

MEDIA RELEASE

UNICEF and The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sign Programme of Activities for 2007

Georgetown Guyana, UNICEF, February 27th, 2007 – The Government of Guyana (GOG) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) this morning signed Annual Work Plans (AWPs) outlining activities to be undertaken during 2007 in fulfilment of the results outlined in the GOG-UNICEF 2006-2010 Country Programme of Cooperation. The AWPs were signed by the Hon. Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Elisabeth Harper on behalf of the Government of Guyana and the UNICEF Representative for Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago Johannes Wegenig. The signing signals the official commencement of projects and activities aimed at achieving specific programme results.



The current Country Programme of Cooperation has entered its second year towards realising the aims and objectives

for the current five year cycle, the main areas of which are Public Policy and Child Rights, Child Protection, Early Childhood Development, Quality and Inclusive Education and HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support. Considering the wide range of government and non-government partners involved, the GOG-UNICEF cooperation is in a unique position to promote inter-sectoral collaboration between ministries.

According to UNICEF Representative Johannes Wedenig, over the last few years the annual budget has seen steady growth, and has now reached more than US\$2 million for 2007.

Among the priorities for this year are the establishment of a Children's Budget, with the Ministry of Finance, and widespread dissemination of the results of the only national social indicators survey, i.e. the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), led by the Bureau of Statistics.

The implementation of the campaign *No Violence against Children is Justifiable, All Violence against Children is Preventable* and the continuation of the Global Campaign *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* as well as the implementation of a campaign to get male partners more involved in sexual reproductive health are also listed as priority in the work plans. The setting up of a youth media group to document programme interventions and to act as a strong advocate for children's rights is linked to these campaigns as well.

In close collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security, a national child protection strategy will be developed and continued support will be provided to ensure

From left Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Elisabeth Harper and UNICEF Representative Johannes Wedenig sign the AWPs 2007 signalling the official start of programme activities for 2007.

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protective environment for vulnerable children, such as those in orphanages, children affected by HIV/AIDS, victims of abuse and exploitation and adolescents in conflict with the law. Further, the establishment of Legal Aid services for children and a national Children Help Line will be realized later this year.

The Ministry of Education is the main partner for the expansion of the child friendly approach and the promotion of healthy life styles through Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) in schools. In 2007, the "effective" school initiative will reach 6 Regions and national HFLE programme will start its roll out in 2 Regions. The Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports is the lead agency for the undertaking of sports for development and social cohesion activities. These initiatives started in 2006 and will be scaled up in 2007.

With the Ministry of Health, UNICEF will continue its efforts in achieving universal access to prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. This Ministry will also be the main partner for the establishment of a National Salt Board.

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights to help achieve the basic needs of children, and to create wider opportunities for them to attain their potentials

From Left Ambassador Rudolph Collins, Director General Elisabeth Harper of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNICEF Representative Johannes Wedenig at the signing ceremony of the 2007 Annual Work Plans.



About UNICEF

UNICEF is on the ground in 155 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence. The world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS. UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

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