



HELP & SHELTER

STRENGTHENING POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND SOCIAL SERVICES, PUBLIC EDUCATION & ADVOCACY TO REDUCE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

FINAL REPORT

PROJECT INFORMATION

A grant agreement was signed between UNIFEM and Help & Shelter (H&S) on 1st December 2007 by Roberta Clarke, the Regional Programme Director for UNIFEM and Margaret Kertzious, Coordinator of Help & Shelter.

The project: Strengthening Policy Frameworks and Social Services, Public Education & Advocacy to Reduce Gender-Based Violence was executed over a 2-year period. Due to the non-completion of project activities by the end of the second year, a request for a no-cost extension of three months was granted by UNIFEM to complete capacity building workshops on monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management and an external evaluation.

The goal of the project was to make a significant contribution to the reduction of gender-based violence in Guyana. To achieve this, the project sought to support efforts toward the enactment and implementation of the Sexual Offences Bill; the development of protocols to guide the work of staff of Magistrate's Court, police officers and ranks, prosecutors and social workers/counsellors; the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA) through training of police officers, other frontline workers and other relevant stakeholders using the developed protocols, with a view to increasing awareness of the DVA and the Sexual Offences legislation.

In addition, the project included implementation of Public Education and Awareness Sessions for other social service providers, educators, students, community members, community leaders, members of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the general public as well as production of material and the hiring of a Legal Consultant. Targets were also set for the number of persons to be engaged during the life of the project.

The management team of the project comprised a part-time Project Coordinator, a full-time Public Education Officer, a part-time Public Education Officer, a part-time Accounting Officer, a part-time Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer and three volunteers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Project Goal was to make a significant contribution to the reduction of gender-based violence in Guyana.
- Key achievements and outputs were the acceptance of the four protocols by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, sensitization of members of various groups such teachers, students, health care professionals, staff of the Ministry of Education and members of faith based organizations through 24 public education sessions leading to an increase in use of Help & Shelter's services and more appropriate response by community members to cases of gender-based violence. Over 50% of clients who accessed Help & Shelter's services indicated that they were motivated to use the services through the broadcasting of the PSAs or participation in public education sessions; they

also expressed their satisfaction with service provided by hotline or office-based counsellors.

- Progress towards outcomes: four protocols for specific stakeholders, namely, the police, persecutors, social workers/counselors and the staff of the magistrate's court were completed. Over 75% of frontline workers now understand the dynamics of gender-based violence and that the DVA may be used to protect women.
- Major challenges and solutions were the passing of the sexual offences legislation and the development of the protocol. The sexual offenses legislation is before the select committee and is to be sent to parliament for the debate process. Four of the five protocols are completed and training was conducted with persons from several institutions. Copies of the protocols were sent to the relevant stakeholders who were consulted before the developmental stage. The one for health workers is in draft and consultation with the ministry is yet to be done.
- Lessons learnt: Help & Shelter has no control over the passing of the new sexual offences legislation that is scheduled to be passed in parliament. The process is a lengthy one and the coalition between Red Thread and Help & Shelter had tried to speed up the process through picketing exercises in front of the Office of the President and Parliament every Thursday afternoon from 4 to 5 pm, we are still awaiting the final results.

PROJECT CONTEXT

The project envisaged the enactment of the Sexual Offences Bill during the period of implementation. However, consideration of the Bill by the Select Committee of Parliament was protracted. As a consequence, the Bill was not presented to Parliament for acceptance by the end of the project. Dependence on the passage of the Sexual Offences Bill was an unintended risk built into the project.

The delay by the Select Committee sparked outrage among some citizens and led to the formation of a coalition between Help & Shelter and Red Thread. The coalition organized a series of picketing exercises in front of Parliament Buildings and the Office of the President, campaigned in the city centre distributing brochures and leaflets and engaging members of the public in one-on-one conversations.

No approval was received from the Guyana Police Force to carry out activities with police officers and ranks; thus activities planned in this regard could not be implemented.

