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The process for gathering data and preparing the report included meetings, briefings and de-briefs with the core CFYR Guyana program teams responsible for making the recommendations actionable. This should strengthen the quality and feasibility of the recommendations proposed in this report.

DISCLAIMER

This report was prepared by Creative Associates International. The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	2
OVERVIEW OF GUYANA’S GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE.....	4
Global and Regional Perspective.....	4
Country Specific Legal and Institutional Setting	5
GENDER GAPS AND CHALLENGES	6
Gender Gaps in Youth Development.....	6
Economic Participation and Opportunity	7
Gender-Based Violence.....	9
Crime and Juvenile Justice	10
Mental Health, Suicide, and Sexual and Reproductive Health.....	12
RECOMMENDATIONS	15
Promote awareness on GBV, SRH and social norms.....	15
Integrate gender in juvenile justice reform and opportunities.....	16
Promote gender equity in economic participation and opportunity	16
Integrate gender considerations in grants under contract	17
Strengthen technical gender integration throughout the project cycle	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	19
ANNEXES	22
Annex 1: List of individuals consulted.....	22
Annex 2: Guyana’s gender architecture and gender gaps	24
Annex 3: Gender gaps in educational attainment.....	27
Annex 4: Maternal health and HIV related issues.....	28
Annex 5: GBV and child abuse legislation	29

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CFYR	Community, Family, and Youth Resilience Program
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CSOs	Civil Society organizations
FBOs	Faith-Based Organizations
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GEMS	Gender Equitable Men Scale
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GOG	Government of Guyana
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMAGES	International Men and Gender Equality Survey
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOC	New Opportunity Corps
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SKYE	Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
YDI	Youth Development Index

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Crime and violence are among the high-ranking problems facing youth in the Caribbean region, and gender issues, including social norms and gender-based violence, compound these problems. The Government of Guyana (GOG) has shown efforts to promote gender equality, most notably through violence prevention and non-discriminatory legislation and by embracing the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite its efforts, gender disparities exist in economic and labor market participation, health, safety and security. Notably, although female educational attainment has improved, their job prospects have not improved commensurately. The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index shows that Guyana slipped from 38th to 64th between 2011 and 2014 out of 135 countries rated, all of this with a backdrop of increasing evidence that promoting gender equality and female empowerment is a fundamental path towards eradicating poverty, ending violence and advancing inclusive sustainable development (United Nations, 2015; USAID, 2012).¹

The USAID funded Community, Family and Youth Resilience (CFYR) program's Guyana Rapid Gender Assessment revealed a deficit in national and local programming to address threats to citizen security, and gender gaps and inequalities that increase youth risks and vulnerabilities.² Assessment findings indicate that although gender-responsive policies and institutional mechanisms are in place, implementation is slow and challenging due to limited government capacity and resources. Youth face barriers to labor market participation, and female youth face limitations to enter and maintain paid work. Different forms of crime and violence persist in Guyana, some of which may reflect Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and negative social norms including Machismo culture. The juvenile justice system is yet to integrate gender considerations and approaches, including in its reintegration and diversion programs. Mental health is a major health concern in Guyana, and data suggests that it disproportionately affects young males. Unsafe sexual behaviors leading to teenage pregnancy and other health challenges is a serious problem among adolescents and youth in Guyana. And juvenile justice and crime prevention systems, policies and strategies are yet to fully take account of the differential impacts and needs of women and girls, men and boys.

Key recommendations emanating from the rapid assessment to make CFYR gender-responsive while increasing target beneficiaries' resilience or protective factors include:

1. Promote awareness on GBV, Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and Social Norms.
2. Integrate gender in juvenile justice reform and opportunities to support diversion, alternative sentencing and re-integration programs.

¹ United Nations, 2015: Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; USAID, 2012: Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy.

²The Assessment included desk research and in-country interviews and focus groups. CFYR staff conducted seventy-five interviews with 30 representatives from 22 different organizations with various stakeholders in Guyana, including youth, women, civil society, government and donors (see Annex 1 for full list of organizations) from November 28-December 2, 2016 and April 3-12, 2017 in Guyana and between December 2016 and May 2017 online. Twenty-eight of the interviews were conducted through face-to-face meetings in Georgetown, Guyana, and two were conducted online via Skype and email follow-up. Two focus group discussions were held in Corriverton; one for youth (mixed group of 26 male and female) and another for women (group of 28 including adolescent mothers).

3. Promote gender equity in economic participation and opportunity.
4. Integrate gender considerations in grants under contract.
5. Strengthen technical gender integration throughout the project cycle.

Recommendations from the Rapid Gender Assessment will be integrated across the four key CFYR program output areas. In practice, this means that recommendations will impact primary, secondary and tertiary violence prevention interventions, and promote gender-responsiveness in the program's learning agenda.

It is critical that CFYR learn from and engage with organizations and networks active in violence prevention that have experience integrating gender. This may entail formal and informal exchange with implementers of the Commonwealth Youth Programme and UN agencies, among others. CFYR can use its learning agenda as a platform to strengthen these networks to promote an advocacy agenda for the GOG to adopt gender considerations and approaches in the juvenile justice system. CFYR should also engage with and support (through its grants pool) local civil society organizations such as Help & Shelter, Red Thread, Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination, among others, who provide victim's care and reintegration support for youth in conflict with the law.

OVERVIEW OF GUYANA'S GENDER EQUALITY ARCHITECTURE

Global and Regional Perspective

Guyana embraced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which identifies gender equality as one of the priority goals, and sets targets and indicators along different dimensions of economic, social and environmental development (Sustainable Development Goal 5). Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is reflected across goals relating to education, poverty, health and the promotion of peaceful, just and inclusive societies (United Nations, 2015).³ Guyana's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) informed its various poverty reduction strategy papers (PAHO/WHO, 2016)⁴ and is supported by the country's gender equality architecture⁵.

Overall, reports show progress in education and political participation. In education, Guyana has achieved gender parity and considerable progress has been made in political participation, with 31 percent of its members of parliament being female. However, several reports show that gender gaps persist across economic and labor market participation, health, safety and security.⁶

The country has mechanisms to review progress on implementation of gender equality frameworks and plans. One such review mechanism led by Guyana's Women and Gender Equality Commission culminated in the Beijing +20 national conference that examined the progress, gaps and actions on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This review, completed in 2014, highlighted some progress in advancing women's rights, but also showed serious gaps such as in eliminating gender-based violence and achieving parity in equal work for equal pay.

From a regional perspective, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) has convened various Caribbean regional meetings for its member states including Guyana, and formed taskforces to identify gaps in gender equality, equity and mainstreaming and offer recommendations for action (Brown, 2016). Based on the recommendations, CARICOM has supported youth development activities, in collaboration with Guyana's Ministry of Education and Ministry of Social Protection, and developed a cadre of skilled male and female youth leaders and ambassadors in the region. The Commonwealth Youth Programme has promoted positive youth development for

³ United Nations, 2015: Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

⁴ PAHO/WHO, 2016: Guyana Country Cooperation Strategy.

