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GUYANA DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION & CONFLICT RESOLUTION (GDCCR) Project BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Guyana Democratic Consolidation & Conflict Resolution (GDCCR) Project

BI-ANNUAL REPORT

Report for April 2008– September 2008

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Introduction

RTI International was contracted by USAID to implement its USAID/Guyana Democratic Consolidation and Conflict Resolution (GDCCR) Project through contract (504-C-00-04-00110-00) signed on 5-25-2004, for the amount of \$7,679, 113 for the period of June 16, 2004 through September 30, 2008 (4 years, 3 months). This Bi-Annual Report presents both the activities of the final half year of the project, as required by our contract, as well as highlights of the project's achievements over the past four years.

The report starts with a summary of Life of Project Achievements, followed by the Bi-Annual Report covering activities that took place from April-September 2008. Where appropriate, we also provide background information that explains some of the earlier project's work that led to more recent efforts.

Life of Project (LOP) Summary Achievements

Project History

The original GDCCR contract focused on three outcomes, or Intermediate Results (IRs): IR1, Increasing Citizen Participation in Policy Making; IR2, Improving Transparency and Accountability in Government; and IR3, Reducing Vulnerability to Ethnic and Political Conflict.

In 2007, USAID moved to Program Areas (PAs) and Elements (PE). Modification 8, signed on April 9, 2007, kept the same IRs (with minor wording changes) but dropped or added other lower level IRs. The USAID-Guyana Democratic Consolidation and Conflict Resolution Project (GDCCRP) mapped the contract IRs to the new framework as follows:

PA1: Rule of Law and Human Rights

PE1.3: Justice System

PA2: Good Governance

PE2.3: Local Government and Decentralization

PA3: Political Competition and Consensus Building

PE3.2: Elections and Political Processes

PA4: Civil Society

PE4.1: Civic Participation

Over the life of the Project it embarked on over 200 activities aimed at realizing the three IRs and four Program Areas. During the period more than one thousand nine hundred persons, of whom approximately sixty percent were females, were directly trained or

otherwise impacted upon. Grantees and CSOs which received technical assistance in the form of financing or training also served another fifteen thousand persons. Thirty small and sub-grants totaling US\$775,000 were disbursed to CSOs for the purposes of Capacity Building, Advocacy and Consensus Building and significant results were achieved.

Objectives and Goals

The original intent of the GDCCR Project was to increase citizen participation in policy decision-making through capacity building of CSOs, increasing transparency in government, including the parliament and to put together the building blocks for the development of political consensus and reduction of conflict among ethnic groups.

Due to the absence of local government elections during the life of the project (LOP), little activity could be done under PA2, Local Governance and Decentralization.

The Project has completed significant technical work in PA1 and PA4, demonstrating impressive key achievements. Particular achievements occurred in the areas of promoting mediation, establishing a case tracking system in the High Court, strengthening legal-aid, and addressing Trafficking in Persons (TIPs) and domestic violence.

LOP Key Accomplishment

The project achieved the following Key Accomplishments. Further details for each of those accomplishments as well as additional information on project activities, are described in the Program Area sections that follow.

- Citizen Participation in Policy Making

The Project:

- increased citizen participation in policy making by improving the capacity of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in advocacy and networking , technical and administrative skills, as well as providing support to their physical and infrastructural capacity, through training, technical assistance and grants.
- Provided civic education training and sensitization on civic and local government issues to women.
- Empowered over 100 women to participate in local government elections.
- collaborated with GECOM, civil society and the international donor community to support free and peaceful elections.
- provided technical assistance for the revision of electoral laws and made recommendations for legislative changes.
- conducted training for members of mass media (television, radio, print) on the Media Code of Conduct.
- sensitized the public about the elections in the media (television, radio, print).
- provided commodity support to GECOM through the provision of 18,300 training manuals.

- served as election observers, and provided logistical support to external observers of the Organization of American States(OAS).
 - Increased Accountability, Transparency and Efficiency of Governance
- Contributed to the institutionalization of mediation as a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in civil cases by training a cadre of local mediators, providing technical assistance for the formation of a Mediators Association, and providing equipment to the Mediation Center. Training in ADR, ethics and other related areas was also provided to judges and attorneys.
- Provided computers and peripherals to the High Court and Court of Appeal in an effort to reduce the backlog of case in the courts.
- Provided computers and peripherals to judges of the High Court and Court of Appeal in an effort to enhance their efficiency in researching and writing judgments.
- Refined over 350 Acts with the Laws of Guyana and approved 160 for publication.
- Established a system to enable the Attorney General’s office to track changes and provide separation of functions between revisers and approvers of the Laws of Guyana.
- Designed a system at the Attorney General’s office to access the Laws of Guyana in both CD-ROM format and publication on the Internet, which would allow global access with lower distribution costs.
- Established an IT system and provided equipment to modernize and secure an electronic case tracking system at the High Court. Over nineteen thousand cases have been input into the system.
- Established IT Unit at the High Court and trained personnel. This not only resulted in modernizing and securing case files but provided easier access to information by the public.
- Sensitized members of the Bar Association on international best practices in the practice of law worldwide. Made recommendations to strengthen the Guyana Legal Practitioners Act and presented members of the Bar with an Ethics Code.
- Created a sensitization video about mediation that was distributed to television stations and aired throughout the Life of the Project. Distributed over 5000 mediation brochures. The sensitization campaign is estimated to have reached an estimated 200,000 Guyanese as evidenced by data collected from the National Communications Network (NCN) and other television stations.
- Provided print-suite, television studio, computers and peripherals to build the capacity of the Communications Division of the University of Guyana (UG).
- Trained faculty, staff and students of UG and practicing journalists to build the capacity of media in Guyana.
 - Reduction of Ethno-Political Violence
- Supported the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) to conduct National Conversations with participation from CSOs with diverse ethnic backgrounds and

- political affiliations, as well as representatives from national and local Government. This culminated in a Multi-Stakeholder Forum.
- Provided technical assistance to Working Groups, which emanated from the Multi-Stakeholder Forum, to engage them in consensus building and provide recommendation to the government of Guyana (GOG) on a range of social, economic and political issues to solve problems in their communities.
 - Trained ERC Commissioners and staff in Organizational Skills.
 - Provided training in Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to approximately 350 persons to provide them with a process for consensus building and techniques in conflict resolution. Participating CSOs and Neighbourhood Democratic Councils (NCDs) subsequently carried out AI activities in their local communities.

Basic Work Plan Milestones Achieved

The contract envisaged the achievement of improved democracy and governance in Guyana through the three intermediate results (IRs). Some major activities were undertaken to achieve these higher level results.

Some of the major milestones achieved were building the capacity of CSO's through the small grants program and provision of technical assistance; establishment of a mediators association as a legal entity and training a cadre of 80 mediators including 11 trained as trainers, establishment of an IT Unit and a case management system at the High Court and empowering women to participate in local government elections.

Other outcomes and milestones are discussed in the M&E report in Appendix A.

The project embarked on direct training of CSOs and sensitization of stakeholders on related issues and indirectly supported the training of other beneficiaries by grantees/CSOs.

Management Plan Overview

The Project team was based in the capital, Georgetown, and consisted of a Chief of Party (COP), Civil Society Specialist, Finance /Office Manager, Grants /M&E Specialist and support staff. Most staff members were Guyanese, thus contributing to building local capacity in governance and project management.

Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) and Governance Specialist, Ms. Gloria Richards-Johnson, assumed the position of COP in April 2007, after serving as DCOP from December 2004.

USAID/GDCCRP has used local, regional and international short-term advisors to complement the skills of the local team and to provide expertise across results areas.

Biannual Report April – September 2008

Executive Summary

As the Project entered its final bi-annual period April – September 2008, it focused on areas that would provide the greatest impact for Guyana while achieving the results outlined in the contract and operational plan. The following bi-annual report describes in detail the activities carried out during the reporting period, the effectiveness of those activities and recommendations for the way forward.

Key Activities April – September 2008

Program Area 1: Administration of Justice

The Project conducted the following activities to improve the enabling environment for the judicial sector:

- Enhanced use of mediation in Guyana, by providing mediation training for both legal and non legal professionals.
- Made recommendations to legal professionals in dialogue to strengthen the Guyana Legal Practitioners Act,
- Presented legal professionals with an ethics code and addressed illicit activity such as money laundering.
- Finalized implementation of the Information System of the Supreme Court Registry and trained IT and other professionals at the Supreme Court and the office of the Attorney General.
- Provided commodity support to improve efficiency in the Registry of the Supreme Court, and the office of the Attorney General.
- Progressed significantly towards finalizing the CD ROM that will contain all the laws of Guyana and assisted the Attorney General’s office on management and IT issues.
- Established a system at the AG’s office to access the Laws of Guyana through CD or internet format which will allow global access.
- Provided training and capacity building for members of the three Bar Associations.

Critical Assumptions

Critical Assumptions for USAID/GDCCRP success included:

- Active support of the Government of Guyana for project initiatives.
- Continued willingness of local and national government officials to engage with citizens and citizen groups aiming to increase their voices in national and local political decisions, and willingness of citizens to participate, organize, express their opinions and priorities. Constructive engagement by people working in the country’s political and legal structures to continue efforts to reform and improve.
- Successful and peaceful national and local elections would be carried out, enabling a new cadre of officials to be trained by USAID/CDCCRP, allowing for joint initiatives between local government and civil society.

During the USAID/GDCCR period of performance, peaceful national elections took place. However, local government elections did not take place. As a result, local government activities were put on hold under the direction of the Government of Guyana, and agreed to by USAID/Guyana.

Program Area 2: Good Governance

The Joint Task force on Local Government had expressed an interest in seeking support from the Project to draft legislation and establish a public education program in the media.

- USAID and the project met with the Presidential Advisor on Governance regarding support from the Project to the Joint Task Force on Local Government.

Program Area 3: Political Competition and Consensus Building

In an effort to render GECOM capable of administering elections independent of technical assistance from donors, the Project:

- Conducted 5 full-day consultations with the parliamentary political parties, GECOM and Civil Society to discuss internationally accepted best practices for elections management.
- Obtained recommendations from session participants on elections management for Guyana from the three political parties, GECOM and civil society
- Supported the establishment of a website for GECOM

Program Area 4, Civil Society

- Supported the development of partnerships among civil society organizations that have common interests and provided training to groups representing women, youth and persons with disabilities
- Provided women with capacity building training to facilitate their participation in local government elections
- Provided technical support to the University of Guyana (UG) Communications Division to procure a Print Suite and a Television Studio
- Convened 7 workshops for the local media in collaboration with the Communications Division of UG and Guyana Press association (GPA) on topics such as news gathering, covering sensitive issues, writing, presentation techniques and utilizing print and television equipment.

Key Achievements during the Bi-annual period

The following summarizes the achievements of the period April- September 2008:

- Trained fifty-two (52) legal and non-legal professionals in advanced mediation.
- Utilized eleven (11) attorney/ mediators who were trained as trainers by the Project to serve as facilitators, in the advanced and basic training of mediators.
- Trained twenty-six (26) Justices of the Peace and Commissioners of Oath including seven (7) Toshao in basic mediation.

- Prepared and presented a practice direction on payment of mediators to the Chancellor who accepted it for implementation.
- Chancellor (ag) convened a meeting on September 17, 2008 to sensitize mediators on the details of the payment formula.
- Sensitized approximately 200,000 persons countywide on mediation through airing mediation discussion on television stations and distributing approximately 2000 additional brochures.
- Input over Nineteen thousand (19,000) cases into the database at the Registry of the High Court.
- Established a computerized system at the High Court to facilitate efficient retrieval of information on cases by the public.
- Refined three hundred and fifty-six (356) of a total of 536 Acts with the laws of Guyana and approved one hundred and sixty (160) for publication.
- Established a system which enables the office of the attorney general to track changes in Laws of Guyana and provide separation of functions between revisers and approvers.
- Designed a system at the office of the AG to permit publication of the LOG in both CD ROM format and publication on the internet which will allow global access with lower distribution costs than CDs.
- Sensitized members of the Bar Associations on international best practices worldwide in the practice of law, Ethics and Professional Responsibility.
- Prepared and distributed a manual on Ethics and Professional Responsibility to members of the Legal Profession.
- Made recommendations to the Guyana Bar Association (GBA) on the refinement of the Guyana Legal Practitioners Act (GLPA).
- Sensitized seventy-four (74) members of the parliamentary political parties (including two ministers) on international best practices in conducting elections worldwide
- Sensitized thirteen (13) members of Civil Society and 8 persons from GECOM (including the Chairman, CEO and two commissioners) on international best practices on conducting elections worldwide
- Shared information on issues related to sexual and reproductive health, civil education and human rights through the Women's Empowerment Project workshops to seventy-Two (72) women.
- Supported "communicating with Persons with disability project" conducted by Partners under the Project's Networking / Partnership program for thirty-Five (35) participants
- Built the capacity of Ninety-three (93) women from five regions to empower them to participate in local government elections.
- Supported five (5) organizations which are partnering, in Essequibo - Region 2, Berbice - region 6, East Bank of Demerara - Region 4 and Georgetown -Region 4.
- Distributed over 500 civic education manuals produced by the Project to CSOs.
- Conducted a two day training workshop focusing on Project Proposal and Report Writing for 8 technical staff of ERC.

- Presented a Television Studio and Print Suite to the University of Guyana, Communications Division to strengthen its capacity to train journalists
- Trained faculty, staff and students of UG to utilize the print suite and television studio.
- Trained eighty-two (82) journalists to improve their capacities to investigate analyze and report on major political and sensitive issues.

Detailed descriptions of the above activities and achievements are in the following sections, organized by Program Area. The sections begin with a discussion of activities that took place during the Bi-Annual Reporting Period (April-September 2008) followed by highlights of related activities that took place over the life of the project.

Program Area 1: Rule of Law and Human Rights

Program Element 1.3 – Justice System

Program Sub-Element – Operations of Institutions & Actions

(IR 2.3 - Administration of Justice Improved)

(IR 2.3 Outcome: “ADR is institutionalized for civil cases.

GDCCRP carried out a significant number of activities in support of Program Area 1. They include:

1. Mediation
2. Capacity Building of the Guyana Bar Association, GLPA and Ethics Code
3. Computerization of the Supreme Court Registry, and
4. Support to the Attorney General’s office for a CD ROM with all Guyana’s laws

Each is discussed in turn below.

Mediation

Pursuant to IR. 2.3: “The contractor shall support interventions aimed at improving the timeliness, fairness and efficiency of the judicial administration. One of these interventions will include further support for ADR in civil cases and seek ways to expand and make ADR more sustainable over the long term. Mediation reduces the need for formal judicial recourse and supports IR 3 by reducing sources of conflict in the community.

This may entail further training for mediators, capacity building of the mediation center and expansion of its services and improving the enabling environment for increased use of mediation – rules of court, ethics training for judges and public awareness.”

Background:

An important area of USAID/GDCCR Project support has been mediation as a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to enhance access to justice. During the period

under review, the Project conducted a number of activities to improve the enabling environment for increased use of mediation through providing both basic and advanced mediation training for approximately 80 persons from the legal and non legal professions.

Two highly experienced and well-respected mediation practitioners, who had introduced mediation to Guyana under a prior project, returned to Guyana to work on several initiatives related to ADR. With their support the Project prepared a draft practice direction which will facilitate the use of mediation as a court connected measure without affecting the existing Rules of Procedure and a draft practice direction to facilitate payment of mediators. These drafts were submitted to justice officials for consideration and action. As the project came to a close, a payment formula for mediators was under discussion.

Since Mediation is relatively new in Guyana, the Project re-aired a mediation sensitization video on several television stations and distributed approximately 2000 additional brochures on mediation to Guyanese from all walks of life, to inform and educate them of its importance. Through both television and brochures, the project estimates that it reached approximately 200,000 Guyanese.

The project also conducted several training and sensitization activities during the period under review as follows:

- Conducted 2 training sessions in advanced mediation for 26 mediators respectively.
- Conducted basic mediation training course for 26 Justices of the Peace, and Commissioners of Oath including Toshaos in an effort to reduce sources of conflict in the community.
- Utilized attorney/mediators trained as trainers and facilitators in the aforementioned workshops.
- Provided guidance and documentation to the mediator's task force for the establishment of the mediators association which became a legal entity in June 2008.
- Provided guidance to the mediation center to improve its processes leading to more efficient disposition of cases.
- Discussed with justice officials the merits of a practice direction to circumvent the rules of procedure, thus expanding the use of mediation.

