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ATTENDANCE TO STATUTORY MEETINGS OF THE WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION

(68th –74th Statutory Meeting of the W&GEC)

Period after the Commission's Report to Parliament 2017

No	Name	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	Total	Total
		2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2017	2017	2017	2017	Present	Absent
1	Indranie Chandarpal Chairperson	P	P	P		P		P	P	P		7	0
2	Cheryl Sampson Deputy Chairperson	A	AE	AE		AE		P	AE	A		2	5
3	Ali-Hack Shalimar	P	P	AE		P		P	AE	A		4	3
4	Baron Gaietri	P	P	P	N	A	N	P	P	P	N	6	1
5	Persaud Gillian Burton	A	AE	AE	O	A	O	A	P	P	O	2	5
6	Chuck-A-Sang Renata	P	P	P		P		P	P	P		7	0
7	Cole Nicole	P	P	P		P		P	P	P		7	0
8	Coonjah Nandranie	A	P	P	M	AE		P	P	P	M	5	2
9	Corbin Karen Vansluytman	AE	A	AE	E	P	M	P	AE	AE	E	2	5
10	Henry Debra Ann	P	P	P	E	P	E	AE	AE	A	E	4	3
11	Khan Bebbie Haliema	P	P	P	T	P	E	P	A	A	T	5	2
12	Lagan Hymawattie	P	P	P	I	P	T	P	P	P	I	7	0
13	Logan Ernestine Barker	P	A	AE	N	AE	I	P	AE	AE	N	2	5
14	Persaud Peter	P	P	AE	G	P	N	P	AE	AE	G	4	3
15	Pollard Magda	AE	AE	AE		AE		P	AE	AE		1	6
16	Radzik Vanda	P	A	AE		P		AE	AE	AE		2	5
17	Hooper Sandra ROCC Representative	P	P	P		P		P	P	P		7	0
18	Jacobis Doreen IPC Representative	AE	A	AE		AE		AE	AE	AE		0	7

ACRONYMS

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CISOCA	Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPAP	Country Planning Action Plan
DV	Domestic Violence
GO	Governmental Organisations
GTUC	Guyana Trade Union Congress
GPF	Guyana Police Force
HFLE	Health and Family Life Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
IWD	International Women’s Day
IPC	Indigenous People’s Commission
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MoLHSSS	Ministry of Labour, Human Services & Social Security
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
PSC	Private Sector Commission
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
HRC	Human Rights Commission
RCC	Right’s of the Child Commission
SASOD	Society against Sexual and Other Discrimination
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nation Population Fund United Nations Children’s Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
W&GEC	Women & Gender Equality Commission

DECLARATION

These are the Fifth and Sixth Periodic Reports to the National Assembly on the status of the work of the Women and Gender Equality Commission, pursuant to the requirements of Resolution No. 86 which was passed in the National Assembly on Thursday, 21st May, 2009.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

Members of the Commission consist of sixteen (16) persons who were sworn in on 27th August, 2009 by H.E. President Bharrat Jagdeo.



Chairperson
Indranie Chandarpal
Women's Progressive Organisation



Deputy Chairperson
Cheryl Sampson
National Congress of Women

WOMEN IN VOLUNTARY WORK



Magda Pollard



Vanda Radzik



Shalimar Ali-Hack

ATTENDANCE TO STATUTORY MEETINGS OF THE WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION

(57th–67th Statutory Meeting of the W&GEC)

Period after the Commission's Report to Parliament 2017

No	Name	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	Total	Total																
		2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	2016	Present	Absent															
1	Indranie Chandarpal Chairperson	P	P	AE	P	P	P	N O M E E T I N G	P	P	P	N O M E E T I N G	P	P	10	1																
2	Cheryl Sampson Deputy Chairperson	P	P	P	AE	P	AE		P	P	A		N O M E E T I N G	A	P	7	4															
3	Ali-Hack Shalimar	P	P	AE	P	P	P		P	A	P			N O M E E T I N G	A	P	8	3														
4	Baron Gaietri	P	AE	P	P	P	AE		P	P	A				N O M E E T I N G	P	P	8	3													
5	Persaud Gillian Burton	AE	P	P	AE	P	AE		P	P	A					N O M E E T I N G	A	A	5	6												
6	Chuck-A-Sang Renata	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P						N O M E E T I N G	P	P	11	0											
7	Cole Nicole	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P							N O M E E T I N G	P	P	11	0										
8	Coonjah Nandranie	P	P	P	AE	AE	P		AE	AE	AE								N O M E E T I N G	AE	AE	4	7									
9	Corbin Karen Vansluytman	P	AE	P	AE	P	P		P	P	A									N O M E E T I N G	P	AE	7	4								
10	Henry Debra Ann	P	P	P	P	P	AE		P	A	P										N O M E E T I N G	P	P	9	2							
11	Khan Bebbie Haliema	P	P	AE	P	P	P		P	P	P											N O M E E T I N G	P	A	9	2						
12	Lagan Hymawattie	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P												N O M E E T I N G	P	P	11	0					
13	Logan Ernestine Barker	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	A													N O M E E T I N G	P	P	10	1				
14	Persaud Peter	P	P	AE	P	P	AE		P	P	P														N O M E E T I N G	P	P	9	2			
15	Pollard Magda	AE	P	AE	AE	P	AE		P	A	A															N O M E E T I N G	A	A	3	8		
16	Radzik Vanda	AE	P	P	AE	P	AE		P	P	P																N O M E E T I N G	P	P	8	3	
17	Hooper Sandra ROCC Representative	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P																	N O M E E T I N G	E	P	10	1
18	Jacobis Doreen IPC Representative	P	AE	AE	AE	AE	P		AE	AE	AE																		N O M E E T I N G	AE	AE	2

PRESENTATION OF 4th ANNUAL REPORT AND NATIONAL EXHIBITION TO HONOUR OUTSTANDING GRASSROOTS AND WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES



National Exhibition 2015 honouring outstanding grassroots and women with disabilities



Chairperson, Ms. Chandarpal presenting the 4th Annual Report

On 22 October 2015 at the Parliament Building the W&GEC held two activities. Chairperson of the W&GEC presented the 4th Annual Report to Speaker of The National Assembly, Dr. Barton U.A. Scotland, C.C.H, M.P.

Chief Executive Officer chaired the presentation honouring fifteen (15) "Outstanding Grassroots Women and Women with Disabilities" was launched under the theme "Weaving the Stories of Women's Lives." The women honoured have contributed significantly to their communities and to the country.

The CEO noted that the W&GEC "recognizes the rights of persons with disabilities are no different for persons without and the Commission's aim is to respect and publicise practical knowledge, skills and expertise that grants women acquired from their real life experiences as mothers, wives, daughters, income generators, community caretakers and day-to-day problem solvers" as awards were presented to these exemplary women:



Honouree Ms. Oviah Setra O'Selmo viewing her poster at the National Exhibition honouring outstanding grassroots and women with disabilities

- Chandrowattie Ramnarine
- Ingrid Peters
- Karen Hall
- Monica Garrett
- Oumwattie Bharatt
- Radhamonie Kajram
- Setra O'Selmo
- Vilma Da Silva

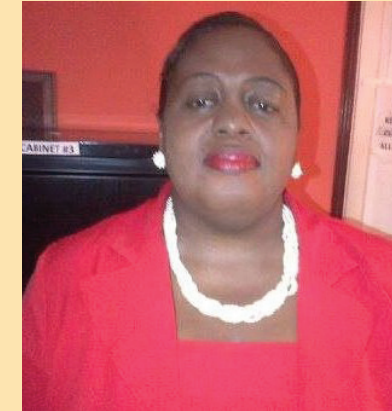
- Claudette Hunte
- Julie Lewis
- Margaret Kertzious
- Odessa Blair
- Paulette Allcock
- Sabra Bashir
- Shreemattie Vevacan