The project was designed to result in one protocol being prepared to guide the work of several groups as noted above. However, as the process unfolded, the decision was made to prepare separate protocols for each group, since peculiarities existed. As a consequence, the period of preparation was extended well into the second year of the project, resulting in no piloting of the documents. Thus, only one training session on their use was held. This may result in limited use of the documents unless Help & Shelter and/or the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security take the lead in this regard. In the case of Help & Shelter, such action would depend on the availability of funds to facilitate training activities.

The Capacity Development Workshops held at the end of the project have equipped staff of Help & Shelter with knowledge and skills which should enable the organization to design and implement future projects which lead to tangible results. However, the timing of the initiative did not provide the opportunity to influence actions of this project. As a consequence, some of the results and the indicators articulated in the project document which ought to have been revised were not.

PROJECT GOAL

The project goal was to make a significant contribution to the reduction of gender-based violence.

A. PROJECT STRATEGIES

- Advocacy to change public attitudes by a national media campaign using PSAs, distribution of brochures and posters; incidentally, picketing of the Office of the President and Parliament as well as participation in a press conference to draw attention to violence against children and the delay in passage of the Sexual Offences Bill as a member of a coalition forged with Red Thread.
- Capacity Development through strengthening of the knowledge and skills of frontline workers in the social service sector through training including issues such as the dynamics of gender-based violence to enable the workers to effectively implement the Domestic Violence Act and providing quality social support services. Additionally, the conduct of workshops on monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management for members of H&S' project teams.
- Public Outreach/Awareness-raising sessions and workshops with target groups such as teachers, students, leaders of faith-based organizations.
- Development of protocols relating to the implementation of the DVA and the Sexual Offences Act for use by key frontline workers.

PROJECT OUTCOMES & OUTPUTS
PROGRESS TOWARDS OUTPUTS

EXPECTED OUTCOME 1	A new Sexual Offences legislation is created, which includes gender sensitive language and focuses on women's right to protection from violence.
INDICATOR 1	The Sexual Offences Act is passed and its language reflects gender sensitivity and women's right to protection from violence: this was not achieved.
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
Nil	A 1-hour picketing exercise continued in front of the Office of the President and Parliament Building every Thursday afternoon.
PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 1	<p><u>Protocol – Part 1</u></p> <p>At the end of the project period, the Sexual Offences Bill was still with the Select Committee of Parliament. As a result, the expectation that the Bill would be passed and be available to inform subsequent activities was not realized.</p> <p>However, Help & Shelter continued to participate in the activities of the coalition it forged with Red Thread aimed at raising awareness in the general population and indicating to government and Parliamentarians dissatisfaction with the rate of progress towards passage of the Bill. This entailed picketing of Parliament and Office of the President as well as campaigning in the city centre where brochures and flyers were distributed and individuals were engaged in discussion of the state of sexual violence in the country and the stalling of the Bill in Parliament.</p> <p>[N.B. The Sexual Offences Act was passed in Parliament on April 22, 2010 and assented to by the President of Guyana on May 24, 2010 after the end of the project.]</p>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 2	A draft protocol to accompany the Sexual Offences Act, the Domestic Violence Act and protection orders is created and key institutions have

	agreed to use it.
INDICATOR 2.1	Protocol is completed.
INDICATOR 2.2	Number of institutions agreeing to use the protocol to implement the Sexual Offences Act, Domestic Violence Act and Protection Orders
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
Nil	Nil
PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 2	<p>While one protocol was envisaged at the design stage of the project, four protocols focusing mainly on responses to Domestic Violence were completed for the following groups: the police, persecutors, social workers/counsellors and the staff of the Magistrate's Court.</p> <p>The process of preparation of the protocols took much longer than envisaged at the design phase of the project. This was due, in part, to the realization that separate protocols were more relevant.</p> <p>Help & Shelter has presented the four completed protocols to the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security which has accepted the protocols and is expected to promote their use by the relevant agencies through its Domestic Violence Policy Unit. The DVU is expected to monitor use of the protocols. The Registrar of the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security have agreed to use the protocols.</p> <p>No written agreement with respect to the use of the protocols exists.</p>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 3	<p><u>Police Training</u> 75% of the senior police officers have an increased understanding of the acts and rare trained in how to use them effectively and are passing the knowledge to their fellow officers</p> <p>50% of the police stations where the trained police officers work are providing better services to victims of gendered violence</p> <p>5% of the new police recruits have a better understanding of gender-based violence and the acts and how to use them effectively</p>
INDICATOR 3.1	Number of senior police officers that have an increased understanding of the dynamics of gender based violence and are able to effectively implement the Acts and protection orders
INDICATOR 3.2	Number of police stations providing better services
INDICATOR 3.3	Number of new police recruits that show an understanding of gender based violence and how to use the Acts and protection orders
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
Nil	Nil
PROGRESS	No training has been conducted specifically for the police. Requests for