On Tuesday, April 1st, 2008 the consultants facilitated a Sensitization Session in Berbice. Approximately 70 persons representing various professions participated in a very lively discussion.



Sensitization Session – Berbice

Some of the topics covered during the event were history of mediation, importance of mediation in Guyana and Access to Justice. The seminar was enthusiastically received and several individuals requested that there be additional mediation training in Berbice and that a mediation center be established there. The sensitization session was widely and positively reported in the Chronicle and Stabroek Newspapers later that week.

Advanced Mediation Training: April and May, 2008

In addition to sensitization, the consultants conducted two Advanced Mediation Training exercises, each for 26 persons, from during April and May. As part of the training, eleven previously trained attorney/ mediation trainers served as facilitators.



Participants at the Advanced Mediation Training- April, 2008

Participants at the Advanced Mediation Training- May, 2008

The areas covered in the training were:

- Mediation survey
- Bridging from original mediation training to this advanced training
- Interests

- Non Judgmental conversations
- Mediation exercises- Red Devil Dog
- Mediator preparation for court connected mediation with counsel
- Mediation role plays
- The role of Lawyers in mediation
- Mediation for Understanding
- Conflict Strategy Labs
- Guyana Mediation Association
- Reframing Positions Interests
- Co-Mediation Lecture
- Convening a Mediation
- Practice of Dispute Resolution

Basic Mediation training -Justices of the Peace, Commissioners of Oath and Toshaos – May 19, 2008

Providing basic mediation training to Justices of the Peace, Commissioners of Oath and Toshaos has the support of and had been initially recommended by Guyana’s Presidential Advisor on Governance. The course was similar to the mediation training conducted in 2003, but tailored to disputes and issues that might arise in a community mediation setting in Guyana.

Topics discussed with the Presidential Advisor included:

- The challenges of promoting peaceful resolution of conflict in remote areas of the country;
- A review of the roles and responsibilities of different justice and community officials including: rural constables, lay magistrates, community police, Toshaos and Justices of the Peace. An overview of the existing and planned efforts of outside funding agencies and how USAID might effectively fit in to other ongoing and planned efforts,
- Issues and challenges of forming new NGOs; and
- The potential for using existing organizations and resources for promoting and institutionalizing sustainable community conflict resolution mechanisms;

In order that the consultants obtain a better understanding of village life and customs in Guyana, prior to commencing the basic mediation course for Justices of the Peace and Commissioners of Oath, the consultants toured Mahaica and vicinity with a presidential advisor. They visited with market vendors, a rice farming family, and a local shop keeper and his family. The purpose of this exercise was to expose the consultants to some of the issues facing mediators at the community level in Guyana.



Mediation Trainers and Participants

Other accomplishments during the life of the Project

- In February 2005 an international consultant from the Dispute Resolution Foundation (DRF) of Jamaica was retained to conduct a needs assessment of mediation in Guyana. In 2006 she had conducted refresher training for 12 previously trained mediators, sensitized approximately 200,000 Guyanese through a discussion on television, 110 members of civil society at a town hall meeting, sensitized 12 judges and eight attorneys. In June 2007, she returned and trained 60 professionals in basic mediation and sensitized seventy attorneys.
- In 2006 the Project financed the participation of the Chancellor(ag) the Director of the mediation center and two attorneys in mediation training provided by Dispute Resolution Foundation (DRF) held in Jamaica. In 2006, the Project also provided financial support to facilitate the participation of the Chief Justice of Barbados in the local annual judicial conference. Among other topics, the Chief Justice spoke extensively about the importance of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and mediation and its increased use regionally and internationally.
- In 2007, the Project presented a copier/ fax machine to the Mediation Center.

- In November 2007, international mediation consultants conducted advanced mediation training for 16 attorney mediators.
- In March 2007, international mediation consultants trained 11 attorney mediators as trainers and conducted a sensitization workshop in Essequibo for approximately 27 participants.
- From November – May 2007, the mediation consultants provided documents and guidance to the mediation task force to establish the mediator’s association as a legal entity.
- On September 15, 2008 Chancellor (ag) notified the project that a member of the Rules committee of the United Kingdom and editor in chief of the Caribbean Civil Court Practice has been retained to refine the rules of procedure of Guyana. The Chancellor is on the editorial board of the aforementioned body. In an effort to reduce the backlog, the Project commissioned the following studies and submitted them to USAID for its consideration.
 1. “Assessment and Initial Approach to Business Process Enhancement and Automation of Case Management in the High Court and the Court of Appeal prepared November 29, 2004 by Justice James Hargreaves through DPK Consultants, a subcontractor to the Project.
 2. “Report on recommendations for direction of judicial reform and enhancement of ADR in Guyana” prepared March 29, 2005 by Justice James Hargreaves through DPK Consultants, a subcontractor to the Project.

The Project collaborated with IDB in the preparation of its current judicial enhancement projects in Guyana through sharing of the afore-mentioned reports and meeting with IDB Consultants.

Effectiveness

The interventions of the Project in the area of ADR have been highly effective since:

- The project has left a large cadre of 80 highly trained mediators
- Provided assistance to establish the mediation association as a legal entity.
- Provided a formula to facilitate the payment of mediators which is being implemented by the Chancellor (ag).
- Trained eleven (11) attorney/mediators as trainers.

Recommendations

The Project recommends that USAID consider building the capacity of the mediators association, continue support to the mediation center, bar associations and provide continued training to judges and attorneys on ADR. Provision of advanced mediation training to Justices of the Peace and Commissioners of Oath including Toshoas would also be useful. The attorney/ mediators trained as trainers could be utilized as paid consultants for future training.

Bar Associations- GLPA and Ethics Code

Background

In order to improve the enabling environment for the increased use of mediation, the Project continued to provide training in mediation, Rules of Court, ethics and public awareness, international best practices and other related areas for the judiciary, attorneys and other court professionals.

In furtherance of the above, from May 18- 25, 2008 a Washington DC Attorney-at-Law and Executive Member of the American Bar Association visited Guyana and conducted the following activities:

- Met with the Chancellor of the Judiciary, the Guyana Bar Association, the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers, the Berbice Lawyers Association and other attorneys admitted to practice law in Guyana.
- Provided comments and made recommendations on refinement of the Guyana Legal Practitioners Act (GLPA).
- Sensitized stakeholders on international best practices in the practice of law in countries like United States of America, CARICOM countries and other international jurisdictions.
- Provided information on Professional Responsibility and Ethics required of attorneys in other jurisdictions.
- Advised participants on Anti-money laundering issues and international banking requirements.
- Disseminated a manual on Ethics and Professional Responsibility to Guyanese attorneys.

GLPA and Ethics Code Workshops

The attorney conducted two workshops and numerous meetings with members of the various bar associations. During the workshops and meetings the consultant and participants noted that the GLPA was clearly in need of modernization and the absence of a code of ethics was a serious gap and problem for local practitioners.

The Consultant advised the participants that the anti-money laundering and other regulatory standards are high on the international agenda due to activities of groups such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) the Caribbean FATF and other international organizations, such as the IMF, World Bank and United Nation (U.N). In addition, he noted that the Caricom Single Market Economy (CSME) may eventually cause modernization and harmonization on the LPA and codes of ethics on all bar associations within the CSME including Guyana.



- The legal practitioners:
 - agreed that the GLPA needs amending and a modern code of ethics must be enforced.
 - Indicated that they were not very aware of international anti-money laundering and banking standards.
 - Admitted that the legal profession would be strengthened if the GLPA and code of ethics were updated and enforced.
 - observed that better communication on the goals of the GLPA is required prior to the drafting process
 - agreed that the divisive politics in Guyana create a lack of confidence in the process,
 - stated that modernizing the ethics laws must be inclusive of all the stakeholders from the beginning and throughout the process if it is to be successful.

The workshops and meetings sensitized the participants to the fact that compared to the ethical standards and LPAs for lawyers in CARICOM and elsewhere, those in Guyana are too few and the proper enforcement is almost non-existent.

The attorneys in attendance served as a task force which went through the GLPA article by article, as the consultant discussed international best practices and made recommendations to enhance the document.

The attorneys agreed that the GBA needs to be strengthened.

- The consultant:
 - discussed the Guyana Legal Practitioner Act in detail with the GBA, GAWL, Chancellor (ag), and several senior counsel
 - acquired consensus that the GBA needs to be strengthened
 - agreed with participants that there should be stakeholder involvement before further attempts are made to refine the GLPA
 - sensitized participants on Ethics and Rules of Professional Responsibility
 - presented participants with a Manual on Ethics and Professional Responsibility

- sensitized participants on Anti-money laundering and other international regulatory standards regarding banking.
- was advised by participants of the need for a code of ethics for attorneys in Guyana
- sensitized participants on the role of CARICOM in harmonizing the activities of attorneys in member States
- made recommendations on enhancing the GLPA

Effectiveness

This activity was very effective since:

- The project provided a code of ethics to the GBA and other attorneys.
- Provided recommendations on the refinement of the GLPA
- Sensitized stakeholders on critical governance issues like anti-money laundering and international banking regulations.

Other accomplishments during the Life of the Project:

- In June 2006, Ms. Barbara Friday Technical Manager of RTI in collaboration with the GBA and GAWL sensitized over 120 Guyanese including members of the Bar associations and other attorneys on Anti- corruption issues at a town hall meeting.

Recommendations

The Project recommends that USAID continue to build the capacity of the Guyana Bar Associations and provide guidance to bring the GLPA in compliance with other CARICOM countries. The project also recommends that training on sensitive and relevant governance issues be continued.

Computerization of the Supreme Court Registry

Background

The computerization of the Registry of the Supreme Court of Guyana is an important step to speed up and bring stronger security and accountability to the workings of the Judicial System in Guyana. The activity is designed to improve access to Justice and will allow the retrieval of information on the progress of a case in digital format without requiring the file to leave the Registry. The Project started working on this component in May, 2005 and significant progress has been made to date related to IT infrastructure and systems development.

RTI Consultant Pablo Destefanis returned to Guyana from June 12- 25, 2008, to finalize the implementation of the Information System for the Supreme Court Registry. He also provided direction on key issues, close-monitoring and prepared the registry for sustainability beyond the duration of the Project.

Four data entry clerks were hired by the Project in April 2008 to input the cases at the High Court to contribute to the computerization and modernization of the registry of the

High Court. These individuals were trained by the IT consultants who were trained by the RTI consultant in March 2008. The data entry clerks are supervised by the Deputy Chief Registrar.

The Information System at the Registry is being used on a daily basis for consultation of active and concluded cases, and it is being constantly up-dated by a team of five. One computer was recently placed at the information desk to allow staff to provide quick information on the progress of causes to the public. The institutionalization of technical, data entry staff and the continued improvement to the system have been discussed with the Chancellor(ag) who has expressed satisfaction with the progress of the system and written to IDB requesting support to retain the data entry clerks.

Computerization of the Supreme Court Registry Actions Taken

- Information system:

During his June 2008 visit, the RTI Consultant:

- Finalized the changes requested for the recording of information on civil causes, and presented a pilot of the module to record criminal causes. While this module was not initially envisioned within the system, it would be very useful to the Court
- Revised reports and made changes based on suggestions from the Chancellor (ag), and the Deputy Chief Registrar.
- Discussed with the Chancellor the possibility of publishing the status of the causes online, using a separate server and read-only records, to allow direct access by the public.

- Data protection

- Recommended that the backups done daily and weekly at the RSCG be transported to the Court of Appeals for safeguarding to provide a secure, off-site alternative to store the data on the Court's causes.
- Recommended that the RSCG create at least two permanent positions for data entry staff, and at least three temporary positions to help with the initial loading of the system.

- Amendment of pertinent laws

- Discussed with the Chancellor the amendment of the existing laws. Agreed that at this point this activity could proceed without the amendment.

In the future, the amendments could be pushed forward and the electronic records would serve as the main record of the causes' status.

Computerization of the Supreme Court Registry Results:

- Over 19,550 cases dating from 2001 to present were input during the review period.

- Cases continue to be input in the system daily.
- Recommendations were made to process criminal cases and the publication of online case status.
- Recommendations were made to the Chancellor(ag) to link the Chancellor's office with the Registry of the Supreme Court over a secure connection to allow access to the system from the Court of Appeals
- A system has been put in place to provide the public with computerized case status information which cuts down significantly on retrieval time.

Other activities during the life of the Project

In February, 2005 RTI IT Consultant Dean Swerdlin prepared a report on ICT Technical Assistance to the Guyana High Court and AG. The report was submitted to USAID on March 14, 2005 for its consideration.

In April 2005, RTI Consultant Pablo Destefanis conducted a needs assessment of the High Court and one of its branches in Berbice and prepared a comprehensive report.

In 2006, Mr. Destefanis began the process of establishing the systems to modernize and secure the case files.

Constraints

In 2006 Mr. Destefanis recommended that the GOG hire three IT Specialists in order to establish an IT Unit at the High Court. The hiring of those specialists did not occur until January 2008 resulting in a significant delay in the implementation of the project.

Effectiveness

This project has proven to be highly effective and successful. Prior to this intervention, cases were recorded in paper files and lodged in ledgers. The computerization of cases has modernized and secured the system and enhanced the ability of the High Court to provide information on cases to the public.

Recommendations

USAID may wish to consider continuing to provide support to the High Court to reduce the backlog. Establishment of a case management system should be of high importance.

Support to the Attorney General's Office for a CD ROM with all of Guyana's Laws

Background

The Project recognized that the establishment of a Law Revision Unit in the Office of the Attorney General would provide greater transparency and accessibility to the Laws of Guyana for judges, attorneys, civil society and other stakeholders. The Project undertook to:

- compile a complete set of Laws of Guyana (LOG) in electronic format that is syntactically and semantically correct and complete an accurate depiction of the LOG on paper.
- develop a document management system that can be used on an ongoing basis to review, approve and publish future revisions.
- Amend the initial set to the year 2006
- create a distribution version of the LOG that provides a simple interface and search functions.

In April 2008, the project hired four consultants to assist the office of the Attorney General in the refining and uploading of the Laws of Guyana so that a CDROM containing the accurate Laws of Guyana could be prepared, and continually updated in a sustainable manner. These individuals, along with personnel from the AG's office were trained by Pablo Destefanis, RTI IT Consultant.

During his June 12-25, 2008 visit to Guyana, Pablo Destefanis assisted personnel in the Attorney General's office to advance the publication of the Laws of Guyana (LOG) in electronic format. He provided direction on key issues, monitored activity, and prepared the Attorney General's (AG's) office for sustainability of the activity beyond the life of the Project. The overall result was positive and significant progress was noted by the Consultant. The System established by the Project would allow the AG'S office to keep the system updated.

The staff at the AG's office would continue to follow the scheme of work developed by RTI to compile the LOG with amendments to their last revision, in a framework that is secure, simple to use and at the same time allows easy updating of the body of laws by the AG's office though it is not fixed to a single publishing format.

In the future, the same office that now updates the paper edition of the laws will be able to update its electronic counterpart in the future.

During his visit in June 2008, Mr. Destefanis:

- Revised the management system and made changes based on suggestions from senior and junior office staff at the AG's office. Resolved some technical issues, mostly related to large files.
- Solved problems related to the maintenance of the computers at the AG's office. Most of the problems detected had two roots: either the low quality of some of the components used in the computers, which lead to several crashes, or the lack of preventive maintenance, i.e. Anti-virus updates, which created delays in the work plan.
- Updated the computers at the AG's office, by returning the LOG to the AG's LAN. Added a form of policing to the internet connection used by all the staff at the AG's office, to prevent congestion by approximately forty (40) users of the link.
- Established a firewall and content management system to allow only a subset of internet applications and internet sites to be used across the AG's office.

- Recommended that the AG's office retain at least two people to perform the revisions, add necessary amendments and manage the updates to the electronic version of the LOG.

The Project has made significant progress in refining and uploading the laws. Over the period of performance the body of laws expanded from the initially reported 450 Acts to 546. As of September 2008, 356 Acts were completed with 10 awaiting queries to responses. 160 were approved for publication by the Deputy Chief Parliamentary Counsel.

Recognizing that time constraints would preclude the ability of the project to refine and upload the outstanding laws, GDCCRP held discussion with Justice and GOG officials to explore funding by other donors to cover these costs.

