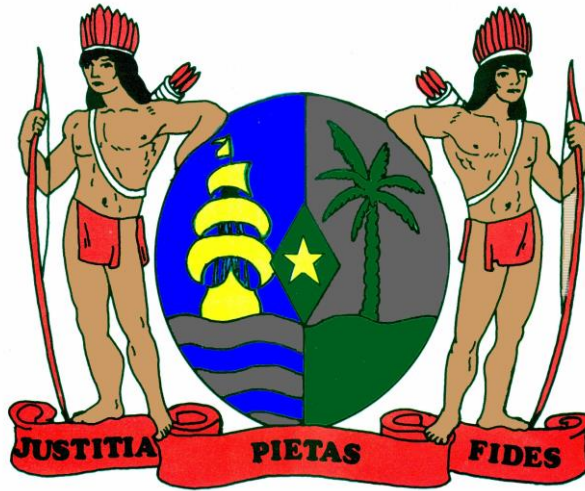


REPUBLIC OF SURINAME



PRELIMINARY REPORT

NATIONAL REVIEW
OF THE
BEIJING DECLARATION
AND
PLATFORM FOR ACTION + 20

Ministry of Home Affairs

May, 2019

SECTION ONE: PRIORITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND SETBACKS

Major Achievements

Increased enrollment of women at all educational levels

As mentioned in the previous report, there are no significant differences in the enrollment of boys and girls in primary schools. From the secondary junior level to tertiary education the gender parity ratio is still in favor of girls, as in all these educational levels more women than men are enrolled.

Table 1: GPI Primary, secondary and tertiary education

Period	Educational Level			
	Primary	Lower secondary	Upper secondary	Tertiary
2012-2013	0.93	1.2	1.79	2.49
2013-2014	0.96	1.2	2.02	2.21
2014-2015	0.94	1.09	1.69	2.04
2015-2016	0.94	1.12	1.65	2.01
2016-2017	0.93	1.11	1.57	2.01
2017-2018	0.93	1.04	NA	NA

Strengthening of the legal context and development of policies and (action) plans

- Over the past five (5) years progress has been achieved in the adoption and strengthening of national legal framework to further support the implementation of the Development plans of the Government of Suriname 2012-2016 and 2017- 2021, relevant international agreements and other related national policy. In this regard the Government of Suriname ratified the convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in March 2017. Suriname also ratified three (3) ILO Conventions namely the Conventions on Equal Remuneration, 1951(No. 100), Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958 (No. 111) both in 2017 and Minimum Age, 1973 (No. 138) in 2018. The implementation of these ILO conventions will entail more activities towards the full and equal participation of women on the labour market.
- To eradicate poverty and strengthen social protection, a National Social Security System has been put in place through the adoption and implementation of three (3) social laws namely the Minimum Hour Wage Act (2014), the General Pension Benefits Act (2014) and a National Basic Health Insurance Act (2014). Major beneficiaries of these interventions are women, considering their overrepresentation in lower income groups and the growing number of female heads of households.

- To eradicate child labour and with the view to harmonize the Surinamese labour law concerning child labour to the present context as well as to the ILO standards (ILO- convention 138 and 182), the Law containing rules to combat child labor and work performed by young persons (Law Workers and Children Youth Act) has been adopted in 2018 and replaces the previous labor legislation concerning children and young persons dating from 1963.

- In the past, women employed in the private sector by companies without a collective labour agreement had no legal coverage for maternity leave services provided by their employers. With the adoption of the law on protection of the family in employment (2019), employed women will be entitled to paid maternity leave for 16 weeks and men to 7 days paternity leave. Women who give birth to multiple births, i.e. three or more children, are entitled to maternity leave up to a maximum of 24 weeks.

- In July 2014 the Law of 1975 on Nationality and Residency has been amended. The amendment includes the removal of gender discriminatory provisions regarding the acquisition and loss of nationality in the context of marriage and divorce. The law Regulation of the Surinamese Nationality and Residency (2014) also changed the situation with regard to the nationality of children. According to the 1975 law (as last amended in 2002), the child of a Surinamese woman only acquired Surinamese nationality if that child was born out of wedlock and not recognized by the father (Article 3(c)) or (ii) born in Suriname and would otherwise be stateless (Article 4(b)), whilst the child of a Surinamese man acquired Surinamese nationality regardless of its place of birth (Article 3(a)).
 According to the July 2014 law a child is now granted Surinamese nationality automatically if its father or mother is Surinamese at the time of its birth (Article 3(a) as amended) and the other conditions for a woman to confer her nationality to her child have been removed. The explanatory note to the law states that this amendment “demonstrates the full equality of man and woman (father and mother) before the law in the establishment of the nationality of the child at birth”.
 Article 3(c) of the 2014 law retains the provision of the 1975 law, granting Surinamese nationality to any child born on the territory who would otherwise be stateless, and Article 4(b) retains the provision, granting Surinamese nationality to foundlings or abandoned children in the country, whose parents are unknown.

- The Penal Code with regard to trafficking in persons was revised in 2015 and has been brought more in line with the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air. The revision includes first of all an extension of the jurisdiction, which means that the Penal Code of Suriname is also applicable to Surinamese persons who commit trafficking in persons outside Suriname. Secondly, the revision includes the preclusion of criminal proceedings by laps of time. Generally, the term of preclusion commences on the day after the criminal offence has been committed.

Exception is made in cases where trafficking is committed against a person who has not yet reached the age of 18 years. The term of the preclusion commences in these cases on the day the victim turns 18 years.

Thirdly, apart from sexual exploitation other purposes of trafficking have been included, such as forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, and removal of organs. Fourthly, for mutual balance between the maximum penalties, the sentences have been increased.

Revision of the Penal Code, namely the First, Second and Third Book, by National Parliament in March 2015. Important to mention is that the prison sentences in cases of assault and grievous bodily harm may be increased by one third for the perpetrator who commits the crime against his or her mother, or her father, his or her spouse or partner, wife or partner or his or her child (article 364.1 of the Penal Code).

- National policies and (action) plans have been developed, among others: draft Gender Vision policy document 2021 - 2035 and Gender Action Plan for 2019 and 2020; National Strategy Plan HIV 2014-2020; the National Strategic Plan 'Renewal and Strengthening of Primary Health Care 2014-2018'; Safe Motherhood and Neonatal Health Action Plan, based on the Safe Motherhood Needs Assessment 2014 and the National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy of Suriname, 2013-2017; National Action Plan to combat Child Labor (NAPKA) 2019-2024; Draft National Action Plan Children (NAPK) 2019-2021; Decent work country program 2014-2016.

Increased availability of strategic information for monitoring purposes

- The General Bureau of Statistics (GBS), Suriname's National Statistics Office (NSO) is responsible for the production of gender statistics. The first publication 'Selected Gender Statistics', launched in 2002 is published every odd year by the GBS. In 2017 the GBS published the last publication under a different title "selected Statistics about women and men in Suriname".
- Statistical papers produced by the GBS "A statistical study from a gender perspective on Surinamese women and men(2016) and the Housing situation of Female Headed Households (FHH) In Paramaribo (2015)
- To meet the lack of gender disaggregated data, the Ministry of Home Affairs/Bureau Gender Affairs (BGA) has executed the CARICOM Gender Equality Indicators (GEI) model with support of CARICOM and UNWOMEN and in close collaboration with the GBS. The main goal of this initiative was to develop a set of indicators (the CARICOM Gender Equality Indicators Model) parallel to the Global Set of Minimum Gender Indicators to identify, assess, measure and track the persistent gender equality concerns and disparities across the CARICOM Region, in accordance with the newly adopted SDGs. Suriname was one of the four pilot countries (apart from Dominica, Grenada, and Jamaica). This study was conducted between January and July 2017 and did not only provide in recent data, but also revealed the shortcomings in the collection of gender-related data.
- During the drafting of this preliminary report the results of the most recent MICS study (2018) and the study to measure the existence of violence against women (2018) were not available.

Main Challenges

In the Suriname's Development plans 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 Gender is addressed in a separate chapter and is also being considered a cross cutting issue. In the Development Plan 2017-2021 it is stated that the Ministry of Home Affairs faces challenges in the formulation and implementation of the gender policy due to the insufficient capacity to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate a gender strategy and policy.

