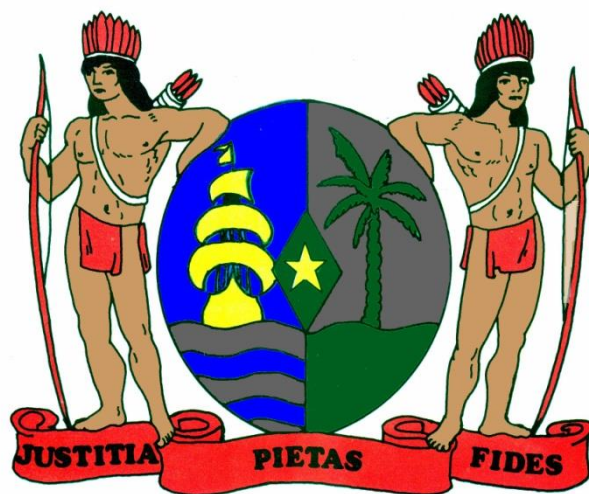

**Thirtieth anniversary of the
Fourth World Conference on Women and the approval of the
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing, 1995) in
Latin American and the Caribbean**

**NATIONAL REPORT
SURINAME
2024**

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME



SURINAME REPORT
NATIONAL REVIEW
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
BEIJING DECLARATION
AND
PLATFORM FOR ACTION + 30

**Ministry of Home Affairs,
Bureau Gender Affairs
November 2024**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AHP	Affordable Housing Program
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AOV	Algemene Oudedags Voorziening (Old Age Allowance)
BEIP	Basic Education Improvement Plan
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
BGA	Bureau Gender Aangelegenheden (Bureau Gender Affairs)
BLS	Basic Life Skills
BvK	Bureau Vrouw en Kind Beleid (Bureau for Women and Child Policy)
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CERD	Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
DWCP	Decent Work Country Program
DNA	De Nationale Assemblée (The National Assembly)
DV	Domestic Violence
EMTCT	Elimination of Mother-To-Child Transmission
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GBS	General Bureau of Statistics
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GoS	Government of Suriname
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDB	International Development Bank
ILO	International Labor Organization
ITP	Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
JPLNOB	Joint Programme Leaving No One Behind
KPS	Korps Politie Suriname (Police Force of Suriname)
LBGT	Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay and Transgender
MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MDP	Multi-Annual Development Plan
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MJ&P	Ministry of Justice and Police
MOESC	Ministry of Education Science and Culture
MSAH	Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing
NCCR	Nationaal Coördinatie Centrum voor Rampenbeheersing (National Coordination Center for Disaster Management)
NCDV	National Council Domestic Violence
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NSO	National Statistics Office
PAHO	Pan- American Health Organization

PLHIV	People Living with HIV
SAO	Stichting Arbeidsmobilisatie en Ontwikkeling (Vocational Training Institute)
SDG's	Sustainable Development Goals
SIP	Perinatal Information System (SIP, for its acronym in Spanish)
SLHC	St. Lobi Health Center Foundation
SNTA	Suriname National Training Authority
SPWE	Stichting Productieve Werk Eenheden (Foundation for Productive Works)
SRD	Surinamese dollars
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nation Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VAC	Violence against Children
WHO	World Health Organization
WRC	Women's Rights Center

INTRODUCTION

Suriname acknowledges that gender equality and women's empowerment are pre-conditions in achieving national development as well as the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This is, inter-alia reflected in the Multi-Annual Development Plan 2022-2026 (MDP 2022-2026) which is based on the following values: justice, inclusiveness, freedom, equality and sustainability. In addition, the SDGs are integrally included in this plan.

The National Review Beijing +30 Suriname report is a reflection of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly 2000 in Suriname.

This national review has been drafted and completed by the Bureau Gender Affairs (BGA,) according to the guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews.

This National Review is structured in six sections covering:

- macro analysis of priorities, achievements, challenges and setbacks;
- analysis of measures taken to advance gender equality;
- national processes and mechanisms;
- availability of data disaggregated by sex and gender statistics; and
- future challenges and priority actions that are needed to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda, notably as part of the Decade of Action for sustainable development.

SECTION 1: HIGHLIGHTS

Core elements of the country-level review process

The national review of the Beijing Platform for Action was conducted by the Bureau Gender Affairs (BGA) of the Ministry of Home Affairs. For the compilation of this report, the BGA made use of information provided by stakeholders during the drafting of the first draft of the CEDAW report, various reports produced by ministries and international organizations such as the UN agencies. Additional information was requested from stakeholders such as Gender Focal Points; and focal points from various ministerial plan units. On completion of the draft report a validation session was held on November 4th, where stakeholders had the opportunity to deliver their feedback on the report and to submit additional information.

Progress, challenges, and set-backs in the implementation of the BPfA

The review shows that in the past thirty years, in many areas substantial progress has been achieved. Notable progress can be observed in the strengthening of the legal and policy context given the revision and adoption of supportive national legislation, the formulation of various national plans, programs and projects, increased access to basic education, availability of disaggregated data through (new) surveys and the acknowledgement, protection and realization of human rights.

Despite the achievements, some challenges continue to exist in achieving targets such as translating evidenced based national legislation and policies into annual plans, regulations and programs and monitoring of programmes and projects. Despite the establishment and strengthening of the ministerial Plan Units these challenges have not been addressed.

Another challenge regards the heavy cuts in government budget, due to the economic downfall of the Surinamese economy, COVID-19 pandemic and economic reform which led to fewer funds available for implementation of specific programs. Several initiated programs aimed at specific (marginalized) groups were implemented with funding of donor agencies.

SECTION 2: MACRO ANALYSIS OF PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS

2.1 Achievements

1. Strengthening of the legal framework

Over the past five (5) years progress has been achieved in the adoption and strengthening of the national legal framework to further support the implementation of the Development plans of the Government of Suriname 2017-2021 and 2022- 2026, relevant international agreements and other related national policies, including:

- **In 2018, the Identity Cards (ID Cards) law (S.B. 2019 no. 16) was approved** by Parliament. Every ID card visibly mentions at least the following personal data of the holder: the surname; the first names; the date of birth; place of birth or country of birth; and the gender. The marital status is stored in the electronic data carrier of the ID card. Therefore annex 1 of the Identity law (S.B. 1976 no. 10) has been withdrawn.
- On August 30, 2019, **the Act establishing the Constitutional Court (S.B. 2019 no. 118) was adopted** by Parliament and entered into force on January 14, 2020 (S.B. 2020 no. 12). The Constitutional Court is tasked with reviewing laws on their contradictory nature with the Constitution and international conventions. The Court also has the authority to review and decide on challenged decisions of Government bodies on the grounds of incompatibility with basic rights and freedoms. This Court is impartial and independent as are all courts in Suriname. On May 7, 2020, the chair, vice-chair, members and alternate members were sworn in. In accordance with the respective provisions of the afore-mentioned Act, the Constitutional Court consists of one chair, one vice – chair, 3 members and 3 alternate members, all with appropriate qualifications. The chair, members and one alternate member are women.
- **The law on equal treatment regarding labour matters.** The law was approved on October 13, 2022 by the National Assembly and entered into force as per November 17, 2022. The law contains a definition on distinction which includes both direct and indirect distinction, and reads as follows: “Direct and indirect distinction as well as the assignment to make a distinction based on race, sex, religion, skin color, ethnic origin, national origin, social origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, disability or family responsibility, HIV status and other chronic diseases, pregnancy, age or marital status”. The law applies primarily to the private sector. In addition, the law mandates the minister responsible for government personnel policies to make regulations in accordance with this law within twelve (12) months after the entry into force of this act for the public sector. The law on equal treatment regarding labour matters contains provisions for the mandatory establishment of an internal complaints committee and complaints procedure by employers who employ more than 30 employees. In a company with fewer than 30 employees, an employer, if he is unable to handle a complaint himself, reports to the Labour Inspectorate with the request to investigate the complaint. Furthermore, employees have the right to file a complaint with the Labour Inspectorate regarding discrimination.

- **The law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace** which was also adopted on October 13, 2022 and entered into force as per November 17,2022 contains similar complaints mechanism provisions as mentioned in the law on equal treatment regarding labour matter.
- In March 2020 the **Environmental Framework Act** was passed unanimously after two decades of negotiation. A legislative amendment was approved most recently in April 2024. The National Environmental Authority was established by this act. This authority must ensure that polluters are dealt with and fined. The proclamation of this authority took place July 26,2024 and as a result of this the implementation of the environmental framework act will commence.
- **Adoption of the New Civil Code** by the National Assembly in August2024 by the National Assembly. The new Civil Code has not yet entered into force.
- **Ratification/ signature of international instruments.** The government of Suriname has ratified both **the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)** and **the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)** in November 2021.

2. Development of policies and (action) plans

In the past five years, the Recovery Plan 2020-2022 and the Multi-Annual Development Plan 2022-2026 were developed and implemented. Several national plans and policies have been developed in consultation with various stakeholders, including on women, children and youth, such as:

1. National Mental Health Plan 2015-2020
2. National Plan Suicide Prevention 2015-2020
3. National Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases2015-2020
4. National Adolescent Health Strategy 2018- 2025
5. National Strategic Health Plan 2018-2028
6. Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035
7. National Action Plan on prevention and reduction of Child Labour 2019 – 2024
8. National Policy Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2019-2025
9. National Maternal Health and Mortality Reduction Priority Plan July 2019 - September 2020
10. National Policy Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2019-2025
11. Ministry of Health National Policy Document 2021- 2025
12. Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy 2021-2025, with an action plan for the period 2021-2023
13. National Strategic Plan for HIV 2021-2027
14. Fourth National Strategic Plan for HIV 2021-2027
15. National Strategic Plan 2021-2030 to prevent and control cervical cancer
16. “National Plan for the Renewal of Healthcare 2025” (Recovery Plan Health Care 2025), with an implementation period of 2022-2025.
17. Decent Work Country Programme, Suriname, 2023-2026
18. National Strategic Plan for Nursing (2023-2028)
19. National Health Promotion Strategic Plan (2024-2028)

3. Increased access to basic education and basic health services

- **Increased access to basic education**

- **Continued subsidized of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education**, as a result of which school fees are kept at a minimum level.
- **School backpacks were distributed** for school children and students at primary, junior and senior secondary school level.
- **Expansion of school transportation service for school children** living in the urban district of Paramaribo in 2021.
- **Evaluation and adjustment of school feeding programmes** for primary schools. The government has evaluated the interventions that have been implemented over the years and as of May 2022, has rolled out an adjusted school feeding programme for primary schools.
- **Access to junior and senior secondary education in the rural areas** was enhanced through the construction, renovation and rehabilitation of school facilities and teacher's houses in the interior was taken up, as a result of which 21 new classrooms and 20 renovated classrooms were delivered, and 20 new houses for teachers were built. In the interior two schools were built in the Indigenous villages; one in Amatopo (2022) and one in Coeroenie (2023)

- **Increased access to basic health services**

- **Continued implementation of a National Social Security System** composed of the following laws: the General Pension Benefits Act (2014), National Basic Health Insurance Act (2014), the Minimum Hour Wage Act (2019 and amended in 2024) and the Family Employment Protection Act (2019). With regard to the latter, the Fund for Parental Leave has been established to ensure maternity and paternity leave for employees in the private sector and has started paying wages during maternity and paternity leave.
- **Expansion of primary health services in the coastal areas and in the interior:** renovation of policlinics and transformation of some of these clinics to community health centers, opening of ten (10) Health Education Units nationwide as part of prevention, information and education to society, Construction of 3 hospitals; 1 in rural areas (district of Wanica) and 2 in the interior (districts of Brokopondo and Marowijne).

4. Improved data, information systems and capacity for evidence-based policy

- **With support from the UNICEF**, the educational Management Information system web portal was further improved, aligned with the ongoing structural reforms. The educational data and statistical yearbook 2019-2021 were also finalized and released.
- **Continued production of statistics on women and men in Suriname**
The General Bureau of Statistics (GBS), Suriname's National Statistics Office (NSO) is responsible for the production of the publications "Selected Statistics about women and men in Suriname". This publication is published every odd year by the GBS. In March 2024 the GBS published its last publication with data regarding the elections of May 2020.
- **DONDRU knowledge database (2022)**
The DONDRU online knowledge database was launched on June 10, 2022 and serves as the central platform for cluster-related data/information about Climate Change in Suriname. It aims to publish official and formal environmental data and information for national policy and planning.

- **The establishment of the HEARTS app for real time data collection.**
With support from the PAHO-WHO the HEARTS app was established and operationalized. The hearts app is a patient information portal designed for real-time data collection acting as a clinical tool for cardiovascular risk and hypertension management.
- **Development of the Electronic Health Record (EHR) system.**
PAHO-WHO worked to promote the digital transformation of Suriname's health care systems. In collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Ministry of Health the EHR system was developed. With this system the Ministry of health aims to automate primary health care and/or general practitioner care in Suriname.
- **Implementation of several nationwide studies such as** Employability of people with disabilities in Suriname, A baseline study by the International Labour Organization and the Ministry of Labour, Suriname (2020), the Situation analysis and Needs Assessment in which 36 ITP participants were engaged (2023), 1 children's Mental Health Study conducted by UNICEF aiming to identify influencing well-being and to develop tailored interventions, a deep dive into Suriname's Social Protection System for children, adolescents, and adults, and covers the period 2015 to 2023 (2024).
- **Launch of a pilot Perinatal Health Information System (SIP) developed with support from the PAHO-WHO.** The primary goal is to assess the functionality of the SIP system as a potent instrument for monitoring maternal and newborn health, providing a foundation for evidence-based decision-making, and contributing to the formulation of informed policies and programs.
- **Development of the Suriname SDG Data and Analysis Repository Framework:** Mapping and guideline for SDG-indicators by data availability and quality in 2022. The objective of the assignment was to prepare sound data and determine the availability of accurate and up to date statistics and data analysis with respect to the SDGs which are important to Suriname and its contribution to Agenda 2030
- **Launch of Suriname's first Climate Change Statistics and indicators publication:** A Milestone in Environmental Reporting in 2023. This publication underscores the urgency of climate action and serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, researchers, and all stakeholders dedicated to a sustainable and resilient Suriname.
- **The GBS benefited from technical support from the UNFPA in conducting the Ninth General Population Census.** The starting signal for the Census was given on October 14th, 2024.

5. **Efforts towards the establishment of a human rights institute**

- In January 2022, the Minister of Justice and Police formed a commission to draft legislation for the National Human Rights Institute. The draft law is currently under review by the State Council and will then be submitted to the National Assembly for consideration and approval. The commission is currently working on State Decrees related to this law to produce a final legislative product.
- In November 2021, the President established a working group consisting of officials from the Office of the President, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs, the National Assembly, the Anton de Kom University of Suriname, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, and the Ministry of Justice and Police to take up the preconditions, regarding the preparation, establishment and implementation of the Children's Ombudsperson Institute. The draft Children's Ombudsperson Suriname Act is approved at the Council of Ministers

on September 7, 2022. The draft Children's Ombudsman Act is submitted to The National Assembly by the Government on September 29, 2023. The objective of the draft Children's Ombudsperson Act is to broaden the system of (legal) protection of the child, for which there appears to be a great need in practice. This law provides a form of legal protection for children, in particular the handling of complaints and the duties and powers of the Children's Ombudsperson.

6. **Implementation of programs to end violence against Women:**

- The project **“Gender Based Violence (GBV) interventions in response to COVID – 19 measures”** was implemented in the period June 2020- January 2021. This project was a joint effort of the ministry of Home Affairs, the ministry of Justice and Police, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Program together with civil society organizations and government institutions.
- The judiciary has specifically appointed **judges to deal with protection order appeals** in cases of domestic violence, besides their existing regular duties.
- **Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to violence (2022)**. This regional project has been implemented in Suriname by the United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA). The overall objective of this assignment was to contribute to the eradication of GBV by assessing and addressing key essential services.
- **Education on human rights** is incorporated in the curricula of the Law Enforcement Officers training. In this context seminars in identifying discrimination and violence against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community were organized by the LGBT Platform Suriname.
- The **adoption of the law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace** by the National Assembly in 2022. The law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace contains provisions for the mandatory establishment of an internal complaints committee and complaints procedure by employers who employ more than 30 employees.
- The launch of the seminar on the Law on Domestic Violence for the sitting and standing judicial (magistracy) in November 2023.