Effectiveness

This activity has been highly effective.

- The AG took responsibility for the implementation of this activity and is committed to its finalization and establishment of a Law Revision Unit.
- The Project established a system which enables the AG's office to track changes and provide separation of functions between revisers and approvers.
- The Project also designed systems to access the LOG through both CD ROM format and publication on the internet, allowing global access with lower distribution costs than CDs.
- The Project manager of the IDB Modernization of Justice Administration System-Project and the attorney general have expressed satisfaction with the progress of the exercise thus far.

The following is a Screenshot of the Computerized System for the Attorney General's Office

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Approval Queue | Laws of Guyana - Microsoft Internet Explorer". The address bar shows "http://www.rtidemo.org/guyana/?q=view/approval". The page header includes the RTI International logo and "Laws of Guyana". Below the header, there is a "Home" link and a search bar. The main content area is titled "Approval Queue" and features a table with the following data:

Title	Status	Last changed	Last Edited by
GUYANA DEFENCE FORCE UNIFORMS ACT	awaiting approval	12 weeks 6 days ago	johnny
FOOD AND DRUGS ACT	awaiting approval	12 weeks 6 days ago	cousette
FAMILY AND DEPENDANTS PROVISION ACT	awaiting approval	13 weeks 5 hours ago	norma
FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT	awaiting approval	13 weeks 9 hours ago	cousette
CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL (EXAMINATIONS) ACT	awaiting approval	13 weeks 9 hours ago	norma

The sidebar on the left contains a search bar and a navigation menu for "admin" with the following items:

- Add New Act
- Approval Queue
- Revision Queue
- Approved Acts
- Monitor check-outs
- My account
- Administer
- Log out

Milestones Achieved in Program Area 1(as per the work plan)

- Grants
 - Equipment to courts - 95 crates of computer hardware and software were delivered to the courts (Jan – Mar 2005) through a grant.
 - Each High Court and Court of Appeal judge was presented with a laptop computer to facilitate research, speedier delivery of judgments and reduction of the backlog.
 - Participation of 4 people at the 3rd Caribbean Conference on Dispute Resolution
 - Financial support to the annual Guyana Judges Conference
 - Georgetown Legal Aid Clinic
 - Linden Legal Aid Clinic

Key Accomplishments (Or “Outcomes” as per contract. Bullet Points)

- Contributed to the establishment of the Law Revision Unit at the office of Attorney general through provision of computers and peripherals, training of staff and consultants and strengthened the IT capacity of that office.
- Contributed towards the institutionalization of ADR for civil cases. This entailed further training of mediators, capacity building of the mediation center, improving the

‘enabling environment’ for increased use of mediation, ethics training for judges, public awareness, and preparation or practice direction of the payment of mediators.

Lessons Learned

Active commitment by judges and other stakeholders and legislative support (rules of procedure) are necessary for the institutionalization of ADR.

Recommendations

- Partner with other donors to complete the establishment of the Law Revision Unit of the office of the Attorney General.
- USAID should consider continued support for mediation, and provide further technical assistance to build the capacity of the Judiciary (for more efficient and balanced judgments; trial procedures). Also provide continued training for judges and attorneys.

Program Area 2: Good Governance

Program Element 2.3 Local Government & Decentralization

Program Sub-Element: Representative & Responsive Local Government

(IR 1.3 Local Government Reforms adopted and implemented)

- Activity /Discussion Brief: Joint Task Force on Local Government

On April 4, 2008 USAID officials and the project’s COP met with Guyana’s Presidential Advisor on Governance, to discuss the way forward regarding the provision of technical assistance to the Joint Task Force on Local Government by the Project.

Constraints:

- In March 2005, USAID recommended that local governance efforts be placed ‘on the back burner until such time that local government elections become a priority.
- In March 2006, parliamentary activities were suspended by the Speaker of the National Assembly in preparation for upcoming general elections.
- The Project had planned 6 town hall meetings to sensitize the public on elections issues in collaboration with the private sector in April 2006. Due to “sensitive developments in Guyana” (April-June 2006), the meetings were cancelled.

Other interventions by the Project

- In June 2007, Gloria Richards- Johnson, Chief of Party was invited by the University of Guyana to make a 2 hour presentation on Governance issues to over 60 faculty members, administrators and staff. In response to the presentation, participants agreed to establish a task force to enhance governance and transparency at the university.

Grants

- Equipment (computers, solar power system) given to Moraikobai Village Council and installed (Jan-March 2006)

Key Accomplishments (Or “Outcomes” as per contract).

- Parliamentary library facilities improved through provision of computers and peripherals
- Built the capacity of the Moraikobai Village Council

Program Area 3: Political Competition and Consensus Building

Program Element 3.2: Elections and Political Processes.

(IR 3: Vulnerability to Ethnic-Political Conflict Reduced)

- Activity /Discussion Brief:

One of the outcomes related to election reform in the RTI International /USAID contract as amended in April 2007 is:

- GECOM is capable of administering elections independent of technical assistance from donors.

In order to achieve the aforementioned outcome, the Project amended its initial SOW for elections and conducted a search to source a consultant to sensitize Guyanese stakeholders on international best practices in elections worldwide.

A well known regional expert in electoral reform was contracted to provide consulting services in international best practices in elections. He visited Guyana from June 8 to 28, 2008 and met with senior GOG officials, the General Secretaries and senior functionaries of the parliamentary political parties, GECOM, USAID, donors and Civil Society.

Action Taken:

Consultations were held with the main Parliamentary Political Parties, the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) and Civil Society as follows:

Date	Entity	Participants		
		Male	Female	Total
June Friday 20, 2008	People National Congress Reform	18	10	28
June Monday 23, 2008	People Progressive Party Civic	16	2	18
June Tuesday 24, 2008	Alliance for Change	19	9	28
June Wednesday 25, 2008	Guyana Elections Commission	7	1	8
June Thursday 26, 2008	Civil Society	11	2	13

Participants

Representatives of the political parties included senior functionaries and Members of Parliament (2 Ministers for the PPP-C). Persons under 40 yrs [approx.] were approximately 14% for the AFC and PNC-R, and 5% for the PPP-C. The county's major ethnicities constituted the representation of all parties.

GECOM's team comprised the Chairman and two Commissioners, the Chief Elections Officer and senior staff of the Secretariat. Civil Society representation included trade unionists, social workers, business persons, an attorney-at-law and teachers/academics. Some of these persons had been involved in monitoring or facilitating previous elections. Two of the representatives were under 40 years old [approx].

Political Parties Consultations

A common agenda was followed for the consultations held with the three political parties. The facilitator emphasized that his role was to share information on international best practices for free and fair elections, and the efficient and effective operations of independent electoral management bodies worldwide. He also stressed that he wished to solicit from the participants their views and recommendations

The facilitator summarized the critical elements for successful management of the electoral process in terms of pre-polling day, polling day and post- polling day activities. He also discussed the structure and functioning of the electoral management body as the vehicle for ensuring national confidence in the process.

Concepts and misunderstanding were clarified, for example, the consultant explained that observers pronounce an election as free and fair when about 90% of the international best practices, ideals and conditions have been satisfied.

The consultant facilitated a caucusing exercise in each workshop. The AFC and PNC-R Teams formed three groups, while the PPP-C sat as a unit for this exercise, the objectives of which were:

- to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the extant electoral machinery
- to formulate recommendations for improvement and possible mechanisms for effecting those

All teams approached this assignment with a high degree of commitment.

In all, 74 functionaries from the three main political parliamentary parties, some of whom were from outlying and hinterland areas were sensitized on the internationally accepted practices for free and fair elections. Please see Appendix B for a chart that summarizes comments of the participants. A summary of their recommendations follows.

Recommendations from the political party participants

- It was agreed that Electoral Management Bodies should adhere to international best practices. That said, participants expressed that the international community should be held accountable for compliance with the principles of free and fair elections.

- Mechanisms (along the lines of India and Bangladesh) must be put in place to prevent the misuse of state resources around the time of elections by the party in government.
- The election of the President by a majority vote warrants serious consideration.
- There should be priority listing of candidates on parties' List of candidates.
- The penalties for election crimes/ violations should be strengthened by legislation.
- The laws to sanction persons who refuse to be registered should be enforced.

Recommendations from political party participants regarding GECOM:

- The powers and of the Elections Commission should be enshrined in the Constitution.
- Additionally, this body ought to be reformed, with attention paid to:
 - The methodology for Selection and appointment of Commissioners and the Chairman
 - Term limitation and conditions of service should be instituted.
 - Independence in terms of financing and operational management but with reporting responsibility to the Parliament
 - Full control of the electoral machinery including oversight of political parties' campaign funding/expenditure, access to the state and private media in the context of a Code of Conduct. This management function must include authority to impose sanctions for breaches.
 - Institutionalization of systems for continuous registration and voter education, the latter being incorporated into the civic education component of the school curriculum.
 - De-centralization of GECOM'S administrative and operational functions
 - Adoption of an enlightened and sensitive staff recruitment policy
 - Review of legislation and constitutional provisions regarding voter identification cards.
 - There should be cross-referencing with other national data banks to identify and minimize disenfranchisement of voters
 - To give teeth to these measures appropriate legislation must be enacted

GECOM Consultation

It was decided that in the interest of time there would be a round table discussion of issues that were more pertinent to GECOM. The topics to be emphasized were agreed on before getting into discussion. The Chairman indicated that the Commission was of the view that the meeting would have been inclusive of all stakeholders.

GECOM Recommendations

- There must be an inclusive meeting of stakeholders to give meaning to the individual interests' consultations and the composite report.

- One Commissioner emphasized that although members were nominated by political parties, they all were not representing the interests of their nominees.
- Mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure Commissioners perform their obligations to GECOM at a high standard.
- The composition of and modalities for appointment to the Commission need to be reviewed.
- GECOM must be fully autonomous and adequately resourced to function effectively.
- The legal status of GECOM needs to be clarified; presently the “institution” cannot sue but can be sued.
- The election date should be fixed by law (as per US Constitution)
- The senior staff must operate in accordance with a Code of Conduct
- There should be a defined Operations Manual of Procedures for each position in the secretariat.
- There must be a clear demarcation between policy and administrative issues and the Commission must focus on policy issues only and not get involved in day to day minutiae.
- According to a report of the Commonwealth Observer Group on the 2006 elections, there was increased coherence regarding Media Code of Conduct (training by USAID/GDCCRP), which contributed to “an atmosphere that was free of intimidation.”. However, the OAS Observer group reported that media coverage continued to be biased with regard to coverage of political parties. Continued work with the media (television, radio and print) to reduce bias toward political parties (e.g., time allocation), the creation of a media monitoring and compliant body during elections, and technical assistance in order to revise media legislation would be prudent areas for future USAID support.

Civil Society Consultation

This meeting also took the form of a round table discussion.

Civil Society Recommendations

- Mechanisms to ensure the prompt judicial resolution of electoral disputes need to be put in place as credibility is jeopardized when justice is delayed.
- Electoral laws should incorporate mechanisms for equal access by political parties to the State-owned media.
- The enactment of information/ legislation will address issues of transparency and would enhance all systems in the country.
- In the context of the speedy transmission of election results and GECOM’s limited capacity to tabulate these, the use of modern technologies would overcome the logistical problems associated with managing the electoral process in hinterland locations.
- There should be enforcement of the law to prohibit bribery of the electorate around the time of elections.

- For membership on the Elections Commission, there should be a consultative process involving Civil Society that gathers a list of names of persons for submission to Parliament, which by a 2/3 majority would make the selection of Commissioners.
- Tenure on the Commission should be for a designated period which should be longer than the life of the sitting government. Appointment/tenure of individuals should be staggered so as to ensure continuity within the body.
- GECOM should have the mandate to regulate access of political parties to the media
- In the absence of a media regulatory body, the Oversight Facility established during the last 2006 elections should be resuscitated
- GECOM should manage the total election process and not only a part of it.
- Voter education should be continuous and should be introduced in the senior levels in schools
- The law governing campaign financing needs to be reviewed and where necessary strengthened.
- The use/abuse of government resources by the party in power needs to be addressed
- Media advertising and the licensing of television stations warrant examining.
- Issues of inclusive governance need to be addressed and the party in government ought to take the lead role.
- Civil Society needs to be more pro-active in terms of improving democracy in the country.
- The consultative process which was initiated by the President earlier this year as a result of a crisis situation ought to be institutionalized to create a climate of genuineness.
- A methodology for honoring the commitments to the populace made by politicians, particularly the party in government, is necessary.
- Politicians need to enlighten the populace of their responsibilities.
- There is need for a legal professional to advise GECOM on aspects of law which will impact on its work.

In September 2008, the Project wrote to the Chairman of GECOM. The General Secretaries of the PPP, PNC and AFC and Civil society, requesting them to review the recommendations to ensure that they were accurately captured by the Project.

Responses:

- Alliance for Change (AFC) agreed that the comments were accurately captured by the Project.
- People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C) made minor modifications to the submission of the group.
- The People's National Congress made minor changes. They agreed in principle with the recommendation but rearranged them.
- Guyana Election Commission (GECOM) Chairman sent a letter indicating different views to those expressed by the group at the workshop.

- Eleven (11) letters were sent to the individual participants of the Civil Society workshop. One person responded and suggested that consideration be given to providing civic education to indigenous people on elections issues, not just at election time but on a continuous basis.
- There was a majority opinion among the participants that a collective meeting of stakeholders would have been appropriate and useful.

GECOM

During the period under review the project provided human resource and IT support to GECOM.

Data-Entry Clerk

In response to a request from GECOM, a data-entry clerk was retained to enter the data to support a new GECOM website. The data entry clerk uploaded all administrative, legal and other documents for inclusion in the website. The completion of this activity will result in stakeholders being able to access legal, administrative, political and other documents from the GECOM website in an attempt to maintain transparency in the process. GECOM has agreed to be financially responsible for the data-entry clerk at the conclusion of the Project.

GECOM Website

At the request of GECOM the Project funded the establishment of the website by DevNet, a grantee of the Project. DevNet is in the process of establishing the website and uploading the information provided by the data-entry clerk. This activity will result in the public being able to access GECOM documents in a transparent manner.

The following quantitative and qualitative information is in support of project activities under Program Area 3.

During its tenure, significant assistance was provided to GECOM by the Project which:

- Hired consultants to identify lacunae, gaps and ambiguities in the electoral laws. (2005)
- Hired consultants to refine and prepare a Manual of Electoral Laws which was distributed to stakeholders. (2005 – 2006)
- Hired consultant to conduct an extensive needs assessment of the organization. (2005 - 2006)
- Provided 12,000 T-shirts with voter education logos to polling day staff and other officials. (2006)
- Provided 15,500 copies of the Official Manual for Presiding Officers and Other Polling day Officials and 3000 copies of the Official Manual for Returning Officers and other District Staff to GECOM for use as training materials.
- Project staff participated as electoral observers

- Provided financial support to OAS long term observer mission to Guyana.
- Provided training for 67 media operatives including owners, editors, reporters and talk show hosts on the media code of conduct and ethical coverage of the general elections.
- Published the media code of conduct over a three month period in the Sunday newspapers to sensitize the populace.
- Prepared and published in collaboration with the private sector, “Voices of Reason, Vision of Tomorrow” to communicate positive message of peace and unity leading up to the elections and beyond.
- Distributed “Stand Up and Be Counted” voter education video, prepared by US Embassy to schools, youth oriented and civic education groups.
- Contributed towards enhancement of the security of the voter database through preparation of a needs assessment by an RTI IT expert.

Technical Recap

- Peaceful elections in August 2006

Peaceful Elections

Overall it was found that the period leading up to and after elections were one of the more peaceful elections in Guyana’s recent history.

-Elections Assistance Bureau (EAB) Final Report: General and Regional Elections, 28th August 2006, Co-operative Republic of Guyana, March 7, 2007

- Manual of Laws Related to GECOM updated and hyperlinked (Jan-March 2006). Final version completed in late March. (April-June 2006) USAID/GDCCRP distributed to stakeholders,
- 74 members of the parliamentary political parties (including 2 ministers), 13 members of civil society, and 8 persons from GECOM were sensitized on international best practices in conducting elections

Statement from Dr. Steve Surujbally, Chairman, Guyana Elections Commission, December 2007

It would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the voluminous financial and technical support we received from the international donor community and the Government of Guyana. Such support contributed significantly to implementation of successful electoral process. I must also note the development and signing of the Media Code of Conduct, the establishment and management of the Media Monitoring Unit and the ensuing responsible media behavior.