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONISM



*Karen Vanslytman Corbin
TUC - Women Advisory Council*



*Gillian Burton
Labour Union*



*Gaietrie Baron
Labour Union*

REGIONAL WOMEN'S AFFAIRS COMMITTEES



*Ernestine Barker Logan
Regions 3, 4 & 10*



*Nandranie Coonjah
Regions 2, 5 & 6*



*Bebbi Haliema Khan
Regions 1, 7, 8 & 9*

CULTURE/ETHNIC



*Nicole Cole
Culture/Ethnic*

CULTURE/ETHNIC



*Peter Persaud
Culture/Ethnic*

PROFESSIONAL



*Debra Henry
Professional*

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION



Hymattie Lagan
Women's Affairs Bureau



Renata Chuck-A-Sang
Private Sector

REPRESENTATIVES FROM OTHER RIGHTS COMMISSIONS



Sandra Hooper
Rights of the Child Commission



Doreen Jacobis
Indigenous Peoples Commission

FULL TIME STAFF



Diana Swan-Lawrence
Chief Executive Officer



Deokumarie Raghubir
Administrative Assistant

LAUNCH OF THE INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



First Lady Mrs. Sandra Granger, Mrs. Sita Nagamootoo, Hon. Volda Lawrence M.P., with attendees at the launch of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies

inequality and intolerance are exposed and the entire population, especially men – are educated around these issues, the Policy will remain a paper one. So other drivers will be needed apart from Government / institutional ones. A preliminary survey by the IGDS of 30 History textbooks used in Regional Secondary schools revealed the ways in which texts promote hegemonic masculinity and cement gender inequality and “powerlessness”.

- **Historicizing the Policy:** In articulating the background to, and rationale for the Policy, there should be a more expanded section on the historical evolution during the colonial period of patriarchy, hegemonic masculinity, gender-based violence, ideologies of inequality and intolerance of diversity which affect equal access to justice.

- **International Conventions:** The Policy could also broaden the references to the Regional and International Agreements to which Guyana is a party – not just CEDAW, but, for example the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; and the Convention on the Rights of

the Child, etc. And unsigned Conventions that have implications for gender justice will have to be resolved.

- **Policy strategies and tools for implementation:** gender focal points in all Ministries of Government, institutions and organizations, including NGOs and CSOs- will be critical and will need to be outlined clearly

- **Data collection:** to address the problem of gender inequality, sex-disaggregated data are critical and will need to be systematically collected. So the Policy will need to speak to this.

- **Educational strategies:** Until the roots of sexism, violence against women, patriarchy and the male claim to power as a right, hegemonic masculinity,

- **Address the issue of dislocated youth:** The situation of youth who are dislocated and who have little access to equality before the law, to respectable employment and decent wages and who are idling their life away because they cannot fulfil the dictates of a backward patriarchal ideology must also be addressed; we are no longer living in a Caribbean where only women are vulnerable and we need to recognise and plan strategies to bring males into the discourse of gender equality.

- **Allocate dedicated funds:** Finally, budgetary allocation will be critical to crafting and implementation.

LAUNCH OF THE INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



Professor Veren Shepherd,

Ms. Hazel Halley Burnette, Gender Policy Consultant of the Ministry of Social Protection. Professor Verene Shepherd University Director of the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies did the feature address.

Professor Shepherd stated that any national policy for gender and development being developed in 2015 must therefore take notice of the Post-2015 agenda, while addressing its short-comings. She made the following recommendations in keeping with Jamaica's National Policy for Gender Equality and the UWI's proposed National Policy on Gender.

W&GEC Commissioners

- Language deconstruction : this would be a way of signalling that language change

in all documents, the media and everyday speech will be a part of the Policy, meaning no 'his' to mean 'hers', for example. Several Universities and countries have already addressed the matter of sexism in language and speech, starting with the tertiary institutions. But this needs to become a broad base aspiration.

- Human Rights Framework: Since the Policy is located within a Social Justice and Human Rights framework; and as Guyana is a party to certain International Conventions, the Policy will need to indicate how it will treat with emerging identities that do not fall within the traditional male/female, man/woman/boy/girl dichotomies. Indeed, such a policy will have to redefine traditional "gender symbols" as well as its definitions of gender and gender relations.



Officials from the W&GEC and the Ministry of Social Protection.

On the 28th of August, 2015 the Honourable Volda Lawrence M.P., Minister of Social Protection, facilitated the launch of the Gender and Development Studies in collaboration with the University of Guyana, University of the West Indies, University of York and the Women and Gender Equality Commission. Mrs. Sandra Granger, First Lady of Guyana and Ms. Sita Nagamootoo, wife of the Prime Minister of Guyana were among other important delegates in attendance.

Deputy Chairperson Cheryl Sampson and Commissioner Vansluytman-Corbin chaired the programme. Brief remarks were made by Ms. Marianne Flach, Resident Representative of UNICEF and

**W&GEC STATUTORY MEETINGS
June 2015 - April 2017**

The Commission agreed to convene statutory meetings on the last Wednesday of every month. The table below details the dates of the meetings for the period under review.

No	Date
56 th	24 th June 2015
57 th	29 th July 2015
58 th	31 st August 2015
59 th	30 th September 2015
60 th	28 th October 2015
61 st	25 th November 2015
62 nd	13 th January 2016
63 rd	2 nd March 2016
64 th	30 th March 2016
65 th	9 th May 2016
66 th	16 th June 2016
67 th	27 th July 2016
68 th	31 st August 2016
69 th	28 th September 2016
70 th	2 November 2016
71 st	25 th January 2017
72 nd	22 nd February 2017
73 rd	29 th March 2017

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In keeping with the objectives and functions, the Women and Gender Equality Commission accomplished more than 90% of the goals targeted.

On International Women's Day 2017 the Commission interacted with a number of stakeholders at its public forum held under the theme; *Be Bold for Change*. The key note speaker was Ms. Sandra Granger, First Lady of Guyana. Presentations were done by Deputy Vice-Chancellor for International Engagement of the University of Guyana, Mrs. Barbara Reynolds and Mr. Lawrence Latchman Singh, Chair, Justice and Peace Commission, Roman Catholic Church.

Six additional Billboards, to commemorate International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, observed on November 28th with the caption *Family Violence Leads to Despair, Destruction & Death* were erected in Regions One, Two, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten to add to Billboards already placed in Regions Four, Three and Six.

Suggestion/Sexual Harassment Boxes were established in Region one (1) at Matthews Ridge, in Georgetown at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, National Library, Guyana Post Office Corporation, Rights Commission, University of Guyana Turkeyen and Region 6, University of Guyana Tain Campus.

Regional workshops were continued in all ten Administrative Regions aimed at Education and Public Awareness on issues of Gender and Development.

The Commission paid a courtesy call on H.E. President Arthur Granger and also engaged relevant stakeholders.

Some members of the legal fraternity supported the conversations to develop a Sexual Harassment Policy for the Workplace.

Some members of Parliament and other Policy Makers discussed relevant issues such as gender sensitive budgeting and local government elections

The Commission continued its yearly exhibition to celebrate Women's History Month at the Convention Centre under the Theme: *Celebrating Iconic Women pre Independence to 2015*.

The Commission signed a MOU with the University of Guyana to facilitate the implementation

of the Institute of Gender and Development Studies at the University of Guyana.

Additionally, the Commission highlighted and condemned issues related to the negative images and portrayal of women in the media, the promotion of popular songs and celebrities who condone violence and abuse and denigrate sexuality and human rights as well as the lewd behaviour of some 'revellers' at Mashramani.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The W&GEC would like to express thanks to the Ministry of Finance for the budgetary allocations for 2015-2017.

The Commission wishes to acknowledge the efforts of the Speaker of the National, Assembly, His Hon. Dr. Barton Scotland, O.R. C.C.H., M.P. for facilitating a meeting to discuss challenges of the Constitutional Offices.

Thanks to the Chairperson of the National Procurement and Tender Board Administration for facilitating a Training and Education Workshop for staff of the Rights and Ethnic Relations Commissions.

Heartfelt gratitude to the Ministry of Presidency and the Head of the Public Service for involving the Commission in training for Public Servants.

Our sincere thanks to the High Commissioner of Canada for donating GDY \$2,958,400.00 to the Commission to support training for stakeholders.

