



SURINAME

FIRST VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2022



High-level Political Forum on
Sustainable Development
July 2022

Government of the
Republic of Suriname

Title : Suriname's First Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals
Presented by : Government of the Republic of Suriname
Published by : Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation
Pictures : Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; Ministry of Regional Development and Sports;
National Institute for Environmental Development in Suriname; The National Assembly of Suriname;
Suriname Business Association; United Nations Suriname; Howard de Abreu and Paul Soegriemsingh
Graphic Design : ChadLab (Chad Abdoellah)

© Copyright June 2022

No portion of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the express request in writing and consent and permission in writing from the publisher, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation.



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SURINAME
FIRST VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW
High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
July 2022



Table of Content

VNR

Acknowledgements 7

Statement from the Minister of Foreign Affairs,
International Business and International
Cooperation, His Excellency Albert R. Ramdin 8

1

Introduction 11

2

**Methodology and Preparation
of Review** 13

3

Policy and Enabling Environment 15

3.1 SDGs in National Policy frameworks
and Institutional mechanisms 15

3.2 Raising awareness on the SDGs 18

4

Suriname's Country Profile 21

4.1 Geography, population and demography 21

4.2 Environment 25

4.3 Labour force and employment 27

4.4 Social protection 28

4.5 Macro-Economic situation 29

4.6 COVID-19 impact 29

5

**Progress towards achieving
Sustainable Development Goal 4:
Ensure inclusive and equitable
quality education and promote
lifelong learning opportunities
for all 33**

5.1 Status of the Targets	34
5.2 Policy context and Progress	35
5.3 Challenges and Emerging opportunities to accelerate achieving SDG 4	43
5.4 Statistical overview and analysis by selected indicators	45

6

**Progress towards achieving
Sustainable Development Goal 8:
Promote sustained, inclusive and
sustainable economic growth,
full and productive employment
and decent work for all 53**

6.1 Status of the Targets	54
6.2 Policy context and Progress	55
6.3 Challenges and Emerging opportunities to accelerate achieving SDG 8	65
6.4 Statistical overview and analysis by selected indicators	70





7

Progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts 83

7.1 Status of the Targets	84
7.2 Policy context and Progress	84
7.3 Challenges and Emerging opportunities to accelerate achieving SDG 13	94
7.4 Statistical overview and analysis by selected indicators	96

8

Progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for Sustainable Development 99

9

The way forward on the implementation of the SDGs in Suriname 107

List of tables	112
List of figures	112
List of abbreviations	113

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Suriname's first Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the product of a concerted effort by the government of the Republic of Suriname.

The Review encompasses substantial and valuable contributions made by technical staff and representatives from the ministries, private sector, civil society organizations, the General Bureau of Statistics, the National Planning Office Suriname, United Nations agencies, International partners and other stakeholders, who committed their time and efforts to take part in the Review process. Hence, special reference and acknowledgment to all these crucial government and non-government actors, who are an intrinsic part of Suriname's development path.

The government applauds the commitment and dedication demonstrated by the VNR technical committee for its guidance and completion of the VNR Report. Finally, the government extends its appreciation to the United Nations Country Team in Suriname for their full support.

STATEMENT



from the Minister of Foreign Affairs,
International Business and
International Cooperation,
His Excellency Albert R. Ramdin

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), embedded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, are a commonly defined and agreed blueprint for countries to achieve a better and sustainable future for humankind and the planet.

The SDGs serve as a continuous reminder and motivation for the government of the Republic of Suriname in its pursuit of continued action and acceleration of the implementation of these robust and ambitious universal goals.

Hence, Suriname is pleased to present its first Voluntary National Review Report, focusing on the following four SDGs:

- Goal 4 - Quality Education
- Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth
- Goal 13 - Climate Action
- Goal 17 - Partnership for the Goals

This Review is timely as the government is currently implementing its short-term recovery plan 2020-2022 and medium-term Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026, aimed at developing its vision 2050. I can assure that this Review is the first of a series of VNR reports.

Government Ministries, the Private Sector, Civil Society Organizations, and Local Communities have been engaged with the implementation of the SDGs for quite some time now. Recognizing the need for coordination at a national level, institutional arrangements were introduced to bring about more coherence and ownership.

The VNR technical committee was entrusted with the auspicious task of drafting the first Review. Through multi-stakeholder engagement, this committee ensured that all relevant government and non-government partners were actively engaged and their voices were heard, in line with the principle of leaving no one behind.

Furthermore, the government established the National SDG Committee and the National SDG Public-Private Platform, in which the private sector and civil society are also represented, to coordinate and accelerate the implementation of the SDGs. In planning is a National High-Level meeting on the SDGs, which will be convened later this year.

As we strive for collective sustainable development, we must acknowledge our particular vulnerabilities due to economic shocks and climate change. Suriname is at a pivotal moment to restore its economy, and therefore revitalizing strategic partnerships is critical to promote collaboration and investments in the economic sector, for the environment and for enhancing human capital development.

The President of the Republic of Suriname, H.E. Chandrikaparsad Santokhi is committed to the achievement of the SDGs and underscores the importance of an inclusive development approach within the national policy frameworks and strategies, by leaving no one behind.

I proudly submit this report to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and look forward to the presentation and discussion at the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The government of Suriname remains driven to achieving the SDGs and will furnace all resources available to improve advocacy, and increase awareness so as to ascertain advancement of accomplishing the SDGs, and in doing so, providing for a thriving and peaceful future for us all!

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Albert R. Ramdin". It is written in a cursive style with a blue line underneath it.

Albert R. Ramdin



1

INTRODUCTION

In September 2015, Heads of State and Governments embarked on an ambitious collective journey to achieve the robust, integrated, and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the protection and preservation of humanity and the planet. This Agenda provides the framework for countries to build a world through which the economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainable development are pursued.

The government of the Republic Suriname recognizes the importance of achieving this global agenda with its 17 ambitious and integrated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and has taken necessary steps to align these universal goals with its national development policies and frameworks.

The integration of the SDGs in the existing national policy frameworks is a result of Suriname's commitment to pave a pathway for inclusive development, prosperity, and the protection of its people. The goals, targets, and indicators of the SDGs, which are deemed relevant and realistic for the country's development, have been incorporated in and are aligned with the policy areas and objectives set out in current the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026, as they were in the previous Development Plan 2017-2021. It is now timely for Suriname to prepare its first VNR given the comprehensive national policy frameworks and mechanisms, in which the SDGs are embedded.



This Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026 provides the building blocks for the 2050 vision for Suriname:

'In 2050, Suriname will have a just society in which its values are fulfilled: Justice, Inclusiveness, Freedom, Equality, and Sustainability. Within the system of law and order, everyone can decide for themselves to realize his/her own potential, taking into account the sustainability of the environment.'

'Every citizen takes pride in a life and country that offers prosperity and well-being, holding the following norms in high regard: Good Governance; Guaranteeing Energy, Water, Food, Healthcare, Education and Social Services; Employment opportunities; Protecting the Environment; and Recognition of Land Rights.'

Restoring and preserving economic stability and improving inclusive growth and development are main priorities for the government. Hence, the government is undertaking crucial actions to create the enabling environment towards a positive business and entrepreneurial climate to ensure sustainable socio-economically acceptable employment (decent work), which in turn is the best means to combat poverty, crime, and violence.

Suriname is at the cusp of an era where it is embarking upon exploiting its natural resources within the emerging offshore gas and oil industry, as an opportunity to reboot its economy, while taking into account its commitment towards green economic development.

The prospects in the exploitation of these natural resources will require more skilled workers and investments in technical and vocational education as well as (technological) innovation. Therefore, the government is making significant efforts to reform the education system with an emphasis on technical and vocational education.

On the other hand, the focus on mitigating and adapting the effects of climate change remains critical. Suriname is one of the few carbon negative rating countries in the world and significantly contributes to the mitigation of the effects of climate change. However, climate change remains an existential threat for Suriname due to its low-lying coastal area, where almost 80 percent of its population resides. As this VNR is being prepared, the country once again faces flooding in the coastal and interior areas due to persistent heavy rainfall.

In light of these national circumstances, the emphasis of Suriname's first VNR is on climate action, sustainable livelihoods, human capital development, and partnerships.

This VNR provides the government the opportunity to take stock on the progress made and to accelerate further implementation of the SDGs and national development goals. This Review also assesses the processes and mechanisms that are in place to support monitoring and evaluation of the Goals. Moreover, the identified gaps, lessons learned, and opportunities give guidance to address and advance those development matters of major concern in an adequate manner.

2

METHODOLOGY AND PREPARATION OF REVIEW

The Review process commenced with the establishment of an inter-institutional VNR technical committee -chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation-, to guide and facilitate the preparations of Suriname's first VNR. Since this initial VNR provides the progress on four priority SDGs (4, 8, 13 and 17) the VNR committee has consisted of representatives of the ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation; Education, Science and Culture; Spatial Planning and Environment; Economic Affairs, Entrepreneurship and Technological Innovation; and Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs, as well as key institutions such as the National Planning Office Suriname and the General Bureau of Statistics (hereafter, GBS).

The preparatory work done over the past years by the GBS on data collection and statistical analysis, complemented by data provided by the sector ministries and the Planning Office, has been the basis for reporting on the various SDG indicators.

The review of policy documents provided information and narratives on the policy context and achievements as well as the challenges related to the implementation of the SDGs. Furthermore, the policy analysis prepared by the Planning Office for the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026, which was developed through a broad consultative and participatory process, was another major source of information.



Reports of prior engagements and consultations with local communities -under the 'Localizing the SDGs' initiative- in certain urban, rural and interior areas were useful and enabled the incorporation of the perceptions of these local communities into the VNR. The VNR process also benefitted from national progress reports concerning the implementation of various international commitments and treaties that Suriname has ratified.

Within the context of a whole of society approach, the VNR committee facilitated several virtual stakeholder consultation sessions with representatives from the government, civil society, academia, private sector, UN agencies and other relevant stakeholders. Additionally, one-on-one interviews were conducted with selected stakeholders to ensure data accuracy and refinement of information.

The different stages of consultation provided the stakeholders the opportunity to reflect on progress made, challenges, lessons learned and opportunities and contribute any additional information to feed into the Report. The meetings enabled in-depth discussions and provided the opportunity to evaluate how the integration of the SDGs has taken place this far and how it should take shape in policies and planning. The various draft chapters were shared among all relevant actors for review and consolidation into the final VNR Report.

3

POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

3.1 SDGs IN NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS AND INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORKS

The government has made efforts to mainstream the SDGs in its national policies and planning frameworks, by building on existing mechanisms in the policy planning and budgeting processes, and the continued engagement with non-government actors, including civil society organizations and the private sector.

The Development Plan 2017-2021 was guided by the five principles of the 2030 Agenda with the aim that, *'each individual and group contributes to the Surinamese society based on the rights and responsibilities in a nation where people live happily through the eradication of hunger and poverty, where security and social security are guaranteed, and the community lives in sustainable balance with nature and other people in the world community, based on mutual economic advantage and respect for international law.'*

Hence, this Plan was framed around four pillars aiming at:

- 1) Strengthening development capacity** by investing in human resources and the institutional framework for planning, as well as creating the necessary conditions for the enabling sectors including, amongst others, physical infrastructure, energy, water and security;
- 2) Economic growth and diversification** whereby the potential of natural resources was identified as a key instrument for job creation and income distribution;
- 3) Social progress leading towards equal development** opportunities for every citizen and reducing vulnerabilities, as well as law enforcement and safety for all; and
- 4) Protection of the environment** whereby the threats posed by climate change and from human or natural disasters are considered.

In the current Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026, the SDGs have been integrated within the national development goals. Building on the principle of 'Leave no one behind', this mid-term development plan was designed through various interactions with government and non-government actors including entrepreneurs, social partners, civil society organizations, interest groups, political parties, and experts. Hence, the government expects support and (where necessary) guidance from these stakeholders for a successful implementation of this Plan, in the interest of the future of the nation: a just and sustainable development.

This Plan also provides the policy framework that includes the prioritized policy areas with short- and long-term goals and serves as the building block for a long-term vision 2050. The emphasis on investments in modernization and innovation in the economic sectors through production, entrepreneurship, and employment; rebuilding of the social system guaranteeing inclusive and affordable healthcare, education and social services; improving good governance; enhancing sustainable environment; and strengthening of key institutions, provides critical conditions for achieving peace, prosperity and well-being for everyone.

Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the policy areas of the Multi-annual Development Plan linked with the relevant SDGs.

Figure 3.1: Suriname's Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026 policy areas in relation to the SDGs

Production, Entrepreneurship, Employment and Export



Land and Housing



Social Protection



Education and Health Care



Transport and Infrastructure

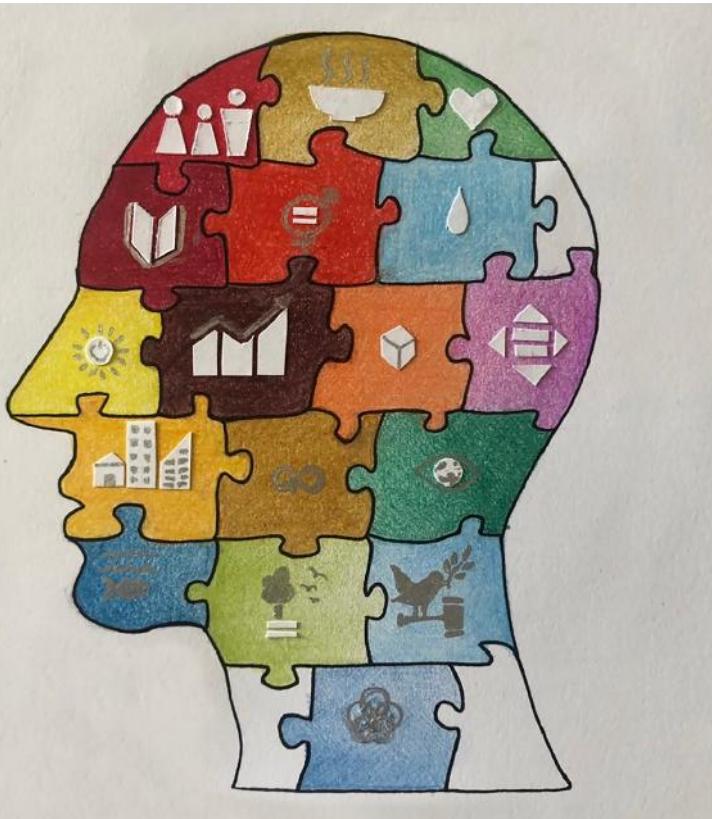


Livable Environment, Nature and Safety



Efficient and Effective Government





It should be noted that within the current policy planning and implementation structure of the government of Suriname, the line-ministries prepare their respective annual plan and budget, based on the broader policy framework of the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026.

Furthermore, at district level, the office of the District Commissioner¹ prepares the annual district plan for the respective district, to be incorporated in the annual plan and budget of the Ministry of Regional Development and Sports. The district plans are designed based on the engagement with people in the local communities and provides an effective mechanism for the government to pursue the commitment of 'Leaving no one behind', and to better serve these communities' immediate needs. This approach is instrumental for reaching inclusive development, which the government will continue during the implementation of the SDGs.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

The General Bureau of Statistics has been working on strengthening the data collection process, both institutionally and in terms of human capacity, with respect to the SDG indicators framework. In 2017, the GBS -as a member of the Technical Working Group on the SDGs for the CARICOM- contributed in the selection of the 125 unique CARICOM core SDG indicators, which are deemed relevant and realistic for the region. The National Planning Office Suriname in collaboration with the GBS used the CARICOM core set of indicators as the baseline to develop a national SDG indicators list for Suriname, by aligning the national development indicators with the CARICOM specific SDG indicators. The VNR process exposed the vital role of a robust monitoring mechanism and the need for institutional strengthening to minimize the data gaps. The GBS, -in collaboration with line-ministries and agencies- continues its work on SDGs data availability and quality. The data system recently developed by the National Planning Office Suriname and the system within the GBS will be important mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national goals and the SDGs.

Within the national planning structure, significant efforts have been made to strengthen the planning capacity of the government. Planning Units have been established within the line-ministries and an online database has been developed by the National Planning Office Suriname to monitor the projects that are being implemented by the ministries.

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, the National SDG committee with representatives of all line ministries, the Parliament, the National Planning Office Suriname, and the General Bureau of Statistics has been established to facilitate further promotion and advancement of the implementation of the SDGs.

¹ Suriname has ten districts and in each district, a District Commissioner is appointed by the government and is head of the government administration in the district

To deepen and broaden community engagement, a National SDG Public-Private Platform has been institutionalized to serve as the link between the government, the private sector and civil society organizations. The partnerships between government, youth, civil society, academia, private sector and other stakeholders will be vital for the rollout of the SDGs at national level.

3.2 RAISING AWARENESS ABOUT THE SDGS

Raising awareness about the SDGs was taken up by both government and non-state actors, through the execution of several initiatives over the years. The United Nations system in Suriname is a key partner that supports the awareness and sensitization activities with regard to the SDGs. This is reflected during the celebration of special days such as International Women's Day and World Children's Day, but also as part of project activities that are carried out.

In the period 2016-2018, the government collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme and executed the 'Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals' awareness campaign.

The aim was to share information about the SDGs and gather views of local authorities and communities on their role and contribution in achieving the SDGs. Information and awareness sessions with the local authorities, community representatives, school youth, non-governmental and community based organizations in some urban, rural and interior areas were held.

Education and communication materials such as calendars and posters were developed to support the awareness activities. In the effort to reach the youth, a card game called 'SDG quartet' was developed. Through the game, youth get acquainted with the 17 Goals and learn to understand the meaning of each Goal in a playful manner.





Source: <https://www.local2030.org/story/view/60>

Sessions were held with school youth at the primary and secondary level in the urban, rural, and interior areas, including school youth from both the Indigenous and Maroon tribal communities.

SDG awareness sessions were also held in some of the line-ministries to sensitize the public sector staff on the SDGs and to elaborate on how the targets and indicators should be incorporated in the policy planning and programmes.

Special reference should be made to the SDG Youth Ambassadors programme, which encompasses the inclusion of youth in raising awareness about the SDGs. This programme has been initiated by the government and two SDG youth ambassadors are elected for two years. To fulfill their mandate, they are supported by the SDG youth officers. Discussions, social media campaigns, youth fairs and other events are used as platforms where information about the SDGs is provided to youth in the age group 14-28 years. With support from the government or through partnership with the private sector and other donors, funding is mobilized to organize various awareness events. A key achievement of the programme is the SDG Voices project, which is implemented together with the SDGs platform in the Netherlands.

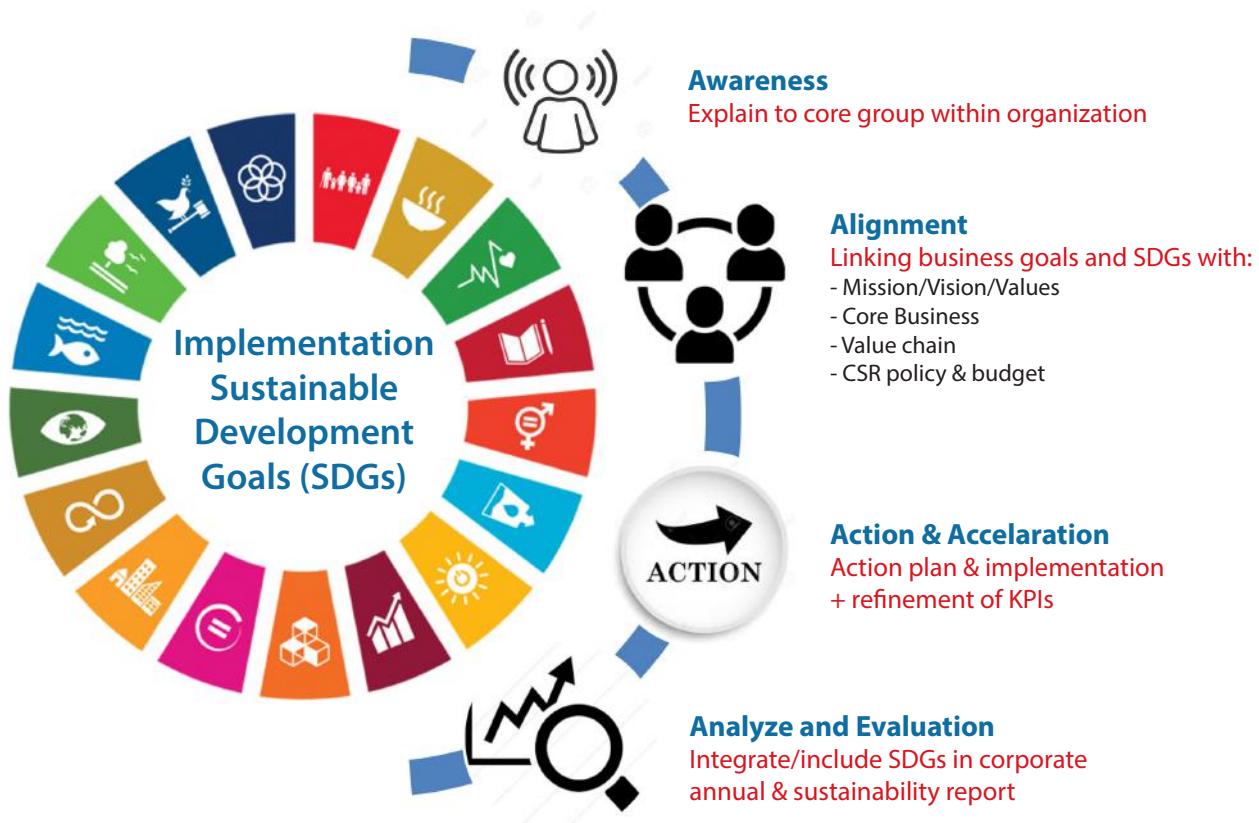
As a result of the SDG Voices project, youth is trained in the context and the principles of the SDGs, which enables them to further promote the SDGs among their peers.

PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector is recognized as a key partner and has an important responsibility to contribute to achieving the SDGs. To complement government efforts, the business community can (and must) make an important contribution towards achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth and decent job creation. Translating the SDGs into company goals and thereafter into the individual goals of employees is a critical first step.

The contribution of the private sector is proposed using a simple model with 4 A's:

- Awareness
- Alignment
- Action and Acceleration
- Analysis and Evaluation



As a first step, the Suriname Business Association (VSB) has initiated a series of training courses about the Sustainable Development Goals, which is supported by the United Nations system in Suriname. About forty companies had expressed their interest to participate and a first round of training sessions has been held which trained up to 180 private sector employees. Several Surinamese companies have already indicated their support to the SDGs and that, where possible, they will integrate the SDGs into their mission, vision, core values and business objectives. During the training sessions, emphasis was placed on examples of foreign companies that have committed themselves to the SDGs.

Furthermore, the focus is also on identifying challenges within their own company and proposing possible actions and strategies to address these challenges. This may include, for example, SDG components that are incorporated in company documents, or creating more awareness among staff about the SDGs.