Other challenges mentioned in the development plan include:

- The shortage at the BGA on gender experts to raise awareness on gender issues and human rights for the society in general and school-aged youth in particular.
- Insufficient statistical and other information, including qualitative data for specific policy determination and for targeted interventions.
- Little experience with and the lack of gender integration processes (gender mainstreaming) in order to add equality goals to all policy objectives in the policy development phase, both in the public and private sectors.¹

To overcome these challenges the Ministry of Home Affairs signed, through the Ministry of Finance, an agreement with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) for technical assistance for the period 2019-2022 for the institutional strengthening of the BGA. The main goal of the project is to develop the institutional capacity of the BGA to fulfill its role to advocate for women's needs and priorities within national policies and government agencies. The specific objectives of the project are to i) develop the capacity of the BGA to formulate, monitor and evaluate the National Gender Policy, conduct policy analysis, advocate, and monitor the countries mainstreaming of women's needs and priorities within national policies and government agencies; ii) establish institutional framework to guide the work of the BGA; iii) develop a national gender database to monitor and report on the countries efforts and achievements in meeting its national development objectives and international commitments and iv) conduct research to identify key issues that generate social and economic inequalities within the country.

With this project the BGA also aims at closing the gaps in sex disaggregated data, which will make it possible to present trends over time in the situation of women in Suriname and meet the national and international reporting obligations. The Technical Assistance will support the establishment of a robust data collection system, strengthen the capacity of the BGA as the national authority in charge of executing and monitoring of the gender policy and strengthen the Gender Management System to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate the national targets on gender.

Activities to be carried out in this regard are the following:

- Strengthen the research departments of social ministries: Health; Justice and Police; Education, Science and Culture; Labour; Social Affairs and Housing; and key government officials (e.g. policymakers) in order to increase the reliability, regularity and use of the gender statistics collected within the national and international framework and disseminate the findings to inform policy development with respect to national and international framework.
- Develop gender expertise in the BGA in various thematic areas such as health, education, power and decision making, employment and violence.

¹ Development Plan 2017-2021, Development priorities of Suriname

- Strengthen the capacity of key government officials (e.g. policymakers) in the application/ translation of available sex disaggregated data to the development of evidence-based formulation of policies and programs.
- Provide guidance and training to gender focal points (GFPs) on gender mainstreaming
- Strengthening the national data collection system in capturing measurable gender indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress made towards the realization of women's empowerment in all areas covered by the CEDAW Convention, the Beijing Platform for Action and the SDGs.

Other Challenges are:

- Lack of gender awareness at the highest governmental level and also in the community;
- Lack of clear mandates, adequate resources, and ability to influence policy in our gender management system;
- Implementation of gender budgeting;
- Insufficient capacity to develop, implement and monitor/assess a gender strategy and policy (shortage of high level staff at the BGA)
- Little experience and no processes for gender mainstreaming in policy development, implementation and assessment, both in the public and in the private sector.

Insufficient statistical and other information

The gathering, processing and presentation of data in Suriname is the legal responsibility of the GBS, but data are also collected by other agencies, ministries and research institutes. According to the National Report Situation Analysis of Women and Men (2018), due to a lack of financial resources, knowledge, human power and clear goals for data collection, data are not always collected in set periods, as a result of which available data are often outdated. Other constraints mentioned in the report are:

- Data are also gathered through registration of information, without a clear purpose.
- Research department do not receive data from other organisations like private job centres, which also register similar data.
- Data are not always brought in line with data gathered by other departments or organisations within the same ministry.
- Many organizations do not know how to gather gender-related data.
- Data are often old, unstructured or lacking, not analysed, not immediately available, not always specified according to sex, and in particular not gender-related.
- GFPs of the various ministries often do not know what data are available and need approval from their superior before sharing data with other organisations.

Which of the following have been the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country over the past five years through laws, policies and/or programmes?

The focus over the past five years where on the following:

- Eliminating violence against women and girls.
- Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression).
- Gender-responsive social protection (e.g. universal health coverage, cash transfers, pensions).
- Basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, energy, transport etc.).
- Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes.

Eliminating violence against women and girls

Steps taken to combat violence against women and girls were:

- The installation of the National Council Domestic Violence.
The National Council Domestic Violence (NCDV) was installed in June 2017 by the Minister of Justice and Police for a period of 3 years. The main task of this council is to update the National Policy Plan Structural Approach Domestic Violence and to formulate a Work plan for the integral approach of domestic violence; the monitoring of the implementation of all the activities mentioned in these documents. The NCDV consists of representatives of the Ministry of Justice and Police (The Public Prosecutor’s Office, the Bureau Victim Aid, the Bureau Women and Child Policy and the Police Corps of Suriname), the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Regional Development, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing (MSAH), the Ministry of Education Science and Culture (MINOWC), the Ministry of Health the Foundation Stop Violence against Women and the Foundation “de Stem”.
- The finalization of the National Policy Plan “Structural approach Domestic Violence” and the Work plan Domestic Violence and the presentation of these documents to the Minister of Justice and Police in July 2018.
- The development and approval of a standard registration form domestic violence.
The Ministry of Justice and Police started this project in 2014 in collaboration with the United Nation Population Funds (UNFPA) and the Ministry of Home Affairs. After several discussions and the use of the form in a pilot project, the draft form is adapted and sent to the Minister of Justice and Police for approval. The Minister of Justice and Police approved the standard registration form in December 2018.
- Appointment of cantonal judges to deal with protection order appeals in cases of domestic violence
Since 2014, four cantonal judges have been appointed for Paramaribo and surrounding area for the duration of two session years to deal with protection order appeals in cases of domestic violence, besides their existing regular duties. For the district of Nickerie one judge has similarly been appointed. The number of appeals has increased to such an extent that every judge in a session year concludes around 100 new appeals; has to deal with an average of 12-16 new appeals per month; considers at least 3-4 new appeals each week; and at least 3 to 4 cases are being tried in one session each week.

- **Strengthen efforts to tackle human trafficking**

The provisions of the revised Criminal Code extended jurisdiction to nationals who committed trafficking offences in other countries and there was no statute of limitations for trafficking offences. Regular awareness-raising programmes were carried out, including campaigns specifically targeting women, who could be perpetrators as well as victims. Trafficking victims of both sexes had access to a shelter.

- **Right to work and rights at work (e.g. gender pay gap, occupational segregation, career progression)**

The law on protection of the family in employment has been adopted in April 2019. Draft legislation on “equality of treatment in employment and regulation of working time” has been drafted and submitted to the state council.

The Government of Suriname (GoS) envisages collecting sex-disaggregated data on occupational segregation, both horizontal and vertical. In this regard, two measures will be taken. The first measure is to install a Labor Market Information System, which is currently in progress. The second measure is to update the Workers Registration Act, which is currently outdated and no longer applied. These measures are taken with a view to strengthening endeavors to enforce the principle of equal pay for work, in line with ILO Convention No. 100.

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

In 2014 three laws were promulgated, which constitute the basis for the Surinamese Social Security System. These are:

- The National Basic Health Care Insurance Act;
- The General Pension Act and
- The Minimum Hourly Pay Act.

Since October 9, 2014 the National Basic Health Care Act (BAZO) compels every resident to take out health insurance for medical expenses. By using BAZOinsurance these persons are guaranteed a basic health care package: medicines, doctor’s treatment and selected specialist and paramedical treatments.

Within this law, there are three main categories of persons, namely:

- Persons under the age of 17 years.
- Persons 60 years and older.
- Persons within the age group 17 to 59 years.

The government covers the insurance premium of the two former groups and for those from the latter group (17 to 59 years) who cannot pay the compulsory insurance scheme. The law offers the possibility to persons in certain circumstances to receive an allowance from the ministry of Social Affairs and Public Housing by payment of the premium. If necessary (if the limit of the coverage of the health insurance has been reached) extra medical costs are covered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing.

The General Pension Act 2014 requires employers and employees, but also self-employed people to take out a pension insurance. This law aims at increasing the coverage of the active population for pensions by providing a pensionscheme to persons who were not yet covered by an existing scheme.

