





Mission: Guyana September 13-17, 2015 Report

INTRODUCTION

The mission to Guyana was organized to follow up on several projects which The Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD) through its Inter-American Observatory on Drugs (OID) have been collaborating on with the Government of Guyana via the Ministry of Public Security . During the week of September 13-17, several objectives were to be satisfied, these included: the launching of the Report on Drug Use among Secondary School Students in Guyana and facilitation of a policy discussion based on the results; meetings with representatives from the Ministry of Public Security and other key stakeholders to formulate a work plan for the execution of the National Household Drug Prevalence Survey and a meeting with drug treatment providers to about the implementation of the Regional Standardized Treatment Center Intake Form project in Guyana and to answer any question that representatives may have.

The results from the 2013 survey on drug use among the secondary school population was made available to the public and the resulting policy discussion yielded positive outcomes, planning and coordination has begun for the national household survey on drug use in Guyana in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Security and a local coordinator has been selected to execute the project. The two treatment providers contributing data to the standardized registration project was updated on the status of the project and the data being collected in Guyana. Additionally, we were able to sensitize a third treatment provider to the project and are engaging in talk with them to also be a part of the project. The Honorable Minister of Public Security and Vice Present of Guyana. Minister Khemraj Ramjattan was briefed on CICAD and the OID's projects in Guyana and has given his approval for the projects. Key stakeholders for the household survey have been briefed on the project and their role in it. Additionally, a timeframe for the project has been developed.



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Summary of Activities

Monday 14th September 2015

Meeting with Minister Khemraj Ramjattan- Ministry of Public Security

This meeting served as an introduction to the newly elected Minister about the work of CICAD and the OID in Guyana especially those projects that are being executed in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Security. Present at this meeting with Minister Ramjattan were; the OAS representative in Guyana Mr. Jean Ricot Dormeus, OID staff members Mr. Pernell Clarke and Ms. Tiffany Barry and Staff from the Ministry of Public Security- Major Vaughn and Major General Atherly- Coordinator of the Task Force on Narcotic, Drugs and Illicit Weapons.

Mr. Clarke provided an overview of the work of CICAD general and what projects the division has been executing in Guyana over the years then he discussed the work of the OID specifically in Guyana. These includes:

- Launch of the drug use among school children report
- Upcoming household survey and proposed country coordinator
- Treatment Center Project
- Guyana Drug Information Network (GUYDIN)

During this discourse, Minister Ramjattan expressed an interest in several topics:

- Gathering more information about drug use patterns of various populations especially
 among the Amerindian communities, and the gold miners and across the regions and
 the border regions. He indicated that having this information on drug use patterns is
 important for policies around public and national security.
- The minister also expressed an interest in knowing about the situation with treatment for problematic drug users and to the degree to which treatment is available and accessible by those who need it. He also indicated that seeking funding to improve treatment options and availability in Guyana is of vital importance.
- He committed himself to attend the meeting with treatment providers to better understand how this service is being provided and the characteristic of persons seeking treatment in Guyana







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 Additionally he was delighted that the 2014 DIN report was being published and wanted to know more about the information that this network records

In concluding the meeting, Mr. Clarke informed the minister about the upcoming CICAD Plan of Action Meeting from 28th September to 2nd October, 2015 in Mexico City, Mexico and encouraged him to send a representative from the Ministry to this important meeting as it gives countries an opportunity to guide the work plan for CICAD for the coming year.

Meeting with Ambassador Pierre Giroux- Canadian High Commissioner

This meeting was held at the office of the Canadian High Commissioner and was attended by the OAS Representative Mr. Dormeus, Mr. Clarke and Ms. Barry.

This courtesy call was essential as Ambassador Giroux has recently taken up this post in Guyana and it was important to update him on OID projects in Guyana especially those that are being funded by the Government of Canada. Ambassador Giroux was invited to bring greetings on behalf of the government of Canada at the launch of the school survey report on Wednesday 16th September, as Canada was sponsoring the event. Additionally he was brief on the progress of the DIN project and informed that Guyana was responding to the trainings and technical support being offered by OID in the development of their DIN and one of the best practices countries in the region as they have been holding regular DIN meetings and have been successful at producing their annual DIN report without mush assistance from CICAD/OID. He was also briefed on the upcoming household survey.

