
OBJECTIVE 1: TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN WHOSE PARENT/GUARDIAN WAS THE VICTIM OR PERPETRATOR OF A VIOLENT CRIME.

The Committee noted the absence of local studies for children whose parent/guardian was the victim/perpetrator of a violent offence. (4.1, pg. 40.)

Since the review by the Committee, the Children's Authority has prioritized the strengthening and expansion of its research capacity. This includes obtaining access to academic databases, JSTOR, Lexis Library, the Commonwealth Library and Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court Reports. This will enable the Children's Authority to undertake fundamental and foundational research that will be used as a catalyst to undertaking extensive local research.

Current CATT priorities for the \$200,000 released for fiscal 2016 to conduct research, was based on the findings of the Statistical Bulletin: Nine Months and Counting from May 18, 2015 to February 17, 2016. The Authority also highlighted the need for additional financial resources to conduct research which would incorporate the use and analysis of actual cases produced by the child protection and information management system. (4.2; pg. 40)

Corresponding recommendation: We recommend the employment of additional research staff and funding to the Authority to advance its research priorities. (4.8; pg. 42)

Whereas the Children's Authority was allotted \$200,000 for research in fiscal 2016, it was given \$400,000 for the same purpose in fiscal 2017. It is expected that this would go a long way to facilitating the expansion of the Authority's research function, together with its anticipated increase in staff.

The Authority's records indicated that 180 children or ten percent (10%) of cases are children whose parent/guardian was the victim / perpetrator of a violent offence and a breakdown revealed there are:

- *34 children whose parent or guardian was a victim of a violent offences such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect*
- *41 children whose parent or guardian was a perpetrator of a violent offences such as possession of drugs and ammunition, domestic violence, inflicting bodily harm, physical abuse and neglect and sexual abuse*
- *105 children whose parent or guardian was a victim and a perpetrator of a violent offences such as domestic violence, sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, possession of drugs and ammunition, domestic violence and inflicting bodily harm (4.4; pgs., 40 and 41)*

The updated statistics regarding children whose parent or guardian are victims and/or perpetrators of violent offences are unfortunately not yet available for dissemination. The Authority is however, working on finalising reports which would allow this data to be shared with stakeholders.

The Committee was informed that the Policy, Research and Planning Unit, OPM has two (2) researchers and policy specialists to conduct secondary research and no resources to conduct primary research. (4.3; pg. 40)

Corresponding recommendation: We recommend that local research is commissioned on the impact of primary and secondary school children, whose parent or guardian was the victim or perpetrator of a violent offence by the Office of the Prime Minister who has the gazette ministerial responsibility for children. This research should include the collection of data from the prison population. (4.9; pg. 42)

The Office of the Prime Minister is in the process of restructuring its Policy Research and Planning apparatus which currently consists of the Policy, Strategy and Government Performance Division and the Policy Research and Planning Unit. The Office of the Prime Minister will ask Cabinet to consider the following means of expansion:

- The rebranding of the unit as the Policy, Research and Planning Division with the mandate of implementing:
 - Policy design
 - Strategic Planning
 - Economic Analysis
 - Performance Management
 - Monitoring and Evaluation
 - Research

Cabinet has approved 23 employees for the Policy Research and Planning Division. This expansion will facilitate the further implementation of the Committee's recommendations in the area of research. The areas identified by the Committee have been noted and flagged for action as soon as the necessary human resource becomes available.

The committee highlighted the absence of data and proactive programmes to detect post-traumatic stress disorder and other psychological deficiencies associated with children whose parent / guardian was the victim / perpetrator of a violent offence. It was reiterated that a child may not present external symptoms to be detected by the MOE. (4.7; pg. 41)

All children assessed at the Authority's Assessment Centre are subjected to a battery of psychological tests which can determine if a child is going through post-traumatic stress or if they have psychological deficiencies. Once it is determined that a child has such signs, the Treatment

Plan identifies the rehabilitative interventions necessary to treat the child. It is important to note however, that programmes to identify PTSD specifically for children whose parent/guardian was the victim/perpetrator of a violent offence are not available at the Assessment Centre. This may require collaboration between the OPM and Ministry of Health.