4

SURINAME'S COUNTRY PROFILE

4.1 GEOGRAPHY, POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHY

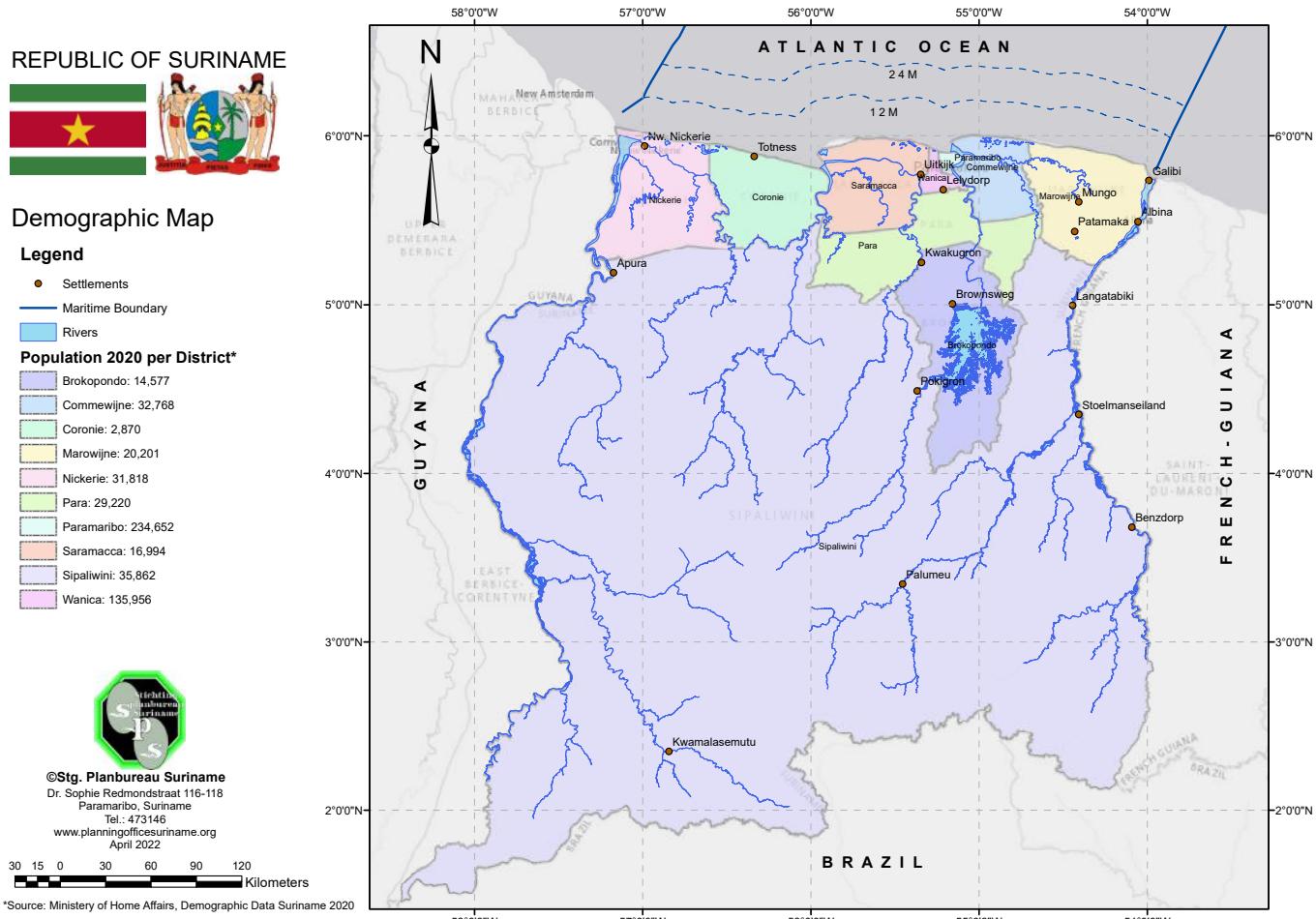
The Republic of Suriname covers a land area of 163,820 km² and is located on the North-east coast of South America, between 2°-6° Northern latitude and 54°-58° Western longitude. The country borders French Guiana to the East, Brazil to the South, Guyana to the West and the Atlantic Ocean to the North.

Suriname is the smallest independent country of South America, and its population is multi-ethnic due to its colonial background. Suriname was a Dutch colony and became an independent republic in 1975.

The country has a democratic system with parliamentary and regional representative elections held every five years. In these elections, fifty-one members are elected to the Parliament, who in turn elect the President and the Vice-President.

In 2020, Suriname had an estimated mid-year population of 602,500 persons. The population is unequally distributed over the total land area. About 66 percent of the population lives in the urban area, 20 percent in the rural area and 14 percent in the interior.

Figure 4.1 and table 4.1 present an overview of the population by district. The population growth is merely 10 percent compared to the latest Census of 2012.

Figure 4.1: Map with geographical distribution of the population of Suriname

Source: National Planning Office Suriname, 2020

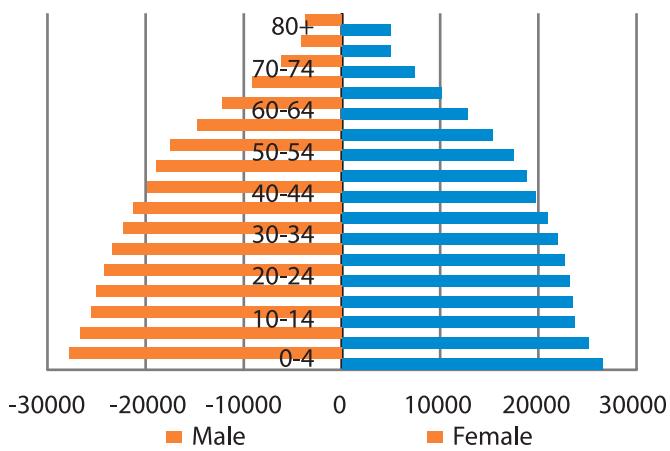
Table 4.1: Population, Population Density and Population Growth by area

Area	Population			Population growth		Surface Km ²	Density	
	Total	%	Total	%	Number	%	2004	2012
	2004		2012		2004-2012		2012	
Urban	328,932	66.7	359,146	66.3	30,214	9.2	625	526.3
Rural	98,904	20.0	111,224	20.5	12,320	12.5	20,637	4.8
Interior	64,993	13.2	71,268	13.1	6,275	9.7	142,558	0.5
Total	492,829	100	541,638	100	48,809	9.9	163,820	3.0
								3.3

Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2004 & 2012 data)

Suriname has a relatively young population, equally distributed by gender over all age categories. Figure 4.2 presents the population by different age categories and by gender for 2020. About 25 percent of the total population is younger than 15 years. The percentage of persons of 60 years and older is 12 percent.

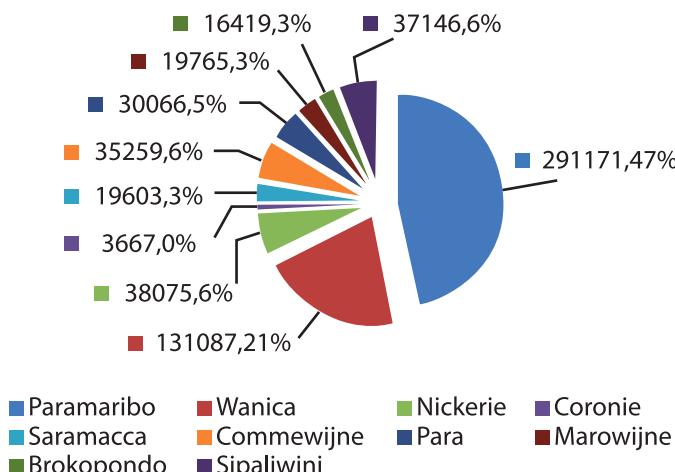
Figure 4.2: Mid-year population by age group and gender



Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Population statistics), 2020

Suriname's population is multi-ethnic and the distribution varies among the geographical areas (districts).

Figure 4.3: Population distribution by district



Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2012 data)

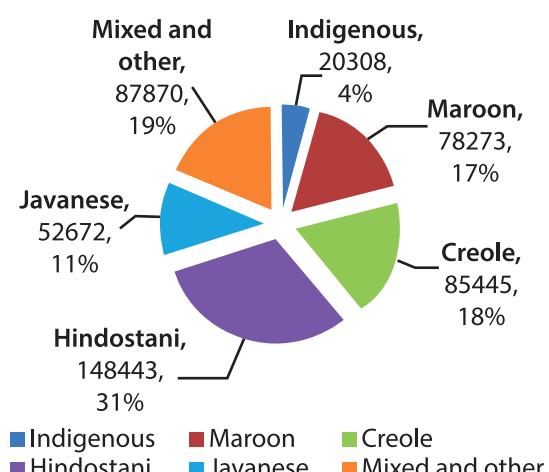
In some districts (Nickerie, Brokopondo, Sipaliwini, Coronie and Marowijne) there is a majority (about 75 percent or more) of one ethnic group, whereas in other districts such as Paramaribo, Wanica and to some extent Commewijne, multiple ethnic groups are almost equally distributed.

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 present an overview of the distribution by district and ethnicity, based on the Census 2012 data.

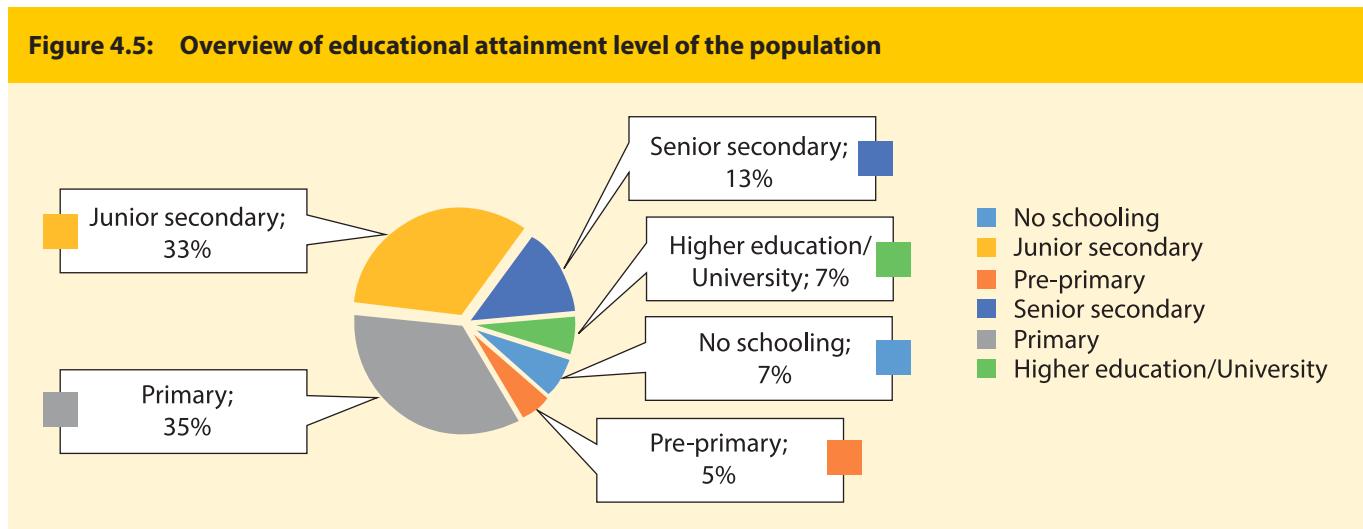
Due to its colonial history, Dutch is the official language of Suriname. It is also the most widely spoken language, followed by Sranan Tongo, the lingua franca.

Figure 4.5 presents an overview of educational attainment level. The literacy rate in Suriname is about 98 percent, and on average less than 10 percent never completed primary education.² These figures depict the ongoing improvements in the education system in the past periods, which are due to nationwide efforts to expand the number of schools and teaching staff, and provision of materials. In the rural areas, access to senior secondary education has been enhanced for students.

Figure 4.4: Population distribution by ethnicity



² General Bureau of Statistics, 2022

Figure 4.5: Overview of educational attainment level of the population

Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2012 data)

Table 4.2: Key social and demographic SDG related indicators

Social and Demographic Indicators	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Mid-year Population (estimate)	567,291	575,700	583,200	590,100	598,000	602,500
Mid-year Population - Male (estimate)	283,300	287,400	290,800	298,300	294,200	300,500
Mid-year Population - Female (estimate)	284,000	288,300	292,400	299,700	295,900	302,000
Urban (estimated number)	NA	381,400	386,500	391,200	396,400	397,700
Rural (estimated number)	NA	116,300	117,500	117,900	118,900	120,000
Interior (estimated number)	NA	78,000	79,200	81,000	82,700	84,800
Sex ratio (%)	99.8	99.7	99.6	99.4	99.4	99.3
Total Fertility Rate (women 15-44 years)	2.30	2.23	2.12	2.17	2.23	NA
Life expectancy at birth (in years) - Male			70.9	70.9	70.9	NA
Life expectancy at birth (in years) - Female			75.6	75.6	75.6	NA
Infant Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births)	14.68	17.15		19.37	20.93	NA
Child Mortality Rate per 1000	2.17	2.12	2.96	3.36	3.36	NA
Births per 1000 women 15-44 years old	78	76	74	74	76	NA
Mean age	31.98	32.16	32.32	32.47	32.64	NA
Literacy rate women (15-49 years old) (%)				96.3		
Literacy rate men (15-49 years old) (%)				98.0		

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, 2022

NA: Not available or applicable



4.2 ENVIRONMENT

Table 4.2 presents selected demographic indicators between 2015 and 2020. The life expectancy of females (75 years) is slightly higher than for males (71 years). The current fertility rate is 2.3 per woman³ on average, but has slightly been decreasing since 2004, when this was about 2.8.

Suriname has a semi-humid climate, influenced by movements of the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ). Hence, two rainy seasons and two dry seasons are observed annually over the largest part of the country, with a mean annual air temperature of about 27°C, ranging from 26°C in January up to 31°C in October and an annual precipitation between 1,600 mm/year – 2,600 mm/year. Suriname is home to many unique ecosystems. The coastal plain houses a complex mangrove ecosystem, which is an important breeding, feeding and nursery ground for marine and brackish water fish, marine invertebrates, sea turtles and enormous numbers of migratory birds and waterfowls. Table 4.3 gives an overview of key environment indicators.

Table 4.3: Key environment SDG related indicators

Environment Indicators	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Total Surface Area (sq. km)	163,820	163,820	163,820	163,820	163,820	163,820	163,820
Total Forest Area (sq.km)	152,517	152,404	152,300	152,212	152,110	151,999	151,888
Total Forest Area (%)	93.10	93.03	92.97	92.91	92.85	92.87	92.72
Protected Area (sq. km)	22,650	22,650	22,650	22,650	22,650	22,650	22,650
Protected Area (%)	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Terrestrial and Marine Protected Area (%)	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2
Average Relative Humidity (%)	77	77	78	77	77	77	78
Average velocity (Beaufort)	2.2	2	2.1	2.2	2.2	1.8	2.0
Temperature in °C (average)	27.8	28.1	27.8	27.6	28.0	27.8	27.6
Minimum	22.9	23.9	24.0	23.7	23.9	24.3	24.2
Maximum	31.4	31.6	30.9	31.1	31.5	31.3	30.9
Annual Precipitation (mm)	1,979.7	1,925.2	2,192.4	1,881.4	1,617.5	1,686.5	2,108.7
Amount of waste disposal (m³)	204,960	202,824	195,220	192,174	197,430	238,099	220,383

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, 2022

3 Fertility rate per woman in the age group 15-49 years





4.3 LABOUR FORCE AND EMPLOYMENT

Following the definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the labour force of Suriname consists of those aged 15-64 years with the potential to work and is estimated at about 65 percent of the population.⁴ About 54 percent of the labour force is employed and the remainder does not formally work since they are school attendees, retirees, homemakers, have a disability or are actively seeking a job. About 40 percent are reported as economically inactive persons.

In table 4.4 the labour force is disaggregated by gender. The total number of the persons in the labour force is 349,583, which is equally distributed by gender. However the number of employed persons is 188,229, of which about 60 percent is male and 40 percent is female. The proportion of women who are economically inactive is twice as high as for men. The proportion of persons with disabilities and therefore not able to work is about 2 percent.

Furthermore, the data indicates that there is a clear disproportion in the number of workers in the urban and rural areas compared to the interior. Table 4.5 shows that about 70 percent of the economically active population is settled in the urban areas, whereas approximately 20 percent is from the rural areas and less than 10 percent lives in the interior.

An analysis of the educational level of the labour force shows that most of the workers have a primary, junior secondary education or no education at all (table 4.6). Comparisons by gender show that men are relatively better represented in the labour market. The proportion of working men is higher than women and women are relatively more unemployed than men. However, working women have a slightly higher educational level compared to their male peers.

Table 4.4: Labour force (15-64 years old) by activity status and gender

	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Economically active persons						
- Employed	188,229	53.8	118,745	34.0	69,484	19.9
- Unemployed	21,512	6.2	8,526	2.4	12,986	3.7
Economically inactive persons						
- Discouraged workers	6,047	1.7	2,062	0.6	3,985	1.1
- Pensioners/retired persons	13,186	3.8	5,882	1.7	7,304	2.1
- Students	44,583	12.8	19,775	5.7	24,808	7.1
- Homemakers	37,829	10.8	886	0.3	36,943	10.6
- Persons with a disability	7,231	2.1	3,988	1.1	3,243	0.9
- Other economically inactive	17,932	5.1	7,158	2.0	10,774	3.1
Unknown	13,034	3.7	6,317	1.8	6,717	1.9
Total	349,583*	100	173,339	49.6	176,244	50.4

*approximately 62 % of the total population

Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2012 data)

Table 4.5: Economically active persons by area

Area	Total		Employed		Unemployed	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Urban	146,045	69.6	132,377	63.1	13,668	6.5
Rural	43,073	20.6	38,802	18.5	4,271	1.9
Interior	20,623	9.8	17,050	8.2	3,573	1.7
Total	209,741	100	188,229	89.7	21,512	10.3

Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2012 data)

Table 4.6: Education level of the labour force by age group and gender at national level

Labour force	24 years and younger				25-64 years			
	Male	Female	Total		Male	Female	Total	
			%	%			Number	%
Primary/junior secondary	51.7	12.1	14,176	63.9	38.5	18.3	94,312	56.8
Senior secondary and higher	13.5	13.1	5,907	26.6	14.4	15.4	49,428	29.8
No education / Don't know	7.5	2.0	2,116	9.5	8.9	4.5	22,292	13.4
Total	72.8	27.2	22,199	100	61.8	38.2	166,032	100

Source: General Bureau of Statistics (Census 2012 data)

4.4 SOCIAL PROTECTION

The legislation on the Surinamese social security system which was adopted in 2014 includes provisions for general health care, minimum income, and pensions. This system is complemented by a social provisions scheme that is operationalized through the Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Housing, and targets low-income families, children, elderly, and persons with disabilities. Suriname's social provisions scheme consists of targeted and untargeted cash or in-kind transfers. The government recognizes that poverty still prevails, and some groups are more vulnerable such as elderly, children, women, persons with disabilities, and indigenous and tribal peoples. Therefore, the government has prioritized poverty reduction and is working on defining updated poverty lines and minimum wages.

Due to the dire social and economic situation as well as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, several cash transfers have been increased since 2020. A temporary additional social safety net is also being developed, consisting of forms of (financial) subsidies for families to cope with the effects.

The provision of health care is guaranteed through the national basic health insurance scheme, with the guarantee that the government covers the health insurance for persons or families that are unable to insure themselves, but also for children in the age group 0-16 years and persons of 60 years and older. The government and the social partners (private sector and trade unions) have agreed on a Tripartite Agreement in 2021, with the aim to achieve a financially and economically stable situation, in which economic activity can recover.



Conditions must be created for structural strengthening of the economy and employment opportunities, in particular by promoting and diversifying production and exports, with a focus on social support and income policies.

4.5 MACRO-ECONOMIC SITUATION

Although Suriname is classified by the World Bank as a high-middle-income country, the living conditions and income of about half of the population does not reflect this welfare level. The current estimated GDP per capita is USD 4,784⁵ at national level, but there still are huge disparities at the district level. Besides the huge inequality among households of different geographical areas, the deterioration of the economy affected households at national level. Between 2015 and 2022 the purchasing power of all households has declined significantly.

The high dependency of the government's budget on the leading mining products as well as expansionary budgetary and monetary policies to compensate for the effects of declines in the export, created and still generates major economic risks. Suriname is a price taker due to its small share in the world market. Mostly triggered by unfavourable sentiments of the global market, the country regularly faced major economic setbacks, for example during a large part of the eighties, 1997-1999 and more recently in 2015-2016, and subsequently 2020-2021.

One of the main goals of the government is to speed up the process of macro-economic reform to leave the current negative growth path behind. The strategy is to divide the five-year governing term 2020-2025 in three phases to battle the crisis and work towards economic stability and growth. The first phase was an emergency phase of 9 months (2020-2021), in which the immediate and most urgent measures were taken to combat the financial and economic crisis and to specifically tackle the COVID-19 situation.

The second phase is about stabilization within 24 months (2021-2022), for which a comprehensive Recovery Plan 2020-2022 has been developed to manage the foreign debt and to work towards debt sustainability and economic recovery. The third phase (2023-2025) will focus on development and modernization, with the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026 as the anchor towards achieving sustainable growth and development.

To strengthen the fundamentals of local financial institutions, support has been requested from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In collaboration with the IMF, the government is currently implementing the Recovery Plan. The public budget will be also evaluated and balanced according to existing budgeting criteria. The government aims to bring inflation back to a level below 10 percent in the period 2020-2025, reduce the budget deficit to a cap of 3 percent, achieve a stable exchange rate and have an import cover of at least 3 months.

4.6 COVID-19 IMPACT

The COVID-19 shock has been unprecedented for all countries, and Suriname has been no exception. The first positive (imported) case of COVID-19 in Suriname was reported on the 13th of March 2020. The country responded quickly to the onslaught of COVID-19 to contain the spreading of the pandemic. Suriname managed to cope with the COVID-19 uncertainty by declaring the law on State of Emergency COVID-19 ('Wet Uitzonderingstoestand COVID-19') in April 2020, which gave the authorities mandate to take certain measures. The measures were divided in social, health, fiscal and monetary measures. Gatherings were banned or limited, public and private offices and schools were (partially) closed, and (providers of) non-essential services (such as hotels, casinos, places of worship, covered vegetable, fruit, meat and fish markets) and other places were also (partially) closed. In addition, full or partial lockdowns were effectuated by the government.





Ad hoc special funds were created and directed to the health sector, towards food packages and towards cash transfers. The authorities also closed all borders in the beginning of the pandemic and air flight schemes regularly were adjusted.

To combat the devastating impact on the health sector, the government received full support from the private sector and development partners to strengthen its health system, to train and equip health workers and other key stakeholders, to communicate prevention measures to specific groups and the general public, and to purchase vaccines. At the Bureau of Public Health of the Ministry of Health, a COVID-19 helpline was activated and information regarding the COVID-19 situation is published on the COVID-19 Suriname website and the website of the Bureau of Public Health. Face masks and hand sanitizers were provided to health workers, school children and other vulnerable groups. Currently, the country has a cumulative number of 80,673 confirmed cases so far, and 1,352 deaths.

Launching the vaccination campaign and expanding the number of test facilities were important measures taken by the government to tackle the pandemic. Currently, about 40 percent of the Surinamese population is fully vaccinated. Since April 2022, COVID-19 measures have largely been relaxed.

Taking into account the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on Suriname, findings of a survey supported by the United Nations system in Suriname⁶ indicated amongst others that:

- 1) Suriname was not prepared for this shock, did not accumulate financial buffers and its already fragile economy and financial situation were further threatened.

- 2) The limited health system capacity, especially outside of the capital of Paramaribo, was further stretched. Beyond reducing COVID-induced morbidity and mortality, containing the outbreak endangered the delivery of essential health services such as immunization, family planning services, pre- and post-natal care interventions and addressing communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- 3) Low-income and marginalized individuals and households were / are suffering disproportionately as a result of losing their income / employment, lacking a financial buffer and rising prices of consumer goods.
- 4) Rural and urban populations could not sell their goods as markets were closed resulting in severe income losses
- 5) Small and medium-size enterprises lost their revenues, laid off workers and may have even gone out of business.
- 6) Tourism, which is also a major source of income and employment for the country, was almost at a standstill.
- 7) Although schools and other educational institutions were closed, efforts were made to organize virtual schooling; however, this also increases inequalities in access to education since lower-income households, especially in the rural and interior areas have limited or no access to computers and internet.