⁵ Refer to Annex 2 for details on Guyana's Gender Architecture

⁶ The progress and gaps are discussed in more detail in sections to follow. Various reports have tracked progress in the attainment of the SDGs (initially as Millennium Development Goals). References for this report include the following: World Economic Forum, 2015 - The Global Gender Gap Report ; Government of Guyana, 2014 - Report on the Republic of Guyana on Beijing +20; Government of Guyana, 2015 - Guyana Education Sector Plan: 2014-2018; UN Women, 2010 - Response of the Government of Guyana to the questionnaire on violence against women; UNDP, 2013 - Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014 Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America; UNICEF, 2016 - The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guayana; United States Department of State, 2016 - Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016; United States of America, 2016 - Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2016; Women and Gender Equality Commission, 2013 - Third Annual Report of the Women and Gender Equality Commission; WHO, 2015 - Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990 to 2015: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division; WHO, 2017 - Global Health Observatory Data Repository.

both female and male youth through the establishment of youth centers and the provision of formal training for youth development workers. Such regional efforts have advanced female youth leadership, and provided supporting platforms for their engagement.

United Nations agencies, including United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UN Women and World Health Organization (WHO), and Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) have supported various initiatives to promote gender equality, child protection and female empowerment in Guyana, and in the Caribbean region. UN Women, through multi-sector partnerships, plans to support work to monitor the gender-related progress in the implementation of the SDGs in the region. The work will focus on developing legislation and regional-specific tools to address GBV and to ensure strong evidence-based advocacy.

The United States Government has also supported several programs to promote youth development, with a gender lens. For example, the USAID Skills and Knowledge for Youth Employment (SKYE) Project was designed to reduce youth crime and violence by offering education, skills building and employment for at-risk youth in Guyana. Although the SKYE program concluded in 2016, its gender, inclusion and diversity training for beneficiaries and staff could guide other programs to advance gender integration goals.

Country Specific Legal and Institutional Setting

Guyana’s constitutional, conventional and regulatory framework is well established to guarantee *de jure* gender equality and female empowerment⁷. The country commits to gender equality in its constitutional law and several Acts of Parliament, guaranteeing equality and prohibiting discrimination based on sex. But despite legislative and institutional mechanisms, gender inequalities persist in Guyana. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) ranks Guyana at 114 out of 154 countries (UNDP, 2015). The main reasons cited for gaps are a lack of political will, a lack of implementing protocols, and limited resources and capacity, both technical and human. Challenges also persist in data collection, reporting, investigation and accountability procedures.

GOG’s strategic plans, policies, services and programs focus on development issues such as poverty reduction, livelihoods support and equal access to goods and services for the poor and vulnerable, who are defined as women, children, youth, the elderly, indigenous peoples and individuals living with disabilities. Translating strategic plans and legislative and institutional commitments, however, to action remain a challenge mainly due to limited resources, social norms and lack of coordination.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Guyana have also implemented various programs, with multi-sector partnerships, to promote gender equality and/or youth development. For example, a select number of Guyanese faith-based organizations provide support and institutional residential care for GBV victims.

⁷ Refer to further detail in Annex 2 – Guyana’s gender architecture, and Annex 5 – GBV and child abuse legislation.

GENDER GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Gender Gaps in Youth Development

Guyana underperforms neighboring countries in narrowing gender gaps. Although it is notable that during the period 2010 to 2014, Guyana’s Human Development Index increased from 0.624 to 0.631 primarily due to strategies and policies to address the social and economic determinants of human development, (PAHO/WHO, 2016)⁸, there has been an actual widening of the gap between males and females and youth development/wellbeing. Per the Youth Development Index, Guyana ranks 116 globally out of 183 countries, with an overall score of 0.58 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016). Overall, Guyana ranks lower in YDI than several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in various domains of youth empowerment as illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Youth Development Index (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016)⁹

Country	Global Rank	2016 Overall YDI score	Health & Wellbeing Rank	Education Rank	Employment Opportunity Rank	Civic Participation Rank	Political Participation Rank	2016 YDI Overall Score
Jamaica	46	0.706	87	79	102	5	5	Very High
St. Lucia	83	0.635	55	66	13	56	149	High
Suriname	81	0.639	109	102	69	94	66	High
Guyana	116	0.582	150	95	94	23	125	Medium

Guyana’s overall YDI score in 2010 was 0.552, which indicates that its YDI improved by more than 5 percent between the period 2010 to 2015, particularly in mental health and youth mortality rates. Gains have also been made in education where the percentage of young people aged 15-24 able to read a short simple statement about everyday life, or who have attended secondary education is at 98% for females and 97.7% for males (Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, 2015).¹⁰

But gender inequalities and disparities persist in Guyana—its 2016 YDI correlates with the gender inequality index at negative -0.86 (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016). Guyanese youth are still disproportionately affected by socio-economic problems including unemployment, suicide and teenage pregnancies (UNICEF, 2016).¹¹ This national gender inequality reflects the general trend with gender disparities in youth development in the world, and specifically in selected communities of Guyana’s Region 4 and 6 where CFYR is operating.

Various CFYR interviews and focus group discussions affirm that Guyana is yet to advance equal opportunities, treatment and conditions for women and girls, and men and boys to realize equal and full participation, rights and dignity. Guyanese youth face gender constraints relating

⁸ PAHO/WHO, 2016: Guyana Country Cooperation Strategy: 2016-2020.

⁹ Commonwealth Secretariat, 2016: Global Youth Development Index and Report 2016.

¹⁰ Bureau of Statistics and UNICEF, 2015: Guyana Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report.

¹¹ UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guayana.

to social norms and expectations on masculinity and femininity, and are exposed to risks of domestic violence, drug and substance abuse, early sexual debut, sexual and gender-based violence, early marriage, early and child pregnancy and other risks that limit opportunities for their development (Interviews, 2017).¹²

Guyanese females lag behind males in overall development including economic participation and opportunity, health and survival, security and empowerment.¹³ CFYR’s preliminary baseline data shows similar patterns of gender disparities in overall youth development in all the five communities in Guyana where CFYR is operating: Sophia, Lodge, East Ruimveldt, East La Penitence and Corriverton.

Economic Participation and Opportunity

Guyana is one of the few countries in the Caribbean that has legislation that prohibits discrimination for employment or the provision of goods and services based on sex. Despite this, Guyana lags behind peer countries on labor and workforce participation indicators (World Economic Forum, 2015).¹⁴ Gender inequality is most prevalent in women’s economic participation, where females earn less than their male counterparts in executive decision-making positions as legislators, senior officials and managers. Overall, female labor force participation in 2013 was 34 percent, compared to Latin America and the Caribbean regional average of 42 percent. Gender disparities in the labor market are record high, with women’s participation in the labor market reported at 44 percent compared to 83 percent for men (World Economic Forum, 2015).

Table 2: Country Score Card: Economic Participation and Opportunity (World Economic Forum, 2015)

(Ranking out of 136 countries)	Rank	Female	Male	Female to Male Ratio
ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION AND OPPORTUNITY	117			
Labor Force Participation	123	44	83	0.54
Wage equality for similar work	94	-	-	0.61
Estimated earned income	117	3,757	8,495	0.44
Legislators, senior officials and managers	83	26	74	0.35
Professional and technical workers	1	59	41	1.41

Both women and youth in Guyana face discrimination in employment and occupation, often confining them to positions in retail, cosmetology and security guard sectors (United States Department of State, 2016).¹⁵ Youth unemployment is estimated at 40%, and youth

¹² Interviews, April 8, 2017 – Focus Group Discussions with 26 Youth in Corriverton; April 11, 2017 – Focus Group Discussions with 28 women in Corriverton.

¹³ World Economic Forum, 2015 - The Global Gender Gap Report.

¹⁴ World Economic Forum, 2015: The Global Gender Gap Report.