The ambassador requested a copy of the school survey report and the GUYDIN 2014 report.

Meeting with Treatment Center Providers



This meeting was attended by 14 persons and Minister Ramjattan. Persons at this meeting represented two treatment centers currently involved in the OID's project: Phoenix Recovery Project and Salvation Army; representatives from the Georgetown Hospital Psychiatric Ward who also









provide drug treatment services, representatives from the Ministry of Public Health and other members of the DIN (see appendix 2 for full list of participants).

This meeting was chaired by Mr. Pernell Clarke. The main purpose was to get have all the treatment and prevention stakeholders together to not only present them with an update on the project but to also secure by in by the public hospital to participate in this project and to have a discussion about how to improve drug treatment in Guyana- what are their needs, what they are lacking both in terms of financial resources and human resources.

Mr. Clarke's presentation provided an over view of the project, the instrument that is used to gather the data, the implementation structure on how information gets from the agency to CICAD and presented results from 2014 data collection cycle. He also informed those present about outcomes from a follow-up training that was conducted in St. Lucia in May, 2015 in which

each country including Guyana was represented by a treatment provider and a drug council or similar institution representative who is in charge of the local coordination of the project.

Ms. Barry followed with a presentation of preliminary results on the characteristic of persons seeking treatment in Guyana for the period January, 2014- June 2015. Some of the results were:



Treatment Center Meeting: Participants included Minister Ramjattan, Jean Ricot Dormeus, OAS Representative, Maj. General Atherly

- 81 persons sought treatment from 2 centers (Salvation Army and Phoenix Recovery Project)
- 10 female sought treatment from Phoenix Recovery as it is the only treatment facility that can cater to the needs of female clients
- Clients are mostly between the age of 20-29 and largely have not completed secondary school
- The main substances they are seeking treatment for are alcohol abuse, crack cocaine and marijuana abuse
- The average age of first use for the substance impacting treatment is age 12









- Most persons are referred to treatment by a relative, about 40% of those seeking treatment had received treatment for substance use in the past.
- About 30% of those seeking treatment for problematic substance use was arrested at least once in their lifetime and about 20% were also treated for a psychiatric disorder.
- Patients are referred to a residential treatment facility for assistance.

Ms. Sarita Nanku the local coordinator of this project and representative of the Ministry of Public Security then explained the steps that are being taken in include other treatment providers in this project to ensure full coverage which should result in more reliable data on the profile of persons seeking treatment and the demand for treatment in Guyana.

Following the presentations on the nature of the project and the findings, these was a discussion among those present about what are the needs and challenges in Guyana in coordinating their treatment and prevention programs. Some of the main take-away were:

- Treatment centers are seeing clients from as young as 13 years and they do not have a capacity nor the right facility to treat the needs of juveniles
- While the hospital does provide some amount of out-patient treatment for problematic drug use, it is not enough as they lack the human resources to attend to clients and the capacity to treatment the number of persons seeking treatment.
- Too many persons seeking treatment cannot afford to be in a residential treatment program for extended periods.
 - There is a call for the government to explore ways in which some residential treatment can be made available in public hospital or for them to explore ways of subsidizing aspects of treatment especially for youths seeking treatment
- There is need for additional social support for patients after treatment and for family support.
- There was a call for more focus to be placed on the drug use in Amerindian communities and for treatment and prevention programs to be expanded to the outlying regions of Guyana.
- There is need for a coordinated effort to address drug demand reduction and treatment
 - While there are agencies who are providing services and engaging in drug demand reduction programs, there is little inter-agency communication to ensure comprehensive coverage.