CONSTRAINTS

According to Article 212 P (2) The Human Rights Commission shall be responsible for the efficient functioning of the Secretariat of the Commissions. This matter must be given urgent attention since the present arrangement of no Chairperson nor Chief Executive Officer is impacting on the assignment of management duties and employees' functions and creating frustration for the staff of the Commission.

Diana Swan Lawrence

Diana Swan-Lawrence
Chief Executive Officer

Women and Gender Equality Commission

W&GEC LAUNCHES EXHIBITION TO HONOUR ICONIC WOMEN

- | | |
|--|--|
| 20. Diane McTurk - Conservationist | 38. Bernadette Persaud - Artist |
| 21. Jean La Rose - Indigenous Peoples' / Amerindian Rights | 39. Camille Goliah - Tempest (Calypsonian) |
| 22. Josephine Whitehead - Human Rights | 40. Joycelynne Loncke - Musician / University Lecturer |
| <i>GRASSROOTS / COMMUNITY LEADERS</i> | |
| 23. Chandroutie Ramnarain | 41. Lynette Dolphin - Culture & Arts Administrator |
| 24. Radhamonie Kajram | 42. Marilyn Dewar - Musician |
| 25. Paulette Allicock | 43. Laxhmie Khallicharran - Researcher / Author |
| 26. Oumawattie Bharat | 44. Marjorie Kirkpatrick - Researcher / Author |
| 27. Shreemattie Vevacanand | |
| 28. Vilma Da Silva | <i>SPORTS</i> |
| 29. Monica Garrett | 45. Claudette Masdammer - 1956 Olympian for British Guiana |
| <i>WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES</i> | |
| 30. Julie Lewis - Broadcaster | 46. Aliann Pompey - Women's athletics |
| 31. Karen Hall - UG Lecturer | 47. Nicolette Fernandes - Squash |
| 32. Margaret Kertizious - Human Rights | |
| 33. Odessa Blair - Youth Activist | <i>ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL / BUSINESS</i> |
| 34. Ingrid Peters - Educator | 48. Sister Mary Noel Menezes - Historian |
| 35. Oviah Setra O'Selmo - Human Rights | 49. Sybil Patterson - Social Work |
| 36. Claudette Hunte - Culture and Human Rights | 50. Enid Denbow - Doctor of Medicine |
| | 51. June Ramsammy - Administration |
| | 52. Lyla Kissoon - Business |
| | 53. Matilda Saigo-Williams - Nurse / Midwife |
| 37. Desrey Fox - Anthropologist | 54. Savitri Balbahadur - Education |

W&GEC LAUNCHES EXHIBITION TO HONOUR ICONIC WOMEN

On the 9th September, 2016 at 9:00 hours the Women and Gender Equality Commission launched an exhibition for fifty four (54) iconic women who supported the development of Guyana pre Independence to present in commemoration of Guyana's 50th Anniversary celebrations.

Minister of Education, Honourable Rupert Roopnarine M.P. and Minister within the Ministry of Education, Honourable Nicolette Henry M.P. made remarks at the opening at the National Convention Centre. The Exhibition was later moved to the GiftLand Mall to maximize viewership.

Below is the list of fifty-four (54) iconic women:

Honourees 2016

PRE-INDEPENDENCE

1. Janet Jagan - PPP, WPEO, WPO
2. Jane Phillips Gay - PPP/PNC
3. Jessie Burnham - PPP
4. Winifred Gaskin - WPEO, PPP/PNC

POLITICIANS

5. Viola Burnham - PNC
6. Philomena Sahoye-Shury - PPP
7. Cheryl Sampson - PNC
8. Christina Ramjattan - PPP
9. Indranie Chandarpal - PPP
10. Faith Harding - PNC
11. Gail Teixeira - PPP
12. Debra Backer - PNC
13. Sheila Holder - WPA/AFC

RIGHTS DEFENDERS

14. Kowsilla - Union Activist

15. Andaiye - Women's Rights Activist



CEO Diana Swan-Lawrence (left) and Ms. Magda Pollard (right), one of the honoured iconic women

16. Magda Pollard - Women's Rights Activist
17. Urmia Johnson - PNC/Women's Rights Activist
18. Eileen Cox - Consumers' Rights Activist
19. Desiree Bernard - Rule of Law / Women's Rights

RECOMMENDATIONS

Women and Gender Equality Commission recommends the following to the National Assembly:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enactment of Legislation and Policy on Sexual Harassment in the Work Place. 2. Initiate pilots of the Community Counselling Centers and Friendship Benches in communities. 3. The delivery of Comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive age appropriate Health and Rights Education in schools. 4. Promote Parenting Skills Training in Pre and Post Natal Clinics in all Health Centres. 5. Encourage more Male Friendly Health Centres such as the Pilot Project in Region 5. 6. Gender mainstreaming should be incorporated in the Schools' curriculum. 7. Lobby to Resuscitate the Gender Desk at the Caricom Secretariat. 8. Gender Sensitivity Training should be mandatory for all judicial, protective services, health and social services personnel especially those who interact with the public as part of their job. 9. Strengthen Gender Focal Points in the Public Service. 10. All programmes and policies should reflect Gender Mainstreaming for all Government Employees. 11. Establishment of a National Gender | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Advisory Committee. 12. Full Enactment of the Domestic Violence Act and enforcement of the Breach of Protection Order. 13. The provision for Paternity Leave by National Insurance Scheme. 14. Work Place Policy on Flexible Working Hours for all caregivers. 15. Gender Parity in Parliament and Local Government bodies in keeping with Guyana's commitment to Sustainability Development Goal 5. 16. All Public Buildings should be accessible to persons with disabilities. 17. All documents should be clearly comprehensible to persons with disabilities, e.g braille. 18. Equal NIS provisions for widowers and widows. 19. Provision of adequate public sanitary facilities accompanied by public awareness campaigns for proper use and maintenance. 20. Implementation of Gender Responsive Budgeting. 21. Encourage Government to sign-on to the Optional Protocol of Women. 22. Speedy Enactment of the Juvenile Justice Bill. |
|--|---|

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Unveiling of suggestion box at UG Tain Campus	22
Workshop with the Regional Development Council of Region 6	23
Workshop with the New Amsterdam Municipality - Region 6	24
Regional Workshop on Gender Based Violence (8 December, 2016)	26
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W&GEC OUTREACH VISIT TO MAHDIA, REGION 8



(Top) Commissioning of Billboard, (Middle) Commissioner Khan and Lagan handing over Suggestion Box to Roger Hinds' Supermarket, (bottom) Mr. Dennis Boalt, donor of the land where the Billboard was erected.

In an outreach visit during 9-11 December 2016 to Mahdia, Region 8, Commissioners Khan and Lagan conducted a number of activities in the Region under the theme *Stop Family Violence: Stop Violence Against Women and Girls! If you can't say it; Write It!*

- The aims of these activities were:
1. Commissioning of the Family Violence Bill Board
 2. Set up of Sexual Harassment/Suggestion Box
 3. Presentation & distribution of Family Violence and Sexual Harassment posters and other materials
 4. Meetings with Regional representatives
 5. Awareness session with staff and customers at Roger Hinds Supermarket

- Issues Highlighted:**
1. No Labour Officer, School Welfare Officer, Child Protection Officer in the Region
 2. Allegation of drugs and alcohol abuse
 3. Teenage Pregnancy
 4. Lack of jobs

- Recommendations:**
1. The need for more public education in the areas of, Gender based/Sexual Violence, drug and alcohol abuse.
 2. The need for Child Protection Officer and Labour Officer.
 3. The need for Skills/Vocational Training Centers.

W&GEC REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN KWAKWANI

Commissioner Logan hosted a Parenting Workshop on 16 December 2015 at Kwakwani Worker's Club in Kwakwani. There were twenty-seven (27) participants and three (3) facilitators.

The objective of the Workshop was to help parents to understand the growth and development of children. Some of the topics discussed were:

Child Development: Age 0—18, Physical Development, Social & Emotional Development, Intellectual development, Language Development, Meeting the child's needs, Why it is important to track developmental changes, Developmental delay, Influences & Factors that affect children and young people's development.