-GECOM Press Release Statement, January 12, 2007

Milestones Achieved (as per the work plan)

Over 18,000 presiding officers polling day staff, retuning officer and other district staff were trained through the manuals presented to GECOM.

Approximately 100 stakeholders including attorneys, media operatives, government officials and other stakeholders were sensitized on the electoral laws of Guyana through distribution of the manuals.

Needs assessment on modernization of the electoral system in Guyana completed.

Recommendations from political parties, civil society and GECOM were made in response to a sensitization workshop on international best practices convened by the project.

Grants

- EAB grant (\$25,237) for supporting the elections process by enhancing voter confidence. (July – Sept 2006)
- Supported transportation to OAS election observers (2 long-term)

EAB Advisors and Sponsors Discuss Voter Confidence Measures, Security Issues and Upcoming Elections

On Monday August 14, the EAB hosted a multi-stakeholder meeting with sponsors, advisers, Councillors and Regional Coordinators to discuss security arrangements, observer recruitment and logistics for providing stakeholders with timely information on Election Night and the following day...The group reflected on factors that led to security break downs and loss of voter confidence in the electoral process in previous elections... The group discussed the role of voters' education in creating an enabling environment for free and fair elections and one where citizens can exercise their right to independently observe elections without fear of violence and other threats. The EAB decided to take several steps to raise public awareness on the voting process and the role of observers.

-Electoral Assistance Bureau (EAB), News, Vo.1, No.3: July- August 2006

Recommendations

- Elections took place within an “atmosphere of calm” and GECOM should be commended for this according to a report by the Commonwealth Observer group. USAID should consider providing technical assistance to the voter registration and monitoring process to increase the confidence of political parties and the general public in the election process.
- Support continued training for elections personnel, using manuals distributed by USAID/GDCCR (Manual for Presiding Officers and Other Polling Day Officials and the Official Manual for Returning Officers and Other District Staff)
- Political Party technical assistance and training, including a Code of Conduct founded on international best practices during elections.
- Voter education should be continuous for all Guyanese.

Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC):

- Activity /Discussion Brief:

At the request of the executive of the ERC the project implemented a two days workshop on Project Proposal and Report Writing for the institution during the period May 29-30 and June 2, 2008. Participants were the 8 technical staff of the ERC.

Action Taken:

The technical staff was exposed to the following topics:-

- What constitute a project?
- The components of a proposal

Results

Participants were requested to prepare a proposal to deepen the learning experience. Regarding report writing, topics such as the types of reports; structure etc were dealt with. Participants, the Board and Executive of the ERC expressed their appreciation for the exercise and for the project's assistance over the years.

The project during its tenure has built the capacity of the institute to assist in the reduction of ethnic and political conflict in Guyana.

This section will describe in details the activities to assist ERC over the life of the Project

- 2 day workshop on Fundamental Tools for Conflict Resolution delivered by Mercy Corp. for CEO, Chairman, and Commissioners. The ERC has since used these skills in its daily operations as noted in Guyana Chronicle article dated June 10, 2005 (April – June 2005)
- 2 day retreat for staff of the ERC and a second 2-day workshop for Commissioners for staff development. Commissioners developed a set of objective criteria for work with political parties and the media. (Oct – Dec 2005)
- ERC “Culture Fest 2008”, partially funded by USAID/GDCCRP, was held and attended by between 5,000-7,000 people. ERC held 3 ‘conversations’, one for women, one for youth and one for religious organizations (July – Sept 2006).
- ERC received training on advocacy targeted to the Working Group that emerged at the Multi-Stakeholder Forum, with 18 people representing the major political parties, religious organizations, and regions (April – June 2007).
- 2 day training course for ERC management on Supervisory Management, attended by all 8 supervisors/managers. The Opening Ceremony was covered in the Chronicle newspaper (Oct – Dec 2007).
- 2-day training workshop focusing on Project Proposal and Report Writing conducted for 8 technical staff of the ERC (April – June 2008).

Effectiveness

The interventions in this area were very effective since the project increased the efficiency and accountability of the ERC to the nation.

Recommendations

USAID is encouraged to continue support to ERC.

Program Area 4: Civil Society

Program Element 4.1 Strengthen Democratic Civic Participation

(IR 1.1 Capacity of CSOs Increased)

(IR 1.2 Civic education institutionalized)

(IR2.2 Capacity of Media to Objectively Analyze and Report Increased)

Project activities in support of the above objectives included:

- The Partnership Project
- Women in Local Government
- Civic Education Manual
- Media Freedom and Freedom of Information

Each of these is discussed in greater depth below.

Partnership Project

Partnership Project Background

During the period under review, the program on networking/partnership initiated by the Project in January 2008 continued. The Project undertook to build the capacity and credibility of CSOs to work together to participate in decision making because CSOs in Guyana have traditionally worked independently.

The efforts of USAID/GDCCRPP to foster networks are not new. The creations of networks have been tried and have failed in the past. In that context, the Project focused on HOW to create sustainable networks/partnerships. To this end, the six months program was initiated in January with a workshop titled Building Partnerships for Development between the Private and Civil Society Sectors. Three networks/partnerships were created around the themes – women, youth and differently-abled. It was expected that their working together during the period would deepen their learning as they practiced the principles of networking/partnership. A consultant was contracted to monitor and facilitate the process and the smooth implementation of the activities.

While Partners developed their projects another workshop was held titled- Managing and Sustaining Networks/partnerships, on April 15-17, 2008

At this workshop participants were able to candidly review their partnerships and interactions and were given techniques for the way forward. Participants were exposed to topics on roles and leadership in a partnership; a television assimilation on building a relationship with the media to tell their story; and the mobilization of resources. Subsequent to the workshop partners submitted their proposals for funding to the Project. The Projects and their results are as follows:

Women's Empowerment Project

The Women's Empowerment Project was launched on June 3, 2008 in region no. 5. This launching was very successful in terms of planning, organizing and implementation. The Regional Chairman and the Regional Executive Officer were present at the opening session and invited to give brief remarks. The Chairman welcomed the Session to the Region and emphasized that partnership now more than ever is very necessary for Guyana's development. He expressed gratitude to the partners for choosing Region 5 for the launch. Since the launch, three other workshops were held in Essequibo, and Bartica, in Regions # 2 & 7 respectively. Eleven organizations are a part of this network/partnership.

The Disability Group:-

The Project- Etiquette in Communicating with Persons with Disability- was also launched in Essequibo and Berbice on June 16-17, 2008 and June 24-25, 2008 respectively. These partners also invited the Regional heads to participate. In Berbice the Regional Education Officer represented the Regional Chairman and give remarks and blessings on the activity This project hoped to convene four workshops in Regions 2 and 6 (2 each). While it dealt with general disability it was heavily weighted on the deaf and sign language.

Youth Group:

This group demonstrated that some partnerships can a challenge. They succeeded in conducting a feasibility study with their target group from the Beterwagting Community on the East Coast Demerara. They held numerous meetings to organize and plan among themselves and with stakeholders and to discuss. remedial and skills training. The general consensus among partners and stakeholders is that the benefits for the community are tremendous and will have a multiplying effect through which many in school and out of school youth will benefit and become change agents who are empowered. To date, however, there has been no implementation of their activities.

Results:

- Women's Group:-

To date over 72 women have participated in the workshops. They have been exposed to information on sexual and reproductive health, civic education and their rights. Evaluations reveal that for some of the women this is the first time they have been exposed to this information. More importantly the partners have surmounted their challenges and learnt to work together. They have skillfully practiced and applied the

principles of partnership and were successful in their activities. They have identified opportunities where they can continue to work together in the future.

- The Disability Group:-

To date over 35 persons have participated in the workshops. Participants were drawn from the health profession, the police force, teaching profession and CSOs. This group has demonstrated that each partner brings to the table additional skills and expertise that are deemed necessary to overcome challenges and roadblocks that may be encountered. The diverse nature of this partnership must be highlighted. Five organizations are in this partnership, one in Essequibo in Region 2, two in Berbice in region 6, one on the East Bank of Demerara in Region 4 and the other in Georgetown in Region 4. Noteworthy is the facilitator's comments that in her over 20 years of teaching and working with persons with disability, it is the first time she has seen an attempt to involve other professions in training to better communicate and deal with persons with disability. She referred to the activity as historic.

Partnership Follow-up requirement

Each group continued to benefit from the support and guidance of the facilitator/Broker, Ms Pamela Nauth for the smooth implementation of their projects and for applying partnership principles.

Women in Local Government

Background

The Project in the last fiscal year embarked on a training program for women, designed to build their capacity, participate in Local Government Elections and by extension exercise their civic rights and duty to participate in decision making. To this end, three workshops were implemented, Leadership Skills; Understanding Local Government; and Campaign Management.

Women in Local Government Workshops

In May 2008, workshops on the Effective use of the Media were held in all five regions (2, 3, 4, 5 and 6). In this module participants were exposed to the designing of media strategy; building relations with the media; formal and informal media; the preparation of press releases, press conferences; and how to do presentations and speeches. The sessions were highly participatory with the use of role plays and case studies. This further helped to foster close camaraderie and team spirit among the participants despite ethnic and political differences.



Participants in group session and presentations

Results

A total of ninety (90) women attended the workshops. The attendance was affected by the national house to house registration being conducted by GECOM for the local government elections to be held in 2008.

One of the key features of all the workshops was the feed back session on actions initiated by the participants as a result of the training. In answer to the question- ‘what have you been doing with your new knowledge and training?’ - There were many proud moments reported. Below two are highlighted:

In Region 6, one participant, made a successful approach to her NDC to refurbish the community centre. Today the residents especially the children have somewhere for recreation.

In Region 2, another participant led other members of her community to successfully initiate the rehabilitation of an access road in Riverstown. She has also initiated the repairs by the NDC to a school in the community on which works will commence soon.

The women continued to express their appreciation to the Project for its intervention and noted that the training has raised their self esteem and motivated them into action.

Civic Education Manual

Background

The Project to date has distributed over 500 of its civic education manuals to NGOs. Further the Project responded to a request by the Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports to deliver aspects of the manual to 65 youth leaders at their Youth Leaders Camp at Madewini. Two of the previously trained facilitators voluntarily conducted the sessions along with the Civil Society Specialist. This was held on June 7, 2008.

The response to the information was very encouraging. It revealed the need for this kind of activity.

Monitoring revealed that the facilitators trained under this program have been utilizing the manual in their areas of operation. Further the women's Group under the networking/partnership program have incorporated the manual into their programs and have been delivering on the modules in the regions under their projects.

Effectiveness

Empowering 92 women to participate in local government elections is an important milestone of the project and recommendations

Recommendations

- It is proposed that USAID continue to work with the women.
- Institutionalize Civic Education into the school system in Guyana.
- USAID should build in its program a component that supports formal public private partnerships and networking.

Media Freedom and Freedom of Information

University of Guyana, Communications Division and Guyana Press Association

A grant of USD \$76,800.00 was awarded by the Project to the University of Guyana Communications Division in February 2008. During the period under review, the funds were utilized to procure a Print Suite and Television Studio, and to source a number of experts to build the capacity of faculty, staff and practicing journalists from the Guyana Press Association (GPA) through a series of workshops on relevant topics aimed at improving capacity to investigate, analyze and report on major political and sensitive issues.

The purpose of the technical assistance was to ensure that the equipment which was intended to improve the technical capacity of the centre could be effectively utilized and maintained, so that sustainability of that new capacity could be assured. The Project assisted in providing Communications experts who possessed specialist knowledge and experience to train the aforementioned stakeholders.

The fund for training supported four Training Workshops for the local Media. The focus of the training was aimed at improving presentation skills, ethics and investigative ability of the existing media pool, particularly on sensitive issues. Media houses were also targeted during this effort. The fund was not intended to support the University of Guyana in providing a service (training course) which should be part of its normal mandate. Here, the workshop type training of shorter duration was chosen, so that there would be enough time remaining for the Project to produce preliminary results. The University of Guyana collaborated with the Guyana Press Association in this effort.

The Project funded a separate workshop on “Covering Sensitive Issues” and the technical assistance funded two additional workshops for faculty and staff so that they could become familiar with utilizing the television studio and print suite.

The series of activities was launched by an opening ceremony held on April 18, 2008 in which the Mission Director, Mr. Peter Hubbard was the keynote speaker.

Workshop 1:

Effective News Gathering and Production

April 18-19, 2008

The specific goal of the workshop was to upgrade news gathering and production skill sets of practicing journalists.

A total of 22 persons participated in the eight sessions of the workshop, representing both private media houses and the state owned sector.

The major topics covered during the workshop were:

- The role of news
- The subjectivity scale
- Defining the field
- The First Amendment and freedom of Expression
- Role of the Press in democratic societies
- Political
- Qualities of good journalism
- The nature of news
- Sources and (anonymous sources)
- The Inverted Pyramid
- Writing: Transitions, Quotations, Word Choices
- 1ST and 6TH Amendment conflict
- Media ”Miranda’ Rights
- Contemporary Issues
- The Blundell Chain
- The Interview Process: The theory of reciprocity, the Interview lie, the Interview question
- Guyanese journalism and the international environment

The objectives were to expose participants’ to the follows topic areas:

- Sources and news gathering
- Preparation for interviews
- Interviewing styles
- Questioning techniques and strategies

Workshop 2:

Utilizing print studio equipment “Print Suit”

April 21-27, 2008

The overall goal was to train participants in the effective use of the print studio equipment

10 participants both faculty and students were present at the training session.

Outcome

- Faculty was trained as trainers to ensure that they have the ability to train students in the use of the Print Suite
- A manual was prepared for the use of the Print Suite.
- Students were trained to utilize the equipment.

Workshop 3:

Coverage of Socially Sensitive Issues

April 24-26, 2008

The stated overall goal was to upgrade news gathering and production skill sets of practicing journalists with a view to improving coverage of socially sensitive issues in support of democratic objectives.

A total of nineteen persons participated in the eight sessions of the workshop, representing both private media houses and the state owned sector.

The major topics covered during the workshop were:

- Media Effects
- Sensitive Issues in Contemporary Guyanese
- Ethics, audiences and Accountability
- Conflict Journalism: - The Case of Annandale/ Buxton
 - Reality Check and Self-Audit

- Reaching Out to the Community
- The New Society: What is it that Guyanese have in common?
- Return to Political, Race and Ethnic Conflicts
- Media Law: Emerging Trends in the Legal Environment
- Applied Media Law

Outcome

- Preparation of draft code of conduct for the covering of socially sensitive issues in Guyana and recommended a process for developing a consensus among journalists and media practitioners.

Workshop 4:

Utilizing Television Equipment and Television Production

May 2-11, 2008

The overall goal was to train participants in the effective use of the television studio equipment.

Twelve participants both faculty and students were present at the training session.

.Outcome

- Faculty was trained as trainers to ensure that they have the ability to train students in the use of the television studio and suite.
- Students were trained to utilize the equipment.
- Students were trained to utilize the television studio and suite
- A manual was prepared for the use of the television studio and suite.

Workshop 5:

Writing for Media

May 9-10, 2008

The specific goals for the workshop were mainly to help participants gain a broader background in and enjoyment of correct grammar and syntax, as well as precise language usage. As well as improving skills in writing for print, electronic and online media.

Ten persons participated in this workshop representing only private media houses.

Workshop 6:

Research for Media

May 16-17, 2008

The overall goal of the workshop was to upgrade skill sets of participants media practitioners with a view to improved democracy and governance in Guyana

Ten persons participated in this workshop representing only private media houses.

The major topics covered during the workshop were:

- Orientation to a Research Toolkit
- Research Design: -Developing questions and Topics
 - Operationalization and Development of Instruments
 - Data Collection
 - Data Analysis and Interpretation
 - Research Reports

Outcome

- Identified what was meant by research and discussed why it is necessary
- Identified and discussed various useful research methods
- Identified data sources
- Provided an opportunity for journalists to conduct a research project.

Workshop 7:

Presentations Techniques

May 23-24, 2008

Outcome

- Providing training for Presenting for radio
- Providing training for Presenting for television

Prior to the Workshop convened by the Project on Covering Socially Sensitive Issues, another opening ceremony was held on April 24, 2008. The Mission Director, Mr. Peter Hubbard, Professor James Rose, Vice Chancellor of the University, Dr. Paloma Mohamed and Dr. Vibert Cambridge gave remarks.



