

# Canadian Organization and Guyanese Government Join Forces to Conclude 5-Day Suicide Prevention Training

*Cross-border collaboration tackles mental health crisis: Canadian NGO and Guyanese officials complete intensive suicide prevention training*

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA, February 21, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF), a Canadian-based INGO, in collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Education in Guyana, proudly announces the successful completion of the Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention training for Regional Mental Health Leads (RMHLs). This intensive 5-day training is a pivotal component of the "Safeguarding the Human Dignity & Rights of Populations At-Risk for Ill-Mental Health in Vulnerable Communities across Guyana" (SPAR) project, funded by Global Affairs Canada in 2022 as a 5-year multi-million-dollar initiative.



IDRF Guyana team

Led by Canadian Clinical Psychologist & Technical Lead, Dr. Tayyab Rashid, the training took place from February 16th to the 20th and covered crucial topics such as suicide prevention, understanding mental health disorders, identifying at-risk individuals through screening tools, intervention strategies, self-care for helpers, crisis communication, and engagement with local resources. RMHLs also received instruction in effective supervision techniques, confidentiality and ethical considerations, the Training of Trainers (ToT) approach, and the project's monitoring and evaluation strategy.

The comprehensive training is part of the broader SPAR project, which aims to enhance mental health services in communities, schools, and the public health system across Guyana.

The RMHLs, carefully identified through consultations with regional officials in January, are now

equipped to play a pivotal role in enhancing mental health at the grassroots level within their designated regions. Their responsibilities include fortifying mental health services for survivors in targeted communities and supporting Community Gatekeepers in gathering crucial mental health data.

Approximately 800 individuals, including healthcare workers, community leaders, civil society figures, and religious leaders such as pandits, imams, and pastors, are expected to be identified and trained as Community Gatekeepers. This initiative is designed to complement existing mental health services, particularly in remote and hard-to-reach areas.

The SPAR project, aimed at addressing the suicide epidemic in Guyana, aligns closely with the Ministry of Health's Mental Unit and Regional Health Officers nationwide to ensure its strategies align with government policies and priorities for mental health.

"We are excited to mark the successful completion of the Gatekeeper Suicide Prevention training under the SPAR project," said Nabil Ali, COO at IDRF. "This collaborative effort between IDRF, the Canadian government, and Guyanese authorities is a testament to our shared commitment to address mental health challenges and promote well-being in vulnerable communities across Guyana."

With the conclusion of this training phase, the SPAR project is set to continue its impact with the commencement of the Regional Suicide Prevention Training in early March.

For Media Inquiries and Interview Requests:  
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About IDRF:

The International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF) is a Canadian charitable organization dedicated to empowering vulnerable communities through sustainable development, disaster response, and humanitarian assistance. To learn more, visit [www.idrf.ca](http://www.idrf.ca).

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