In an interaction and communication activity a number of topics were discussed:

- Six (6) Tips for reading to your children
- A New way to earn with chores
- Five (5) Ways to talk to your kids about violence
- Five (5) Tactics to become a more connected parent
- Top tips for single parents
- Ways to keep your child safe on the internet
- Ways to get your kids to take homework responsibility
- Raising your teen's self-esteem
- Talking about alcohol & drugs
- Things not to say to your kids

There were breakout group sessions to further develop activities which could be shared with children. Some activities discussed were:

Homework, cooking, praying, go on outings(picnics), have open conversations, have them involved in making rules, play games together, watch movies together etc, activity charts covering from morning (wake up) to evening (bed time)

Participants were asked to write two changes they would implement when they return to their homes. Some of these were:

- I will set examples to my younger sister and other friends and family and let them know how to care about their children or child in the future.*
- I will go and work with my child everything I learn.*
- Post cards on the wall, practice not to show anger toward anyone while pregnant.*
- Share information with friends, neighbours and parents at church.*

Summary:

Participants suggested that the workshop should be conducted in the river communities and because of its content should be held for no less than two (2) days.

W&GEC CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2017



First Lady, Mrs. Sandra Granger

International Women's Day was celebrated, under the theme *Be Bold for Change: Women in the Changing World of work, Planet 50-50 by 2030*, in the form of a roundtable discussion at the Carifesta Sports Complex, Georgetown.

The theme, which was set by the United Nations in observance of International Women's Day 2017, aimed at achieving gender parity in member states by the year 2030. The gathering included First Lady, Mrs. Sandra Granger, Honourable Annette Ferguson M.P. Minister within the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, and fellow Member of Parliament Audwin Rutherford, Linden Councillor, Mrs. Sandra Adams, members of the diplomatic corps, non-governmental organizations, and other interested stakeholders.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Planning and International Engagement at the University of Guyana, Dr. Barbara Reynolds presented at the forum. She informed the gathering that gender parity was possible by 2030. She believed in a simple concept: "We can refer to one another with respect. We can disagree, but we can still work

together. It doesn't mean we are working against men. We can work together because the sisterhood is needed."

Meanwhile, First Lady Sandra Granger, in her presentation, congratulated all women on their contributions to society. She noted that fighting against human trafficking and advocating for the education of young girls and women and maternal advancement are some of the areas she would like to see addressed in Guyana.

The First Lady continued, "I believe that with behavioural change, determination, and serious concerted action we can become a healthier, more educated, more confident, and productive society. We can then achieve gender parity in the not too distant future." She added that women needed to recognize and address the social and economic factors limiting easy access to education for the development of women and girls in Guyana.

Mrs. Granger further stated, "Our entire population must be educated

to understand the long-term implications of gender disparity. We must be bold for change. We must speak up and speak out against injustice. A comprehensive countrywide campaign should be launched to socialize our women and men, girls and boys, so that they recognize and desist from behaviours which harm us individually, collectively, socially and economically."

Mr. Lawrence Latchmansingh, Chair of the Justice and Peace Commission of Roman Catholic Church in Guyana called for the full value of women in society to be recognised and harnessed. Mr. Latchmansingh noted that, "Men need to become champions and advocates for women as well, treating them as potential assets as opposed to liabilities." He noted that there was not enough done to harness the capacity of women as peace builders.

In her Remarks the Chairperson of the Women and Gender Equality Commission stated that the 107th anniversary of IWD which is a story of grass root women who were poor and uneducated but who were brave enough to leave the mills and factories to demonstrate against poor working conditions, long hours of work, poor wages and very importantly, inequality in pay and other working conditions.



She said that it was significant that this year the theme of the UN captures a part of what those women were fighting for some 160 years ago. "Women in the changing world of work: Planet 50-50 by 2030."

She added that the Commission believed that the dialogue on Gender Parity had to start now in order to "Step it up before 2030"

On September 25, 2015 the new

W&GEC CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2017



global 2030 roadmap and the 17 SDG'S were approved by the United Nation Members states. Goal 5 deals specifically with gender equality. Of course, all the other goals will impact on the lives of women in a number of ways.

She stated that the Commission was heartened by the commitment made by more than 90 world leaders who have made concrete commitment to overcome gender equality gap at an event co-hosted by the UN Women and China and that the UN Women was proposing global indicators to effectively monitor how the SDG's will be implemented for women and girls.

The Chairperson noted that this development was indeed welcome especially since there has been little movement since the Fourth World Conference of Women in 1995 when countries adopted the Beijing Platform for Action.

She said that there were a number of important landmark events for women starting with the strike of the garment workers in 1857 in New York and which one decade later linked up with

Clara Zeitkin who was then campaigning for women rights in Germany. She supported the American women and Zeitkin was able to persuade the Second International to declare an "International Proletariat Women's Day" which was celebrated in March 1911.

The Chairperson informed the gathering that it was only in 1975 that the UN took a decision to adopt a Decade for Women when three world conferences were held and a number of important decisions



were taken. She reminded the participants that Guyana became a signatory to the CEDAW Convention and the setting up of the Women's Affairs Bureau. These were some of the initial steps all countries were required to undertake. Significantly, of the 194 countries of the UN 187 have ratified the CEDAW Convention. Again in 1995 the Fourth World Conference was held where countries adopted the Beijing Platform for Action where 12 critical areas of concern were identified. She highlighted "Women in Power and Decision Making" as one of the critical areas to illustrate how slow the progress has been.

She told the participants that the Inter Parliamentary Union statistics on women in National Parliaments of 193 countries only two countries have fulfilled the target of 50/50 and they are Rwanda with 61.3% in 49 out of 80 seats and Bolivia which is 53. % in 69 out of 130 seats. In the first 50 only 3 countries in the Caribbean have done a little better and they are Grenada 33.3, in 5 out of 15 Guyana 23 out of 69 or 33.8% and TT 13 out of 42 with 31%. She stated that there was a lot of stepping up to do and this event was intended to start the dialogue to work towards the 50/50 in 2030. We are only 13 years away.

The event included cultural presentations and spoken word poetry from the Jazz and Poetry-on-a-stool artists.

**W&GEC's Outreach in Region 6
21 November 2016**

A courtesy call was made to the Regional Chairman, Region 6 where a short discussion was held with the Regional Gender Affairs Committee and some posters and other materials were presented to the Region Officials.

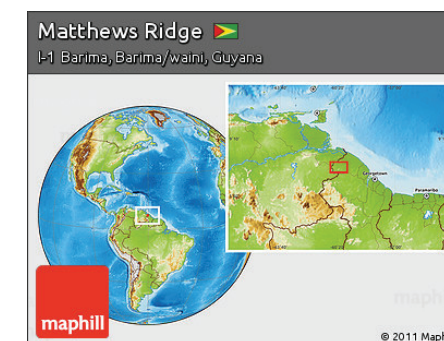


W&GEC Commissioners along with staff of the Regional Chairman's Office display donated posters.

UNVEILING OF THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT SUGGESTION BOX IN REGION I, BARIMA-WAINI

Commissioner Persaud hosted a workshop with Matthews Ridge residents on Thursday 15th December, 2016 on *Sexual Harassment and Family Violence* at the Matthews Ridge Community Centre.

In attendance were twenty-one (21) females and ten (10) males. The meeting



was successful despite the rainy weather in Matthews Ridge.

Vice-Chairman of the Neighborhood Democratic Council (NDC) chaired the

meeting. Commissioner Persaud on behalf of the W&GEC spoke on sexual harassment and family violence which are social ills that are unacceptable and unlawful which today are contributing to the destruction of families in Guyana.

