

## Regional Report of Multi-Stakeholder Forums in Region Three

**Total Number of Consultations Held: 17**

**Total Number of Participants: 353**

**Average attendance: 20.7**

**Summary Table of participation:**

Area	Venue	Date	Attendance
Vreed-en-Hoop	Vreed-en-Hoop Primary School	4 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	17
Greenwich Park, East Bank Essequibo	Greenwich Park Primary School	20 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	6
Parika	Parika Primary School	20 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	20
Zeeburg	Zeeburg Secondary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2006	19
Zeelugt	Zeelugt Primary School	22 <sup>nd</sup> March, 2006	50
Leonora	Leonora Primary School	24 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	9
Cornelia Ida	Cornelia Ida Primary School	24 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	25
Santa/Aratak Mission	Interactive Centre	26 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	25
Windsor Forest/Nova Flanders/La Jalousie/Pakistan	Windsor Forest	27 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	15
Den Amstel	Den Amstel Primary School	27 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	45
Canal No. One	McGillvary Primary School	29 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	15
Bagotville	Bagotville Community Centre	29 <sup>th</sup> March, 2006	19
Sans Souci – Wakenaam	Sans Souci Primary School	1 <sup>st</sup> April, 2006	12
Leguan Island	Leguan Secondary School	1 <sup>st</sup> April, 2006	8
Canal No. 2	Kawall Primary School	4 <sup>th</sup> April, 2006	11
Wales	Wales Community High School	4 <sup>th</sup> April, 2006	19
Hogg Island	Hogg Island West Primary School	8 <sup>th</sup> April, 2006	38

### 1. What does Region Three celebrate as positives in Guyana:

People in Region Three celebrate the interest, skills and resources, both local and from overseas, which are put into development of the communities. Despite many complaints people seem to recognise that infrastructure in certain areas have improved. Other positive areas are the presence of natural resources, the hospitality of the Guyanese and the freedom of expression people experience. People are happy that there is no racial disunity in the region. There are no high crime rates. A number of conversations did not mention any positives to celebrate.

## **2. What are Region Three's Elements of a vision for Guyana:**

The major themes in the region's vision are racial harmony, religious and political unity and equal opportunities for all citizens. Furthermore, people envisage a crime free Guyana with better vocational prospects and an end to migration. The hope, expressed in one of the conversations, is that Guyana can become a leading country in the world using all its natural potential.

## **3. Key points to note on residents'/participants' issues:**

Many conversations mentioned the issue of **infrastructure**. People complain about *poor water supplies* as well as problems with the *drainage* in most areas. Furthermore, many communities are dissatisfied with the state of the *sea-defenses* in the region and *poorly organized garbage disposal* is a source of much frustration.

**Limited employment opportunities for youths**, particularly those with limited qualifications, are a constant worry.

**NIS** came under a severe criticism in some communities.

Lastly, people are very much looking for **investment in manufacturing** in the region.

The participants of the conversations identify several areas as harboring **potential for violent conflict**. Those are:

- a. Limited and unequal job opportunities,
- b. Unfair distribution of land and house lots,
- c. Poor discipline and idleness among the youth,
- d. The handling of domestic violence,
- e. Alleged corruption in the handling of flood relief,
- f. Inactive police,
- g. Poor garbage disposal, and,
- h. Limited access to clean water.