We recommend that training is provided to CATT, MSDFS and VWSU staff to detect, diagnose and treat the fourteen (14) psychological conditions of children whose parent or guardian was the victim or perpetrator of a violent offence. (4.10; pg. 42)

The Authority has arranged training for all Psychologists on staff in the administration, scoring and interpretation of psychological tests that measure vast domains of functioning. These domains tap into the psychological conditions identified. These allow for the detection and diagnosis of the pertinent presenting issues of children whose parent or guardian was the victim or perpetrator of a violent offence. Training has been offered in the use of the following tests:

- Battelle Developmental Inventory™, Second Edition (BDI-II)
- Beck's Youth Inventory, Second Edition (BYI-II)
- Child Abuse Potential Inventory (CAPI)
- Child Sexual Behaviour Inventory (CSBI)
- Family Environment Scale (FES)
- House-Tree-Person (HTP)
- Kinetic Family Drawing
- Millon Pre-Adolescent Clinical Inventory (M-PACI)
- Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI)
- Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory- Adolescent (MMPI-A)
- Personality Assessment Inventory-Adolescent (PAI-A)
- Rotter Incomplete Sentences Blanks®, Second Edition (RISB - II)
- Trauma Symptom Checklist for Young Children (TSCYC)
- Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (TSCC)
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales, Second Edition (Vineland-II)
- Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory 2.0 (YLS/CMI)

In recognition of their role in working with children and families in child protection contexts, the Authority, has also in the past, extended the opportunity to attend some of these training sessions to Psychologists in other agencies such as the Child Guidance Clinic and the Barataria Mental Health Unit and Wellness Centre. Consideration may be given in the future to having additional training sessions for other partner agencies.

Additionally, the Psychologists and Social Workers at the Authority, particularly those within the Assessment and Child and Family Services Units which focus on evaluations and treatment, also benefit from in-house clinical supervision, whereby they are able to discuss and receive guidance on the assessment and management of the presenting conditions. This poises them for efficient detection, diagnosis and treatment.

Moreover, when relevant training programmes are periodically offered on topics that would aid in the efficient detection, diagnosis and treatment, arrangements have been made for the Authority's staff to attend and participate. Some training programmes which the Authority's staff have participated in which aid in the detection, diagnosis and treatment of the conditions outlined include:

- Understanding Child Abuse and Trauma
- Understanding Vicarious Trauma
- Child Psychotherapy with the Brain in Mind
- Dealing with Incest
- Adolescent Suicide Prevention Training
- Child and Adolescent Therapy
- Art Therapy for Childhood Trauma
- How to Assess Child Traumatic Stress
- The Psychosocial Effect of the Absent Father
- Emotional Intelligence

The Authority identifies training as a critical component of success. However, the current budgetary allocation does not allow for the organisation to roll out as robust a training programme as it would hope. Additional funds for training would allow for more widespread training which can be offered to stakeholders as well.

OBJECTIVE 2: TO EXAMINE THE ADEQUACY OF PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN WHOSE PARENT/GUARDIAN WAS THE VICTIM/PERPETRATOR OF A VIOLENT OFFENCE.

The Committee noted the external social service providers of the OPM to whom referrals were made (Appendix V) and CPU centers (Appendix VI). The need for this information to be accessible to members of the public. These sentiments were similarly shared by the National Council of Parent Teacher Associations Inc. who also highlighted that a possible client would have to visit a number of websites to access similar information. (4.11; pg. 42)

Recommendation: We recommend that a comprehensive directory of the programmes and services of each stakeholder with contact numbers should be published in the newspaper, websites and social media for use by members of the public. (4.31; pg. 47)

The Office of the Prime Minister has produced a Children Services Directory titled: Reach Out: A Guide to Child Friendly Services as a resource reference point for children, their parents, guardians and all actors in the child development arena. The booklet features over 70 child related organizations categorised by health, volunteerism, education, recreation and social support. The books were also developed as a solution to reports on the lack of comprehensive and accessible information on child related services. Essentially the books are designed to be easily accessible as they are available online for download on the OPM'S website, www.opm-gca.gov.tt, and hard copy at every school, library and community residence in Trinidad & Tobago. The booklet has been advertised in the local newspapers and social media.