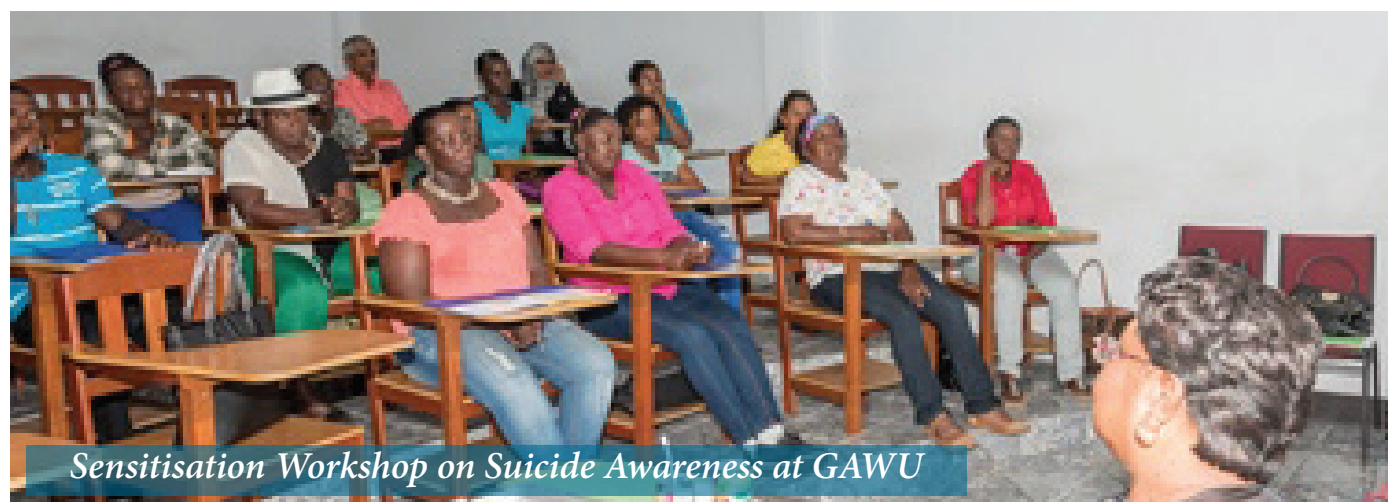
Sexual harassment and family violence suggestion box was erected at the Matthews Ridge Hospital compound. Residents were encouraged to report any instances of sexual harassment and place it into



Commissioner Peter Persaud handing over posters to participants of the meeting in Matthew's Ridge

the red mailbox which will be opened on a monthly basis by the W&GEC.

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON SUICIDE AWARENESS
15 March 2016**



Sensitisation Workshop on Suicide Awareness at GAWU

The Workshop which was aimed at *Education and Public Awareness on Suicide* was held at the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union (GAWU) headquarters on 15th March, 2016. There were thirty (30) workers, three of whom were males in attendance from various sugar estates.

Participants were given a session on Understanding Suicide. In Guyana's case, suicide is ranked in the top ten (10) causes of death for the last several decades. In the age group 15 to 24, suicide ranks between 1 and 3 in terms of the top causes of deaths.

Participants were divided into four (4) groups and asked to discuss common misconceptions about suicide, some of which are listed below:

FALSE: People who talk about suicide won't really do it.

Almost everyone who commits or attempts suicide has given some clue or warning.

Do not ignore suicide threats. Statements like "you'll be sorry when I'm dead," no matter how casually or jokingly said, may indicate serious suicidal feelings.

FALSE: Anyone who tries to kill him/herself must be crazy.

Most suicidal people are not psychotic or insane. They must be upset, grief-stricken, depressed or despairing, but extreme distress and emotional pain are not necessarily signs of mental illness.

FALSE: If a person is determined to kill him/herself, nothing is going to stop them.

Even the most severely depressed person has mixed feelings about death, wavering until the very last moment between wanting to live and wanting to die. Most suicidal people do not want death; they want the pain to stop. The impulse to end it all, however overpowering, does not last

forever.

Most of the participants felt that we all have to work together to eradicate suicide. Women needed to show more appreciation towards the efforts of some men. Women must never accept abuse from men.

There should be mandatory counselling before any kind of marriage or union. Finally there should be a lot more education and training on social issues for both men and women.

Participants expressed their pleasure at being invited to the workshop and stated that there should be similar workshops in the future.

**WOMEN AND GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION REPORT
25 January 2017**

Commissioner Renata Chuck-A-Sang met with Ms Isiuwa Iyehen, Programme Specialist, United Nations (UN) Women Caribbean on January 25, 2017 in response to the Women and Gender Equality Commission's request for technical assistance to do a gender analysis for the 2017 National budget.

MS Iyehen stated that the UN Women Caribbean was unable to offer specific

assistance at this time.

However Ms Iyehen stated that she will be working together with the Ministry of Social Protection and the Bureau of Statistics to do a Women's Health Survey.

This survey will attempt to gather data on the prevalence of violence against women. The resulting data could be used to make or support decisions on financing and implementation of programming to combat the

issues of shelters, hotlines etc.

It was suggested that W&GEC use the data to look at what measures were currently being taken to combat violence against women and whether current budgetary support was adequate.

W&GEC PUBLIC SERVICE AWARENESS TRAINING



Participants of a Staff Orientation Seminar facilitated by Ms. Koren Layne, Ministry of the Presidency

In order to build capacity and to enhance client centered relationship, the Chief Executive Officer proposed a training programme for the staff of the Rights Commissions.

After consultations with the other Commissions on 21-22nd March, 2016 Ms. Koren Layne a Public Servant with over twenty-three (23) years of experience within the Public Service was invited to educate the staff of the Women and Gender Equality Commission

(W&GEC), Indigenous Peoples' Commission (IPC), Rights of the Child Commission (RCC), Human Rights Secretariat and the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) on topics such as:

Who is a Public Servant?

Role of the Public Servant

Do I know my job?

Entitlement/Concessions for a Public Servant

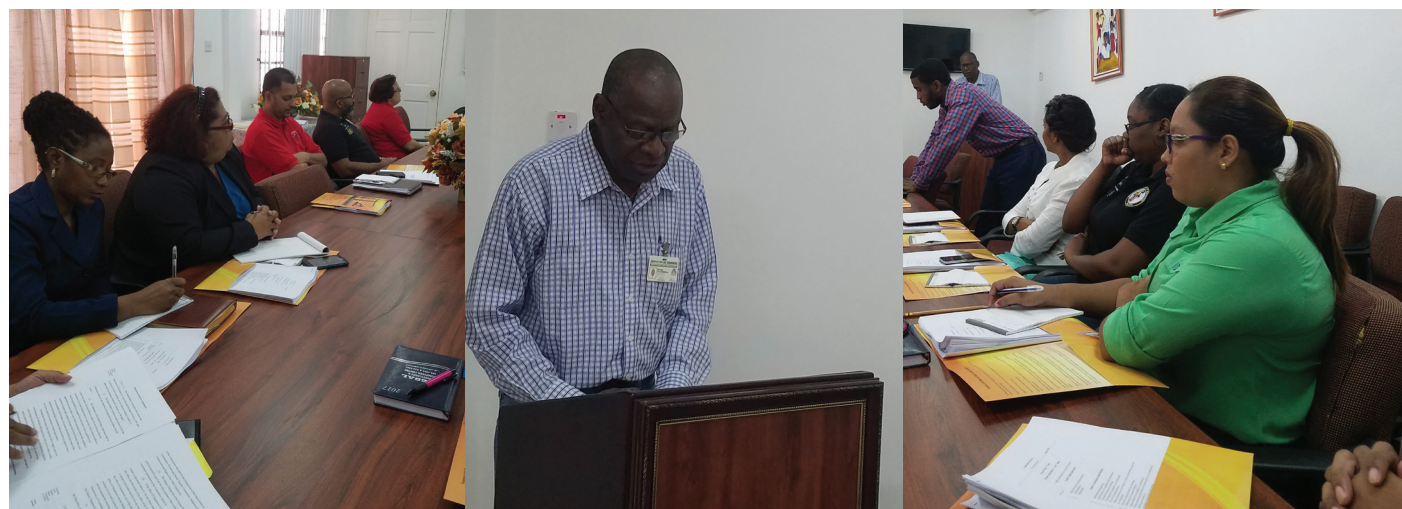
Contract Employment

Code of Conduct for Public Servants and

Appraisal Reporting within the Public Service.

The Chief Executive Officer recommended that there should be follow-up sessions to equip staff with the necessary tools to effectively execute their respective roles within the Public Service.