7. **Submission of country Reports to the UN**

In the past 5 years the government submitted several country reports on the status of commitments related to human rights according to the UN guidelines and have participated in constructive dialogues with the human rights committees, including the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Suriname (ICCPR), National Report on Implementation of the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development 2018- 2022 (2023). Several ministries and civil society institutions have participated in the process of drafting these national reports.

2.2 Challenges and setbacks

COVID-19 impact¹

The first positive (imported) case of COVID-19 in Suriname was reported on the 13th of March 2020. The country responded quickly by taking the measures necessary to contain the spreading of the pandemic. The law on State of Emergency COVID-19 ('Wet Uitzonderingstoestand COVID-19') was declared in April 2020, which gave the authorities mandate to take certain measures.

The measures were divided in social, health, fiscal and monetary measures. Ad hoc special funds were created and directed to the health sector, towards food packages and towards cash transfers. To combat the devastating impact on the health sector, the government received full support from the private sector and development partners to strengthen its health system, to train and equip health workers and other key stakeholders, to communicate prevention measures to specific groups and the general public, and to purchase vaccines.

At the Bureau of Public Health of the Ministry of Health, a COVID-19 helpline was activated and information regarding the COVID-19 situation was published on the COVID-19 Suriname website and the website of the Bureau of Public Health. Face masks and hand sanitizers were provided to health workers, school children and other vulnerable groups. In addition, full or partial lockdowns were effectuated by the government.

Macro-economic situation²

Due to the economy setback since 2015 followed by the COVID19 pandemic, the living conditions and purchasing power of the population have significantly declined. According to the Financial Annual Plan of 2022 (Ministry of Finance, 2023) the purchasing power declined by 32% in 2022, compared to 2019. A recovery plan, consisting of social-economic reform policy measures was launched in 2020 as a means to improve the social-economic situation in Suriname. These reforms were implemented in a period of economic recession, high external debts, hyperinflation and a highly fluctuating exchange rate. Given the country's fragile economic situation and limited resources available for the financing of regular programs and external debt payments, the government sought assistance from the IMF in 2020. With a standby arrangement (Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program) both parties agreed to implement a recovery program with the aim to improve the economic situation. Several stringent and structural economic reform measures were taken in this regard. In addition to these measures, social support was provided to low-income and vulnerable households that would otherwise be significantly affected. Since the reform measures involved cutting off subsidies on basic needs and services as electricity, fuel, subsidized food prices, health services, etc. it was expected that low-income households would not be able to manage under these conditions

¹ Suriname's First Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (2022)

² A deep dive into the social protection system in Suriname for children, adolescents, and adults over 2015-2023' (2024)

Poverty

As stated in ‘a deep dive into the social protection system in Suriname for children, adolescents, and adults over 2015-2023’ commissioned by the Planning Office of Suriname in Partnership with the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), poverty is a serious problem in the country. According to household expenditures survey data of 2014, households in the two lowest quintiles spend merely all their financial resources on food (65%), household utility expenditures (15%), and transportation (7%), (Sobhie & Kisoensingh, 2023). According to the preliminary results of the second wave of the SSLC, carried out in 2022, the multidimensional poverty is about 43%, with high deprivations on health-related indicators, overcrowding, school backwardness and housing. The Surinamese Government has poverty reduction high on its policy agenda.

Being aware of consequences of the prior actions of the Reform agenda, the government introduced an “Extended” Social Safety Net program to support the most vulnerable and (near) poor households in society, with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing in the lead.

Access to health and health services

Due to the budget and difficult macro-economic situation in Suriname, the access to health services and the availability of essential medicines and medical aids became challenging. Another major challenge concerns the acute shortage of trained health and medical professionals due to brain drain. Over the past years, the Surinamese healthcare sector has seen a significant outflow of personnel, resulting in healthcare being in a critical situation. In order to contain the brain drain of health personnel, the ministry of health has recently significantly increased the rates for obtaining a statement or certified document from SR\$ 250 to US\$1000.

Weak (government) institutions

With notable progress achieved in the strengthening of the legislative and policy environment, and also availability of disaggregated data, some challenges continue in achieving the set targets. Translating evidenced based national legislation and policies into annual plans, regulations and programs that are not only implemented but also guided by operational plans and regular monitoring remain a big challenge. Persistent barriers include lack of required capacity in gender mainstreaming, data management, evidence-based policy making, management of programs and monitoring and evaluation. Information of policy implementation and evaluation is scattered within the Ministries, as a result of which civil servants are not informed about projects within their respective ministries and different persons have to provide the data and information. This is not effective for a proper policy evaluation and analysis.

2.3 Top five priorities over the past five years

1. Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

The Government of Suriname remains committed to ongoing improvement of access to education for all children, including in the rural areas and the interior. In this regard the following measures were taken:

- **During COVID-19 pandemic**, some teachers worked with a system where packages with school materials and assignments were provided to school children. Messaging through WhatsApp and SMS, and Zoom or Google Teams were also utilized by some schools. School radio and school television were also used to provide education.
- **Execution of structural changes in the education sector** in this regard there is further implementation of the second BEIP, phase II from 2016-2021. Schools and teacher housing have also been constructed or renovated in the interior.
- **Access to junior and senior secondary education in the rural areas** was enhanced through the construction and or renovation of schools.
- Continued subsidized of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education, as a result of which school fees are kept at a minimum level.
- Within the Basic Education Programme 2, a STEM / STEAM program for the primary years 7 to 8 of primary education will be developed. This course material is completed and. The Ministry is now busy with the distribution of the material.
- **Distribution of textbooks in the native languages** of the Tribal Communities with the assistance of NGOs
- **School backpacks were distributed** for school children and students at primary, junior and senior secondary school level.
- **Expansion of school transportation service for school children** living in the urban district of Paramaribo in 2021.
- **Evaluation and adjustment of school feeding programmes** for primary schools.
- **The construction of student flats at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname campus** has been implemented in the period 2016-2019 in order to increase access to higher education for students from rural and interior areas.
- **A pilot project in the area of sexual and reproductive health has been conducted** on lower vocational schools by MOESC in collaboration with the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance.
- **Development of an age-appropriate curriculum for Health and Family Life Education** which is being implemented as subject on every level of education.
- An inspiration fair “SULA” has been carried out by the ministry of education. The developments that have been taking place within Surinamese Education have aimed to offer all children within society equal opportunities. Furthermore, besides making education fun and attractive there are also more development opportunities created to prevent dropouts.
- **Educational innovation.** As part of the new assessment procedure of grade 10, exam fairs were held at the various schools since schoolyear 2022/2023

- **The Suriname National Training Authority (SNTA):** A National Qualifications Framework for Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) has been established to align skills capacity building efforts with the country's priorities in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and economics - and to establish a core group of digital specialists who can spearhead innovation in various industries.
- **A commitment to action for education.** Colombia led engagement with Education Ministers from Latin America and the Caribbean to reduce learning gaps in the region to address the educational gaps left by the pandemic. The strategy to achieve this must guarantee the restoration of primary education (grades 1 to 12). Bogotá D.C., March 22, 2023. Ministers and education experts from Suriname, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela joined Colombia's call for a roadmap that will allow them to join forces to restore the learning of children, adolescents and youth in the region. "A commitment to action for Education" aims to guarantee the restoration.

2. Poverty eradication, agricultural productivity and food security/ Women's entrepreneurship and women's enterprises

- To increase agricultural productivity in Suriname, investments are made in infrastructure and management of irrigation and drainage systems in the main production areas in the country.
- The Agri-food Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA) project with financing from the UN-SDG Fund has invested in agricultural development for Indigenous pineapple farmers, and to guarantee access to markets.
- In July 2021, the Tripartite Council was established in which the government, unions and private employers' representatives participate to collaborate on actions to enhance labour market circumstances. In this regard a Tripartite Agreement was reached in November 2021 between the three social partners, whereby five key issues have been prioritized concerning tax reforms, strengthening of the purchasing power of families, execution of a social safety net, pricing policy and advancing entrepreneurship and employment.
- In the context of food security and food safety, various training courses have been provided to stakeholders in the different regions of Suriname, including plant propagation, construction of nurseries, construction of vegetable gardens, Good Agricultural Practices, Pest Risks Analyses, Communication skills, etc. Within the project Cassava Industry – Market Assessment and Technology Validation and Dissemination, the training "Farmer Field School" (FFS) was provided, in which the knowledge and skills of Agricultural Extension Officers and Researchers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries were increased.
- To guarantee food security, vegetable gardens are set up at educational institutions, childcare centers and homes for the elderly. The children and the elderly are thus encouraged to plant their own fruit and vegetables
- The 'Enhancing Food Security in Response to COVID-19 by Improving Access to Locally Grown Food' programme's focus is on the reduction of post-harvest losses in the crops cassava, mango and vegetables. A baseline survey of the crops was performed. Equipment for the Post-Harvest lab will also be delivered.

- The agricultural development in rural areas, with a focus on Indigenous pineapple farmers and their communities, is the primary area of intervention. While creating business opportunities and facilitating access to markets and value addition for women and men, this intervention will ensure conditions that promote respect for fundamental labour rights and rights of the Indigenous people, guaranteeing environmental sustainability, and consideration for the vulnerability of the involved traditional communities.
- To Improve livelihood, enhance food security, and establishment of female farmer networks in targeted ITPs communities through the Joint Programme Leaving No One Behind (LNOB), the following activities have been implemented to build Resilience, and Improve Livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) in Suriname:
 - Pilot of the Highland Rice Production: indigenous women in the Village Washabo (and expansion to the villages Section and Apoera) but also Tribal communities (Kwinti) were empowered, to initiate highland rice cultivation, fostering peer support and economic empowerment.
 - Agroforestry Champions: Training of farmers, including two female farmers, in the village Donderkamp in climate-smart agricultural practices, establishing them as community leaders.
 - Business Coaching: 25 ITPs women were trained in Business Coaching

Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) Manuals delivered to ITPs for the cultivation of Highland rice – to be used to facilitate implementation and adoption beyond the LNOB UNJP.
- Farmers in the Upper Suriname (Langu) area have been trained in plant propagation, involving 10 women and 3 men. Machinery such as a peanut mill, a sealing machine, a water pump and a chipper have been purchased to process peanuts.
- Farmers, among of which women, in the interior districts of Brokopondo, Marowijne and Sipaliwini were provided with planting materials such passionfruit plants, dragon fruit and citrus plants and the Directorate of Sustainable Agricultural Development Interior (DAOB) of the ministry of Regional Development and Sports also provided instructions and the necessary training in planting and care. In the district of Marowijne the starting signal was also given to a ‘Ginger project’. This project supported over 80 farmers (of which 50 women) in cultivating ginger.
- Two families of which 1 woman and 2 men in the Upper Suriname (Nieuw Aurora) and Atjoni area have been trained in the breeding of chickens and ducks.
- School gardens have been established at three primary schools in the district of Brokopondo. The Directorate of Inland Agricultural Development of the ministry of RG&D wants to focus on the education of students by setting up these school garden projects. It is partly the task of this Directorate to encourage and inform the youth about the agricultural sector with a view to the sustainable agricultural development of the Interior.
- One of the results of the JPLNOB is the Integrated Policy Framework for ITPs that has been developed to improve inclusion and resilience of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs)”. Based on the deliverables of the International and National Policy consultant and the validation sessions with the ITP communities, there is an end product of the Integrated ITP policy framework that the lead ministry RD&S and the other ministries as well as the ITP decision makers can use for further planning and implementation.
- In 2023 the Directorate of Sustainable Development for Indigenous Peoples (DDOI) of the ministry of RG&D has successfully delivered agricultural tools and machinery to the Traditional Authorities

of the indigenous villages Donderskamp, Cassipora, Bigi Poika, and Alfonsdorp.

3. Eliminating violence against women and girls

- **Continuous awareness on gender-based violence.** Activities carried out between 2015 to 2024 include public awareness raising activities on gender and domestic violence for communication officials, priests and youngsters from different religious denominations, civil servants, high level Government officials, Community Based Organizations, primary school students, and society in general.
- In November 2019 **the Women's Health Report** was launched. This study was financed by the IDB. The NCDV made its contribution in the preparation phase by providing feedback on the questionnaire.
- **In the context of tackling violence against children**, the Bureau for Women and Child Policy prepared and implemented an awareness program in collaboration with UNICEF in 2019. The goal of the program was to raise awareness among children about different forms of violence especially child abuse, bullying, sexual abuse and safe online., how to recognize these forms of violence and what to do to protect themselves and others. To implement this program employees from different departments of the Ministry of Justice and Police particularly the Bureau for Family Affairs (BUFAZ), pre-detention centre 'Opa Doeli', Justice Child Protection Department (Justitiele Kinderbescherming), the Bureau Victim Care, the department Youth Affairs of the Corps Police Suriname, the department Justice of the district of Nickerie, the department Legal Care and hotlines were trained as educators.
In addition, consultants were engaged by UNICEF to develop educational materials (posters, banners and pamphlets) and compile a manual for the purpose of this awareness program. From December 2019 to January 2020, a total of 8 information sessions were conducted at a primary school in the district of Paramaribo, with a total of 169 students (88 boys and 81 girls) participating. The topics covered during the sessions were violence in general and specifically child abuse, sexual abuse and bullying.
- **The formulation a National Action Plan for Children, 2019-2021** by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing. The general objective of this Action Plan is, facilitating coordinated and integrated implementation of legislation, policies and programs aimed at creating optimal development opportunities for all children in Suriname. Seven priority areas have been identified, focusing on the realization of multiple strategic goals. One of the priority areas is the prevention and reduction of violence against children.
- The project "**Gender Based Violence (GBV) interventions in response to COVID – 19 measures**" was implemented in the period June 2020- January 2021. This project was a joint effort of the ministry of Home Affairs, the ministry of Justice and Police, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Program together with civil society organizations and government institutions.
- In 2020, the Ministry of Justice and Police in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) started **the implementation of the project "Consultancy to improve reports of domestic and sexual violence in Suriname"**. The aim of this consultancy/project is to create a more streamlined and robust approach to the reporting of domestic violence in Suriname.

- **The Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035** launched in 2019, contains interventions to tackle and reduce Gender based violence and contributes to achieving the long-term goals as set in the gender policy document.
- **“Supporting of the child protection network/Improving the service to young people** at Youth Affairs Police. In 2021 the social service department of the Suriname Police Force was made child-friendly with the technical and financial support of UNICEF.
- In 2022, the project **“Development awareness campaign to reduce violence against children and increase youth empowerment as prevention against risk behaviors”** was successfully implemented in the rural district of Coronie with technical and financial support from the UNICEF. This project was prepared and coordinated by the Justice Department Nickerie (Region West) in cooperation with the Coronie hotline and the Women and Child Policy Office.
The goal of this project was to raise awareness among children and adolescents about the different forms of violence, how to protect themselves and their peers from the violence, and to offer them tools to make them mentally strong. To make parents and key people aware of the different forms of violence and train them in early identification. The topics covered during the information sessions included violence against children, the use of alcohol and drugs and Mental Health. The target group was primary and secondary school students and key people in the Coronie district. A total of 118 children (54 boys and 64 girls) and 20 key persons participated in the sessions.
- **The services of the Government** Foundation “Child Help Line 123”, as per 2021 called as “Mi Lijn”, has upgraded its services to a 24-hour helpline for children and adolescents and to adults who are victims of abuse. So far it has been noted that most of the adult callers are women
- **Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to violence (2022)**. This regional project is being carried out in Suriname by the United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA). The overall objective of this assignment is to contribute to the eradication of GBV by assessing and addressing key essential services.
- **The Law on Domestic Violence has been evaluated** by the Women's Right Centre (WRC) in 2022 with funding from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and with support of the Ministry of Justice and Police, representatives of all relevant stakeholders and many young volunteers.
- Adoption of the law on equal treatment regarding labour matters in 2022.
- Adoption of the law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace in 2022.
- **The NCDV has been re-established in January 2023** for 1 (one) year. In the recent period, the NCDV has worked on identifying bottlenecks that police Corps Suriname and other organizations within the government and NGOs experience in the aid sector.
- There are also **programmes initiated for perpetrators**. Psychological help is being offered by psychologists, religious leaders, and NGOs such as The Foundation Stop Violence Against Women. Counseling is also offered to perpetrators of all forms of violence -including domestic violence- in prison. Data of the various programs are regularly gathered and the programs are evaluated.
- **The establishment of Hotlines** as part of a pilot project, to identify cases of sexual abuse within local communities. The hotlines were set up in different areas for ease of accessibility and to avoid the threshold fear among citizens.

4. Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions)

- The government recognizes that poverty still prevails, and some groups are more vulnerable such as the elderly, children, women, persons with disabilities, and indigenous and tribal peoples. Therefore, the government has prioritized poverty reduction and is working on defining updated poverty lines and minimum wages.
- To eradicate poverty and strengthen social protection the National Social Security System is still in place after the adoption and implementation of the three (3) social laws namely the Minimum Hour Wage Act (2019, and amended in 2024), the General Pension Benefits Act (2014) and a National Basic Health Insurance Act (2014).
- In October 2022 the Ministry of Labor, Employment opportunity and Youth Affairs has installed a commission to evaluate the minimum hour wage act. The minimum wage Act is enacted in 2019 with a minimum hour wage of SRD8,40. Due to the significant devaluation of the Surinamese dollar which undermines the purpose of this law to guarantee employees and their families a certain minimum subsistence, the minimum hour wage has been adjusted since then to SR\$ 20,-since June 2022 to SR\$ 49,12 in April 2024.
- The Ministry of Social Affairs and Public housing had due to the COVID19 pandemic and it is extremely high number of COVID deaths decided to cover funeral costs for relatives who were unable to come up with some of the funeral expenses.
- The MOSH has provided a nutrition program to support the socially vulnerable in society with food packages.
- The government implemented a financial support programme to provide employees, SMEs and self-employed who lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a monthly fee to support them to meet their *basic needs*. The programme started in May 2020 and lasted until November 2021, with some interruptions due to financial, administrative or logistic challenges. An on-line registration process was executed to reach a broader audience and the payments were made in cash or by bank transfer.
- In October 2022 the soft launch of the Affordable Housing Project (AHP) took place in district of Brokopondo. This project will be executed nationwide whereas 40 percent of the homes that will be built will be allocated to single women.
- Due to the dire social and economic situation as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, several cash transfers have been increased since 2020. With regard to the **basic social protection services various financial assistance were raised** in the past five years such as:
 1. financial assistance to poor households (FBHH)(SRD 1750 monthly),
 2. financial assistance to persons with disabilities (FBMMEB) (SRD 2500 monthly),
 3. child allowance (AKB) (SRD 200 monthly) and
 4. general old age pension (AOV) (SRD 1750 monthly).
- **Financial Inclusion.** The MOSH implements a Social Beneficiary Program (SBP). Through this program the government is subsidizing in fuel, electricity, water, gas, basic food, transport and medicines through a purchasing power enhancement of SRD 1,800. The SBP system is designed for those already receiving benefits or support from the MOSH and other vulnerable groups who qualify but are not yet registered with the ministry.

- To compensate for higher fuel, food and energy costs, poor households (households receiving AOV, FBMMEB, BIS, FBZWHH) receive a cash transfer of SRD 1800 monthly. School clothing program has been incorporated into the policy of the MOSH and is intended for school-age children derived from the MOSH weak household database and childcare institutions aged 4 to 21 years. Through this program, students at primary, junior and senior secondary education are supported with the costs of education. The ministry distributes school bags, including school supplies, nationwide
- **Senior citizens support plans (Ministry of Home affairs)**
The Civil Servants Pension Fund (*'Pensioenfonds Suriname'*) managed by the government manages a pension system granting a pension to Surinamese civil servants and employees of State-owned enterprises.
- **Widows Pension System:** Governmental Pension Bureau manages a Widows Pension System for widows of civil servants and employees of State-owned enterprises. For the public sector in 2022 in total 16.848 persons have received retirement pension among which 5.185 women who received widow's pension. For the private sector in 2022 in total 1.222 person have received retirement pension among 526 women out of which 46 received partner's pension.
- **Special Transportation and Home care for the elderly and people with a disability is an ongoing policy measure by the** ministry of Social Affairs and Housing. There is special transportation "Zorg vervoer" for senior citizens and people with a disability for a lower rate. With this type of service, the ministry aims to increase and upgrade the mobility of these two groups and further promote their integration and participation within the society.

5. **Changing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes**

Since 2021 gender is included in the curricula of the Higher Vocational Education of the Civil Servants education of the Ministry of the Home Affairs. Different topics such as gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, gender equality, violence against women are addressed

2.4 Specific actions to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of marginalized groups of women and girls

With regard to discrimination, it is important to mention that Article 8 sub 2 of the Constitution states: No one shall be discriminated against on the grounds of birth, sex, race, language, religious origin, education, political beliefs, economic position or any other status. There are also provisions in several other laws which prohibit discrimination such as in the Penal Code of the Republic of Suriname, specifically the articles 126 sub a, 175, 175 sub a, 176, 176 sub b, 176 sub c and 500 sub a.

The Equal Treatment Labour Act , which is approved in October 2022 and entered into force in November 2022 states in article 4 paragraph 1 the following: "The employer may not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, skin color, ethnic origin, national origin, social origin, sexual inclination, orientation and gender identity, political opinion, affiliation, disability, HIV status and other chronic conditions, family responsibility, pregnancy, age or marital status when entering into the employment contract, when providing training to the employee, in the employment conditions, in working conditions, when promoting and when terminating the employment contract".

Further according to this law employers (with more than 30 employees) have the obligation to establish

internal complaint mechanisms and employers who have less than 30 employees and who are not able to handle the complaint themselves, need to submit the complaint to the Labour Inspection with the request to investigate the complaint.

1. Women living in remote and rural areas

Access to health services for women in the interior

- The Medical Mission is the primary health partner of the government in the interior. Via health care assistants, who have attended a 4-year training course approved by the Ministry of Health, a basic package of services is offered 24 hours through each outpatient clinic, which complies with international standards. In addition, health care assistants are supervised by local doctors at locations or from another village.
- The Ministry of Health has carried out various projects together with the Medical Mission. For example, the curriculum of the Health Care Assistant program is being revised. This review should raise the training to a higher level. This takes place in collaboration with the Medical Mission and the PAHO. Together with the 'One Stop Shop', the ministry has started in 2022 with a pilot project in which patients with chronic disorders will be guided in the most modern way. The goal of this project is to use the 'One Stop Shop' principle in every Medical Mission clinic. The PAHO HEARTS strategy for fighting cardiovascular diseases is being implemented by the Medical Mission.
- Though it is difficult to provide statistics it can be mentioned that access to sexual and reproductive health care is guaranteed. The Stichting Lobi Health Centre and also the Regional Health Department offers sexual and reproductive health care. In the interior the Medical Mission offers these services. The National Policy Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights 2019-2025 will be used as a guiding document to develop a national SRH strategic action plan in which access to SRH, family planning and sexual education (to be implemented by Ministry of Education) will be addressed.
- Through the renovation of policlinics and transformation of some of these clinics to community health centers, opening of ten (10) Health Education Units nationwide as part of prevention, information and education to society, Construction of 3 hospitals; 1 in rural areas (district of Wanica) and 2 in the interior (districts of Brokopondo and Marowijne), access to health care is also provided to women in remote areas. The Marwina Hospital in the district of Marowijne has not been operational for some time due to financial constraints. Steps have been taken to operationalize the Marwina Hospital in phases. In the first phase, a well-functioning emergency room, pharmacy and radiology department must be set up and a good ambulance service. In the second phase, work will be done on organizing specialist missions and attracting specialist staff for the hospital.

Access to quality education

Access to education in the interior was enhanced through the construction, renovation and rehabilitation of school facilities and teacher's houses. In the interior two schools were built in the Indigenous villages; one in Amatopo (2022) and one in Coeroenie (2023).

2. Rural women, maroon women and indigenous women living in the interior

Through a partnership between the Ministry of Home Affairs and UN Women in response to COVID- 19, several organizations have been supported to carry out projects during June - September 2021. The UJEMA foundation was able to purchase two brush cutters and train twenty women of Indigenous village Apoera within the district of Sipaliwini and surroundings in how to use the brush cutters for maintaining their farmlands. The Kooperatie van Groente Verbouwers van Pettenpolder-KGVP (Cooperative of vegetable growers of Pettenpolder) of the rural district of Nickerie was able to purchase seeds and distributing these among its 164 members (140 men and 24 women) and necessary maintenance equipment (two brush cutters and four spray tanks) for its farmland.

The Moederhart foundation of Nickerie also provided twenty persons (four men and sixteen women) with agriculture training and purchased plant material, seeds and equipment and handed these over to ten women. Further twenty-two government and non-government organizations from the districts of Paramaribo, Wanica, and Nickerie dealing with gender-based violence and vulnerable groups were provided with PPEs. The Bureau Gender Affairs has also been supported with office appliances.

3. Women living with disabilities

Continued efforts are made to strengthen the social protection programmes for those in need namely subsidies for utilities, subsidies for fuel, subsidized transportation for citizens and more specifically for persons with a disability. The Republic of Suriname has signed an agreement on January 17, 2019 with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to develop the “Basic Needs Trust Fund Program” (BNTF). The ministry of Finance is the main responsible for this grant. In this regard entrepreneurship training for people with disabilities have been provided namely computer hardware level 1 and 2, bicycle repair, hydroponics and advanced hydroponics training. In total 26 persons among which 21 males and 5 females with a disability has successfully completed one of the above-mentioned trainings.

4. Women living with HIV/AIDS

There is an ongoing review and improvement of the structure of the Elimination of Mother-To Child Transmission (EMTCT) program. The aim is to strengthen the link with the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) program and expanding the scope of Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) and Family Planning (FP) package, and improved adherence to the national Quality Control (QC) system for HIV testing.

In 2020 the fourth national strategic plan for HIV 2021-2027 was developed in consultation with various stakeholders. The main strategic objectives were redefined as follows:

- Goal 1: Accelerate Prevention to Reduce New HIV Infections;
- Goal 2: Reduce Morbidity and Mortality by Providing Treatment, Care and Adherence Support for All PLHIV; Goal 3: Improve HIV Resource Acquisition and Allocation;
- Goal 4: Strengthen Program Management and Response to Ensure Equity, Human Rights and Sustainability; and
- Goal 5: Strengthen Strategic Information to Guide Progress Toward Achievement of NSP Goals

5. Women with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities

The Surinamese Constitution does not explicitly protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation. There is a general article which prohibits discrimination. In March 2015, Suriname legislation was adapted; in particular, the Surinamese Penal Code was updated with articles sanctioning hate speech and the recent government administrations have taken the position that LGBT can consider them protected by this article, which included sexual orientation as a ground for non-discrimination complaints. Violation of this law can result in a prison sentence of up to one year or a fine.

The two (2) laws approved in 2022 by the National Assembly namely and the law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace and the Equal Treatment Labour Act respectively preventing and combating workplace related violence and sexual harassment, and the promotion of equal treatment in employment provide also protection to LGBTQIA individuals. E.g. the Equal Treatment Labour Act , which is approved in October 2022 and entered into force in November 2022 states in article 4 paragraph 1 the following: “The employer may not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, skin color, ethnic origin, national origin, social origin, sexual inclination, orientation and gender identity, political opinion, affiliation, disability, HIV status and other chronic conditions, family responsibility, pregnancy, age or marital status when entering into the employment contract, when providing training to the employee, in the employment conditions, in working conditions, when promoting and when terminating the employment contract”. While the Violence and Sexual Harassment on the work floor Act obliges in article 4 each employer to have a written policy in place aiming to prevent violence, intimidation and sexual harassment in the workplace and to record and resolve cases that have occurred. This written policy should include inter alia specific measures to protect 1. Young workers; 2. Migrant workers especially women; 3. Workers with disabilities; 4. Workers who are members of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples; 5. Workers living with HIV and other chronic diseases; and 6. Workers from marginalized communities.

2.5 The confluence of different crises affecting the implementation of the BPfA and measures taken

The COVID – 19 pandemic as well as the challenging economic crises haven’t influenced the Suriname’s commitment towards the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in reaching gender equality and empowerment of women. The government is constantly seeking partnerships with inter alia UN Agencies, Private sector and CSOs in addressing gender inequalities and is working towards a society where men and women can participate equally.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic/lockdowns the Government has also taken special measures to guarantee access to e.g. health services. Some of these measures included:

- The limited availability of services taking into account the safety measures. Some of the sexual and reproductive services can be reached through different social media platforms for e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. Special phone numbers have been made available through which the services could be reached.
- The Stichting Lobi Health Center provided online counseling and guidance, advice and psycho-social aid via appointments or phone.

- Pharmacies that women can use for, among other things, contraceptives were categorized by the COVID-19 Crisis Management Team as essential services and were open to clients during the lockdown. Women could have access to pre- and post-natal care offered by medical institutions.
- With regard to mental health, the Ministry of Health Suriname/Bureau Public Health facilitated a specific hotline for providing psychological assistance for persons in isolation and quarantine. The psychologists from the Bureau for Public Health/Medical Educational Bureau managed the hotline. Through online platforms, different topics are also discussed such as how to deal with stress during COVID-19, how to keep children occupied during lockdown etc.

Implementation of the project “Gender Based Violence (GBV) interventions in response to COVID-19 measures

During the COVID-19 pandemic, special attention has been given to domestic violence. Worth mentioning in this regard is the implementation of the project “Gender Based Violence (GBV) interventions in response to COVID-19 measures”. This project has been carried out in the period June 2020 – January 2021 and is a joint effort of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and Police, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Program together with civil society organizations and government institutions. This project consists of three components, namely: communication campaign, capacity building and establishment of referral pathways with the following objectives:

- a. Ensure continuation of essential Gender Based Violence (GBV)/Domestic Violence (DV) services including through remote service provision;
- b. Increased knowledge on GBV/DV and the available support services;
- c. Increased knowledge of stress coping mechanism to prevent violence; and
- d. Establishment of GBV/DV referral pathways for improved access to services

Rural women, maroon women and indigenous women living in the interior

Through a partnership between the Ministry of Home Affairs and UN Women in response to COVID- 19, several organizations have been supported to carry out projects during June - September 2021. The UJEMA foundation was able to purchase two brush cutters and train twenty women of Indigenous village Apoera within the district of Sipaliwini and surroundings in how to use the brush cutters for maintaining their farmlands. The Kooperatie van Groente Verbouwers van Pettenpolder-KGVP (Cooperative of vegetable growers of Pettenpolder) of the rural district of Nickerie was able to purchase seeds and distributing these among its 164 members (140 men and 24 women) and necessary maintenance equipment (two brush cutters and four spray tanks) for its farmland.

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2.6 Top five priorities for the coming five years

The selected priorities can be linked to the thematic areas identified in the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035. The identified priority areas for the period 2021 – 2035 are:

- Labour, income and poverty reduction
- Education
- Health
- Power and decision-making
- Gender-based violence
- Legal and regulatory framework
- Environment and climate change

1. Equality and non-discrimination under the law and access to justice

The principle of non-discrimination is also applied as much as possible in the formulation of current legislation. In this regard measures taken to eliminate discriminatory attributes towards the LGBTI on the labour market are e.g., the adoption of the law on equal treatment regarding labour matters in 2022.

This law contains a definition on distinction which includes both direct and indirect distinction, and reads as follows: “Direct and indirect distinction as well as the assignment to make a distinction based on race, sex, religion, skin color, ethnic origin, national origin, social origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, political opinion, disability or family responsibility, HIV status and other chronic diseases, pregnancy, age or marital status”.

Access to justice and judicial independence are fundamental to our legal system. Protecting the right to a fair trial, we uphold due process and procedural fairness, ensuring fair and unbiased hearings in court. To this end, the Court of Justice currently has 29 candidates in training, who will be adjudicating Civil and Criminal cases. The Attorney General has also launched a training program involving 16 candidates for the public prosecutor’s office.

In January 2024, the Legal Aid program was evaluated and recommendations were made for its improvement. In this regard the project decentralization of the judiciary, once in a month civil proceedings are held in the interior districts of Brokopondo and Marowijne.

2. Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls

The MOESC has recently launched three important documents

- Het Nationaal Onderwijs Beleidsplan Suriname (NOBS)2024-2031 (the National Education Policy Plan Suriname (NOBS) 2024-2031
- Verslag van het Onderwijscongres “Samen Onderwijs Toekomst Bouwen” (Report of the Education Congress "Building Education Future Together")
- Verslag over de onderwijsvernieuwing:” Van Silhouet naar Stralend Gelaat” (Report on the educational innovation: "From Silhouet to Radiant Face")

The National Education Policy Plan Suriname 2024-2031 serves as a roadmap to a more inclusive and future-proof education system, in which quality and innovation are central. The Policy goal with regard to curriculum is to develop a modern, relevant and future-oriented curriculum for all levels of education, with attention to a close connection between levels, learning routes, 21st century skills, sustainability, gender transformative education and art and cultural heritage.

3. Eliminating violence against women and girls

In recent years important targets were achieved with respect to the creation of an enabling environment with the approval of required legislation³ and development and implementation of policies, in particular the national policy on prevention of domestic Violence. In the gender vision policy document 2021- 2035 gender-based violence is identified as one of the priority areas. In close collaboration with the National Council for Domestic Violence (NCDV), the Bureau Gender Affairs (BGA) will coordinate and monitor activities on the prevention and elimination of domestic violence, as included in national plans.

The National Council on Domestic Violence (NCDV) is established from January 1, 2023 for the duration of 01 (one) year and thus until January 01, 2024. The Ministry of Justice and Police is currently in the process to re-establish the NCDV. The NCDV consists of representatives from the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Bureau of Women and Child Policy, the Victim Services Bureau, the Suriname Police Force, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Regional Development and Sport, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the foundations 'De Stem' and 'Stop Violence Against Women.'

The actions planned for the coming period are as follows:

- Updating the National Policy Plan Structural Approach to Domestic Violence
- Updating the referral pathway, threshold lowering and making domestic violence units child-friendly,
- Setting up a data collection and education system.

In addition, work will be done on workable structures, protocols and cooperation agreements to address domestic violence more effectively.

³1. Amendment of the Penal Code with regard to trafficking in women and minors in 2006 and 2015. 2. Amendment of Penal Code with regard to sexual crimes in 2009. 3. Law on Combatting Domestic Violence in 2009. 4. Law on Criminalisation of Stalking in 2012.

4. Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights

Within the Development Plan for 2022-2026, one of the measures in this development plan is to make healthcare affordable, accessible, and reliable through a decentralized range of specializations. In addition, the Ministry of Health has developed the following plans all aimed at achieving universal health:

Plan	Actors	Period
Development Plan 2017-2021	Government	2022-2026
National Adolescent Health Strategy	Ministry of Health	2018- 2025
National Strategic Health Plan	Ministry of Health	2018-2028
National Policy Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	Ministry of Health	2019-2025
National Policy Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights	Ministry of Health	2019-2025
Ministry of Health National Policy Document	Ministry of Health	2021- 2025
Maternal and Newborn Health Strategy	Ministry of Health	2021-2025
National Strategic Plan for HIV	Ministry of Health	2021-2027
Fourth National Strategic Plan for HIV	Ministry of Health	2021-2027
National Strategic Plan to prevent and control cervical cancer	Ministry of Health	2021-2030
“National Plan for the Renewal of Healthcare 2025” (Recovery Plan Health Care 2025), with an implementation period of 2022-2025	Ministry of Health	2022-2025
National Strategic Plan for Nursing	Ministry of Health	2023-2028
National Health Promotion Strategic Plan	Ministry of Health	2024-2028

5. Political participation and representation

- Within the framework of the organization of the 2025 elections, the Ministry of Home Affairs, responsible for the organization of the elections as well as the gender policy, has decided to incorporate a gender component within the elections. In addition to the quantitative equal participation of both men and women in all structures, all working arms of the elections within the ministry are trained in how to mainstream 'gender within their own area of work. The Ministry of the Home Affairs, with funding from the UNDP, is leading the Women, Leadership and Development project, implemented by Stas International. One of the activities implemented in august 2024 is the training 'Gender balance in elections' for Election working groups, Management team elections, District commissioners, officials of the Bureau Gender Affairs and Election commissions.
- The Excellence, Women First Campaign, was launched in June 2024 as part of the Women, Leadership and Development project. This campaign is implemented by the NGO Stas International and is financed by the UNDP and supported by the Ministry of Home affairs. As opposed to quantity, this campaign emphasizes quality in general and inclusiveness of women and youth in particular in the highest institutions of State
- The gender vision Policy Document 2021-2025 contains activities to increase women’s political participation and representation.

6. Promoting gender equality as part of environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies

In 2020, the UN SDG Fund Joint programme had been established which consisted of three (3) projects, namely:

- **Roadmap for a Sustainable Financial System for Suriname**
The aim of this Joint Programme (JP) was to develop a National Roadmap for a Sustainable Financial System to reorient the flow of international and local resources toward more inclusive and gender responsive sustainable actions (i.e. banking, public and private sector investments) in the Republic of Suriname. The Joint Programme was intended to mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources. It worked with the implementation of sustainable forest management and other nature-based solutions linked with the other Suriname NDCs priorities while strengthening scientific and technical cooperation and partnerships. Through the JP, the United Nations has been supporting the Ministry of Spatial Planning & Environment on the development of the National Climate Agreement (NCA). This NCA will be accompanied by a roadmap of actions over the short-to-medium terms, to address climate change, build awareness and capacity and increase the flow of capital towards climate solutions.

An addendum was development and launched by the BGA in close collaboration with UNFPA in 2023 specifically for the priority area Environment and Climate Change of the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 - 2035 focusing on inter – alia financial inclusion.

- **Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA) programme**
Empowering Suriname's Pineapple Industry. The Sustainable Pineapple Value Chain Development project implemented in the framework of the Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA) in Suriname is a 4-year joint programme funded by the Joint SDG fund and co-led by FAO and UNIDO, with support from ILO and UNFPA. The comprehensive program provides training, capacity building, and access to finance for smallholder farmers to adopt organic and regenerative production practices. It also facilitates investments in processing facilities and infrastructure to add value while minimizing food loss and waste. **This project is ongoing.**
- **Leave No One Behind project (LNOB)**
Leaving No One Behind, Building Resilience, and Improving Livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) in Suriname. This programme has been finalized in June 2024 and the Government of Suriname must implement the policy document developed during this project namely: Blueprint Integrated Policy framework and Addendum to the Policy Framework.

7. Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building

- **Three policy documents have been developed namely:**
 1. **SURINAME Aligned National Action Programme to COMBAT LAND DEGRADATION (2023–2030)**
The Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment is responsible for this project. The Target population of this project are local people, especially women and youth in decision making. The Aim of this project is to spell out practical steps and measures to be taken to combat degradation and drought in specific ecosystems. The aligned NAP seeks to deliver an integrated understanding of: (a) the biophysical and socio-economic causes and impacts of land degradation; (b) the effectiveness of land management practices adopted to prevent or mitigate land degradation; and (c) the important elements of the institutional, economic and policy environment that need to be in place for Sustainable Land Management (SLM).

2. Implementation of the National Communications for Behavioural Change Strategy & Action Plan for Suriname targeting the Climate Change and Disaster Recovery Coordinating Agencies (EnGenDER Project).

The aim of this project is to increase application of gender equality and rights-based approaches by national climate change and DRR coordinating bodies.

3. Enhancing Eco-systems and Coastal Protection in Suriname for Climate Change Resilience (2023 - 2026).

This project addresses the critical decline of coastal ecosystems, particularly mangroves, in Suriname's Saramacca and Coronie districts, exacerbated by climate change and human activities. Coastal communities in these areas face significant barriers, including a lack of capacity for ecosystem-based management, inadequate participation in climate monitoring, and insufficient knowledge management. To tackle these challenges, the project aims to empower communities, particularly women and girls, to engage in climate change adaptation, disaster response, and ecosystem restoration efforts. Key activities include establishing a community consultation body, providing education and training on climate change, and implementing mangrove restoration and hydrological interventions. The project will collaborate with government agencies, NGOs, CBOs, local businesses, and educational institutions, benefiting diverse stakeholders, including government employees, community members, educators, and young engineers. Ultimately, the project seeks to enhance climate resilience and protect coastal ecosystems, benefiting over 20,000 people in the region.

- **Implementation of “The Caribbean Organizations for a Resilient Environment (CORE)” (2023-2027).**

The CORE Project aims to increase resilience to climate change of vulnerable groups in 8 beneficiary countries across the Caribbean: Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname. More specifically, project beneficiaries include Caribbean organizations: Conservation Trust Funds, Women’s Rights Organizations, Environmental Organizations and Youth Organizations. In partnership with the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund, Global Affairs Canada will contribute a total of CAD 8 million to the CORE project. CAD 4 million of this will be used for small to medium grants to local environmental and women-rights organizations to implement inclusive and gender responsive nature-based solutions (NBS), including ecosystem-based adaptation (EBA). The contribution from Global Affairs Canada will be matched by CBF from the existing CBF Endowment Fund.

- **Changing discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes**

The Gender vision policy document 2021-2035 contains interventions to achieve long term goals such as the eradication of enduring, discriminatory stereotypes of the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society and to take temporary, special measures to combat gender discrimination. In this regard the Bureau Gender Affairs of MoHA, regularly provides training and information sessions on gender and gender-related issues to various target groups on own initiative or at the request of organizations. In these sessions, gender biases and stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of men and women in the family and society are addressed. Since 2021 gender is included in the curricula of the Higher Vocational Education of the Civil Servants education of the Ministry of the Home Affairs. Different topics such as gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, gender equality, violence against women are addressed.

SECTION 3: PROGRESS ACROSS THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

3.1 Inclusive development, shared prosperity and decent work

3.1.1 Actions to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment

1. Measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace

- For addressing sexual harassment at the workplace, the Ministry of Justice and Police developed a policy memorandum and a complaint mechanism. In the Ministry, a complaints committee for sexual harassment in the workplace was established in October 2020 for a period of three years. The complaints committee consisted of representatives of the Public Prosecution office, the Suriname Police Force, the Suriname Fire Brigade, the Security and Assistance Service Suriname, the Corps Penitentiary Officials and the Bureau for Women and Children; all departments of the Ministry of Justice and Police.
- In December 2020 a reporting unit “Meld Molest op de Werkvloer” for harassment was established within the Ministry of Defense.
- The adoption of the law **Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace** by the National Assembly in 2022. The law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace contains provisions for the mandatory establishment of an internal complaints committee and complaints procedure by employers who employ more than 30 employees. The complaint committee is authorized and required to investigate complaints of violence, intimidation or sexual intimidation and to advise the employer, within thirty (30) working days, on the measures to be taken, including dismissal for urgent reasons. The advice of the committee is binding.

2. Improved financial inclusion and access to credit through the following programs

- **Fund for** small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to stimulate and support new small and medium-sized entrepreneurship. This fund has been relaunched in 2022 and is being managed since October 2023 by Trustbank Amanah.
- **Suriname Growth Enterprises (SURGE) project 2023-2026**
The Suriname Competitiveness and Sector Diversification (SCSD) Program, with the Suriname Growth Enterprises (SURGE) project as an important component, is aimed at increasing the economic competitiveness and diversification of the sectors in Suriname. The emphasis on encouraging female entrepreneurship is commendable as it can contribute to more inclusive growth and broader societal benefits. The launch of the SURGE project at the Office of the President in July 2023 underlines the government's commitment and support to this initiative. Within this group of companies and associated outsourcers there are 19 individual companies and 8 value chain groups, which together comprise 163 outsourcers. Of this group, 134 come from indigenous communities and belong to the tribal population. This inclusive approach emphasizes the diversity of the supported group. As a result, 84 people are directly supported, including 6 women, 18 members of indigenous communities and 40 people of tribal descent. The selection of participants took place on the basis of established criteria by a committee consisting of sector experts from both the private sector and the government.
- **The First National Financial Inclusion and Education Strategy (NFIES) for 2024-2027** was launched on June 28, 2024 by the Central Bank of Suriname I to promote financial inclusion and education in the

country. The strategy aims to address challenges such as the lack of access to formal financial services, particularly for vulnerable groups and those in the informal sector. The NFIES outlines a comprehensive plan with priority areas including policies and regulations, digitizing financial products and services, entrepreneurship, financial education and consumer protection, and data infrastructure. The strategy emphasizes increasing access to digital financial services, improving financial literacy, supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, and enhancing financial infrastructure. It also establishes a governance structure, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, and outlines potential risks and mitigation measures. Overall, the NFIES aims to create a more inclusive financial system in Suriname, empowering individuals and businesses and fostering economic growth.

3.1.2 Actions to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work, promote work-life and family balance and strengthen the rights of paid care workers

1. Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave

Monitoring bodies have been established to oversee compliance with anti-discrimination laws and to address grievances. For example, the National Inclusive Labor Market Commission has started raising awareness about promoting equality in the labor market and in the workplace. With this, the committee has taken the first step to give shape to the objective of the Employment Equal Treatment Act, which came into effect in November 2022. This law aims to ensure equal treatment in both the labor market and the workplace.

The aim is also to eliminate discrimination on the basis of, among other things, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, age, as well as people with disabilities. Furthermore, the Fund for Parental Leave has been established to ensure maternity and paternity leave for employees in the private sector and has started paying wages during maternity and paternity leave. This fund has been established as a result of the law on Family Work Protection (Maternity protection Act of 10 June 2019) which came into effect in 2019.

2. Promoted decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers

In February 2023 a new four-year Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2023-2026 was signed between the ILO and tripartite partners. The third DWCP is better aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and focuses, among other things, on supporting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including in the interior. Furthermore, in the pursuit of promoting Decent Work for all, the programme will promote the transition from the informal to the formal economy. Transition to the formal economy is necessary for adequate protection of vulnerable workers in informal work.

3.1.3 In the past five years, what actions has your country taken to reduce the gender digital divide?

Taken measures to promote gender-responsive STEM education

- The implementation of the UNDP Project: **“Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in STEM” implemented by the BGA within the period** November 2023- March 2024.
Various ICT trainings were provided to children from Children’s home within the districts of Paramaribo, Wanica and Nickerie. Furthermore, Introduction of STEM/ICT-activities for girls from an indigenous village (Matta) within the district of Para and girls living in a children’s home in the district of Commewijne. Children from the community organization Stibula in the district of Paramaribo received training in Windows, MS Office Word, PowerPoint and Canva while boys, girls and women from age 14 years from the Shelter Haddasah (in the district of Wanica) received the same training.
- As of 2022, The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs (AWJ) provides computer training to various target groups such as teenage mothers, dropouts and disadvantaged youth within various districts.

3.2 Poverty eradication, social protection and social services

3.2.1 Actions to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls

1. Promoted poor women’s access to decent work through active labour market policies (e.g. job training, skills, employment subsidies, etc.) and targeted measures

- Vocational trainings to broaden the chances of men and women in the labour market such as: 1. the project “Wroko Foe Mek Moni” (Freely translated: “Work to make money”) that provides free vocational training for people in the age group 16 - 40 years throughout Suriname; and 2. the vocational training in electrical installations for houses, and in gas, water and sanitation installations, of which women have successfully completed the training.
- ICT related courses have been provided to teenage mothers, young girls from children’s homes and vulnerable households, and to female domestic violence victims, with the aim to increase their chances in the ICT sector and to decent work.
- In march 2023 Trustbank Amanah introduced a special financing product for female micro entrepreneurs, in order to make their business a success.

2. Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services

- To empower farmers, to cope with inter alia climate change, training and information sessions have been delivered covering various topics, such as post-harvest management; credit facilities; and gender in agriculture.
- In October 2022 the soft launch of the Affordable Housing Project took place in district of Brokopondo. This project will be executed nationwide whereas 40 percent of the homes that will be built will be allocated to single women.
- In the context of food security and food safety, various training courses have been provided to stakeholders in the different regions of Suriname, including plant propagation, construction of nurseries, construction of vegetable gardens, Good Agricultural Practices, Pest Risks Analyses, Communication skills, etc. Within the project Cassava Industry – Market Assessment and Technology Validation and

Dissemination, the training “Farmer Field School” (FFS) was provided, in which the knowledge and skills of Agricultural Extension Officers and Researchers of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries were increased.