⁶ Socio-Economic Impact Assessment and Response Plan for COVID-19 in Suriname, United Nations Suriname, 2020



5

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4:

ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

4 QUALITY
EDUCATION



Equal opportunities and access to affordable and quality education for everyone in Suriname! Every Surinamese citizen has the right to education and lifelong learning.

The success of a country strongly depends on the knowledge, skills, competencies, and attitudes of its citizens. Therefore, it is of eminent importance to reform learning, teaching and didactic methods, innovate curricula, optimize in-service training for teachers and lecturers, and reorganize the educational infrastructure, in order to achieve SDG 4. To reach the aforementioned, it is necessary that policies be directed towards creating sustainable development within the nation, taking into account the implicit duty to prioritize and emphasize the intellectual and moral solidarity of humanity, respect for human rights, democracy and rational use of resources. With a view to strengthening the production base, education will be further aligned with the needs, including those of the private sector. In this process, structural cooperation between the actors in the private sector and the government is a pre-condition. This is to give substance to the public-private partnership idea, which is crucial for all actors within education, science and culture.

Marie Levens
Minister of Education, Science and Culture

5.1 STATUS OF THE TARGETS

SDG 4 Targets	Status
4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes	
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	
4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university	
4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship	
4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations	
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	
4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development	
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	
4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States	
On track  Moderate improvements  Not on track  Not monitored yet 	



5.2 POLICY CONTEXT AND PROGRESS

Education is a fundamental human right and provides the condition to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Increasing skills, knowledge and use of technology can be seen as the main drivers for improving an individual's economic and social condition. Hence, the government of Suriname has prioritized education as one of its main policy areas, with the emphasis on the quality and the nationwide provision of education at all levels. The government aims to enhance the country's development with an inclusive approach towards children and young persons by improving access to education for all, including the vulnerable and marginal groups in Surinamese society. About 90 percent of all schools and educational institutions are run by the public sector or receive subsidy from the government. Annually, the government allocates approximately 15 percent of its government expenditures to education.⁷

The main stakeholders which run schools in Suriname are the government, the religious denominations -organized under the umbrella foundation 'Federation of Special Education Institutions Suriname' (FIBOS)- and private educational organizations and institutions. The contribution of FIBOS is notable since they run primary and junior secondary schools nationwide and are supporting the government's efforts in making qualitative education accessible to every Surinamese child. The curriculum in the FIBOS schools is the same as in the public schools.

In Suriname, the education system consists of pre-primary, primary, junior and senior secondary schools, which also includes technical and vocational education as well as higher or tertiary (technical/vocational) education. Pre-primary school (grades 1 and 2) is a two-year programme for children aged four and five and forms part of primary school. Currently, pre-primary school is not compulsory.

According to the education legislation, compulsory primary school consists of grades 3 up to and including 8 for children aged 7-12 years. In general, children enter junior secondary education at 12 years of age and senior secondary education at 16 years. Junior secondary school grades are referred to as grade 1 up to and including grade 4, and senior secondary schools can have either 2, 3 or 4 grades, depending on the categorization of the school. The data of 2021 shows that there are in total 370 primary schools in the urban, rural and interior areas of Suriname, which are subdivided as follows: 347 schools for regular education and 21 schools for education for children with learning difficulties. There are also 2 schools for adult education ('bigisma skoro').

At junior secondary level, there are 153 schools in the urban, rural and some interior areas of Suriname, which are subdivided into technical and vocational education, general education, and education for children with learning difficulties.

About 51 senior secondary education schools are located in the urban and some rural areas and in the past years, much attention was given to accessibility of senior secondary education in the rural areas.

Facilities for higher education are primarily available in the capital Paramaribo and are operated by both the government and private organizations or institutions. Higher education consists of both scientific, technical, and vocational education.

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Currently at primary school level, about 60 percent of girls and boys achieve the required reading level. For mathematics at primary level, that is about 40 percent. At junior secondary level the percentage is about 85 percent for reading and 60 percent for mathematics.

⁷ Annual Government Budgets and Financial Notes, 2017-2020



In the period 2015-2020, the number of students with the minimum skills to read at the end of primary school increased slightly by 5.5 percent, and at junior secondary level by 6.9 percent. The number of students with the minimum skills in mathematics increased by 19.4 percent at the primary level and 34 percent at the end of junior secondary level. Although there has been an increase in the reading and mathematical skills at the primary school level, these figures are still low. This means that at an early-stage students are lagging behind in reading and mathematics.

Completion rates are 85 percent at primary education level and progressively decreasing at the junior secondary and senior secondary level to respectively 49 percent and 24 percent. The disparities in completion rates increases as children transit from primary to junior secondary and on to senior secondary education level. Completion rates are higher for children living in urban areas and those belonging to the richest quintiles compared to their peers in the rural areas and the poorest quintile.

The government has made efforts to work on reforms within the education system. Through the implementation of the Basic Education Improvement Programme (BEIP) in the past decade, emphasis was placed on revising the pre-primary and primary education curricula and improving quality and internal efficiency of the education system. The pre-primary curricula was revised and in primary education, new learning methods and materials including text books and teacher guides were developed for the subjects Language, Arithmetic/Mathematics, Orientation to Yourself and the World, Art and Culture and Physical Education. The primary school teachers received training and were coached in working with the new methods. Information Communication Technology (ICT) in education was another component of BEIP and as a result, a national strategic policy plan for ICT in education was drafted, which provides guidelines on how the use of technology can complement the delivery of the curriculum.

Over the years, the government faced huge challenges to guarantee and to improve education in the interior areas, including, amongst others, renovation of schools, water shortages, overdue maintenance, and availability of suitable housing for teachers, security and transportation for teachers.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- *Renovation of primary school facilities and teachers' housing in the interior areas provided the possibility for the children of the villages to access education.*
- *Financial incentives to socially and economically vulnerable children is an important measure to facilitate access to education.*

To facilitate access to primary education in the interior areas, the construction, renovation and rehabilitation of school facilities and teacher's houses in the interior was taken up, as a result of which 21 new classrooms and 20 renovated classrooms were delivered, and 20 new houses for teachers were built.

Currently, one school is being built in the Indigenous village Amotopo, which is in the remote interior. The children in this village have been deprived of education and a particular approach is required, given the fact that there are barriers in terms of adaptation to and integration in the school system, but also regarding language.

One key partner for providing education at primary level in the interior is FIBOS. The collaboration of FIBOS with the government in the past decade, especially regarding the renovation of primary schools, was effective and resulted in improved facilities for the school children.

The role of local communities in the interior is vital to support the policy implementation of the government.



In December 2021, the government received three publications from the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS), which included a baseline report on Indigenous people in Suriname and archival research on historical and contemporary sources of two Indigenous tribes in Suriname. These studies, conducted by the Indigenous people themselves, provide a good overview of these communities' living conditions with respect to health care, education, and other social-centric topics, and will allow the government to develop evidence-based policy and programmes to further develop the provision of education in the interior. Due to the remoteness and the complexity of residing in the interior, the engagement with civil society and private sector is critical. Hence, promoting public-private partnerships in the area of education is of paramount importance. In this regard, youth-led organizations have been working in some remote Indigenous villages to support primary education for the children in these villages.

Access to junior and senior secondary education in the rural areas was enhanced through the construction of schools, which provided the opportunity for school children from these areas to have access without all the challenges and limitations of having to attend these schools in the capital of Paramaribo.

Another important policy intervention of the government is subsidizing primary, junior secondary and senior secondary education, as a result of which school fees are kept at a minimum level and do not place a heavy financial burden on families. Although this policy intervention is being applied, some families, classified as socially and economically vulnerable, are still in need of financial support to pay the total school fees. In that regard, the government has a system in place through which the children from these families attending junior and senior secondary school level, can receive monthly financial support. Additionally, the annual distribution of school backpacks to these families has been taking place.

School backpacks were distributed for school children and students at primary, junior and senior secondary school level. For the higher education level, a Student Finance Fund is in place for those students who cannot afford to pay for enrollment, tuition fees and the necessary materials.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- *School feeding programmes in different forms such as the distribution of sandwiches, milk and yogurt are implemented in primary schools.*
- *School transportation for school children and students is an important provision to accommodate children's access to school.*

Over the years, the government has guaranteed school transportation for school children, students and teachers at all levels of education in the rural and interior areas, by providing school busses and school boats.

The data of 2021 shows that approximately 21,130 school children and 1,618 teachers make use of the government provided transportation. In 2021, the government decided to expand the school transportation service for school children living in the urban district of Paramaribo.

School feeding programmes have been part of the education system in Suriname for many years. This has taken shape in different forms (i.e. distribution of sandwiches, milk, yogurt and lunches in primary schools). The government has evaluated the interventions that have been implemented over the years and as of May 2022, has rolled out an adjusted school feeding programme for primary schools.



To increase access to higher education for students from rural and interior areas, the construction of student flats at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname campus has been implemented in the period 2016-2019, since the higher education facilities are only located in the capital of Paramaribo.

It should be noted that the private sector and service clubs have taken some initiatives with regard to education. For years, the Rotary in Suriname has been organizing the Student Excellence Awards for school children of primary and junior secondary education who passed their exams with the best results. The private sector stakeholders and service clubs are also active in organizing motivational sessions at schools, promoting basic life skills, guidance and support to children that have dropped out of school, providing school supplies and school furniture, and encouraging girls to take up ICT.

The ICT Association in Suriname, as a result of its commitment towards the implementation of the SDGs, took the initiative to prepare an ICT Vision 2030 document for Suriname and presented it to, among others, policymakers and educational institutions to engage them in a dialogue about the role and importance of ICT in the current context of national development in Suriname, with a special focus on how ICT can maximally be utilized in the education system.



PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The participation rate in organized learning and children who are developmentally on track, remained steady during 2015-2020. According to the data of the Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018, 77.4 percent of children are developmentally on track. The participation rate in organized learning slightly increased from 97.7 percent in 2015 to 98.5 percent in 2020. It should be noted that the data concerns four- and five-year old children. Data of two- and three-year old children attending organized learning i.e. in day care centres and pre-schools is not readily available yet.

The Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI) score is 77 percent at national level. For females this is about 10 points higher than for males. The ECDI score is 82 percent for urban areas and 62 percent for the interior. The literacy and numeracy domain is about 44 percent, for the physical and learning domain this is about 98 percent and for the socio-emotional domain, 68 percent.

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Office within the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has been set up to ensure that every child is provided with the opportunity for optimal development in the first years of life (0-8 years), in particular the development of their skills in order to successfully complete primary education. Skills include physical health, mental alertness, well-developed intellectual skills, emotional stability, creativity, flexibility, responsibility, and resilience. The ECE Office initiated a project to enable children of three years old to enter the pre-primary school following a screening. This project was evaluated and decisions will be taken on how to proceed in this regard.

Children of two and three years old can enter daycare centres and pre-schools in Suriname. The government runs 11 daycare centres and 1 pre-school; it has invested in the infrastructure of these centres and pre-schools as well as in capacity strengthening of the staff working with these children.

It is important to note that the majority of daycare centres and pre-schools in Suriname are run by private individuals. The early childhood development standards for institutional care have been developed and are monitored by the relevant government entities. The government aims to develop standardized early childhood education curricula, which have to be integrated in the programme of both public and private daycare centres and pre-schools.

The government is currently preparing a national policy for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and the establishment of an ECD network Suriname.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Competent and skilled citizens for the labour market are critical to increase employability and boost the economy. In policy level discussions, it was recognized that reforms are very important to make technical and vocational education demand-driven. Reforms in the education system have been undertaken to provide a seamless transition from primary education to junior technical and vocational education.

In general, technical and vocational education is tainted by low expectations and therefore policy interventions are aimed at reducing the negative image of this education stream, improving the coordination between the labour market and technical and vocational education institutions, decentralizing technical and vocational education and strengthening it in terms of content, organization and infrastructure. To highlight the positive results of technical and vocational education, several (social) media campaigns were developed to demonstrate the value of this education stream to potential candidates.

To improve the technical and vocational education and training in Suriname, legislation to establish the Suriname National Training Authority (SNTA) was approved in February 2019.



Transformation of this education stream was initiated based on a consensus strategy prepared by the SNTA and integrated into the education plans. This strategy introduces the new national qualification system and curricula with the corresponding quality control and certification.

The reformed junior technical and vocational education system stimulates and enables students to achieve better learning results.

The reform also considers the integration of ICT with focus on facilitating distance learning, motivating the educational partners, minimizing the chance that students fall behind and evaluating the learning performances.

Several policy interventions related to the reform of technical and vocational education have been launched for the different education levels in Suriname. The 'Reforming the Technical & Vocational Education and Training' (TVET) programme aims to upgrade and improve the junior vocational education level to make it more accessible, to increase competence and employability of local graduates and to set up facilities in clustered training hubs/practice centres for more relevant on-the-job training. In six (6) urban and rural areas, thirty-nine (39) practice centres were renovated and/or constructed and the technical equipment of these centres were renewed. Labour market research was conducted in three sectors (ICT, Construction, and Tourism) and an information system is being developed to gather all the information of the research, which will then serve as the baseline for policy development.

Specifically for the interior, the 'Enhancement of the Technical & Vocational Education and Training' (ETVET) programme focuses on the construction and equipping of eight (8) practical hubs at junior secondary educational level, adaptation of the curricula, renovation of teachers' housing in the targeted interior areas and carrying out specialized training for the teachers.

The practical hubs can also be utilized by adults for their own vocational skills development. Given the difficulties that children in the interior have with the Dutch language, didactic strategies for promoting language skills have been developed and will be piloted to assess their effectiveness.

Another intervention to increase access to technical and vocational education at junior secondary level is the establishment of modern and well-equipped school campuses in two rural areas⁸ of Suriname. These campuses include education, sports and housing facilities for students. These rural areas have been identified, based on their geographical location since this increases the possibilities for students from the interior areas.

The labour market demand for highly skilled professionals continues to grow. The Polytechnic College Suriname receives financial support from the government and provides higher technical and vocational education to enable professionals to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills in their field. Much effort has been made to improve the facilities at this College, but also to strengthen the College's institutional capacity and develop a distance learning system.

EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Within the education system in Suriname, there are specific schools to provide education and guidance for children with learning difficulties. It should be noted that the schools for children with learning difficulties are separate from the regular schools. In 2020, an evaluation of the curricula in these schools indicated that there was a need to revise what was already in place. With the proposed revisions, the curricula has a more practical orientation with a focus on eleven learning areas, for example, mathematics, language, social skills, hygiene and others.

⁸ Districts of Para and Marowijne



To work towards inclusiveness and coach children with learning difficulties to be part of the regular school system, the government has set out a guiding process, where emphasis is on the potential of the children and the provision of extra support. In this regard, the testing and observation facility has been upgraded to better determine the type and level of functional difficulty.

As a result, custom-made development plans are used by the teachers to support the children. Although this policy is in its initial phase, the results have shown that there is an effective outcome and a certain number of children who had learning difficulties are now able to attend regular schools.

The government has a mechanism in place of school counsellors through which guidance and support is provided to teachers, school management, school children and students at primary and junior secondary level. The guidance focuses on the pedagogical and didactical support for teachers as well as providing support and counselling for school children and students who have social problems. Parenting support is also provided in cases where social problems have been identified.

Current efforts are focusing on decentralization of the support in the rural and interior areas of Suriname. The decentralized support approach is critical and practical by bringing those services closer to school children, students and teachers.

INFRASTRUCTURE FOR EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Despite financial challenges, the government is taking all efforts to rehabilitate the infrastructure in schools. Sanitation facilities in approximately 45 schools have been rehabilitated and a specific programme on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools aimed at improving water access, rehabilitating existing hand-washing facilities, improving sanitation facilities in selected schools and hygiene and hand-washing promotion, has been executed.

The programme was piloted in 16 schools, reaching 4,800 children, and included the development of learning material for WASH awareness and behavioural change, and supporting the upgrading of WASH facilities to meet at least basic WASH service level standards.

At pre-primary and primary level almost all of the teachers (99.5 percent) have the minimum qualifications to serve as a teacher. As for junior secondary level this percentage is around 85 percent, of which two third is female and one third is male. At pre-primary and primary level the proportion of male teachers is less than 5 percent. The proportion of qualified teachers slightly increased for those educating at junior secondary level.

To coordinate continued professional development of teachers and school management, investments have been made in the National Centre for Continuous Professional Development within the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. A milestone has been the development of professional profiles for school management, teachers and school counsellors, in which the competencies are elaborated. For school management, the emphasis is on managing the school as an organization, building relationships in- and outside the school community and ensuring teacher quality. For teachers, the focus is on enhanced pedagogical content knowledge and managing the teaching and learning process.

Professional development for the National Teacher Training Institute for Vocational and Technical Education (LOBO) placed emphasis on a larger curriculum redesign process within LOBO, aimed at a better integration of subject content knowledge, occupational competence, and pedagogical-didactical competence.



Given the developments in the technical and vocational education system, an effort was made to strengthen school management of this education stream, by establishing a platform for management to regularly discuss pressing issues impacting the wellbeing and learning outcomes of their students. This platform also proves to be an effective forum to share experiences and provides recommendations on needs for capacity strengthening.

Experiences with gender-based violence in junior secondary vocational education is a persistent phenomenon. The dropout rate at this education level is around 25 percent. An assessment pointed out that the underlying issues are strongly related to traditional gender roles and norms, adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (ASRHR), and gender-based violence (GBV) against and among adolescents. A series of training sessions regarding gender-sensitive prevention and management of problem behaviour, including sexual transgressive behaviour in the classroom and the broader school environment was implemented. Consequently, a collaboration between the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, civil society organizations and ten junior secondary vocational schools led to the execution of a pilot programme, where a comprehensive approach was implemented to create a supportive environment on issues relating to ASRHR and GBV.

Some of the findings of the pilot emphasized the need for strong school management and capacity among the teachers and educational staff to create a safe learning environment, empowering children's rights and gender equality and the call for establishing and implementing a code of conduct. Based on the results of the pilot, nationwide rollout will be coordinated by the government.

To strengthen the capacity of teachers at schools managed by FIBOS, a training programme in interpersonal communication to improve teacher-student engagement was provided to school counsellors and management from junior secondary schools.

This initiative contributes to strengthening support for students experiencing bullying, corporal punishment, harassment, violence, sexual discrimination, or abuse.

For the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, reform of the education sector is continuously on its radar. In 2020, the reforms that had been implemented over the course of the previous years were evaluated and the importance of investing in the development of the child was underscored. As part of the professional development of the teaching staff, a training course of two years has been rolled out on how to exercise development-oriented education. The main aspect of this approach is that education is based on learning outcomes that clearly indicate what a child should be able to do and know. In this development-oriented education, explicit attention is paid to multilingualism, equality, cultural diversity and the physical and mental health of the child. This is based on the vision of competence development for all children. Till date, fifty (50) school management professionals and nine hundred and forty six (946) teachers of fifty (50) schools in eight (8) districts have received the training and will receive coaching during the two-year period (2022-2023).

EDUCATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The developments due to the COVID-19 pandemic imposed the imperative on the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture to implement measures to cope with the situation. Schools were closed during certain periods of time given the high rise of COVID-19 infections. During these periods, some teachers worked with a system where packages with school materials and assignments were provided to school children, which they had to do at home. Messaging through WhatsApp and SMS, and Zoom or Google Teams were also utilized by some schools. School radio and school television were also used to provide lessons to school children of primary education. After the number of infections became less concerning, the schools re-opened and children went to school in smaller groups of 10-12 children.



The pandemic exposed the gap of the minimal digital advancement that persists in the education system to support distance learning.

The COVID-19 situation also led to an evaluation of the number of school children per class and the government decided to move away from large classes (more than 25 children or students per class), in especially primary and junior secondary education. The ministry is currently implementing a class divisor of 15/18 up to a maximum of 24 children or students. FIBOS developed learning material for distance learning, through content production of video lessons that were/are aired on television and discussed during radio programmes. Supporting material for the different subjects was also developed to stimulate learning through play.

5.3 CHALLENGES AND EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCELERATE ACHIEVING SDG 4

CHALLENGES

Despite continued investments and policy development in the education sector in Suriname, there are still challenges that limit the full effectiveness and efficiency of the system. The bottlenecks in the education system with regard to serving the multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual society of Suriname are still large and lead to unequal opportunities for children, especially those in the interior. Curricula and didactic teaching methods are not optimally geared to advancing technological developments e.g. there is still insufficient access to the internet and ICT equipment. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this weakness evident. Investments in strategies for distance education will therefore have to be made.

Capacity building in the education sector needs further attention, especially with regard to data gathering and analysis, planning and implementing evidence-based educational policy. Strengthening and improving the quality of higher and scientific education is another area where continued efforts are needed. Given Suriname's dire social and economic situation, families face difficult social-economic circumstances, which also affect the learning opportunities of their children.

OPPORTUNITIES

The government remains committed to innovating and investing in the education system. Proposed changes in the current education legislation will result in increasing the compulsory school age to 4-16 years and bringing compulsory education from grade 1 up to and including grade 10 (now it is up to and including grade 8). In its most recent policy reform, the government is expanding the primary level education with grades 9 and 10, adding two more years to the current system. This reform is necessary because the transition of children from one grade to another is problematic and there are still too many repeaters⁹, which consequently leads to children dropping out of school.

The recent evaluation of the current curriculum shows that it is still too elaborate and the same teaching methods are utilized for every child. The curriculum will be adapted from a knowledge-oriented to a development-oriented curriculum. The emphasis is not only on subject-related knowledge transfer, but also on the importance of the subject for the student. The policy is to reduce children dropping out of school; current figures of around 12.6 percent should significantly drop.

⁹ The Suriname MICS 2018 data shows a repetition rate of 12 percent in grade 5 of primary education



In addition, education innovation must entail that the choice for vocational and technical courses in secondary education should not be based solely on test grades, but on a consciously future-oriented choice of the student. In the context of innovation, the education system will gradually move away from a numerical assessment to competence-oriented education through subject-specific knowledge assessment methods. The emphasis will be on STREAMS, which is a way of learning and development that integrates the fields of Science, Technology, Languages (Reading), Engineering, Arithmetic/Mathematics and Arts. The curricula for grades 9 and 10 will be revised to improve the quality by updating the contents of traditional subjects like Mathematics and Language and transitioning towards a problem-based learning approach.

Specific attention will be on providing inclusive education to populations in disadvantaged situations, including children with disabilities, early learners, and non-native Dutch speakers. Since the interior requires a more targeted approach, policy implementation will take into consideration establishing kindergarten classes in the different villages and including grade 9 and 10 in the existing schools. Distance education is seen as a necessary tool for education in the interior and the results of a pilot in six (6) locations will provide input for the policy development. In view of the diversity of languages in Suriname, the emphasis will be on further strengthening multilingualism in education.