The President (ag), the Honorable Samuel Hinds and the Mission Director Mr. Peter Hubbard at the handing over ceremony.

On Friday June 20th, there was an official handing over of the equipment to the University of Guyana. The speakers were the President (ag), the Honorable Samuel Hinds, the Mission Director Mr. Peter Hubbard, the Registrar of the University of Guyana Professor Chanderbali, and Dr. Paloma Mohamed. Certificates of participation were presented to all participants.



Audience the handing over ceremony

Results

- 82 media practitioners trained
- Print suite and television studio presented to the University of Guyana Communications Division
- Capacity of UG Communications Unit and GPA strengthened

Recommendations

- Inequitable use of government controlled media continues to be an issue in Guyana. However, there is an active and independent media. USAID could provide technical assistance and training for a Media Association. The Association could also be responsible for ‘peer monitoring’ of fair ethnic and political coverage.
- Encourage government to update Broadcast Legislation.

- Provide support for public services (health, education, land rights, natural resource management) to Amerindian areas.

Other activities during life of Project

2005- Trained of 27 journalists in investigative reporting in collaboration with UG

2006- Trained of 67 journalists in Media Code of Conduct

Provided computer and other peripherals to strengthen the capacity o the UG Communications Division

2007- Provided Grant to GPA to convene workshops to strengthen the capacity

2008- Grant and training to the GPA.

This section will provide a technical narrative citing quantitative and qualitative information in support of project activities.

Technical Recap

Civil Society Participation/Community Decision Making

- Appreciative Inquiry training (60 participants from 50 CSOs; 8 administrative regions were represented). Monitoring has shown that 26 participants have begun AI training with their own organizations (April – June 2005). Since AI workshops, Partners for Positive Change (PPC) have since conducted workshops with for Region 2 (32 participants – 11 men, 21 women, including 5 youth). This was the first time that AI has been used to Guyana using the 2 day format and at the community level. (July – Sept 2005).
- Enfield/New Doe Park (NDC) AI training for which several plans were developed for a collaborative process for community planning (Oct – Dec 2005). The (elected) Management Committee has been meeting “regularly” (bi-weekly) since the 2005 workshop. (Jan-March 2006). A follow-up AI training was held in Dec. on Changing Our Community One person at a Time (28 participants). From the training, ‘positive action were taken’ from participants including a survey on the needs of young people and the Development Committee planned a week of activities to reactivate services and to bring people together (April-June 2006). The Development Committee had a 2-day workshop on Industrial Relations as a follow-up to AI held for the same group (29) as in December. USAID/GDCCRP learned that the youth group launched in May is going well (July-Sept 2006). A third AI training was held focused on financial management, attended by 23 people (7M, 16 F) (Oct – Dec 2006)
- Appreciative Foundation Workshop (134 participants with 120 certificates for those who attended all 3 trainings: 56 males, 78 females).
- At an AI Practitioners meeting (11 attendees) several participants reported on successes using AI. (July – Sept 2006)

- Advanced AI Practitioners’ training program (25 participants) (April-June 2006). Advanced participants also earlier received training in facilitation (April-June 2006)
- AI training (Part 2) attended by 12 practitioners. Practical applications outside of the training are sited in the report. (Oct – Dec 2006)
- 4 Appreciative Inquiry workshops (120 people from RDCs, NDCs, CDCs, government, CSOs, private sector, Amerindian Council members(12 youth)) (July – Sept 2005). A Youth Group reported (COP interview) that they since had over 50 participants in peer language training. (July –Sept 2005)
- Policy and Policy Reform workshop on “Toward Greater Citizen Participation in Policy and Policy Reform in Guyana”, attended 22 CSOs (24 people, 14 males, 10 females). The second workshop, ‘Advocacy’ was attended by 20 people from the 1st workshop (12M, 8F) (Oct – Dec2006)

Women

- 1st of 3 workshops for women on Leadership with participants from NDCs across regions (2-6). 122 women attended representing communities and political parties, who were housewives, secretaries, clerks, university students, security guards, teachers, nurses and administrators in the public and private sectors. Facilitators were drawn from the project’s pool of practitioners (April – June 2007). Workshops for women were concluded (Regions 2-6). 13 women participated. (Oct – Dec 2007).
- Leadership Development Skills Training, a 6 session workshop, was held for 21 young women at the YWCA (July – Sept 2006)
- 72 women through workshops exposed to information on sexual and reproductive health, civic education and human rights under the Women’s Empowerment Project. (April – June 2008).
- 93 women participated in a project to build the capacity of women in 5 regions to participate in local governance. (April – June 2008).

Youth

- 1 day symposium on racism organized by the Race Relations Committee of the Guyana Public Service Union, developed as a result of project support to 8 youth members to attend the Second Public Services International Conference in Miami on “Racism is a Trade Union Issue’. Upon return the youth formed a core group of a nationwide program to reduce the incidence of racism within communities, and commence implementation of the union’s program of social, racial and ethnic cohesion. (April – June 2007).

Persons With Disabilities

- 35 people participated in Communicating with Persons with Disabilities Project under the Networking/Partnerships Project (April – June 2008).

Networking/Partnerships

- Planned and initiated a 6 month program on Networking/Partnerships to build capacity and credibility of CSOs. Workshop on Building Partnerships for Development Between the Private and Civil Society Sectors. 22 participants from CSOs attended (Jan – March 2008).
- 2nd workshop on Managing and Sustaining Partnerships (April – June 2008).

Civic Education

- Civic education manual produced (Jan – Mar 2007) User friendly Civil Education manual completed (July - Sept. 2007). 500 civic education manuals distributed to CBOs (April – June 2008).
- ToT for Civic Education Manual for regions 2-6 & 10. Participants committed to utilizing the manual in different areas of operation, and 37 manuals were distributed to facilitate that process. 1 session was held for 13 people at UGIAA and another for 80 people during a church conference (Jan – March 2008).

Media

- 2 day workshop on Media Ethics: Coverage of Election Issues (67 participants, including 8 media house owners, 7 editors and 52 reporters, talk show hosts and representatives of advertising agencies) (Jan-March 2006). Based on resolutions from the workshop, USAID/GDCCR reformatted, edited and disseminated a signed Media Code of Conduct, in cooperation with GECOM) to the public (published 13 times) (April-June 2006) and several times in the newspaper (July – Sept 2006). According to the report of Commonwealth Observers, “The Media Code of Conduct and the activities of GECOM’s Media Monitoring Unit had a gradual but perceptible effect in bringing out the best in Guyana’s media.”
- Two week workshop on investigative journalism: (27 Practicing journalists from various media houses)
- Due to discussions with the Prime Minister the Broadcast Legislation bill was “put back on the table” (Jan – Mar 2007)
- 82 journalists received training to improve capacities to investigate, analyze and report on major political and sensitive issues (April – June 2008).

Grants activities over the period

- Grant to Guyana Volunteer Consultancy (GVC) (\$58,800) for capacity building for work in poverty alleviation. 2-day Appreciative Inquiry Workshop (12 people representing 5 CSOs). Launched a youth volunteer arm. (Jan – Mar 2007) (July – Sept 2006). Training in AI for 26 people and expanded Outreach program (Oct – Dec 2006). 2-day AI workshop for 12 people representing 5 CBOs. (Jan – March 2007). Conducted institutional governance workshops (3) across Guyana (Regions 4, 5, 10)

- for over 70 participants (July - Sept. 2007). Workshop for Conflict Resolution for 25 participants (11M; 14F) (Jan – March 2008).
- WAVE submitted report for conducting 4 workshops for 89 people exploring issues associated with violent crime, mobilizing citizen groups, and how to advocate for change (July – Sept 2006). WAVE grant (\$6,000 expended, grant cancelled) for a Citizenship Module for women (Jan – Mar 2006).
 - Help and Shelter grant (\$99,639) to support Trafficking in Person (TIPs), counseling and support, Public Education and Advocacy Program (1,424 people of which 94 were women and girls) (Jan – Mar 2007). Scope was expanded to include mitigating Trafficking in Persons (TIPs) (July – Sept 2006) Counseling continued (6-10 people observed in the waiting room at any given time by M&E team, and 600 total expected during the quarter). Pamphlets, posters, and radio and TV clips designed to promote awareness of TIPs – 1,670 people benefitted from Public Education and Advocacy between Sept and Nov. (Oct – Dec 2006). From Dec. – Feb (2 reporting periods) Public Education and Advocacy program conducted workshops and awareness sessions that benefitted 2,154 persons (1,493 women and girls; 661 men and boys) in 7 regions (including Amerindian territories) with 3 religious organizations; students, teachers and PTA members at 29 schools; members of the public at 9 health clinics; members of 7 communities. Due to a number of suicides, in Moruka H&S arranged for a visit from probation and welfare officers from the Ministry of Labour Health and Social Security (MLHSS) and held a joint press conference with a representative from the Amerindian People’s Association (Jan-March 2007). TIPS public awareness and education reached 4,483 people through training and sensitization activities. (April – June 2007). Counseling and support to 199 people (141F; 16M; 42 children – 32 girls; 10 boys), and direct training to 3,993 persons on TIPs, the Domestic Violence Act (DVA), and other issues. Shelter was provided to 29 persons, including 2 TIPS victims. Workshops and awareness sessions was also done for indigenous people on management, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and parenting. H&S asked (whom?) to review changes to the DVA (July-Sept 2007).

Violence Against Women

According to the NGO Help and Shelter, the government used laws against domestic violence with some measure of success; the problems lay with the failure of those responsible for implementation. Help and Shelter said that magistrates and magistrate court staff needed to be more sensitive to the problem of domestic violence and to their roles in ensuring implementation of the law. In addition not all police officers fully understood provisions of the law.

- Guyana 2006, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, D.O.S., Country Reports on Human Rights, March 6, 2006, Political Asylum Research and Documentation Service (PARDS) LLC

- National Commission on Disabilities (NCD) grant (\$17,240) for team to attend Disability Convention (Oct – Dec 2006). Report in Feb. said that the team benefitted from new information, sharing experiences and networking (Jan-March 2007).
- Women’s Studies Unit grant (\$6,000) for books, office equipment and a computer

- Guyana Community Based Rehabilitation Programme (GCBRP) grant (\$44,117) for a 1 year program “to enable persons with disabilities to be involved in the local decision-making process and to build capacity and self-confidence”. Procurement of office equipment and computers. 22 personnel were trained (?). GCBR participated in ‘several TV shows’ focused on education and people with disabilities. USAID/GDCCRP was recognized during more than 1 [TV] program for supporting GCBR and to the National Disabilities Commission during preparation of Disabilities draft bill and for public hearings at the regional level. (July – Sept 2006). Renovations to the new building. The same 15 people attended a follow-up training of trainers (ToT) training (Jan – March 2007). Follow-on ToT workshop in Lethem on Advocacy, attended by 15 people who received certificates. Essequibo Unit also conducted Advocacy training (#?). A GBCCR trained trainer conducted a workshop on Advocacy Planning for 15 persons with disabilities in Region 2. Participants agreed to meet with key officials on issue such as transportation and a strategy for engagement. (April – June 2007)
- Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning (GFFLL) grant (\$49,750) for office and training equipment, staff remuneration, and supporting the Youth Development Training Program. M&E observed physical improvements to the facility and conducted 2 Leadership trainings (using AI) for 39 people (Oct – Dec 2006) Training workshop for Leadership for youths in Georgetown attended by 36 youths. AI workshop for youths in Berbice attended by 20. Debating Skills competitions (2) were held for youth in G-town. (Jan-March 2007). AI workshop for 35 youth at Linden and workshop on Leadership for youths (#?) in G-town. (April – June 2007). Engaged over 85 youth in workshops, forums and advocacy activities (July - Sept. 2007). Debating Skills workshop held (24 youth). Leadership Development Workshop held (49 youth). Monitoring has revealed that networking activities continued between groups. 5 youths previously trained by GFFLL in Leadership skills and Advocacy carried out networking activities with the ECD in domestic violence and child abuse. 4 trained youth were able to influence the administration of the Cheshire Home to provide shelter to an 18 yr old girl with disabilities. Youth trained in advocacy successfully advocated for changes in the Annual General meeting of the Methodist Church and negotiated changes in the youth camp to make nit more responsive to the needs of young people. A speech and hearing impaired women trained in Leadership and Advocacy was elected to represent her group, Support Deaf Group, at the National Forum for Advocacy. (July - Sept. 2007). 3-day workshop of Conflict Resolution and Advocacy as part of the Leadership Development Program. (Missed date). Workshop on Leadership Development (12M; 15F), 2 workshops on Debating Skills (9M; 15F and then 13M; 12F), 1 workshop on Conflict Resolution and Advocacy (6M; 12F) (Jan – March 2008).
- Guyana Press Association grant (\$800) for a 2-day workshop on basic journalism – staff of 4 TV stations and 2 daily newspapers (Jan – Mar 2007). GPA workshop on Getting Back to Basics (8M; 12F) (July - Sept. 2007). USAID/GDCCRP support (?) for the Guyana Press Association anniversary exhibition and media presentation (Oct – Dec 2005). 1-day training workshop for 18 people (12M; 6F) (Oct – Dec 2007).

- Peace vigil “Flame of Hope, Light a candle for Peace” support (\$?) to the Volunteer Youth Corps for advertisements in newspapers (major papers over 3 days) and flyers (500). Attended by 100 people in G-town and 2-300 in Buxton.
- Grant to DEVNET (\$16,000) to design, establish, host and maintain websites for NGOs and CBOs in Guyana. Number of recipients increased from 43 to 53, and they conducted 6 workshops for 6 organizations (?) Also “supported” the EAB (?) (July – Sept 2006). One new organization was added to Devnet to host, consultations were done with 27 organizations, and 10 new organizations were added (Oct – Dec 2006). Served 60 clients (Jan – Mar 2007)
- Grant to GUYBERNET (\$45,172) to document multiculturalism (Jan – Mar 2006) A second grant (\$14,028) was provided for an office and equipment. They held a Multicultural Essay Competition, and received 20 entries (July – Sept 2006). During an M&E visit 6-8 people, mostly youths, were observed using the facility (Oct – Dec 2006). New location. Clean-up campaign. (Jan – Mar 2007). Multicultural Extravaganza hosted by Guybernet attended by 65 people, including the Prime Minister. World Environment Day followed by discussions of the environment in 8 schools (April – June 2007).
- 8 CSOs selected for CSOSI (April – June 2005)
- Guyana Youth Development Association grant (\$?) to attend the Third Commonwealth Youth Parliament grant (April – June 2005)
- Member of the Advisory Committee on Broadcasting received a grant (\$?) to attend a professional training program in journalism the US (at American U) (April – June 2005).
- University of Guyana grant (\$76,800) to convene 6 workshops for and collaborate with the Guyana Press Association and acquire a television studio and print suite ToT on Effective Use of the Media (continuing workshop for preparation on women in regions 2-6) (Jan – March 2008). Equipment provided (April – June 2008).

Key Accomplishments

- Citizens have improved understanding of local and national issues.
- At least 5 CSOs are fully equipped and their staff have complete technical and administrative ability to perform all organizational functions, including membership development, accounting, research and analysis, outreach, canvassing, lobbying, and community mobilization. 3 of the 5 CSOs must have a national – not merely regional or community level – influence and membership base.
- At least 4 CSO networks are formed: 2 across geographical space and 2 across sectors
- Civil society (commissions, advisory groups, associations) regularly provides contributions to policy making at local and national levels of government
- A civic education program is introduced, on a pilot basis, in schools and selected CSOs
- Staff of at least 5 TV stations and the 2 major daily newspapers have improved capacity to investigate, analyze, and report on major political issues. Media consistently provides informed, balanced and objective reporting and editorials.

- At least 2 study tours for up to 6 participants (approx. 10 days each tour) to examine ethnic relations in any 2 countries with relevant experiences
- Conflict management mechanisms established in at least 5 communities

Lessons Learned

- Work to update the Media Code of Conduct resulted in improved reporting. However, there is no mechanism in Guyana for enforcement for the behavior of media nor political candidates.