The Committee was pleased with the achievements of the programmes and services under the MOE (3.16), MSDFA (3.24), OPM (3.32) and TTPS (3.47 and 3.48). However, the absence of data means that the qualification of "success" for programmes and services is subjective and cannot be substantiated. (4.14; pg. 43)

It is usual that the success of programmes offered and hosted by an organisation, would be evaluated by the same host organisation. As such, the Authority currently cannot address the monitoring and evaluation of programmes and services under the 'MOE (3.16), MSDFA (3.24), OPM (3.32) and TTPS (3.47 and 3.48)' as the paragraphs in the report which speak to these programmes and services were not included in the document shared.

The Committee was pleased that the Authority was in the process of revising its strategic plan and developing key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of its performance. (4.16; pg. 43)

The Children's Authority is currently in the process of revising its strategic plan and expects that one will be ready within the first quarter of 2017.

It was expressed that these statistics of cases investigated, cases referred to the CATT, perpetrators arrested and charged and assisted interventions conducted with the CATT were the CPU's current metrics of effectiveness. (4.18; pg. 44)

The methodology employed to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Child Protection Unit (CPU) has not been made available to the Authority. Therefore, the Authority is unaware of the CPU's key performance indicators, targets and objectives which will guide a comprehensive and suitable monitoring and evaluation framework. The Authority as such cannot address the change in methodology used to measure the effectiveness of the CPU.

The Committee noted that there are 800 cases where the Children and Family Unit, CATT is seeking to reunite children with their families. However, due to staff constraints of ten (10) members of staff working with these families, some cases are outsourced and family team conferences are used for children facing similar issues. (4.22; pg. 45)

The Child and Family Services Unit of the Authority to date has 1153 cases of children in need of care and protection under its preview. Of this total, 53 families are receiving intervention targeted towards family reunification and 197 children in care are receiving psychosocial interventions. The family team conferencing approach is utilised in addressing all cases assigned to the Child and Family Services Unit. Staff constraints continue to impact the rate of progress in addressing cases assigned to the Unit. Currently the staff complement of the Child and Family Services Unit is 13 staff members.

With regard to support to Community Residences, the OPM is in the process of rolling out a Cost per Child programme which will include psychosocial support to children in CR's.

It is important to note that the Authority requires additional resources to meet the demands of the increased workloads across the various Units, in order to continue to best serve the nation's children.

The Committee was informed that CATT's reintegration plan includes external monitoring of a child. OPM admitted that the Ministry had sought to ensure that the National Standards for the Care and Protection of a Child is utilized at all fifty (50) community residences. (4.23; pg. 45)

In 2014, the Ministry of Gender, Youth and Child Development (MGYCD) designed a One-Off-Grant subsidy as a means of funding for community residences. The aim of this funding was to allow these community residences the opportunity to meet the minimum requirements for

obtaining a residence license thereby ensuring that the National Standards for the Care and Protection of a Child are adequately met. In order to access this grant community residences were required to meet certain set criteria in order to qualify for the grant and lodge a formal application with the MGYCD. This application process was managed by the MGYCD where applications were assessed on a regular basis (weekly) by a Grants Committee. Funds were granted to applicants in full compliance with the stipulated criteria. Prior to proclamation (May 18th 2015) the Authority assisted the MGYCD with the roll-out of this initiative by providing support with two sensitisation sessions with community residences, as well as with visits to Residence Managers to provide support and advice regarding the application process. As at October 15, 2014, applications were received from 27 community residences with grants being disbursed to approximately 12 community residences.

On October 10th, 2016, the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs) launched a proposal on the Payment per Child Policy to all community residences. The aim of the Payment per Child Policy is to provide financial support to community residences to facilitate the attainment of the necessary quality of care to be provided to children.