The Minimum Hourly Pay Act was promulgated in September 2014 as the third component of the social security system. The law came into force as of January 1, 2015. Though, as anticipated, this law is not a perfect product and stakeholders need continued dialogue.

Social transfers that were budgeted the past five years are financial assistance to poor households (SRD33, 50 up to 40, 50 monthly), financial assistance to persons with disabilities (SRD325, - monthly), child allowance and general old age pension (srd525, - monthly). The amount of child allowance was increased from SRD 30, - to SRD 50, - per child per month. For the other cash transfers there was no increase in the amounts. A challenge for all cash transfers is the payment in the interior, due to the high transportation costs. Another challenge is lack of an automated management information system or program to monitor the target group, gather data and share such data.

- **Basic services and infrastructure (water, sanitation, energy, transport etc.)**

In 2017, six projects were executed under the outcome *Adoption and implementation of mitigation and adaptation technologies* through the Japan-Caribbean Climate Change Partnership (J-CCCP).

This project is designed to strengthen the capacity of countries in the Caribbean to invest in climate change mitigation and adaptation technologies, as prioritized in their Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

From the six projects five have an adaptation component. The participation and roles of both men and women are important components in all of the projects. The project proponent had to indicate how many men and women will be involved in the preparation and the implementation phase of the project. Furthermore, the project proponent also had to indicate what the specific roles, anticipated benefits and the negative outcomes on either gender are. The projects listed below are with regard to water and digital infrastructure:

- **'Enhancing access to drinking water for the Maroon community of Asigrón Brokopondo' the project of the ministry of Regional Development.**

The objectives of this project are to:

- Strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Regional Development to design and execute drinking water projects in vulnerable communities in the interior of Suriname;
- Provide access to clean and safe drinking water, in the rainy and dry season that meets national standards for 100% of households in the Maroon community of Asigrón;
- Improve drinking water management and storage capacity in Asigrón.

- The project addresses J-CCCP focal area: Water Resource Management and is in the implementation phase.

- **‘Climate resilient access to drinking water for the Maroon community of Nw. Lombé (district of Brokopondo) the project of the ministry of Natural Resources.**

The objectives of this project are to:

- Provide access to clean, safe and climate-resilient drinking water, in the rainy and dry season that meets national standards for 100% of households in the Maroon community of Nw. Lombe;
- Reduce women’s time spent on collecting water, thus allowing for increased investment of time in social and productive activities.
- It proposes completion of a water distribution system. This system will pump and filter well water to all households in Nw. Lombe. The project addresses J-CCCP focal area: Water Resource Management and the project proposal is still under review.

- **INFRA HUB, a center for practical knowledge education ‘- Anton de Kom University Suriname, Faculty of Technological Sciences, Department Infrastructure.**

The department of Infrastructure of the AdeKUS identified a need for small scale practical and innovative measures that can be implemented on short term within our society especially within the vulnerable communities. To achieve this an INFRA HUB is required to conduct research on and gain knowledge in small infrastructure measures combating the effects of climate change in the built environment.

- ‘Combating flooding and increasing water supply through waste water treatment. In a small pilot plot within the Old Kampong in Mariënborg located in district of Commewijne’. The project addresses J-CCCP focal area: Water Resource Management and Community Based Climate Smart Resilient Infrastructure.

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

In December 2015, the training on “Domestic violence intervention for communication experts from the Government, media workers and artists” was conducted, in which 11 men and 20 women participated. The purpose of this training was to develop engagement practices aimed at eliminating violence against women and to provide them with tools to create productions (for example newspaper articles and music). This group of communicators can play a leading role to combat domestic violence. A formal assessment has not been conducted, but after the training one journalist wrote an article about domestic violence in a daily newspaper. The same journalist wrote another article during the Zika epidemic in Suriname in 2016. He pointed out that the focus should not only be on (pregnant) women in the prevention of and protection against Zika but should also focus on men. As of January 2016, the Ministry of Home Affairs has provided training in gender and gender-related issues to several staff of various ministries, faith-based organizations and NGOs.

After a successful lobby of the BGA, gender has been incorporated since 2016 in the curricula of courses provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs to civil servants.

Gender stereotyping is one of the topics that is addressed in these courses. A short evaluation has revealed that the students have a better understanding of gender and gender-related issues.

In 2017, the BGA provided a gender training for media workers in the district of Nickerie. The paragraphs dealing with the gender stereotyping and the role of the media in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and CEDAW were included in the training.

The BGA also supported a theater group that wanted to expose gender, domestic violence and women's emancipation through their own production in 2017.

Over the past five years, have you taken specific measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination? (please check relevant categories)

With regard to discrimination it is important to mention that although the draft Revision of the Civil Code does not include a specific definition on discrimination, the principle of equality between men and women is integrated in that draft revision. For example: joint exercise of parental authority; decision on the surname of the child (the choice can be made between the surname of the father or the mother or for a combination of both). Unlike the draft Revision of the Civil Code, the Revision of the Penal Code, approved in 2015, contains a definition of discrimination (article 126a). This definition is applicable to both men and women and is in line with CEDAW. In addition, article 500a of the Revised Penal Code, which deals with occupational discrimination, sexual orientation is explicitly mentioned as a ground for discrimination.

Women living with HIV/AIDS

The National Strategic Plan (NSP) for a multi-sectoral approach to HIV in Suriname 2014-2020 places emphasis on the prevention of contracting HIV/ AIDS by high-risk groups, namely women in prostitution and women working as prostitutes in the mining field in the interior, man having sex with man, LGBT and youth as well as the need to reduce stigma and discrimination against women living with HIV.

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 however, and the recent government administrations have taken the position that LGBT can consider themselves protected by this article. In March 2015, Suriname legislation was adapted; in particular the Surinamese Penal Code was updated with articles sanctioning hate speech, 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.

Which of the following does your country consider to be the top five priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in your country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes?

The priorities for accelerating progress for women and girls in our country for the coming five years through laws, policies and programmes are the following:

- Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls
- Eliminating violence against women and girls
- Access to affordable quality health care, including sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights
- Political participation and representation
- Strengthening women's participation in ensuring environmental sustainability
- Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building
- Changing negative social norms and gender stereotypes

The above selected priorities can be linked to the thematic areas identified in the draft Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 which is currently being finalized by the BGA. This policy document 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. 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

To implement the targets within the policy document yearly annual plans are/ will be developed. For the period 2019- 2020 a gender action plans have been developed wherein concrete activities have been incorporated with regard to the thematic areas. The activities will be executed in collaboration with the relevant ministries.

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 Ministry of Health has identified two high level policy priorities for health policy in its Development Plan for 2017-2021.

Policy area 1: Prevention and reduction of morbidity and mortality; and

Policy area 2: Availability and accessibility of quality health care for the entire population.

According to the National Strategic Plan 2019-2028 (see Annex) Suriname has gone through important policy reforms in the last years to advance in the direction of Universal Health. In 2014 the Basic Health Care Insurance Act came into effect with the aim to provide health insurance coverage for the population under 16 and over 60 years old and intended to improve access to services across all levels of care, while the working population is insured through employers' health insurance programs.

Suriname has a fragmented health system that covers the urban, coastal and interior regions of the country. A dedicated primary health service exists both for the population in the interior (Medical Mission) as well as the urban-coastal area (RGD) providing first level of care services. Implementation of projects and public health programs including health trend monitoring takes place through the Ministry of Health's Bureau of Public Health (BOG). Six hospitals serve the population, four of which are in the capital. In addressing the social determinants of health, health inequities, and the SDG-2030 body of participants from all key sectors across government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector advanced 12 policies that was later approved by the Council of Ministers health agenda, the government of Suriname has embraced a 'Health in All Policies Approach' (HiAP).