#### 4. Key issues raised by residents/participants:

##### Summary Table of Issues

Present local conflicts/ areas of tension	Communities which raised issue	Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges
<b>Infrastructure</b>		
Poor state of public buildings, e.g. schools	Wales, Den Amstel, Windsor Forest	Improvement in fencing and toilet facilities must be kept high on the agenda
Poor street lighting	Wales, Canal No. 2, Bagotville, Cornelia Ida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GPL must expedite electricity connections.</li> <li>- Local recommendation is that lights need to go up in the direction of Wales from the Harbor Bridge</li> </ul>
Need for improved water facilities and supply	Parika, Wales, Sans Souci, Canal No. 2, Bagotville, Den Amstel, Santa/Aratak Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More pumps, treated water in all communities, larger and deeper wells.</li> <li>- Water authorities may have to rotate the distribution of water to all villages until improvements have been made</li> </ul>
Difficulties in transportation	Parika, Wales, Sans Souci, Leguan Island, Canal No. 2, Hogg Island, Bagotville, Den Amstel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More bridges, together with improvement of existing streets and bridges. This is particularly important because it helps children getting go school.</li> <li>- More reliable and frequent speedboat service is necessary. Public transportation system has to be re-introduced</li> </ul>
Poor drainage	Sans Souci, Leguan Island, Canal No. 2, Hogg Island, Canal No. 1, Bagotville, Den Amstel, Vreed-en-Hoop, Cornelia Ida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More regular drainage and irrigation. Canals should be cleaned when it is dry.</li> <li>- Buildings should not be erected where they can create serious drainage problems.</li> <li>- Fix the La Bagatelle access drain culvert that collapsed many years ago (nothing has been done to fix it so far)</li> </ul>
Badly enforced sea-defenses	Sans Souci, Leguan Island, Greenwich Park, Hogg Island	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repair collapsed sea-defenses.</li> <li>- Keep constant checks</li> </ul>
Lack of a post office in an area	Canal No. 2	

<b>Present local conflicts/ areas of tension</b>	<b>Communities which raised issue</b>	<b>Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges</b>
Need for functioning recreational and sport facilities	Hogg Island, Den Amstel, Vreed-en-Hoop, Santa/Aratak Mission	
Poor telecommunications	Cornelia Ida, Santa/Aratak Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GT&amp;T must accelerate the introduction of basic telephone facilities.</li> <li>- A functioning public phone service is considered to be critical</li> </ul>
Lack of a cemetery	Cornelia Ida	
<b><i>Social Inclusion/Cohesion</i></b>		
Allegations that improvements in infrastructure is based on ethnicity	Greenwich Park, Sans Souci, Den Amstel	
Unequal job distribution	Sans Souci, Cornelia Ida	Skills and qualifications must be the only concern in hiring people
No cohesion between political parties	Sans Souci, Leguan Island	
Allegations of political endorsement of racism	Sans Souci	Politicians should look to the population where there are minimal acts of racism
Religious disrespect	Leguan Island	
Insufficient unity in community	Hogg Island	Assistance from the government with the development of communities
Exclusion of community members in decision making	Vreed-en-Hoop	
<b><i>Social Issues</i></b>		
Late night alcohol consumption	Sans Souci	Rum shops should be closed at the required time
High incidence of drug sellers and users	Leguan Island, Bagotville, Cornelia Ida	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Counseling and guidance for users and sellers.</li> <li>- The police must carry out more frequent raids on suspected sellers</li> </ul>
Street children	Parika	Address the issue to begin with
Need for day care centers	Canal No. 2	
Domestic violence	Canal No. 2	Visits from social workers to communities
Teenage pregnancy	Den Amstel	

<b>Present local conflicts/ areas of tension</b>	<b>Communities which raised issue</b>	<b>Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges</b>
HIV / AIDS	Den Amstel	
<b><i>Access to Opportunities and Resources</i></b>		
Limited employment opportunities for youths	Leguan Island, Hogg Island, Den Amstel, Santa/Aratak Mission	Establish institutions for vocational training
Allegations that land and house lots are unfairly distributed	Parika, Cornelia Ida	Allocations and processing must be expedited. The Ministry of Housing must set time frames.
Little employment for people with no academic qualifications	Greenwich Park	Build factories in food processing and garment making
Need of functioning health care centers with trained personnel	Windsor Forest, Vreed-en-Hoop	
<b><i>Youths</i></b>		
Insufficient discipline	Parika, Wales, Hogg Island	Encourage more community parenting
Need for after school activities	Wales	
Child labour	Zeeburg	Children should never be taken out of schools to work
Early school dropouts	Canal No. 2	Establishing skills training centers
Limited involvement of youth in decision making	Santa/Aratak Mission	Young people should not be excluded from leadership positions. There needs to be training opportunities in governance for them
<b><i>Morals/Values</i></b>		
Insufficient honesty and lack of other virtues in the society	Santa/Aratak Mission, Canal No. 2, Vreed-en-Hoop	Introduction of a proper moral education in schools. Adults should lead by example in the communities
<b><i>Law and Order</i></b>		
Inactivity of the police, especially during the night	Wales, Sans Souci	Recruit more ranks. Keep police points open at all times
Allegations of biasness and bribery in	Parika, Sans Souci	