Recommendations

- CSOs made great strides in counseling victims and carrying out sensitization campaigns to the general public. However, a “lack of sensitivity for victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence and tolerance for perpetrators of abuse reached to all levels of society.” USAID should consider continuing sensitization activities on domestic violence. Sensitization and training could be extended to those responsible for implementing and enforcing the law (e.g., police, magistrate). USAID should consider continuing sensitization activities on domestic violence. Sensitization and training could be extended to those responsible for implementing and enforcing the law (e.g., police, magistrate, Ministry of Human Services).
- CSOs made great strides in counseling victims and carrying out sensitization campaigns to the general public. The government continued to make progress in its efforts to combat trafficking in persons, although there were no convictions under the Trafficking in Persons Act during the year. USAID should consider continuing sensitization activities on TIPs. Sensitization and training could be extended to those responsible for implementing and enforcing the law (e.g., police, judiciary).
- In March the National Commission on Disabilities (NCD) released the results of a survey of 1,500 persons with disabilities across four regions. Survey respondents reported facing significant obstacles in accessing employment, health care, education and training, and social outlets because of disability. There is no legislation allowing such persons to contest discriminatory acts. USAID should consider technical assistance to revise and enforce legislation.

Grants Program – Please note that the grants support the program areas.

Summary of the Grants Program

The Grants Program includes two categories of grant assistance. First is the Small Grant which has a limit of just under US\$100,000 and was provided in the contract to support capacity building and other CSO related initiatives within the three intermediate result areas (and now, with the advent of the Operational Planning system, they support program Area initiatives) These grants ranged from US\$5,000 to US\$99,000.

At the time of reporting (first week of Sept 2008 the position of the grants program was as follows:

- Total Grants Program budget US\$1,000,000.
- Total of Grants awarded US\$786,273
- Total Small Grants awarded US\$746,219
- Total Sub-grants awarded US\$33,333
- Total grants Disbursed US\$774,260
- Number of Applications to date Eighty-nine (including 30 sub-grant applications)
- Number of Applications approved Thirty (including seven sub-grants)

A list of all grants and their results over the LOP follows this narrative of current project activity.

During the April – September period of reporting there were three active Small Grants which were about to be completed. These were as follows:

- Guyana Forum For Lifelong Learning
- Guyana Volunteer Consultancy
- The Linden Legal Aid Center

The Project continued to monitor the work of Georgetown Legal Aid Clinic which had benefited from a Grant of \$10,330 for supporting its outreach program through the provision of equipment and furniture for the regional offices.

Also, small grants were issued to seven CSOs for supporting their work programs on Advocacy and Consensus Building. Grants were awarded to:

- East Bank Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme (EBCBR)
- Youth Aflame
- DEVNET
- Ascension Temple of Truth
- National Youth Development Network
- Hopeful Steps
- Guyana bar Association.

Grants Supporting Program Area 1.3 : Justice System

(Program Element 1.3.4 Access to Justice)

- Georgetown Legal Aid Clinic

During the months April-September 15th, the clinic provided legal aid services to clients as follows:

- Interviewed 989 prospective clients of whom 723 were females and 226 were males.

- Provided legal advice to 510 new clients
- Provided legal advice and representation to 484 new clients
- Referred 82 clients to other agencies for appropriate assistance, mostly Help & Shelter and Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.
- Represented 180 clients out of Georgetown.

Analysis of the civil matters dealt with during the period revealed that:

- - Divorce made up approximately 30 to 35 percent of the matters.
- - Domestic violence accounted for about 10 percent
- - Division of property, estates and maintenance ranged between 3 to 5 percent.

Criminal matters for which assistance was given included rape/carnal knowledge, robbery, theft, assault, and disorderly behavior. There were three instances of assistance for murder/manslaughter during the period.

- Linden Legal Aid Centre (LLAC)

During the period under consideration (April to September 15th) LLAC provided services to persons of low income within the Region 10 area as follows:

- Interviewed 70 prospective clients of whom 58 were females and 12 were males
- Nineteen cases were completed during the period.

From the commencement of the USAID Support to the Mediation Center to 15th September 2008:

- 261 Cases were handled (persons interviewed – 214 females and 47 males)
- 53 matters were completed

Types of matters handled were mostly divorces, deed polls and warning letters.

- Mediation April to 15 Sept 2008

No. of Matters referred to mediation 370

No. of matters Judge directed 296

No. of matters attorney directed 74

No of sessions scheduled 316

No. settled before mediation 14

No. resolved by mediation 64

No. mediated but went back to trial 92

No. partially resolved 23

Grants Supporting Program Area 3: Political Competition & Consensus Building

(Program Element: Consensus Building & Dialogue Processes)

The Project continued to support the CSOs which had earlier benefitted from grant support for capacity building and for executing their work programs. To date only two grants remained. current – the Guyana Volunteer Consultancy and Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning.

Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning

During June, four workshops were conducted by the Guyana Forum for Lifelong Learning at the Multicultural Centre, Farm, East Bank Essequibo. The workshops were on Appreciative Inquiry – Module 1, Leadership Skills – Module 2, Debating Skills - Module 3, and Conflict Resolution and Advocacy – Module 4. Each workshop was of three days duration held on the dates 2-4, 5-7, 9-11, and 12, 13 and 17, June 2008 respectively. The Forum held two graduation exercises during the month of June. The first exercise was held on Sunday 1st and the other on Saturday 14th June, 2008 respectively. The one on Sunday was held in Linden, Mc Kenzie and the other in Georgetown for participants who completed training in all four modules in the Leadership development Project. A total of one hundred and thirteen persons graduated as at June 30, 2008. Representatives from USAID GDCCR Project attended the graduation exercises. Details of the activities are:

- Appreciative Inquiry Workshop for 44 participants, including 8 males and 36 females during 2-4 June, 2008. Participants ranged in ages between 18 – 60 and represented youth groups, churches women’s groups and CBOs. For some of the participants, this was the first experience in attending a workshop.
- Leadership Development Workshop for 46 participants (6 males and 40 females) between the ages of 18 to 50 years. They were drawn from a similar grouping as above.
- Debating Skills Workshops for 37 participants (5 males and 32 females) between ages 18 and 50.
- Conflict Resolution and Advocacy Workshop for 38 persons (5 males and 33 females) between ages 18 to 50.

Action Taken:

Monitoring and guidance were provided towards the foregoing activities.

Results:

This series of training contributes towards the OP Target - Number of Groups Trained in Inclusive Consensus Building Techniques with USG Assistance. This is however an intermediate achievement since the groups have begun to focus on issues for placing on the agenda of the relevant decision makers.

- Sub-Grants Program Summary

During the period April to August beneficiaries under the Sub-grants Program undertook several activities in relation to their work-programs.

Grants Supporting Program Area 3: Political Competition & Consensus Building

(Program Element: Consensus Building & Dialogue Processes)

- Ascension Temple of Truth

Award: USD5000

Objectives: To empower residents of the Lodge community to be change agents

Purpose: To train 30 persons in Leadership, Conflict Resolution and Advocacy skills.

Methodologies: Four Participatory workshops, June- July 2008. Themes on deviant behaviours.

Outcomes: Participants, 15-30 years, exceeded target number for most workshops; majority, approx. 60%, were female.

In spite of what must have been their best efforts, this Group seemed stuck at the level of consensus building and capacity strengthening. This conclusion is made against the background of having guided the facilitators in the *raison d'être* of the grant and showing them possible mechanisms for achieving the goal.

Major outputs: Problems, Causes and Solutions identified thus:

Problems: Crime, truancy, drug use, violence, child molestation, teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections.

Causes: Unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, uneducated parents and youths, peer pressure, religious beliefs, political persuasions, money laundering, greed, unavailability of recreational centers.

Solutions: Establishment of youth friendly community centers, evening classes to teach parents handicraft and other self-development skills; teaching of parenting skills, highlighting the problems of young people, a more active community role for churches,

Government must pay attention to teacher-quality and pay, counseling should be done in schools, sex education should be taught in schools, parents should be prosecuted when their children do not go to school, police patrols should be done in troubled areas, more homes should be established for street children, government must ensure equal opportunities for all ethnic groups, National Service should be reintroduced, this project should be replicated.

Post-project, the Coordinator has submitted that ‘the findings will be submitted to the Ministries of Education, Homes Affairs and Labour, Human Services and Social Security.’

- GuyberNet

Award: USD4500

Objective: Implementation of Conflict Transformation Through Cultural Exchange and Creative Teaching [CONTACT] Project.

Purpose: Production of kits and training for transformational leaders, hosting practicums in communities and a youth symposium.

Outcomes: This initiative had its genesis in a search for a methodology to address violence in schools. It was originally launched July 5 but had to be re-engineered so that the identified Community Facilitators were intensively trained July 26/27. The practicums were held during August in communities on the lower East Bank Demerara, within Georgetown and environs and West Coast Berbice; the symposium was held in the city September 6. This climax event afforded opportunities for the community participants [approx.35], with support from their Facilitators, to show that ‘through the various artistic forms, that they can express themselves non-violently, build conflict resolution skills and live peacefully.’

The Guybernet Contact Coordinator has indicated that a comprehensive document with emphasis on the lessons learnt will be produced shortly; this will also be used to seek funds to expand the project and liaising with policy makers.

- National Youth Development Network.

Creating a Document of Policy Recommendations for Youths by Youth. The grant was required for funding focus group meetings, general consultation meetings, traveling, facilitators and preparation of the Youth Policy Recommendations Document. This project was expected to contribute towards number consensus building processes assisted by USG, and the drafting of a Youth Policy Recommendations document for submission to the Government. Even though the grant was awarded this project had not gotten underway.

- Guyana Community Based Rehabilitation Program- Hopeful Steps Project

Award: USD5000.

Objective: To develop a cadre of 50 child ambassadors [within Georgetown] to promote the rights of disabled children

Purpose: Acquisition of miscellaneous supplies for hosting four practicums.

Outcomes: After considerable bureaucratic inertia, the Project was executed during the school holidays with volunteer second and third formers [20] from one private school, two from Government-run schools, and ten from the David Rose School for the Handicapped.

Outcomes: There were gains on both sides. The hearing children developed a more enlightened attitude towards the deaf children through the sign language instruction, art work and games; the deaf children were exultant at their acceptance.

The children formulated a petition for the teaching of basic sign language in schools to the Ministry of Education. Copy attached.

At the Closing Exercises of the East Bank CBR in August, the Minister in the Ministry of Education lauded this petition and indicated that steps were being put in place for its adoption.

Monday July 28, 2008

Hon. Minister of Education
Shaik Baksh
Ministry of Education
Brick Dam, Georgetown.

Re: Sign Language Training in Schools

Dear Sir,

We the “Ambassadors for the Rights of Children with Disabilities” are requesting that basic Sign Language be taught in schools country wide.

During the past three (3) weeks, we have been actively involved in a project implemented by the Guyana Community Based Rehabilitation (GCBRP) which was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This was a wonderful and educational experience for us. We had the opportunity to meet and interact with children who have hearing disabilities from the David Rose School for Handicapped Children. We also had the opportunity to learn their language – Sign language. Through our interaction with these children we have found that they are just like us “hearing children.”

Prior to this project we had little or no contact with Deaf persons and no understanding of their special needs. After our interaction with the Deaf children we learnt how easy it is to discriminate against such children – who are quite like us in many ways. Sign Language in Schools would be very interesting and beneficial to both parties as it will help in reducing the stigma against Deaf person.

Signatories

Stephen Fraser
The Guyana Education Trust College

Nkechi McPherson
St. Joseph’s High School

Susanna Pile
The Guyana Education Trust College

Alicia Rogers
The Guyana Education Trust College

Soyini McPherson
The Bishops’ High School

Zoe Daniels
The Guyana Education Trust College

Ryan Blackman
Tucville Primary School

Seon Wood
The Guyana Education Trust College

Nicholas Bourne
The Guyana Education Trust College

Nyvin John
The Guyana Education Trust College

Mario Gorsira
David Rose School

- Youth Aflame

Award: USD5000.

Objective: To train youth in the Linden community in Advocacy.

Purpose: to fund training workshops in Self- empowerment, Appreciative Inquiry, Conflict Resolution and Advocacy.

Outcomes: The project was executed during July; attendance eventually topped 60 teenage boys and girls.

The format was similar to that of the Ascension Temple of Truth Project, but in this instance the participants had progressed further in putting together elements for an advocacy component, i.e. a Focus Group was formed at the conclusion of the activity to work with the Project Coordinator on liaising with the Linden TV station for public sensitization and meeting with the Regional administration for institutionalizing policy change. Up to September 8, no further word was forthcoming.

The need for sensitization of the adults- their parents and relatives- in the community to conflict resolution strategies was raised by participants [for whom this training had a significant impact].

- DevNet

Award: USD5000.

Objective: Online network formation and information sharing

Purpose: Design and build web forums; facilitate online lab sessions and coaching participants; related operating costs.

This project focused on helping NGOs learn about Internet tools and use them to collaborate and share information.

The project was of short duration and had two areas of activity. The first was a series of workshops and lab sessions with NGOs on relevant Internet tools. One workshop session was held in central Georgetown and three lab sessions held at the International Conference Centre. During the lab sessions participants used an email list to exchange messages and posted to forums.

The second area of activity was the setting up of the email list and web site with forums for use by participants. This was completed early in the project and used as a resource in the lab sessions.

An on-line poll was used to evaluate the project.

DevNet has been working with NGOs for many years providing web site and other Internet services as well as training. This project focused on helping NGOs learn about Internet tools and use them to collaborate and share information.

The project was of short duration and had two areas of activity. The first was a series of workshops and lab sessions with NGOs on relevant Internet tools. One workshop session was held in central Georgetown and three lab sessions held at the International Conference Centre. During the lab sessions participants used an email list to exchange messages and posted to forums.

The second area of activity was the setting up of the email list and web site with forums for use by participants. This was completed early in the project and used as a resource in the lab sessions.

Two organizations (Family Research Programme and Hope For All) asked for help in creating a web site and this was agreed. FRP provided enough information to start a site and this was done. Hope For All has still to provide content for a site but the site will be created once this is done.

Poll

At the end of the project emails were sent to the 48 members of the email list requesting them to respond to an on-line poll. The focus of the poll was the success of the project. Seven responses were obtained – not a good response for this type of survey. The response was quite positive. A summary is given in the table below. The negative response to question 4 is puzzling as there were no other negative responses or comments. Possibly the question was misread.

Summary of poll results

1. How useful was this project for your organisation?			
Not useful at all	Not so useful	Useful	Very useful
0	0	1	7

2. In what way was the project useful?	
I learnt about new internet tools	6
I have started using email for the first time	0
I have used a forum for the first time	3
I have gained more confidence using the internet	5
I can now encourage my organisation to use these tools	7
Other: Motivate us to develop our own web site	1

3. The project aimed to increase collaboration between local civil society organisations like yours.					
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
The skills taught will help achieve this	0	0	0	0	5
We will be using these skills right away	0	0	1	1	0
We are not ready to use these skills yet	3	3	0	0	0
We will be exploring these tools to see how we can apply them	0	0	1	6	0

- The East Bank Community Based Rehabilitation Programme

Award: USD4554.

Objectives:

- To reduce stigma and discrimination against persons with hearing and speech disabilities
 - To improve the basic educational foundation of deaf children
- Purpose: to design and produce training material on deaf awareness, conducting training and organizing a public symposium on deaf awareness.

Methodologies used: Sensitization workshops; teaching of sign language

Target: Cross-section of adults in East Bank Demerara communities Speech/hearing impaired children

Project was launched in April 2008, Closing Exercises held August 14, 2008; Minister in the Ministry of Education, Dr. Fox, M.P., attended both events.

Outcomes: Participants: 24 women and teenage girls mainly.

Project afforded greater inclusion of deaf persons in lower East Bank Demerara community affairs as a wide cross-section of the population was sensitized on the negatives of discrimination.

Project received coverage in the national newspapers.

Because of advocacy by the EBCBR, a 'Teach the Sign Language Trainer Initiative' has been launched in collaboration with Ministry of Education.