5.4 STATISTICAL OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS BY SELECTED INDICATORS

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.1.1 Proportion of children and young people (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex

Table SDG 4A: Minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics by education level and gender

Reading proficiency at primary level									
Year	2018			2019			2020		
	Area	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban	52.1	60.3	56.3	59.4	60.3	62.5	61.8	70.0	66.1
Rural	46.8	59.1	53.1	54.5	59.1	59.4	59.7	68.1	64.2
Interior	20.9	30.7	26.5	30.6	30.7	34.5	36.8	43.4	40.4
National	48.1	56.6	52.5	55.9	56.6	58.9	59.7	66.3	63.2

Mathematics proficiency at primary level

Year	2018			2019			2020		
	Area	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban	30.9	30.2	30.5	31.3	33.2	32.3	40.5	41.7	41.1
Rural	28.3	30.6	29.5	34.4	41.2	37.8	40.6	42.9	41.8
Interior	12.1	13.4	12.7	13.7	17.0	15.6	26.5	28.1	27.3
National	28.7	27.8	28.2	30.4	32.0	31.3	39.6	40.4	40.1

Reading proficiency at junior secondary level

Year	2018			2019			2020		
	Area	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban	76.5	83.6	80.8	78.0	82.9	81.0	87.1	89.6	88.6
Rural	73.5	84.4	80.3	72.3	89.2	82.7	82.7	90.7	87.7
Interior	63.1	77.8	73.5	56.0	63.1	60.9	76.4	77.1	76.4
National	75.7	82.2	79.7	75.3	81.2	79.0	85.0	87.7	86.7

Mathematics proficiency at junior secondary level

Year	2018			2019			2020		
	Area	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Urban	49.1	57.3	53.6	52.0	58.5	55.7	63.3	63.3	63.2
Rural	38.5	48.6	43.6	45.2	61.2	55.1	67.8	66.1	66.5
Interior	21.0	32.1	26.7	42.5	26.6	34.3	60.5	48.9	54.3
National	46.0	53.3	50.1	50.0	55.8	53.3	64.5	62.7	63.4

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Table SDG 4B: Minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics at primary level

	Reading			Mathematics		
	Primary level (grade 6)					
Year	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2015	57.7	61.9	59.9	32.8	34.4	33.6
2016	54.6	62.6	58.8	26.0	27.5	26.8
2017	51.3	56.8	54.2	27.2	26.7	27.0
2018	48.1	56.6	52.5	28.7	27.8	28.2
2019	55.9	61.5	58.9	30.4	32.0	31.3
2020	59.7	66.3	63.2	39.6	40.4	40.1

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Table SDG 4C: Minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics at junior secondary level

	Reading			Mathematics		
	Junior secondary level (grade 4)					
Year	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2015	76.8	83.8	81.1	44.5	49.8	47.4
2016	79.9	85.5	83.4	48.2	51.2	49.9
2017	69.0	79.6	75.6	50.7	57.1	54.4
2018	75.7	82.2	79.7	46.0	53.3	50.1
2019	75.3	81.2	79.0	50.0	55.8	53.3
2020	85.0	87.7	86.7	64.5	62.7	63.5

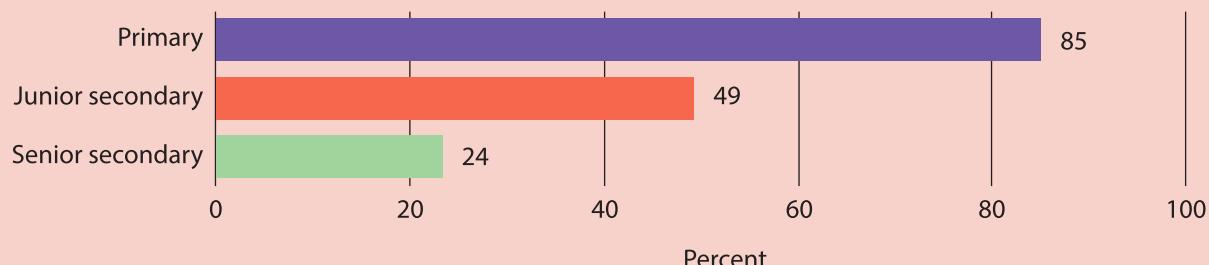
Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

At primary school level, about 60% of girls and boys achieve the required reading level. For mathematics, that level is about 40%. At junior secondary level, the percentage is about 85% for reading and 60% for mathematics.

In the period 2015-2020, the number of students with the minimum skills to read at the end of primary school increased slightly by 5.5%, and increased at junior secondary level by 6.9%. The number of students with the minimum skills in mathematics increased by 19.4% at the primary level and 34% at the end of junior secondary level. Although there has been an increase in the reading and mathematics skills at the primary school level, these figures are still low, which means that at an early stage students are lagging behind in reading and mathematics.

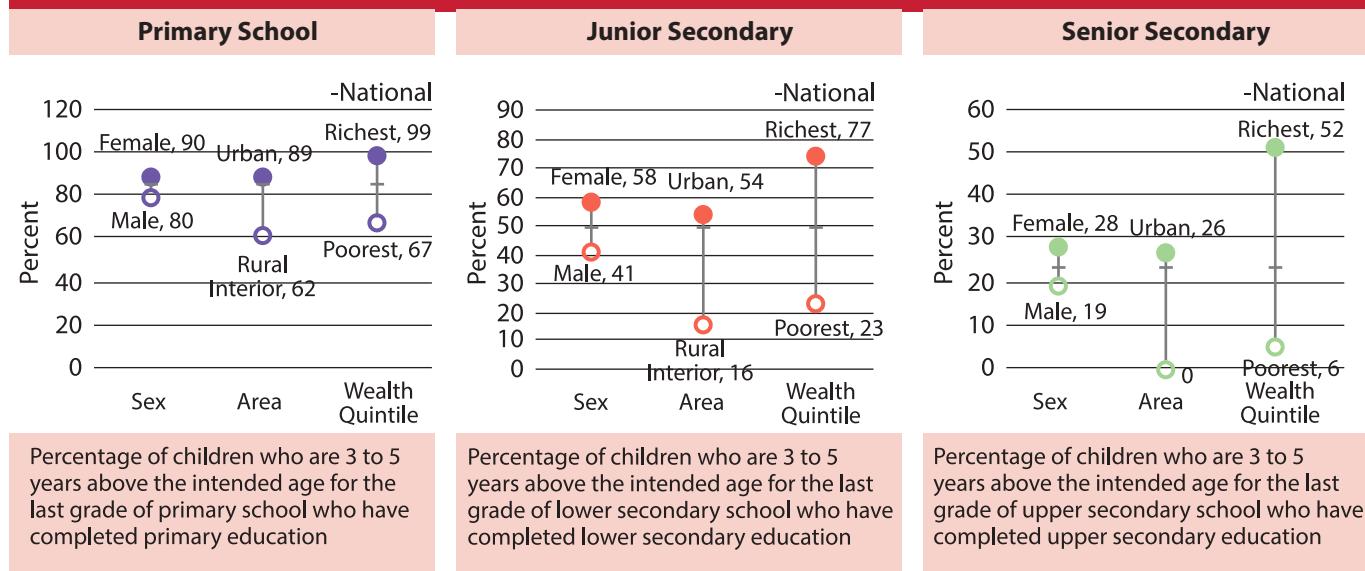
4.1.2 Completion rate for primary education and lower secondary education

Figure SDG 4A: Completion rate at primary, junior and senior secondary level



Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

Figure SDG 4B: Inequalities in completion rates



Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

Completion rates are higher at the primary education level with 85% and progressively decreasing at the junior secondary and senior secondary level to respectively 49% and 24%.

The disparities in completion rates increases as children transit from primary to junior (lower) secondary and on to senior (upper) secondary education level. Completion rates are higher for children living in urban areas and those belonging to the richest quintiles compared to their peers in the rural areas and the poorest quintile.

- 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.2.1 Proportion of children aged 24–59 months who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex
- 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex

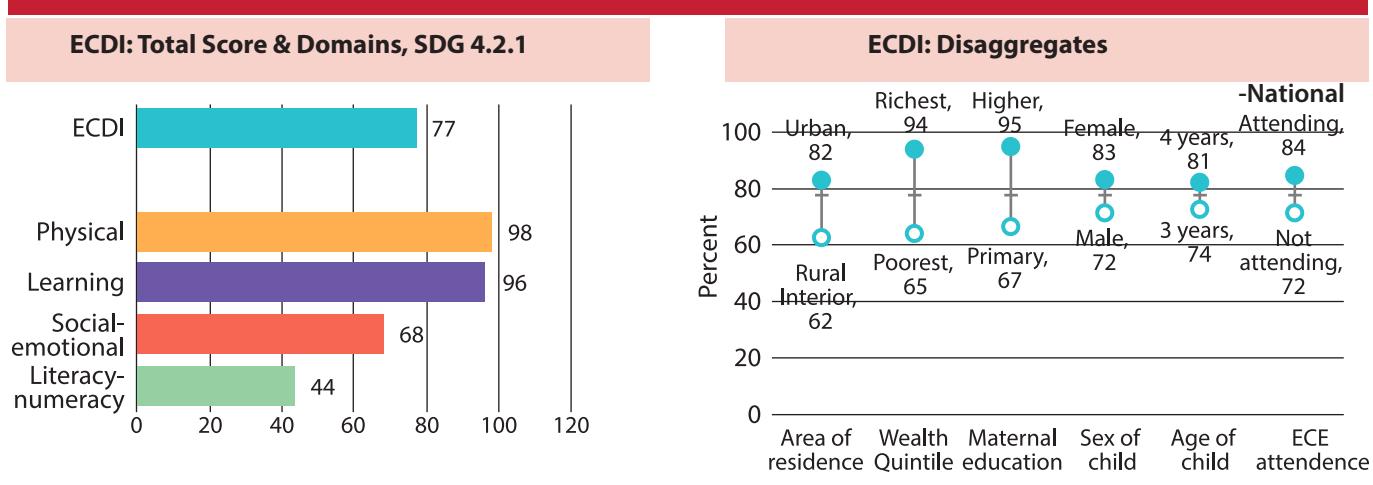
Table SDG 4D: Participation in organized learning

Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age) in percentages for both sexes

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2015	96.7	95.5	97.7
2016	99.7	95.5	97.7
2017	96.1	91.7	93.6
2018	99.7	95.5	97.6
2019	94.4	90.8	92.6
2020	98.5	98.5	98.5

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

Participation rate in organized learning and children who are developmentally on track remained steady during 2015–2020. According to the data of the Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018, 77.4% of children are developmentally on track and the participation rate in organized learning slightly increased from 97.7% in 2015 to 98.5% in 2020. It should be noted that the figures presented concern the four- and five-year old children. Data on the two- and three-year old attending organized learning is not readily available yet.

Figure SDG 4C: Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI)

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

The ECDI score is 77% at national level. For females this is about 10 points higher than for males. The ECDI is 82% for urban and 62% for the interior. The literacy and numeracy domain is about 44%, for the physical and learning domain this is about 98% and for the socio-emotional domain, 68%.

**4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship****4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill****Table SDG 4E: Percentage of women and men age 15-49 years, who in the last 3 months have carried out computer related activities**

	Women	Men
Copied or moved a file or folder	25.0	24.1
Used a copy and paste tool to duplicate or move information within a document	27.8	27.7
Sent e-mail with attached file, such as a document, picture or video	23.9	25.4
Used a basic arithmetic formula in a spreadsheet	15.3	14.6
Connected and installed a new device, such as a modem, camera or printer	11.4	15.3
Found, downloaded, installed and configured software	12.9	17.5
Created an electronic presentation with presentation software, including text, images, sound, video or charts	13.9	13.3
Transferred a file between a computer and other device	17.0	18.7
Wrote a computer programme in any programming language	5.0	4.6
Performed at least one of the nine listed computer related activities	32.5	34.4

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

About 25% of males and females have basic ICT skills such as copying, typing and sending emails. Between 10-15% have technical ICT skills, whereby males have a slightly higher percentage. About 5% can write a computer programme in any programming language. At least one third has performed one of the nine listed computer activities.



- 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations**
- 4.5.1 Parity indices (female/male, rural/urban, bottom/top wealth quintile and others such as disability status, indigenous peoples and conflict-affected, as data become available) for all education indicators on this list that can be disaggregated**

Table SDG 4F: Ratio of adjusted net attendance ratios of girls to boys in primary, junior and senior secondary school

Area	Primary school	Junior secondary school	Senior secondary school
	GPI for primary school adjusted NAR	GPI for junior secondary school adjusted NAR	GPI for senior secondary school adjusted NAR
Urban	1.02	1.18	1.70
Coastal	1.02	1.25	1.84
Interior	0.97	1.96	1.51
National	1.01	1.24	1.72

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

The GPI (Gender Parity Index) at primary level is close to 1, which shows that at the youngest age there is not much difference between boys and girls in school attendance. For the interior area, more boys are attending primary school than girls. However, the average GPI is above 1 at regional and national level, which indicates that relatively more girls are attending school than boys. The higher the educational level, the higher the GPI, which underlines that at secondary level significantly more girls are attending school than boys.

- 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**
- 4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex**

Table SDG 4G: Distribution of women age 15-49 years by highest level of school attended and literacy

Percent distribution of highest level attended and literacy						Total literacy
	ECE, Pre-primary and None	Primary	Junior secondary	Senior secondary	Higher	(%)
	Literate	Illiterate	Literate	Literate	Literate	Literate
Women	0.3	3.5	13.5	42.7	26.0	13.9
Men	0.1	1.6	18.0	47.7	23.6	8.3
						96.2
						97.7

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

The literacy percentage is about 96% for women, and slightly higher for men at 97%. The illiteracy percentage at national level is less than 5%; for women this percentage is twice as high as that of their male peers.



4.C By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States

4.C.1 Proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications, by education level

Table SDG 4H: Proportion of teachers in pre-primary, primary and junior secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training or in-service training

Year	Pre-primary		
	Male	Female	Total
2017	0.1	98.4	98.5
2018	0.6	98.9	99.7
2019	0.2	99.4	99.6
2020	0.8	98.7	99.5

Year	Primary		
	Male	Female	Total
2017	4.4	93.6	98.0
2018	4.7	94.6	99.3
2019	4.8	94.6	99.4
2020	4.6	94.7	99.2

Year	Junior secondary		
	Male	Female	Total
2017	15.2	68.5	83.7
2018	16.0	70.6	86.6
2019	15.2	71	86.2
2020	15.6	70	85.2

Source: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

At pre-primary and primary level almost all of the teachers (99.5%) have the minimum qualifications. As for junior secondary this percentage is around 85%, of which two third are female and one third is male. At pre-primary and primary level the proportion of male teachers is less than 5%. The proportion of qualified teachers slightly increased for those educating at junior secondary level.



6

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 8: **PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL**

"The policies of the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs are geared towards the realization of Decent Work in Suriname, because it is of critical importance, I dare to say paramount, to sustainable poverty alleviation, since securing a job usually is the first step out of poverty."

Steven Mac Andrew
Minister of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs

6.1 STATUS OF THE TARGETS

Targets	Status
8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries	Yellow
8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors	Yellow
8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	Red
8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead	Grey
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	Yellow
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	Yellow
8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms	Yellow
8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment	Green
8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products	Green
8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	Green
8.A Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries	Grey
8.B By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization	Green
On track	
Moderate improvements	
Not on track	
Not monitored yet	



6.2 POLICY CONTEXT AND PROGRESS

Suriname has historically experienced volatile economic growth, partly due to its dependence on world market prices and non-continuous investment pattern. This is shown by the average economic growth of 5 percent in the period 2005-2012, which gradually turned into a contraction of (minus) 4.9 percent in 2016 and (minus) 15.9 percent in 2020.

Therefore, the period 2015-2021 is characterized as a period of economic recession with low GDP growth, high inflation, a decline in purchasing power of more than 50 percent, deterioration in the balance of payments, an increasing debt burden of more than 80 percent of GDP, and a disruption of monetary stability.

Table 6.1: GDP growth by selected sectors

Description	2016	2017*	2018*	2019*	2020**	2021***	2022***
GDP growth (mp)	-4.9	1.6	4.9	1.5	-16.4	-3.3	1.9
A. Mining sector:	15.0	24.0	0.8	-8.4	-13.5	-1.7	10.7
Gold	15.47	24.65	2.23	-11.24	-19.64	-10.98	2.68
Oil	25.96	22.91	-1.40	-4.06	-4.68	9.62	18.60
B. Non-mining sector:	-7.24	-5.21	7.53	1.08	-14.61	-5.00	1.18
Production sector	-22.64	1.82	0.24	-6.13	-17.06	-7.00	-0.46
Services sector	0.15	-0.83	1.10	0.42	-1.36	-0.43	0.18
C. Government	-14.38	8.92	-1.59	21.61	-29.24	3.77	-8.19
Indirect taxes minus subsidy on production	-4.91	1.57	4.95	1.10	-15.91	-3.33	1.88

Source: National Planning Office Suriname, April 2022

*) preliminary figures **) Estimate ***) Forecast

Percentage annual GDP growth in constant (market) prices (base year 2015)

Table 6.2: Macro-economic indicators

Description	2015	2016	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Exchange rate (SRD/\$)	3.43	6.29	7.55	7.53	7.52	9.39	20.07	21.0*
Inflation (year average, %)	6.9	55.5	22	6.9	4.4	34.9	59.1	45.1**
Import coverage (in months)	1.5	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.2	3.8	6.3	4.9
Debt ratio (% of GDP)	41	72	67	63	72	121	138	NA
Foreign reserves (USD Mln)	330	381	424	581	648	585	992	1018
Real GDP growth (%) (base year 2015 = 100)	NA	-4.9	1.6	4.9	1.1	-15.9	-3.3	1.6
Purchasing power (base year 2014)	0.92	0.6	0.48	0.45	0.43	0.33	0.21	0.41

Source: General Bureau of Statistics/National Planning Office Suriname, April 2022

* Current estimates; NA: not available or applicable

** Early estimate National Planning Office Suriname



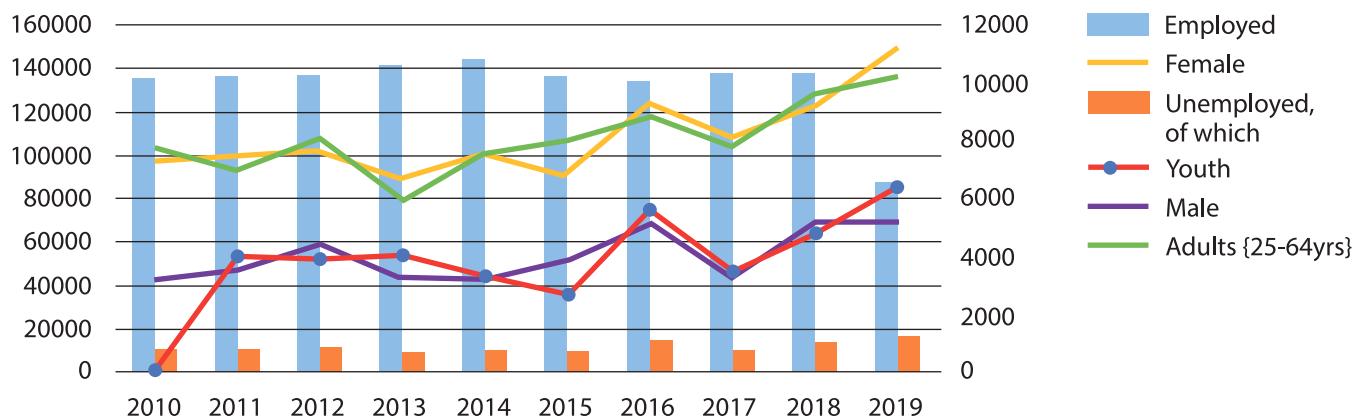
Through the cooperation with the IMF, Suriname is currently laying out a strict reform programme, and the main targets are to recover the government budget, planning and monitoring system as well as to improve the monetary economy with support of loans from the IMF to level up the monetary reserves. Subsequently, subsidies and tax reform measures are being implemented.

PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The last Census of 2012 measured a total of 188,229 employed persons, an increase of 20 percent compared to the figures of the 2004 Census. The available data shows that about 70 percent of the economically active population is settled in the urban areas, approximately 20 percent is from the rural areas and less than 10 percent lives in the interior areas. It is critical to note that the cases of informal work or those who are self-sufficient or self-employed -which is mostly the case in the interior areas-, are not optimally reported. Statistics that are available about the employed persons primarily concern those in formal work. The employment situation in Suriname stems from a classical employment structure by sectors.

Men are more engaged in the so-called technical jobs such as construction, mining, and industrial sector, whereas women are engaged in education, services and administrative jobs.

An analysis of the labour force through comparison of 2012 and 2018 data, indicates that there is a clear evolution of the labour force with regards to the education level. There is a slight increase in participation rate from those with a higher education level and the distribution also points out that the relative participation rate of those with a primary education level or no-schooling has significantly dropped. This means that the labour market in 2018 is on average, skilled with a relatively higher educated labour force compared to 2012. A key development issue and labour market challenge is the underutilization of the labour force, including unemployment of women, those living in the rural and interior areas, and those who have not completed their education.

Figure 6.1: Unemployment by selected population subgroups in urban areas

Source: Suriname Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026

The 2012 Census counted a total of 21,512 unemployed persons nationwide, resulting in an unemployment rate of 6 percent. Furthermore, the statistics indicate that the population of unemployed persons consists mainly of women (60.4 percent), young people (32.3 percent) and low-educated persons with primary and junior secondary education.

The General Bureau of Statistics gathers data through its household surveys in the urban areas. This data (based on the strict definition of unemployment) shows an unemployment rate of 7 percent in 2013, 10 percent in 2016, and 9 percent in 2018.

Table 6.3: Number of unemployed in urban areas

Year	Labour force	Unemployed	Unemployment (%)
2013	140,895	9,960	7
2014	145,036	8,374	5
2015	136,447	10,621	7
2016	133,663	14,369	10
2017	138,071	11,189	7
2018	137,059	4,277	9

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, 2018 (Households in Suriname, 2013-2018)

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the socio-economic situation and the labour market, where both the supply (employees) and demand side (employers) faced major challenges. Because of the pandemic, relatively more employees were unable to work due to health conditions or not able to go to work due to the full and partial lock downs that were frequently effectuated. Due to the lockdowns, employees were forced to change their routine working schedule, and most of them had to work from home to be able to meet their employers' demands. Employers faced challenges to maintain their revenues because of a less productive situation and a declining demand for the goods and services.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- The government implemented a financial support programme to provide employees, SMEs and self-employed who lost income due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with a monthly fee to support them to meet their basic needs.*
- A wide social media and public campaign was implemented to inform the public about this programme.*

The pandemic led to uncertainty, reduced income for families, reduced company revenues, and employees -mainly in the private sector- being laid off as a result of decreased investments and declining purchases of goods. These circumstances negatively influenced the development of various small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the self-employed. Numerous SMEs were forced to close in 2020 and 2021 or continue with fewer staff.

To provide a safety net for affected employers and employees, the government implemented a financial support programme. The aim of the programme was to accommodate employees who received reduced income or were laid off, or to accommodate the self-employed and SMEs who had to close business or had reduced income, with a monthly financial incentive to meet their basic needs.

The programme started in May 2020 and lasted until November 2021, with some interruptions due to financial, administrative or logistic challenges. An on-line registration process was executed to reach a broader audience and the payments were made in cash or by bank transfer.

Video commercials and social media were utilized to promote the programme and applicants could request support via telephone to fill in the application forms. The total number of registrations was 11,265; ultimately 8,119 applications were categorized as eligible.

Table 6.4: Registered applicants for the COVID-19 financial support programme

Category	Registered applicants	Eligible	Not eligible
Employees laid off	4,646	2,993	1,653
Employees with reduced income	3,380	2,218	1,162
SMEs and self-employed	3,239	2,908	331
Total	11,265	8,119	3,146

Source: Labour Market Development Department/Labor Statistics Division, 2021



During this COVID-19 pandemic it became clear that Suriname's labour market system could not handle structural and long-term unemployment; furthermore, it became evident that the existing unemployment benefit mechanism was not equipped to manage the large amounts of requests.