- Need for a system of checks and balances; while the Ministry of Public Health should be the coordinating agency for all activities related to drug demand reduction and treatment, they have not always been able to fully coordinate this effort due to lack of financial and human resources
 - Need for capacity building seminars for professionals working in the demand and treatment fields
 - More professionals needs to be recruited and trained to work in this field.
 - Currently treatment and most demand reduction programs are concentrated in Georgetown but it needs to be expanded across the country
- There is need for a universal standard of care guideline for all treatment centers to abide by.
 - o CARICOM have developed a manual but it is yet to be fully rolled out and adopted across the region.
- The suggestion was made that all agencies present at the meeting to be active in the DIN and in lieu of a local coordinating agency, the DIN can serve as such as it is a mechanism that fosters inter-agency communication, information sharing and communication and it can also lead to agencies working together to advocate for policy changes to make drug demand reduction and treatment a central focus of the government's agenda in calling for a local coordinating agency to be established. Additionally, in participating in the DIN agencies can develop a relationship whereby they can coordinate their efforts and utilize the combined human and financial resources to being stream lining treatment and demand reduction programs.

Following the treatment discussion. Mr. Cummings Interim head to the Crime and Social Observatory and chairman of the DIN, presented the findings from the 2014 DIN report and made several recommendations on how to improve the functioning of the DIN including establishing its own secretariat and securing more active participation by the Ministry of Public Health in the network.

> Meeting with Clement Henry- Country Coordinator for the Household Drug Prevalence Survey







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This meeting was organized to formally begin the planning process with Mr. Henry for the execution of this project.

Mr. Clarke and Ms. Barry went over the outline of the project and the data collection tool as this survey will be conducted using electronically with facilitators being deployed in the field with tablet computers to capture the data. Additionally, there will also be a rapid assessment component of this study to capture information on drug use from specific populations in Guyana.

CICAD outlined the terms of reference for the country coordinator, a timeline was proposed for the execution of the project, the country was given a draft copy of the questionnaire for review and input and a budget was agreed upon.

Tuesday 15th September 2015

Meeting with Guyana Bureau of Statistics

This meeting was organized to sensitize the bureau of statistics about this upcoming survey, to seek their collaboration in generating the national sample and partnering to train the local survey team.

Present at this meeting were Mr. Ian Manifold, head of Survey Department, Ms. Jacqueline Tull, senior Statistician, Mr. Sonkarley Bos, Demographic Consultant, Ms. Vanessa Profitt Senior Statistician, Mr. Clement Henry Local survey Coordinator and the CICAD/ OID team.

Once both parties understood the needs of the survey and the type of sample needed, a deadline of September 30 was set as the date of which the statistics bureau can present the final sample. The agency also agreed to participate in the training exercise and proposed a date in November for this partnership. The agency also requested from CICAD information on the software being used for the project as they are also considering venturing into E-surveys, they requested a copy of the questionnaire to be used in the study and that they have access to the data once the study is completed.

The statistics agency also provided guidance on the following:

- They can provide a list of expert surveyors
- Guidance on a publicity plan for notification of this study







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- Guidance on regional officials that should be notified about the study and proposed dates that the region will be surveyed
- Proper security for and identification of survey team
- They recommended seeking insurance for the study
- They suggested that the questionnaire ask a specific question about type of household
- They clarified how a household is defined in the Guyana context.

Wednesday 16th September 2015

Launch: Report on Drug Use Among Secondary School Students in Guyana

This event was held at Cara Lodge and wad attended by 60 persons from various government and nongovernmental agencies who are a part of drug demand reduction and treatment in Guyana. Other stakeholders included representative from youth



Opening Ceremony for the launch of the school survey. From Left US Head of Mission, Mr. Brian Hunt, Minister of Public Security Mr. Khemraj Ramjattan, Canadian High Commissioner Mr. Pierre Giroux, Major General Atherly, OAS Representative. Mr. Jean Ricot Dormeus

agencies and the diplomatic corps (see appendix 3 for list of attendees).

The event began at 9:00 hrs. and was chaired by Major General Retired Michael Atherly. The OAS representative in Guyana, the Canadian High Commissioner and the Head of Mission at the United States Embassy all delivered opening remarks (Speeches in appendix 4). The Feature Address was delivered by Vice President and Minister of Public Security, the Honorable Khemraj Ramjattan, MP. In his opening remark the honorable minister indicated that a multi-pronged, multi-agency approach is needed for drug demand reduction. He also noted that more focus needs to be placed on a reduction strategy for youths. He also noted that the Ministries of









Public Security and Public Health will endeavor to work closer on demand reduction issues and welcomed international support to address the drug issues in Guyana.