Grants Update Summary as at 8
Sept 2008

Number	Organization	Amt Awarded	Total Drawdowns to Date	Balance on Grant	Remarks
1	Gyber Net	45,172	44,615	557	Equipment & furniture accessed for establishment of an ethno-friendly and youth-friendly space in G'town; two movie nights/mo.x 18 mo. at HQ, Regions 2,3 & 4 including schools; three w'shops in different communities. Over 1,000 beneficiaries [mainly youth].
2	WAVE	6,000	6,000	0	Re-developed Citizenship Module, carried out 3 day training in 3 regions to contribute to violence reduction. Worked with community groups on policy advocacy and reduction of violence. This Grant was discontinued after the NGO ran into organizational (leadership) difficulties
3	Devnet	16,000	15,266	734	Designed and hosted web based information for CSOs to promote transparency and accountability by making their information available to the public. Designed and/or maintained over 60 websites. Provided means of dialogue and citizen's participation in policy making.
4	Community Based Rehab	44,118	44,907	-789	Expanded capacity of regional and local groups in 5 regions to advocate on disabilities issues; to increase participation in local, regional and national issues. Grant Funds awarded for Capacity building and work program support. 4 Regional offices were strengthened. One Advocacy program which represented several issues was effected.
5	Guy. Volunteer Consulting	51,719	51,719	0	Trained 240 persons in 6 regions of Guyana in Advocacy and Consensus building techniques, including Appreciative Inquiry. Established a Volunteer Youth Arm of the organization

6	Guy. Forum for Life Long Learning	49,500	49,445	55	Advocacy training in 8 regions; developed networks for community participation, local and national issues. Worked particularly thru youths. Over 350 youths were trained in Leadership, Advocacy, Debating Skills, consensus building techniques. One advocacy program addressing several issues was successful completed.
7	Help & Shelter	28,164	28,231	-67	Mission is to contribute to bringing about a society where attitudes to the use of violence have been transformed. Funds provided for H&S Work program of shelter and counselling to DV victims. Over 3600 persons received counselling during the period of grant support. One successful advocacy program on Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse was effected.
8	Help & Shelter Grant 2	99,639	99,639	0	Funding provided to TIPS Program - Over 11,000 persons (at risk groups and stakeholders) were directly trained. Public Awareness Campaign reached over 75,000 persons. One Advocacy campaign of TIPS was successfully completed.
9	Legal Aid	88,848	88,522	326	The funding provided by USAID GDCCR served to maintain an essential programme which was already in existence, but required intense financial assistance to keep it in existence. The grant provided overpersons with access to justice which would otherwise have been denied.
10	Legal Aid Amendment	6,344	6,344	0	Purchase of Computers for GLAC head office. Capacity building for GLAC
11	Legal Aid Grant 2	96,138	96,138	0	The funding provided by USAID GDCCR serves to maintain a programme which was already in existence, but requires intense financial assistance to keep it in existence.
12	Moraikobai Village Council	5,298	5,298	0	The Council seeks to promote an efficient, effective and participatory self managed community, with its citizens empowered to make meaningful contributions. Computers and Solar panel electricity generators provided as in kind grant. Capacity of the Council Increased.
13	National Commission on Disabilities	17,248	17,248	0	Sponsorship of seven participants representing groups with disabilities to attend the 9th International Congress for Children and Youth with Disabilities. On their return, they utilized the information gained at the training to formulate draft policies, and to train others related to persons with disabilities.

14	National Commission on Disabilities	9714	9668	46	(1) To carry out activities related to drafting the Rights of Persons with Disability Bill. (2) To carry out Nationwide Consultation Process necessary before the Draft becomes law in Parliament. Draft completed and submitted to Govt. 413 persons attended seven country-wide consultations which served as the basis for drafting PWD legislation. One Advocacy program successfully run.
15	Women Studies Unit UG	6,000	5,355	645	Furniture & Books procured. Capacity of the Women's institute strengthened. Women can use the improved facility for research and advocacy.
16	Electoral Assistance Bureau	25,000	25,000	0	Supporting 2006 Elections by increasing Voter's confidence in the Results of National Elections when released by GECOM. EAB performed field verification of GECOM's published results and found a high degree of accuracy. Reports and recommendations were made public. This finding contributed towards reduced violence due to ethnic tensions during elections
17	National Parliament	15,719	14,479	1,240	Funding for improvement of the Library. The computers and furniture provided assisted in capacity building for the parliament Library.
18	Guyana Press Association	3,229	1,600	1,629	Training courses in basic skills for Journalists. Contributed towards the improved skills of media workers to report fairly.
19	Guyana Press Association	800	800	0	Training courses in basic skills for Journalists. Contributed towards the improved skills of media workers to report fairly.
20	GPSU	12,000	12,000	0	Sponsored eight youth to attend and participate in Conference addressing Racism as a Trade Union issue in the workplace. On their return they promoted reduction of racism in workplaces regionally and organized a highly successful anti-racial discrimination symposium which was attended by over three hundred persons of diverse ethnicities for all regions of Guyana.
22	University of Guyana Communications Centre	76,800	76,800	0	Grant provided for purchase of TV Studio equipment, print Lab, TA on use of equipment and four training workshops. Capacity of University Communications centre increased. This grant contributes towards Capacity of the Media to report effectively increased. Forty-seven media personnel were trained.

21	Georgetown Legal Aid Clinic 3	10,269	10,330	-61	Purchase of Computers for GLAC regional offices. This supported a regional outreach program which provided an additional 250 persons with access to justice
22	Linden Legal Aid Centre	32,500	31,523	977	Provision of Legal Services to Economically disadvantaged persons in Linden community. 261 persons assisted during Jan to Sept 2008.
	TOTALS	746,219	740,927	5,292	

	Small Grants Program	Awarded	Drawdown	Balance	Remarks
1	GCBRP Hopeful Steps	5000	4787.02	212.98	20 hearing and 10 deaf children trained in sign language.
2	GCBRP East Bank Demerara	4554	4528.74	25.26	Community Based deaf awareness training. Expenses are related to designing and producing training materials on deaf awareness, conducting training and organizing a public symposium on deaf awareness. Advocacy program completed.
3	National Youth Development Network	5000	0	5000	Creating a Youth Policy for Youths by Youth. The grant was required for funding focus group meetings, general consultation meetings, traveling, facilitators and preparation of the Draft Policy Document. Program did not materialize so there was no drawdown.
4	Youth Aflame	5000	5082.03	-82.03	Training and Advocacy project for Linden youths successfully completed.
5	Devnet	5000	4145.48	854.52	Online Network Formation and Information sharing . Funds required to Design & Build web forums, facilitate online lab sessions, coaching participants and operating costs related to those activities. Completed.
6	Guybernet	4500	3698	802	Youth Development/Governance. Grant required to produce contact kits required for training transformational leaders, and to promote conflict transformation in selected schools on the East Coast of Demerara.

7	Ascension Temple of Truth	5000	5091.86	-91.86	Empowerment of Residents of Lodge and its Environs to become Change agents in their Communities. Funds required for training thirty persons in Leadership, Conflict Resolution and Advocacy Skills. Completed. Advocacy program supported.
8	Guyana Bar Association	6000	6000	0	For preparing, printing and Disseminating one thousand copies of a Bar Journal. Successfully completed.
	TOTALS	40054	33333.13	6720.87	

	Total Grants Program	Awarded	Drawdown	Balance	Remarks
		786,273	774,260	12,013	

Appendix A: Monitoring and Evaluation

Introduction

The GDCCR Project reports program performance information to USAID/Guyana in three main categories: 1) M&E indicators under a strategic framework results (SOs and IRs); 2) US Foreign Assistance (USFA) Operational Plan (OP) indicators; and 3) milestones according to approved annual work plan activities and tasks.

Approach

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are a crucial part of good management, and critical to improving and sustaining benefits from any intervention. Key indicators measure the extent to which progress is being made toward program results. M&E data are collected, analyzed and reported in order to inform managers and stakeholders in the program, USAID, and other partners and stakeholders appropriately on progress and results of project implementation. The project's management uses indicators and milestones information internally also, to assess progress toward targets and results and to improve intervention design and implementation.

Over the course of the project (4 years, 3 months), USAID converted its reporting system from Strategic Objectives (SOs) and Intermediate results (IRs) to Operational Planning (OP). This change required the M&E system to adapt in order to capture data and present information in a different manner. With agreement from the Mission, GDCCR developed a blended Results Framework/USFA OP structure. Integrating new OP indicators into ongoing results reporting has enabled GDCCR to help the USAID Mission meet its obligation to report OP data while also maintaining project focus on progress toward program results and activity milestones.

Management

The GDCCR Chief of Party (COP) maintains responsibility for the project's M&E results and reporting. She is supported by an M&E specialist who also fulfills the role of project Grants Manager. In FY2008, a local consultant was hired to collect data in the field in support of accurate and timely M&E reporting for final (M&E) reporting. Technical assistance has also been provided by the RTI home office in North Carolina as needed. All program staff and collaborating organizations have had a role to play in M&E, from primary data collection and quality assurance to review, oversight, and use of results information.

Data Collection

Routine data consists of reports and supporting documents from the project's collaborating partners, including CSOs, government institutions, and records, forms, and other documentation as needed from training, sensitization, and other program events. M&E staffs maintain an electronic paper trail of supporting documentation for all indicator values reported to USAID. Routine data is collected primarily at the point of activities such as training or sensitization events, and in narrative reports by activity leaders, consultants, and collaborating CSOs or other organizations. This information is used in quarterly and biannual reports to USAID.

Data Quality

GDCCR Project staff record primary data on paper forms and in narrative activity reports, through the project's own internal reporting or through reports provided by partner institutions and organizations. GDCCR staffs have provided first-hand monitoring and spot-checking for data quality assurance, as appropriate and as resources permit. Paper and electronic records of all relevant data are maintained at the GDCCR office in Georgetown, Guyana. Records are tracked using Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Anomalies in data are reconciled as reports are reviewed internally, and again as totals are compiled, before reporting information to USAID. Figures are provided to USAID in Microsoft Word documents according to the work plan and agreed schedules.

Data Table

Data for OP indicators, that match activity outputs, and project performance indicators, that measure results from activities, are found in the following data table that presents performance over the life of the Project

Exhibit A-1: Indicator Table for GDCCR Project for the Life-of-Project (LOP)

OP Indicator	Project Indicator	Data Collection Method	LOP Target	LOP Total	Project Notes
Program Area 1: Rule of Law and Human Rights					
1.1: # of Guyanese courts that received USG technical assistance for improved case management		Project activity reports	1	1	
	1.2: # of people who visited USG-supported legal services centers serving low-income and marginalized communities (IR2)	CSO records and reports	2250	3321	Georgetown Legal Aid Clinic (GLAC) supported from 2005 to 2008. Linden Legal Aid Center 261 additional matters
	1.3: # of cases brought to the Mediation Center (IR2)	Mediation Center and Court Records	No target set	1,239	Data up to June 2008.
1.4: # of cases resolved by the Mediation Center		Mediation Center and Court Records	No target set	189	Cases referred to the Mediation Center by judges and lawyers up to June 2008.
	1.5: # of people who have received USG-assisted training related to human trafficking and assistance to victims (IR3)	CSO records and reports	No target set	11,551 (8,098 women; 3,453 men)	Trafficking in Persons (TIPs) training included issues of domestic violence and sexual abuse.
	1.6: # of people estimated to have been reached by human trafficking public awareness programs (IR3)	Project records and media audience analysis	No target set	75,000	Media figures based on average audiences during public awareness program spots (television, radio, newspapers, and posters and brochures)
Program Area 2: Good Governance					
	2.1: % of people in targeted groups interviewed who report their confidence in key public institutions has increased over the past five years (SO)	NA	NA	NA	Data collection was cancelled for this indicator as agreed by the Mission and the Project. Progress is reported in the narrative section of this report.
2.2: # of laws or amendments promoting decentralization drafted with USG technical assistance		Project activity records and reports	2	0	No submission made by the Government or Political Task Force for assistance in drafting legislation. USAID/GDCCRP parliament activities were suspended by the Speaker of the National Assembly and in consultation with USAID.
Program Area 3: Political Competition and Consensus					
	3.1: # of major political parties that accepted the results of the last local election (SO)	Commonwealth Observer Group Report; Media reports	No target set	4	There are 5 major political parties in Guyana: PPP/C, PNCR-1G, GAP/ROAR, AFC, and TUF.
3.2: # of ethnic/political consensus-building processes* assisted with USG support		Project activity reports	6	11	ERC consultations (3): Regional Consultations, National Conversation, ERC Working Groups Guybernet (4): Multicultural exchange via a Clean-up campaign (youth groups), World Environment Day (schools), Multicultural Extravaganza (CSOs, businesses), Symposium on Race Issues (trade unions) Appreciative Inquiry (AI) (1): Training and implementation

					Creation of Networks (sharing common interests), Partnerships (bring together diverse stakeholders for a common purpose) and Associations (legal registration) (3)
3.3: # of groups trained in inclusive consensus building techniques*		Project training records	No target set	49	Separate organizations are counted as "groups".
Program Area 4: Civil Society					
4.1: # of CSO advocacy campaigns supported by USG		CSO and project records	10	14	Domestic violence (2), TIPs, People with Disabilities (3), Youth (2), Race Relations (1) Disabilities Act, EAB, Trade Union (1), Sub-grants: East Bank CBR (1), Ascension Temple of truth (1) Youth Aflame (1)
	4.2: % of people in targeted groups interviewed who report their confidence in USG-assisted CSOs has increased over the past five years (SO)	NA	NA	NA	Data collection was cancelled for this indicator as agreed by the Mission and the Project. Progress is reported in the narrative section of this report.
4.3: # of people who have completed a USG-assisted civic education program		Project training records	200	557	Women who completed a program consists of Leadership, Understanding Local Governance, Effective Use of the Media, Running a Campaign Civic Education Manual Training
4.4: # of mechanisms supported with USG technical assistance for citizens to engage their sub-national government		CSO and project records and reports	10	5	Watchdog group formed following AI training and local survey in Enfield/New Doe Park (NDC). Women's Empowerment Project 3 mechanisms.
4.5: # of positive modifications to enabling legislation/regulations for media drafted with USG assistance		Project records, Media Reports, legislation/regulations	No target set	0	The Government has not acted to modernize the Broadcast Legislation Bill, despite offers of technical assistance from USAID/GDCCRP.
4.6: # of journalists who have been trained with USG technical assistance		Project training records	40	95 (35 women; 60 men)	

Guyana GDCCR, Section C, Scope of Work
“Outcomes/Results Accomplished Through the Contract”

Outcomes to be Achieved*	Contract IR**	Program Area**
<p>Citizens have improved understanding of local and national issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 1500 citizens directly trained, or otherwise reached through Civic Education Program, ERC’s National Conversation, sensitization sessions for CSOs, GECOM, Political Parties and other stakeholders on international Best Practices in Elections. 	IR1	PA 4
<p>At least 5 CSOs are fully equipped and their staff have complete technical and administrative ability to perform all organizational functions, including membership development, accounting, research and analysis, outreach, canvassing, lobbying, and community mobilization. 3 of the 5 CSOs must have a national – not merely regional or community level – influence and membership base.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help & Shelter – Supported administrative and program activities. Contributed to capacity to successfully execute the TIPS program at a national level. This CSO demonstrated particular strength in advocacy. GLAC – Three grants plus TA assisted to build technological and organizational capacity. Financial reporting of this CSO was improved. Contributed towards equipping of regional offices. GUYBERNET- Office refurbished and equipped, computers provided. Shared space for research and dialogue established and utilized by youths and CSOs. Guyana Volunteer Consultancy. Institutional capacity improved. Youth arm established. Furniture and equipment donated. GCBR Program. Head Office and regional offices established/refurbished/equipped. Staff, volunteers, members and stakeholders trained. Financial Reporting capacity improved This CSO demonstrated greatest strength in lobbying, and possesses a considerable membership base at the regional levels. GFFLL. Project contributed towards technical and institutional capacity building by providing computers and office equipment. Has members and trainees in all regions. LLAC. Establishing and equipping of this CSO was funded by GDCCRP. USG also funded its work program of providing legal aid to the economically disadvantaged.. 		PA 4
<p>At least 4 CSO networks are formed: 2 across geographical space and 2 across sectors.</p> <p>CSO Networks formed and functional around:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Women and women’s issues. Women from CSO in all regions were involved. Differently-able persons in all regions were involved. Refer to the detailed reports contained in the body of this document. 		PA 4
<p>Civil society (commissions, advisory groups, associations) regularly provides contributions to policy making at local and national levels of government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Groups emanating from ERCs Multi-Stakeholder Forum continues to meet, address issues and to provide suggestions to leaders. 		PA 4
<p>GECOM is capable of administering elections independent of technical assistance from donors.</p>		PA 3
<p>A civic education program is introduced, on a pilot basis, in schools and selected CSOs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manuals provided to two schools and over 20 CSOs. Training was provided on the manual. 		PA 4
<p>Parliamentary library facilities improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This library was improved through provision of \$15,000 worth of computers, library furniture and books. This library is currently functional and is in use. 	IR 2	PA 1
<p>The law revision unit is equipped and its staff trained.</p>		PA 1

