

Regional Report of Multi-Stakeholder Forums held in Region Eight

This report has two parts:

- **Part One** (pages 1-6) comprises a summary of the 5 conversations held at the community level between March 12th 2006 and April 22nd 2006, for Region 8.
- **Part Two** (pages 7-14) is a summary of the outcomes of the Regional Conference held on June 6th 2006 for Region 8 as well as the points raised at the community level conversation.

The information in this report is based on the information discussed at the community and regional conversations. The information has not been verified through any research or follow up enquiries

PART ONE

SUMMARY OF LOCAL COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Total Number of Consultations held: 5
Total Number of Reports received: 5

Total Number of Participants: 137

Average Attendance: 27

Summary Table of participation:

Area	Venue	Date	Attendance
Mahdia	Mahdia Secondary School	12 March 2006	24
Micobie	Micobie Benab	18 March 2006	30
Kato		11 April 2006	15
Paramakatoi	Paramakatoi Multi-purpose Room	11 April 2006	30
Monkey Mountain Village	Monkey Mountain Village Benab	22 April 2006	33

1. What does Region Eight Celebrate as Positives in Guyana?

The **harmony and spirit of cooperation** among the persons in the communities of Region 8 was the main positive thing people highlighted during the conversations. Participants celebrate the **natural beauty** and the **pollution free environment** of the region as positives. Two communities highlighted the **hospital facilities** as something positive in their community.

2. What are Region Eight's Elements of a Vision for Guyana

There was general agreement in this region on what participants wanted for Guyana. Five out of the six communities want to see:

- A **united Guyana** with peace, love, harmony, where every citizen felt a part of the country and was respected
- A Guyana with **equal access to opportunities** for all persons

Other popular desires for Guyana were a **stronger sense of national pride** and a **crime free** society. Two communities mentioned more **assistance to small farmers** and better **health and education** facilities.

The desires for the Kato community were most unique. Their desires for Guyana focused on infrastructure such as health, education and technology and the government's need to deliver on promises to it.

3. Key issues raised by residents/participants

The number one issue raised by each of the five communities in this region was the **absence of potable water**. Second was the issue of **absence of electricity**, raised by four of the five communities. The third most important problem was the **deplorable community and access roads**.

Other common issues (three communities highlighted this as an issue) were:

- In the area of education: the **absence of secondary schools, poor facilities in schools** such as computer, teaching aids and materials for students and **no adult education opportunities**
- In the area of health: **"run down" and inadequate health facilities** with **insufficient qualified medical personnel**
- In the area of crime and security: **poor police protection** and **badly managed police service**
- In the area of community facilities: the **absence of recreation facilities and a community centre**

Each community identified different items as having **potential for violent conflict**. The issue of land titles not being given to Amerindians was the only issue raised by more than one community. Other issues included:

- Drug abuse
- Abuse of young girls
- Invasion of criminal elements
- False promises by the government
- Discrimination

Two communities Kato and Monkey Mountain Village identified no areas of tension that could erupt into violent conflict.

Notable **recommendations** made by the community include:

- In the area of electricity – the **rehabilitation of the hydropower project**, using hydropower in schools and hospitals for example.
- In the area of health and education – **training of community persons** in midwifery and teaching and contracting them to serve the community on completion of the training.
- Other concrete recommendations included the **promotion of the beauty of Townanda, Echilibar Mipima and other waterfalls** in the area by the Ministry of Tourism.

See the **Summary Table of Issues** on page 4.

4. Residents'/Participants' feelings about and expectations from the conversations

Generally, participants were happy for the opportunity to mingle and speak with each other on issues affecting them. Many of them were looking forward to positive results as a result of these conversations, as well as future conversations. Monkey Mountain Village participants in particular were hopeful that their voices would have been heard by the relevant authorities and felt that there were little things they could start in their community.

In some communities there were mixed reactions to the conversations. In some instances participants were sceptical of another "talk-shop".

Kato specifically asked for feedback on the report.

5. Process Issues:

The attendance by the communities was consistent throughout in this region, averaging 31 persons per conversation. The only conversation with a low attendance was Kato with 15 persons.