<p>TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 3</p>	<p>collaboration with the Guyana Police Force were not entertained. However, some police participated in public education sessions and members of Community Policing Groups received training during the project.</p> <p>It must be noted, however, that the Guyana Police Force has an 8-module course on Police Response to Domestic Violence which is delivered by a team of trained trainers who are members of the organization; the course includes the Police Policy on Domestic Violence, Police Procedures for Responding to Domestic Violence, Police Procedures for Responding to Child Abuse, the nature and dynamics of domestic violence, data collection and record keeping.</p> <p>The course is offered to recruits attending the Felix Austin Police College as well as ranks and officers participating in continuing education courses offered by the College. It is the intention that training would be conducted in all Divisions of the institution; however, some Divisions no longer have resident trainers due to retirement, death, migration or transfer.</p>	
<p>EXPECTED OUTCOME 4</p>	<p><u>Public Education</u> Over 75% of the frontline workers will better understand the dynamics of gender based violence and the legal provisions available to protect women and therefore be able to provide better services to victims of violence</p> <p>50% of Help & Shelter clients report better services from institutions where public education sessions have taken place</p>	
<p>INDICATOR 4.1</p>	<p>Number of frontline workers reporting a better understanding of gender-based violence and legal and social provisions available to provide better services to victims of violence</p>	
<p>INDICATOR 4.2</p>	<p>Number of Help & Shelter clients that report better services from institutions where public education sessions have taken place</p>	
<p>Planned Activities</p>		<p>Actual Activities</p>
<p>3-4 hour public education sessions conducted to sensitize and training frontline workers in Georgetown and three towns close by.</p>		<p>Public education sessions were held with 26 school children, 8 male and 18 female; 42 members and leaders of youth groups, 18 male and 24 female and 806 members and leaders of community-based organizations, NGOs, faith-based organizations and other groups, 216 male and 590 female.</p>
<p>PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 4</p>	<p>The frontline workers now have a better understanding of gender-based violence and the legal provision available to protect women and victims of violence. The majority have indicated that they are now in a position to respond more appropriately to victims of violence and refer persons to Help & Shelter.</p> <p>There has been an increase in referrals made to Help & Shelter by persons who were trained and by other members of the agencies from which they came and by Help & Shelter to health centres. Unfortunately, no system was instituted to track the referrals resulting from participation in project activities.</p>	

	<i><u>Please see attached doc. on public education.</u></i>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 5	<p><u>Awareness Sessions</u> 40% increase in numbers of women seeking assistance from Help & Shelter</p> <p>20% increase in number of gender based violence cases reported to the police</p> <p>20% increase in the number of protection orders and other orders applied for under the DVA</p> <p>10% increase in the number of court cases</p>
INDICATOR 5.1	Number of H&S client intake forms that refer to these sessions as playing a role in their seeking assistance
INDICATOR 5.2	Number of cases reported to the police for the 6 month
INDICATOR 5.3	Number of protection orders and other orders – for the 6 month – 3 applications made by legal consultant –the others were referred to the Guyana Legal Aid Centre
INDICATOR 5.4	Number of court cases – numbers would represent the number of attendances at court
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
1-3 hour sessions on the dynamics of gender-based violence, the DVA and other provisions for teachers, students, women attending pre- and post-natal clinics, health care workers and NGOs.	Sessions were conducted 1833 students, 681 male and 1152 female, and 361 members of NGOs and faith-based organizations, 74 male and 287 female. Sessions were also conducted at health centres targeting 76 male and 739 female.
PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 5	<p>Sessions were interactive. Participants were involved in lively discussions during the sessions. Participants, especially the school children, were willing to share information on the abuse perpetrated on them. The challenge is that students are using drugs and alcohol thus an increased in violence in the schools.</p> <p>During July to December 2009, 310 new clients accessed the counseling services of Help & Shelter, 234 female and 32 male of whom there were 29 female and 15 male children.</p> <p>Unfortunately, no system was instituted to track the number of clients who referred to the sessions on the intake forms, the number of cases reported to the police, the number of protection or other orders or the number of court cases resulting from participation in project activities.</p>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 6	<p><u>Material</u> Increase in public awareness</p> <p>40% increase in number of women seeking assistance from & Help</p>