<b>Present local conflicts/ areas of tension</b>	<b>Communities which raised issue</b>	<b>Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges</b>
the police force		
Ineffectiveness of Community Policing	Sans Souci	Leaders of the church can counsel conflicting persons
Illegal alcohol selling	Parika	
Squatting	Parika	Needs to be treated fairly and evenly
Lack of police cooperation when people report incidents	Zeeburg	
<b><i>Environment</i></b>		
Littering and poorly organized garbage disposal	Parika, Leguan Island, Windsor Forest, Canal No. 1, Bagotville, Vreed-en-Hoop, Santa/Aratak Mission	More disposal sites, local authority needs to provide bins and vehicles
Aggressive street dogs	Sans Souci	
Disturbances caused by a sawmill	Sans Souci	Better monitoring from the Department of Forestry and the EPA
Sea walls badly cleaned	Leguan Island	Regular cleaning, fine those who litter
The reek of pit latrines	Windsor Forest	Availability of flush toilets, especially. in the school
Mosquito nuisance	Vreed-en-Hoop	Spraying
<b><i>Economy/Markets</i></b>		
Lack of vision for tourism	Leguan Island	Historical sites, e.g. St Peter's Anglican Church, can be repaired
High cost of agricultural machinery	Canal No. 2	
Farmers need more training	Canal No. 2	
Need for employment opportunities	Canal No. 2, Den Amstel	Establishing a canning factory, opening up for investment in agriculture and manufacturing
Local contractors not getting contracts	Vreed-en-Hoop	
Difficulties in transporting products	Hogg Island	New Wharf needs to be erected
<b><i>Education</i></b>		
School accommodation inadequate	Wales, Greenwich	Begin construction on allocated land

<b>Present local conflicts/ areas of tension</b>	<b>Communities which raised issue</b>	<b>Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges</b>
	park	
Shortage of qualified teachers	Parika, Bagotville, Vreed-en-Hoop	Increase teachers salaries
Insecure and noisy school areas	Greenwich Park, Wales, Zeeburg, Parika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Begin repairs on schools.</li> <li>- Fencing has to be improved in order to keep children away from water, streets, markets and industrial sites.</li> <li>- School in Wales needs to be relocated due to the noise from the sugar factory.</li> <li>- Environmental and welfare officers need to visit school lots</li> </ul>
Need for an Information Technology introduction at primary school level	Canal No. 2	
Dire need of adult education programmes and encouragement of reading	Bagotville, Canal No. 2	Establish a Public Library
Lack of electricity is having impact on education	Santa/Aratak Mission	
<b><i>Public Administration</i></b>		
Allegations of less than proper distribution of pension books	Sans Souci, Windsor Forest, Canal No. 2	More organized manner of distribution is needed
Allegations that the Food for the Poor Committee is not functioning properly	Sans Souci	Dissolving the committee
The function of the billing system for the GPL	Sans Souci	The time until the paid bills are processed in Georgetown needs to be shortened
Disappointment with issues related to the NIS	Leguan Island, Canal No. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NIS should give all contributors/subscribers a document educating them on the full benefits and legal rights under the NIS scheme.</li> <li>- Annual statements should be issued</li> </ul>
NDC alleged inability to work for the benefit of all residents	Leguan Island	
Too exorbitant fees for land surveying	Hogg Island	
Allegations of a mishandling of flood relief	Canal No. 1	

## **5 Residents'/Participants' feelings about and expectations from the conversations**

Most participants felt relieved and satisfied after the conversations and looked forward to the results. There is a strong anticipation of further conversations and, indeed, access to the reports.

Many are thankful to the ERC and applauded the good coordination and the orderly meetings.

However, some participants raised the issue that 'talk is cheap' and that the conversations were a waste of time. Some even raised the concerns that this has been a political trick, which will yield no follow up.

## **6 Process Issues:**

Attendance in the communities was never more than moderate and poor in few instances. In one forum a sizable contingent of youth made their welcome presence felt. Reports from Zeelugt and Leonora were not received in time for this Regional Report.