

Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons
Ministry of Public Security
Brief
Guyana and Trafficking in Persons in 2017

Overview. Trafficking in Persons, human trafficking or modern-day slavery continues to be one of the world's three most profitable criminal enterprises, along with arms and drugs trafficking. Criminal organizations increasingly turn to human trafficking because of the perceived notion that modern day slavery is highly profitable and has lower risk of being detected than other high profile crimes. Trafficking in persons deprives victims of the most basic freedom - the freedom to determine their own present and future. Unfortunately, evidence has shown that this crime exists in Guyana. However, the Government of Guyana has taken steps to combat it.

These steps taken have resulted in Guyana being elevated to Tier 1 in the United States Department of State's Annual Global Trafficking in Persons Report, last released in June, 2017 – demonstrating that Guyana was meeting the minimum requirements for combating trafficking in persons as prescribed in the United States' Trafficking Victims Protection Act (2000). This marks a promotion from Tier 2 in the 2016 report, whereas Guyana was ranked on Tier 2 watchlist for the previous three successive years.

Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act No. 2 of 2005. This Act was adopted in 2005 and remains Guyana's primary legislation to combat trafficking in persons. It was borne out of the need for Guyana to establish a local legislation to meet the guidelines set out in the United Nations' Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons. The Task Force came into operation on February 6, 2007 as an Inter-Agency body created to oversee the implementation of national plans to combat trafficking in persons, as provided for by the aforementioned Combating TIP Act.

After a brief period of inactivity, the Task Force was reconvened on January 15, 2016 and has since held monthly meetings. These meetings, supported by the input of external stakeholders, gave rise to the implementation of a number of anti-TIP initiatives and the eventual launching of the National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response to Trafficking in Persons 2017-2018.

Task Force Member Agencies are as follows: Ministry of Public Security (Head), Ministry of Social Protection, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, Attorney General's Chambers and Ministry of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Communities, Ministry of Natural Resources, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission, Guyana Police Force (CID and Immigration), Chambers of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Indigenous Peoples' Commission, Food for the Poor, Help and Shelter, Guyana Women Miners Organization and Burn the Price Tag.

The Counter-Trafficking in Persons Unit at the Ministry of Social Protection sits as a member of the Task Force and takes the lead in a number of activities/initiatives geared at raising awareness on trafficking in persons and/or assuring the safety of alleged victims of the crime. The Government of Guyana through the Ministry of Social Protection provides annual subventions to facilitate the smooth running of Ixora, which is managed by Help and Shelter, and the Togetherness in Peace Home, which are the two (2) primary victim shelters in Guyana.

The Guyana Police Force Trafficking in Persons Unit, which is part and parcel of the Major Crimes Investigations Unit (MCIU) at the Eve Leary Criminal Investigations Department focuses on improving Guyana's investigative efforts which the support of the other Officers in the MCIU and Police throughout the country. In 2017, the Guyana Police Force Trafficking in Persons Unit had for the calendar year investigated fourteen (14) cases of suspected trafficking in persons, including fifty (50) alleged victims, twenty-one (21) of whom were under eighteen (18) years of age, and thirty-five (35) suspects. There was one (1) conviction for 'trafficking in persons' while there was also one (1) conviction for 'attempting to transport a person for the purpose of exploiting such person's prostitution'.

National Plan of Action for the Prevention and Response to Trafficking in Persons 2017-2018. The Task Force's Action Plan is implemented both by the efforts of individual Agencies or through collaborative efforts coordinated by the Task Force. These collaborative efforts are streamlined under the oversight of Sub-Committees, namely, the Awareness; Training; Protection and Reintegration; Research; Prosecution and Legal Issues; and Action (surveillance, investigation, establishment raids, etc) Sub-Committees.

In 2017, the Task Force made considerable strides in implementing the initiatives set out in its Action Plan. Activities carried out by the Task Force and individually by its Constituent Agencies include the following:

N.B. These activities denote collaborative Task Force efforts unless indicated otherwise.

