

Canadian Organization Launches 5-Year Multi-Million Dollar Mental Health Project in Guyana

Canada's first mental health project in the Caribbean region is launched in Guyana

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, November 17, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The United Nations has identified mental health as one of the greatest challenges to income equality and prosperity around the world. This situation is particularly acute among young people who live in vulnerable communities in developing countries, including in Guyana.

In recognition of this challenge, the International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF), with funding support from Global Affairs Canada, has launched a multi-million-dollar mental health project in Guyana in co-operation with local organizations, and in support of a wider Mental Health Strategy. The project is employing a community-oriented care approach to mental health and well-being that builds on existing social structures and the strengths of community health workers, mental health survivors, multi-faith and other key influential leaders, and the capacity of communities to work together in charting a new path for mental health resilience.

The Guyana Mental Health and Well-Being (GWB) conference, included a launch for the project on Tuesday afternoon at the Arthur Chung Conference Centre, Liliendaal. Canada's Minister of International Development, Harjit Sajjan, via video message, made the announcement.

Some of the key stakeholders and partners will include the Ministries of Health; Education;



CEO, Mahmood Qasim Program Manager, Julie Sookram, Senior International Assistance Officer, Tariq William, Head of Cooperation for Guyana, Jessica Teasdale, Board Chair, Yasmeena Mohamed, High Commissioner of Canada to Guyana and Suriname, Mark Berman Dr. Tayyab Rashid

Amerindian Affairs; Human Services and Social Security; the Central Islamic Organization of Guyana; Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association (GRPA) and Women Across Differences (WAD).

“IDRF has been carrying out development and humanitarian relief efforts throughout Guyana in cooperation with local partners since 2005, including in response to the severe summer flooding of 2021,” said Nabil Ali, Director of Programs for IDRF. “To date we have assisted more than 20,000 Guyanese people, and with the launch of our IDRF-Guyana Mental Health Project and the support of local partners, we plan to significantly increase our local impact.”

The IDRF-Guyana Mental Health Project expects to benefit 67,750 adult and youth in school and community settings in vulnerable communities across Guyana over a five-year period, including:

- 9,000 youth in school settings with gender-responsive education for equitable inclusion and wellbeing;
- 5,750 adults with community-based mental health care and support;
- 52,500 adults with mental health services in 400 Public Health facilities;
- 500 dialysis patients with mental health counselling.

Some of the project’s key activities in various regions of Guyana will include:

- Training of youth peer leaders to promote gender equality and inclusion;
- Re-integration of adolescent mothers and additional early school leavers back into the school system;
- Re-integration of mental health survivors into their communities
- Training of community health workers (CHW) in rights-based mental health service, substance abuse and suicide attempt first aid;
- Training of facility-based health care workers in mental health management priorities; and,

It is anticipated that these and other activities will build on existing programs and initiatives to strengthen mental health resilience among youth, their families, and vulnerable women and men in all regions of Guyana.

About IDRF:

IDRF is a registered Canadian charity that has been empowering disadvantaged people in Canada and around the world since 1984. We have been recognized by third-party organizations as one of Canada’s best-run charities for our effectiveness, efficiency, and results. Find out more about IDRF's work in its Annual Report, and follow them on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

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