¹⁵ United States Department of State, 2016: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2016.

entrepreneurship is still in its formative stage (UNICEF, 2016).¹⁶ There is weak youth representation and participation in decision-making processes, and there is a general lack of deliberate strategies, opportunities or affirmative action, such as quotas, that can facilitate youth inclusion. Overall, the work of women, and particularly young women, in formal and informal sectors is concentrated in traditional sectors such as the public sector, teaching and nursing, security guard service, and domestic work. Such sectors are often low paying, non-unionized, un-regulated and labor-intensive, with poor occupational health, safety protections and limited maternal health support.

Although evidence suggests that there has been progress toward gender parity in education¹⁷, there is a marked lack of correlation between more women and girls getting through education and their ability to enter paid work or participate in leadership roles in their communities. There is also a mixed picture as progress in education attainment has not been universal in all regions of the country, and particularly in poor communities and neighborhoods where CFYR is implementing its program.

CFYR's preliminary assessment¹⁸ indicates that for at-risk youth seeking employment, there is limited job training to meet the needs in better-paying private sector jobs. Fewer young women search for jobs than young men—men are also pressured to fulfil the gender roles of economic provider within the household. Youth are also more likely to face incidents of job-related discrimination and harassment, including unequal pay for equal work and sexual harassment for young women and non-flexible working hours. There is also a tendency to treat women and youth with homogeneity, ignoring specific needs and barriers relating to age, ethnicity, religion and other social factors. Focus group discussions indicated that ethnicity plays a role in labor market participation in Guyana, and disparities and vulnerabilities for women and youth may be exacerbated by such factors. For example, poor youth from Afro and Indo-Guyanese communities in Little Africa and Little India in Corriverton lacked access to jobs and were impacted by unemployment and extreme poverty that put them at risk of truancy and school dropout, delinquency, drug use, teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation, and GBV.¹⁹

The need to increase labor force participation for youth, and for many more women, and particularly adolescent mothers and girls, is yet to be met. Though young women's literacy rates are higher than most males, female labor force participation is lower. Factors such as time poverty, social norms and expectations limit their entry to and retention in the work force. Fewer young women search for jobs than young men—men are also pressured to fulfil the gender roles of economic provider within the household. Further, most jobs available to youth are in low-paying service sectors (hospitality) that lack stability.

¹⁶ UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guayana.

¹⁷ Refer to Annex 3 for details on gender gaps in educational attainment

¹⁸ CFYR Youth Opportunities Strategy (YOS), referred to in the proposal as a Labor Market Assessment

¹⁹ Interviews, April 8, 2017: Focus Group Discussions with 26 Youth in Corriverton; April 11, 2017 – Focus Group Discussions with 28 women in Corriverton.

Gender-Based Violence

The prevalence of GBV is high, with one out of every six women reporting having experienced violence (IDB, 2016)²⁰. GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, but it also includes violence that men and boys experience or perpetrate because of their own gender roles or relations- The Guyana Police Force monthly report for February 2016, indicates that rape, kidnapping, murder, armed robbery and burglary were among the most serious crimes committed (Guyana Police Force, 2016). For that month alone, there were 48 incidents of rape and 473 of domestic violence reported to the police. A report from the Guyanese CSO Help and Shelter indicates that 9,193 women and girls and 1,689 men and boys sought and received GBV face-to-face counseling for the period between 1995 to 2015 (Help & Shelter, 2016).²¹

There are efforts with civil society, the GOG, private sector and other multi-sector partners to address GBV. The GOG supports efforts to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence through multi-sectoral partnerships with civil society organizations, faith-based organizations, UN agencies, private sector, universities, security sector and governments. Several capacity building trainings have been conducted on sexual and domestic violence laws and protocols to promote awareness and skills on management of incidents among social workers, police, probation officers, health workers, prosecutors, civil society organizations, court officers, community and faith-based leaders among others (Shepherd & Dorris, 2016).²² Guyana observes the 16 days of activism to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, convening various high level panels and national advocacy and awareness programs annually. Such efforts can be supported and re-targeted to address the specific challenges facing youth.

Efforts have been made various agencies including CARICOM, UN Women, UNDP and Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States Commission in promoting GBV awareness and advocacy for prevention and response. CARICOM conducted interviews with women and men from the region, including Guyana, on experiences and perceptions on violence against women. Expert group meetings were convened by CARICOM, bringing together stakeholders from different sectors including the gender unit, specialized violence prevention units, national statistical offices, NGOs, the police among others towards planning and strategizing to enhance data collection (Brown, 2016; Lyahen, 2016; Solomon, 2016).²³ Through these efforts, the need to improve GBV data availability was recommended.

In addition to the lack of sufficient GBV data, other challenges continue to make it difficult to prevent and respond to GBV. Although there are several legislative measures and institutional mechanisms in place to address GBV and child abuse (such as the Sexual Offences Act, and the Domestic Violence Act),²⁴ implementation has been slow and challenging. GBV has been examined in isolation from other safety and wellbeing programs undertaken by multi-sector actors.

²⁰ IDB, 2016: Data: Inter-American Development Bank (<https://data.iadb.org/IADBOpenDataVisuals/en/country-at-a-glance.html?country=GUY>).

²¹ Help & Shelter, 2016: Help & Shelter Crisis Service Cumulative Data: November 1995 - December 2015.

²² Interview with Manager, Gender Affairs Bureau; Manager, Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Policy Unit held November 30, 2016.

²³ Interviews with UNDP representative/tam lead for Citizen Security Specialist for Caribbean and CARISECURE held on November 29, 2016; Interview with UN Women representative held December 1, 2016.

²⁴ See Annex 5 for more details on Guyana's GBV and child abuse legislation.

GBV, particularly domestic violence, is often perceived as a private, personal and a family matter. This perception has overshadowed the problem and prevented the dedicated high-level public and political attention it deserves – like other forms of violence such as those related to drugs, gangs or violent crime (Interview, 2016).²⁵

Overall, the lack of systematic and comprehensive national data that records and tracks the incidence of gender-based violence is a major gap. While there is some statistical administrative and service-based data from the police, health management information systems, social services and justice, it may not reflect the complexity of the problem as most victims of GBV may not seek help through such formal sectors (Brown, 2016).²⁶

Gender inequality, social norms, childhood experiences and the enactment of harmful forms of masculinity have been identified as the main factors influencing abuse (UNICEF, 2016; Interviews, 2017).²⁷ Efforts to address social norms and negative forms of masculinity among youth and at the formative ages of children are yet to be implemented.

Crime and Juvenile Justice

Like in other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, crime and violence limits the rights and opportunities of Guyanese youth to live free from fear and threats (UNDP, 2013; IDB, 2012).²⁸ Crime and violence are among the high-ranking problems facing youth in the Caribbean region, and gender issues, including social norms and gender-based violence compound the problem. Reports indicate that besides economic pressures, social factors such as deteriorating social support systems, lack of positive male role models and the growing numbers of unattached males who are at risk of violence, combine to create opportunities for disorder and crime (USAID, 2013).²⁹

Different forms of crime and violence persist in Guyana, some of which may reflect gender-based violence, while others may have gendered dynamics or impacts. The country is ranked within the top 20 countries in the world (a rank of 15) with the highest murder rates per capita (WHO, 2014).³⁰ The homicide rate was 20 per 100,000 people in 2013, an increase from a rate of 17 per 100,000 people in 2011. Most of the homicides were carried out using firearms. A great majority of victims of homicide are young males—in 2011, 74% of reported homicides were males, while 26% were female. For the month of February 2016 alone, a total of 25 murders were recorded by the Guyana Police Force, 9 of which were committed during robberies, 5 were related to domestic violence, 10 were of the disorderly type, and 1 was undetermined (Guyana Police Force, 2016).³¹ These numbers reflect only incidents that were reported, and are very

²⁵ This came up in interviews, and respondents wanted to remain anonymous.