- To guarantee food security, vegetable gardens are set up at educational institutions, childcare centers and homes for the elderly. The children and the elderly are thus encouraged to plant their own fruit and vegetables

3. Supported women’s entrepreneurship, access to markets, and business development activities

- **Fund for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SME)** to stimulate and support new small and medium-sized entrepreneurship. This fund has been relaunched in 2022 and is being managed since October 2023 by Trustbank Amanah.

- **Suriname Growth Enterprises (SURGE) project 2023-2026**

The Suriname Competitiveness and Sector Diversification (SCSD) Program, with the Suriname Growth Enterprises (SURGE) project as an important component, is aimed at increasing the economic competitiveness and diversification of the sectors in Suriname. The emphasis on encouraging female entrepreneurship is commendable as it can contribute to more inclusive growth and broader societal benefits. The launch of the SURGE project at the Office of the President in July 2023 underlines the government's commitment and support to this initiative. Within this group of companies and associated outsourcers there are 19 individual companies and 8 value chain groups, which together comprise 163 outsourcers. Of this group, 134 come from indigenous communities and belong to the tribal population. This inclusive approach emphasizes the diversity of the supported group. As a result, 84 people are directly supported, including 6 women, 18 members of indigenous communities and 40 people of tribal descent. The selection of participants took place on the basis of established criteria by a committee consisting of sector experts from both the private sector and the government.

- A nationwide training program is launched in February 2024 by the ministry of Economic Affairs entrepreneurship and technological innovation (EZOTI) that is currently being executed for starting and restarting entrepreneurs. This program includes a 3-day training “Basic Entrepreneurship Skills” and aims, among other things, to stimulate entrepreneurship to promote the economy in Suriname.
- **To address poverty and build resilience, various training activities have been executed by various institutions such as the Foundation for Labour Mobilization and Development (SAO), the Foundation Productive Work Units (SPWE), the ministry of Economic Affairs, entrepreneurship and technological innovation (EZOTI), to empower women, such as:**
 - Through the project 'Supporting self-reliance among people with disabilities', training and guidance have been provided to two visually impaired micro-entrepreneurs of which one is a female entrepreneur.
 - Nationwide training program for starting and restarting entrepreneurs. This program includes a 3-day training “Basic Entrepreneurship Skills” and aims, among other things, to stimulate entrepreneurship to promote the economy in Suriname.
 - Vocational trainings to broaden the chances of men and women in the labour market such as: 1. the project “Wroko Foe Mek Moni” (Freely translated: “Work to make money”) that provides free vocational training for people in the age group 16 - 40 years throughout Suriname; and 2. the

- vocational training in electrical installations for houses, and in gas, water and sanitation installations, of which also women have successfully completed the training.
- ICT related courses have been provided to teenage mothers, young girls from children’s homes and vulnerable households, and to female domestic violence victims, with the aim to increase their chances in the ICT sector and to decent work
 - **Other activities to promote entrepreneurship and support micro-small and medium-sized enterprises**, also in rural areas with the focus on indigenous and tribal communities were implemented with international donor organizations such as:
 - The Republic of Suriname has signed an agreement in 2019 with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) to develop the “Basic Needs Trust Fund Program” (BNTF). The ministry of Finance is the main responsible for this grant. In this regard entrepreneurship training for people with disabilities have been provided namely computer hardware level1 and 2, bicycle repair, hydroponics and advanced hydroponics training. In total 26 persons among which 21 males and 5 females with a disability has successfully completed one of the above-mentioned trainings.
 - Knowledge sharing on ISO standards for cassava production. In 2023 the FAO supported the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries in strengthening the capacities of MSMSs and integrating them into regional and national value chains. Thirty-five (35) stakeholders, among of which women, were engaged in this project.
 - The promotion of high-value products through National Fairs for Producers and exporters. This initiative was funded by the EU under the Suriname Agriculture Market Access Project (SAMAP) More than 35 grantees and Value Chain Platform (VCP) members participated in this initiative, conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries and the ministry of Economic Affairs, Entrepreneurship and Technological innovation.
 - Other activities implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Fisheries **to further strengthen the agricultural sector**, are establishing Value Chain Platforms for Cassava, Fruit and Vegetables, and Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), reviving the Credit Guarantee Fund to facilitate access to finance for local entrepreneurs, and training of financial professionals.
 - **The Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA) programme**, jointly implemented by FAO, UNIDO, ILO, and UNFPA, worked to drive advancements in Suriname's agrifood systems through its innovative approach to pineapple chain development. The ASTA programme has also played a crucial role in structuring innovative financial mechanisms; by engaging with financial entities like Trust Bank Amanah (TBA) and National Development Bank (NoB), the program is working to tailor concessional loan instruments and microfinance programs to support pineapple farmers. Through ASTA, the capacity of 233 farmers was strengthened, focusing on pineapple production, gender equality, and participatory decision-making. The introduction of modern organic pineapple practices, including soil health enhancement techniques, has benefited over 300 pineapple farmers, enhancing production sustainability.

4. Introduced or strengthened social protection programmes for women and girls (e.g. cash transfers for women with children, public works/employment guarantee schemes for women of working-age, pensions for older women)

- To eradicate poverty and strengthen social protection the National Social Security System is still in place after the adoption and implementation of the three (3) social laws namely the Minimum Hour Wage Act (S.B. 2014 no. 112), the General Pension Benefits Act (S.B. 2014 no. 113) and a National Basic Health Insurance Act (S.B. 2014 no. 114). Important to note is that the Minimum Hour Wage Act of 2014 has been replaced by the Minimum Wage Act of 2019. Some amendments to the Act of 2019 have been adopted in 2024.
- Due to the dire social and economic situation as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, **several cash transfers have been increased** since 2020. With regard to the basic social protection services various financial assistance were raised in the past five years such as financial assistance to poor households (SRD 1750 monthly), financial assistance to persons with disabilities (SRD 2500 monthly), child allowance (SRD 200 monthly) and general old age pension (SRD 1750 monthly).
- To compensate for higher fuel, food and energy costs, poor households (households receiving AOV, FBMMEB, BIS, FBZWHH) receive a cash transfer of SRD 1800 per month.
- **Senior citizens support plans (Ministry of Home affairs)**
The Civil Servants Pension Fund (*'Pensioenfonds Suriname'*) managed by the government manages a pension system granting a pension to Surinamese civil servants and employees of State-owned enterprises.
- **Widows Pension System:** Governmental Pension Bureau manages a Widows Pension System for widows of civil servants and employees of State-owned enterprises. For the public sector in 2022 in total 16.848 persons have received retirement pension among which 5.185 women who received widow's pension
For the private sector in 2022 in total 1.222 person have received retirement pension among 526 women out of which 46 received partner's pension.

5. Introduced/strengthened low-cost legal services for women living in poverty

- The government provides legal assistance and legal aid free of charge to the financially weak irrespective of sex, through the Legal Aid Bureau (Bureau Rechtszorg) of the Ministry of Justice and Police. Free legal includes counseling services in all areas of law provided by legal officials, and if necessary, clients are referred to lawyers who are paid by the government for their services.
- In January 2024, the Legal Aid program was evaluated and recommendations were made for its improvement. In this regard within the project decentralization of the judiciary, once month civil proceedings are held in the interior districts of Brokopondo and Marowijne.

3.2.2 Actions to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

Introduced or strengthened social protection for women of working age (e.g. unemployment benefits, public works programmes, social assistance)

- School clothing program has been incorporated into the policy of the MOSH and is intended for school-age children derived from the MOSH weak household database and childcare institutions aged 4 to 21 years. Through this program, students at primary, junior and senior secondary education are supported with the costs of education. The ministry distributes school bags, including school supplies, nationwide
- The MOSH has provided a nutrition program to support the socially vulnerable in society with food packages.
- **Special Transportation and Home care for the elderly and people with a disability is an ongoing policy measure by the** ministry of Social Affairs and Housing. There is special transportation “Zorg vervoer” for senior citizens and people with a disability for a lower rate. With this type of service the ministry aims to increase and upgrade the mobility of these two groups and further promote their integration and participation within the society.

3.2.3 Gender-responsive social protection innovations during the covid-19 pandemic

The social protection response to the pandemic was significant but did not spur any gender-responsive innovations.

- The Ministry of Social Affairs and Public housing has due to the COVID19 pandemic and it is extremely high number of COVID deaths decided to cover funeral costs for relatives who were unable to come up with some of the funeral expenses.
- The government implemented a financial support programme to provide employees, SMEs and self-employed who lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a monthly fee to support them to meet their *basic needs*. The programme started in May 2020 and lasted until November 2021, with some interruptions due to financial, administrative or logistic challenges. An on-line registration process was executed to reach a broader audience and the payments were made in cash or by bank transfer.

3.2.4 Actions to improve health outcomes for women and girls

1. Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, maternal health and HIV services

Maternal and child mortality

Maternal and child mortality remains a challenge. Despite progress in certain areas, there are still significant risks and bottlenecks that need to be addressed. The most common causes of maternal mortality are complications during pregnancy and childbirth, such as bleeding, infections, and high blood pressure. Child mortality is mainly caused by infectious diseases, malnutrition, and birth complications.

To address the issue of maternal and child mortality, the Family and Community Health Department of the Ministry of Health has implemented a series of interventions:

- Enhanced Prenatal Care: The intention is to create a comprehensive prenatal care program.

- The expansion of digitalization of healthcare data through the introduction of the Perinatal Information System (SIP) Plus: A digital system in which pregnant women will be placed from the moment they arrive at the doctor's office. These pregnant women will receive regular medical check-ups to detect and treat complications early. All necessary data will be included in this system. This will help to be able to monitor the pregnant woman as with the general practitioner as well as the women's doctor and to reduce maternal mortality.
- The training of Health Workers: Regular refreshment training sessions will be organized for midwives, nurses, and doctors to provide them with the latest knowledge and skills in maternal and childcare.
- Education and community engagement: Information sessions are currently conducted to educate communities about the importance of prenatal care, breastfeeding and healthy nutrition.
- Certification of hospitals.
- Trainings for a general re-certification of the hospitals under Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) in collaboration with UNICEF personnel will be implemented.

2. Developed gender-sensitive approaches to the prevention and treatment of chronic and non-communicable diseases (e.g. cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes)

To improve cardiovascular health the WHO HEARTS technical package is introduced in Suriname in 2022. Through the implementation of this package in primary care, the Ministry of Health tries to control cardiovascular diseases in Suriname. The package consists of six modules and an implementation guide. In order to implement HEARTS as effectively as possible in Suriname, the ministry has decided to revise the existing hypertension guideline. To this end, a Committee on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) protocols has been set up. In the development of the protocols, all relevant actors have given their input and pledged their cooperation so that these protocols can be successfully complied with.

From 29 to 31 August 2022 the Ministry of Health held a quality improvement workshop. The workshop was intended for healthcare professionals with clinical or managerial experience, who also possess teaching and mentoring skills. The HEARTS initiative, which focuses on improving hypertension control as part of a broader cardiovascular disease prevention and treatment program, aims to strengthen primary care in Suriname. The program is executed in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). This program, which was introduced in Suriname in January 2022, is designed to transform health systems, standardize treatment, and provide an integrated approach to the management of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and chronic kidney disease. During the workshop, participants were trained in applying the HEARTS quality improvement methodology and in the use of clinical and management tools that are essential for scaling up the HEARTS program.

3. Provided gender-responsiveness training for health service providers

With regard to suicide the Ministry of Health in partnership with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has provided crucial training and support to frontline health workers for the prevention of self-harm and suicide. These efforts include early detection, effective management, and raising awareness. In this regard a training was held in May 2024. By providing training for health workers, efforts have been made to strengthen the capacity of frontline health workers. The training focused on preventing self-harm/suicide, the negative impact of stigma when seeking help, the warning signs, and the role of creating awareness in the prevention of self-harm/suicide.

Health professionals have also been trained, some of whom are involved in collecting data for the implementation of a self-harm surveillance system.

3.2.5 Actions to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls

Provided gender equality and human rights training for teachers and other education professionals

- A training 'Gender-sensitive Prevention & Approach to Behavioral Problems (GPAG 4)' was carried out for educators.
- Implementation of the Basic Life Skills (BLS) AHPE programma: Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)

3.3 Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

3.3.1 Forms of gender-based violence prioritized for action

1. Sexual violence and marital rape.

2. Domestic violence committed by other family or household members.

3. Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and workplaces

The Ministry of Justice and Police is currently in the process to re-establish the NCDV. The NCDV consists of representatives from the Public Prosecutor's Office, the Bureau of Women and Child Policy, the Victim Services Bureau, the Suriname Police Force, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Regional Development and Sport, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the foundations 'De Stem' and 'Stop Violence Against Women.'

The actions planned for the coming period are as follows:

- Updating the National Policy Plan Structural Approach to Domestic Violence
- Updating the referral pathway, threshold lowering and making domestic violence units child-friendly,
- Setting up a data collection and education system.

In addition, work will be done on workable structures, protocols and cooperation agreements to address domestic violence more effectively.

- In November 2019, the **National Women's Health Report** was launched. This study was done by the IDB. The NCDV made its contribution in this process. The report can be downloaded from the IDB website.
- The project "**Gender Based Violence (GBV) interventions in response to COVID – 19 measures**" was implemented in the period June 2020- January 2021. This project was a joint effort of the ministry of Home Affairs, the ministry of Justice and Police, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Development Program together with civil society organizations and government institutions. The project produced the following results:
 - Video communication material has been developed and broadcasted in various languages through television from December 2020 to January 2021. In general, the message was that gender based violence is condemned and that services for survivors are available.

- Three individuals have followed a regional train the trainer's program virtually and subsequently they have nationally trained 22 trainers from different organizations during three to four months in remote GBV case management service provision. During all training sessions the gender and survivor-centred approach perspective was constantly emphasized. These 22 trainers then provided training for various target groups. Currently preparations are being made to continue with the training sessions for service providers and individuals who act as first responders but are not GBV specialists.
 - A mapping of available GBV service providers has been conducted and referral pathways have been developed in booklet form, as well as a poster, containing information about various GBV services. Hard copies of the booklet, posters and the link to the referral pathways have been disseminated nationwide. The booklet and posters are also available in digital format. Currently these referral pathways are being updated.
- **“Consultancy to improve reports of domestic and sexual violence in Suriname”**
The Ministry of Justice and Police (JusPol) started in the year 2020 in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) with the implementation of the project "Consultancy to improve reports of domestic and sexual violence in Suriname". This project is funded by the Regional Grant Project of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The aim of this project is to create a more streamlined and robust approach to domestic violence reporting in Suriname, through an evidence-based reform of the current data collection system of the Suriname Police Force. The data collection system of the Department of Criminal Information Care (DCIV) of the KPS is being upgraded so that data on domestic violence can be recorded on the basis of the standard domestic violence registration form
- 4. Violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (e.g. online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)**

National legislation

As per 2009 (SB 2009 No. 122), the National Assembly started to adapt existing legislation to digital development in order to protect young people in particular against pornography. Articles 292 and 293 of the Criminal Code have been expanded to criminalize virtual pornography. The expansion is a result of the Cyber Crime Convention.

The Criminal Code was further amended in 2015 (SB 2015 No. 44). In the articles dealing with insult and discrimination (Articles 175 to 176c), among others, 'data from automated works' have been added to the means of inciting discrimination or hatred or violent action against a group of people.

In 2020, the National Assembly once again amended the Criminal Code (SB 2020 No.42). This concerns, among other things, the criminalization of some conduct that involves the use of automated works or communication services. This includes:

1. enticing children to share intimacies (so-called grooming, article 292a);
2. the intentional and unlawful production and publication of images of sexual conduct of a person (Article 307); and

3. the intentional and unlawful production and publication of shocking images in which a person is involved (Article 307a).

The foregoing supplements and tightens the many existing cybercrime provisions in the Criminal Code.