With regard to the labour market policy, the government has several programmes that are being executed.

The Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs has three technical vocational institutions to support in the implementation of the labour market policy.

1. The Foundation for Labour Mobilization and Development (SAO) is responsible for the registration of the unemployed, the placement and redeployment of registered unemployed persons, and the coordination of technical and vocational skills training and re-training activities. The target groups are jobseekers, namely youth that have dropped out of school and those persons who are already working. The SAO works in close cooperation with public and private institutions and operates two training centres.

2. The Foundation Productive Work Units (SPWE) is specifically responsible for supporting the development and strengthening of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). By providing information, guidance and training, the Foundation promotes employment and entrepreneurship. Those attending the training programmes are informed about the legal and financial steps that need to be taken to set up an SME, but are also coached in developing a business plan, applying for micro-finance and business licenses and the fulfilment of tax obligations.

3. The Suriname Hospitality & Tourism Training Centre (SHTTC), is a Foundation with a board composed of both government and private sector institutions. The Foundation provides training and education at national level for those in the working class who want to build a career in the tourism and hospitality sector. The training programmes are at secondary level in the field of hotel, recreation, hospitality, housekeeping, tour guiding, entrepreneurship, and management.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- *The government executes nationwide training programmes through its training institutes. This provides an opportunity for those persons who want to increase their skills.*
- *Specifically, a programme was developed for persons with disabilities to facilitate opportunities for decent work or develop their entrepreneurship skills to set up a small enterprise.*

In the period 2020-2021, the government executed a special training programme at national level for persons who wanted to start a small enterprise. The capacity of SAO, SPWE and SHTTC was utilized to a maximum to provide the training programme, and about 200 persons have participated till date. One specific target group in the training programme are persons with disabilities. In 2018, the government partnered with civil society organizations working for and with persons with disabilities and the Suriname Business Association (VSB) to launch the Alliance for Decent Work for Persons with Disabilities (PWD). The Alliance collects and analyzes the data on PWD through a registry established for PWD active in the labour market and to facilitate opportunities for decent work, or develop their entrepreneurship skills to set up a small enterprise. As a result, some private companies employed persons with disabilities after completion of their training. Furthermore, some persons established their small enterprise to be self-sufficient. A total of 57 persons with disabilities have been trained till date.

In addition to the training programmes through the technical vocational institutions, the government had established a SME Fund to stimulate new small and medium-sized entrepreneurship. These (prospective) entrepreneurs were able to receive funding to start up their business.





The implementation of the SME Fund has been evaluated in 2020 and to improve access to financing for SMEs, the existing SME Fund will be restructured to enhance its effectiveness. Discussions with several commercial banks to restart this Fund and the facilitation of access to financing through a simplified but acceptable business plan for the banks, have already started.

Noteworthy is also the contribution of civil society organizations to provide technical and vocational skills training for youth that have dropped out of school. One of these organizations is RUMAS Foundation which is continuously engaged in technical and vocational education for boys. Training programmes and individual guidance are key interventions, with the purpose to provide a second chance to acquire the necessary skills and attitude to enter the labour market.

With development partners, the government has initiated other labour market programmes to increase access to quality employment, whereby the main objectives are to strengthen institutional capacity, to promote quality employment and inclusive labour market opportunities, and reduce the mismatch between job seekers and employers. Emphasis is placed on improving the existing technical and vocational system to meet the demands of the private sector and invest in the infrastructure facilities and equipment, and implement digital transformation. The government has been working on the institutional capacity and coverage of Public Employment Service Units (PES) within the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs and will continue its efforts in this regard.

The 'Suriname Business Climate and Innovation Programme' (SUBCIP) is another programme with the aim at increasing the share and added value of the private sector in the economy. During the period 2019-2021, thirty six (36) firms benefited from capacity building and twenty two (22) firms were supported in programme design.

Stimulating local investment, local production and import substitution is a priority as well, and by implementing the 'Suriname's Growth Enterprises Programme' (SURGE), an Industrial Investment Fund to stimulate and increase local production through a matching grant programme with the aim of exporting, is in preparation.

To facilitate the entrepreneurial and investment climate, steps have been taken on the drafting of legislation for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises' development.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- *With financing from the UN-SDG Fund, the government is investing in agricultural development for Indigenous pineapple farmers, and to guarantee access to markets.*
- *The programme also ensures conditions that promote respect for fundamental labour rights, including consideration for the vulnerability of the involved traditional communities.*

The government has partnered with the United Nations (UN) system in Suriname, which resulted in funding made available by the UN-SDG Fund. The agricultural development in rural areas, with a focus on Indigenous pineapple farmers and their communities, is the primary area of intervention. While creating business opportunities and facilitating access to markets and value addition for women and men, this intervention will ensure conditions that promote respect for fundamental labour rights and rights of the Indigenous people, guaranteeing environmental sustainability, and consideration for the vulnerability of the involved traditional communities.



As a result of the close collaboration with the International labour Organization (ILO), the Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) 2019-2022 is being executed. The achievements till date are: (i) studies on labour market policies; (ii) regular publication of labour statistics; (iii) development of an occupation register and (iv) a survey on the labour participation of persons with disabilities. Within the DWCP, activities will be implemented such as training of the labour inspectors and social workers to strengthen the capacity to monitor compliance as well as monitor child labour; enhancing social dialogue and strengthening tripartite relations between government, employees and employers, and preparations to set up a labour market information system (LMIS).

It should be noted that the current DWCP is a follow up of the first Programme, through which existing labour legislation was revised and/or drafted and the institutional capacity of the Labour Market and Youth Employment divisions of the Ministry were strengthened.

Informal employment is a pervasive phenomenon in Suriname. Evidence from studies carried out in the period 2015-2021 shows that there is an inverse but high correlation between the growth of the informal sector and the GDP growth of the country: a contraction of the economy amounts in an increase of the informal sector. Projections show that the estimated size of the informal economy for 2021 is about 75 percent of the GDP; this is a huge increase since 2015, when it was estimated at around 35 percent.

A comparison with other Caribbean countries also shows that on average, Suriname had an informality of about 40% between 2000 and 2007.

SOCIAL DIALOGUE

In July 2021, the Tripartite Council was established in which the government, unions and private employers' representatives participate to collaborate on actions to enhance labour market circumstances.

In this regard a Tripartite Agreement was reached in November 2021 between the three social partners, whereby five key issues have been prioritized concerning tax reforms, strengthening of the purchasing power of families, execution of a social safety net, pricing policy and advancing entrepreneurship and employment. It should be mentioned that two initiatives that the government has taken to support labour market policy and enhance social security are the determination of an updated minimum wage that will be finalized and agreed upon in 2022 and the calculation of a national poverty line, also to be finalized and agreed upon in 2022. In 2018, the minimum wage per hour was determined at SRD8.40 (USD1.12), taking into account the 2015-2016 economic crisis, which resulted in an inflation rate of 55%. In July 2021, the government established a formal Wage Council responsible for the adjustment of the minimum wage, and per June 2022, the government announced a minimum hourly wage of SRD20.- (USD0.96), which is significantly higher than the previous one of 2018.

LABOUR LAWS AND PROTECTION

With regard to equal pay for work of equal value, the available information shows that in Suriname about 30 percent of the payments are under the current minimum wage. The average hourly earnings of employees are different for the public and private sector, and it has been noted that civil servants are slightly better paid than private sector employees.



Payment by educational level shows that the higher the educational level, the higher the hourly wage of the employee. The mining sector and other technical sectors are the better paid sectors, with an average hourly payment of USD4.-. A disaggregation by gender shows that men are overall paid better than their female peers. According to the Global Gender Gap Index¹⁰, Suriname scores well in the field of education (gender parity 0.991) and health (gender parity 0.973), but in terms of economic participation and opportunities, there is still a lot to be done (gender parity 0.638).

A breakdown of the data by gender concludes that women are lagging behind compared to their male peers in the area of payment, labour market participation, unemployment, child labour, engagement in sectors with higher wages and completing vocational training.

Results of the survey on living conditions in Suriname carried out in 2016-2017 shows that men earn about 28 percent more than women, and this inequality is the highest in the mining sector, where men are paid 6 times more than women.¹¹

To guarantee full employment and decent work, efforts have been made in the past period to adjust or draft new legislation. Suriname has ratified most of the guidelines and instructions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to ensure labour rights. The national legislation for employers and employees, including the regulations on working conditions has been improved, renewed, or developed to be aligned with global trends on human rights.

The law on Converting Indefinite Employment contracts to Fixed-term Employment contracts was approved in 2018, with the purpose to put an end to the continuous renewal of employment contracts, and provide security and equality for employees when entering the labour market. The Maternity Protection law was approved in 2019 and provides regulations to ensure maternal leave in all sectors.

The law on Equal Treatment of Labour focusing on the elimination of discrimination in the workplace has been drafted and is ready for discussion in Parliament. There is ongoing work on (i) equal treatment of employees by gender; (ii) violence and sexual harassment in the workplace and (iii) working hours for employees taking care of the elderly and minors in the family.

To operationalize the legislation, the Labour Inspection Unit has the main task to ensure compliance with the legal provisions regarding terms and conditions of employment. This mainly takes place by carrying out physical inspections at the workplace. The capacity of the Unit needs improvement and the evaluation has indicated that -due to insufficient protective equipment and lack of capacity- inspections are not carried out optimally.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND CHILD LABOUR

In Suriname, youth is defined as persons between the age of 0 and 30 years. According to the Census 2012, youth constitute a significant part of as much as 55.7 percent of the development potential of the country. This includes school-age/out-of-school youth (including those who dropped out) and employed/non-employed persons.

In 2018, the Children and Youth Persons Employment law was adopted, containing rules on the prevention of child labour and the performance of work by young persons. In this law, children are defined as persons who have not yet reached the age of 16 years. Young persons are defined as persons who have reached the age of 16 years, but not yet that of 18 years. Work, paid or unpaid, which is dangerous to health, morality or life, or work during the night, is prohibited for young persons.

10 Global Gender Gap Report 2018

11 Suriname Survey on Living Conditions: 2016-2017, Inter-American Development Bank



Data on the proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) who are not in the education system, employed or in training, shows that between 2005 and 2016, the unemployment of youth (NEET ratio) remained about 17-22 percent for those living in the urban areas. Currently, data is not available for the rural and interior areas. In the last census (2012), it was determined that of the 29,152 young persons who can be employed, 23.9 percent were unemployed. It was further noted that a substantial part of the total population of young unemployed persons are young persons with a low level of education, with 22 percent consisting of young persons with primary education and 46.6 percent of young persons with junior secondary education level.

The term *child labour* denotes the involvement of children in prohibited labour, and more generally the forms of labour that are banned both under national legislation and under the ILO Minimum Age Convention 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 1999 (No. 182). Statistics from the Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018 show that 6.1 percent of 7,722 children aged 5-17 years (survey population) are involved in child labour. For boys this is 7.5 percent and for girls this is 4.5 percent. The urban area has an incidence of 4 percent, the rural area 4.8 percent and the interior area, 18 percent. A breakdown by age group shows that about 6.1 percent of children aged 5-11 years is engaged in child labour, followed by 4.5 percent for the 12-14 years age group and the highest incidence of 7.7 percent for 15-17 year old children.



Finally, the percentage of child labour among children attending school is 5.5 percent and for their peers that are out of school, this incidence is 13.6 percent.

The government has established the National Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour, which implements measures based on the National Child Labour Action Plan 2019-2024.

Policy actions, drafting new legislation or proposing adaptation of existing legislation, proposing specific programmes for children of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, and monitoring compliance with international commitments related to child labour and child rights are within the mandate of this Committee.

6.3 CHALLENGES AND EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCELERATE ACHIEVING SDG 8

CHALLENGES

Suriname relies heavily on the revenues from gold mining and crude oil production, and thus the country's income is highly dependent on international prices and export volumes. Given this, international commodity shocks in the past years weakened the financial-economic situation and social security system in Suriname with economic growth coming to a standstill; the COVID-19 pandemic and the high fiscal and debt burden worsened the macroeconomic situation. The government has therefore set out several policy interventions, and projections indicate an economic growth of about 3.5 percent by 2026. There are still challenges being faced in creating an entrepreneur-friendly climate and facilitating private sector development. The data indicates that informal employment is high in the country and measures should be increased to guarantee the rights of employees in the informal sector. Unemployment and brain drain, especially among youth, is a matter of concern for the government as well as persisting inequalities in payments.

OPPORTUNITIES

Economic stability and inclusive growth are important preconditions for the recovery of prosperity, well-being and tranquility in society. Employment, characterized by high labour productivity, is important for a balanced society and for social cohesion.

The government has made it a priority to execute a macro-economic policy with the emphasis on economic growth, diversification of the economy and labour market reform through the facilitation of employment opportunities in, among others, the tourism, agriculture and services sector. Strengthening the existing training institutions and continuing the technical and vocational training, as well as the further development of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, especially in rural and interior areas, are key areas of intervention. The current discussion on labour policy targets the following areas: youth, modernization, national availability of technical and vocational training programmes, job placement specifically aimed at youth that have graduated but also youth at risk, as well as training and coaching to promote cooperatives and SMEs. Policies should also focus on an entrepreneurial and investment climate that encourages and supports economic activities on any scale, including an increased coverage of the Public Employment Service Units (PES). The development of new service delivery channels that combine digital tools and traditional mechanisms, improving access to credit by operationalizing the SME Fund and the Production Credit Fund, tax incentives, and training and skills building programmes focused on the needs of sectors and training for entrepreneurs, have been identified as much needed policy measures.

With the developments due to off-shore oil and gas discoveries, the government will pursue a strategic policy that will stimulate these emerging industries to utilize the potential of the local labour market. It is therefore important that Surinamese companies receive a significant share in the supply chain of the oil and gas industries. This share is referred to as 'local content', meaning the extent to which Surinamese companies and citizens participate in the economic activities, whereby the local content policy is strategically defined and anchored in a legal framework with clear objectives and results.

Furthermore, to guarantee labour rights and protection, drafting new legislation and/or updating existing legislation will be continued. Together with international partners and through social dialogue with the tripartite partners, labour market institutions will be strengthened to design and implement active labour market programmes targeting women, youth, persons with disabilities, and people living in rural and interior areas. To gain insight into the labour market, investments in the Labour Market Information System and labour market research will be continued.

Table 6.5: Overview of the labour laws by year of enactment

2016	2018
Freedom of Association law (update)	Children and Young Persons Employment law
Collective Bargaining Agreements law (update)	Dismissal law (update)
Labour Advisory Board law (update)	Contract Labour law
2017	2019
Cooperative Association law (update)	Centre for Innovation and Productivity law
Labour Exchange law	Maternity Protection law
Private Employment Agencies law (update)	Minimum Wage law (update)
Labour Inspection law (update)	

Source: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs, 2021

The continued implementation of the National Child Labour Action Plan 2019-2024 will focus on increased collaboration with national and development partners for targeted inspections to prevent child labour, on interventions on tackling child labour and on the implementation of legislation.

The government will continue its efforts to facilitate the private sector and utilize existing institutions such as the Suriname Business Forum (SBF), which is a tripartite body established by law and an important platform for developing the private sector and working towards an Enterprise Development Centre. In the area of technological innovation, the idea of an Innovation Fund has been discussed to accommodate product development, including financing and the purchase of new technology for business operations.



Table 6.6: Overview of labour laws that are pending approval

Laws and status	Submitted to
Working Conditions law (update)	Parliament
Working Hours Regulation law (update)	Parliament
Corporate Consultation law (new)	Parliament
Equal Treatment law (new)	Parliament
Violence and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace law (new)	Parliament
Labour Disputes law (update)	State Council
Accidents Control law (update)	Labour Advisory Board
Employee Registration law (update)	Labour Advisory Board
Holiday law (update)	Labour Advisory Board
Work Permits for Migrants law (update)	Council of Ministers

Source: Ministry of Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs, 2021



FIATAGRI

3550 R



Suriname has ratified the following ILO conventions and agreements regarding the protection of the rights of employees:

1. Convention No. 11: Right of Association (Agriculture)
2. Convention No. 13: White Lead (Painting)
3. Convention No. 14: Weekly Rest (Industry)
4. Convention No. 17: Workmen's Compensation (Accidents)
5. Convention No. 19: Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation)
6. Convention No. 27: Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels)
7. Convention No. 29: Forced Labour
8. Convention No. 41: Night Work (Women)
9. Convention No. 42: Women's Compensation (Occupational Diseases)
10. Convention No. 62: Safety Provisions (Building)
11. Convention No. 81: Labour Inspection
12. Convention No. 87: Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to organize
13. Convention No. 88: Employment Service
14. Convention No. 94: Labour Clauses (Public Contracts)
15. Convention No. 95: Protection of Wages
16. Convention No. 96: Fee-Charging Employment Agencies (Revised)
17. Convention No. 101: Holidays with Pay (Agriculture)
18. Convention No. 105: Abolition of Forced Labour
19. Convention No. 106: Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices)
20. Convention No. 112: Minimum Ages (Fisherman)
21. Convention No. 118: Equality of Treatment (Social Security)
22. Convention No. 122: Employment Policy
23. Convention No. 135: Workers' Representatives
24. Convention No. 144: Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards)
25. Convention No. 150: Labour Administration
26. Convention No. 151: Labour Relations (Public Service)
27. Convention No. 181: Private Employment Agencies
28. Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labour
29. Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention

6.4 STATISTICAL OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS BY SELECTED INDICATORS

- 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
 - 8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
- 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
 - 8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person

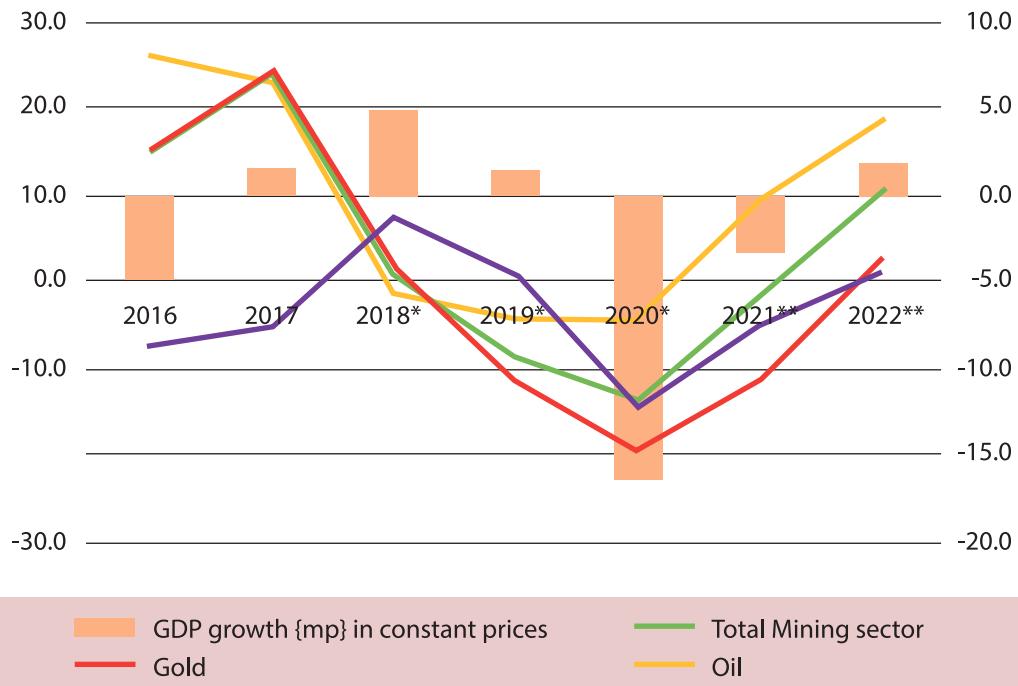
Table SDG 8A: Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita

Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita (SDG 8.1.1) and per employed person (8.2.1) and GDP market prices at Constant Prices (2015=100), 2015-2020

	2015	2016	2017	2018*	2019*	2020*
Gross Added Value at basic prices	16,142,345	15,349,488	15,589,867	16,361,295	16,540,904	13,909,901
Tax minus subsidies on products	1,372,302	1,304,899	1,325,334	1,390,916	1,406,184	1,182,516
GDP at market prices (x 1000 SRD)	17,514,647	16,654,387	16,915,201	17,752,211	17,947,089	15,092,418
Real growth (%)		-4.9	1.6	4.9	1.1	-15.9
Number of employed persons	92,837	94,194	96,066	97,284	98,143	103,222
Real GDP per employed person (SRD)	188,660	176,809	176,079	182,478	182,867	146,213
Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person	NA	-6.3	-0.4	3.6	0.2	-20.0

Source: National Planning Office Suriname, 2022

NA: not available or applicable

Figure SDG 8A: GDP growth by selected sectors

Source: National Planning Office Suriname, 2022

The annual growth rate of the real GPD declined in 2012 from 5% to -4.9% in 2016 and -15.9% in 2020. The country is coping with huge budget deficits, high external loans and with the impact of COVID-19, the slight recovery of the years 2018-2019 has faded. In 2020, there is a contraction of almost -16% per employed person. With the current financial-economic reforms, the expectation is that for 2023-2026, there will be a positive and increasing growth. Figure SDG 8A shows that growth is dependent on the mining sector (gold and oil), and the non-mining sector will have a relatively lower contribution.

Table SDG 8B: Macro-economic indicators

	2015	2016	2017*	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Exchange rate (SRD/\$)	3.43	6.29	7.55	7.53	7.52	9.39	20.07	21.0*
Inflation (year average, %)	6.9	55.6	22	6.9	4.4	34.9	59.1	45.1**
Import coverage (in months)	1.5	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.2	3.8	6.3	4.9
Debt ratio (% of GDP)	41	72	67	63	72	121	138	NA
Foreign reserves (USD Mln.)	330	381	424	581	648	585	992	1018
Real GDP growth (%) (2015 =100)		-4.9	1.6	4.9	1.1	-15.9	-3.3	1.6
Purchasing power parity (2014 base year)	0.92	0.6	0.48	0.45	0.43	0.33	0.21	0.14

Source: General Bureau of Statistics and National Planning Office Suriname, 2022

* current estimates; NA: not available or applicable; ** early estimates

Table SDG 8B shows the development of key indicators during 2015-2022. These indicators reflect the economic worsening during 2015-2020 and show a slight improvement for 2021 and 2022 regarding GDP and the foreign reserves.



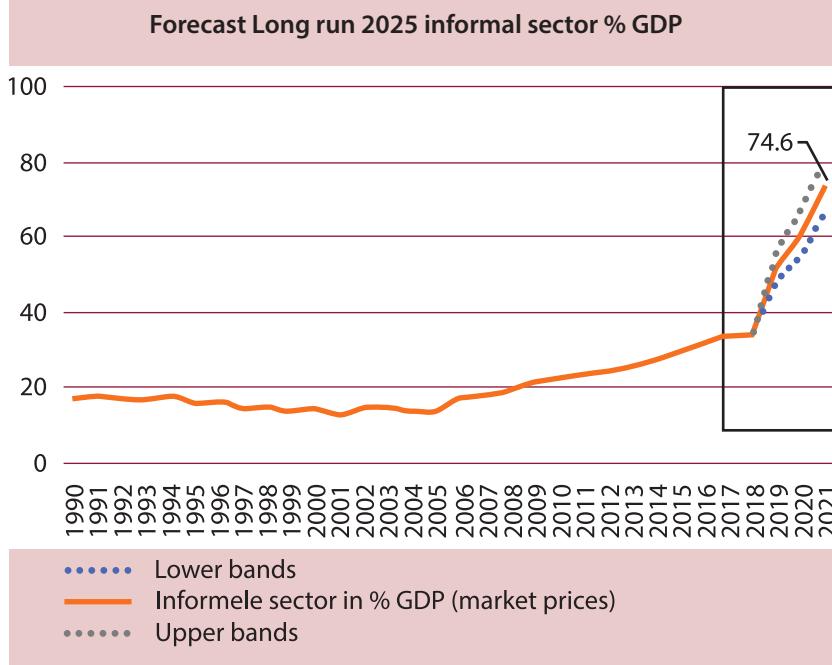
8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services

8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in total employment, by sector and sex.