²⁶ Interview with CARICOM Program Manager held in December, 1 2016.

²⁷ Some of these factors were identified in the report prepared by UNICEF on Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana; Interviews with respondents at focus group discussions with youth and women held in Corriverton in April 2017 also identified some of these factors.

²⁸ UNDP, 2013: Regional Human Development Report 2013-2014 Citizen Security with a Human Face: Evidence and Proposals for Latin America; IDB, 2012: Citizen Security Conceptual Framework and Empirical Evidence.

²⁹ USAID, 2013: Eastern and Southern Caribbean Youth Assessment (ESCYA) Final Report.

³⁰ WHO, 2014: Global Status Report on Violence Prevention 2014.

³¹ Guyana Police Force, 2016: Press Release - Monthly Statistics Summary February 2016.

telling of the fact that 60 percent of the murders in that month were connected to interpersonal conflicts with the deadly use of violence to resolve conflict.

Youth in Guyana are both victims and perpetrators of crime and violence. So, increasingly, there are children and youth in contact with the law. The GOG has only one holding center for both male and female youth, although it holds many more young men and boys than girls and women. Of the 831 children admitted to the Juvenile Holding Centre in Sophia between 2011 and 2014, 70% of them were male (UNICEF, 2016).³² Discussions with key stakeholders did not indicate that there were any systematic gender-differentiated services for the male and female youth at the holding center. Guyana's New Opportunity Corps (NOC) correctional facility is intended to offer opportunities for youth in conflict with the law with potential transition, diversion, reintegration and re-insertion to their communities (Interview, 2016).³³ The NOC had 84 children and adolescents in residence in 2015, 55 percent of whom were boys.

The juvenile justice system in Guyana faces challenges, particularly regarding preventive measures for crime reduction and rehabilitation of juvenile offenders (USAID, 2013).³⁴ Alleged charges for male misconduct include drug or substance abuse, and violent crimes such as theft, robbery and larceny, while female misconduct is primarily for 'wandering', indicating a broken relationship often between parents/guardians and adolescent youth (United Nations, 2012).³⁵ Stakeholders in Guyana advocate for the removal of wandering from the statutes, although some debate that it is a necessary inclusion as wandering may result in other crimes. The root causes of why girls and adolescent women may wander have not been examined, and some have indicated that domestic violence, trauma, and past experiences of violence within the home may drive girls away from the home (Interviews, 2017)³⁶. While young men and boys wander, at times more than young women and girls, social norms and perceptions are more accepting of that behavior among men and boys. The root causes for male misconduct are often linked to economic factors, including the societal pressure to be "breadwinners" and economic providers for their families.

With a draft juvenile justice bill in the process of finalization, the GOG is already taking steps to reform its juvenile justice system. The draft bill is expected to de-criminalize crimes such as wandering, and address issues relating to youth sentencing regarding economic crimes, which penalize the youth for being poor and going on to the streets.

Another challenge is that there is limited indication that Guyana's juvenile justice system considers the gendered needs, roles, relations and perspectives of female and male youth. A gender approach seems to be lacking, and reintegration and diversion programs are gender-blind. Effective interventions to address the gendered differential needs of young women and men in both the holding center and the NOC correctional facility were limited (Interview, 2016).³⁷

Gender sensitivity is often not applied on programs for youth in conflict with the law, so they fail to cater for the gender differences that need to be addressed. For example, pregnant adolescent

³² UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana.

³³ Interviews with respondents who wanted to remain anonymous.

³⁴ USAID, 2013: Eastern and Southern Caribbean Youth Assessment (ESCYA) Final Report

³⁵ United Nations, 2012: The United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child: Guyana's Commitments

³⁶ Focus Group Discussions with women and youth in Corriverton in April 2017

³⁷ Interviews with respondents who wanted to remain anonymous, December 2016.

girls and youth lack essential services and facilities regarding matters such as pregnancy and sexual reproductive health. Juvenile justice diversion and/or reintegration programs are limited and tend to work with the police with a focus on punitive measures. There is limited capacity or guidelines regarding gender integration in juvenile justice that would consider the different needs of males and females and support non-punitive approaches to build individual and community resilience and social cohesion. There seems to be a lack of gender sensitivity training or capacity to conduct gender assessments of differential needs and impacts – and sometimes do unintended harm particularly to young men and women who have been abused and are living with trauma (Interview, 2016).

There is limited capacity in the juvenile justice system to address or respond to gender issues relating to tackling ‘macho men’ culture, addressing reproductive health issues of young women and linking with families to address domestic violence and GBV. It was difficult to find any counseling or trauma-informed approaches to gender issues in the justice systems, such as those relating to teen pregnancy, sexual assault, child defilement and the like. There is also limited psychological counseling for children and youth in conflict with the law who have been sexually assaulted or are child mothers, or who may need medical and/or mental health care. The protective environment approach is yet to become a common platform for the protection of vulnerable youth and the promotion of an integrated approach that builds safe communities, families and youth resilience.

Evidence and practice suggest that the needs of young women and girls are not being met by a justice system that is primarily designed for young men and boys. In addition, the behaviors and needs of young men and boys in the juvenile justice system are hardly examined with a gender lens to understand their potential linkages to GBV, social norms and other challenges relating to SRH such as teenage pregnancy, and implications for gender-responsive diversion and/or reintegration efforts.

Mental Health, Suicide, and Sexual and Reproductive Health

Guyana is guided by its national health strategy—Health Vision 2020—developed following a multi-stakeholder consultative process and which provides a roadmap for long-term health planning for positive outcomes. Although the country has made significant positive strides in human development since 2010 in such areas as life expectancy, water and sanitation facilities, and mortality from communicable diseases, much is needed to achieve overall comprehensive health and wellbeing.

Mental health is a major health concern in Guyana, and data suggest that it disproportionately affects young males. The country has a mental health policy with an implementation plan, and mental health is also explicitly referenced in general health policy for integration into primary care (WHO, 2011).³⁸

³⁸ WHO, 2011: Mental Health Atlas.

Evidence suggests that Guyana has the highest rates of suicide in the Caribbean region, and in the world, with young males much more likely to be victims than females.

Table 3: Suicide rates (WHO, 2017)³⁹

Country	Sex	2015	2010	2005	2000
Barbados	Male	0.5	2.3	3.7	3.3
	Female	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.6
Jamaica	Male	2.6	0.9	3.3	0.4
	Female	0.3	0.2	0.9	0.1
St. Lucia	Male	12.0	11.5	5.3	12.9
	Female	1.6	2.1	0.00	3.6
Guyana	Male	46.0	43.4	44.4	41.2
	Female	15.5	14.4	13.3	11.7

Focus group discussions with women and youth (both male and female) in Guyana suggested that gender roles and social norms expectations are major contributing factors in the high rates of suicide among youth, particularly among young men. Over 92 percent of individuals interviewed indicated that young men are pressured to be heads of household and provide for their families— as one youth respondent put it, ‘*an ideal young man should work in the sense of bring money to the home he is living at and be the one that will enforce the rule of law of his home to show his superiority in the home.*’ Some young men are more likely to commit suicide when they fail to meet this societal expectation as economic providers, which gives them authority and meaning in the home, and ultimately in the society (Interviews, 2017).⁴⁰ For young females, the main cause of suicide identified during the consultations was due to desperation and trauma, often resulting from sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence and teenage pregnancy.

