

# **Report**

Help & Shelter / EU

Child Protection Project

Project Coordinator's Report – January 2011

## **Overview**

Assessment of the four (4) target Communities was done via community visits and some critical baseline information and contacts were made. Zeelugt was visited on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> January. The persons that were contacted in the Community of Zeelugt were

- Pandit Vijay Doobay of the Shree Rama Krishna Mandir
- Head Mistress of Zeelugt Primary School, Ms. Faria David
- Pastors Magdalene Juman- Assembly of God Church
- Chairman of the Zeelugt Masjid. Mr. Khan
- Organizer of the Cricket team Mr. Terry Patram who is also a member of the Shree Rama Krishna Mandir management.
- Women's group organizer Ms. Deowkie Sankar
- Nurse Melisa James who's in charge of the Health Out Post.
- Ms. Shafena Inshan – Community Mobilizer
- The PTA Chairperson –Hardai “Anita” Persaud
- Pastor Rishi Persaud – Baptist Church

Good Hope was visited on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January and a meeting was held with community mobilizer Susan Chung who was also currently involved in

another Help & Shelter project that was focused on domestic Abuse. Ms. Chung provided some relevant background information on the community :-

- The community had no public meeting place
- The school that most children was in Lusignan (a close by village)
- Some work was done under a previous H&S project with the Lusignan school PTA
- A particular section of the community has a high incidence of domestic and child abuse.
- Ms. Norma Patadin always offers a space at her home for meetings and workshops held in the community.

A meeting was held with members of the Hague Community who were part of another H & S Project. Present at the meeting were:

- Ms Parbattie Ranglall
- Ms B. Khedu
- Ms. Paula John

They provided back ground information and status reports of current situations and activities within the community.

In Sophia, an update was given to members of the community, and members of the community coalition who were active during the Pickney Project were contacted and given an outline of the new Child Protection Project implementation and action.

Those contacted were:

- Ms Malini De Nobrega Community Rep.
- Mr. Lionel Alleyne – Policing Group Vice Chairman
- Pastor N. Khublall – Church of Christ
- Mr. Reginald Blake – Sophia Nursery PTA

- Ms Tandecia Hytmiah – Youth Club Volunteer
- Ms. Winifred Toney School Teacher
- Ms Anita Shelto – Leader of women’s group

All the communities felt the Project will be impacting and help to build stronger awareness and an understanding of how to care and protect children.

### **Community Assessment Data**

The visits and meetings in the communities provided the project Team with a general sense of community dynamics and confirmed the community buy into the Project Community Data acquired was as followed:

#### **Many teen and Young parents in the Community.**

In Zeelugt , Sophia and Good Hope it was observed and stated by persons living in the community that most of the pregnant women and mothers of young children were very young them selves. Discussions with the nurse at Zeelugt health Centre also supported this fact. Teen pregnancy was also prevalent in these communities.

#### **Many male early school drop outs**

A regular occurrence in communities was the presence of school age boys that are not in the school system. Some of them would instead seek menial jobs during the day or just loiter at various points within the community. Some would also just spend the time playing games or gambling.

#### **Verbal and physical abuse**

Verbal abuse is very prevalent in all the communities and though most cases of physical abuse is not reported, children do show signs of being abused.

#### **Use /abuse of alcohol**

Use and abuse of alcohol is also very prevalent in the community and is sometimes linked to other forms of abuse and unstable family situations. Members of the communities who were associated with a previous domestic abuse project (Hague, Good Hope) have confirmed that many cases where alcohol is abused or used it results in physical and child abuse.

**1. . To raise awareness of Child Protection issues and alternative ways of parenting in a non- violent environment**

Workshop for Nursery school Teachers was held on Tuesday 1<sup>8th</sup> January at Vreed-en-Hoop, Region 3. This Cluster included Teachers from Hague, one of the target communities. The Project coordinator facilitated that workshop and the response was very good and an invitation was extended for him to return to conduct other sessions for the group, so another session was scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup>.

**2. Introduction of standard protocols for Care givers - Teachers, Nurses, Day Care staff, by enhancing their ability to recognize and give correct response in cases of child abuse.**

Help & Shelter has launched its Child protection Policy which encompasses relevant aspects of safety and protection of Children. This document will be shared with health care personnel, Teachers, Ministries, the Police, schools NGOs, the press and other stakeholders. This policy also highlights the engagement of the Childcare and Protection Agency regarding reporting and handling cases of child abuse, neglect or children at risk.