1. Launch of 2017-2018 TIP Action Plan
2. Creation of Awareness Materials to add to existing tools
 - Two (2) different Brochures
 - Two (2) different Posters
 - Two (2) different Standing Banners
 - Other novelty items, such as bags, key rings and water bottles
3. Three (3) TIP Training sessions, each lasting three (3) hours, delivered to a total of one hundred and ten (110) Immigration Officers by Task Force Member Senior Superintendent Ewart Wray – Guyana Police Force initiative
4. TIP Presentation made to new staff at Ministry of Public Security

5. TIP Presentation to ninety-seven (97) Police Ranks as part of Station Management and New Recruits Training Course
6. Trafficking in Persons Awareness in **Region 2**
 - TIP Awareness Booth at the Essequibo Agro and Trade Expo
 - Awareness Sessions with three (3) Secondary Schools
 - Awareness Sessions with two (2) Indigenous Villages
7. Trafficking in Persons Enforcement ‘Area Sweeps’, including surveillance, surprise inspections and establishment raids at Julian Ross Landing, Devil Hole Landing, Dukwari Landing, Arangai Landing – Cuyuni District, **Region 7**; Issano – Middle Mazaruni, **Region 7** (included support provided for alleged victims); Bollywood Club – Providence, E.B.D., **Region 4**; Tajo’s Night Club – Pouteroyen, W.B.D, Region 3; and Arakaka and Big Creek – **Region 1**
8. Trafficking in Persons Awareness at Port Kaituma and Arakaka, **Region 1**
 - Distribution of brochures and erection of posters
9. Trafficking in Persons Awareness at the Juvenile Holding Centre
10. Training Course on Trafficking in Persons for Police Prosecutors
 - Thirty (30) Police Prosecutors Trained to increase efficiency of trafficking in persons’ case prosecutions
11. TIP Media Training
 - Twenty-three (23) Media Personnel trained to understand the issue of trafficking in persons and to report responsibly on cases which may arise, especially those involving children.
12. Completion and Release of 2016 Trafficking in Persons Report
13. Ministry of Social Protection Launch of Weekly Radio Programme on Trafficking in Persons – 94.1 Boom Fm, 09:00 hrs – 10:00 hrs, Saturdays
14. Ministry of Social Protection ‘June Blu’ Craze’ TIP Awareness Booth at Stabroek Market, **Region 4**, supported by Task Force
15. Ministry of Social Protection TIP Awareness Booth at Linden Town Week, **Region 10**
16. Ministry of Social Protection Training of Community Policing and Police Ranks in Linden, **Region 10**
17. Trafficking in Persons Awareness in **Region 6**

- Awareness Sessions with nine (9) Secondary Schools, Female Section of New Amsterdam Prison, FACT Group and Guysuco Training Centre
18. Week of Activities to Commemorate World Day Against Trafficking in Persons – July 30 – Included TIP Awareness Activities at Mon Repos and Stabroek Markets and Giftland Mall, **Region 4** which included ‘Flash Mob’ Performances; Awareness Walks in **Regions 4** (Bank of Guyana to Seawall Bandstand) **and 5** (No. 30 Village to Fort Wellington Secondary School) and a TIP Awareness Concert in **Region 4**. The Ministry of Social Protection held a Programme to Launch its ‘Blu Flame Campaign’ at the Ministry building on Cornhill Street, Georgetown, Region 4 and held TIP awareness sessions at Giftland Mall and **Bartica, Region 7**.
19. Trafficking in Persons Awareness during Mining Week – Annual GGMC Initiative
- TIP Awareness Booths at the Mining Exhibition, **Region 4** and Pork Knockers’ Day Activities, **Region 10**
20. Ministry of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs and MoSP, Labour Department TIP and Domestic Violence Training Sessions with:
- Twenty-nine (29) Toshias and Village Councillors from seventeen (17) communities at St. Ignatius Village
 - Twenty-one (21) Toshias and Village Councillors from eight (8) communities at Aishalton
 - Twenty two (22) Toshias and Village Councillors from eight (8) communities at Karasabai
 - Twenty three (23) Toshias and Village Councillors from twelve (12) communities at Annai.
 - Sixty-one (61) Monitors from the Hinterland Entrepreneurship Youth Service (HEYS) programme, who have responsibility for approximately one thousand seven hundred and sixty five (1,765) youths from **Regions 3,4,7,8 and 10**
21. Trafficking in Persons Awareness at Upper Mazaruni, **Region 7** - Imbaimadai, Jawalla, Kako, Karowering, Fort Knox, Kamarang, Mining Camps at Chi Chi, Draggers along the Mazaruni River
22. General TIP Awareness Material Distribution at Police Stations, Central Immigration and Passport Office and Ports of Entry/Exit
23. Trafficking in Persons Awareness with Massy Services-Money Gram Agents and Qualfon, **Region 4**
24. TIP Awareness during Lethem Town Week activities and at St. Ignatius Secondary School, **Region 9**