Unsafe sexual behaviors leading to teenage pregnancy and other health challenges including HIV and other sexually transmitted infections⁴¹ is another serious problem among adolescents and youth in Guyana (PAHO/WHO, 2016).⁴² With the high incidence of teenage pregnancy, the adolescent birth rate is 88.5 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19 (UNICEF, 2016).⁴³

Sex and reproductive health education for children and youth remains a challenge in Guyana. Consultations with key stakeholders in Guyana indicated that there is limited sex and reproductive health education and services for children, adolescents and youth. The GOG has integrated a health and family life educational curriculum in schools, but the curriculum does not focus on sex and reproductive health education and services which are critical. This is due to cultural and religious norms in Guyanese society. Some parents and religious groups are afraid that sex and reproductive health education may result in decline of what they view as moral and societal values, by increasing the use of contraceptives among youth and encouraging sexual activity among children and youth. (Interview, 2016)⁴⁴ This is further complicated by in

³⁹ WHO, 2017: Global Health Observatory Data Repository available online at Age Standardized Suicide Rates webpage (<http://apps.who.int/gho/data/node.main.MHSUICIDEASDR?lang=en>).

⁴⁰ Interviews, April 8, 2017: Focus Group Discussions with 26 Youth in Corriverton; April 11, 2017 – Focus Group Discussions with 28 women in Corriverton.

⁴¹ Refer to Annex 4 for more details on maternal health and HIV related issues in Guyana.

⁴² PAHO/WHO, 2016: Guyana Country Cooperation Strategy: 2016-2020.

⁴³ UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana.

⁴⁴ Interview, 2016: Respondents in the key informative interviews chose to share this information with assurance of anonymity.

definitions of the legal age of a child which is set at 18 years, while provisions for the legal age of sexual consent are set at 16 years.⁴⁵ This poses challenges in clearly defining sexual abuse against children. And for adolescents aged 16-17 who are sexually active, and legally so, societal practices and economic constraints make it difficult for them to access services relating to pregnancy, contraceptives or any preventive education. To access SRH services through formal structures before the age of 18, they would need to be accompanied by parents as they are still considered minors at age 16-17, which makes it difficult and discouraging (Interview, 2016).

There are promising efforts in Guyana to promote sexual and reproductive health among youth. For example, the GoG and UNFPA has worked to reduce reproductive health risks and vulnerabilities of adolescents and youth through access to friendly information and services by creating community adolescent and youth friendly spaces in at risk and disadvantaged communities. This involved setting up Youth Friendly Health Spaces within the primary health care centers, with support from neighborhood democratic councils, civil society and faith-based organizations. Through these spaces, the GoG and UNFPA have trained peer counselors, provided comprehensive SRH, sexuality education including information on gender identity and roles, and outreach services such as HIV/AIDS counseling and testing and family planning, and life skills training for adolescents and youth from target communities.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Guyana's Sexual Offences Act defines a 'child' as any person under 18 years of age. However, children aged 16 or over can have sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex who is 16 or older, if both consent. The law provides different age ranges for different offences such as sexual activity with a child under 16 years old. Guyana is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which protects the rights and interests of persons under 18.

⁴⁶ Interview with UNFPA Assistant Representative in Guyana, April 2017.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Youth in Guyana face gendered barriers relating to social norms, time poverty, GBV, teenage pregnancy, gender relations and gender roles. Another challenge is to ensure that crime and violence prevention systems, policies and strategies take account of the differential impacts and needs of young women and girls, men and boys.

In response to these challenges and the status of Guyana's progress toward gender equality, the following recommendations provide opportunities for CFYR to incorporate gender-responsive programming to support increasing youth and family protective factors⁴⁷:

Promote awareness on GBV, SRH and social norms

CFYR will aim to change attitudes, expectations and behaviors, create alternative norms, provide alternative role models, and increase awareness among youth, family and community on GBV, SRH and social norms. Interventions may include:

- Conduct gender training with CFYR's Family Counselors, and Community Enhancement Committees (CECs) established at community level on GBV, SRH and social norms. CECs will include ministry of social protection gender committees and community advocates who work on issues such as advocating for access to services and victim assistance, and provide them with training to work with and through the CECs to address GBV, SRH, social norms and other gender issues affecting at risk youth.

The CECs will also be provided with technical support to integrate gender considerations in CFYR's community safety plans to create a shared perspective for combating GBV and negative social norms. This will include developing tools for gender-sensitive safety analysis, implementation and evaluation; conducting gender and safety audits or incorporating gender-aware exploratory walk approaches to be used in community safety audits; developing gender-sensitive community safety operational plans; conducting gender training for youth, family and community-level stakeholders on gender-aware community safety strategic planning; developing positive role models for young women and girls, men and boys at the community and household levels; and creating a community gender forum for sharing information, resources, ideas and learning relating to gendered threats to safety and violence prevention.

- Through its grants mechanism, CFYR will support existing groups, including Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), women and youth groups and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), to leverage what they are already doing to promote gender equitable norms and relations, and further build their capacity as first responders to GBV, trauma, social norms, SRH and other social issues in communities that CFYR will be serving.

⁴⁷ Additional details are provided in Annex 7.

- Assist the GOG ministry of public health in systematically documenting data from existing administrative records, and collaborate with USAID-funded CARISECURE program in integrating gender considerations where needed in the injury surveillance system. This would produce valuable data to advise responses such as GBV hotspots, circumstances of the injury, and other demographic relationships. The data from hospital records would complement police records to provide much more robust administrative data that can be used for CFYR programming. CFYR will also collaborate with the ministry to expand and strengthen its initiatives to promote outreach and support to teenage mothers.

Integrate gender in juvenile justice reform and opportunities.

CFYR will integrate gender in juvenile justice reform and opportunities to support diversion, alternative sentencing and re-integration programs. Interventions may include:

- Review with a gender lens administrative and diagnostic tools used, such as the risk assessment instrument, care plan template, reintegration plan template and the pre-probations report template. CFYR will support social protection officers to improve risk assessment, with a gendered lens. And ensure that data management and reporting tools integrate gender and incorporate sex-disaggregated data.
- Provide awareness and support to the entities engaged with diversion programs (law enforcement, families, civil society organizations, faith-based groups, community committees) to ensure CFYR interventions are sensitive to different needs of young women and girls, men and boys, and where necessary, to design gender-differentiated or gender-specific programs (for women and girls only, or boys and men only).

In collaboration with these entities, CFYR will develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to support the integration of gender considerations in alternative sentencing, diversion, rehabilitation and reintegration of at risk youth, with the goal of addressing gender vulnerabilities including teenage pregnancy and GBV trauma, as well as reducing gender barriers and recidivism rates.

- At policy level, CFYR will organize high level policy dialogues on gender-responsive juvenile justice reform, in collaboration with the Inter-Agency National Advisory Board, and Guyana Ministry of Social Protection and other relevant ministries and agencies. These discussions will systematically include themes related to gender, and specifically on equitable access to justice for young women and girls.
- CFYR will provide gender technical support to the Ministry of Social Protection for gender-responsive review of the management and administrative systems of the New Opportunity Corps (NOC), and for gender training of staff members of the NOC, Sophia Juvenile Remand Center and the Probation Department.

Promote gender equity in economic participation and opportunity

- Promote gender parity in identification of youth at risk to be referred for educational after-school programs, soft-skills/coping and workforce development skills training.