Table SDG 8C: Distribution of the employed population by sector and gender, at national level

Distribution of employed persons by sector and gender	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	6865	3.6	1725	0.9	8590	4.6
B. Mining and quarrying	9316	4.9	1200	0.6	10516	5.6
C. Manufacturing	7013	3.7	2451	1.3	9464	5.0
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	1021	0.5	214	0.1	1235	0.7
E. Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	713	0.4	155	0.1	868	0.5
F. Construction	11476	6.1	644	0.3	12120	6.4
G. Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	14347	7.6	9435	5.0	23782	12.6
H. Transportation & storage	7450	4.0	1296	0.7	8746	4.6
I. Accommodation and food service activities (hotels and restaurants)	1913	1.0	3259	1.7	5172	2.7
J. Information and communication	1625	0.9	1021	0.5	2646	1.4
K. Financial and insurance activities	1407	0.7	1626	0.9	3033	1.6
L. Real estate activities	164	0.1	135	0.1	299	0.2
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	1083	0.6	1005	0.5	2088	1.1
N. Administrative and support service activities	3899	2.1	1906	1.0	5805	3.1
O. Public administration, defense and compulsory social security	16744	8.9	12667	6.7	29411	15.6
P. Education	2073	1.1	8941	4.8	11014	5.9
Q. Human health and social work activities	1856	1.0	6950	3.7	8806	4.7
R. Arts, entertainment and recreation	1238	0.7	1356	0.7	2594	1.4
S. Other service activities	1149	0.6	1314	0.7	2463	1.3
T. Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use	5204	2.8	3961	2.1	9165	4.9
U. Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies	64	0.0	51	0.0	115	0.1
X. Unknown	22125	11.8	8172	4.3	30297	16.1
Total	118745	63.1	69484	36.9	188229	100

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, 2020

Figure SDG 8B: Estimates Informal sector

Source: National Risk Analysis 2019-medio2020, Public version, Government of Suriname

The data available is at macro level and not disaggregated by gender. Studies carried out show that the types of informality carried out are:

1. Illegal activities (mostly drugs and smuggling)
2. Legal activities (small scale gold production)
3. Tax evasion (seasonal workers, mostly self-employed workers)

Table SDG 8D: Estimates of non-observed economies of selected Caribbean countries

Country/Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Average
Suriname	39.9	39.8	40.3	40.8	41.5	42.9	43.3	43.9	44.7	41.9
Suriname*	77	32	63	30	31	21	29	32	24	37.7
Guyana	33.8	33.6	33.8	33.5	33.3	33.8	33	33.4	33.3	33.5
Jamaica	36.4	36.4	36.6	36.6	38.6	39.1	38.9	40.2	40.5	38.1
Haïti	56	55.4	54.7	54.3	54.4	53.4	53.7	53.8	53.7	54.4

Source: Schneider, Buehn, and Montenegro (2010); *Kamau & Lin (2015), Greenidge, Holder, and Mayers (2009) in Peters (2017)

Evidence from studies carried out in the period 2015-2021 shows that there is an inverse but high correlation between the growth of the informal sector and the GDP growth of the country. Projections shows that the estimated size of the informal economy for 2021 is about 75%; this is a huge increase since 2015, when it was estimated at about 22%. Comparison with other Caribbean countries also shows that on average Suriname had an informality of about 40% between 2000 and 2007.

8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of employees, by sex, age, occupation and persons with disabilities

Figure SDG 8C: Distribution of average hourly earnings by employees

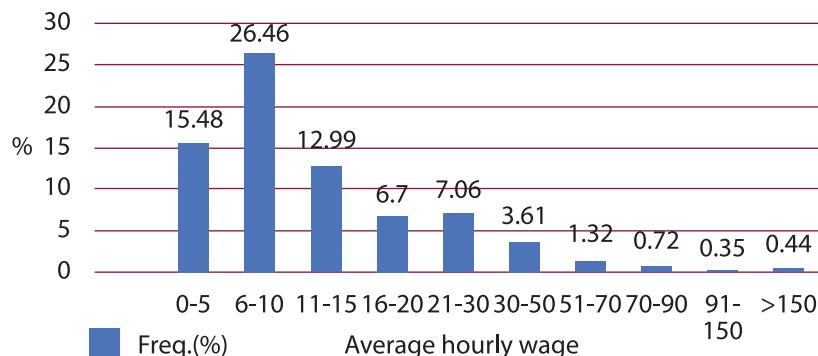
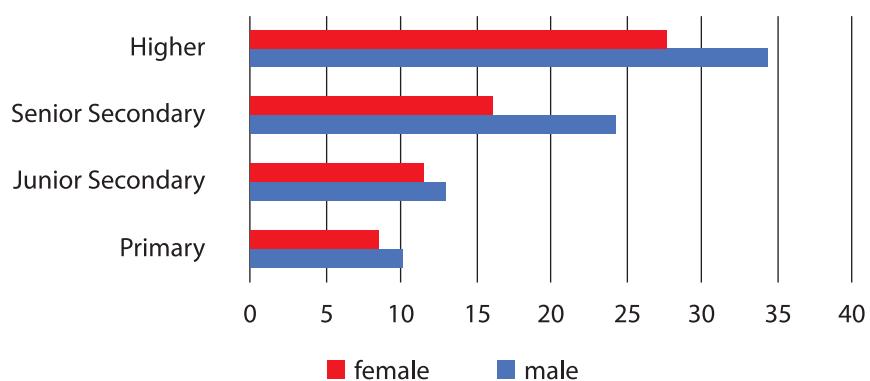


Table SDG 8E: Average hourly earnings by occupation type

Occupation type	Frequency	Average hourly earning (SRD)
Self-employed	254	15.68
Public sector	548	19.26
Private sector	908	13.37
Total (N)	1710	16.10

Figure SDG 8D: Average hourly earnings by gender and educational level (SRD)



Source: Suriname Survey on Living Conditions: 2016-2017, Inter-American Development Bank

About 30% of the wages are under the minimum of SRD8,40, as decided in 2018. About 60% of the workers have an hourly wage less than USD1. Average hourly earnings of employees show that public and private sector payments differ, civil servants are slightly better paid than private sector workers. Payment by educational level shows that the higher the education level, the higher the hourly earnings of the employees.

Furthermore, females are paid significantly lower than their male peers, irrespective of their educational level. The inequality in hourly earnings between male and females is higher for those with a senior secondary or higher education level.

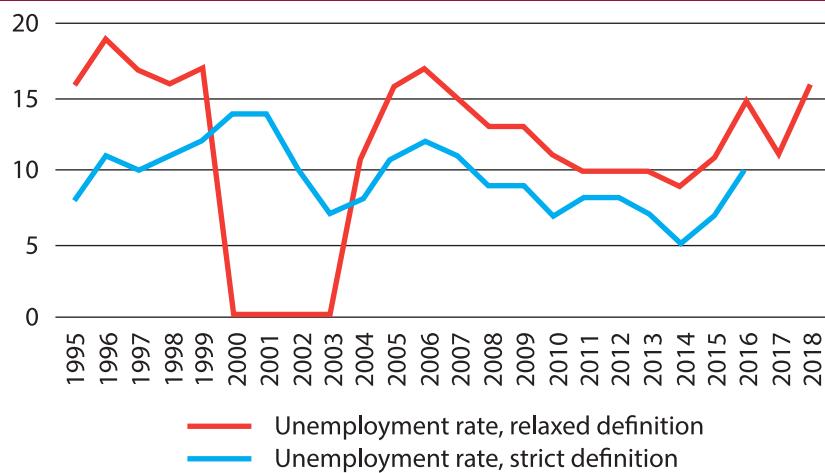
Table SDG 8F: Wage earnings by sector and gender

Wage earnings by sector and gender	Male			Female		
	Average wage per hour			Average wage per hour		
	N	SRD	USD	N	SRD	USD
A. Agriculture, forestry and fishing	104	9.24	1.24	34	6.84	0.92
B. Mining and quarrying	42	51.64	6.93	3	7.27	0.98
C. Manufacturing	182	12.14	1.63	77	10.11	1.36
D. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	7	17.4	2.34	0		0.00
E. Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	11	15.92	2.14	3	14.53	1.95
F. Construction	174	11.17	1.50	9	13.23	1.78
G. Wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	118	13.09	1.76	81	13.32	1.79
H. Transportation & storage	86	13.96	1.87	18	20.36	2.73
I. Accommodation and food service activities	10	10.06	1.35	31	14.81	1.99
J. Information and communication	31	20.59	2.76	16	20.35	2.73
K. Financial and insurance activities	25	22.69	3.05	22	22.79	3.06
M. Professional, scientific and technical activities	17	39	5.23	15	17.56	2.36
N. Administrative and support service activities	109	12.99	1.74	65	11.94	1.60
O. Public administration, defense and compulsory social security	103	17.56	2.36	77	14.7	1.97
P. Education	39	21.57	2.90	168	26.8	3.60
Q. Human health and social work activities	25	16.32	2.19	73	16.32	2.19
R. Arts, entertainment and recreation	19	12.48	1.68	19	12.26	1.65
S. Other service activities	20	30.04	4.03	12	12.27	1.65
T. Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use	11	13.22	1.77	18	9.76	1.31
Total	1133	19.0	2.55	741	14.73	1.98

Source: Suriname Survey on Living Conditions: 2016-2017, Inter-American Development Bank

Results from the Living Conditions Survey in Suriname carried out in 2016-2017 show that men earn about 28% more than women and this inequality is the highest in the mining sector, where men are paid 6 times more than women. Comparing the earnings by sector shows that the mining sector and other technical sectors are the better paid sectors, with an average hourly payment of USD4. A disaggregation by gender shows that men are overall better paid than their female peers.

For Suriname the women's labour force participation is 43% compared to 68% of men (at urban level). Only 1% of men's labour force (those who have the potential to work, aged 15-64) are engaged in unpaid care and domestic work, while this is 19% for their female peers. About 98% of those engaged in unpaid care and domestic work are women.

Figure 8.5.2: Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities**Figure SDG 8E: Unemployment rate**

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, 1995-2018

Unemployment in Suriname is based on various factors, e.g. differences in dynamics between the growth in the supply and demand for labour, a non-conclusive alignment between the labour market and education, lack of interest in specific professions and branches and an inadequate flow of information about open jobs.

The unemployment rate, including discouraged workers, was on average between 10-18% in the period 1995-2018. In 2012, as measured by Census 2012, the national unemployment rate (including discouraged workers) for the labour force was 10.3%. In the urban areas, the unemployment rate (including discouraged workers) increased from 11% in 2015 to 16% in 2018. The data shows that from 2014, the unemployment figures lowered (9%), after which it increased again in 2016 (16%).

8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training.

Table SDG 8G: Participation by gender in technical and vocational training (TVET)

Wage earnings by sector and gender	Number of participants			Completed		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Textile		26	26			
Care taking		69	69		7	7
Nursery	1	170	172		41	41
Car mechanic	36		36	15		15
Autobody repair	34		34	14		14
Construction	39	1	40	15		15
Electronics	47	2	49	12	1	13
Mechanics	47	2	49	16		16
Refrigerating technology	45	1	46	19		19
Construction	26		26	9		9
Weld construction	53	1	54	15		15
Machine woodworking	24		24	6		6
Machinery skills	24	2	26	4	2	6
Construction	4		4			
Textile extra	3	6	9			
Total	383	280	663	125	51	176

Table SDG 8G shows the TVET courses provided by the government. The participation by gender is almost equally distributed for these courses, however men are more engaged in technical courses, while females are more enrolled in care taking courses. From the total number of enrollments, about 25% successfully completes the course. More men are completing the courses than women.

Source: Foundation for Labour Mobilization and Development (SAO), 2022

**Table SDG 8H: Youth unemployment**

	Youth Employment	YET	Y	NEET Ratio
	Employed	Student	Urban Youth	Y-Yemp-YET/Y
2005	16,094	32754	63120	22.61
2006	16,963	33084	64049	21.86
2007	16,710	34781	64728	20.45
2008	17,083	34131	64767	20.93
2009	17,309	34928	65415	20.15
2010	19,206	35399	66344	17.69
2011	15,685	33230	60043	18.53
2012	15,139	33621	61520	20.74
2013	15,269	33203	61422	21.08
2014	16,684	33706	62198	18.98
2015	16,812	34081	62384	18.42
2016	13,294	36987	64661	22.24

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, Household Surveys (Urban areas)

Table SDG 8H: Taking a closer look at youth unemployment, the data shows that there is no significant progress in combating youth unemployment. From 2005 till 2016, the proportion of youth unemployment, measured by the NEET ratio, remained between 17 – 22%.

8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age.

Table SDG 8I: Child labour

Percentage of children age 5-17 years by involvement in economic activities or household chores during the last week, percentage working under hazardous conditions during the last week, and percentage engaged in child labour during the last week, Suriname MICS 2018

	Children involved in economic activities for a total number of hours during last week:		Children involved in household chores for a total number of hours during last week:		Children working under hazardous conditions	Total child labour ¹	Number of children age 5-17 years
	Below the age specific threshold	At or above the age specific threshold	Below the age specific threshold	At or above the age specific threshold			
Total	9.1	3.4	71.5	0.5	2.9	6.1	7722

Sex

Male	11.9	4.4	69.4	0.2	4	7.5	4042
Female	6.2	2.4	73.7	0.9	1.7	4.5	3680

Area

Urban	7.1	2.3	70.4	0.6	1.3	4	5221
Rural Coastal	11.3	2.7	73.6	0.1	2.6	4.8	1437
Rural Interior	16.4	9.9	73.9	0.7	11	18.1	1063

Age

5-11	3.7	5.4	59.9	0.6	1.2	6.1	4388
12-14	13.9	1	84.8	0.4	3.2	4.5	1649
15-17	18.6	0.8	88.6	0.4	7	7.7	1685

¹ MICS indicator PR.3 - Child labour; SDG indicator 8.7.1

A Children age 15 or higher identified as emancipated

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018

Child labour occurs when children are involved in economic activities for at least one hour during the reference week during a specific reference period, and are between 5-13 years old and/or involved in dangerous work (for children aged 5-17 years). Statistics from the Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2018 show that 6.1% out of 7,722 children aged 5-17 years are involved in child labour. For boys, this is 7.5% and for girls the percentage is 4.5%. The urban area has an incidence of 4%, the rural area 4.8% and the interior, 18%. A breakdown by age group shows that about 6.1% of children aged 5-11 years is engaged in child labour, followed by 4.5% for the 12-14 years age group. The highest incidence of 7.7% is for 15-17 year old youngsters.

8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment.

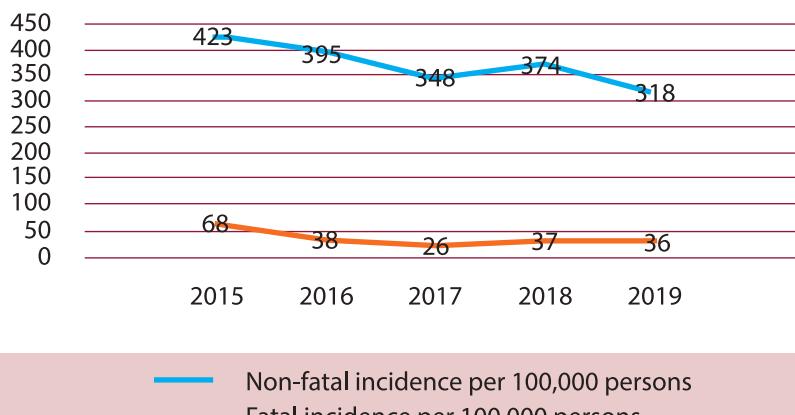
8.8.1 Fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers, by sex and migrant status.

8.8.2 Level of national compliance with labour rights (freedom of association and collective bargaining) based on International Labour Organization (ILO) textual sources and national legislation, by sex and migrant status.

8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

Figure SDG 8F: Occupational unsafety by number of accidents

Incidence per 100,000 persons



This indicator provides information on the number of fatal and non-fatal occupational injuries per 100,000 workers in the reference group during the reference period. It is a measure of the personal likelihood or risk of having a fatal or a non-fatal occupational injury for each worker in the reference group. Statistics from the past decade show that the number of accidents reduced with almost 50%, for both fatal and non-fatal accidents.



7

PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 13

TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

13 CLIMATE
ACTION



While Suriname, with its carbon negative status, is one of the least contributors to the sources of climate change, it has been categorized as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world. An unfortunate reality that brings us to the forefront of the fight against climate change.

The establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment in 2020, is one of the main strategic actions to achieve the goal of capacity strengthening for effective climate change planning. The deliberate connection with spatial planning underlines our determination to implement sound resilience and adaptive measures to face the hazards caused by climate change. We are not only resolute to mobilize all our resources to face the challenges of climate change, we are also determined to serve as a model to the world. A country where the best environmental practices are an integrated part of normal governance.

Silvano Tjong-Ahin
Minister of Spatial Planning and Environment

7.1 STATUS OF THE TARGETS

SDG 13 Targets	Status
13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	
13.2: Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	
13.3: Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning	
13.a: Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible	
13.b: Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities	
On track Moderate improvements Not on track Not monitored yet 	

7.2 POLICY CONTEXT AND PROGRESS

Suriname has a tropical hot and wet climate with a mean temperature between 25°C-27.5°C and an annual rainfall varying between 1,600 mm/year-2,600 mm/year. Since 1960, the average annual temperature increased by 0.2°C at an average rate of 0.05°C per decade. Although Suriname is situated outside the hurricane zone, the aftermath of the hurricanes that proliferate in the Caribbean region are often experienced in the form of heavy rainfall. Weather events like the passage of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), very strong winds ('sibibusies') and the El Niño and La Niña phenomenon have a big influence on the weather in Suriname.

As such, Suriname is regularly confronted with a series of extreme weather conditions (flooding, heavy winds and salt water intrusion), and in recent years there also seems to be a pattern of severe flooding in the interior areas of Suriname (2006, 2008, 2021 and 2022).

A recent study¹² indicates that almost 30 percent of the country is within a few meters above sea level, making it susceptible to coastal flooding.

¹² State of the Climate Report: Suriname, Inter-American Development Bank, 2021



Nearly 80 percent of Suriname's population (two thirds of whom live in the capital Paramaribo) and most of the country's fertile land and economic activities are located in the 384 kilometer-long coastal plain. Therefore, sea level rise presents significant development challenges.

It is estimated that a one-meter rise would impact over 6.4 percent of GDP, 7 percent of the population, and 5.6 percent of agricultural land.¹³

Another aspect that leads to more frequent flooding in the coastal plain area is the fact that the storage capacity of the outdated drainage systems is insufficient to handle all the excess water after heavy rainfall, because of overdue maintenance of the water infrastructure and water pumps.

Drought on the other hand is also a climate change effect that can lead to less groundwater for the production of drinking water and water for the distribution for hydropower electricity. The expected impact of sea level rise (1 m by 2100), temperature rise (+0.8 to 2.0°C by 2050) and changing precipitation patterns (-22 to +14 mm/month by 2050) will affect productive sectors such as infrastructure and agriculture, but also water availability and energy, which significantly impacts sustainable development in Suriname.

Because of the serious consequences due to extreme weather events and the vulnerability due to sea level rise, the government made efforts to develop the National Climate Change Policy Strategy and Action Plan for Suriname 2014-2021 (NCCPSAP), the National Adaptation Plan 2019-2029 (NAP) and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs). Suriname also fulfilled - as part of the Paris Agreement - its commitment to submit its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), National Communication (NC), and the Forest Reference Emission Level (FREL) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

CLIMATE RELATED DISASTERS

Table 7.1 provides an overview of the population affected due to extreme weather events. Although the data for 2020-2021 is not readily available, the overall assessment is that the effects in certain geographical coastal and interior areas are worsening due to heavy rainfall. To illustrate this, as of April 2022, some streets in the districts of Paramaribo and Wanica are almost continuously flooded, and villages in the interior have to deal with heavy flooding, whereby houses and community centres are submerged up to the roof. Suriname has reached out to the international community for urgent support.

Table 7.1: Population affected by a disaster due to extreme weather per 100,000 populations

Year	Type Disaster	Death	Injured	Affected	Total	Estimated Population	Ratio per 100,000 people
2015	Floods, storms and heavy winds	1	3	790	794 ¹⁴	567,291	140
2016	Floods, storms and heavy winds	-	2	36	38	575,700	6.6
2017	Floods, storms and heavy winds	-	-	109	109	583,400	18.7
2018	Floods, storms and heavy winds	-	-	22	22	590,100	3.7
2019	Floods, storms and heavy winds	-	-	74	74	598,000	12.4

Source: National Coordination Centre for Disaster Management

13 State of the Climate Report: Suriname, Inter-American Development Bank, 2021

14 In July 2015, Suriname faced extreme heavy winds and even whirlwinds in the coastal zone, as a result of which more persons were affected than in other years

The National Coordination Centre for Disaster Management (NCCR), responsible for coordination, prevention and/or management of crises and disasters, has trained disaster response teams in land search and rescue (LSAR). To be able to provide assistance on community level in all ten districts of Suriname, administrative officials of the respective District Commissioners' offices, staff of the Medical Services and other actors were trained in disaster risk management, and are part of the National Disaster Response Teams.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

National Disaster Response Teams at district level have been established to cope with disasters and guarantee a decentralized approach in managing risks.

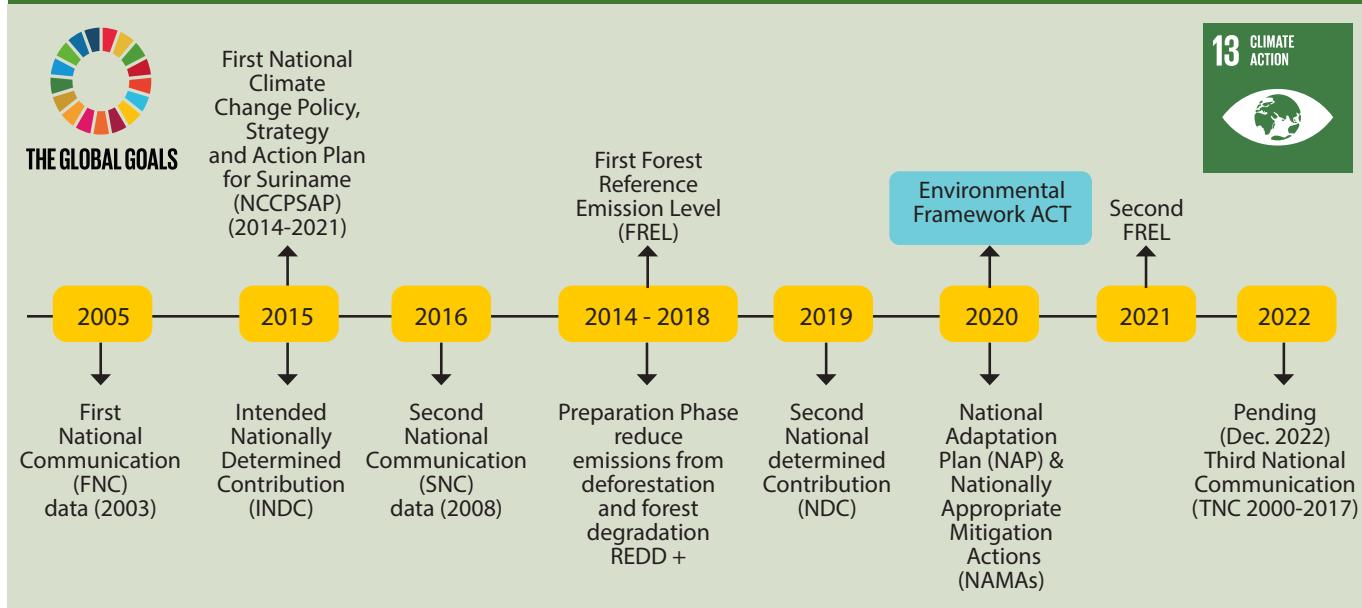
In the absence of disaster risk management legislation, NCCR in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), prepared Suriname's National Disaster Reduction Risk strategy, which is in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.