5. Trafficking in women and girls

- In 2019, the Government of Suriname renewed the mandate of the inter-ministerial Trafficking in Persons Working Group for three years and launched a National Plan of Action for the prevention and response to trafficking in persons under the pillars of “Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, Partnership and Policy.
- According to the TIP 2019 Action Plan, the following activities have been undertaken:
 - A TIP conference with Embassies and other stakeholders was organized. On international and regional level there are bilateral plans to widen cooperation against trafficking between Suriname and other States.
 - The extensive media awareness campaign is continued, addressing the following issues:
 - a. Spots that serve as information are broadcast via radio and television.
 - b. Docutainment/ sketches, specially recorded for awareness purposes, have been broadcasted on various television channels.
 - c. Bill Boards were placed in locations that are classified as risk areas, where many foreigners reside.
 - d. TIP posters have been placed at all police stations, border posts (Albina and Nickerie) and the Johan Adolf Pengel Airport.
 - e. Awareness programs on trafficking are being carried out for Maroon People and women and girls in the interior. These programs are broadcasted in the languages Dutch, Sranan Tongo and Aucan (local language of one of the Maroon tribes) through Radio Koyeba, as this radio station is popular among the Maroon community.
 - f. A total of 325 police officers from police stations throughout the country were trained including 1 doctor, 2 health workers and 10 members of the Military Police from Nickerie.
- Furthermore, a new 24-hour trafficking hotline was launched. The TIP hotline 155 was evaluated and a protocol will be developed for the hotline.
- With regard to the TIP Unit of the Suriname Police Force, there is a protocol in place for first response in case of TIP, which entails among others:
 - a. Special care for minors, foreign victims often victims of loverboys.
 - b. Counseling and other services to trafficking victims in partnership with the country’s psychiatric institute.
 - c. A shelter, which is gender-neutral with 24 hours protection.

3.3.2 Actions prioritized to address gender-based violence

1. Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation

- **The Law on Domestic Violence has been evaluated** by the Women's Right Centre (WRC) in 2022 with funding from the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and with support of the Ministry of Justice and Police, representatives of all relevant stakeholders and many young volunteers. On March 8th, 2024, the Women's Rights Center presented its recommendations for amending the law on Domestic Violence to the chair of the National Assembly (DNA).
- Adoption of the law on equal treatment regarding labour matters in 2022.
- Adoption of the law Violence and Sexual Harassment on the Workplace in 2022.

2. Introduced, updated or expanded national action plans on ending violence against women and girls

- **The Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035** launched in 2019, contains interventions to tackle and reduce Gender based violence and contributes to achieving the long-term goals as set in the gender policy document.
- **The formulation a National Action Plan for Children, 2019-2021** by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing. The general objective of this Action Plan is, facilitating coordinated and integrated implementation of legislation, policies and programs aimed at creating optimal development opportunities for all children in Suriname. Seven priority areas have been identified, focusing on the realization of multiple strategic goals. One of the priority areas is the prevention and reduction of violence against children.

3. Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice

- The judiciary has specifically appointed **judges to deal with protection order appeals** in cases of domestic violence, besides their existing regular duties.
- **Essential Services Package for Women and Girls subject to violence (2022)**. This regional project has been carried out in Suriname by the United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA). The overall objective of this assignment was to contribute to the eradication of GBV by assessing and addressing key essential services. UNFPA aims to provide support to the government of Suriname in providing greater access to a coordinated set of essential and quality multi-sectoral services for all women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence. The initiative aims to identify the required actions to be taken by government officials and sectors leads, in order to ensure essential services to be provided by the health, social services, police, and justice sectors (the "Essential Services") as well as guidelines for the coordination of essential services and the governance of coordination processes and mechanisms (the "Coordination Guidelines).
- The launch of the seminar on the Law on Domestic Violence for the sitting and standing judicial (Magistracy) in November 2023.

4. Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence

- There are also **programmes initiated for perpetrators**. Psychological help is being offered by psychologists, religious leaders, and NGOs such as The Foundation Stop Violence Against Women. Counseling is also offered to perpetrators of all forms of violence -including domestic violence- in prison. Data of the various programs are regularly gathered and the programs are evaluated.

- **The establishment of Hotlines** as part of a pilot project, to identify cases of sexual abuse within local communities. The hotlines were set up in different areas for ease of accessibility and to avoid the threshold fear among citizens.
- In December 2020 a **reporting unit “Meld Molest op de Werkvloer”** for harassment was established within the Ministry of Defense. As per August 04, 2022 six cases have been received. There were 6 victims of which 5 female and 1 male. The perpetrators were all male. In the meantime 5 cases were successfully dealt with by the Unit, while one is referred to the military police and is still in process.
- **The services of the Government Foundation “Child Help Line 123”**, as per 2021 called as “Mi Lijn”, has upgraded its services to a 24-hour helpline for children and adolescents and to adults who are victims of abuse. So far it has been noted that most of the adult callers are women
- Until February 2024, there was only **one Government shelter** for women victims of domestic violence and their children up to 12 years old. Currently, the government has no shelters for victims of domestic violence. However, there are two shelters run by NGOs. It should be noted that at least two civil society organizations also operate victim shelters for women and their children. These are:
 - The Foundation Weid Mijn Lammeren has opened in June 2020 a shelter “Hadassah”. The Hadassah shelter provides a safe home for homeless children, single mothers and vulnerable women including women victims of domestic violence.
 - The Foundation Sticris, a women's shelter has reopened, after nine years, her doors on 11 December 2020. The shelter is also for women victims of domestic violence.

5. **Introduced or strengthened strategies and interventions to prevent violence against women and girls**

- **To increase access to services for child victims of violence**, the Ministry of Justice and Police established ‘**Meldpunten Kindermishandeling’ (Centers for Reporting Child abuse)** in communities with relatively high prevalence of child maltreatment. In 2019 several actions have been implemented to further strengthen the delivery of services at the afore-mentioned Centers, such as development of operational plans, capacity building of service providers and establishment of case management teams for enhancing an integrated approach in serving child victims of domestic violence.
- In the context of tackling violence against children, the Bureau for Women and Child Policy prepared and implemented an awareness program in collaboration with UNICEF in 2019. The aim of the program was to raise awareness among children in schools about different forms of violence especially child abuse, bullying, sexual abuse and cybercrime. In order to provide information to the target group, officials of various departments of the Ministry of Justice and Police in particular the Bureau for Family Law Affairs, Opa Doeli, Judicial Child Protection, Bureau Victim Care, Police Youth Affairs, Department of Justice Nickerie, Legal Care and hotlines were trained as educators. The launch took place on 18 December 18, 2019 and a total of 8 information sessions were conducted up to January 2020.
- **Education on human rights** is incorporated in the curricula of the Law Enforcement Officers

training. In this context seminars in identifying discrimination and violence against the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community were organized by the LGBT Platform Suriname.

- Since 2021 gender is included in the curricula of the Higher Vocational Education. Different topics such as gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, gender equality, violence against women are addressed.

3.3.3 Strategies to prevent gender-based violence

Raising public awareness to change attitudes and behaviours

- In close cooperation with CSOs, the BGA has tried to raise awareness on gender based violence in the past period and is continuing to do so. In this regard the BGA takes part in the Orange Day Campaign on monthly basis, which was launched in Suriname in 2015 by the minister of Home Affairs and the Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaign annually.
- Activities carried out between 2015 to 2024 includes public awareness raising activities on gender and domestic violence for the general public, communication officials of the government, priests and youngsters from different denominations, civil servants, high level government officials, CBOs, pupils of the primary schools. The activities were not only carried out in the capital, but also in the rural and urban districts.
- The Ministry of Home Affairs offered training on gender, women's rights, violence and other gender-related issues to various ministries, religious organizations and NGOs.
- Since 2021 gender is included in the curricula of the Higher Vocational Education. Different topics such as gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, gender equality, violence against women are addressed.
- In October 2019, an information session on domestic violence was held for the staff members of the Paramaribo-South hotline and a delegate from the Police Corps Suriname to inform them about the approach and referral of cases of domestic violence to the relevant agencies/organizations.

3.3.4 Actions to prevent and respond to technology-facilitated gender-based violence

No actions taken in this regard.

3.3.5 Measures to resource women's organizations working to prevent and respond to GBV

No actions taken in this regard.

3.3.6 Actions to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media, including social media?

The Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 contains interventions to achieve long term goals such as the eradication of enduring, discriminatory stereotypes of the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society and to take temporary, special measures to combat gender discrimination. In this regard the Bureau Gender Affairs of MoHA, regularly provides training and information sessions on gender and gender-related issues to various target groups on own initiative or at the request of organizations. In these sessions, gender discrimination, gender biases and stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of men and women in the family and society are addressed.

Since 2021 gender is also included in the curricula of the Higher Vocational Education of the Civil Servants education of the Ministry of the Home Affairs. Different topics such as gender stereotyping, gender discrimination, gender equality, violence against women are addressed.

3.3.7 Actions taken specifically tailored to address violence against marginalized groups of women and girls

No actions taken in this regard.

3.4 Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

3.4.1 Actions and measures to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making

1. Encouraged the equal political participation of all women, including young women and underrepresented groups like indigenous women, through capacity building, skills development, sensitization and mentorship programmes

- The gender vision policy document 2021-2035 contains long term goals to be achieved within five to fifteen years. Interventions and activities such as the “the development of a comprehensive strategy to promote participation of women in all levels of political and public life, among others by fixing legal quota for political appointments, accelerated recruitment of women in decision-making positions and providing financial incentives to political parties to include equal numbers of women and men on their lists of candidates” are identified to be achieved between five to ten years.
- Additionally, other activities which have been implemented within the framework of the general elections of 2020 to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making include the following:
 - In order to achieve a gender balance within the various electoral commissions and structures the BGA addressed a letter to the management team of the Ministry of Home affairs responsible for the elections to emphasize the importance of equal participation of women.
 - A letter was also addressed to the OKB (Electoral Authority) to encourage a gender balance at the OKB and between the observers.
 - Slogans to promote equal participation of women in decision-making were developed and shared with the wider community through social media.
 - An awareness campaign “Balance in 2020”, implemented by Stas International with support of the UNDP and the Dutch Embassy, with the aim to achieve balance (men/women and young/old candidates) on the election lists of 25 May 2020. Live television debates with political organizations were also part of this awareness campaign.
 - The media (De Ware Tijd) and women's organizations such as the Women's Rights Centre Suriname also paid attention to introducing new and young candidates including women to the public by inter alia publishing written articles.
- Within the framework of the upcoming elections of 2025 the following activities were organized:
 - In July and August 2022 the General Secretariat Election (ASV) in collaboration with the BGA has organized a training ‘Gender and elections’ for diverse groups installed within the framework of the elections 2025 such as Policy commission, Management team, District Commissioners including focal points and the working groups.

- The Excellence, Women First Campaign launched in June 2024 is implemented by the NGO Stas International, financed by the UNDP and supported by the Ministry of Home affairs. As opposed to quantity, this campaign emphasizes quality in general and inclusiveness of women and youth in particular in the highest institutions of State.
- The Ministry of the Home Affairs, with funding from the UNDP, is leading the Women, Leadership and Development project, also implemented by Stas International. The Ministry of Home Affairs, responsible for the organization of the elections as well as the gender policy, has decided to incorporate a gender component within the organization of the upcoming elections. In this regard, all working arms of the elections within the ministry are trained in 'gender policy' within their own area of work. One of the activities implemented in August 2024 is a training 'Gender balance in elections' for Election working groups, Management team elections, District commissioners, officials of the Bureau Gender Affairs and Election commissions.

2. Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including in appointed and elected positions

On a yearly basis the BGA collects data on women's political participation to be published in the publication form the GBS 'Selected Statistics on Women and Men in Suriname'. Election data is also published in the GBS publication such as the number of voters who voted and did not vote by age (group), district and sex, the composition of the election commissions and working groups by sex and the number of main polling station members by constituency and sex.

3.4.2 Actions to increase women's access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

Measures to enhance access, affordability and use of ICTs for women and girls (e.g. free Wi-Fi hubs, community technology centers)

- **"Girls in ICT Day"**: Since April 2011, the "Girls in ICT Day" is commemorated in Suriname every year on the fourth Thursday in the month April. Activities of the past years include for example the participation of girls with physical and mental disability in various ICT related activities. In 2023, Within the framework of the International Women's Day and Girls in ICT Day, the BGA provided an eight (8) week training in coding at the Children's University Suriname for twenty-two (22) girls from 3 children's homes in the age group 10-14 years. This activity was held in the period April- June 2023. The aim of this project was to encourage the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and improve girls' access as a strategy to increase their chances in the labor market and access to other economic opportunities. The sub-goal was to stimulate the potential of girls in the field of ICT. This project was carried out with the support of the Telecommunication Authority Suriname and the Institute of the First Lady of the Republic of Suriname. This year, the ICT Association organised an educational day for girls from different secondary schools to interest them in the so-called STEM skills.
- In the period November 2023- March 2024 a follow up of the above-mentioned activity was included in the Women's Empowerment in STEM project from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Activities implemented within this STEM project are:
 - Training in coding 1, 2 and 3 for girls within the age group 10-14 years from 6 children's homes in the district of Paramaribo and the rural district of Nickerie.

- Training in Windows, MS Office Word and PowerPoint and Canva for girls 14 years and older from two (2) Children's Home in the rural district of Nickerie and from one neighbourhood (Latour) within the district of Paramaribo and for boys, girls and women from age 14 years from the Shelter Haddasah (in the district of Wanica).
 - Introduction in STEM/ ICT activities for girls within the age group 10-16 years from one Children's Home in the district of Commewijne and for girls from an indigenous village (Matta) in the district of Para. These girls were introduced in basic computer skills (hardware & Software), assembling a working personal computer, script writing, developing and presenting their own comic strip and in 3D printing and creating their Own design.
- **National computer project:** The Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs has launched in 2023 a nationwide computer course. Courses is provided in the various districts for teenage mothers, dropouts and disadvantaged youth.

3.4.3 National women's machinery

The Bureau Gender Affairs is the current national machinery and is a department within the Ministry of Home Affairs. An auxiliary branch of the BGA was opened in the district of Nickerie in 2006, operational until 2015, and has been revitalized in March 2016.

As of 2022, the following national mechanisms exist for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women:

- The Bureau Gender Affairs, a department within the Ministry of Home Affairs, which is responsible for formulation, coordination, evaluation and monitoring of the gender policy.
- Gender Focal Points at the majority of ministries as part of the gender mainstreaming within the government.
- Bureau Women and Child Policy, Ministry of Justice & Police.

In February 2019 the Gender Platform Nickerie has been installed with the aim to identify gender issues in district Nickerie and to propose solutions. The platform consists of government organizations, and non-governmental organizations and individuals. This Platform needs to be revitalized.

Budget BGA national women's machinery and staff capacity to fulfil its mandate

In the last 5 years the budget of the BGA varied between SRD 230.000 and 300.000. This is due to the heavy cuts in government budget, due to the economic downfall of the Surinamese economy, which led to fewer funds available for various policy areas, including gender. In spite of this, the BGA has implemented various activities with support from donor agencies.

Staffing BGA and capacity building

In the past period the BGA has been working on further staffing of its personnel and to strengthen their capacity through a number of trainings provided by national and international partners. The trainings addressed subjects such as interalia gender-based violence, gender responsive budgeting, migration, data collection methods for GBV, human rights, GBA + analysis, public management of MSME programs with gender approach, sexual and reproductive health; gender and climate change and disaster risks.

National strategy for gender equality:

The Ministry of Home Affairs has launched in July 2019 its Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035. This Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 elaborates on Suriname’s international and regional obligations to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; the Constitution of Suriname; the evaluation of earlier integral gender policy plans of the Ministry of Home Affairs; and the Development Plan of Suriname for the period 2017 – 2021 (OP2017 – 2021).

The formulation of a long-term gender policy was preferred, with a view of a period of approximately 15 years (2021 – 2035), as processes of social change associated with gender equality and equity require time. In this manner, the goals of the 2030 World Agenda (SDGs) and the national goals may be better attuned to one another and the intended vision on development and change will be more clearly expressed.

The priority areas for the period 2021 – 2035 are:

- Labour, income and poverty reduction
- Education
- Health
- Power and decision-making
- Gender-based violence
- Legal and regulatory framework
- Environment and climate change

This GVPD 2021- 2035 points the way to eventually achieve gender equality and equity in Suriname in the chosen priority areas.