In one community there were communication barriers due to differences in culture; participants were unwilling to speak

In Mahdia, the conversation was rushed as a result of a delay in flight arrival to Mahdia

6. Summary Table of Issues

Present local conflicts/areas of tension	No. of Com.	Name of Communities which raised issue	Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges
Infrastructure			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deplorable community and access roads Transportation Costs are very high (land and air)- there is no government air and land transportation 	4	Mahdia, Monkey Mountain Village, Micobie	Roads should be graded to accommodate fast moving vehicles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor water facilities; no potable water 	6	Micobie, Mahdia, Monkey Mountain Village, Kato, Paramakatoi	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No electricity 	5	Micobie, Mahdia, Monkey Mountain Village, Paramakatoi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate the hydro project with schools, hospitals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unavailability of Telephones 	2	Mahdia	
Environment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor garbage disposal 	1	Mahdia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water pollution by miners in the lower area 	1	Monkey Mountain	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mosquitoes are rampant 	1	Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce mosquito infestation through use of chemicals
EDUCATION			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No secondary schools as a result transportation costs are very high to allow attendance in school 	3	Micobie, Monkey Mountain Village, Kato	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor facilities in schools (computer, teaching equipment, text and exercise books, uniform) 	3	Mahdia, Monkey Mountain Village, Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Installation of computers Purchase new furniture and equipment Programmes to assist school children with uniforms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of trained teachers 	2	Mahdia, Monkey Mountain Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of college and university graduates from the area who can come back and contribute to the development of the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Education Welfare Officer 	1	Mahdia	

Present local conflicts/areas of tension	No. of Com.	Name of Communities which raised issue	Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No adult education opportunities 	3	Mahdia, Paramakatoi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government should put in place an ongoing adult education programme for academic and vocational subjects
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No school feeding programme 	1	Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an ongoing school feeding project
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No public library 	1	Mahdia	
Health			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run down health facilities (no x-ray equipment at the hospital) Poor health care systems No qualified medical personnel 	3	Mahdia, Micobie, Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medex needs additional help Train community member as a mid-wife and contract person Extend Cottage Hospital to include malaria and dental departments Implement security system for the hospital
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cottage Hospital has insufficient capacity to accommodate patients from neighbouring villages and remote areas 	1	Monkey Mountain Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospital should obtain its own transportation (2 450 ATV bikes)
Youth			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teenage Pregnancy Exploitation of young Amerindian girls by Pork-knockers 	1	Mahdia,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Villagers are willing to assist parents in guiding their young daughters against becoming pregnant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Labour 	1	Mahdia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child delinquency 	1	Mahdia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No job opportunities 	1	Micobie	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No self esteem programmes for youth 	1	Paramakatoi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-introduce National Service
Security and Crime			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase crime rates (invasion by criminal elements) 	1	Mahdia	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor police service and police protection 	3	Mahdia, Micobie, Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employ more police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police corruption 	1	Mahdia	
Economy and Markets			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mining is being carried out by pork knockers from outside of the area and no royalties are given to residents in the community 	1	Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax non-residential miners

Present local conflicts/areas of tension	No. of Com.	Name of Communities which raised issue	Concrete commitments and ideas towards overcoming challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No agricultural personnel to advise on agricultural pests – pests are destroying crops Limited access to agricultural tools No system to access water for agricultural purposes 	2	Kato, Monkey Mountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government to employ agriculture field officer to advise farmers Develop markets and transport for agricultural produce after production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unemployment 	1	Mahdia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create job opportunities using country's own resources e.g. timber
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Estimates for contacts are underestimated causing residents to get late and low wages 	1	Kato	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government should sustain funding of projects undertaken by community (particularly fishing project)
Community Facilities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No community centre No recreational facilities 	3	Micobie, Monkey Mountain Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy a generator for the community centre Construct a pavilion and fence it
Land			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all Amerindians were given land titles Inadequate Housing – no land titles 	1	Micobie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build housing schemes in the community
Public Administration			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government and Regional Officers are not available when problems arise 	1	Mahdia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' concerns must be addressed Those in authority must listen and act on community proposals – there must be vertical and horizontal communication between communities and administration and senior officials at national and regional levels The community must cooperate with the government The community must be willing to undertake some type of self help