**3. Empowering children and Families to report child abuse and offering of counseling and court support services for affected children.**

One of the Project's Child Care Counselor has also been working in Zeelugt community, prior to the Project launch and to date listed seven children in counseling session. Home visits were made, parents counseled and exposed to alternative parenting methods while other children continue to be monitored. The counsellor's report is in Annex 1 .

**4. Creating an effective network of persons and organizations within the target community communities.**

The Project has engaged most of the functioning community based organizations within the target communities'. Those that have registered their interest in participation are from.

Churches

Mosques

Mandirs

Women's Groups

Sports Clubs

PTAs

Community development Groups

Policing Groups

### **Project Launch**

The official launch of the Child Care Project was held on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2011 at the Conference Room of the National Library.

Help and Shelter also launched its Child Protection Policy document at this event.

A statement was read from Concerned Citizens Against Domestic Abuse (Corp), an overseas based group who is also a funding Partner of the Project.

### **The list of Attendees at Launch Included:**

<b>Ministries / Stakeholder Agencies/ Press</b>	<b>Community Representativess.</b>
Nickhai Jandoo - MTV	Malini De Nobrega
Abigail Wade -MTV	Joyce Clarkson – Policing Group
Parbattie Ranglall _ Help& Shelter	Sandy Sugrim
Patrice LeFleur - UNFPA	Ramdat
Anton Roke - SASSOD	Anjanie Balasar
Abigail Semple - Stabroek News	Sonita Singh
Chevon Singh- Chronicle Newspaper	Kathy Adams
Frances Abraham- Stabroek News	Savitri Ismail
Karen Shaw – Help & Shelter	Hemwantie Ramsaway
Josephine Whithead – H & S	Rajkumarie Jeewan
Andrew Kross – Evening News	Shafena Inshan
Rosanne Purnwasie- Min. Home Affairs	Susan Chung
Shabela Lord – H & S	R. Kamaluddin
Ann Geer- CIDA	Bhagwandai Khedu
	Jomo Paul
	Louis Jordan
	Kamladai Sukhu

Highlights on background and implementation of the Project were presented and statements of expectations of the Project were made by persons from the communities.

### **Community Launch**

The first Community Launch will take place on Saturday February 5<sup>th</sup> 2011 where all the community stakeholders will be formally introduced to the Project.

The Zeelugt community has already provided a space for a counseling site.

The Health Centre and Faith based groups have also agreed to circulate public education materials and also host parenting sessions.

## **Work Plan**

Scheduled for the next sixty (60) days of Project action

- Community Launches
- Community Meetings
- Focus Group Discussions
- Counseling sessions
- Public education materials dissemination

Colin Marks

Project Coordinator - CPP

## **Child Protection Project**

### **Child Care Counselor's Report for the period January, 2011**

***In month of January, the following were accomplished:***

#### **Counseling:**

- *Total Caseload Forty-five (45) of which nineteen (19) cases are counseling, one (1) case with the school welfare, nine (9) cases with Child Protection and sixteen (16) cases are monitoring.*
- *Thirteen (13) children received counseling; six (6) at the Sophia Special School and seven (7) at the Centre in Zeelugt.*
- *New cases two (2)*
- *Three (3) cases closed*

#### **Child Protection Awareness Session:**

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- *Be Safe sessions continues at the Sophia Primary School with the Grade 1 classes. To date a total of sixty-two children have attended the sessions.*

#### **Referrals**

- *Six (6) children were referred to the Child Protection Agency for intervention for issues such as child neglect, child abuse and domestic violence.*



- *One (1) parent was referred to the Ministry of Human Services for Public Assistance and also to the Difficult Circumstances Unit for emergency relief (food stuff).*
- *One (1) parent was referred to the Ministry of Housing to acquire a house lot.*
- *One (1) parent was referred to Food for the Poor for assistance to build a house. This family is presently living in a floorless shack.*

### **Home Visits:**

*Eight (8) homes were visited, two (2) in Sophia, one (1) Kitty and six (6) in Zeelugt.\_*

### **Parenting Session:**

*One to one sessions were held with Four (4) parents from Zeelugt and Sophia addressing parental issues such as alternative discipline methods, guidance and boundaries.*

***Prepared & Submitted by:*** Karen Shaw

*Child Care Counselor*