- Provide equitable access to life, work and business-ownership readiness skills to young women, including teenage mothers. Building gender-transformative leadership and social-relational skills of at risk youth through after school and out of school programs such as sports, summer camps, second step and alternative suspension programs. Providing gender-specific support and outreach to vulnerable youth, including formation of teenage mothers’ support groups and survivors of trauma and GBV agents of change clubs. Strengthening the capacity of programs supporting under-age mothers to receive services and to enter the labor market.
- Engage with and conduct gender-sensitivity training for the private sector, employers and other stakeholders to promote gender-equitable policies and practices, respond to the specific needs of young women and teenage mothers, and support on-demand work-based skills and employability. A gender training module will be included in CFYRs toolkit on hiring and employing at risk youth, and efforts will be made to increase awareness on gender-specific factors that increase risks and vulnerabilities for youth, and the different resources, career pathways and positive support that male and female at-risk youth need for growth and development.
- Leverage both the CFYR learning agenda and prevention activities with inter-agency committees, community councils, family counselors to promote policy and community dialogue to reduce gender-based barriers to economic participation and opportunity.
- Provide gender-specific mentoring and coaching career support. CFYR will develop a cadre of male and female “gender champions” from among the family counselors and CECs who would serve as role models as well as advocates for gender equity in economic participation and opportunity.
- Support the ministry of education to integrate gender and social norms training in targeted schools for their ongoing training programs for youth between ages 10 to 14.

Integrate gender considerations in grants under contract

- Apply a gender-sensitive criterion to ensure gender representation in grants selection teams, mainstream gender in the grantee selection processes and ensure gender-focused programs are selected where appropriate. Gender considerations will include implementation of special measures, such as a quota system toward a 50% representation of males and females in grants selection committees, and inclusion of gender plans and approaches in proposed grantee activities. All CFYR grantees will receive gender training as part of their agreement. Gender considerations will also be considered in examining proposed activities by grantees. As grants are awarded, the CFYR Guyana team will continue to document gender-related lessons learnt, conduct institutional capacity assessments and support capacity-strengthening plans recommended for grantees.

Strengthen technical gender integration throughout the project cycle

- Develop a gender strategy for CFYR that will ensure program quality through implementation of gender-specific activities, and coordination of gender integration in all program activities.

- Develop and implement a training program on gender and social norms for all CFYR program staff, for broader shared discussion and recognition of mandates, challenges and opportunities.
- CFYR will strengthen male and female participation in all project activities, aiming for a least 50% representation in the CECs.
- Ensure that all indicators and results are fully gender integrated and sex-disaggregated, and that there is constant review of the program’s monitoring plan and a collaboration, learning and adaptation process to strengthen gender components or make changes where needed.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of individuals consulted

#	Affiliation/Organization	Name and contact	Title
1.	Government of Guyana, Ministry of Social Protection	Ms. Akila Doris 654 8025 223 3390	Manager Sexual offences and Domestic Violence
2.	Government of Guyana, Ministry of Social Protection	Mr. Jason Shepherd 668 2551 1643 4240	Manager, Gender Affairs Bureau
3.	Government of Guyana, Ministry of Social Protection	Ms. Abike Samuels; office: 223 1745, Cell: 618 1018; abikelove2001@gmail.com	deputy director
4.	Government of Guyana, Guyana Ministry of Education	Mr. Ruel Johnson 592 673 4396 592 225 2071 ruel.johnson@moe.gov.gy	Cultural Policy Advisor
5.	UNICEF	Ms. Patricia Gittens 226-7083 pgittens@unicef.org	Child Protection Officer
6.	SSYDR	Ms. Fiona Wills magda.wills:ssydr.org Skype: magda.fiona	Executive Director
7.	SSYDR	Mr. Dale Erskine	Director Criminal Justice
8.	Guyana Police Force	Mr. Hicken	Commander A Division
9.	UNFPA	Ms. Patrice La Fleur	Assistant Representative
10.	UNDP Guyana	Ms. Mikiko Tanaka	Resident Representative
11.	UNDP	Mr. Fabio Oliva fabio.oliva@undp.org	UNDP Peace and Development Advisor for Guyana and Suriname
12.	Guyana Chronicle	Ms. Ikola Thompson 677-0604	Columnist
	Women and Gender Equality Commission	Ms. Diana Swan-Lawrence Tel. 231-5298 diana@womensgender.org	Chief Executive Officer
10.	CARICOM Secretariat	Dr. Hilary Brown Tel: (592) 222-0147 (592) 222-0001-75 ext. 2707 Hilary.Brown@Caricom.org	Programme Manager Culture and Community Development and Gender
12.	Red Thread	Ms. Karen De Souza 227-7010 / 223-6254 redthreadguyana@gmail.com	Coordinator

13.	USAID Mission	Ms. Chloe Noble	USAID Mission for the Eastern and Southern Caribbean
	Ministry of Social Protection	Ms. Oslin Crawford Ms. Abike Samuels 225-6212 ext 253 / 680-3200	Chief Probation Officer Deputy Director
14.	FACT	Ms. Annette Jaundoo	Project Coordinator (<i>coordinated the Outreach</i>)
15.	Society Against Sexual Orientation Discrimination(SASOD)	Mr. Joel Simpson 225-7283 manager@sasod.org.gy	Executive Director
	Help & Shelter	Ms. Margaret Kertzious 592-227-3454; 225-4731 and fax 227-8353	Coordinator / Director
16	PAHO/WHO	Dr. William Adukrow adukroww@paho.org	Representative
17.	University of Guyana	Mr. Andrew Hicks Andrew_hicks@yahoo.com	Department of Sociology
18.	Inter-American Development Bank	Ms. Heather Sutton	Research Coordinator
19.	Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association	Dr. Patricia Bishnauth	Executive Director
20.	UNDP	Ms. Juliet Solomon Tel: 507 6650 0243- juliet.solomon@undp.org	UNDP CARISECURE Team Lead and Citizen Security Specialist for the Caribbean
21.	UNDP	Ms. Janine Chase janine.chase@undp.org	CARISECURE Deputy Team Lead
22.	UN Women	Ms. Isiuwa Iyahan pgittens@unicef.org	Program Specialist Economic Empowerment

Annex 2: Guyana’s gender architecture and gender gaps

The GOG has made numerous strides in addressing gender concerns. It ratified and incorporated international and regional multi-lateral conventions into its constitution, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and *Belém do Pará*—the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women. In addition to non-discrimination, Guyana has instituted several national laws to prevent gender-based violence and child abuse and neglect. Its Domestic Violence Act of 1996 provides legal protection to any persons (male or female adults and children) who have suffered abuse or are at risk of suffering domestic violence abuse. The country’s Sexual Offences Act 2010 defines and criminalizes a wide range of sexual offences which include, rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with persons with mental disability, voyeurism, grooming and other forms of abuse. Guyana’s Combating Trafficking in Persons Act 2005 prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons (adults and children) for purposes of sex or labor. The country introduced the ILO Decent Work Country Programme in 2013, and has protections for domestic workers.

GOG established the Women and Gender Equality Commission in 2010 as a constitutional rights commission mandated to address gender issues, promote the advancement of women in society and investigate and make recommendations to the Parliament. The Commission is also mandated to receive complaints and reports on issues affecting both women and men, and to examine policies and programs on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The commission has established regional gender affairs committees to advance gender issues at the regional level, and facilitate women’s access to justice.