Over the past years, early flood warning systems were installed at different locations and NCCR closely works with the response teams, other national institutes, and the communities before, during and after a disaster. An inventory will be carried out to assess what further investments need to take place with regard to early warning.

NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE POLICIES AND GHG EMISSIONS

Suriname ratified both the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol, and it has deposited its instrument for ratification of the Paris agreement in 2019. All policies related to climate change are coordinated by the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment, which acts as the national focal point to the UNFCCC. The main operational national institute for climate change, which is administratively positioned' under the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment, is the National Institute for Environmental Development in Suriname.

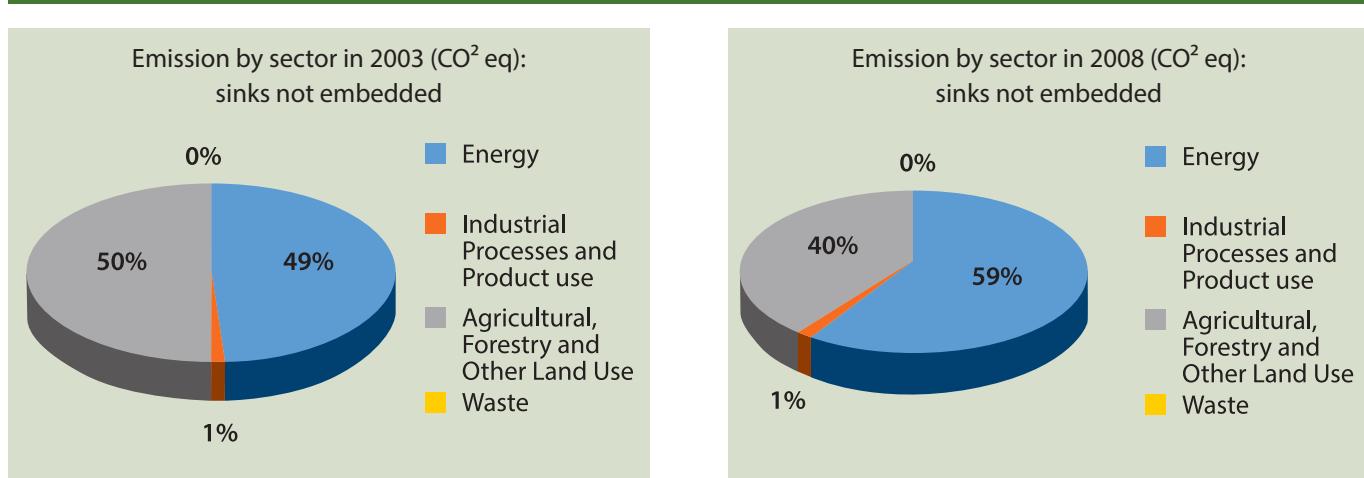
Figure 7.1: Suriname's climate change policy documents and reports



As a result of its commitments, the government submitted its first National Determined Contribution (NDC) in 2015, and in 2019 the second NDC for the period 2020-2030 was submitted. The second NDC outlines a cost-effective pathway to de-carbonization of sustainable economic development, maintaining the integrity of the natural forest acting as a carbon sink, and strengthening resilience to enable adaptation and mitigation action. It also includes (enhanced) contributions from the emitting sectors, as identified in Suriname's most recent greenhouse gas inventory (GHGI), in which it was concluded that the agriculture, forestry and energy sectors are the highest contributors. Other sectors that contribute to the emissions are land use and change, industrial processes, as well as product use and waste. Although no assessment that is based on the UNFCCC has yet been implemented, it is set as a priority by the government to work according to the NDC. In the NDC, which is a monitoring instrument, the involvement of the various ministries and stakeholders is identified through action plans and portfolios, and there is a multi-year plan and fund identification assessment in process.

Furthermore, Suriname's first National Communication¹⁵ was prepared in 2006 and the second one in 2016. The third National Communication will be finalized in December 2022 and will include national circumstances, greenhouse gas inventory, mitigation and vulnerability assessments, and other information relevant to the implementation of the Climate Convention as well as constraints and gaps. It should be noted that in the assessment, the aspect of gender and climate change will be included. As part of the third National Communication process, emphasis will also be laid on support for the further integration and mainstreaming of climate change into Suriname's national development goals, on coordinating efforts among different actors and sectors to address climate change, and on strengthening the institutional and technical capacity of government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Given these developments, it may be stated that Suriname is on track with regard to its reporting obligations and the institutional strengthening of the main responsible institutes to meet the reporting obligations.

Figure 7.2: Emission by sector in 2003 and in 2008 (CO² eq/sinks not embedded)



Source: First National Communication, Government of Suriname 2005
Second National Communication, Government of Suriname 2016

¹⁵ A national communication is a report that each Party to the UNFCCC prepares periodically in accordance with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP)



In 2019, Suriname finalized its National Adaptation Plan 2019-2029 which was designed to effectively address climate-related challenges in the pursuit of sustainable development. The objective of this Plan is to help Suriname conduct comprehensive medium and long-term climate adaptation planning. It is a flexible approach that builds on the country's existing adaptation activities and mainstreams climate change into national decision-making, development planning, policies and programmes. The strategic level priorities are: (i) Institutional arrangements, policies and capacities able to lead and coordinate national and sub-national climate change adaptation; (ii) Data and information collection systems to fully support national and sub-national climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation decision-making; (iii) Integration and institutionalization of climate change adaptation in broader Surinamese economic development policies, plans and programmes; (iv) National technical capacity that is fully trained and skilled at leading and implementing Suriname's climate change adaptation actions; (v) Climate change adaptation that respects Surinamese society and culture and reduces gender and social inequities and; (vi) Identify and access financing and investment opportunities for climate change. The priority sectors are agriculture, livestock and fisheries, sustainable forestry, water resources, mining, energy, infrastructure, housing, tourism, education, health, environment, disaster risk reduction and spatial planning.

The government of Suriname also developed the National Climate Change Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for Suriname (NCCPSAP) for the period 2014-2021. This NCCPSAP emphasizes the importance of developing partnerships to enable technology transfer and promotes alternative financing sources for climate compatible development. As part of the implementation of the NCCPSAP, the Environmental Framework Act was approved by Parliament in 2020 and four supporting State decrees have been drafted for approval.

Data-gathering and analysis were improved, capacity building and institutional strengthening initiatives were conducted and awareness on climate change and its effects was raised. Preparations are underway for a second NCCPSAP for the period 2022-2026.

The government continues its efforts to mainstream climate change adaptation and with the adoption of the National Adaptation Plan and the NDC 2020-2030, Suriname introduced a more systematic approach to addressing both mitigation and adaption that will enable strengthening resilience, maintaining the carbon stock, and reducing emissions while sustainably developing Suriname's economy, and limiting impact and adaptation costs. The Adaptation Plan marks a significant step forward towards enabling resilience building, improving risk management, and adapting to climate impacts.

Suriname is proud to not only be categorized as a high forest cover and low deforestation (HFLD) country, that stores 13.1 Gt CO₂ and accounts for 0.01 percent of global GHG emissions, but also as one of the three carbon negative countries in the world. With its abundant 93 percent forest cover, it absorbs more GHG emissions than the country emits. To maximize the status of an HFLD country, the government of Suriname re-engaged into a national REDD+ (Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) Readiness Preparation process. In the past years, Suriname finalized the REDD+ readiness phase and is preparing for the implementation of REDD+ as a tool for sustainable development, while remaining an HFLD country and actively pursuing national development goals. As a result of the readiness phase, one of the key areas of intervention was the strengthening of national capacities to prepare for its readiness strategies and policies to gain advantage of the forest resources and the design of the implementation framework in the area of forest management and conservation.



This resulted in the development of the National REDD+ Strategy for Suriname and supporting mechanisms for the implementation framework through the Feedback, Grievance and Redress Mechanism (FGRM).

In February 2019, Suriname hosted the first high level global HFLD conference on Climate Finance Mobilization in which about twenty official delegations of HFLD nations and other nations as well as representatives from international and national civil society, the United Nations and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), participated in the capital of Paramaribo. The President of Suriname declared the adoption of the document known as the 'Krutu of Paramaribo Joint Declaration on HFLD Climate Finance Mobilization'. Through this joint declaration, the HFLD developing countries expressed their interest to collectively coordinate positions and undertake joint actions towards increasing the delivery of financial and other support to HFLD developing countries, as well as mobilizing existing resources and technical expertise, including for capacity building, to realize its objectives as set out in the Krutu Declaration.

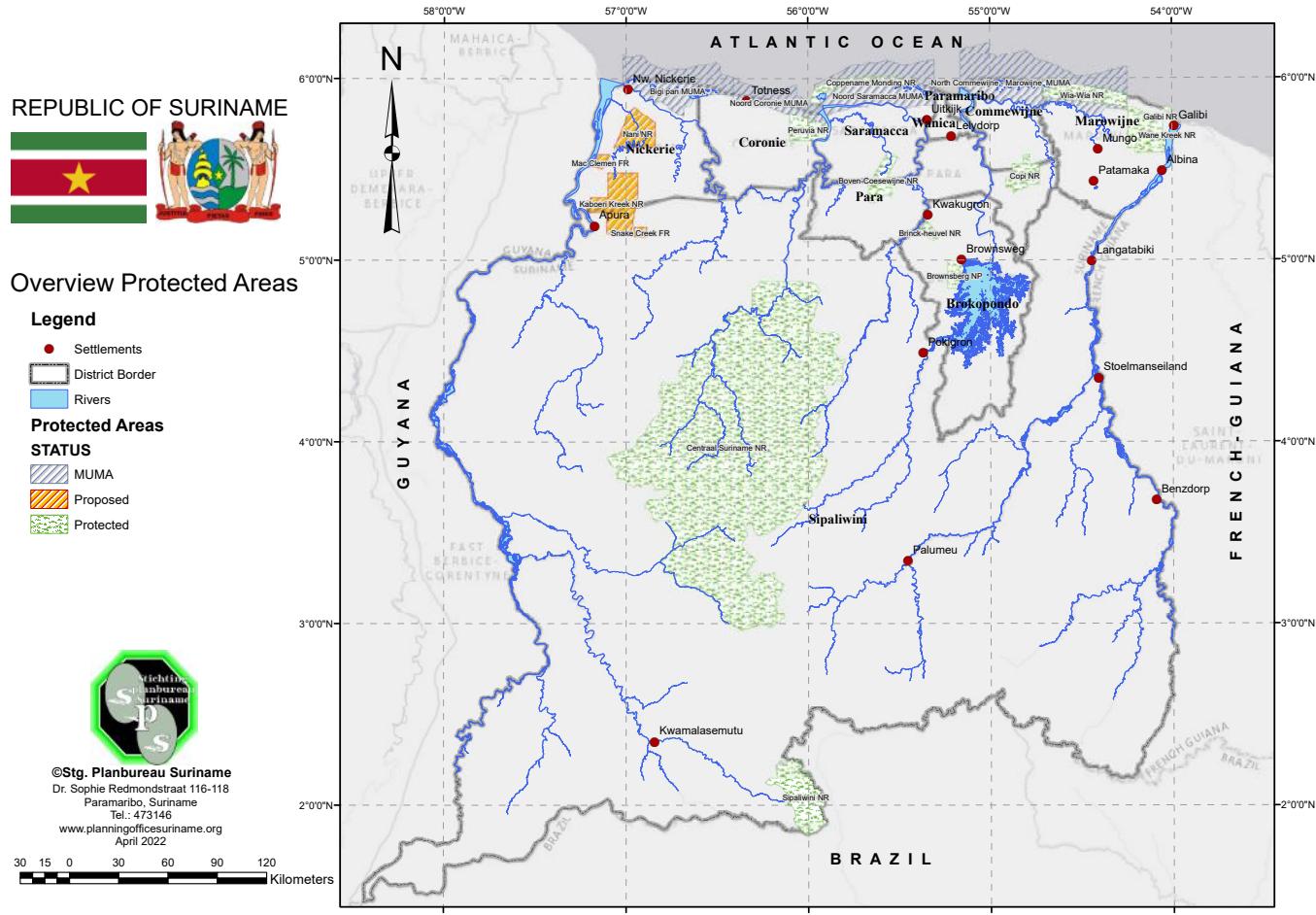
To promote environmentally responsible practices in the mining sector, in particular Artisanal and Small-Scale Goldmining (ASGM), a Mercury Initial Assessment was executed and prepared for the ratification and subsequent implementation of the Minamata convention¹⁶. The draft National Action Plan on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold-mining (ASGM) has been developed and provides a long-term strategy and policy, whilst supporting medium-term policy enhancements and building capacity for improving monitoring and enforcement of the regulations in ASGM.

Since the agriculture sector is one of the highest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, there have been several initiatives to work towards climate responsive agriculture. Hence, Suriname is participating in a regional project on 'Strengthening the foundation for a climate responsive agricultural sector in the Caribbean'. This readiness project will provide data to enable conditions to design, implement and evaluate options for enhanced climate action in the agricultural sector by strengthening policies, and for the collection, monitoring and analysis of agricultural and associated activity data from the sector. Suriname is also working on strengthening the planning and decision-making capacity among key stakeholders in the agriculture sector, as well as enhancing the functional inter-sectoral mechanisms and planning processes at a national level to support coordinated policy decision-making.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, the coastal plain of Suriname houses a complex mangrove ecosystem, which is an important breeding, feeding and nursery ground for marine and brackish water fish, marine invertebrates, sea turtles and enormous numbers of migratory birds and waterfowls. In 2019, the National Mangrove Strategy was developed and the National Mangrove Biodiversity Monitoring System was established along the coast of Suriname. The National Mangrove Forest cover map, as part of the National Forest Inventory, was produced.

Three Management Plans of Coastal Multiple Use Management (MUMA) were updated, and to promote alternative low-emission and climate-resilient technologies, three Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) for specific sectors, were completed.

¹⁶ The Minamata Convention on Mercury is a multilateral environmental agreement that addresses specific human activities which are contributing to widespread mercury pollution

Figure 7.3: Map of Protected Areas of Suriname



The absorption capacity of these institutions was also increased in project management and execution as well as monitoring and evaluation.

As part of the capacity development and institutional strengthening, mechanisms within national institutions such as the National Land Monitoring System in Suriname (Gonini Portal - www.gonini.org) and the Sustainable Forestry Information System Suriname (SFISI - www.sfisi.sbb.sr) to support Near Real Time Monitoring (NRTM) have been established, to monitor deforestation and forest degradation in Suriname. The collection of climate and weather data was also optimized and necessary equipment has been installed, whereby relevant institutions were trained in the proper utilization of this equipment. Government agencies and the private sector were also trained in estimating GHG emissions by using the IPCC software programme. Additional training will be provided for mitigation assessment and the adaptation part, especially with regard to technical capacity for the greenhouse gas inventory. The UNFCCC has also enabled national experts and representatives of national institutes to follow online training courses, i.e. training in measuring, verification and reporting, training on emissions, and other.

The establishment of the 'Suriname Climate Information Network' (SMIN), with the objective of producing official national environmental information and translating it to policy advice, is one of the key milestones. As of 2002, the General Bureau of Statistics (GBS) has been issuing the Environment Statistics compendium bi-annually and is committed to continue¹⁷. In 2022, the GBS plans to publish its first Climate Change Statistics report using the UNSD global set of Climate Change Statistics and Indicators, approved in March 2022.

The empowerment of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) for their engagement in the REDD+ preparedness, is one of the key interventions under the REDD+ readiness phase.

The structure of the REDD+ Assistants Collective was established through which the different ITPs have assigned representatives to function as REDD+ Assistants and received skills training and training in the concept of REDD+. This Collective supports the information provision and raising awareness on REDD+.

Simultaneously with the approval of the REDD+ Readiness Programme, the Indigenous communities prepared the initiative 'Planning of Our Future' for the selected interior areas (West Suriname, Donderskamp en Kawemhakan). Under this initiative, participatory 3-dimensional maps of their traditional territory were developed to carry out monitoring activities and develop plans to manage, preserve and protect their land as they have been doing for centuries.

LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

- *ITPs are engaged in the REDD+ preparedness and therefore the REDD+ Assistants Collective was established.*
- *ITPs are also working on developing FPIC protocols to guarantee their voice to be heard.*

The ITPs are currently working intensively on the development of protocols regarding Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) to be utilized in the communities in the interior areas of Suriname. This will enable them to guarantee that their voices are heard in all measures taken with regard to climate change adaptation measures and resilience building.

17 <https://statistics-suriname.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Final-9th-environment-pub-2020.pdf>





With regard to education and awareness on climate change, the National Institute for Environmental Development in Suriname is actively engaged with different stakeholders, including schools, on climate change awareness activities both through awareness sessions and training, and the distribution of materials such as information brochures, posters, and booklets. This Institute is also leading the communication and advocacy activities to the general public on REDD+ and increasing awareness of climate change, through a wide range of public outreach and awareness raising activities such as general REDD+ information sessions and REDD+ community awareness sessions for ITPs (e.g. through video and audio productions and newsletters).

In one of the rural districts¹⁸, the Mangrove Educational Centre was upgraded while the curriculum was endorsed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

The national execution of the Suriname Climate Promise 2021 communications strategy for Suriname's NDC 2020-2030 aims for a whole-of-government approach, building broad-based awareness regarding climate actions, raising the profile of Suriname's climate contributions internationally and supporting private sector and civil society interventions to educate and mobilize the Surinamese society on climate change.

In the preparation of the third National Communication, an inventory was made of the education and awareness materials targeting ITPs and youth that have been developed over time. With the results of this inventory, an evaluation will take place on which materials are still of use and which should be updated.

GREEN CLIMATE FUND

National Designated Authorities (NDAs) are government institutions that serve as the interface between each country and the Green Climate Fund. The National Delegated Authority (NDA) for Suriname is with the Ministry of Spatial Planning and Environment. It is of utmost importance that the NDA is in the position to fulfill its tasks. Suriname has little experience with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and since 2019, the government has taken some initiatives to build the technical capacity of key government stakeholders and civil society organizations to enable access to climate finance resources, and enhance the implementation of climate change actions as articulated in its policy frameworks that have been developed.

For the agricultural sector, the government has submitted proposals to improve the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries and key partners to acquire skills and expertise in data assimilation and analysis for climate change in the agricultural sector and contribute to building the enabling environment to support the programming and implementation of GCF-funded activities. The aim is to build the capacity and provide the baseline data to allow Suriname to submit a project proposal to the GCF. Suriname also participates in the regional readiness project targeting nine countries in the CARICOM sub-region, through which the awareness of the agricultural sector's potential contribution to climate solutions is raised, and promising practices and technologies to enhance resilience and quantifying its contribution to GHG reductions, are identified.



Aside from the government stakeholders, there is an eminent role for civil society organisations (CSOs) in climate change actions, because they are well positioned to lead a bottom-up approach to reduce vulnerability and build the resilience of high-risk communities and their livelihoods. Enhancing CSOs' capacity to access climate finance and deliver climate change projects nationally and regionally is critical. Activities are undertaken to improve CSO's (organizational) capacity, knowledge and skills to access climate financing and deliver climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Another important regional intervention in which Suriname participates is investing in Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS). Support has been requested to improve both regional and national level mechanisms and to enhance capacity to achieve climate resilience through advancing MHEWS. These systems enable individuals, communities, governments, businesses and other actors to take timely action to reduce disaster risks in advance of hazardous events and build resilience by helping national authorities and communities to prepare for the impact, and if needed, to evacuate vulnerable areas to prevent loss of property and life.

7.3 CHALLENGES AND EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCELERATE ACHIEVING SDG 13

CHALLENGES

Although Suriname has maintained a forest cover of approximately 93 percent, of which about 14 percent concerns protected areas, the increased pressure on Suriname's forests is persistent, primarily due to economic activities from the artisanal small-scale gold mining and forest degradation related to logging activities. There is no national integrated data system either with agricultural or meteorological data to inform decision-making on climate change in the agricultural sector.

There is a need to assess what data is being collected by whom and what additional data is needed to inform national planning and responses to climate change. Simultaneously, there is still a need to further build capacity of government and non-government stakeholders in data management, and the ability to conduct assessments to advise policy and design proposals for climate investment. Overall, the limited institutional and human capacity as well as lack of reliable and current data, outdated laws and regulations, unfamiliarity with environmentally friendly technologies, and the capacity to mobilize funds effectively are challenges that continue to hamper the optimal implementation of environmental policy. Given the impact that climate change has on the livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples, the engagement and participation of ITPs in policy design and implementation is of utmost importance. The government has been actively engaging with the ITPs in this regard and continued efforts are needed to guarantee full involvement and participation and a rights-based approach.

OPPORTUNITIES

For the way forward, the government has identified some strategic actions:

1. Converting the NDCs into concrete policy programmes. These programmes will utilize the technical assistance and relief funds for mitigating the effects of climate change.
2. Setting up a monitoring station off the coast of Suriname using Early Flood Warning Systems to measure and monitor sea level rise.
3. Develop a climate change knowledge database containing spatial, environmental and climate information with regard to mitigation and forecasts. All relevant stakeholders will be trained in using this knowledge information database.
4. Submitting the third National Communication in December 2022, emphasizing the urgent aspects related to climate change and its effects on the livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.



5. Updating the National Climate Change Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for Suriname (NCCPSAP).
6. Preparing and adopting legislation for mangrove and parwa forests, to safeguard natural protection and maintain the natural coastal strip and estuarine zones, as protection against the influences of climate change.
7. Revision of the Nature Conservation law; implementation of the Plan law and Urban law; and adoption of the Coastal Protection law and the Disaster Risk Management law that have been drafted for approval. Also, a Spatial Planning law will be drafted.
8. Introducing 'carbon tax' for the greenhouse gas emissions by multinationals working in the extractive non-renewable sectors.
9. Approving the draft National Action Plan on Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold-mining.
10. Developing a National Roadmap for a Sustainable Financial System to reorient the flow of international and national resources towards more inclusive and gender responsive sustainable actions in Suriname. The programme will promote dialogues, alliances and networks with the government, development banks, the financial sector as well as investors to facilitate informed policy and decision-making in the country, and in the implementation of sustainable forest management and other nature-based solutions.
11. With regard to water resources, a Sector Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (SASAP) will be drafted with the aim to place gender equality and social inclusion at the centre of actions. This is in line with Suriname's commitments to gender-responsive climate action as recommended by the Paris Agreement and the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan.

7.4 STATISTICAL OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS BY SELECTED INDICATORS

SDG target 13.1: Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	2015	2016	2017	2018	2018	2020
13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	139.6	6.6	18.7	3.7	3.7	NA
13.1.2 Number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030						2022 status: The Suriname national disaster risk reduction strategy - which is in line with the Sendai Framework - was finalized and is awaiting approval by the Parliament.
13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies						2022 status: The office of the district commissioners are implementing the local disaster risk reduction strategies in all ten districts, which are in line with the national disaster risk reduction strategy.