The Committee noted that the primary challenge to execute programmes and services for children whose parent or guardian was a victim or perpetrator of a violent offence amongst the agencies examined was inadequate staffing. However the Committee was pleased to note that efforts were being made to address this staff shortage by the advertisement of vacant positions at the OPM and the CATT. (4.26; pg. 46)

In addition to the restructuring of the Office of the Prime Minister's Policy Research and Planning apparatus, the organizational structure of the Children's Authority is being revisited. This is the result of the Authority's internal review of its performance and assessment of its capacity to effectively undertake its mandate. The passage of the Family and Children Division Bill has also influenced this process, as the Authority will be required to assume additional responsibilities with respect to children in need of supervision, the assessment of youth offenders, investigation of these cases and monitoring these children and the facilities used to accommodate them. The Authority has submitted its revised organisational structure to the OPM which identifies a number of new and critical positions, in order to successfully fulfil the mandate of the organisation. The Authority is waiting feedback from the OPM which has committed to advancing the new structure through the regularisation and approval of these positions.

The following changes to the Authority's current organizational structure have been proposed:

- Narrowing the portfolio of the Deputy Director, Care Legal and Regulatory Services
 - This portfolio has been deemed too demanding on the person in this position.
 - This person will become the Deputy Director, Regulation.
- Two (2) new Deputy Directors:
 - One (1) Deputy Director, Intake
 - One (1) Deputy Director, Intervention
- The Deputy Director, Regulation will oversee the following:

- Legal Services Manager
- Youth Justice Services Manager
 - This Manager will oversee the Youth Justice Services Department to meet the requirements of the Family and Children Division Act. It will implement a framework to deliver the mandate with respect to Youth Justice as well as the related responsibility for designating and Monitoring Rehabilitation Centres.
- Licensing and Monitoring Manager, Community Residences
- Licensing and Monitoring Manager, Nurseries
 - This Manager will supervise an increased staff complement of the Licensing and Monitoring Department to adequately perform the function of monitoring Nurseries. The Authority's preliminary information is that there are in excess of 100 Nurseries that would have to be monitored.
- The Deputy Director, Intake will oversee the following positions:
 - Registry Manager
 - This Manager will coordinate the new Registry function which has been made necessary to address the exorbitant number of reports received by the Authority.
 - Emergency Response Manager
 - On a monthly basis, the Authority routinely responds to in excess of fifty (50) emergency cases of children who are in imminent danger. This Manager will coordinate the effects of a new Emergency Response Department to ensure that emergency cases are dealt with in an effective manner.
 - Investigations Manager
 - This manager will head the new Investigations Department which will have the responsibility to investigate all reports made to the Children's Authority, This is mandated in the Children's Authority Act. The Authority has received over seven thousand reports that must be investigated, which requires significant human resources in order to conduct timely investigations and make positive change in the lives of children in need of care and protection.
 - Assessment Manager
- The Deputy Director, Intervention will oversee the following positions:
 - Family Services Manager
 - Adoption and Foster Care Manager
 - Children in Care Manager
 - This is a new portfolio that will monitor all children taken into care to ensure that their Care Plans are being implemented and the necessary rehabilitative work is being done.
 - Child Supervision Manager
 - The incumbent will respond to the needs of the growing number of children in need of supervision. With the proclamation of the Family and Children Division Act, the Children's Authority anticipates that more children will be brought to its attention for some type of intervention.

- Child Prevention Services Manager
 - This Manager will coordinate the delivery of programmes that contribute towards the creation of a culture that promotes children’s rights and a society where children are valued, nurtured and empowered/ The Child Prevention Services Department will provide targeted interventions to prevent abuse.