Besides the abovementioned priority areas, the government will also identify sectoral development themes or priorities in national development plans in the coming years. By applying gender mainstreaming, policies can be checked in the national development sectors or priorities, thus ensuring that the chosen policy does not create or reinforce gender inequalities. Furthermore, gender analyses can indicate which interventions may help eliminate or lessen any gender inequalities that may be found.

Simultaneously to the Gender vision policy document, the Gender Action Plan 2019 – 2020 was developed to serve as an example for forthcoming annual work plans, which are distilled from the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035.

3.4.4 Other mechanisms and tools to mainstream gender equality across sectors

The current gender management system with gender focal points (GFPs) in every ministry has not always proven to be effective. There are a number of bottlenecks attached to the current network, as a result of which intended outputs are not / not timely achieved and on this basis, the structure of the functioning of the current network needs to be drastically adjusted. Over the past period, the BGA has taken some steps to improve the functioning of the GMS by, among other things, appointing personnel in charge of the various priority areas of the GVPD 2021-2035, offering gender training to the ministries, working with the plan units and other ministry officials besides the GFP.

Currently, the BGA is preparing the establishment of a 'Sustainable Gender Network within Government Structures, Structures and Organisations Outside Government' to successfully implement, monitor, and evaluate the gender policy. Purpose of sustainable gender network to be established

- To promote gender equality
- To promote the integration of gender in policies, programmes and projects of ministries.
- To timely prepare and monitor the implementation of annual gender action plans as well as implement the Gender Vision Paper 2021-2035.

3.4.5 National human rights institution

Currently, there is no national human rights institution in place to address violations of women's rights and promote gender equality. However, measures have been taken to establish a National Human Rights Institute in accordance with the Paris Principles and the following steps have been initiated in this regard.

In January 2022, the Minister of Justice and Police formed a commission to draft legislation for the National Human Rights Institute. The draft law is currently under review by the State Council and will then be submitted to the National Assembly for consideration and approval.

The commission is currently working on State Decrees related to this law to produce a final legislative product.

As part of the operationalization of the Human Rights Institute, the Ministry of Justice and Police entered into a collaboration with the United Nations Development Program in 2022. In the years 2022 and 2023, in accordance with this agreement, the law was drafted and various stakeholder meetings were held with different actors from civil society such as business people, NGOs, organizations advocating for women's and children's rights, organizations for people with disabilities, the LGBTQ community, religious organizations, foundations for the elderly, organizations for indigenous and tribal peoples, the media and government agencies.

These were information sessions to inform the public about the Human Rights Institute and its importance, and to gather input from the aforementioned stakeholders, which was subsequently incorporated into the draft law. The law was also sent to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights for feedback, which was received and incorporated as much as possible. It is noteworthy that the emphasis in drafting the legislation was on the mandate and the independence of the institution based on the Paris Principles.

In July 2023, the agreement with the UNDP for the operationalization was extended for one year. Awareness activities were carried out in November and December 2023, together with the consultant, for civil society and the parliament. These included workshops that delved deeper into the institute and the legislation. The reasoning behind this is the fact that the law outlines, among other things, the allocations of human and technical resources, the conditions, tasks, and competence of such an institute, and the appointment and dismissal procedures. Once the law is approved and promulgated, further steps can be taken to operationalize the institute.

3.5 Peaceful and inclusive societies

3.5.1 Actions to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda

Integrated women, peace and security commitments into key national and inter-ministerial policy, planning and monitoring frameworks

In the past five years, Suriname has taken various concrete measures to build peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies, and implement the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda (WPS). Below are three key initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women within the Surinamese Defense Organization. Suriname has made significant progress in implementing the WPS agenda through concrete policy measures and initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality, inclusivity, and the empowerment of women within the defense organization. The development of a National Action Plan for Women, Peace, and Security is an important next step, as well as further integrating gender equality into the broader national defense policy.

1. Organization of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Conferences

The Ministry of Defense, in collaboration with the South Dakota National Guard (SDNG), has organized annual WPS conferences aimed at increasing the visibility of women within the defense sector and promoting leadership. The conferences are part of the State Partnership Program between Suriname and the United States. In 2023, the focus was on leadership, inclusivity, and the position of women in the Defense Organization, while the 2022 conference focused on mentorship and role models, with the theme "Talent Has No Gender: Lessons in Leadership."

The conferences targeted female military personnel and civilian employees of the Ministry of Defense, as well as their male colleagues. The ministry currently employs 404 female staff members, including 67 officers, 56 non-commissioned officers, 173 soldiers, and 108 civilian employees.

Although detailed long-term evaluations are still underway, the conferences have contributed to strengthening the position of women in leadership roles and increasing awareness of the WPS agenda. The conferences emphasized the importance of mentorship and the role of men in supporting gender equality within the organization.

2. Integration of the WPS Agenda into Defense Policy

Suriname has prioritized the integration of the WPS agenda within its defense policy. The Ministry of Defense is working on developing policies that promote gender equality and aim to increase the participation of women within the armed forces. This policy also addresses new threats such as gender-based violence, climate change, and human trafficking. The goal is to create a more inclusive defense organization where women play a larger role.

This measure targets current and future female employees of the Ministry of Defense, including both military and civilian personnel.

Although the policy is still in the development phase, there is a clear awareness of the need to systematically integrate gender equality into defense policy. There is a need for targeted action to break down the structural barriers that prevent women from advancing to higher positions. A formal impact evaluation will follow once the policy is implemented.

3. Promotion of Gender Equality and Leadership Development for Women

The Ministry of Defense has established specific programs to promote leadership development for women, focusing on mentorship programs and coaching for female military personnel. The goal is to prepare women for higher positions within the defense organization, contributing to more balanced and inclusive leadership.

The programs target female officers, non-commissioned officers, soldiers, and civilian employees who aspire to a career within the armed forces.

The programs are funded from the ministry's internal budgets. An evaluation model is currently being developed to measure the effectiveness of these programs. It has been established that mentorship and breaking traditional roles are essential for the success of female leaders in the defense sector. Strengthening women's self-confidence and building networks are crucial for their development within the armed forces.

Specific Actions for Marginalized Groups

Suriname has also taken measures to promote the inclusion of marginalized women within the armed forces. This includes joint military exercises and increasing the visibility of female military personnel in various roles. Special attention is given to women who experience gender-based violence, with active support for their integration into the military and security sector.

3.5.2 Actions to increase the leadership, representation and participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action and crisis response

In the past five years, Suriname has made significant progress in promoting the leadership, representation, and participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, humanitarian action, and crisis response. Below are four concrete actions that emphasize the active involvement of women in decision-making processes and in the implementation of peace and security measures.

1. Strengthening Women's Participation in Peace Processes and Peace Implementation

Suriname has actively involved women in peace processes and the execution of peace agreements, both nationally and internationally. Women have been promoted to key decision-making roles within Defense and Security, where they participated in peace negotiations and implementation.

Collaboration with the South Dakota National Guard played a significant role by providing training in conflict resolution and mediation to female leaders. Women were actively included in peace delegations as negotiators and mediators. Peace agreements were strengthened by the participation of women, who brought gender-related aspects into the agreements. This contributed to more inclusive peace implementation processes, where women's voices were genuinely heard.

2. Equal Participation of Women in Humanitarian Actions and Crisis Response

Suriname has implemented gender-friendly approaches in the context of humanitarian actions and crisis response. Women were involved in crisis management teams, where they influenced the design of humanitarian aid and crisis interventions, with special attention to gender-specific needs in conflict areas. Women held key roles in humanitarian organizations, enabling them to identify the gender-specific needs of women and girls in conflict and crisis areas. Involving women in crisis response led to more effective, inclusive responses, enhancing the protection of women and promoting access to essential services such as healthcare.

3. Training and Capacity Building in Conflict Prevention and Resolution

Suriname has established programs to strengthen the capacities of women in conflict prevention and conflict mediation. By training women in mediation, conflict resolution, and diplomatic negotiations, they were better positioned to play an active role in both the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Women were also trained as facilitators in peace processes, utilizing their unique perspectives to develop sustainable and inclusive solutions. Women were involved in conflict prevention and peace negotiation processes, resulting in strategies that better addressed the specific needs of women and other vulnerable groups. Training in mediation and negotiation increased women's participation in decision-making on national security issues and peace initiatives.

4. Development and Implementation of a National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Resolution 1325

Suriname has developed a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. The plan aims to ensure the active participation of women at all stages of conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and crisis response. The NAP 1325 includes measures to involve women in decision-making, both nationally and internationally, with specific attention to their safety and protection in fragile and conflict-sensitive environments. The NAP 1325 has led to the establishment of working groups that actively engage women in decision-making processes related to peace and security. Concrete policy measures have been introduced to increase the representation of women in security and peace structures.

3.5.3 Actions to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability

1. Implemented legal and policy reform to redress and prevent violations of the rights of women and girls

Legal and Policy Reforms for the Protection of Women and Girls

Suriname has worked on improving legislation and policy to prevent and remedy violations of the rights of women and girls, especially in conflict and crisis environments. The reform of criminal law focused on better addressing gender-based violence and protecting women's rights in armed conflicts and post-crisis situations. Legislation to combat sexual and gender-based violence has been updated, although it is difficult to quantify the impact precisely without specific statistics.

There has been an increase in reports of cases of gender-based violence, indicating a growing awareness and response from society and authorities.

Lessons Learned: There is an ongoing need for training for law enforcement and the judiciary to effectively address and prevent gender-related crimes.

2. Strengthened institutional capacities, including of the justice system and transitional justice mechanisms as applicable, during conflict and crisis response

Strengthening Institutional Capacities in Human Rights and Violence Prevention

Suriname has invested in building the capacity of institutions within the security sector, such as the Surinamese Defense Force and the police, to prevent sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse. This was achieved through targeted training and the implementation of specific protocols for handling such incidents. There has been a noticeable improvement in the preparedness and response of defense and police teams in cases of SGBV. The number of reported abuses has increased, and these cases are being handled more effectively by the authorities.

Lessons Learned: Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of training programs and policy implementation are crucial to ensure the effectiveness of these measures.

3. Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children

Actions Against Human Trafficking and Violence Prevention

Suriname has taken various measures to combat human trafficking, particularly of women and children. This includes both legal reforms and prevention and protection measures for victims of human trafficking. Initiatives have been established to improve access to justice for victims of violence. Legislation against human trafficking has been strengthened, and there are more reports of human trafficking that are coordinated and effectively addressed by the authorities.

Awareness campaigns have led to greater societal awareness of the dangers of human trafficking.

Lessons Learned: There is a continuous need for collaboration between governments, international organizations, and local communities to enhance the effectiveness of measures against human trafficking.

4. Specific Actions for Vulnerable Groups

During the implementation of these initiatives, Suriname has paid special attention to vulnerable groups, such as refugees and internally displaced persons, who are often on the front lines of violence and abuse in conflict and crisis situations. Efforts have been made to improve access to medical care, psychological support, and legal assistance for these groups, as well as their protection against gender-based violence and exploitation.

3.5.4 Actions to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child, including adolescent girls

1. Taken measures to combat discriminatory social norms and practices and increased awareness of the needs and potential of girl children

- Yearly, the BGA commemorates the International Day of the Girl Child on October 11th. Activities such as the development of awareness material for children and gender training for educators are organized with the aim to combat gender stereotypes and to promote gender equality.

- Changing social and gender norms and behavior change strategies have been implemented through high-level advocacy with the Institute of the First Lady of the Republic of Suriname, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs, and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Housing, resulting in a televised awareness program called “How do you feel” and engagement with local influencers to increase reach and results on social media and online platforms.
- Guidelines were developed for alternative measures for children in conflict with the law, promoting their reintegration into society. Through community engagement initiatives in seven (7) localities and youth empowerment programs in five (5) districts, with support from the UNICEF the governmental and civil society partners worked to challenge harmful social norms and behaviors.

2. Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence

- With support from **UNICEF** capacity strengthening of teachers and social workers was provided in six (6) districts to ensure prevention and protection of children and adolescents from violence, gender-based violence, and mental health issues in schools.
- UNICEF established platforms in seven (7) communities to challenge social and gender norms through impactful awareness campaigns. Additionally, efforts to safeguard children were bolstered, with 284 children benefiting from life skills training aimed at fortifying resilience against VAC and GBV. Through multifaceted collaborations and targeted interventions, tangible progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment was achieved, laying the foundation for a more inclusive and equitable society.
- In 2023, the Government made significant advancement in child protection and youth empowerment initiatives, aligning closely with the fifth and sixth combined Convention on the Rights of the Child's periodic reports. Concurrently, partnerships between the UN and organizations such as ADEK University facilitated the training of 25 social workers in child protection, enhancing the country's capacity in safeguarding vulnerable children.
- Support was extended to the Ministry of Education bolstered efforts to combat various forms of violence against children (VAC) and gender-based violence (GBV) through comprehensive training programs benefitting over 200 care coordinators, teachers, and school administrators. 50% of all primary schools empowered to provide mental health support.
- Juvenile justice reform guidelines were established. 80 para-social workers equipped with tools to identify and respond to VAC and GBV cases. 7 localities in 5 districts benefited from youth empowerment programs.
- The Youth department of the Corps Police Suriname (KPS) has implemented the project ‘Youth empowerment as a prevention against risk behavior with special focus on crime prevention program through social media and Institutional strengthening of the Youth department of the Corps Police Suriname in the year 2021 in collaboration with the Bureau Women and Child Policy of the Ministry of Justice and Police and the UNICEF.

The Covid -19 pandemic has transformed the prevention policy of the Youth department of the Corps Police Suriname. In view of the measures taken by the government and in order to prevent children from committing offenses and or becoming victims of violence, it was necessary to provide information to society, especially our target group (young people), via digital means. Social media was chosen due to the fact that the accessibility of young people through social media is high, as a large proportion of children have access to social media, either through their own or someone else's smart phone or other

devices. In addition to empowering sessions to children and juveniles through social media, the staff of the Youth department of the Corps Police Suriname has been trained on the job in providing and developing sessions/programs to protect children from violence and reduce juvenile crime. This project aims, through live sessions, to reach children and youth, where there can be communicated (question and answer options) to make them resilient from the negative influences and thus reduce crime and violence among youth.

3.6 Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

3.6.1 Actions to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies,

1. Supported women's participation and leadership in environmental and natural resource management and governance

- **The Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project (UNDP EnGenDER Project 2019-2024)**

The Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project was initiated in 2019 to further integrate gender equality and human rights-based approaches into climate change, disaster risk reduction and environmental management interventions in nine (9) Caribbean countries including Suriname. The project aimed to analyse and prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable with respect to climate change adaptation and mitigation in priority sectors as well as to increase livelihoods resilience to accelerate post-disaster recovery and mitigate risk.

Under this project the following activities have been implemented:

- Formulation of the "Report of the Gender-based climate resilience analysis for Suriname" in 2021.
- Development of a Policy Brief 'Gender Inequality of Climate Change and Disaster Risk in Suriname' in 2021
- The Sector Adaptation Strategy and Adaptation Plan (SASAP) for Water Resource Suriname has been launched in February 2022.
- Presentation and dissemination of the Report of the Gender-based Climate Resilience Analysis for Suriname in May 2022 to various national stakeholders.
- A Behaviour Change Communication Strategy – Guidance Frame Work Document has been developed for the Caribbean region and launched in September 2022. A national consultant completed the National Communications for Behavioural Change Strategy Action Plan Suriname.
- The following trainings were provided to various stakeholders (including BGA staff):
 - Climate Change and Gender Based Analysis+ in January 2024.
 - Disaster risk reduction, gender analysis & gender mainstreaming in January and the first week of February 2024
 - Train the Trainer gender in relation to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction In March 2024
 - Gender & Monitoring, Reporting and Verification in July and August 2024.

2. Enhanced women's access to sustainable time- and labour-saving infrastructure (e.g. access to clean water and energy) and climate-resilient agricultural technology

- Within the framework of the **Leaving No one behind** project water tanks were donated for the storage of clean drinking water. Communities and villages were identified for the installation of the Rain Water Harvesting Tanks (RWHTs) based on need and the locations and households in collaboration with the village leaders, Kapiteins and Basjas, and at village meetings. The RWHTs system was designed and an instruction manual for maintenance and cleaning was developed. At all locations instructions were given to the beneficiaries, especially to the women on the cleanliness of the tank, its maintenance and regular cleaning. A total of 118 rainwater harvesting tanks were installed in 57 villages along the Upper Suriname and Tapanahony rivers providing access to safe drinking water to 4,385 persons.