The Stichting Lobi Health Center (SLHC), an NGO provides an integrated, qualitative package of sexual and reproductive health services focused on prevention. This NGO also provides services regarding cancer prevention and early detection services, the focus is on cervical cancer screening (VIAA and Pap smear) and counseling services, clinical breast exam and prostate examination services. The SLHC has a specific department that focuses on comprehensive sexuality education for youth in and out of schools, training and workshops for parents and educators about sexuality and information and awareness sessions for companies and other groups and organizations about SRHR. To increase the access to its services the SLHC regularly organizes outreaches in 9 of the 10 districts, bringing its services closer to especially remote areas and vulnerable populations. The SLHC has three static clinics one in the district of Paramaribo, one in the district of Wanica and one in the district of Nickerie.

The Ministry of Health has developed significant policies and plans of actions, aimed at increasing access for women to health, guided by a human rights based approach and a gender perspective, i.e. the National Strategy Plan HIV 2014-2020; the National Strategic Plan 'Renewal and Strengthening of Primary Health Care 2014-2018'; Safe Motherhood and Neonatal Health Action Plan, based on the Safe Motherhood Needs Assessment 2014 and the National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy of Suriname, 2013-2017.

To promote access to contraceptives in the interior, contraceptives are distributed through the Malaria Program of the Ministry of Health. In 2017 an agreement has been signed with NGO's to also distribute contraceptives in the mining fields while conducting their outreach programs.

In March 2019, UNDP and the Ministry of Home Affairs signed the agreement for "Technical Assistance towards the 2020 Elections in Suriname". Activities to be implemented include: capacity strengthening for relevant institutions, support towards the participation of women, the indigenous population and persons with disabilities, training sessions for the media and a voter outreach campaign.

The gender action plan 2019 and 2020 also contains activities to increase women political participation and presentation.

In the coming years, policy on the environment, biodiversity and climate change and gender policy will be aligned. The draft environmental framework law, which is currently being approved by the National Assembly, sets out the environmental strategy and policy. In the Gender Vision policy document 2021 - 2035 and in the Gender Action Plan 2019-2020, a start has already been made on incorporating environmental and climate change activities that are specifically related to gender equality. Once the Environment Framework Act has been officially approved, the BGA will further coordinate with the organizations charged with environmental policy on adapting interventions in the environment and climate change priority area.

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 with 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. Furthermore, NCCR is currently in the process of training regional district administration offices ("Bestuursdienst") in disaster management procedures and planning, where a substantial number of the staff is female and from the local communities.

Ensuring that the curricula, textbooks and other materials used in schools are gender sensitive and do not (un) consciously help maintain gender stereotypes and / or promote gender discrimination

Section Two: Progress across the 12 critical areas of concern

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to advance gender equality in relation to women's role in paid work and employment?

- **Strengthened / enforced laws and workplace policies and practices that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in the public and private sectors, and equal pay legislation**
- **Taken measures to prevent sexual harassment, including in the workplace**
Draft legislation on "Sexual harassment on the work floor" is submitted to the state council.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to recognize, reduce and/or redistribute unpaid care and domestic work and promote work-family conciliation?

- **Introduced or strengthened maternity/paternity/parental leave or other types of family leave**
The law on protection of the family in employment has been adopted in April 2019. With the adoption of the abovementioned law, employed women will be entitled to paid maternity leave for 16 weeks and men to 7 days paternity leave. Women who give birth to multiple births, i.e. three or more children, are entitled to maternity leave up to a maximum of 24 weeks.
- **Promoted decent work for paid care workers, including migrant workers**
The ministry of Labour with support of the ILO has conducted the Decent Work Country Program 2014-2016. The decent work country program has two main objectives namely, to promote decent work as a key component of national development strategies and to organize ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework to advance the decent work agenda. The Decent Work Country Program of Suriname is currently being reviewed.

Has your country introduced austerity/fiscal consolidation measures, such as cuts in public expenditure or public sector downsizing, over the past five years?

Yes. The impact on women/men has not been assessed.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to reduce/eradicate poverty among women and girls?

- **Broadened access to land, housing, finance, technology and/or agricultural extension services**

The agricultural cooperative *Wi Uma fu Sranan* is the first women's agro cooperative in Suriname (launched in February 2016). It consists of 40 Maroon women. This cooperative aims at jointly developing the interior of Suriname by increasing employment opportunities for Maroon women.

The cooperative is active in the districts of Brokopondo, Saramacca, Para and Wanica, and works with strategic partners, including the government. Currently the cooperative produces and sells a variety of cereals made from cassava.

Actions taken in the last five years are the building of houses for persons with low income.

The Ministry of Finance has signed a loan agreement with the Islamic Development Bank for the implementation of the Affordable Housing Project (AHP). Gender equity is a key principal of the AHP program and therefore will be issued as a key performance indicator. The Project Implementation Unit installed for this project must undertake all necessary steps to ensure that a minimum 40% of all AHP awarded subsidies will be granted to female headed households. The Ministry of Social and Affairs and Housing is responsible for implementation.

- **Supported women's entrepreneurship and business development activities.**

In 2017 the BGA, with support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries and the United Nations Development Fund carried out a phase one of the project Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in the district of Nickerie. It was a training in plant propagation techniques to economically empower (unemployed) women, so that they will be able to generate an own income.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing has financed a training program for entrepreneurship in 2018. This project stems from an assessment made within several vulnerable communities. Based on that and the validation meetings held within these communities, the priorities are listed. For 2019 a follow up training in manufacturing of garments for 50 persons is planned.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve access to social protection for women and girls?

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

The MSAH does not provide in an unemployment benefit, but provides in financial assistance for vulnerable households.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve health outcomes for women and girls in your country?

The focus over the past five years were on the following:

- Promoted women's access to health services through expansion of universal health coverage or public health services.
- Expanded specific health services for women and girls, including sexual and reproductive health services, mental, maternal health and HIV services.
- Undertaken gender-specific public awareness/health promotion campaigns.
- Strengthened comprehensive sexuality education in schools or through community programmes.

Access of rural women to health services has been provided with the opening of a new hospital "Marwina" in the district of Marowijne. The services that will be provided will be aligned with the needs of the local community. This hospital will work together with the different health care centers of the Regional Health Department. Furthermore a health care center has been built in other parts of earlier mentioned district.

To promote access to contraceptives in the interior, contraceptives are distributed through the Malaria Program of the Ministry of Health. In 2017 an agreement has been signed with NGO's to also distribute contraceptives in the mining fields while conducting their outreach programs.

The screening of pregnant women for HIV/AIDS has been standardized since 2003. Progress was shown in the Elimination of Mother-To-Child Transmission (EMTCT) program with an increase in the percentage of HIV positive pregnant women receiving ART from 64% in 2006 to 93% in 2013 and a decline in the number of infants born infected with HIV to 0 in 2013. There is ongoing review and improvement of the structure of the EMTCT program aimed at strengthening 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.

HPV Vaccination Campaign: "Voor een prikje ben ik niet bang, HPV vaccinatie in mijn belang" (I am not afraid of a shot, HPV vaccination in my interest)"²

In November 2013 the HPV vaccine was introduced in Suriname's National Immunization Program. Girls in the age group 9-13 are vaccinated with the HPV vaccine. It concerns vaccinations at approximately 200 primary schools in Suriname.

Project goal and objectives:

The vaccination campaign is aimed to increase vaccination coverage and to raise awareness on the benefits of the vaccine through vaccine promotion activities. Partnering with other stakeholders and eventually reducing cervical cancer on national level.

Objectives:

²https://www.paho.org/sur/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=551:hpv-vaccination-campaign-voor-een-prikje-ben-ik-niet-bang-hpv-vaccinatie-in-mijn-belang-period-17-november-17-december-2017&Itemid=563

- Increase immunization of girls in schools, for girls who are difficult to reach, focusing on those who live in remote areas, so that every girl within the age group can be immunized.
- communication campaign with enough information about HPV vaccination for the general public

Media Campaign: Country wide broadcasting of the HPV vaccine campaign has been conducted including the following activities; Media interviews, TV-infomercials, radio messages and advertisements.

Evaluation of the HPV school vaccination program for 2016 identified main issues to be: lack of finances for optimal execution of the HPV vaccination program and lack of awareness especially for parents. In order to increase the HPV vaccination uptake and coverage it is necessary to strengthen the school vaccination program and increase awareness about the benefits of the HPV vaccine. In this regard the Ministry of Health and the Bureau of Public Health in association with the Pan American Health Organization have planned a HPV vaccination campaign.