W&GEC PROCUREMENT TRAINING



Participants of Procurement Training facilitated by Mr. Wickham and Mr. De Younge of the National Tender Board

On the 10th February, 2017 Mr. Berkley Wickham and Mr. Michael De Younge of the National Tender Board Administration facilitated a training with some staff of the Rights Commission and Ethnic Relations Commission, on the

Procurement Act 2003 and all the other Public Procurement Amendment Acts. The facilitators explained: What is Public Procurement, Differences between Private and Public Procurement, Objectives of the

Procurement Act 2003. The Facilitators answered all the questions by the participants. An evaluation of the programme revealed that most participants benefitted tremendously from this programme.

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
8 November 2016**

The workshop aimed at education and public awareness on *Gender Based Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace* was held at the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union (GAWU) headquarters on the 8th November, 2016 and was facilitated by Commissioner Barron.

There were twenty-nine (29) workers from various sugar estates such as Skeldon, Albion, Rose Hall, Blairmont, Enmore, Wales and Uitvlugt.

The objectives of the workshop were to educate the workers on the meaning of gender based violence, sexual harassment, suicide,

the symptoms of gender-based violence and ways to prevent and eradicate this dangerous phenomenon and suicide.

Milestones on the international level for the prevention of violence against women were included in the workshop. These included various types of violence against women which can take a number of forms.

Commissioner Barron explained the following concepts to the participants of the workshop:

- Rape
- Violence Against Victims
- Marital Rape
- Domestic Violence
- Honour Killings

- Dowry Violence
- Acid Throwing
- Forced Marriage
- Forced Feedings
- Stalking
- Sexual Harassment
- Human Trafficking & Forced Prosecution
- Forced Sterilization & Forced Abortion
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Breast Ironing
- Obstetric Violence
- Access to Justice for Victims of Violence

Participants were very pleased with the public awareness workshop and expressed their expectations that there would be follow-up workshops.

**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
8 December 2016**

Issues experienced in Domestic Violence	Causes	What can be done to effect change
Families	Non approval of marriage	Counseling
Financial Issues	Lazy man, lost, or not being employed	Separation, do not give up continue job search and pray
Person afraid to speak out	Uneducated/Afraid /Uncertain	Build your self-esteem
Infidelity	Spouse unable to satisfy each other, impotent	Seek Counseling, seek medical help
Jealously	Trust, insecurity	Change of attitude, counseling
Superiority	Low self-esteem, deserve power and control in the relationship	Counseling and understanding of gender roles
Suicide	Social issues	Seek Counseling, Family support
Culture	Growing up you see your parents hitting each other	Reminder of our morals and values
Alcohol and drugs abuse	Depression/ seeking a way to escape problem	Rehabilitation and empowerment
Confinement	Fear	Counseling
Provocation	Constant nagging and accusation	Seek professional help e.g. Group session, counseling
Education	Parents cannot afford to send children to school, emotional stress	Seek public/social assistance

WORKSHOP WITH THE NEW AMSTERDAM MUNICIPALITY - REGION 6

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| <p>Social Protection for Parenting Education</p> <p>Recommendations to The Women and Gender Equality Commission</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Greater Communication Awareness through the media to promote or highlight positive behaviours of men. 2. Empowered women should use public forums to better the lives of their families, communities and society and not to be in competition with men. 4. Organisations should acknowledge men who are role models. 5. Establish support systems including training in anger management and mentorship programs for abused men through the Men's Affairs Bureau and other men's organisations. 6. Social Services Officers should be better trained to demonstrate more compassion/ empathy. 7. Collaboration with Amerindian Affairs and Indigenous People's Commission to support Amerindian communities | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> for special training on gender awareness. 8. Need for more male teachers in school to mentor boys. 9. Programmes to strengthen the family as the most important social institution. 10. Improved Prison Education. 11. Improved Mental Health Programs in the Education and Social Services. 12. Religious, Faith Based and Community Based Organisations should play a greater role in teaching Human Rights, Justice and Moral Education through Health and Family Life Education in Schools. 13. The need for more training of relevant personnel on children's behavioural issues. 14. Faith Based Organisations should have more programmes to ensure women's equality. 15. Programmes to strengthen the family. 16. Education at all levels for the family and life skills training. 17. Establishment of | <p>Community Counselling Centres with youth and peer educators, mentors, counsellors and mediators.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. Educational programmes in the work place to enhance gender equality. 19. Pre-marriage counselling on gender equality, shared roles and family empowerment. 20. Public awareness through the media to promote gender equality. 21. Economic empowerment of both men and women through micro-enterprises, vocational training, life-skills and gender equality. 22. Training to re-socialise men and women on gender equality. 23. Religious leaders to play a greater role in positive family empowerment. 24. Rehabilitation and counselling for victims and perpetrators of Domestic Violence. 25. Raise awareness of Domestic Violence and its impact. 26. Mentorship for families with "absentee fathers". 27. Improved community sports programme. |
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**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
8 December 2016**

The W&GEC hosted a workshop on Thursday 8th December, 2016 in the Council Chambers of the New Amsterdam Town Council, facilitated by Commissioner Sandra Hooper. There were twenty-six (26) persons present which included councillors and staff of the Town Council, representatives of groups and non-governmental organisations, religious groups and non-governmental organisations.

Following is a matrix of discussions:

W&GEC CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2015



(Left) Dr. Steve Surujballi, GECOM Chairperson, (Right) Members of the head table.

The Women and Gender Equality Commission in association with the United States Agency for International Development – International Republicans Institute hosted a Panel Discussion on *Women's Involvement in Elections 2015* under the theme "Why Should Women Vote?"

Panelists included: Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the W&GEC; Ms. Simone Mangar, Electoral Assistance Bureau. Commissioner Chuck-A-Sang, chairperson of the event

who in his brief remarks stressed the importance of women voting which is directly related to the development of that country. He stated, "If we are going to ensure that there are peaceful elections, then women obviously have to play a bigger role."

Discussions reflected the usefulness of awareness programmes. Women were encouraged to come forward to take up leadership opportunities, in their respective communities.

W&GEC PARTICIPATES IN GUYEXPO 2016



Guyexpo 12-15 May 2016, the Women and Gender Equality Commission showcased an Education Awareness Booth to highlight the Mission, Vision, Functions and Activities of the Commission. These were done through educational materials and visual aids such as photographs and videos and one-on-one interactions with the Chief Executive Officer and Commissioners.



W&GEC OUTREACH VISIT TO LETHEM, REGION 9



Commissioners Khan and Cole presenting and distributing posters

Commissioners Khan and Cole coordinated a workshop under the theme "Stop Family Violence" in Lethem, Region 9 on the 6-7 December 2016. The objectives of the workshop were:

1. Establishment of the Family Violence Billboard
2. Presentation of the Family Violence and Sexual Harassment posters, and other materials to the Regional representatives and community members.
3. Meet with Regional representatives.

Commissioners Khan and Cole in their discussions with the Regional representatives of Lethem reported on issues affecting the residents as follows:

1. No rape kits at the Public Hospitals.
2. No psychological counselor at the Public Hospitals.
3. Shortages of drugs.
4. No Labour and Child Protection Officers in the Region due to lack of housing facilities.
5. Allegation of drugs and gun smuggling at Marudi.
6. Increase in school drop outs.
7. Increase in prevalence of teens and pre-teens prostitution.
8. Allegation of pornographic materials being made in schools.
9. Increase in teenage pregnancies and statutory rapes.
10. Lack of jobs are causing many of the social issues.
11. Court hearings are held four (4) times per year.

Recommendations:

- * Counter Trafficking in Persons Officers should visit Marudi unannounced.
- * The need for more public education in social issues.
- * The need for Child Protection and Labour Officers.
- * Court hearings more frequently.
- * Establish a home for abused women and children in the Region.