	<p>Shelter</p> <p>20% increase in number of gender based violence cases reported to the police</p> <p>20% increase in the number of protection orders and other orders applied for under the DVA</p> <p>10 increase in the number of court cases</p>
INDICATOR 6.1	Number of Help & Shelter client intake forms that refer to these sessions as playing a role in their seeking assistance
INDICATOR 6.2	Number of cases reported to the police each year
INDICATOR 6.3	Number of protection orders and other orders
INDICATOR 6.4	Number of court cases
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
<p>Distribution of posters and brochures</p> <p>Airing of PSAs on radio and television</p>	<p>Distribution of brochures and posters was continued as was the broadcast of PSAs on radio and television.</p> <p>Between July and December 2009, 28,162 brochures and 489 posters were distributed, while PSAs were broadcast on 5 television and 2 radio stations. A total of 62 radio spots and 106 television spots were broadcast each per month.</p>
PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 6	<p>Distribution of brochures and posters continued apace. They were accessed by other NGOs which used them in their training and informational sessions.</p> <p>As noted in relation to Expected Outcome 5, it was unfortunate that no system was instituted to track the number of clients who referred to the sessions on the intake forms, the number of cases reported to the police, the number of protection or other orders or the number of court cases resulting from participation in project activities.</p>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 7	<p><u>Legal Consultant</u></p> <p>Help & Shelter provides legal services for clients</p> <p>Increased number of clients referred by the court system to access Help & Shelter services</p> <p>Increased number of clients report cases to the police</p> <p>Increased numbers of clients are represented in court cases</p>
INDICATOR 7.1	Number of Help & Shelter clients that received legal services

INDICATOR 7.2	Number of clients referred by the court system to access H&S services
INDICATOR 7.3	Number of clients who report cases to the police
INDICATOR 7.4	Numbers of clients who are represented in court cases
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
Activity 7.1 Provision off legal services to clients by Legal Consultant	<p>Legal Consultant drafted three applications for Protection Orders, represented two clients in court and provided legal counselling to eight clients.</p> <p>Help & Shelter Court Support Officers made 243 court appearances during the period, this number included repeat appearances.</p>
PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 7	<p>The Legal Consultant was able to assist clients through the drafting of applications for Protection Orders, representing clients and court and offering legal counselling.</p> <p>The Magistrate’s Courts have increased referrals to Help & Shelter. Increased number of persons made reports to the police.</p> <p>Increased numbers of clients are represented in court cases.</p> <p>Unfortunately, no system was instituted to track the number of clients referred by the court to Help & Shelter and the number making reports to the police.</p>
EXPECTED OUTCOME 8	Protocol – Part 2 75% of staff members in 10 institutions are using the protocol in their work with victims off gender based violence
INDICATOR 8	Number of staff members that are using the protocol
Planned Activities	Actual Activities
One training session on the use of the protocols.	Because of the late completion of the protocols, training on the use of the protocols was only offered to the staff of Help & Shelter and to relevant stakeholders, including representatives from Red Thread, Women Across Differences, University of Guyana, the Guyana Police Force, Georgetown Magistrates Court, Ministry of Human Services, Ministry of Education, Guyana Conference of Seventh Day Adventist, Guyana Association of Professional Social Workers and Women’s Affairs Bureau. Twenty-one (21) persons were trained on December 11, 2009 at Help & Shelter office on Homestretch Avenue and these include police officers; social workers; counsellors; field officers; welfare officers; staff of Magistrate’s Courts; and students from the