There are efforts by the government to address gender disparities in economic participation and poverty reduction. Guyana’s Women of Worth is an economic empowerment program dedicated to serving women between the ages of 18 and 65 (Shepherd & Dorris, 2016).⁴⁸ Established in 2010 through Guyana’s Ministry of Human Services and Social Security and the Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry, the program aims to promote women’s access to loans and financial services that can help them to start businesses and become more independent and less vulnerable to potential exploitation or abuse. Guyana’s Women and Gender Equality Commission advocates for gender equity in employment and labor market participation, and in the valuing of women’s work, including unpaid labor. It convenes public forums and advocates for legal reforms in Parliament. The commission has also organized round table discussions on development and the effects of gender social norms, culture and traditions to increase awareness and shift perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of the public towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Women and Gender Equality Commission, 2013).⁴⁹

As part of its gender equality architecture, the GOG has established the Gender Affairs Bureau under the Ministry of Social Protection. This Bureau is tasked with the responsibility to promote gender equality, and is in the process of adopting a gender policy that would allow for more strategic planning and interventions. Guyana Women’s Leadership training institute promotes gender equity and awareness, women’s leadership and supports victims of GBV through gender-

⁴⁸ Shepherd & Dorris, 2016: Interviews with GoG Manager, Gender Affairs Bureau; and Manager, Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Policy Unit – November 29, 2016.

⁴⁹ It was not possible to obtain information regarding the budget of the Women and Gender Equality Commission, and whether this has increased or decreased over time.

focused education and training programs for women in Guyana. The institute is part of Guyana's Ministry of Social Protection, and is dedicated to enabling the full participation of women in leadership and decision-making processes in society for equitable and sustainable development.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Guyana have also implemented various programs, with multi-sector partnerships, to promote gender equality and/or youth development. Help & Shelter partners with the government and other civil society to offer essential services particularly in the areas of domestic, sexual and child abuse, including temporary shelter, counseling (for both victims and perpetrators), court accompaniment, training, referrals and accompaniments for health treatment, incident reports, among other services (Help and Shelter, 2016).⁵⁰ The GOG has worked with CSOs such as Red Thread and Guyana's legal aid clinic to provide psychosocial support, legal advice and representation to people who need such services, and offer referrals. The Cops and Faith Community Network is a partnership with Guyana Police Force and Ministry of Security to support community efforts in crime prevention, especially among youth who come into contact with the law. Their programs include community action planning to promote citizen security, and provision of counseling, reintegration and diversion programs for offenders or youth at risk.

The country has mechanisms to review progress on implementation of gender equality frameworks and plans. One such review mechanism led by Guyana's Women and Gender Equality Commission culminated in the Beijing +20 national conference that reviewed the progress, gaps and actions on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This review, completed in 2014, highlighted some progress in advancing women's rights, but also showed serious gaps such as in eliminating gender-based violence and achieving parity in equal work for equal pay.

Despite the gains made with Guyana's gender architecture, the country lags behind other countries in the region in achieving gender equality and female empowerment. The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index shows that Guyana's position shifted from 38 (out of 135 countries) in 2011 to 64 (out of 136 countries) in 2014. And the GII ranks Guyana at 114 out of 154 countries (UNDP, 2015).⁵¹

Although it is notable that during the period 2010 to 2014, Guyana's Human Development Index increased from 0.624 to 0.631, the progress points more to policies and strategies to address the social and economic determinants of human development, including reducing poverty and inequalities and integrating gender equity and human rights into public policies and strategies (PAHO/WHO, 2016).⁵²

⁵⁰ Interview with a representative from Help & Shelter, April 2017.

⁵¹ UNDP, 2015: Human Development Report – Gender Inequality Index.

⁵² PAHO/WHO, 2016: Guyana Country Cooperation Strategy: 2016-2020.

Table 4: Gender Inequality Index (UNDP, 2015)

	Gender Inequality Index		Maternal mortality ratio	Adolescent birth rate	Share of seats in parliament	Population with at least some secondary education		Labor force participation rate	
	Value	Rank	(deaths per 100,000 live births)	(births per 1,000 women ages 15–19)	(% held by women)	(% ages 25 and older)		(% ages 15 and older)	
Country	2014	2014	2013	2010/2015	2014	2005–2014	2005–2014	2013	2013
High Human Development									
Barbados	0.357	69	52	48.4	19.6	89.5	87.7	65.9	76.6
Trinidad	0.371	73	84	34.8	24.7	59.7	60.9	53.0	75.5
St. Kitts and Nevis	..	..	..	..	6.7	..	..	..	..
Saint Lucia	..	..	34	56.3	20.7	..	..	62.7	76.2
Jamaica	0.430	93	80	70.1	16.7	74.0	70.2	56.1	70.9
Suriname	0.463	100	130	35.2	11.8	44.6	47.1	40.5	68.8
Medium Human Development									
Guyana	0.515	114	250	88.5	31.3	60.3	47.8	42.6	80.5

Note: Data on adolescent birth rates are annual average of projected values for 2010–2015, and the data on secondary education refers to the most recent year available during the period specified.

Annex 3: Gender gaps in educational attainment

While females have reached near parity in educational attainment with both enrolment and completion, males continue to be disadvantaged. In the year 2014, 60.3 percent of adult women reached secondary level of education compared to 47.8 percent of their male counterparts (UNDP, 2015).⁵³ Gender parity has been attained in literacy rates and in enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education for females (World Economic Forum, 2015), but males continue to be under-represented in both enrolment and educational attainment at primary and secondary, and tertiary levels.

Table 5: Country Score Card: Educational Attainment (World Economic Forum, 2015)

COUNTRY SCORE CARD (Ranking out of 136 countries)	Rank	Female	Male	Female to Male Ratio
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	1.00			
Literacy rate	1.00	87	82	1.06
Enrolment in primary education	1.00	76	67	1.13
Enrolment in secondary education	1.00	100	86	1.16
Enrolment in tertiary education	1.00	18	8	2.14

Trends indicate higher enrolment rates for females, who also perform as well as males at all levels of academic attainment. For example, female students performed as well as males in 2013 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations, when all subjects were considered as an aggregate, with the proportion of passes at Grades 1 to 3 being 60% for both males and females (Government of Guyana, 2015).⁵⁴ Given that more females were enrolled than males, more females than males have passed the CSEC examination since 2008.

Table 6: Girls and Boys Performance in CSEC examinations in 2013.

Education Level	CSEC Passes with grade 1-3 in all subjects (National)	
	Girls	Boys
Secondary 2013	35,843 (60%)	22197 (60%)
Secondary 2008	24,193 (60%)	14864 (59%)

The under-achievement of males in education in Guyana is of major concern. And although a lot of progress has been made in closing the gender gap, females continue to experience barriers to their education. Per UNICEF, early marriage is high, with 23 percent of children married or in first union before the age of 18 (UNICEF, 2016).⁵⁵ Teenage pregnancy and child marriage are both major disruptions in girls' education, accounting for most of the out of school females. And while gender parity has been achieved in educational enrolment for females, inequalities persist in women's economic participation and opportunity, and in political empowerment.

⁵³ UNDP, 2015: Human Development Report.

⁵⁴ Government of Guyana, 2015: Guyana Education Sector Plan: 2014-2018.

⁵⁵ UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guayana.