Following the opening ceremony, the results of findings from the Guyana study was presented by Ms. Tiffany Barry. Among the findings were:

- Alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana remain the most commonly used drugs among the student population
- The data indicates higher prevalence rates for drug use among private school students
- Marijuana remains the most accessible illegal drug and cocaine the least accessible
- The first drug of choice for most students appears to be inhalants with an average age of first use of 10.8 years old compared to alcohol which is 12
- Overall students are aware of the dangers of drug use as more than 50% of them indicated that using any type of drug is very harmful to their health
- Generally students are not curious to try a drug even if given the opportunitymore than 80% said no.



Ms. Sarita Nanku, Local Treatment Center Coordinator at Ministry of Public Security and Mr. Pernell Clarke, CICAD

This presentation was followed by Mr. Pernell Clarke's who delivered results from the regional comparative analysis of the survey conducted in 12 other Caribbean Countries including: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago.

Based on his analysis, while drug use in Guyana is relatively low compared to other countries in the region, there is still

need for more prevention work to be done in the country to keep the numbers from increasing. Some of this key findings are:

- By far the most widely consumed substance is alcohol and this is followed by marijuana.
- Prevalence is relatively high but there is plenty of variability from country to country.







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- Marijuana is the most widely used illegal substance and in most cases, its use is even more prevalent than tobacco.
- A very important finding relates to students perception of how easy it is to access drugs. Perception of availability of marijuana was very high-- four to five of every ten students indicated that they could access marijuana easily in most of the countries.
- Additionally, the perception of harm associated with marijuana appears to be declining among secondary school students
- Many students do not know the dangers of:
 - frequent misuse of prescription drugs
 - o occasional or frequent use of inhalants
 - occasional or frequent use of ecstasy

Panel Discussion



Panelists: from Left; Mr. John Greaves, Director of Social Life Issues; Mr. Horace Cummings, Acting Head of GuyDIN; Mr. Azure, Ministry of Health; Dr. Harry, Public Hospital, Mr. Clarke, CICAD; Mr. Kumar, Moderator.

These presentations were followed by a panel discussion and reaction segments by those in attendance. The panel comprised of: Dr. Harry, Psychiatrists at the Georgetown Public Hospital; Mr. Aggrey Azure, Ministry of Social Protection; Mr. Horace Cummings, Ministry of Public Security; Mr. John Greaves, Director, of Social Life Issues; Mr. Clarence Young, Director, Phoenix Recovery Project; Ms. Dionne Brown, Ministry of Education; Mr. Pernell Clarke, CICAD. The panel was moderated by Mr. Daniel Kumar.

Each panelist was given an opportunity to respond to the findings of the school survey and to share their insights into what is driving drug use especially among the youths in Guyana ad how their institution is addressing if from the prevention and treatment perspective.

Some of the main issues raised:









- It has been observed that within the Amerindian communities, the youths are not only using drugs; alcohol and marijuana at an increasing rate, they are also cultivating and selling marijuana as a source of income sine unemployment is an issue in these areas.
- Providers are noticing an increase in cases where persons are lacing their marijuana with ecstasy.
- Among juvenile offenders there have been reports of inhalant use especially inhaling diesel to get high.
- In the gated communities drug use is prevalent
- It has been observed that some vendors outside of schools are also supplying drugs to students
- There are gangs within schools who are bullying students to use drugs
- students are being fed with an imbalance of information; they have many sources stating that using marijuana in particular is good, countries are 'legalizing' its use and it helps to calm



A member of the audience commenting on issues discussed at the policy discussion

persons down however there is not enough accessible information about the danger and potential dangers of excessive drug use. Prevention and treatment personnel needs access to this information and means of getting it out to the general public to tackle perception of harm. Stakeholders can also take the opportunity to vamp up their prevention messaging via the television show "Nipping it in the Bud" hosted by NGO Social Life Issues.

