

FCO STRATEGIC PROGRAMME FUND AND BILATERAL PROGRAMME FUND

HELP & SHELTER M&E REPORT

1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2016

Project Title: Counselling, advocacy and referrals for the alleviation of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse.

Project Purpose/Objective: The reduction of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse through provision of essential counselling, advocacy and referral services to survivors/victims of domestic & sexual violence and child abuse, thereby empowering them to recognize and develop coping capacity, change negative behavior patterns, enhance personal growth and overcome abuse and violence in their lives.

Output 1: The provision of counselling (face-to-face and hotline) to 250 survivors/victims of violence

Results

- A total of 82 new clients, 65 adult women and 17 adult men, received face-to-face, hotline and court support services. A total of 84 adults, 72 women and 12 men, also returned for face-to-face follow up counselling services, bringing the total number of adult clients counselled during this quarter to 166, of which 137 were women and 29 were men.
- A total of 5 new children, 4 girls and 1 boy received face-to-face counselling services for physical, non-physical and other forms of abuse and 4 returning child clients, 2 girls and 2 boys also received follow up counselling service, bringing the total number of child clients seen during this quarter to 9 of which 6 were girls and 3 were boys.
- 89% of the new female face-to-face clients and 70% of the new male clients experienced some form of spousal abuse, with physical and non-physical abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and male clients. However, the severity of the spousal abuse experienced by female clients was far greater, more frequent, more intensive and life threatening than that experienced by male clients.
- 9% of new female face-to-face clients and 23% of new adult male face to face clients also experienced intra-family abuse, with non- physical abuse and ‘other’ forms of abuse being the most prevalent for female clients and ‘other’ being the most prevalent for male clients.
- As part of the healing and empowerment process, clients are counselled on the dynamics of domestic violence, cycle of abuse, self-esteem, and the importance of being independent. Many clients are routinely informed about the DVA and how to access DVA protection and maintenance orders as well as other options available based on their individual cases.
- H&S counsellors were able to assist clients with accessing DVA protection and maintenance orders from abusive intimate partners, some of whom were also refusing to financially support their children. One client who has been in an abusive relationship for the past 5 years and whose partner is also the father of her two children, disclosed that she had made several reports to the police station and her partner was charged two years ago and placed before the court, however she did not proceed with the matter. Client said that the situation had gotten worse and her partner is now threatening her life. He took away her bank and ID cards and as soon as her salary goes into her account, he withdraws it and gambles it out. Client said due to her partner behaviour, her relatives do not want anything to do with her. She said she had enough of the abuse and needed help. The client was counselled on domestic violence information and options that are available to address the situation. Counsellor accompanied the client to the nearby police station whereby police officers visited her partner’s home and client was able remove her personal belongings. In addition, the Police was

informed that her partner had taken away her bank and identification cards and with police intervention these were returned to her. Client and her two children were also referred to H&S Ixora Shelter for safety and security. Another H&S counsellor was also able to intervene on behalf of a young mother whose 3 month breast feeding child was removed from her care by a Government Probation & Welfare officer and placed in the care of her male partner after client threw partner's clothes out of the house. The counsellor reported the matter to CPA and when client's partner refused to comply with instructions from CPA to bring child to the agency, the Divisional Police Commander had to be called upon to intervene before child was safely returned to the care of his mother. Another young female client who was being raped by an uncle and told he wanted them to live as man and wife and wanted to have a child with client, was referred to H&S shelter. Reports indicate that client is comfortable at the shelter and has plans for her future which includes getting a job. Clients were also able through successful DVA applications to have their abusive partners removed from homes and were successful in acquiring jobs from referrals given by counsellors and moving on to live lives free from abusive and the threat of abuse. A female client who had endured abuse, disrespect and humiliation from her partner for years, reported that she knew she had to leave when partner locked her out of their room, and when she knocked on the door for him to open, he came out with an ice pick and used threatening words to her. Client who said she had the marks of violence on her body to remind her of the abuse she suffered, walked out of the relationship with only the clothes on her back not knowing where to turn and was directed to H&S. She was depressed, tearful and confused as to where to go, and who to turn to for help. Counsellor shared the various options that were available, informed her about the DVA and cycle of abuse and after counselling referred her to the Ixora Shelter. The following day client was accompanied to the Magistrate Court to file for DVA Protection and Occupancy Orders and was given the very next day to attend court, her partner was also served with the order. The next day client's DVA Orders were granted and partner was told by the Court to stay 500 yards away from client and to remove his belonging from the home. Client stayed at the Ixora for a few days after the order was granted and when her partner complied with the order by removing himself from their home, client then proceeded to changing the locks on the door, for safety measures and then returned to her home. Client with help from H&S was also able to access a small loan from IPED. Client thanked H&S for the services she received, and said, had she known that such help was out there for her, she would have left much sooner. A partner NGO, referred a client who had been sent to them for counselling by the Court to H&S as they felt the client was still at risk from her partner. Client was referred to H&S Ixora shelter for her safety. Counsellors also counselled a mother referred from her daughter's school. The client's daughter had told her teacher at school about the abuse her mother was experiencing at home from her father. Client was called into the school and after disclosing partner's alcoholic behaviour and his sleeping with a knife under his pillow she was referred by the school to seek help and advice at H&S. Client was informed about the DVA, and encouraged to make a report to the nearest police station and informed about services and assistance of various other organizations. Client's partner was also sent a letter asking him to come in for counselling, as was client's request. The night before the appointment, client was physically abused again by her partner and the matter is before the court presently. A hot line client who as advised to access further counselling came into H&S office for further assistance. Client disclosed that she was threatened with a piece of wood, had her hair pulled and told that she will be killed if she continues to come home at that time. It was client's work commitments which caused her to be a little later than usual in returning home. Client became fearful and made a report to nearby police station. The threats didn't stop although the report was made, and the very next day her partner threatened to jump with her into the river, telling her knows to swim. He also call up few of his relatives and told them to stop visiting his home and told client to let her family do the same. Client was appropriately counselled and filed for a DVA Protection Order (P.O.). Client's P.O was granted and client is out of the home. Client is accessing counseling presently.