For girls who have not received the vaccine, there is an opportunity to collect it at the Bureau Public Health. It is also possible to get the vaccine from the nearest RGD outpatient clinic.

The project PROSAMIGO (promoting Health in Small Artisanal Mining of Gold)³

Project scope

In 2015 Medical Mission conducted a study into the knowledge about the health consequences of gold mining for gold winners and the local population. The project focuses primarily on mercury. In an information program they want to increase knowledge and awareness about the effects of mercury on health. Possibilities were offered with which the residents can reduce their own intake of mercury. They will also investigate the feasibility of a program that measures the absorption of mercury in the body.

Target group

The target groups are gold winners and local residents in areas where small-scale gold mining takes place. Mercury is used in small-scale gold mining in Suriname. Mercury exposure poses a threat to the health of both gold winners and the local population. One of the target groups of this study are pregnant women, women who breastfeeds and children. These groups are more sensitive to the effects of mercury and methylmercury.

The project focuses on the development of a health education program to increase the level of knowledge about the health effects of mercury and mercury compounds. Also to give possibilities to gold winners and residents what they could do themselves to reduce the intake of mercury and thus limit the health effects. The intention is also to investigate the feasibility of setting up a program for the biological monitoring of mercury (blood, urine, exhaled air and hair) in gold winners and in adults and children from the local population.

Awareness material was also developed for the local communities in 3 local languages.

³<http://www.medischezending.sr/project/prosamigo-promoting-health-small-artisanal-mining-gold/>

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to improve education outcomes and skills for women and girls?

Actions taken in the last five years are:

- **Taken measures to increase girls' access to, retention in and completion of education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and skills development programmes.**

A number of actions have been taken to provide information about lower vocational education. Posters and a commercial have been developed with information of the new structure of lower vocational education. Commercials about different fields of study were developed, in which both boys and girls are visible. Information is also provided during the open days and youth information fairs which are organized yearly.

- **Strengthened educational curricula to increase gender-responsiveness and eliminate bias, at all levels of education.**

In November 2018, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture started with an analysis of gender inequality within the current curriculum of primary education (sample). The final results still have to be presented by the consultant. The staff of the department Curriculum Development of the MINOWC will be trained in how to develop curricula based on gender equality. Based on this training, the curricula for grades 7 and 8 of primary education will be developed or renewed. The aim is to complete these curricula by May 2020.

At the University of Suriname within the subjects "Gender and Development" of the study branch Sociology; "Gender in International Relations" of the study branch Public Administration; and "Gender in International Perspective" of the Master program in Education, Research and Sustainable Development (MERSD) the following topics are addressed: gender, gender equality, international women conferences and treaties.

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

School teams (pilot phase of 10 schools) are trained in gender-sensitive prevention and approach to behavior problems (GPAG). Tools have been provided to teachers, so that they recognize gender and behavioral problems of students and address them as effectively as possible

- **Promoted safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls.**

To promote safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls, school visits are no longer conducted alone by the female school inspectors, but in the presence of a male inspector. There are separate toilets for men and women and the furniture (desks) and work spaces have been adapted to prevent violation of intimacy.

The school inspectors give approval to the schools to invite organizations to organize information sessions about safe, harassment-free and inclusive educational environments for women and girls.

- **Increased access to skills and training in new and emerging fields, especially STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and digital fluency and literacy.**

Within the Basic Education Programme 2, a STEM / STEAM program for the primary years 1 to 8 of primary education will be developed. This course material must be completed by May 2020 at the latest.

- **Ensured access to safe water and sanitation services and facilitated menstrual hygiene management especially in schools and other education/training settings**

The schools are connected to the water supply network have the guarantee of safe drinking water. The schools that are located in the distant districts and interior are equipped with lockable water trays for the collection of clean rainwater. In the schools there are separate toilet groups for boys and girls. Regarding hygiene, the toilets are cleaned and disinfected every day. Even during the autumn holidays, a major cleaning and maintenance service takes place in which defective devices are replaced, leaks are repaired and clogs are removed. Both the floors and walls of the toilets are tiled. In every toilet group there are sinks and or wash troughs for hand washing. The staff has separate sanitary facilities for both men and women.

- **Strengthened measures to prevent adolescent pregnancies and to enable adolescent girls to continue their education in the case of pregnancy and/or motherhood**

Since 2016, a pregnancy protocol has been established by the MINOWC through a ministerial decision so as to ensure regulation at secondary schools and prevent school principals from taking their own decisions on removal of pregnant adolescents and mothers from school. The protocol is followed and schools are called upon that pregnant students also have right to education at all education levels. In case of pregnancy, the pupil is offered the opportunity to receive education as long as possible and / or to come back after giving birth. This also depends on the student's condition and the doctor's advice.

With regard to pregnant adolescents who drop out of the formal school system, they are offered an opportunity to continue their education through training-courses offered by the Ministry of Labour and NGOs.

Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes

Critical areas of concern:

- D. Violence against women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

In the last five years, which forms of violence against women and girls, and in which specific contexts or settings, have you prioritized for action?

- **Intimate partner violence/domestic violence, including sexual violence and marital rape**

As mentioned in the previous report the National Assembly adopted the law on Domestic Violence in 2009 and the law on Stalking in 2012. The Penal Code has been revised, namely the First, Second and Third Book, by the National Parliament in March 2015. Important to mention is that the prison sentences in cases of assault and grievous bodily harm may be increased by one third for the perpetrator who commits the crime against his or her mother, or her father, his or her spouse or partner, wife or partner or his or her child (article 364.1 of the Penal Code).

The BGA organized in December 2015 a four day intervention domestic violence training for communication officials of the government, media workers and artists. 11 males and 20 females participated in the training. The purpose was to provide insights in the total cycle of domestic violence and an appropriate treatment of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. In order to increase awareness on gender and domestic violence, the BGA has trained around 400 of her personnel (permanent secretary/ deputy directors/ policy advisors / policy officials, heads of bureaus/ divisions and personnel) in gender and gender related violence / domestic violence during January 2016 – June 2017. The following concepts were addressed: gender, gender roles, gender equality, gender stereotypes, gender discrimination, violence against women, causes of partner violence, why women stay in violent relationships, the Law on Combating Domestic Violence. A number of NGOs were also trained in the abovementioned concepts.

- **Sexual harassment and violence in public places, educational settings and in employment**

In 2013 a policy memorandum on sexual harassment at the workplace is approved and signed by the Minister of Justice and Police and the heads of the several departments of the Ministry. In 2018, the Ministry of Labor also drafted a draft law entitled "Labor, Violence and Sexual Harassment". This draft law only applies to the private sector. NGO's and government institutions were consulted for input on the content of this law. The draft law was presented to the State Council in February 2019.

- **Trafficking in women and girls**

The Penal Code regarding Trafficking in Persons has been revised in 2006 and further in 2015. The revision has taken place in conformity with the United Nations Convention against

Transnational Organized Crime and the two protocols namely: 1. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in persons especially women and children and 2.the Protocol against the smuggling of migrants by land, sea and air. Through the amendment both sexes are protected against trafficking and the penalties have been extended especially when minor victims are involved. Except for the sexual exploitation other purposes of trafficking are included such as labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery and removal of organs.

Shelter is also available for female and child victims of trafficking in persons and is for safety reasons located at a secret address. The shelter provides accommodation including food and other necessities to more than 20 victims.

Awareness programs on trafficking are being carried out for Maroon communities 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 communities) through Radio Kojeba, as this radio station is popular among the Maroon community.

In addition to awareness-raising activities on local radio stations, measures to combat trafficking included police patrols in remote parts of the country, sometimes in cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization. Counselling and other services were provided to trafficking victims in partnership with the country's psychiatric institute. Under the revised Criminal Code, the maximum penalty for traffickers was life imprisonment. Judges were empowered to hand down sentences proportionate to the gravity of the offence

What actions has your country prioritized in the last five years to address violence against women and girls?