PROGRESS TOWARDS EXPECTED OUTCOME 8	Due to completion of the four protocols during the reporting period, only one training session was conducted for representatives from eleven institutions/organizations as mentioned above. The organizations/institutions are based in Region 3, Region 4 and Georgetown. The intention was to roll out the training to a larger number of institutions/organizations in three Regions.
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PROJECT BUDGET			
Categories	Planned Budget	Expenditure	Balance
	US\$	US\$	US\$
Personnel	47,817	47,817	0
Activities	8,384	8,384	0
Materials & PSAs	31,237	31,237	0
Technical Equipment & Office Supplies	10,210	10,210	0
Miscellaneous	6,260	6,260	0
Capacity Building	12,519	-	12,519
Evaluation	8,763	8,763	0
TOTAL	125,190	112,671	12,519

CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND ACTION PLANS

During the month of March 2009, Red Thread and Help & Shelter met to discuss the formation of a coalition and on Sunday, March 29, 2009 several organizations and individuals were invited to a meeting held at Red Thread. The meeting, attended by 59 persons, agreed on the theme: "Stepping Up the Fight Against Sexual Violence Against Children" for the coalition. A steering committee was put in place and members scheduled a meeting to prepare a plan of action and discuss the way forward. The first activity on was the picketing exercise in front of the Office of the President and Parliament building during the sitting of Parliament every Thursdays at 4 pm. The other activities were a press conference with the media, both television and print, to discuss the issue of Sexual Violence Against Children. The coalition panel consisted of the Legal Consultant, a counselor, a Help & Shelter Public Education Officer and the Coordinator and a Field Officer from Red Thread. Other activities were appearances on television and radio programmes and public education activities in front of Republic Bank and a shopping mall.¹

The passage of the Child Care and Protection Agency Act has led to the formalization of the Child Care and Protection Agency. Help & Shelter had made several recommendations and other contributions to the passing of this bill since it is interested in ensuring that children who experience domestic violence and sexual violence receive the best possible services.

The preparation of the protocols for police officers and ranks, prosecutors, social workers/counsellors and staff of the Magistrate's Court related to the Domestic Violence Act and the Sexual Offences Bill is a significant achievement.

¹ The picketing exercise continued until the Sexual Offences Bill was passed in parliament on May 24, 2010.

CHALLENGES

The design of the project itself introduced challenges for Help & Shelter.

First, inclusion of the passing of the Sexual Offences Bill as a precursor to other activities and a result of the project led to non-completion of some activities and non-attainment of the stated outcome. It is now recognized that this action was outside the control of Help & Shelter and should not have been used in this manner. The passage of the Bill did not occur by the end of the project as it was laid before a Select Committee of Parliament which had not yet considered it.

Secondly, the inability to gain approval from the Commissioner of Police to effect training with members of the organization led to non-completion of a significant aspect of the project. It must be recognized, however, that the Guyana Police Force already has a course designed to prepare its members to respond appropriately to reports of domestic violence.

Thirdly, the project design envisaged the preparation of one protocol on Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence. However, because of the peculiarities of the focal agencies, the decision was made to prepare four protocols, one for each of the following groups: police, prosecutors, social workers/counselors and staff of the Magistrate's Court. As a consequence, the protocols were not completed until the final quarter; this limited the ability to pilot the protocols.

Finally, the inclusion of targets in the activities and results led to approaches which encouraged more attention being paid to the number of persons engaged than on the deepening of understanding among a smaller number of persons; the latter approach was more likely to enhance achievement of the desired results and sustainability at the community level.

The organization of the Capacity Building workshop at the end of the project raised awareness of participants to the deficiencies in the design of this project. During the workshops, participants expressed some frustration at being denied the opportunity to improve their efforts during the project but recognized the value of the experience for future initiatives. In addition, the timing of the initiative did not provide the opportunity to influence actions of this project. As a consequence, some of the results and indicators articulated in the project document which ought to have been revised were not.

