generally men never saw the whole issue of domestic violence as warranting their time or effort. The general consensus was that there was some success in reaching men and some success in raising awareness of GBV while at the same time recognising that more effort could have been put into finding effective strategies to reach them effectively.

7. Recommendations

Recommendations made by beneficiaries and the next steps that wanted to see now that the project has ended included the extension of the project and ongoing activities in communities or help in mobilising support for some community based activities targeting youth and parents. Students and young people wanted to see domestic and sexual violence, child abuse and alcohol and drug abuse reduced or ended in their communities and wanted continuing peer educating training and other workshops so that the work of education and assistance would continue. Community mobilisers were asked to continue their work in the communities.

Positive changes in communities, better cooperation, better life and peace and love were also some of the things that community members and beneficiaries wanted to see take root in their communities.

8. Lessons Learnt

- Detailed project planning is important for the successful implementation of projects.
- Consultations and involvement by community members using appropriate strategies should be given the highest priority.
- Sustainability and plans to achieve this should be seen as part of a project's outcome.
- More emphasis needs to be placed on ways and means of encouraging community ownership of the project and building capacity.
- Establishing baseline data at the start of the project will help to track and measure the progress made in achieving project goals and aims.
- Innovation and networking with other agencies to address community needs will help to ensure a more holistic development process.