Output 2: The provision of in-court support to 25 victims of violence

Results

- Court support services, including counselling, attending court hearings and educating clients and family members about court processes, rules and procedures benefitted 19 new adult female clients and 2 adult males.

- The majority of adult court support clients were survivors of domestic violence pursuing Domestic Violence Act protection orders(16); child maintenance orders(5); assault(3); threatening language(2); custody (1); attempted murder(1); breach of DVA P.O.(1) (NB some clients had several court matters)
- Outcomes of court support cases resulted in: 12 DVA interim/final protection orders were granted to clients; interim/final child maintenance orders granted to 2 clients; 1 defendant was fined for threatening language; 1 case was dismissed; 1 case was discharged due to offender absent from all hearings and apprehension of offender by Court issued arrest warrant unsuccessful. A further 6 cases are continuing.
- Court support counsellors made a difference in the life of a female client, separated from her husband, who since attending counseling at H&S is now allowing her a lot more access to their two children (who live with him). She said prior to the counseling that was ordered by the court, she was only getting visits on rare occasions. Now she is happy to be able to see her children more often without having to go to court to enforce her rights. Another client who had never been to court said that it was really helpful for her when the court support counsellor encouraged her to sit in the court room while other cases were being heard. She said she was very nervous about going into the court room, but after sitting there during other cases she felt less nervous when she had to give evidence in her case. A client who was sexually abused as a child and whose preliminary case had been transferred for trial at the high Court was called to the DPP office, informed that the trial was to begin soon, and asked whether she was willing to go through with the matter at the High Court. On receiving this news client called the court support counsellor from the DPP office in tears to inform her and said she could not go through with the trauma of this trial all over again. Court support counsellor suggested that she give herself some time to think about her decision and to ask the DPP office for some time before giving them her final decision. After a few days the client informed the court support counsellor and DPP that she would be going through with the High Court trial. Court support counsellors were able to advise clients that even though their DVA protection orders were granted they still had to be vigilant and cautious in their movements to and from home as perpetrators can be potentially dangerous and malicious. Clients were also reminded that they should consider taking legal representation in cases where defendants had acquired their own legal representation to challenge DVA cases. Clients continue to express appreciation of counselling services and support received from Help & Shelter counsellors.

Output 3: 100 victims/survivors of domestic and sexual child abuse are informed of the legal, health, educational, housing, employment, financial and other services available to them and supported in accessing these

Results

- Clients benefitted from a total of 48 referrals, 38 for women and 10 to men. Referrals were given for legal aid services (14); magistrates' courts (20); the police (4); job placement agency (4) Childcare & Protection Agency (1); Ministry of Social Protection (2) and other services (2).
- In addition, 10 adult women and 15 of their dependent children were referred by Help & Shelter's Crisis Centre to Help & Shelter's Ixora Shelter for abused women. Abused clients who have no safe place to live are referred to the shelter where they can access counselling and other free services for themselves and their dependent children for a period of up to 6 months or longer depending on individual circumstances. Counsellors also sometimes accompany clients for DVA protection orders and magistrates' courts have become much more responsive in expediting the hearing of applications.

Output 4: Ongoing advocacy for effective implementation of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Acts

Results

- During the face-to-face, hotline, and court support counselling process clients are informed of the provisions of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Acts and encouraged to utilize these laws

for their protection, prevention of abuse and access to justice. This resulted in 34 client referrals to legal aid and the magistrates' courts for DVA protection orders etc.

- Help & Shelter independently and in collaboration with other NGOs has been active in advocating for full implementation of the Sexual Offences Act, including the re-convening of the Sexual Offences Task Force, appointment of special judges to address the backlog of sexual offence cases, nationwide programmes for sensitization, introduction of protocols for service providers, DVA & sexual offence police units with trained personnel etc.
- We have also taken part in a youth and health fairs at which we disseminated our brochures and posters on DV, DVA, SOA, Child Abuse and GBV and interacted with youths, students, women, teachers and other members of the public.

Danuta Radzik
M&E officer