- **Introduced or strengthened violence against women laws, and their enforcement and implementation**

Revision of the Penal Code, namely the First, Second and Third Book, by National Parliament in March 2015. Important to mention is that the prison sentences in cases of assault and grievous bodily harm may be increased by one third for the perpetrator who commits the crime against his or her mother, or her father, his or her spouse or partner, wife or partner or his or her child (article 364.1 of the Penal Code).

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

In June 2017, the National Council on Domestic Violence (NRHG) was established for three years in particular to evaluate and actualise the national policy plan for the Structural Approach of Domestic Violence 2014 – 2017. The policy plan has been assessed and actualised and a work plan for 2018 has been drawn up. The scope of domestic violence is currently difficult to establish, as the results of the study to measure the existence of such gender-related violence (2018) are not yet available.

- **Introduced or strengthened measures to increase women's access to justice (e.g. establishment of specialist courts, training for the judiciary and police, protection orders, redress and reparations, including for femicide cases)**

Since 2014, four cantonal judges have been appointed for Paramaribo and surrounding area for the duration of two session years to deal with protection order appeals in cases of domestic violence, besides their existing regular duties. For the district of Nickerie one judge has similarly been appointed. The number of appeals has increased to such an extent that every judge in a session year concludes around 100 new appeals; has to deal with an average of 12-16 new appeals per month; considers at least 3-4 new appeals each week; and at least 3 to 4 cases are being tried in one session each week.

- **Introduced or strengthened services for survivors of violence (e.g. shelters, help lines, dedicated health services, legal, justice service, counselling, housing)**

Currently there is only one government shelter for women victims of domestic violence and her children up to 12 years old. For safety reasons this shelter is located at a secret address. The shelter provides practical guidance (when visiting the police, family doctor, emergency room if necessary and for making appointments with the employer and transportation of the children to school); emotional guidance through conversations; legal / emotional guidance when requesting a protection order, visiting the court, prosecution office or the Bureau for Family Law Affairs. The services provided by the shelter are evaluated regularly for improvement.

There are two bureaus for Victim Aid (one in the district of Paramaribo and one in the district of Nickerie)

There are three hotlines for child protection (meldpunt kinderbescherming) located in the districts of Sipaliwini (Apoera), Coronie and Paramaribo.

- **Monitoring and evaluation of impact, including evidence generation and data collection, including regarding particular groups of women and girls**

In 2018 a study to measure the existence of violence against women has been conducted. The results of this study are not yet available.

What strategies has your country used in the last five years to prevent violence against women and girls?

- **Public awareness raising and changing of attitudes and behaviours.**

In close cooperation with CSOs, the BGA has carried out several campaigns regarding violence against women, including: HeForShe awareness raising campaign, Orange Day and Sixteen Days of Activism against Gender Violence that was launched on the 24th of November 2015.

Activities carried out between 2015 to 2019 includes public awareness raising activities on gender and domestic violence for communication officials of the government, communication experts from various ministries, religious leaders from different denominations, civil servants, high level government officials and NGOs. The activities were not only carried out in the capital but also in the rural and urban districts.

In 2015 the ministry of Justice and Police started with the implementation of awareness programs on violence against children and sexual abuse in schools and other institutions in Moengo (district Marowijne) and Apoera (district Sipaliwini). The intention is to set up “meldpunten” (hot lines) for violence/ sexual abuse in all districts.

The students of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname who participated in domestic violence training in November 2016 were nominated by the minister of Home Affairs as Ambassadors of Domestic Violence. This training, organized by the Institute for Women, Gender and Development Studies (IWGDS) in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), aimed at training students to make a major contribution to reducing, preventing and combating domestic violence. In the coming period, work arrangements will be made and evaluation meetings will be held. In this context, the ambassadors will conduct investigations and plan activities in advance, with the support of the ministry.

- **Work in primary and secondary education, including comprehensive sexuality education.**

After the GPAG (Gender Sensitive Prevention and Addressing Behavioral Problems) training sessions there have also been coaching sessions. GPAG is now in the rollout phase, in which the other lower vocational schools are trained and coached.

The Deputy Directorate for Vocational Education (ODB) participates in the GPAG process and examines how ODB will continue to work after completing PROGRESS (more effective education system in Suriname).

- **Working with men and boys.**

The Government of Suriname acknowledges the importance of engaging boys and men to achieve gender equality and the elimination of violence against women. In this regard at an Orange Day awareness activity in 2016 eleven (11) prominent men were installed as HeforShe agent, including three (3) members of the National Assembly. A Masculinity Training has also been carried out in 2017. In other related activities more men engaged in the HeforShe movement.

- **Perpetrator programmes.**

The foundation Stop Violence Against Women has various programs such as: psycho-social assistance and guidance for victims (female / male); psycho-social guidance for perpetrators (voluntarily; on victims’ request or obligatorily by an order of a judge in case of protection order); guidance when applying for and obtaining legal protection through protection orders; training and information at various locations in Paramaribo and districts; self-help groups consisting of victims and perpetrators separately. Data of the various programs are regularly gathered and the programs are evaluated.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls facilitated by technology (online sexual harassment, online stalking, non-consensual sharing of intimate images)?

A project “Initiatief voor Gender-Responsief Onderwijs (iGROW) – Initiative for Gender-Responsive Education⁴” funded by the European Union (EU) is currently being implemented within the lower secondary technical and vocational education and training in the districts of Marowijne and Paramaribo. The majority of students in Suriname’s lower secondary vocational education and training (Lager beroepsonderwijs (LBO)), come from very vulnerable environments. Often this translates into problem behaviour that leads to truancy and an increased risk of early school leaving or expulsion (problem behaviour such as unhealthy and unsafe sex, transactional sex, violent relationships, etc.).

Drop-out rates in Suriname’s LBO schools are very high: 28.4 per cent. The underlying issues are strongly related to persisting traditional gender roles and norms, adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR), and gender-based violence (GBV) against and among adolescents.

Many teachers and school leaders feel at a loss when it comes to addressing these matters. There is no training, policy framework or referral system to provide them with guidance. As a result, students do not find a safe and supportive space at school where they can critically reflect on ASRHR and GBV and where their problem behaviour is met with a proper response.

The iGROW programme creates a more supportive school environment for students in lower secondary vocational education and training on issues relating to ASRHR and GBV.

Partners:

- Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MinOWC)
- Institute for Graduate Studies and Research in Suriname
- MinOWC Directorate for Vocational Training (ODB)
- Centre for In-service Training (CENASU)
- Stichting Lobi (national chapter of International Planned Parenthood Federation)
- YAM (Youth Advocacy Movement)
- Stichting ProHealth
- Stichting YES (Youth Empowerment Suriname)

The iGROW programme pilots a whole school approach to creating a supportive environment on issues relating to ASRHR and GBV.

The programme centres on improving the professional development of teachers and school leaders, and on strengthening the collaboration between schools and civil society.

The whole school approach has 3 dimensions:

- Improved knowledge, policy, and practice of LBO teachers and school directors for addressing ASRHR and GBV.
- Safe spaces for LBO students to critically reflect on and speak openly about ASRHR and GBV.
- Appropriate outreach to LBO students’ parents or caregivers, through positive school-parent/caregiver relations and support for parents or caregivers in addressing ASRHR and GBV.

⁴ <https://www.vvob.org/en/programmes/suriname-igrow>

Within this whole school approach, collaboration between LBO schools and civil society organizations (CSOs) plays a central role. Suriname has several CSOs that have strong expertise and experience working with adolescents on these and similar issues. Enhanced CSO-school collaboration significantly improves outreach to vulnerable adolescents at risk of dropping out, as well as to their parents or caregivers, thus contributing to a safe and supportive school environment.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to address the portrayal of women and girls, discrimination and/or gender bias in the media?

- **Supported the media industry to develop voluntary codes of conduct**

Every five years, within the framework of the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), research is conducted into gender-related topics in the media. In April 2015, research was conducted into the visibility of women in the media in that context. This shows that despite the fact that women worldwide make up around 50% of the world's population, they are only heard or can be seen in newspapers, on television and the radio news for 24%,.