The availability of the reporting format at the end of the project introduced additional challenges. For instance, the reporting requirements on the budget requested information by Activity related to each Expected Outcome. However, the project budget was not prepared along these lines. It would be useful for the reporting guidelines to be available during project preparation.

UNEXPECTED RESULTS

The delay in passage of the Sexual Offences Bill provided the opportunity for Help & Shelter to strengthen its advocacy role and profile through participation in the coalition with Red Thread. Several activities were implemented, e.g., the picketing of Parliament and the Office of the President, hosting of a press conference and engagement with individuals in the city centre. More important, the two organizations have continued to collaborate on advocating for the benefits of women and children basic human rights.

LOCAL/NATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT & PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Help & Shelter has recognized the importance of development of a strategic plan which would guide its initiatives and inform future programmes and projects. The Capacity Development

workshop on monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management which was conducted at the end of the project has sharpened the focus, knowledge and skills of staff and project personnel involved in different Help & Shelter projects. As a result, the organization will endeavour to continue working with those agencies and institutions involved in this project through subsequent projects to build their capacity to function as change agents.

Links have been established, particularly with health centres and schools, to enable referrals to be made. Help & Shelter stands ready to respond to requests from these agencies and institutions which it now considers its partners in the effort to reduce the incidence of gender-based violence. Efforts will also be made to develop a training of trainers course for members of partner agencies and institutions to enable deeper and sustained action at the community level and to broaden the network of supporting organizations.

Help & Shelter is pursuing support for complementary projects from other donor agencies. It intends to work in the communities involved in this project to deepened understanding of the issues and approaches by participants as well as widen the network at the community level. It envisages that training of trainers from these communities (geographic and organizational) will lead to assumption of ownership for the process of change, thus increase sustainability.

PARTNERSHIPS & COORDINATION

The coalition with Red Thread, which was an unplanned activity, has strengthened the relationship between the two organizations. Help & Shelter and Red Thread continued to advocate for the passage of the Sexual Offences Bill through the end of the project.

Help & Shelter has also indicated its willingness to collaborate with the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security through its presentation of the protocols. It is envisaged that the organization will be invited to participate in with the Ministry's efforts related to gender-based violence and can expect reciprocal action.

Help & Shelter intends to nurture its relationship with the Registrar of the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security. In the latter regard, it will seek to collaborate with the Domestic Violence Policy Unit to promote use of the protocols by the relevant agencies, either through co-sponsorship of activities or by providing resource persons for training activities.

GOOD PRACTICE, LESSONS LEARNT & INNOVATION

Guyana, a country of diverse race and culture, has signed on to several human rights conventions such as the convention on the discrimination of all forms of violence against women; the convention on the rights of the child. These legal binding documents have guiding procedures as to what the state party is expected to put in place for the protection of women and children and these include the provision of a safe place for women and their children to stay when options of access to such places are available. On-going public awareness on gender norms with several target groups are conducted on a weekly basis to address the inequitable gender norms and power disparities as the root cause of violence against women and girls, a violation of human rights and an impediment to development.

Working with a diversity of groups to address gender-based violence requires buy-in by partners and stakeholders, if activities are to be implemented in an effective manner and sustainability is to be fostered. Therefore, consultation with key stakeholders is essential and should be ongoing.

Prior to implementation of the project, discussions were held with officials of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security, local government bodies and the Guyana Police Force as well as head teachers of schools and head nurses of health centres. During the project, consultations and meetings were held with officials of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry

of Health. Positive responses were received from some of these, facilitating implementation of project activities and requests for additional issues to be addressed as well as an increase in the number of activities undertaken. Responsiveness by Help & Shelter contributed to shared ownership and the building of capacity of some of the stakeholders who are now equipped to effect referrals in cases of domestic violence and child abuse and be more proactive in their communities.