Annex 4: Maternal health and HIV related issues

In 2015, Guyana’s maternal mortality ratio (MMR) was at 229, with slight progress from 2010 (241 MMR). Guyana has had a continuous trend of regression since 1990 when the MMR was 171. The incidence of early and/or child marriage exacerbates the situation. The adolescent birth rate is 88.5 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19 (UNICEF, 2016).⁵⁶

Table 6: MMR - Maternal Death per 100,000 live births (WHO, 2015)⁵⁷

Region or Country	MMR	# of Maternal deaths	# of AIDS-related indirect maternal deaths	% change in MMR between 1990-2005	Progress towards SDG
World	216	303,000	4700		
Developed Regions	12	1700	87		
Developing Regions	239	302,000	4600		
Caribbean	175	1300	20		
St. Lucia	48	1	-	-6.7	N/A
St. Vincent	45	1	-	22.4	N/A
Suriname	155	15	-	-0.8	No progress
Jamaica	89	43	-	-0.4	N/A
Guyana	229	34	51	-1.2	No progress

The GOG has a Millennium Development Goal Accelerated Framework and action plan focused on improving maternal health, with regular inter-ministerial reviews to monitor progress; but there is a recognition that greater progress with the Health Vision 2020 and with maternal health would require improved services, increased funding, strategic partnerships and political will.

HIV prevalence in Guyana has seen an increase from approximately 7300 people living with HIV in 2012, to approximately 7899 in 2015 (UNAIDS, 2015).⁵⁸ According to PAHO, although there has been a decline in new HIV and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) cases reported during the period 2010-2014, there has been a new increase in 2015, with 789 new cases, compared with 751 in 2014. The male to female ratio has fluctuated, but was at 1:09 in 2014, with most cases occurring in the 25-49 age group. About 1300 young people aged 15-24 were living with HIV in 2015 (UNAIDS, 2015). There have been positive trends in the decline of mother to child transmission of HIV, from 7% in 2003 to less than 2% at the end of 2014. This is attributable to the intensified efforts of the multi-sectoral national Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) program, led by the Ministry of Health. which seeks to ensure that HIV infected pregnant women enrolled in the program are provided with the appropriate care, treatment and support (Government of Guyana, 2015)⁵⁹.

⁵⁶ UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana.

⁵⁷ WHO, 2015: Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990 to 2015: Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, World Bank Group and United Nations Population Division

⁵⁸ UNAIDS, 2015: HIV Prevalence.

⁵⁹ Government of Guyana, 2015: Guyana AIDS Response Progress Report: Reporting period: January - December 2014

Annex 5: GBV and child abuse legislation

Trafficking in persons: Guyana is a source and destination country for women, men and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor, particularly in urban areas, and in mining communities in the interior (United States of America, 2016).⁶⁰ Although the full extent of trafficking is unknown, Guyanese children are particularly vulnerable to sex and labor trafficking. Overall, a great majority of Guyanese children and adults are trafficked for sex and labor in Jamaica, Suriname, and other Caribbean countries. This is in spite of the fact that Guyana’s Combating Trafficking in Persons Act 2005 prohibits all forms of trafficking in persons (adults and children) for purposes of sex or labor (Government of Guyana, 2005). Guyana has shown some significant efforts to prevent and eliminate trafficking in persons, through partnerships with CSOs and other sector, such as Help & Shelter, to provide shelter, psychosocial services and referral for victims of trafficking (United States of America, 2016). The GOG has also recently instituted a few measures including convictions for trafficking offenders and restitution to victims. Guyana’s anti-trafficking unit is severely understaffed, which makes it difficult to facilitate trafficking investigations, reporting mechanisms for victims, or offer needed services to many victims (Guyana Police Force, 2016).⁶¹ The government has an inter-ministerial anti-trafficking taskforce, which collaborates with Help & Shelter as a referral mechanism to provide shelter for female victims.

Domestic violence: Guyana’s Domestic Violence Act of 1996 provides legal protection to any persons (male or female adults and children) who have suffered abuse or are at risk of suffering domestic violence abuse (Government of Guyana, 1996), but there are gaps in the implementation of the law. Victim protection and accountability of the perpetrator depends very much on the cooperation of the police, who may be guided by social norms and relations that disempower victims, especially women and children. With alleged corruption and gender norms, sometimes the police have settled cases informally or through bribes, without following the legal provisions provided by the law (Interview, 2016). There are limited resources and capacity, and a general lack of trust and confidence in the ability of the police and other government agencies to deal with incidents of domestic violence in a robust and effective manner (UNICEF, 2016).⁶²

Sexual Abuse: The Guyana Sexual Offences Act 2010 defines and criminalizes a wide range of sexual offences which include, rape, sexual assault, sexual activity with persons with mental disability, voyeurism, grooming and other forms of abuse. The law recognizes that women and children are the clear majority of victims of sexual abuse, but it also provides for men and boys. The law outlines procedures for its enforcement and application to be adopted by the police and the judiciary. Although the law prescribes severe penalties as deterrence, there are provisions for rehabilitation of perpetrators of sexual offences (Government of Guyana, 2010).⁶³ Some progress has been made in the implementation of this law. In 2016, an action plan for the implementation of this act was prepared by an inter-ministerial taskforce, under the leadership of Guyana Ministry of Social Protection (Shepherd & Dorris, 2016).⁶⁴ Challenges persist particularly about data collection, reporting, investigation and accountability procedures. This

⁶⁰ United States of America, 2016: Trafficking in Persons Report: June 2016.

⁶¹ Guyana Police Force, 2016: Press Release - Monthly Statistics Summary February 2016 (<http://guyanapoliceforce.gy/police/media-folder/press-releases/monthly-statistics-summary-july-2016>)

⁶² UNICEF, 2016: The Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana.

⁶³ Government of Guyana, 2010: The Sexual Offences Act 2010.

⁶⁴ Interview with Manager, Gender Affairs Bureau; Manager, Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Policy Unit held November 30, 2016.

may be an opportunity for the USAID funded CARISECURE project to support data collection and reporting.

Child abuse: Child abuse and neglect is still a challenge in Guyana, with vulnerabilities for children living in poverty or based on race and ethnicity. Children in Guyana face different forms of gender-based violence, including sexual, psychological and physical violence at home and in their communities. The main forms of abuse are child neglect and sexual abuse. Police reports for the period between January-July 2016 indicated that there were 2,238 reports of child abuse, 441 of which were incidents of sexual abuse (Guyana Police Force, 2016). Child trafficking and child labor also affect children—of the 170 cases of human trafficking identified between 2013 and 2015, 50% of them involved children, and 18% of Guyanese children were involved in child labor (UNICEF, 2016). Teen pregnancy is elevated, with about 15% of girls between the ages of 15-19 who begin childbearing and are at risk of contracting Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and/or sexually transmitted diseases.⁶⁵

Gender inequality, social norms, childhood experiences and the enactment of harmful forms of masculinity have been identified as the main factors influencing child abuse (UNICEF, 2016; Interviews, 2017).⁶⁶ There are institutional mechanisms and policies to protect children, prevent violence and punish perpetrators of child abuse and neglect in Guyana; however, the implementation of legislative measures and institutional mechanisms is still lagging. Reporting mechanisms and victim assistance needs to be strengthened to protect victims and reporters from retaliation, build trust with law enforcement, and ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted and impunity is ended (UNICEF, 2016; Guyana Police Force, 2016).⁶⁷ And efforts to address social norms and negative forms of masculinity at the formative ages of children are yet to be implemented.

⁶⁵ The incidence of teenage pregnancy and early childbirth is discussed in the report about women and children in Guyana prepared by UNICEF.

⁶⁶ Some of these factors were identified in the report prepared by UNICEF on Situation Analysis of Women and Children in Guyana; Interviews with respondents at focus group discussions with youth and women held in Corriverton in April 2017 also identified some of these factors.

⁶⁷ Guyana Police Force, 2016: Press Release - Monthly Statistics Summary February 2016.