In 2015, the visibility of women in digital modern media was examined for the first time. The invisibility of women in the traditional news has its bearing on the digital modern media, in which women are only 26% relatively visible in the news. To help the media in Suriname narrow the gap in the visibility of men and women in the media to achieve better results with GMMP 2020, a Gender Media Code has been developed. This code also contains guidelines for a balanced presentation of men and women in realization to: credibility and impartiality, language, reporting on sexual violence, advertisements and ethnicity.

In the period from 2 July to 15 August 2018, the GMMP team approached media houses in Suriname to include the code proposed in 2017 in their policies. The company that has applied this code best was eligible for the Gender media award, which was presented on 31 August as part of the regional project: "Achieving Gender Equality: Influencing Media Houses Policies to include Gender Equity", which is coordinated by "Women's Media Watch

Has your country taken any action in the last five years specifically tailored to address violence against specific groups of women facing multiple forms of discrimination?

No action has been taken.

Participation, accountability and gender-responsive institutions

Critical areas of concern:

- G. Women in power and decision-making
- H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
- I. Human rights of women
- J. Women and the media
- L. The girl child

What actions and measures has your country taken in the last five years to promote women's participation in public life and decision-making?

- Implemented capacity building, skills development and other measures.
- Provided opportunities for mentorship, training in leadership, decision-making, public speaking, self-assertion, political campaigning.
- Collected and analyzed data on women's political participation, including in appointed and elected positions.

During the general elections of 2015, the National Assembly also carried out activities to increase the number of women in parliament, such as the project "More Women in Decision-making 2015" with the purpose to mobilize commitment of political parties to nominate more women as parliament candidates, for management positions or political administrative positions; strengthen self-confidence/self-awareness of politically active women within political parties/potential candidates (how to present yourself); increase awareness on the importance of having more women (equal basis) in politics.

NGO's and others also made efforts to raise awareness on the importance of women's role in politics through discussions on strategies and more profiling of women during election periods. The "OokZij" Campaign of Stas International. The purpose of this campaign, which includes promotion materials, mass media profiling of female parliament candidates, debates, was to increase public awareness on the importance of equal participation of men and women in decision-making and increase women share in parliament seats to at least 30%. This campaign was partially funded by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

After the elections of May 2015, the Bureau for Gender Affairs sent an open letter to the media, calling upon the new government to nominate and appoint women on equal terms with men to various public decision-making positions, in view of the principles of democracy.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to increase women’s access to expression and participation in decision-making in the media, including through information and communication technologies (ICT)?

See response to this question in the Comprehensive report Beijing +25 National Review.

Do you track 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 gender within her total budget in which funds for programs, plans regarding gender equality are allocated every year. The same is also within the Ministry of Justice and Police. There is a policy measure youth, moral and gender policy in which funds for programs, plans on violence are allocated every year.

As a donor country, does your country track the proportion of official development assistance (ODA) that is invested in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women (gender-responsive budgeting)?

Not applicable

Does your country have a valid national strategy or action plan for gender equality?

The BGA is currently finalizing the draft Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035. This policy document 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. 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

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.

Does your country have an action plan and timeline for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (if a State party), or of the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review or other United Nations human rights mechanisms that address gender inequality/discrimination against women?

There are no specific action plans and timelines in place, but the various ministries responsible for the implementation of the recommendations include these recommendations in their action plans. The BGA has included e.g. the CEDAW recommendations and SDG targets in the draft Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 with a specific timeline.

Is there a national human rights institution in your country?

In December 2016, the Ministry of Justice and Police launched the National Human Rights Institute. The planning is that a transition period will be implemented in 4 years, wherein the institute will be arranged in such a way that it will comply with the requirements according to the Paris Principles. This means that in this period the Institute will be made into an independent institution. In the final phase of this transition, the Institute will thus completely stand alone. This institute will deal with the promotion and protection of human rights in the country. Also, a general ombudsman will be linked to this institute. The ombudsman will be divided into two divisions, being one for children and one for adults.

Peaceful and inclusive societies

Critical areas of concern:

- E. Women and armed conflict
- I. Human rights of women
- L. The girl child

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to build and sustain peace, promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development and implement the women, peace and security agenda?

The Government of Suriname (GoS) recognizes the disproportionate impact conflict and post-conflict situations have on women and girls. It also acknowledges the importance of the participation of women and the inclusion of a gender perspective in preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts and maintaining international peace and security.

The GoS, despite its relative small size and scale of its armed forces underscores furthermore the importance of this resolution as well as the fact that this resolution provides an important means or instrument for national institutions, agencies and actors alike to assess the domestic implementation of this resolution and its impact. Unfortunately, the GoS has not yet submitted its mandatory annual national reports. The Ministry of Defense, more specifically the Sub Directorate for Personnel Affairs embarked on a program aimed at assessing among others gender perspective in the areas of Gender integration in the Armed Forces and Women in the Armed Forces. Part of that program had to do with national legislation and policies, Human Resources, Women in operations, Prevention of sexual harassment and assault and Women and military ranks. This program was regrettably not finalized.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to enhance judicial and non-judicial accountability for violations of international humanitarian law and violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed and other conflicts or humanitarian action and crisis response?

- **Increased access of conflict-affected, refugee or displaced women to violence prevention and protection services.**

The GoS provides free Basic Health Insurance (BAZO) to children from 0-16 years of age and adults from the age of 60 and above. Persons from the age of 17 to 59, who have no health insurance, have to register at Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing to be eligible for BAZO. Foreigners who are citizens registered at the Central Registry Office and who live in Suriname, can also apply for BAZO. If they meet all the criteria, they are eligible for BAZO. This provision also applies to stateless persons, refugees and displaced persons/children.

- **Taken measures to combat trafficking in women and children**

The Ministry of Justice and Police installed a workgroup in 2016 on short term with the aim to carry out a cash program. This program contained actions that needed to provide solutions for serious bottlenecks. Some of these were; providing shelters for victims of Trafficking in Persons (TIP) especially women and children; create and implement a national TIP strategy through finance; relevant training for police, military police, health workers, social workers, Ministry of Labour, employees of Justice and other working within this area.

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What actions has your country taken in the last five years to eliminate discrimination against and violations of the rights of the girl child?

- Implemented policies and programmes to eliminate violence against girls, including physical and sexual violence and harmful practices

In November 2017 the IKBeN pledge was signed by all ministers as well as the First Lady and the Chair of the National Assembly (DNA), which emphasizes the commitment from the Government for the protection of the child in Suriname. IKBeN stands for the Integrated Child Protection Network. All ministries, as well as NGOs, are part of this network. Within this group, a Technical Committee (TC-IKBeN) has been appointed to ensure that IKBeN takes further shape and is promoted within society. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the TC-IKBeN to tackle the issues surrounding child protection. A uniform referral system is missing. Different institute conduct their work without involving each other, which means that cases involving children in crisis situations usually take too long to resolve. The TC-IKBeN, in cooperation with UNICEF, has started a process to formulate a well-developed referral system. This should ensure that children, in this case girls, who are victims of violence, are helped quickly, with the right guidance and care. All relevant authorities (government and non-government) are involved in this process

Another project that is being carried out in collaboration with UNICEF is the Positive Parenting Program (PPP). In this regard social workers of the Ministries of Social Affairs and Housing (MSAH) and Justice and Police (MJ&P) in urban and rural areas are trained to support parents / families who are in difficult social circumstances.

- **Implemented policies and programmes to eradicate child labour and excessive levels of unpaid care and domestic work undertaken by girl children.**

The MSAH is represented in the National Committee for the Elimination of Child Labor (NCUK). The recently approved the Law “Workers and Children Youth Act” includes the responsibility of the MSAH to set up a committee to ensure that victims (of child labor) receive the necessary guidance and support from the Government.

The National Action Plan on Child Labour has been approved for the period 2019-2024. This National Action Plan contains action to combat child labour.

- **Promoted girls’ awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life**

In the past 5 years the Bureau for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (BRvK) has held one (1) promotion activity in the context of "The International Day of the Girl Child" at a children's home in Commewijne (Huize Sukh Dhaam). Hereby the children were informed about children's rights and in particular about the rights of the girl. In the context of this day, statements have also been published via the FB page of the Ministry of Sozavo to draw attention to the rights of girls. The BRvK also participated in fairs organized by "Stop Violence against Women Foundation", including a Back to school Holiday Institution and also in a parent and children's activity "Bromtji Fu Tamara Village" organized by Chetskeys advertising Promotion & Production.