25. TIP Awareness at Tamakay Backdam, Kurupung Landing, Isseneru, Poppyshow, Apaiqua and Olive Creek - Middle Mazaruni, **Region 7**
26. Trafficking in Persons Training for ninety-six (96) anti-TIP stakeholders, including twenty-seven (27) Police Officers, at Baramita (15), Matthews Ridge (15), Port Kaituma (28), Mabaruma (18) and Moruca (20) in **Region 1**
27. Ministry of Social Protection, supported by Task Force, TIP Awareness in Secondary Schools and Communities in **Regions 3, 4, 5, 7 and 10**
28. International Organization for Migration and Ministry of Social Protection Collaborative Project – Task Force participation in consultations with the view to establish Standard Operating Procedures for TIP collaboration on matters such as victim identification and referral; and case investigation and prosecution
29. Indigenous Peoples’ Commission’s (IPC) representative on the Task Force delivered a presentation in Paramakatoi, **Region 8** to sixteen (16) Councillors from four (4) Village Councils from Paramakatoi, Kato, Bamboo Creek and Taruka as part of a Capacity Building workshop held by IPC to strengthen to Village Councils.

2018

1. TIP raid and investigation involving forty-one (41) foreign nationals at Diamond Hotel – two (2) persons charged.

Collaboration with Foreign Nations and International Organizations. The United States Department of State regularly supported activities of the Task Force and Ministry of Social Protection’s C-TIP Unit, while it provided capacity building opportunities in collaboration with the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** – which has over the years played an integral role to support to victims, both local and international, in the reintegration process. The IOM in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Protection and the Task Force has also embarked on a multi-faceted three (3) year anti-TIP project in Guyana titled ‘Strengthening Guyana’s Capacity to effectively combat TIP and assist Victims of Trafficking’. This project will see the establishment of a number of Standard Operating Procedures which will guide collaboration among stakeholders on matters related to TIP. The introduction of **INTERPOL** in 2016, with Training opportunities for TIP Unit Police Ranks which continued into 2017, added greatly to the Guyana Police Force’s capacity building efforts and, by extension, improved the quality of training provided by the Task Force.

Work Still to be Done (2018). Elevation to a Tier 1 country is a welcome achievement for Guyana but much work remains to be done. The Task Force has already begun to consider and plan ways to implement the recommendations for improvement set out in the US Report.

Key areas include: training and awareness; more efficient prosecutions; victim identification, support and referral; faster response times; more vigorous investigations; continued and increased training; victim shelter; etc.

The following are some activities which the Task Force and/or its individual constituent agencies plan to implement in the near future:

1. Erection of Billboards at Strategic locations
 - Initial locations identified – CJIA Airport, Timehri, E.B.D. and Eugene F. Correia Airport, Ogle, E.C.D.
2. Implementation of CDB TIP Project involving Capacity Building, TIP Awareness and the development of a Code of Conduct for Task Force Member Agencies
3. Continuation of IOM TIP Project
4. Compilation of 2017 Report
5. Approach Businesses for TIP collaboration
6. Follow-up on initial attempts at TIP collaboration with Brazil
7. Plan TIP Research Project
8. TIP Awareness within Task Force Institutions

Further, focus will be placed on sustaining and improving current efforts, especially victim protection and support and on the effective coordination of efforts among member Agencies. The Task Force also understands the importance of continued and increased collaboration with local, bilateral and international partners in order to further efforts to implement the Action Plan and in keeping with international best practices to combat TIP, and pledges to keep this in view.

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