- There is a call for greater collaboration among stakeholders both public institution and NGOs. A recommendation was made for DIN to act as the coordinating mechanism whereby stakeholders can streamline their drug demand
 - reduction efforts also for them to collectively call for the establishment of a national anti-drug secretariat.
- Ministry of social protection is exploring means of supporting and promoting family prevention messaging through the schools especially in PTAs









- Treatment persons on the panel highlighted that children as young as 13 re being brought to their centers for treatment and that there is a lack of capacity to provide this service. The main reason being that adolescence require a special type of treatment separate from adults and at present in Guyana the service and human resource is not available to do so.
- More persons needs to be trained to deliver both prevention and treatment services to adolescence all across Guyana
- The Ministry of Education have a fairly comprehensive and coordinated drug demand reduction program, they have also engaged in collaboration with a number of other agencies to get their program started however there is a financial and human resource limitations to sustain the program.
- There is a call for prevention programs in the primary schools in light of the early onset of drug use reported by treatment providers and supported in the CICAD report
- There is a call for the Ministry of Public Health to explore mechanisms to improve and expand their in-house treatment services.
- CARICOM has indicated a willingness to collaborate with local stakeholders to develop their drug demand reduction initiative and may have funding available to do so.
- Agencies such as the red cross are interested in know what services can be provided for after care support to persons affected and being treatment for substance abuse, such as the provision of housing, assistance with job training and placement, family support, etc.

Meeting with US Deputy Chief of Mission- Bryan Hunt

This meeting was attended by the OAS representative in Guyana, Mr. Clarke and Ms. Barry. The purpose of this meeting was to brief the Chief of Mission on CICAD activities in Guyana and the status of projects being funded by the US. He was updated on the status of DIN project, the Treatment Center Project and the upcoming Household Survey.

He indicated that the US is supportive of the household survey and awaits the outcomes, he also echoed the call for a more collaborative effort to address drug demand reduction and indicated that while the US has been more active in the supply side efforts, they would be









interested in supporting demand reduction efforts once a local coordination mechanism is established.

APPENDIX 1-

GUYANA MISSION-WORK PLAN SEPTEMBER 13-17, 2015

SUNDAY 13TH September

TRAVEL: Arrive

	MONDAY 14 TH September
10:00 AM	MEETING: MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY with Minister Ramjattan and other relevant officials including OAS rep. Brickdam, Georgetown
	Discuss release of results from the secondary school surveyUpcoming household survey with Principle Investigator
	• DIN
	Treatment center project
	Other CICAD Activities
12:00 PM	MEETING: CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER
02:00 PM	MEETING: TREATMENT CENTER PROVIDERS
	Phoenix Recovery
	Salvation Army
	Public Hospital
	 Presentation of 2014 DIN Report
4:00 PM	MEETING: CLEMENT HENRY- Proposed Household survey coordinator

TUESDAY 15TH September

10:00 AM MEETING: GUYANA BUREAU OF STATISTICS

 Discuss household survey and retrieving relevant census documents Chief Statistician: Mr. Lennox Benjamin
 57 High Street, Kingston

02:00 PM Other Meetings TBD





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WEDNESDAY 16TH September

08:00 AM LAUNCH OF SECONDARY SCHOOL SURVEY

Cara Lodge, Quaminna St, Georgetown Guyana

• Registration begins at 08:30 AM

Ceremony begins at 09:00 AM

01:30 PM MEETING WITH OAS REP and US AMBASSADOR

THURSDAY 17TH September

TRAVEL: Depart

APPENDIX 2- Participants at Treatment Providers Meeting

	Name of Rep.	Agency
1	Ms. Caitlin Vieira	GPHC
2	Ms. Indhira Harry	GPHC
3	Ms. Sarita Nanku	Min. of Public Security
4	Mr. Horace Cummings	Min. of Public Security
5	Ms. Sylvia Cort	Min. of Pub Health
6	Mr. Petoh Gordon	Min. of Pub Health
7	Ms. Joylyn Williams	Salvation Army
8	Major. Ulrick Thibaud	Salvation Army







9	Mr. Clarence	Phoenix
	Young	Recovery
		Project
10	Ms. Lucinda	Phoenix
	Williams	Recovery
		Project
11	Mr. John Greaves	Social Life
		Issues
12	Mr. Courtney	Min. of Public
	Samuels	Security
13	Major. Atherly	Min. of Public
		Security
14	Major. Claudius	Min. of Public
	Vaughn	Security