The following lessons were learnt during the project:

- The involvement of persons who have worked on similar initiatives at the conceptualization and project design stage is critical. This allows them to share lessons with the designers of the project, allowing examination of assumptions, reduction of risks and articulation of more realistic results.
- Activities which are intended to lay the foundation for subsequent activities should be built around processes and systems which are controlled by the organization. In this case, one main activity – passage of the Sexual Offences Bill – was intended to inform the preparation of a protocol as well as provide content for public awareness activities. By the end of the project, the Sexual Offences Bill had not passed in Parliament. As a consequence, some activities which were planned could not be implemented.
- Gaining permission from authority figures such as head-teachers for the conduct of education sessions with students and allowing them to participate in the decision-making helps to increase a sense of ownership of the process. This facilitates the monitoring of the outcomes and impact of the public education programme and increases requests for continued work by the organization. It also encourages the partner entity to be more proactive in responding to relevant issues.
- It is important to identify other organizations/agencies which are involved in similar activities and explore strategies for collaboration. The delay in the passage of the Sexual Offences Bill by Parliament led to Help & Shelter's collaboration with Red Thread on the formation a coalition to advocate for action on the Bill. This helped to raise awareness in a wider audience and gained their participation in crafting slogans. It also demonstrated the importance of flexibility as circumstances change.
- The use of a variety of media in a public awareness campaign and public education programmes throughout the project enables dissemination of information to a wide cross-section of the population. It is important to consider the results of such a strategy as there are implications for the services the organization provides. In this case, there has been an increase in the number of persons accessing the services which are face-to-face counselling, hotline counselling, use of the shelter, court support and requests for additional information. In fact, due to the project activities, for the first time in years the shelter had a major increase in occupancy during 2009.

The project also promoted holistic and multi-sectoral approaches for women to use to address their basic human rights and their need for prevention and response to violence, safety and protection, access to health, legal advice and economic enhancement. These were achieved through one-on-one counseling, coordination and partnership including government ministries, civil society organizations, women's groups and networking with other partners.

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

Brochures were prepared during project cycle. These, along with narrative and evaluation reports and statistical data are posted on the Help & Shelter website: www.hands.org.com; Help & Shelter has also compiled newspaper clippings on various project activities. These are mounted

on coloured cardboard that are displayed on the walls and mobile boards for clients to view. Copies of these were also kept in project files as reference.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

As mentioned above, the capacity development workshop has been beneficial to members of H&S' project teams. It would have had a positive impact on this project had it been conducted earlier in the process.

An external evaluation was conducted at the end of the project and a report on this activity was submitted.

NEXT STEPS

Several recommendations were made at the Capacity Development workshop and in the evaluation report. One major concern is that the organization needs to develop a strategic plan and to put in place a mechanism to capture success stories from project activities. This is to be done at all level of the organization.

Help & Shelter will also use the Monitoring and Evaluation and Documentation and Dissemination Action Plans to guide its work in the future. They articulate steps that the organization needs to take to develop the competence of its staff, volunteers and other stakeholders. They also indicate ways in which Help & Shelter can collaborate with other actors to strengthen systems as well as knowledge management for the benefit of a wider audience.

It is therefore apposite for Help & Shelter to engage in internal strategizing and continue the process of capacity building.

SUPPORTING/ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

GRANTEE FEEDBACK

Help & Shelter is appreciative of the support received from the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women. It recognizes the concessions made to enable it to receive project funding as well as to complete project activities over a protracted period.

The project has taught Help & Shelter many lessons regarding project design and implementation which should lead to better project planning and execution. It has contributed to the building of a sense of identification with and ownership for the organization in staff and project team members. It has also assisted in the forging of relationships with and among frontline workers, community leaders and members and other key players at the community level, ones which should lead to sustained action on the ground.

Help & Shelter will put several systems in place to enable heightened participants' involvement in knowledge generation and more accurate and realistic reporting on outputs and outcomes. Among the areas to be addressed are capturing of participants' experiences for dissemination to a wider audience; mechanisms for accurate collection of data with respect to source of referrals, for example; actions taken by participants post exposure to interventions; and building on what has already been achieved at the community level.

Help & Shelter acknowledges that this has been a learning experience. It also hopes that the project has provided lessons from which others can learn.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DVA Domestic Violence Act

DVU Domestic Violence Unit

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

NGO Non-governmental Organization