Source: NCCR & General Bureau of Statistics, 2020

NA: Not available or applicable

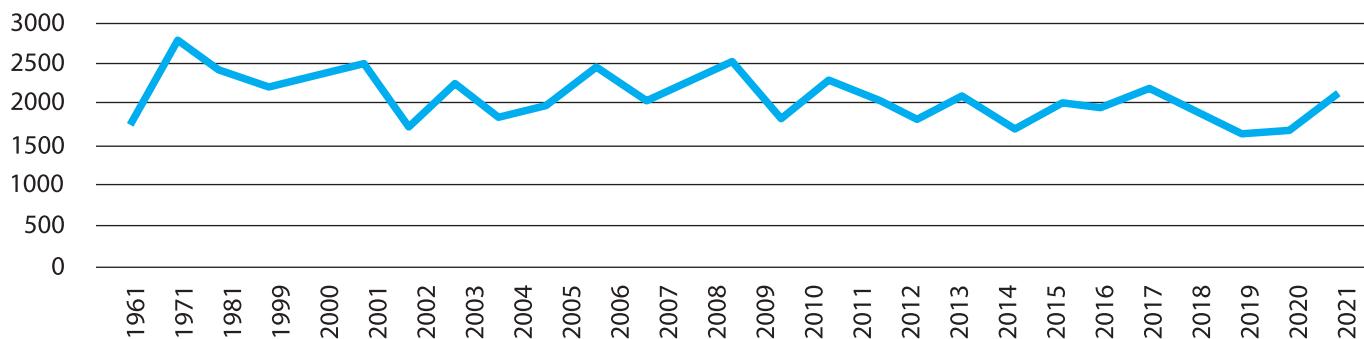
Figure SDG 13A: Average Annual Temperature (°C) in Suriname



Source: Meteorological Service Suriname (2001-2021)

Source: World Bank Knowledge Centre (1960-2000)

Suriname has a semi-humid climate. The average daily temperature can vary from 26°C in January to 31°C in October, where the mean annual temperature has increased by 0.2°C since 1960, at an average rate of 0.05°C per decade. This rate of warming is less rapid than the global average. The observed rate of increase is most rapid in May - July at about 0.1°C per decade.

Figure SDG 13B: Average Precipitation (mm)

Source: Meteorological Service Suriname (1999-2021)

Source: World Bank Knowledge Centre:

<https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/suriname/climate-data-historical>

The passage of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) typically results in a short-wet season from December to February and a long-wet season from May to mid-August. Another key climatic influence relates to Suriname's surface conditions, characterized by rivers and swamps and vegetation cover that produce a large amount of water vapour. This, combined with convection and orographic lifting, contributes to the country's relatively abundant precipitation.

Figure SDG 13C: Average Historical Sea Level Anomaly for coastal Suriname

Source: World Bank Knowledge Centre: <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/suriname/climate-data-historical>

Sea level rise (SLR) presents a significant threat to Suriname given its extensive low-lying coastal zone and the concentration of socio-economic activities within this area. In a comparative analysis of the impacts of SLR on land, population, GDP, urban and agricultural extent, and wetlands in 84 developing countries, Suriname was ranked highest in Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of population and GDP impact, and was second only to Guyana and the Bahamas in terms of urban and agricultural extent (World Bank, 2007). At the global level, Suriname ranks among the top most affected countries overall. Almost 30 percent of the country is within a few meters above sea level, making it susceptible to coastal flooding. By estimates, a one-meter rise would impact over 6.4 percent of gross domestic product, 7 percent of the population, and 5.6 percent of agricultural land. The impact to agriculture is of particular concern as the sector is critical to Suriname's economy (Inter-American Development Bank, 2021).



8

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



**PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 17:**

STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

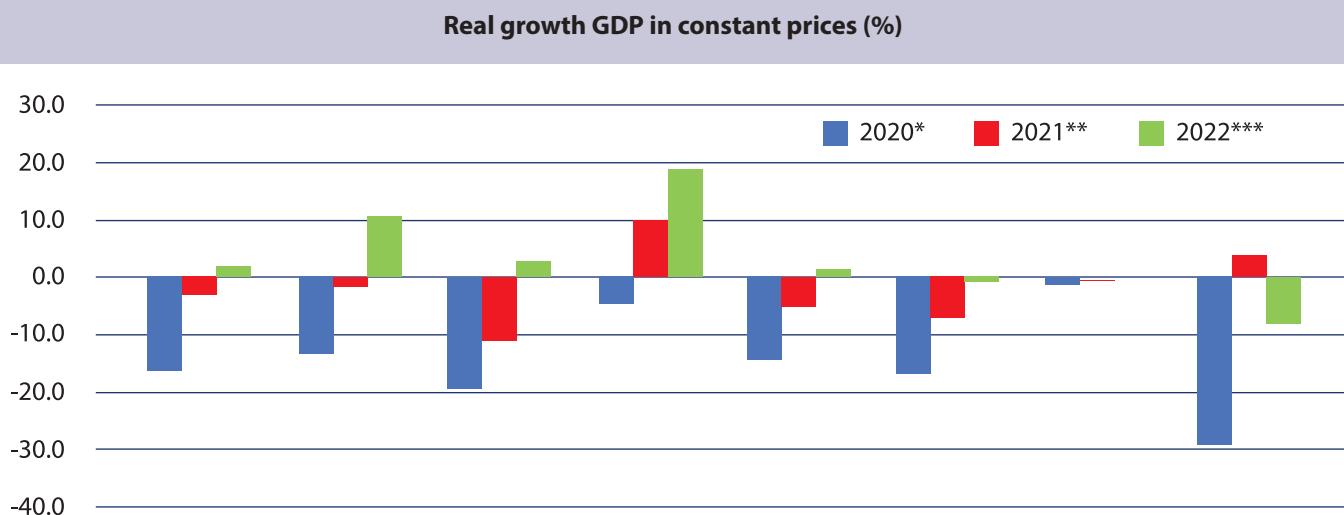
Achieving the 17 ambitious SDGs requires strengthening the means of implementation, and partnership between the government, the private sector and civil society is instrumental. Bearing in mind the principles which will be embedded in Suriname's 2050 Vision towards a just society, rule of law, good governance and national and international partnership, the SDG framework is pivotal in defining and achieving this long-term vision. Recalling the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and the Decade of Action, we must mobilize all resources available to translate our commitments into actions. Hence, building and revitalizing partnerships is inevitable to fast track actions on the SDGs.

DOMESTIC FINANCE

Suriname is classified as a high-middle-income country by international financial institutions despite the country's vulnerabilities; therefore Suriname has limited access to concessional financing and other global financial arrangements. The call from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) for a multi-dimensional vulnerability index needs to be taken into serious consideration.

As of 2015, Suriname faced economic and financial downturns including negative economic growth, high inflation and a high debt burden, which resulted in a weakened financial-economic situation and social security system. The external debts amount to about 139 percent of the current GDP. The domestic loans are about 80 percent of the GDP.¹⁹ The Gross Domestic Product (GDP at market prices) was approximately USD 4.1 billion for 2020 and for 2021 this declined to USD 3.4 billion²⁰.

Figure 8.1: Real GDP growth in constant prices



Year	GDP growth (mp)	A. Mining sector	Gold	Oil	B. Non-mining sector	Production sector	Services sector	C. Government
2020*	-16.4	-13.5	-19.64	-4.69	14.61	-17.06	-1.36	-29.24
2021**	-3.3	-1.7	-10.98	9.62	-5.00	-7.00	-0.43	3.77
2022***	1.9	10.7	2.68	18.60	1.18	-0.46	0.18	-8.19

Source: National Planning Office Suriname, April 2022
 *) preliminary figures **) Estimate ***) Forecast

¹⁹ National Planning Office Suriname, April 2022

²⁰ National Planning Office Suriname, April 2022



DEBT MANAGEMENT

To tackle the weakened economic and financial situation, critical steps have been taken, including the (i) the adoption of the Recovery Plan 2020-2022, (ii) support from the IMF through a USD 688 Million Extended Fund Facility, and (iii) the adoption of the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026.

The main objective of the Recovery Plan is to counter the financial and economic crisis and to improve the management of public finances. At its core, this Plan contains measures that should reduce spending and increase revenues to bring the debt burden to a manageable level. The government has made tremendous efforts to reach adjusted debt agreements with the various creditors.

These adjustments are a combination of cuts on the nominal debt value, lower interest rates, longer maturities, and grace periods. The IMF assists the government to manage its debt, and to ensure monetary stability by backing up the monetary reserves with financial funding. The Development Plan has a more medium-term time horizon and sets out the strategy for sustainable growth of the Surinamese economy.

In concrete terms, the government has worked on crisis and recovery measures, and is now in the stage of implementing economic growth measures to support production, export and full productive employment, which ultimately will result in improved social-economic living conditions of the people of Suriname, in particular those who are vulnerable and living in the remote areas.

TAX REVENUES

Increasing government revenues is pivotal to reduce the current government's budget deficit. In this regard, improving the domestic capacity for taxes and other revenue collection is critical. Hence, modernization of the Tax and Customs Administration is a high priority and investing in human resources within the administration as well as digital transformation are at the core of the interventions. The new tax system will transform the paper-based tax administration into a modern tax system with online portals for citizens, businessmen, and employers. Subsequently, the Tax Administration has been reinforced with tax lawyers and accountants. Necessary steps have been taken towards the transformation of the Tax Administration into a semi-autonomous authority as well as the introduction of the Value Added Tax (VAT) by July 2022.

Alongside the introduction of the VAT, tax incentives to stimulate the production sector, will also be considered when adapting the system of taxation and revenue collection. Also planned for 2022 is the review of legislation and the strengthening of tax enforcement as well as the establishment of the Large Tax Unit in collaboration with the Netherlands.

OIL AND GAS SECTORS

As mentioned in chapter 6, Suriname experienced a major breakthrough in 2020 and 2021 with the offshore oil and gas discoveries. These emerging industries are -given the current financial-economic situation- a huge opportunity for Suriname to increase its income and to provide employment. The offshore industry is relatively new for Suriname and creating the enabling environment is crucial to ensure that matters are handled systematically and accurately, and to properly track the development of local content.

VERTROUWEN
IN EIGEN KUNNEN

K15



The government has already initiated alliances with international companies and countries to support the development of its local content policy. In this regard, several studies are conducted by Suriname's National Energy, Oil and Gas Company (Staatsolie Maatschappij Suriname N.V.), and working groups have been installed by the government to guide the preparation of policy framework, legislation and institutional and capacity development with respect to local content.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENTS

Given the need for economic diversification and Suriname's history on dependency on extractive industries, the government acknowledges that developing and modernizing other economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism and services delivery, is inevitable to expand diverse production, trade and export and to be resilient to external shocks.

To facilitate foreign direct investment and increase trade and export, the government established the Suriname Investment Trade Export Agency (SITA) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, in November 2021. In this regard, a five-year programme with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is currently being implemented. To support policy, the government is in the process of revisiting the Investment law and the preparation of legislation to establish a Co-Investment Fund and a Transfer Pricing Regulation law.

DIASPORA AND REMITTANCES

The government considers the diaspora community as a key catalyst for improving national and community development in terms of investments, technical assistance, knowledge sharing, and remittances. Suriname has a small population but has a relatively large diaspora community living abroad.

About 300,000 persons, which is about 50 percent of the country's current population live in the Netherlands, and about 10,000 persons live in United States of America and the Dutch Caribbean Islands. Over the years, the diaspora community has contributed significantly to the national economy through remittances. The national data shows that almost 69 percent of the total inflow of remittances comes from the Netherlands, where the majority of the Surinamese diaspora lives, and almost 10 percent from the United States of America.

Diaspora diplomacy is an important aspect of the government's policy strategies. Hence, a Presidential Commission on Diaspora Capital was installed in October 2020 and in January 2021, the Commission presented a report on Diaspora Capital to the President, with recommendations on the conditions to attract capital. Currently, a diaspora engagement policy, to increase the Diaspora's commitment and engagement is being prepared with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

It is evident that no single country can face the global challenges alone and that increasing partnerships becomes more and more inevitable. Over the years, Suriname has built and intensified various strategic partnerships at bilateral, regional and multilateral level to stimulate development, complement domestic resources and make progress towards the SDGs. Technical assistance, small grants and credit lines have been provided by development partners for various sectors including natural resources, agriculture, environment, health, education, community development, poverty alleviation, and infrastructure.

The cooperation with neighboring and adjacent countries and the strategic partnerships with countries in the Caribbean, the Americas, Europe, and within South-South cooperation are promising.



Furthermore International Organizations, including the United Nations, CARICOM, European Union and the Bretton Woods Institutions are and remain instrumental for Suriname.

The United Nations agencies on the ground have been providing tailor-made assistance to Suriname with the aim to advance the achievement of the SDGs.

For this Review, valuable data has been collected from surveys and reports such as the Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2018) and the Suriname Survey of Living Conditions (SSLC 2017), the latter was supported by the Inter-American Development Bank.

Noteworthy, Suriname has been granted funding from the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund (Joint SDG Fund), which was launched in 2014 by the United Nations to support sustainable development activities through integrated and multidimensional joint programs, and was applauded for designing multiple impactful and investment-ready projects, namely:

1. Roadmap for a Sustainable Financial System for Suriname;
2. The Accelerator for Agriculture and Agroindustry Development and Innovation Plus: Sustainable Pineapple Value Chain Development; and
3. Leaving No One Behind, Building Resilience, and Improving Livelihoods of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) in Suriname.

These projects have been carefully designed to support development in different sectors and geographical areas as well as targeting different subpopulations, to create conditions for sustainable development.

TRADE

Trade is a key driving factor for economic growth and development. To facilitate trade, a country needs clear trade rules and fair and non-discriminatory trade agreements.

Regional integration and physical integration processes, such as good connections through roads and bridges, positively affect and facilitate trade routes. Noteworthy, the integration with other South American countries has the potential to provide access to consumer markets with a value of USD 3 billion. In light of the emerging off-shore industry, Suriname initiated a Strategic Dialogue and Cooperation Platform (SDCP) with its neighboring country Guyana in November 2020 to ensure that the earnings from this sector are fully benefitting both countries by building a bridge.

Suriname is also engaged in various major external trade negotiations on a multilateral level as well as on a regional level, such as the multilateral Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the negotiations with the CARICOM, CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), Trade Preferential System-Organization of Islamic Cooperation (TPS-OIC), and the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC).

The CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (CARIFORUM-EU-EPA) manages the trade exports to and from Europe and accounts for almost 120 million Euro's on import duties in the pocket of the government. Suriname has signed this Agreement and preparations for ratification are being made. It should be noted that Suriname already uses the duty and quota free market access conditions of the CARIFORUM-EU-EPA.

As a result of meeting the requirements resulting from the Trade Facilitation Agreement, the government installed a Trade Facilitation Committee, responsible for the implementation of the provisions of the Agreement. In this regard, the Suriname Electronic Single Window (SESW) is in preparation for efficient and effective handling of the digitization of the procedures for import, export, and transit.



In the context of further promoting production as well as exports, measures are taken to establish a Market Access Unit. This Unit will be charged with providing the specific technical information necessary to participate in trade in goods and services in a globalizing world.

INVESTMENT IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Funding research in Science and Technology and Innovation can contribute towards economic growth and social advancement. As soon as the new Government came into office, the Ministry of Economic Affairs added *Innovation* to its mandate. The ministry is focusing on renewable energy processes to enhance efficiency and innovation.

With assistance of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), a digital readiness assessment was performed to assess the status of digitalization in Suriname. Suriname has made good progress in systematically shaping and driving digital transformation.

To improve innovation in the agriculture sector, Suriname started with the execution of the Suriname Agriculture Market Access Project (SAMAP) with support from the European Union (EU) and Food Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2019.

Under this Project, the Matching Grant Facility (MGF) was established that provides one-time investment support to eligible farmers/applicants with strong projects in the form of agricultural and food processing equipment and selected agricultural services to improve the quantity and quality of production and accession to local and improve export markets.

Digitalization efforts across the public sector are also heading in a promising direction. The government has a strong ambition to position digital transition at the core of national development. There is across the board support for digital transformation, including at the senior political level, and cross-government ownership in defining a technical vision -the ICT Vision 2030- for digital transformation that aligns with Suriname's broader development priorities. Key and priority actions for the government will be determined.

CAPACITY BUILDING

With regard to human capacity development in the public as well as the private sector, Suriname recognizes the importance of the various longstanding technical assistance programmes that are provided through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Over the years, Suriname's government institutions have been strengthened through these cooperation frameworks and agreements. Institutional and human capacity development is a dynamic process and remains critical as an enabling environment for achieving the SDGs.



9

THE WAY FORWARD ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGs IN SURINAME

This VNR report highlighted major improvements and significant efforts to achieving the SDGs under review. However, the VNR process also brought to light various challenges related to (i) the institutional and human capacity to effectively coordinate and implement the SDGs across all sectors towards balanced economic, social and environmental sustainability; (ii) the full understanding and advocacy of the concept and the interconnectedness of the SDGs overall and within the national context; (iii) the effective implementation of a whole-of-society approach which includes the local communities in the remote rural and interior areas; (iv) the availability of updated and disaggregated data; and (v) adequate financing to achieve the SDGs.

While implementing the economic Recovery Plan 2020-2022 and translating the Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026 into the ministries' policy frameworks and the district plans, harmonizing these policies to close the gaps in the multiple dimensions of sustainability, is a great challenge. The government is aware that a comprehensive, coherent, and well-equipped governance framework is a pre-condition to effectively coordinate, implement, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of the national policies and of 2030 Agenda. Over the years, emphasis has been laid on strengthening the capacities within the line-ministries and key government institutions, however, additional efforts will be needed to improve both institutional and human resources capacities, in particular in the districts.

The SDG National Committee is a crucial mechanism for the government to oversee efforts towards SDG coherence and to give direction to harmonize sector strategies, policies and programmes with the SDGs in a continuous fashion. Furthermore, the institutionalization of the SDG Public-Private Platform is deemed a forum for an integrated approach between the government, private sector, and civil society, to accelerate actions towards the achievement of the SDGs. This Platform will have to continue public awareness and sensitization, including building citizens' knowledge on the SDGs. In this regard, Suriname's unique SDG Youth Ambassadors programme, which facilitates the inclusion of youth in raising awareness around the SDGs and contributes to the implementation process, should be utilized to the maximum. Thus, the whole-of-society approach needs to be effectively implemented by all actors.

Parallel to accelerating and taking action on the achievement of the Goals, the private sector's and civil society's support in evaluating and reshaping the government's policy strategies is critical. Adhering to the social agreement with the private sector and the labour unions is vital to ensure that these entities take the position of a sustainable and reliable employer, promote environmentally smart and responsible technologies, work according to international standards and high ethical values, embed the relevant SDGs into performance indicators, and consider the SDGs as a framework for the policy on corporate social responsibility.

The contribution of civil society organizations is pivotal in community development due to their experience in the field of work and being the voices of the communities. Over the years, development work in the interior areas has been at the forefront for the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ITPs) organizations.





Therefore, the government will continue its collaboration with these organizations for achieving progress in the development of ITPs in line with their vision of development.

Hence, the SDG Public-Private Platform should maximize its standing as an effective forum for in-depth discussions and as a mechanism to propose strategies, endorsed by all stakeholders involved.

The review of the selected SDGs highlighted data gaps; enhancing the existing national data and statistical capacity and systems is of eminent importance to measure progress on the SDGs.

Several capacity development programmes have been implemented in the past years with support from bilateral and multilateral development partners, including the United Nations system on the ground, to increase the government's institutional and human capacity, however, within the context of local, national and global dynamics, capacity strengthening is a continuous process. Intensified cooperation with national research institutes as well as regional and international partners is crucial.



In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and given the current global dynamics and uncertainties, there is a strong need for a transformative recovery towards inclusive and equal prosperity, protection and security for all, including those living in the remote rural and interior areas, thus leaving no one behind. Suriname's unique vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change while contributing significantly to mitigate these effects as a HFLD country, remains a matter of major concern and hinders the further progress of the SDG implementation.

Encouraging and attracting adequate investments, affordable funding and technical assistance to fast track actions towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda will be the highest priority of the government by building and revitalizing strategic partnerships and alliances at bilateral, regional and multilateral level and in particular, utilizing the opportunities provided by South-South cooperation.

The government of Suriname reaffirms its commitment and will maximize its endeavours with the support of local, national and international development partners to achieving the SDGs for the benefit and prosperity of the people of Suriname.



LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 3.1: Suriname's Multi-annual Development Plan 2022-2026 policy areas in relation to the SDGs
- Figure 4.1: Map with geographical distribution of the population of Suriname
- Figure 4.2: Mid-year population by age group and gender
- Figure 4.3: Population distribution by district
- Figure 4.4: Population distribution by ethnicity
- Figure 4.5: Overview of educational attainment level of the population
- Figure 6.1: Unemployment by selected population subgroups in urban areas
- Figure 7.1: Suriname's climate change policy documents and reports
- Figure 7.2: Emission by sector in 2003 and 2008 (CO² eq/sinks not embedded)
- Figure 7.3: Map of protected areas in Suriname
- Figure 8.1: Real GDP growth in constant prices

LIST OF TABLES

- Table 4.1: Population, Population Density and Population Growth by area
- Table 4.2: Key social and demographic SDG related indicators
- Table 4.3: Key environment SDG related indicators
- Table 4.4: Labour force (15-64 years old) by activity status and gender
- Table 4.5: Economically active persons by area
- Table 4.6: Education level of the labour force by age group and gender at national level
- Table 6.1: GDP growth by selected sectors
- Table 6.2: Macro-economic indicators
- Table 6.3: Number of unemployed in urban areas
- Table 6.4: Registered applicants for the COVID-19 financial support programme
- Table 6.5: Overview of the labour laws by year of enactment
- Table 6.6: Overview of labour laws that are pending approval
- Table 7.1: Population affected by a disaster due to extreme weather per 100,000 populations



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASGM	Artisanal and Small-Scale Gold-mining
ASRHR	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
BEIP	Basic Education Improvement Programme
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
ETVET	Enhancement of the Technical & Vocational Education and Training
EU	European Union
FIBOS	Federation of Special Education Institutions Suriname
FREL	Forest Reference Emission Level
FGRM	Feedback, Grievance and Redress Mechanism
GBS	General Bureau of Statistics
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHGI	Greenhouse Gas Inventory
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HFLD	High-Forest/Low-Deforestation
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ITPs	Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
LOBO	National Teacher Training Institute for Vocational and Technical Education
LSAR	Land Search and Rescue
NAMAs	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
MICS	Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NC	National Communication
NCCPSAP	National Climate Change Policy, Strategy and Action Plan for Suriname
NCCR	National Coordination Centre for Disaster Management
NDA	National Delegated Authority
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NRTM	Near Real Time Monitoring
PES	Public Employment Service Unit
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
REDD+	Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SAO	Foundation for Labour Mobilization and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals



SFISS	Sustainable Forestry Information System Suriname
SHTTC	Suriname Hospitality & Tourism Training Centre
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SMIN	Suriname Climate Milieu Information Network
SNTA	Suriname National Training Authority
SPWE	Foundation Productive Work Units
SRD	Surinamese Dollars
SSLC	Suriname Survey of Living Conditions
TVET	Technical & Vocational Education and Training
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollars
VAT	Value Added Tax
VNR	Voluntary National Review
VSB	Suriname Business Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene



SURINAME
First Voluntary National Review

High-level Political Forum on
Sustainable Development
July 2022



GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SURINAME