APPENDIX 3: Registration Sheet-Launch of School Survey

NO.	NAME	APPOINTMENT	ORGANIZATION
1	Ms. Oslyn Crawford	Assistant. Chief Probation Officer	Ministry of Social Protection
2	Mr. Gilbert	Assistant	Ministry of Public
	Vancooten	Coordinator	Security
3	Ms. Jean Skeete	Head Mistress	Covent Garden Secondary School
4	Mr. Welton Trotz	Director of Prisons	Guyana Prison Service







of Inter-American Drug Abuse control Commission		
	5	Mr. Deonari Mangra
H	6	Mr. Courtne

5	Mr. Deonarine	Head Master	Vryman's Erven
	Mangra		Secondary School
6	Mr. Courtney	Research Officer	Ministry of Public
	Samuels		Security
7	Mr. Wesley Duke	Assistant	Guyana Revenue
		Commissioner	Authority
8	Mr. James Singh	Head	Customs Anti-
			Narcotic Unit
9	Mr. Daniel	Policy Analyst	Ministry of Public
	Kumar		Security
10	Mr. Clarence	Coordinator	Phoenix Recovery
	Young		Project
11	Mr. Winston	AC	Guyana Police Force
	Coshut		
12	Mr. Jeetendra	Rep. MOPH	NTP/MOPH
	Mohanlall		
13	Mr. Wendell		
	Nelson		
14	Mr. Sherwin	Programme	CARICOM Secretariat
	Toyne-	Manager	
	Stephenson	Crime & Security	
15	Mr. Jean Ricot	Representative	Organisation of the
	Dormeus		American States
16	Mr. Pernell	Research Specialist	OAS/CICAD
	Clarke		
17	Ms. Tiffany Barry	Project Assistant	OAS/CICAD









18	Ms. Sarita Nanku	Statistical Officer	Ministry of Public Security
19	Mr. Diego Alphonso	Administrator	Ministry of Social Protection
20	Ms. Clair Fredericks Vickens	Service Teacher	Stewartville Secondary School
21	Ms. Sylvia Cort	Project Director	Ministry of Public Health
22	Ms. Caitlin Vieira	Psychologist	Georgetown Public Hospital
23	Ms. Sharda Bacchus	Reporter	Stabroek News
24	Ms. Indhira Harry	GMO Psychiatry	Georgetown Public Hospital
25	Mr. Aggrey Azore	Senior Probation Officer Social Services	Ministry of Social Protection
26	Mr. Peter Gordon	Health Education Officer	Ministry of Public Health
27	Mr. Petr V. Sizov	Deputy Head Russian Embassy	Russian Embassy
28	Min. Volda Lawrence	Minister of Social Protection	Ministry of Social Protection
29	Mr. Wendell Blanhum	Senior Superintendent	Guyana Police Force
		Head of Law	







		Enforcement	
30	Mr. Barrington Bron Buxets	Coordinator	ACDA RESCUE
31	Ms. Erica Ward	ASO	GA-FDD
32	Ms. Diane Blyden		Y.W.C.A
33	Mr. Vahnu Manikchand	Reporter	Guyana Times
34	Ms. Rebecca Ganesh	Reporter	Guyana Chronicle
35	Ms. Leana Bradshaw	Reporter	National Communications Network
36	Ms. Pamela O'Toole	Director	School of the Nations
37	Mr. Cerace Nobils	Coordinator	Dept. of Culture, Youth & Sports Ministry of Education
38	Mr. Brian King	ADOY	Min. of Edu. DCYS
39	Ms. Gillian Vyphius	Chief Schools Welfare Officer	Ministry of Education
40	Ms. D. Daniels	Reporter	Kaiteur News
41	Ms. Dorothy Fraser	SG	Guyana Red Cross









42	Mr. Orin Ross	Principal	School of the Nations
43	Ms. Dionne Browne	Health Promotion Coordinator	Ministry of Education
44	Ms. Gillian Frank	Director of Youth (ag)	M.O.E Dept. of CYS
45	Mr. Clement Henry	Consultant	
46	Mrs. Thessa Munaisar		
47	Ms. Joylyn Williams	Counsellor	Salvation Army Rehab Centre
48	Major. Ulrick Thibaud	Director	Salvation Army Rehab Centre
49	Ms. Lucinda Williams	Senior Counsellor	Phoenix Recovery Project