Increased access of indigenous and tribal villages in the interior to clean drinking water and sanitation

- The Ministry of Natural Resources has in its mission the sustainable management and supervision of the sustainable use of our natural resources, including water. With this, the Ministry is responsible for the supply of drinking water throughout Suriname. Furthermore, the GoS is committed to the Sustainable Development Goal 6. In this regard various water projects have been implemented in the interior. The ministry of Natural resources collaborated extensively with the UN System in 2023 to improve Suriname's water, sanitation, and hygiene(W.A.S.H). sector, with a focus on Indigenous and Tribal villages across Suriname. Mostly women and children are benefitting from these projects as they live and stay in the villages and use water for daily maintenance and care of children and the elderly.
- From the Integrated Water Management Department, the project WASH in schools financed by UNICEF was carried out. In the district of Brokopondo, four schools are equipped with Duro tanks, the toilet were renewed, blockages fixed, drains, ducts and underground pipes were placed.

3.6.2 Actions to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction and building environmental and climate resilience

1. Supported women's participation and leadership, including those affected by disasters, in disaster risk reduction, climate and environmental resilience policies, programmes and projects

National Coordination Center for Disaster Management (NCCR)

The interior is a specific focus area for the National Coordination Center for Disaster Management (NCCR) because of the increasing frequency of flooding versus the vulnerable situation of population, who are highly dependent on their natural environment for their daily subsistence. NCCR strives to ensure the effective participation of Indigenous and Maroon women during its activities in the interior, among others, during the coordination of emergency assistance where women are usually the recipients. An increasing number of the traditional authorities of the Indigenous and Maroon peoples (captains or chiefs, and basjas or assistants) with which NCCR works are female and many villages have women organizations. These authorities and organizations are involved at community level when discussing disaster management, including response and prevention.

2. Strengthened the evidence base and raised awareness about the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to the impact of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters

- In 2023, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) organized a symposium on Gender and Climate Change, with the theme "Building Resilience". The goal of this symposium was to sensitize participants about gender and to solidify the support created for the integration of gender sensitive approaches in the National Climate Agreement. The symposium also provided an opportunity to strengthen knowledge about the link and impact of climate in gender equity outcomes.
- Various training on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction were organized in 2024 with financing from the UNDP (EnGender Project) such as Climate Change and Gender Based Analysis+, Disaster Risk Reduction, Gender analysis and Gender mainstreaming, a Train the Trainer Gender in Relation to Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction and a Training Gender & Monitoring, Reporting and Verification.

3. Introduced or strengthened and implemented gender-responsive laws and policies related to disaster risk reduction and building climate and environmental resilience (e.g. disaster laws addressing vulnerability of women in disaster)

In the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035, Environment and Climate Change is a priority area in which the effective participation of women in this priority area is essential, not only because women are disproportionately affected by the effects of climate change and disasters, but they are also agents of change and play an important role in formulating and implementing policies and action plans with regard to the environment, the protection of biodiversity, as well as adaptation and mitigation in climate change.

Suriname National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2019-2029 (2019)

The NAP is supported by the United Nations Development Programme's Japan-Caribbean Climate Change Partnership (J-CCCP). The NAP provides overarching guidance for Suriname's efforts to adapt to climate change. Water, especially water resources, were identified as a key productive sector that is vulnerable to climate change and suffering high impacts already in the short-term. The NAP further recognizes the importance of technology transfer. As such, a technology needs assessment was performed in 2019. Water management (water modelling, water resource mapping, water storage and harvesting) was identified as one of three priorities to be considered within the assessment. The NAP includes Climate change adaptation that respects Surinamese society and culture and reduces gender and social inequities.

Key performance indicators in the NAP includes among others the number of women's groups actively and consistently engage and the number of initiatives focused on sustainable livelihood transitions including ensuring the livelihoods of women. The following outputs also with a focus on women were identified such as the focus on the formal and informal roles of women and skills and training for them to advance climate adaptation objectives in their spheres of influence and greater visibility of women's organizations such as women organizations (Stg. Nationale Vrouwenbeweging), NGOs (NGO Forum), Maroon representatives (KAMPOS), indigenous (VIDS, Sanomaro Esa) and others.

SECTION 4: NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES

4.1 National strategy or action plan for gender equality

Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035

The Ministry of Home Affairs has launched in July 2019 its Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 (GVPD 2021-2035). This Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 elaborates on Suriname’s international and regional obligations to achieve gender equality and empowerment of women and girls; the Constitution of Suriname; the evaluation of earlier integral gender policy plans of the Ministry of Home Affairs; and the Development Plan of Suriname for the period 2017 – 2021 (OP2017 – 2021).

The formulation of a long-term gender policy was preferred, with a view of a period of approximately 15 years (2021 – 2035), as processes of social change associated with gender equality and equity require time. In this manner, the goals of the 2030 World Agenda (SDGs) and the national goals may be better attuned to one another and the intended vision on development and change will be more clearly expressed.

The priority areas for the period 2021 – 2035 are:

- Labour, income and poverty reduction
- Education
- Health
- Power and decision-making
- Gender-based violence
- Legal and regulatory framework
- Environment and climate change

This GVPD 2021- 2035 points the way to eventually achieve gender equality and equity in Suriname in the chosen priority areas.

Besides the abovementioned priority areas, the government will also identify sectoral development themes or priorities in national development plans in the coming years.

By applying gender mainstreaming, policies can be checked in the national development sectors or priorities, thus ensuring that the chosen policy does not create or reinforce gender inequalities. Furthermore, gender analyses can indicate which interventions may help eliminate or lessen any gender inequalities that may be found.

Simultaneously to the Gender vision policy document, the Gender Action Plan 2019 – 2020 was developed to serve as an example for forthcoming annual work plans, which are distilled from the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035.

In the context of the development of the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035, various stakeholders including Women’s NGOs of in particular the districts of Marowijne and Nickerie were involved through sessions in which gender and gender related concepts were explained.

Please find below the link to the Gender vision policy document:

<https://gov.sr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/3-juli-engelse-printversie-gender-vision-policy-document-2021-2035-1.pdf>

Monitoring mechanism to assess the implementation of Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035

In 2022, with technical assistance from the Canada-CARICOM Expert Deployment Mechanism (CCEDM) a draft Gender Results Framework - Gender Vision Policy monitoring and evaluation plan has been developed. This Framework aims to align the vision, goal, and strategic goals of the **Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035** with the expected results and indicators.

To engage stakeholders in the effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 -2035 that will advance the achievement of gender equality in Suriname a two day workshop was held in January 2023 to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to gain a fuller understanding of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Gender Vision Document 2021 – 2035 and their role and responsibilities in the implementation of the Gender Results Framework. Within this regard the following documents were approved:

- Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035:
- Gender Results Framework
- Legislation and Regulatory Monitoring Framework.
- Planning and reporting template

All documents developed are aligned with the international obligations such as the CEDAW, BPFA, SDGs.

4.2 The proportion of the national budget that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)

The existing structure of the government budgets does not enable measurement or tracking of total financial flows to gender equality. As the key areas of women’s rights and empowerment are multiple and spread over several government institutions and the private sector, coordination of implementation and enhancing an integrated approach is of critical importance for success.

There is only limited data available on this indicator.

Each year each ministry submits the yearly budget to the National Parliament for approval in which policy measures with funds for several programs and plans are included. In general, it can be stated that not all ministries have a specific policy measure regarding gender within their total budget.

The gender activities that are carried out within these ministries are part of programs and plans derived from a specific policy measure. As the Ministry of Home Affairs has a leading role in the formulation, evaluation and implementation of the gender policy it has a separate policy measure on gender within her total budget in which funds for programs, plans regarding gender equality are allocated every year.

4.3 Formal mechanisms in place for different stakeholders to participate in the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

There is no formal structure in place for implementation and monitoring of the **Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**. However, the BPFA is being implemented and monitored through the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 under the seven priority areas and related documents.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation is responsible for the coordination of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**. There is a formal mechanism in place **namely the** SDG Country Commission Suriname. This commission is the association of the National SDG Commission and the National SDG Platform. The National SDG Commission established in 2022, consist of representatives from all ministries, The National Assembly, the Planning Bureau and the General Bureau of Statistics and the National SDG Platform of representatives, established in 2023, is composed of non-state actors such as the private sector and civil society including indigenous and tribal organizations.

The most recent constructive dialogue with the CEDAW Committee was held in February 2018. The Ministry of Home Affairs has the intention to submit the 8th CEDAW report later this year. The last review under the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* has taken place from 10- 11 July 2024. Although there is no national plan/strategy for implementation of the recommendations of the various United Nations Human Rights mechanisms, the recommendations are included in national policy documents e.g. in the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035, formulated by the Ministry of Home Affairs/Bureau Gender Affairs, the various recommendations are also included.

4.4 Contribution of stakeholders to the preparation of the present national report.

For the compilation of this report, the BGA made use of information provided by stakeholders during the drafting of the first draft of the CEDAW report. Various reports produced by ministries and international organizations such as the UN agencies were also used for the drafting of this report. Additional information was requested from stakeholders. A validation session was held on November 4th, where stakeholders had the opportunity to deliver their feedback on the report and to submit additional information. Various governmental and non-governmental organizations were invited for this validation session. Due to different circumstances not all relevant government and non-government stakeholders were present at the validation sessions, which have led to information gaps.

4.5 Action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the CEDAW, UPR or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women.

The most recent constructive dialogue with the CEDAW Committee was held in February 2018. The Ministry of Home Affairs has the intention to submit the 8th CEDAW report later this year. The last review under the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)* has taken place from 10- 11 July 2024. Although there is no national plan/strategy for implementation of the recommendations of the various United Nations Human Rights mechanisms, the recommendations are included in national policy documents e.g. in the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035, formulated by the Ministry of Home Affairs/Bureau Gender Affairs, the various recommendations are also included.

SECTION 5: DATA AND STATISTICS

5.1 Most important areas of progress over the past five years on gender statistics at the national level

1. Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects

Gender sensitive data are used during the drafting of the annual Gender Action Plans for the seven priority areas of the vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035. During the drafting of project proposals gender sensitive data are also being used. Various programs such as the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives encourages interested parties to conduct a Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) which is a required element of the CFLI project application process. In 2017, Canada adopted its Feminist International Assistance Policy to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as the most effective way to reduce poverty and build a more inclusive, peaceful and prosperous world. In alignment with this policy, the CFLI project application process now requires a gender-based analysis (GBA). The purpose of the inclusion of this analysis is to enhance the gender equality outcomes of the CFLI program.

2. Re-processed existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics

The publication of the GBS “Selected Statistics about women and men in Suriname” publishes data from the Census or MICS Survey. In the recent publication a table has been published namely population by disability status, age group and sex. Other data also derived from the Census is e.g., population by religion, age group and sex.

Please find below the link to the GBS publication:

<https://statistics-suriname.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Genderpublicatie-2023-FL180324FIN.pdf>

3. Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

Several training courses are offered annually online and on-site for capacity building e.g., Qualitative Methods and Approaches for the collection of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Data in CARICOM and the OECS Workshop organized by the UN Women in 2023. The Regional Sensitisation and Training Workshop on the CARICOM Agreed Minimum Standards for the Management of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Administrative Data and Gender Statistics and Indicators Training Course for CARICOM National Statistical Offices (NSOs), also in 2023 organized by CARICOM in collaboration with UN Women and UNECLAC. In September 2024 a Workshop: Assessing the Macro-impact of Gender Gaps and Costing Investments to Close Them, was organized by the IMF’s Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Center (CARTAC) and the UNFPA’s Latin American and the Caribbean Regional Office (LACRO).

5.2 Priorities over the next five years for strengthening national gender statistics

1. Re-processing of existing data (e.g., censuses and surveys) to produce more disaggregated and/or new gender statistics

Currently the census is being implemented from which data may be derived to include in the publication of the GBS “Selected Statistics about women and men in Suriname “such as data on youth.

2. Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)

3. Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

4. Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics

One of the general strategies in the coming years, as mentioned in the GVPD 2021-2035 is to improve data and information gathering, and strengthen the ability to carry out gender analyses, in view of a targeted gender policy and efficient gender mainstreaming. The BGA has identified a project ‘Conducting research on gender-related topics and setting up and maintaining a Gender database’.

Qualitative data are needed to raise awareness on key issues that generate and/or maintain inequalities but also to support quantitative data and serve as a basis for comprehensive and targeted interventions, especially in areas that have not been studied much (e.g. access to: land, capital, time-use, basic services, decision-making, knowledge, employment, housing etc.). These data will be disseminated to policy makers to support them in developing comprehensive and targeted interventions to support gender equality.

The availability of quantitative data disaggregated by gender and relevant variables is essential to formulate, monitor and evaluate relevant policies and programmes. Data needed to meet the National Development Plans and international commitments such as CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals need to be identified. After this, data collection will take place based on the identified indicators from the commitments mentioned above. Based on the collected statistics, a National Gender Database system will be set up to digitally store these statistics for monitoring national gender policies, to develop necessary national and international reports, and to create easy access for all relevant stakeholders.

5.3 Prioritized Gender-specific for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

In 2022 a Suriname SDG Data and Analysis Repository Framework 2022: Mapping and guideline for SDG-indicators by data availability and quality was developed. The objective of the assignment at hand was to prepare sound data and determine the availability of accurate and up to date statistics and data analysis with respect to the SDGs which are important to Suriname and its contribution to Agenda 2030. Along with the data repository set up, an assessment was also carried out regarding the priority given to a certain SDG and the respective indicators. The goal of this assessment was to derive a National SDG Indicators list for Suriname based on current priorities and relevance. The overview of the National SDG indicators list can be useful for the SDG reporting process and the annual Voluntary National Reviews.

Please find below the link to the Gender vision policy document:

https://statistics-suriname.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Suriname-SDG-Data-and-Analysis-Repository-Framework-2022_14-sept-2022_final2-1.pdf

5.4 Which data disaggregations are routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

The following disaggregation⁴ is routinely provided by major surveys:

- Geographic location
- Sex/gender
- Age
- Education
- Marital status
- Race/ethnicity
- Religion

⁴ As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education and marital status.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Government of Suriname remains committed to leave no one behind and acknowledges that empowering those who are vulnerable, is essential in creating a society where the personal wellbeing of all is guaranteed.

The review shows that in the past thirty years, in many areas substantial progress has been achieved. Notable progress can be observed in the strengthening of the legal and policy context given the revision and adoption of supportive national legislation, the formulation of various national plans, programs and projects, increased access to basic education, availability of disaggregated data through (new) surveys and the acknowledgement, protection and realization of human rights.

Priority actions to accelerate the implementation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda

Strengthening of (government) institutions

Institutions need to translate evidenced based national legislation and policies into annual plans, regulations and programs that are not only implemented but also guided by operational plans and regular monitoring. Persistent barriers such as the lack of required and motivated personnel need to be addressed for effective gender mainstreaming, data management, evidence-based policy making, management of programs and monitoring and evaluation. In the past five years national legislation has been strengthened, various national plans, programs and projects formulated. This shows the government's commitment which needs to be reflected in plans, programmes and projects.

Furthermore, the expired term of working groups, commissions installed for a specific priority needs to be urgently addressed since this might delay the implementation of specific programmes and projects.

Improvement of data collection and the establishment of a Centralized data system

To gain better insight into the specific challenges faced by various groups of women and girls it is crucial to improve data collection and analysis. Data should be disaggregated by variables such as sex, age, ethnicity, geographical location, disability. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness and provide training on de BPfA and the synergy with the SDG targets and indicators. Gender data, projects and activities need to be centralized within an online and simple accessible management system.

Adequate funding for gender equality programmes

Ministries should have a specific policy measure regarding gender within their total budget.

Collaboration between different departments within a specific ministry and with the private sector to advance the implementation of the BPfA and the SDGs. Stakeholders need to be engaged in the effective implementation of the monitoring and evaluation of the BPfA and the 2030 Agenda to be able to advance the achievement of gender equality in Suriname.