

Women need more help at safe houses

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However, after her six weeks, she ended up back in the home with her abuser. The woman was allowed to keep her nine-month-old baby with her for the duration of the stay. Her ten-year-old son was placed at another home.

The woman said, "I was provided with food and basic toiletries. Initially, I was the one who wanted to go to a safe house. It started off with me thinking I was going to start all over and hopefully things would be put in place to help us. I had confidence in the home and the police because I thought there was a support system in place, not just to mind you but at least get you started over, whether it was job placement or use your skills... relocate you."

To her astonishment, "nothing was done". She said the counselling service was "sit and listen" and explained that she and the other women found greater comfort in each other's stories.

Asked what could be done to improve the services, she said, "I think the first thing they need to do is find proper avenues to assist a woman to start over. If a woman goes into a shelter and has no income, how does she go about caring for her children or re-uniting with them when the shelters does not facilitate that?"

"Your movement in a shelter is restricted. You need permission to leave and your reason must be legitimate. You become totally dependent on the shelter and the people there."

The woman, who is now in her 40s, said she went through the domestic violence hotline and after about one week, was placed at the shelter.

The authorities deal with each case differently. With no assistance after the six weeks, the woman was forced to move back into the abusive environment.

"I did not have a choice. I went back to him because I had nowhere to go."

She told the Sunday Guardian that being in the system did not allow her to become better. She still was left without a job and no income to care for her children.

"The police just gives you a roof over your head. If you don't have an income how will you take care of yourself. What happens after six weeks, or another six weeks.?"

She suggested that the relevant authorities and shelters do proper assessments of victims that will enrich their lives after they stay at a shelter. Last week, the acting leader of government business Clarence Rambharat said Government was expected to commission five buildings — three to be used as shelters for female victims and two for males victims.

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Chairman of Amalgamated Security Services Ltd, Michael Aboud, centre, with chief operating officer, Curtis Cummings and chief administrative officer, Pamela Hosein, after they were presented with their 30 years long service awards at the company's 26th annual awards at Daaga Auditorium, yesterday. PHOTO: ABRAHAM DIAZ

Amalgamated awards employees for long service

RHONDA KRYSTAL RAMBALLY

Over time, people's expectations of a security officer have changed significantly. Chairman of Amalgamated Security Services Ltd (ASSL) Michael Aboud said security officers have to keep adapting and changing to meet the demands of service and delivery.

He said the company has expanded its footprint in the region and now operates in Barbados, Guyana, St Lucia, Grenada, and Antigua.

"Our reputation is well-known throughout the region."

Aboud was speaking at the company's 26th annual employee recognition function—Time and Excellence in Service, yesterday at the Daaga Auditorium, The University of the West Indies, St Augustine campus.

Over 120 employees were awarded for ten, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years' service. Merit, special, and the chairman's awards were presented to 49 employees.

Aboud said, "It is good to see we are still here together. The motto for us in going forward is to seek change. Change in how we go about doing our business."

ASSL was founded in 1983, out of his vision and determination to establish a company that provided innovative and exclusive solutions, tailored to the security industry and its clientele.

Aboud referred to two employees who each served 30 years. The current chief operating officer, Curtis Cummings, who started his career as a security guard and the other, Pamela Hosein, who is now the chief administrative officer and designate chief executive officer, who started off as the executive assistant to Aboud.

He said, "So the path that you are on is honourable and it can bring rewards that you are looking for and all the foundations that you are trying to build, in terms of quality of life."



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