<p>Staff of at least 5 TV stations and the 2 major daily newspapers have improved capacity to investigate, analyze, and report on major political issues. Media consistently provides informed, balanced and objective reporting and editorials. Ninety-five media personnel representing 30 media agencies, including 8 TV stations, 3 major newspapers and one radio station were trained through 12 courses aimed at improving the quality of journalism. Capacity of the media was increased according to reports from media monitors. A more balanced reporting of political and sensitive issues resulted after GDCCRP trained 75 media personnel in this area. (see reports from Independent Media monitoring Unit.</p>		PA 4
<p>ADR is institutionalized for civil cases. This may entail further training for mediators, capacity building of the mediation center, and expansion of its services, and improving the 'enabling environment' for increased use of mediation – rules of court, ethics training for judges, public awareness. Milestones are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediators Association established as a legal entity • A cadre of eighty Mediators trained • Equipment provided to Mediation Center. • A Training of Trainers cadre of mediators trained and in place. 		PA 1
<p>The ERC is assisted with specific capacity building to increase its efficiency and accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioners and Staff of ERC trained in Supervisory Management, Proposal & Report Writing • TA given on financial management. 	IR 3	PA 3
<p>At least 2 study tours for up to 6 participants (approx. 10 days each tour) to examine ethnic relations in any 2 countries with relevant experiences Discontinued from the work plan with USAID guidance.</p>		PA 4
<p>Political parties adopt and practice campaign code ethical behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In absence of the Code the political parties were sensitized on international best practices. 		PA 3
<p>Conflict management mechanisms established in at least 5 communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three ERCs working groups established and functional. 		PA 3

Appendix B: Consultations with Political Parties at the Workshop: International Best Practices in Elections

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
THEMATIC ISSUE: GECOM					
GECOM's Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure of the Elections Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An extensive and participatory stakeholder mechanism, which assists in ensuring acceptance of election results Carter-Price formula was situational to the local scenario and the circumstances remain the same Carter-Price formula is more realistic to the local political scenario. It is in tune with local reality The formula has improved and grown to reach benchmarks which are demanded of the commissioners Carter-Price formula was accepted by all political parties and further institutionalized for adoption in the Constitution. Tried, tested, performed = success. The Carter Price formula has brought democratic change. The words "so-called" describing the Carter-Price formula must be removed from the Dundas Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The establishment of an Elections Commission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mechanisms are in place to protect GECOM members' removal from office Stakeholders are engaged in every aspect of GECOM's operations, for transparency and good governance The achievements of GECOM, as posted on its website, including the peaceful conduct of the 2006 elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration of civil society (Private Sector Commission and the Electoral Assistance Bureau) with GECOM during elections helps to ensure the peaceful conduct of elections

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure as it exists, takes into consideration independent, noble and outstanding individuals as members • GECOM's strength is seen in the fact that it operated successfully under hostile and stressful situations in the last elections, 2006, which were violence- free, showing the maturity of the democratic process • GECOM functions independently and controls the entire electoral process. GECOM is an independent and autonomous body • GECOM commissioners are guaranteed security of tenure and are only removed by voluntary resignations • With commissioners having worked together since 1992, GECOM has developed its own professionalism, which has improved the process • GECOM is in charge of the process of procurement of supplies for the exercise of its functions. The Procurement Board acts on recommendations of GECOM's evaluators. • GECOM has total autonomy in hiring, firing (dismissing) and paying its staff • Acquisitions of funds by 			

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
		<p>GECOM is approved by Parliament, including supplemental provisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special audits of GECOM are in place and recommended and approved by the donor community • The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), chaired by the Leader of the Opposition, has oversight of the Auditor General's Office of GECOM • The whole electoral process is scrutinized by political parties and donors (from preparation of the Voters' Lists to the declaration of results). Financial resources are provided by the government to pay scrutineers. • The present formula is supported by a UN Report which has established that a member of an election management body, though nominated by a political party, can still take non-partisan decisions • Experience of GECOM commissioners generates confidence of the electorate. 			
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formula used for the appointment of Chairman and members • GECOM's lack of independence in decision making. Inability of GECOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM needs to be more visible to the electorate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of decentralized operations of GECOM in all Regions. • Inadequate financial autonomy in the operations of GECOM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While some members of GECOM who were nominated by political parties tend to have independence of thought, others toe the party line • The situation whereby GECOM 	None Noted

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
	<p>commissioners to act independently of political direction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM's lack of financial independence and accountability • Lack of training of GECOM workers/inadequate training of electoral staff • Improper selection of GECOM personnel • Disadvantage in terms of GECOM commissioners (Life) • GECOM's failure to comply with its own defined regulations 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak functional relationship between GECOM and local/regional democratic organizations • Poor financial accountability on the part of GECOM – the need for GECOM to be accountable to Parliament • Inadequate distribution of financial resources to all political parties • Noticeably active GECOM activities only a few months before an election • Heavily politicized composition of GECOM, based on political and parliamentary representation by major parties (with the exclusion of two elected minority parties: GAP/WPA and AFC. • Appointment of GECOM members is decided by the President and the leader of the main Opposition Party. • Priority List of candidates of political parties is not adhered to under the PR system • No term limit for Chairman and commissioners of GECOM • Lack of division, in terms of scope of authority between GECOM as the policy making body and its administrative arm (GECOM Secretariat) 	<p>falls under a Budget Agency compromises its autonomy and independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The postponement of local government elections for many years; and the delay by Parliament to put mechanisms in place • The lack of clear division of roles between GECOM and GECOM Secretariat, in terms of policy and administration. (GECOM Commissioners tend to get too involved in day to day administration. GECOM in not an executive commission) • GECOM is constrained by Government's micro-managing, in terms of finance. • Criticism of GECOM on the basis of hear-say, rather than knowledge of the electoral process • Constraints of finance and human resources mitigate against GECOM's effectiveness 	

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
Recommendations on GECOM's Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a new formula for selection of Chairman. The Carter-Price formula must go. There is a need to examine systems used in other countries. • No Life appointments for members of GECOM. A five-year term is recommended with provision for re-election once. Selection and tenure of commissioners must be specific. • A Vice-Chairman should be appointed • The electoral management body (EMB) should have full multi-party representation and parliamentary approval to recruit its own staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be sensitivity to the ethnic composition of GECOM staff, in terms of hiring practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM should be reconstituted. GECOM must have no allegiance to any political party • New mechanism for selecting, removing Chairman and Commissioners, based on 2/3 majority of the National Assembly • Five year term limit for GECOM Chairman and serving Commissioners • Chairman and members of GECOM should be appointed by Parliament, not the President • Civil Society must be given the opportunity to recommend candidates for appointment to GECOM. • There should be clear definition of eligibility to serve as a member of GECOM • An equally weighted selection committee should be established to select nominations for positions on GECOM from civil society and political parties • Disqualifications of Commissioners for 'cause' (including conflict of interest) 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tenure of GECOM Commissioners should be longer than the 5-year term of the Government (Appointment dates of commissioners should be staggered so that there is continuity) • A consultative process involving civil society should be instituted for the selection of members of GECOM. Nominated candidates should be appointed by a 2/3 majority in Parliament • A representative of civil society should be on the Elections Commission
Recommendations on GECOM's Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM's financial operations should be transparent and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM must exercise a more equitable distribution of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to institutionalize a functional relationship between 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal status of GECOM needs to be clarified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM should effectively use technology to overcome the

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
	<p>GECOM should be held accountable for its operations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training should be given to officers in order to improve electoral machinery • There should be a cut-off period for start of new government works (contracts, roads and other infrastructure) before an election • Powers and operational aspects of the Election Commission should be enshrined in the Constitution • GECOM's administration/operations should be decentralized • Measures for increasing confidence in GECOM's operations, at the national level, should be introduced. 	<p>financial resources, especially in view of recent court rulings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system of payment to scrutineers should be reviewed 	<p>GECOM and political parties, and for GECOM to work closer with local democratic organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM must have total authority to impose sanction on political parties. • GECOM's must have employment policies free from direct or indirect political influences • Training of electoral workers should and must be on a continuous basis and persons selected to serve as poll officials must be from the same area where polling stations are established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed operational manuals should be prepared in relation to the procedures for carrying out the work of each position in GECOM Secretariat (thus reducing reliance on institutional memory) • A clear program of human resource development should be instituted • The need for a clear demarcation between the policy role of GECOM and the administrative role of GECOM Secretariat (thus separating policy and administrative issues) • Donor funding is needed for a joint GECOM-University of Guyana (UG) institution building/training program 	<p>logistical issue of delays in the transmission of election results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The legal fraternity should be given the opportunity to advise GECOM on aspects of the law which will impact its operations, including issues relating to the registration of names of voters
General Recommendations regarding GECOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM must be included in the Third Schedule of the Constitution • GECOM must be removed from the Schedule to the Fiscal Management and Accountability Act, which lists budget agencies. (GECOM will then draw monies directly from the Consolidated Fund) • Passing of legislation to deal with misuse of state resources (Code of Ethics) 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reform of the legal system to facilitate "speedier" and independent resolution of electoral matters and enforcement of decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meeting of stakeholders should be held to discuss issues relating to the electoral process (Stakeholders are more likely to be honest in a face-to-face environment or caucus of equals, compared to what is said for public consumption) • In order to put real meaning to the Report on this Consultation, a collective meeting of stakeholders is important • The date of election, every 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of an Information Act can help to improve transparency in the electoral process • The need to enforce laws relating to election crimes, especially bribery • The issue of inclusive governance needs to be addressed • The international community should do a lot more to bring about further progress/improvement in

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
				five years, should be fixed by legislation (and not subject to the whims of Government)	<p>democratic governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Civil society needs to be more pro-active in working towards improvement in democracy • A consultative process, inclusive of civil society, should be institutionalized to regularly address issues of national interest. Civil society's involvement should not be limited to crisis situations. • Civil society should be more active in the management of elections through representation on GECOM
THEMATIC ISSUE: VOTER EDUCATION					
Voter Education Strengths	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted
Voter Education Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate voter registration education/voter education (GECOM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter education needs to be improved. GECOM can help through providing improved access to information for the younger electorate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate electoral education at national level 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voter education is an area that needs to be improved
Voter Education Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public voter education (process and system) should start in schools • Continuous civic education should be introduced • Public debate on electoral processes should be encouraged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM must develop better voter education programs • Development of a continuous voter education program, not just for voting and election purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GECOM should be more active in educating the populace on electoral matters 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every effort should be made to improve voter education. Voter education should be introduced at the school level. (Political parties and civil society all have roles to play in educating voters) Note: this was a recommendation for GECOM so the mention of political parties and civil society is in that context as additional to the role of GECOM

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
THEMATIC ISSUE: MEDIA					
Media Strengths	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media has a plurality of ownership, thus mitigating against control by partisan groups 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media Monitoring Unit and Code of Ethics for the Media, in reporting on electoral issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Media's signing on to a Code of Conduct has helped to enhance its role
Media Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited access to state media and media outlets in general 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate access to state media 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-owned media supports the Government. Access to State Media by opposition parties is still a major problem
Media Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All parties should have fair and equitable access to the State Media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislations should be introduced to eliminate/strengthen actions against election crimes and negative media representation of election issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be equitable access to state and private media for political campaigns 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legislation should be passed to provide for equal access to State-owned Media by all political parties In the absence of a regulatory body, civil society should exercise oversight of the Media's Code of Conduct
THEMATIC ISSUE: CAMPAIGN FINANCING					
Campaign Financing Strengths	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted
Campaign Financing Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Misuse of state resources, including state media/misuse of non-budgeted fund for campaign purposes (Cabinet outreach/Lotto funds) 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level playing field regarding campaign financing for political parties does not exist 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use/abuse of government resources by the party in power for campaign purposes
Campaign Financing Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passing of legislation to deal with misuse of state resources 	- None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public finance for political parties should be equally 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The law governing the reporting of campaign finance

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
	(Code of Ethics)		distributed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The law governing party campaign financing should be updated 		should be enforced (despite practical constraints to disclosure of campaign funds)
THEMATIC ISSUE: REGISTRATION					
Registration Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> House-to-house registration of voters A properly managed house-to-house registration process, resulting in a credible national register of voters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for house-to-house and continuous registration Extensive claims and objections period The registration process is working well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A system of national registration of voters (AFC) 	None Noted	None Noted
Registration Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate procedure to remove names of deceased persons and migrants from the Register of Voters Residence inadequately defined (in relation to voter registration) Flawed Election Voters' List Method of preparing voters' list 	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted
Registration Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system of continuous registration should be implemented after the completion of the House-to-House registration process Cross-matching of fingerprints must be instituted to eliminate multiple registration/voting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of more efficient means of identifying multiple registration of any voter Cross-referencing of data with other national data sources, in order to identify and minimize disenfranchisement of voters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There must be continuous voter registration 	None Noted	None Noted

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new register of voters from a credible House-to-House Registration process should form the basis for the Continuous Registration process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of a more efficient system to reduce inaccuracies in the voter register (now being prepared in the current House-to-House registration process) Enforcement of laws regarding refusal of persons to be registered 			
THEMATIC ISSUE: ELECTION RESULTS/COUNTING					
Election Results/Counting: Strengths	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is preliminary vote count and this gives confidence in the results which are posted at place of Poll In Guyana, access to the Judiciary (for resolution of electoral disputes) is readily available 	None Noted	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision for the posting of election results (Statement of Poll) at the place of count.
Election Results/Counting: Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No redress for election results not received in a timely manner/delays in dispute resolution by the court Delays in the declaration of election results 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of secrecy of ballots 	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The delay in justice in settling election disputes, (justice delayed is justice denied), and failure of the judicial system to resolve disputes promptly. Delay in reporting election results. (This creates suspicion among the voters and undermines credibility of results) Transmission of results and the capacity of GECOM to tabulate election results in a timely manner are logistical

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
					problems
Election Results/Counting: Recommendation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declaration of election results should be at the District level 				
THEMATIC ISSUE: PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION					
Proportional Representation: Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political party representation under the proportional representation system Every vote counts under the proportional representation system A hybrid electoral system – both proportional representation and first past the post 	<p>A mixed electoral system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures national and geographic representation (every vote counts; there is widespread representation and closer representation between electorate and representatives) Ensures gender issue is taken into account, with the requirement for 1/3 women candidates Ensures participation and involvement of minority parties 	None Noted	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The operation of the Proportional Representation electoral system where voters choose a party's list of candidates
Proportional Representation: Weaknesses	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted
Proportional Representation: Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need for priority listing of candidates by parties contesting elections 	None noted	None noted	None noted	None noted
GENERAL COMMENTS					
General Strengths	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system has led to free and 	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted

	PNC/R comments	PPP/C comments	Alliance for Change comments	GECOM comments	Civil Society comments
		fair elections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The electoral system has been tested by independent audit and by the judicial system and passed both tests in form and content. 			
General Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-enforcement of electoral law, especially in relation to the distance party stations should be away from polling places. Late arrival of international observers – too late to properly observe the electoral process Absence of public debate on the electoral process 	None Noted	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The postponement of local government elections for many years and the delay by Parliament to put mechanisms in place to facilitate the holding of local government elections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intimidation of voters is still present as a feature of the electoral process Bribery at election time, especially the Indigenous peoples' vote
General Recommendations	None Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of legislation and constitutional provisions regarding voter ID cards 	None Noted	None Noted	None Noted

Please note that following the workshop, GDCCRP solicited feedback from each of the political parties, GECOM and Civil Society to validate the findings from the group sessions. Their responses were follows:

- Alliance for Change (AFC) agreed that the comments were accurately captured by the Project.
- People's Progressive Party/ Civic (PPP/C) agreed for the most part, but some individuals did not agree with the opinions expressed by others in the group.
- The People's National Congress agreed in principle with the recommendation but rearranged them.
- Guyana Election Commission (GECOM) sent a letter indicating that not all present concurred with all views expressed by the group at the workshop
- Eleven (11) letters were sent to the individual participants of the Civil Society workshop. Once person responded suggesting that civic education to indigenous people should be provided not just at election time but on a continuous basis.