PART TWO

SUMMARY OF REGIONAL CONFERENCE REGION 8

DATE: June 6th 2006

VENUE: Mahdia Secondary School

FACILITATORS: Chrishna Persaud, Rajkumarie Singh, Arlene Dinally and Karen Vansluytman

ATTENDANCE: 78

1. Key issues repeated from the local community conversations:

- **Infrastructure**
 - Deplorable community and access roads, which resulted in high transportation costs
 - *Poor water, electricity and telephone infrastructure*
 - *Absence of community facilities*
- **Environmental** issues related to *poor garbage disposal, water pollution and mosquito infestation*
- In the area of **education** – the *absence of a welfare officer in the schools, lack of trained teachers, the absence of skills training and adult education opportunities, poor school facilities and no library*
- **Youth delinquency** and their limited access to **job opportunities**
- **Crime**

The issues of **health, Amerindian** and **economic issues** (such as mining and agricultural production) were discussed during the local consultations but not at the regional level.

2. Other issues raised in discussion:

The only issue which came up for the first time at the regional level was the need for a **factory**.

The matter of the formation of community policing groups was raised at regional level, but not at community level.

3. Participants' reaction to the Regional Conference:

The participants present at the Regional Conference were more or less the same persons that participated at the local community consultations. Participants were very participative and indicated that they had no difficulty with the regional report presented.

4. Process Issues:

The Regional Chairman opened the meeting. The Alternate Commissioner from the Christian Constituency gave remarks on behalf of the Ethnic Relations Commission.

- In keeping with the original objectives of the MSF process, facilitators explained the objectives of the exercise, ground rules and the agenda. They further explained that the conversation sought to achieve the following:
 - i. To create a safe space for Guyanese to agree on strategies for overcoming ethnic and other differences; and
 - ii. To focus on how best Guyanese can contribute to the development of their community and country.
- Three participants presented the summary report (Part 1 of this report) by reading major sections of the report.
- Facilitators encouraged participants to break up in smaller groups around topics of their choice. These themes for the small group discussions were:
 - Education and Access to opportunities
 - Social Issues and Drugs and Alcohol
 - Infrastructure, Economy and Markets
 - Public Administration and Law and Order
 - Social Inclusion Cohesion

Participants had difficulty focusing on solutions to problems; they had to be constantly guided to keep focused on solutions.

2. Summary Table of Action to be taken on issues

KEY ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED	WHAT RESIDENTS CAN DO FOR THEMSELVES	WHAT RESIDENTS NEED HELP WITH		WHAT RESIDENTS NEED OTHERS TO DO FOR THEM	
		Issue	Person/Agency to Assist	Issue	Person/Agency to Assist
Infrastructure					
Transport and the poor condition of the roads		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better access roads • Businesses in the community can help with road maintenance • Put in place better transport system to reduce cost • Financial support for maintenance of roads • Reduce fuel costs and subsidise toll on road use • Tools and materials road repairs 	RDC Business community RDC Government and Petrol Dealers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide air and land transport services at a lower cost within the Region 8 communities and Georgetown • Provide transportation for health workers to visit different communities 	Government RDC
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community can provide labour to dig wells 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide water purifiers and educate residents on use 			
Factory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community can identify land to build factory and provide labour 				
Recreational Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community can provide human resources to construct recreational facilities • Community can maintain facilities 				
Electricity and Telephone		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide finance for water, electricity and telephones 	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend electricity and telecommunications services in Region 8 • Resuscitate hydro power plant at Tumulumari • Provide satellite phones in government offices 	GPL GT&T
Land and Environment					
Littering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate residents on proper garbage disposal • Burn or bury garbage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection and disposal of garbage 	RDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dig pits for garbage disposal • Legislation to ensure that miners pay a royalty for river 	Miners with Hymacs Government