Commissioner Khan distributing posters



Commissioner Cole distributing posters in front of donated billboard

WORKSHOP WITH THE NEW AMSTERDAM MUNICIPALITY - REGION 6

	Problems affecting Families	Causes	How the Council can effect changes
1.	Garbage disposal and collection	Limited resources	- Education programme for citizens, Institute Charges - More employees, garbage trucks, working schedule
2.	Drainage and irrigation	Blocked waterways	Provide Labour and maintenance, Organise Community clean up
3.	High school drop outs	Poverty, Teenage Pregnancy. Lack of Parental guidance, Single parents	Welfare Department, Counseling, Workshops, Testing, Family Life sessions, Skills training
4.	Domestic Violence/ Abuse	Drugs, Alcohol, Lack of love	Counseling, Reaching out, Law enforcement
5.	Suicide	Lack of coping skills, Depression, Drug abuse, Domestic violence, Stigma and discrimination	Workshops -Counseling, Guidance
6.	Education	Lack of Qualifications	Promote training in various skills
7.	Unemployment	Lack of job opportunities	Training for small business, Net working with other Organizations, Council work with Business Community to create jobs
8.	Broken Homes	Drug Abuse, Domestic Violence, Crime /Peer pressure, Mental health	Counseling, Rehabilitation
9.	Single Parents	Poor Family Planning	Better HFLE Classes, More education and access to Family Planning
10	Crime	Unemployment	Work with Police to combat crime

PLAN OF ACTION FOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED			
1. Resource identification for programmes (Human and Financial)	4. Rehabilitation Centre	More Counselors in Region	Training of Counselors - UG Tain Campus
2. Formation of Gender Committees in Municipalities	5. Skills training for small Business		7. Marriage/Spousal Counseling
3. Reestablishment of	6. Suicide Prevention- Involvement of Faith Based Organisations -		8. Teenage mothers' reintegration into the school system
			9. Collaboration with Ministry of

WORKSHOP WITH THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF REGION 6

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN COMMUNITIES

6	Child labour	Parents cannot afford the necessities for their children	-Liaise with MSP,NGOs, MOE to assist financially
7	Street Lights	-Destroyed and not replaced -None in place	Replace /and install
8	Stray Animals	No identified pastures	Pastures identified for use
9	Drugs and Alcohol	-School Dropouts, Peer Pressure -Lack of recreational facilities -Unemployment / Under - employment - Domestic problems	-Teach youth Trades /Sports / other activities to keep them occupied - Provide Adult Education / Trade Centres -Recreational facilities built - Counseling provided through Collaboration
	Problems of Communities	Causes	How the RDC/ NDC / Towns can effect change
10	Drains	-Lack of maintenance - Persons dumping garbage	- Maintenance programme -Persons charged for dumping
11	Education- Unemployment	Lack of suitable jobs for qualified persons -Need for more financial stability -Stability to marriage	- Introduce counseling -Introduce mini Workshops / Seminars Competitive sports (integration between ethnic groups)

WORKSHOP WITH THE NEW AMSTERDAM MUNICIPALITY - REGION 6

Commissioner Hooper facilitated a second Regional Workshop for Region 6. It was held in collaboration with the New Amsterdam Municipality on Wednesday 9th December, 2015 in the Council Chambers, New Amsterdam Town Council. The objective of the workshop was *To Sensitize Citizens on Issues Related to Gender and Development to Assist them in*

Making Informed Decisions.

The Workshop targeted forty (40) persons representing non-government organisations, business community in the municipality and council. Twenty (20) persons participated.

Mayor of New Amsterdam, stated that he was happy to have two (2) men present, since the gender discussion was not only for

women.

He noted that New Amsterdam had only one (1) female Mayor, and the time had come for more females to lead in that capacity.

Participants discussed problems affecting families, the causes and how the Council could effect changes. See summary on the following page:

CANADA FUND FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES ACTIVITIES

The W&GEC targeted areas in the three counties of Guyana (Berbice, Demerara & Essequibo).

Activity 1: Gender Advocates Workshop

Thirty (30) Gender Advocates participated from NGOs as well as personnel from the Ministry of Social Protection.

Approximately twenty (20) sets of relevant gender-based workshop courses, modules and training materials were collected, reviewed and assessed to ascertain whether content was appropriate for uptake into the University of Guyana Institute for Gender Studies (UGIGS) course programming.

Some thirty-three (33) research studies were identified as part of the database.

Thirty (30) Gender Advocates who participated have committed their services, expertise and experience to



CFLI representative, W&GEC Chairperson and Committee members

Advocates were nominated by participants to serve on the UGIGS Advisory Board.

Activity 2: Parliamentary Seminars

Two (2) seminars were completed with seventy-seven (77) persons in attendance, which included twenty (20) Members of Parliament and Policy-Makers. The sessions were well received and the presentations made were of a high quality. The UN Women

The first session on Gender Legislation had an attendance of forty-one (41) persons including four (4) MPS: the Prime Minister's representative, Minister of Governance Raphael Trotman, MP Audwin Rutherford and MP Indra Chandarpal, sitting as Chairperson of W&GEC on the occasion; three (3) Policy Makers; four (4) Parliament Staff; thirteen (13) NGO representatives; three (3) UG representatives; one (1) CFLI representative; six (6) W&GEC commissioners; four (4) media personnel; two (2) rapporteurs and videographer.

The second session was attended by thirty-six (36) persons including: eight (8) MPs; three (3) Policy-Makers; eight (8) NGO representatives; two (2) UG staff; five (5) Parliament staff; and six (6) W&GEC Commissioners.



First Parliamentary Session participants and W&GEC Commissioners

the UGIGS for continuing consultations and for delivery of courses or any outreaches and seminars.

Two (2) NGO Gender

Caribbean Representative was very pleased with the Seminar; and NGOs participated fully, engaging the MPs in robust dialogue.

Activity 3: Research Roundtables and LGE Workshops in 3 Counties of Guyana
Approximately one hundred and

CANADA FUND FOR LOCAL INITIATIVE ACTIVITIES

twenty (120) persons participated in this activity which had two sessions in each of the three counties of Guyana.

Those participating in the gender research roundtables have contributed significantly to building a research agenda at UGIGS.

Regional leaders and candidates standing for LGE



Activity 2: Parliamentary Gender Seminars

The Guyana Chronicle Newspapers featured Sexual & Reproductive Health & Rights (SRHR) pertaining to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act and the newly issued related ordinance permitting mid-level health workers to administer non-



Regina (Essequibo - Region 2).

W&GEC will continue to work in partnership with UGIGS as mandated in our MOU and will utilise our own budget as well source other funding (including a second phase with CFLI) for new projects with partners.



surgical abortion medications etc.

Activity 3: Roundtables & LGE Candidates Workshops - Outreach in 3 counties/regions

There was local coverage in Regional media and press conferences with candidates for Rose Hall, Tain Campus (Berbice - Region 6), Linden (Upper Demerara - Region 10) & Anna



have an enhanced understanding of the LGE system; of gender and its importance to development and of their leadership roles and responsibilities as candidates.

The UGIGS has been introduced and promoted to leaders in three (3) Regions of Guyana.

The partnership and working relationship between UGIGS, W&GEC, York University and Gender Advocates in Guyana has been strengthened.

The WGEC will have raised its profile and strengthened its community outreach work in the three targeted areas.

Advocacy & Communications

WORKSHOP WITH THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL OF REGION 6

Commissioner Hooper coordinated a Regional Workshop for Region 6 on Thursday 19th November, 2015 at the St Francis Conference Centre, Rosehall Town. The target group was youths, males and females with representation from the Regional Democratic Councils, Town Councils and Neighbourhood Democratic Councils.

The objective of the Workshop was to *Educate the Public Officers on Issues Related*

to Gender and Development. The Regional Chairman expressed his pleasure that such a programme targeting the NDC and Towns was being held and it would help the Regional Committee on Women and Gender to plan future programmes. He commented on the United Nations Declarations to which Guyana had signed and which required action by the Government.

A number of key issues were discussed:

1. Lack of participation of women in decision making.
2. Increased reports of Gender Based Violence.
3. The need for economic empowerment of women (most males' names were on transports for property, difficulty for women to secure loans).