We recommend the establishment of proper monitoring system to follow-up of a child after treatment. It is important for all the entities to be a part of this process in order to properly provide the necessary support system for the victim. (4.36; pg. 48)

Children’s Service’s Associate (CSA) assigned to the Child and Family Services Unit of the Authority monitors each case assigned to them with the aim of ensuring that:

- There is continuity of care and or service provision by the parent, guardian, fit person or community residence.
- Appropriate steps are taken towards achievement of the goals identified in the Individual Care Plans (ICP) and Treatment plans
- Instructions contained in the Court Order (if applicable) are adhered to
- Implementation of the ICP is appropriately conducted
- Objectives identified in the ICP are achieved
- Services and supports are matched by reasonable outcomes
- New clients’ needs requiring change in the ICP are identified and appropriate steps taken to address them
- Safety concerns are managed in the child’s best interest
- Case review and reassessment of needs are conducted on a timely basis

Monitoring can be court-ordered through a Supervision Order or it can be necessary even if there is no Order. The CSA conducts home and school visits either weekly or monthly as directed by the court or otherwise necessary. Updates and relevant recommendations are provided to the Authority’s Legal Department with the responsibility for updating the Court at the next hearing of the case. Where monitoring is not ordered by the court, a similar process is followed. In the event that there are any child protection concerns identified, the relevant processes of the Authority are actioned and either the investigation or intervention processes begin.

Cases which have been referred to stakeholders for the provision of services to the child and their family are also monitored by the Child and Family Services Unit of the Authority. The Unit liaises with professionals to which the case was referred to received regular updates and continue monitoring the progress of the child.

We recommend additional programmes and services in the primary and secondary schools of Caroni and Port of Spain by the CATT and MOE. (4.40; pg. 49)

The Authority has conducted sensitisation sessions with primary and secondary school Principals and Vice Principals from the educational districts throughout Trinidad and Tobago. During the sessions, participants were informed about the role of the Authority and the role of educators in the New Child Protection System. They were also informed about the process of making reports of abuse. The Authority also supports Community Outreach activities by setting up information booths. The organisation has actively participated in events hosted by several stakeholders such as the Police, NGO's, Faith Based Organisations, Community Based Organisations, Social Workers and others.

The Authority also plans to conduct several sensitisation sessions to students at primary and secondary schools and within communities.

The Student Support Services Division of the MoE will be critical in terms of the development and execution of programmes at the primary and secondary school level.

OBJECTIVE 3: TO IDENTIFY AND EVALUATE THE CURRENT RELATIONSHIP AMONGST STAKEHOLDERS OF CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES.

The Committee was pleased that the CATT had developed a draft proposal entitled, "Trinidad and Tobago National Child Abuse Protocol: A Guide for Key Stakeholders (The Police, Health and Care Professionals, Educators)". This proposal recognised that reporting and investigation of child abuse required an interdepartmental approach amongst the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, Ministry of Health, MOE and MSDFS. It also included a protocol for engagement between CATT and Student Support Services Division, delivery of a child to a place of safety, protocol for medical and psychiatric social workers, proposed engagement with Health Centre or District Health Facilities and a protocol for VWSU. (4.46; pg. 50)

The Authority has been engaged with various stakeholders to develop Memoranda of Understanding which will guide the protocols for reporting, investigating and treating with cases of child abuse. Memoranda of Understanding are in the process of being finalised with the TTPS, Ministry of Health, MOE and MSDFS. Protocols for engagement are already being developed between the Authority and Student Support Services Division, as well as the protocol for medical and psychiatric social workers, and the proposed engagement with MOH and VWSU.

However, the Authority admitted that there was a need for increased collaboration to address additional issues other than child abuse. The OPM also indicated that in 2015 the Ministry had started the process to develop a governance structure for collaboration amongst stakeholders and it may need to be revisited. (4.47; pg. 50)

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We recommend that the draft proposal entitled, "Trinidad and Tobago National Child Abuse Protocol: A Guide for Key Stakeholders (The Police, Health and Care Professionals, Educators)" be reviewed and discussed by all relevant stakeholders by August 31, 2016. These discussions should aim to develop a governance system or memorandum of understanding amongst the involved agencies. The final outcome should be to improve and increase a child's access to programmes and services for children whose parent or guardian was a victim or perpetrator of a violent offence. (4.50; pg. 51)

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