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recycle garbage (for e.g. use bottles to plant flowers) 			pollution. This money can be used to dig wells	
Mosquitoes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce infestation through the use of chemicals 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
Housing (not all Amerindians were given land titles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build own home through self help Residents can come together and lobby to obtain titles to land that they occupy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demarcation of land for special facilities 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed up land titles Identify land for new housing scheme Invest in saw mill for cheaper and quality building materials 	Land and Surveys RDC
Health					
Malaria and typhoid control		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay more attention to malaria and typhoid Distribute drugs to control mosquitoes Regular visits by the Regional Vector Control Units Extend Cottage Hospital to include malaria and dental departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Health RDC Regional Vector Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treated nettings 	Donor Communities
Run down health facilities (no x-ray equipment; inadequate security)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement security system for the hospital 			
No qualified medical personnel		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medex needs additional help Train community members as a mid-wives 			
Cottage Hospital has insufficient capacity to accommodate				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospital should obtain its own transportation (2 450 ATV bikes) 	

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patients from neighbouring villages and remote areas					
Education/Youth					
Parental assistance and involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents and guardians can avail themselves for training and capacity building to help children in school Better communication between parents and children about important issues such as teenage pregnancy and molestation Give responsibility to PTA members to secure school facilities and monitor children activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert advice to parents on how to discuss sensitive issues with their children Persons to donate items for school feeding activity 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide School Welfare Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government Ministry of Education
Accommodation for promising students		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide housing/lodging for school children who live in interior locations and are showing potential 	RDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transportation system for school children Build secondary schools with dormitories 	
No self esteem programmes for youth				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduce National Service 	
Skills training and job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage school children and school leavers to attend skills training and capacity building sessions In the Amerindian communities parents, teachers, employers and captains to discuss employment Form youth clubs and teach skits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical assistance needed to monitor child delinquency Construction and stocking (books and materials) for a library Volunteer persons to provide labour for the library 	Business and Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide job opportunities 	Government and Business Community
Brain drain/ Lack of trained teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When persons receive training in Georgetown they should return to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of college and university graduates 	Government		

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	communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop attractive incentive packages so as to encourage teachers and nurses to return to the region after training 			
Adult Education				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place an ongoing adult education programme for academic and vocational subjects 	Government
No school feeding programme				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an ongoing school feeding project 	
Teenage pregnancy & exploitation of young Amerindian girls by Pork-knockers	Villagers are willing to assist parents in guiding their young daughters against becoming pregnant				
Child Labour					
Child delinquency					
No public library					
Law and Public Administration					
Community Policing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form policing groups to support local police Persons in policing groups to act responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide better security for citizens Train Policing groups in law enforcement 	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate Policing Groups Provide vehicles and fuel for policing groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police Authority Miners
Improving the Police Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage youth to join Police Force 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More Police personnel at stations Give all Terrain vehicles to police in Region 8 	Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give Policing groups some authority and power Construction of police outpost 	Miners – Construction Government - Materials
Corruption	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents can stop bribing the police Form delegations to raise the residents' concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better Security system at the Airstrips to curb the movement of drugs 			

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Delays in the implementation of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community must be willing to undertake some form of self help 			Employ more staff to avoid delays	RDC
Access to Georgetown to raise concerns		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide financial help so that village leaders can take concerns to Georgetown 			
Economy and Markets					
No royalties given to residents in the community for the mining is being carried out by pork knockers from outside of the area				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax non-residential miners 	
No agricultural personnel to advise on agricultural pests		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop markets and transport for agricultural produce after production 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government to employ agriculture field officer to advise farmers o 	
Limited access to agricultural tools					
No system to access water for agricultural purposes					
Unemployment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create job opportunities using country's own resources e.g. timber 			
Estimates for contacts are underestimated		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government should sustain funding of projects undertaken by community (particularly fishing project) 			

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causing residents to get late and low wages					
Community Facilities					
No community centre				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy a generator for the community centre 	
No recreational facilities				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a pavilion and fence it 	