Participants produced a Plan of Action as follows:

SUMMARY OF PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED IN COMMUNITIES

	Problems of Communities	Causes	How the RDC/ NDC / Towns can effect change
1	No recreational facilities	Lack of land space and re-sources	Schedule developed for - Restoration of Recreational facilities -To permit women more access to service
2	Streets/ Roads	-Contractors produce poor work - Excessive weight - Poor maintenance	-Engineer on Work sites to monitored, approve payment -Bill of quantity should be given to NDC
3	Garbage	-Poor waste management -Service by private Contractors not efficient - More barrels needed -Lack of dumpsite	- Councils bring back tractor & trailer for collection of garbage - Enforce fines for dumping -Dump sites identified
4	Rates Collection	Rates to Lands and Surveys instead of to the Councils Low Rates paid for properties	NDC need to collect all rates from farmers New Valuation of properties
5	Overgrown bushes on vacant lots	Residents/Owners are not living in the communities	NDCs clean the vacant lots until owner is found -Add charges to Taxes for lots

UNVEILING OF SUGGESTION BOXES AT GPOC, GPHC, THE NATIONAL LIBRARY AND THE RIGHTS COMMISSION



Unveiling of Suggestion Boxes, (from top left to bottom right) at Guyana Post Office Corporation, Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation, The National Library and The Rights Commission. A suggestion box was also unveiled at the University of Guyana, Turkeyen Campus.

UNVEILING OF SUGGESTION BOX AT UG TAIN CAMPUS



W&GEC Commissioners and staff of UG Berbice Campus at the unveiling of the suggestion box.

The unveiling of the first Suggestion Box was done at Tain Campus on Monday 21st November 2016.

The W&GEC team consisted of the Chairperson, Commissioners Coonjah, Cole, Baron and Khan. The team was welcomed by Ms. Paulette Henry, from the University of Guyana, Tain Campus.

The Chairperson explained the purpose of the suggestion box. The Director of the campus, Professor Gamathinayagan, other staff and students were all delighted that UG was chosen and pledged their support to eradicate gender based violence.

TOSHAOS' CONFERENCE 2016



The Chairperson in brief remarks at the Toshaos Conference, held on 28th September, 2016 shared some concerns raised at the W&GEC's *Access to Justice Regional Workshops* in various regions as follows:

- Region 1**
1. Alcohol was identified as major problem which has far reaching effects on the community resulting in drunkenness, fights, rape, murder and manslaughter.
 2. Some children who should be in school are imbibing in alcohol and narcotics.
 3. Some adults take advantage on their children sexually and sometimes people turn a blind eye to this situation.
 4. The issue of Domestic Violence was raised where victims who are seeking Protection Orders have to go to Georgetown to access it. This Order covers women, men, parents, children and siblings who are in need of protection.
 5. The Commission would like to encourage Residents to insist that their case be tried right in the region. If the case is not brought up, they must tell the Magistrate about it.

A number of issues were raised by the participants:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. A number of residents stated that when offences are committed some of the victims and other residents try to stop it. This must not be encouraged. Let the case go to court, if one feels sorry they can ask for a bond or a suspended sentence. 7. It was also brought to the Commission's attention that some witnesses do not want to come forward. She reminded the residents that this situation should not be allowed as the perpetrator will continue to carry out these acts. Let the law takes its course. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Questions were raised on the absence of a Probation Officer in Mabaruma. Residents were told that there is a proposal to train two persons to obtain a social work diploma/degree. They were advised to get help from the Amerindian Affairs Ministry to assist in training persons for that position. |
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- Region 7**
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children are buying alcohol at the market place. 2. Sale of alcohol is taking place in homes without any license. 3. Persons are employing children under the age of 16 to work. 4. Residents wanted to know why there were no police visits to the villages. It was reported | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are occasions when Police Officers advised persons not to report domestic violence cases. 2. Noise nuisance which is affecting everyone. 3. Court is held every three (3) months. Because of this perpetrators will disappear and the Police cannot find them; thus the Protection Order cannot work. 4. The court system is very slow. Residents travel for 60-90 miles only to be told that the case is postponed or dismissed |
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TOSHAOS' CONFERENCE 2016

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| <p>5. because either the police or witness is not present The Sexual Offences Law which allows children sixteen and over to be sexually active needs to be revisited since it is allowing children to become sexually active too early.</p> <p>6. Since corporal punishment is no longer allowed children behave very rudely because they are not disciplined.</p> <p>7. It is alleged that Perpetrators of domestic violence bribe police officers to prevent witnesses from going to court.</p> <p>8. Although police are trained to deal with domestic violence – they still continue to behave unprofessionally</p> <p>9. Junior Officer do not allow members of the public to see the Officer in Charge.</p> <p>10. There is need for a domestic violence room at police station</p> <p>11. A Call was made for all Domestic Violence cases not to be tried in open court but in camera.</p> <p>12. Need for financial assistance from the court system to help people who have to travel from distances.</p> <p>13. Persons have to leave Bartica, Port Kaituma etc. and go to Suddie to register their business.</p> <p>14. There is need for information so that residents can know when the Labour Officer</p> | <p>15.</p> | <p>visits the region. The same situation exists for the Child Care and Protection Officer.</p> <p>It is costly for persons to be travelling to and from Georgetown and or/Suddie to get their matters resolved. They have to lose a day's work plus pay transportation cost only to be told they have to come again. The other issue is that of confidentiality - this is compromised because victims have to tell all and sundry their story before they can reach the right person. It was felt that access to justice is not what it should be and there is an urgent need for a number of services to be accessed by the public. This is an obstacle to justice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Region 9</p> <p>1. The need for confidentiality in all sectors such as police stations and social workers.</p> <p>2. Trafficking in children was raised where it was stated that there are adults, who collude with offenders by claiming to be a relative to the children when they pass the check points from the hinterland to the city.</p> <p>3. It was reported that Guyanese who reside in Brazil and work in Guyana commit acts of violence in Brazil in</p> | <p>order to avoid persecution.</p> <p>4. Children are getting involved in sexual activities at an early age and some become pregnant thus preventing them from attending schools.</p> <p>5. Parents neglect their children because of alcohol consumption.</p> <p>6. Some abusers who carry out acts disappear from the village thus preventing any further action.</p> <p>7. It is very difficult for victims who live in the Savannah to get help.</p> <p>8. Victims are discriminated when matters are reported to officials in the system.</p> <p>9. Women need an environment which is free from violence so that can have real and equal opportunities</p> <p>10. Need for more course in parenting, agriculture, food processing etc.</p> <p>11. Need to carry out a campaign against children who are smoking marijuana in the Savannah.</p> <p>12. Requests were made for women to be appointed as Rural Constables.</p> <p>13. It was also pointed out that some of the girls under age are taken on fishing expedition by fathers and uncles where they are sexually molested.</p> |
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**REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON GENDER BASED VIOLENCE
9 December 2015**



Sensitisation Workshop on Domestic Violence at GAWU

The Workshop which was aimed at *Education and Public Awareness on Gender Based Violence* was held at the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers' Union (GAWU) headquarters. There were twenty-seven (27) female workers in attendance.

Workers represented Skeldon, Rosehall, Blairmont, Enmore and Wales Sugar Estates, GAWU Headquarters in Georgetown, GAWU in New Amsterdam, Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union, Guyana Forestry Commission, Guyana Labour Union, Social Industrial, Welfare Fund, National Association of Clerical and Commercial Workers' Union, Noble House Sea Foods and BEV Processors Inc.

The W&GEC Commissioner gave an overview of the Functions, Mission and Vision of the Women and

Gender and Gender Equality Commission and explained that the objectives of the workshop were to educate the workers on the meaning of gender based violence, the symptoms of gender based violence and ways to prevent and eradicate this dangerous phenomenon.

The concept of gender based violence and its forms were discussed including rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Participants reflected on women's stories to draw out individual experiences in order to focus on gender roles being socially, historically and culturally constructed, which can be changed.

The discussions indicated that all the women believed that some of the factors which influenced women to sacrifice and deny themselves were their families, children, culture, low self-esteem and lack of value for

self.

Most of the participants felt that in order to change male dominance and eradicate gender based violence; men should avoid drinking alcohol, using mind altering drugs, provide more for the family, be exposed to counselling, be trustworthy, be better communicators, be educated and informed to change their cultural upbringing.

Women on the other hand should have high self-esteem, be financially and economically independent, communicate more, be responsible mothers and wives, be more informed and educated to change their environment and to have self-respect.

Participants expressed their pleasure at being invited to the workshop and stated that there should be similar workshops in the future.