



PRESS RELEASE

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Domestic Violence Remains a Key Challenge

Domestic violence remains a challenge in Guyana according to the 2006 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) carried out by the Bureau of Statistics (BOS) and the United Nations Children's Fund.

The MICS, the third survey of its kind to be done here, was carried out to provide information on a large number of indicators to determine the situation of women and children at the national level.

The results of the survey which was launched yesterday showed domestic violence is three times more prevalent among rural women than urban women. Overall the results showed that one in every five women believed that a husband or partner has the right to beat them.

One in every 20 women believed that a husband is justified in beating his wife or partner if she refuses to have sex with him; while high proportions of women believe that a husband or partner has the right to beat them when they neglect children or if they go out without telling him.

Wealth and education were found in the survey to be key factors in women's attitudes toward domestic violence. Further, married women are more accepting to domestic violence than those who were never married or lived in a union. Also Amerindian women are twice as likely as East Indian women and six times as likely as African women to accept domestic violence.

Additionally, according to MICS 2006, 74% of children were subjected to at least one form of psychological or physical punishment by their mothers or caretakers.

Sixteen percent of these children have experienced severe beatings. The survey described severe beatings as being slapped, or hit in the head repeatedly with an object. A number of themes such as child health, nutrition and child mortality were examined in the survey which successfully carried out interviews in 5,280 households in coastal and rural areas which were identified as the sampling domains.