In 2016 the BGA wrote an article regarding the International Day of the Girl Child and it was published in DWT online. A Radio interview (in the morning) via Radio SRS regarding the International Day of the Girl Child to promote the rights of girls to participate in social, economic and political life was given by BGA.

BGA wrote letters to media workers with the request to promote the International Day of the Girl Child and their rights to participate in social, economic and political life.

In the TV program Panorama of a local television ATV, the Minister of Home Affairs was present to promote the International Day of the Girl Child. During this program, more information about the International Day of the Girl Child and the position of girls in Suriname was provided.

In 2017, as part of the commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child, BGA has held a "mini test" at the Giovanni Montini (LBO) school in the district Para, where 130 boys and girls participated. Before the test the students received the information regarding the International Day of the Girl Child, gender, gender related issues and gender based violence and other problems and challenges that girls face. Through this activity, an attempt was made to raise awareness among students about the International Day of the Girl Child and the importance of equal treatment of girls and boys. BGA strives to raise awareness about gender and gender related issues as broadly as possible, including in rural areas.

In 2018 BGA in collaboration with de UNICEF, UNDP, UNRCO and UNFPA produced a short video in the frame work of The International Day of the Girl Child. Under the theme 'With her: A skilled girl force', the film about The International Day of the Girl Child is the start of an effort to bring partners and stakeholders together for a year to argue for, and draw attention to, and invest in, the most urgent needs and opportunities for girls to acquire employability skills.

This video about World Girl's Day aims to highlight and address the needs and challenges of girls, while at the same time promoting girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. The video is still broadcasted via the GOV.TV (Government tv station) and DNA TV (the National Assembly tv station), since it is a one-year awareness campaign.

Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

Critical areas of concern:

- I. Human rights of women
- K. Women and the environment
- L. The girl child

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives and concerns into environmental policies?(Sharon)

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

Within one of the projects, implemented by ministry of Regional Development early 2017 named 'Enhancing access to drinking water for the Maroon community of Asigrion (district of Brokopondo) 42% of the persons participated where women and 47.8% female headed households. The youth and Elderly also participated (of which 53% Girls) and the Elderly (of which 55 % women).

- **Strengthened evidence and/or raised awareness about gender-specific environmental and health hazards (e.g. consumer products, technologies, industrial pollution).**

From February until June 2017 information sharing sessions were held in the different maroons/tribal and indigenous tribes. The tribes were being informed about climate change, the phases in which the REDD+ is currently working in and how REDD+ can contribute to Suriname and the different specific target group such as women, children, youth, etc. Consultations to develop a REDD+ National strategy have also taken place in different tribal and indigenous communities. During these information sharing sessions and consultations the participation of the women of these communities was also a requirement.

Women at different levels took part in e.g. the REDD+ National Strategy regarding REDD+. The information sharing sessions are ongoing. In these information sessions the participation was 487 persons from 59 tribal and indigenous communities of which 54% women. The last REDD+ consultation regarding the REDD+ National strategy has been held in the month September/October 2017.

What actions has your country taken in the last five years to integrate gender perspectives into policies and programmes for disaster risk reduction, climate resilience and mitigation?

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

See response above

Unedited version

Section Three: National institutions and processes

What is your country's current national machinery for gender equality and the empowerment of women? Please name it and describe its location within Government.

The BGA 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.

Is the head of the national machinery a member of the institutional process for SDG implementation (e.g. inter-ministerial coordinating office, commission or committees)?

There is no national process for SDG implementation

Are there 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?

No

- a) **Do you have mechanisms in place to ensure that women and girls from marginalized groups can participate and that their concerns are reflected in these processes?**

No

Please provide further details about the mechanisms used. (2 pages max.)

- b) **Please describe how stakeholders have contributed to the preparation of the present national report.**

See response in Comprehensive report Beijing +25 National Review

Is gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls included as a key priority in the national plan/strategy for SDG implementation?

There is no national plan/strategy for SDG implementation.

Although there is no national plan/strategy for SDG implementation, the SDG targets are included in national policy/planning documents. The Ministry of Health has mainstreamed SDG 3 within the health policy and the SDG's are also integrated in their long term National Strategic Plan 2019-2028. In the draft Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 formulated by the Ministry of Home Affairs/BGA, the SDG targets are also included.

The four Pillars of the Development Plan 2017-2021; Strengthening development capacity, Economic growth and diversification, Social progress, Utilization and protection of the environment are also linked with the three (3) dimensions of Sustainable Development.

Section Four: Data and statistics

What are the top three areas in which your country has made most progress over the past five years when it comes to gender statistics at the national level?

- Used more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- Conducted new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)
- Improved administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- Produced knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)
- Engaged in capacity building to strengthen the use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

During the drafting of the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 gender sensitive data were used. The study to measure the existence of violence against women (2018) was conducted for the first time in Suriname. Unfortunately the data were not available during the drafting of the preliminary report.

The General Bureau of Statistics (GBS) has published in 2017 their biannual publication entitled “selected Statistics about women and men in Suriname”. Furthermore statistical papers were produced by the GBS such as:

- A statistical study from a gender perspective on Surinamese women and men (2016)
- Housing situation of Female Headed Households (FHH) in Paramaribo (2015)
- An article “The living situation of Surinamese Men and Women, an analysis of gender relations in Census 2012” was also published in a publication “Mozaïek van het Surinaams Volk, Volkstellingen in Demografisch, Economisch en Sociaal Perspectief produced by the GBS and the Institute for Graduate Studies and Research (IGSR) in 2016.

The BGA has produced Factsheets based on the research findings of the Pilot of the CARICOM Gender Equality Indicators (GEI) model. These factsheets were shared with stakeholders and also placed on the Facebook page of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Out of the following which are your country’s top three priorities for strengthening national gender statistics over the next five years?

- Use more gender-sensitive data in the formulation of policy and implementation of programmes and projects
- Conduct of new surveys to produce national baseline information on specialized topics (e.g., time use, gender-based violence, asset ownership, poverty, disability)
- Greater utilization and/or improvement of administrative-based or alternative data sources to address gender data gaps
- Production of knowledge products on gender statistics (e.g., user-friendly reports, policy briefs, research papers)

- Development of a centralized web-based database and/or dashboard on gender statistics
- Statistical capacity building of users to increase statistical appreciation on and use of gender statistics (e.g., trainings, statistical appreciation seminars)

The Ministry of Home Affairs has signed, through the ministry of Finance, an agreement with the Islamic Development Bank for technical assistance for the period 2019-2022 for the institutional strengthening of the BGA. With this project the BGA aims at closing the gaps in sex disaggregated data, which will make it possible to present trends over time in the situation of women in Suriname and meet the national and international reporting obligations. The Technical Assistance will support the establishment of a robust data collection system. Activities to be carried out in this regard are the following:

- Strengthen the research departments of social ministries: Health; Justice and Police; Education, Science and Culture; Labor; Social Affairs and Housing; and key government officials (e.g. policymakers) in order to increase the reliability, regularity and use of the gender statistics collected within the national and international framework and disseminate the findings to inform policy development with respect to national and international framework.
- Strengthen the capacity of key government officials (e.g. policymakers) in the application/ translation of available sex disaggregated data to the development of evidence-based formulation of policies and programs.
- Strengthening the national data collection system in capturing measurable gender indicators to assess trends in the situation of women and progress made towards the realization of women’s empowerment in all areas covered by the CEDAW Convention, the Beijing Platform for Action and the SDGs.

Have you defined a national set of indicators for monitoring progress on the SDGs?

No

Has data collection and compilation on SDG 5 indicators and on gender-specific indicators under other SDGs begun?

Yes, but only for some indicators

Which of the following disaggregations⁵ is routinely provided by major surveys in your country?

- Geographic location
- Income, due to low response this data is not published
- sex
- Age
- Education
- Marital status
- Race/ethnicity

* * *

⁵ As specified in A/RES/70/1, with the addition of education and marital status.