

**BUILDING BACK
BETTER FROM THE
CORONAVIRUS
DISEASE (COVID-19)
WHILE ADVANCING
THE FULL
IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE 2030 AGENDA FOR
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

*A SPOTLIGHT REPORT ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY THE
REPUBLIC OF SURINAME*

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Executive Summary

Suriname has opted to be listed as one of the 45 countries to carry out a VNR of its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in light of the 10th session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2022. This will be the first VNR of Suriname since the adoption and coming into force of the SDGs.

Pursuant to Article 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname the government must develop a Multi-Annual Development Plan (hereinafter MADP), covering a period of five years. MADPs need to be presented to Parliament, the National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname (hereinafter DNA), for adoption. Therefore, MADPs have both the legislative and policy nature. After adoption, each MADP forms the foundation for policy and legislative actions during the five-year-term of that respective MADP. This report will reflect on the MADPs covering 2022-2026 and 2017-2021, both of which support and incorporate the UN SDGs.

The SDGs that this spotlight reports on are SDG 4, 5, and 17. By linking the respective goals and targets to Treaty law applicable to Suriname, the spotlight report also provides a good understanding of how the goals and targets reported on relate to Suriname's obligations under Treaty law.

The assessment of the implementation of SDG 4 on quality education reveals that little progress can be reported towards the elimination of gender disparities and the creation of a gender sensitive, safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all, including LGBTQI persons. SOGIE is non existing in the educational policy and legal frameworks.

The assessment of the implementation of SDG 5 on gender equality reveals that overall progress is slow and minimal in guaranteeing access to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education. Furthermore, the little progress made is fragile because it has been fragmented across different sectors, it is not synchronized, especially within the public sector, and poor or not embedded in the applicable legal and policy frameworks. Therefore, universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, is still severely lacking for LGBTQI individuals.

The assessment of the implementation of SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals reveals that the government continues to resist to recognize SOGIE in the context of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as in the context of gender. This circumstance hampers the government to formulate national comprehensive policies on sexual and reproductive health and rights and on gender. The absence of such instrumental policies hinders the effective engagement by Suriname in strategic partnerships at regional and international level, with the aim to successfully implement the SDGs for all. Not recognizing SOGIE also prevents the government to support the active and consistent participation of CSOs in the field of SOGIE in the Civil Society Participation Mechanism of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development and other regional and international platforms.

The assessment of the space sexual and reproductive health and rights CSOs, including SOGIE-oriented CSOs, have in contributing to the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs in Suriname, reveals a strategy where CSOs have been involved by subsequent governments only to create a favorable optic, as being inclusive. There is little evidence of a sincere intention to involve CSOs to substantially contribute to the development of comprehensive and inclusive policy and legal frameworks.

Introduction

1. Referencing the UNⁱ, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted in September 2015ⁱⁱ. Subsequently the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development came into force on 1 January 2016. UN-Member States committed themselves to carry out Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) to report on their progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. Suriname has optedⁱⁱⁱ to be listed as one of the 45 countries to carry out a VNR of its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development^{iv}, in light of the 10th session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2022. This will be the first VNR of Suriname, since the adoption and coming into force of the SDGs.
3. As part of the VNR-process of the Republic of Suriname, this SDG spotlight will report on the progress with a CSO and SOGIE-perspective. Due to this, the spotlight report will address progress made on the implementation of SDG 4, 5 and 17. The relevance of the spotlight report is that it complements the VNR which will report on the SDGs 4, 8, 13 and 17.^v For this initiative assistance was sought and found from the Federatie van Nederlandse Vereniging tot Integratie van Homoseksualiteit (COC-Nederland). COC-Nederland is a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 2008.
4. The theme for the HLPF 2022 will be "*Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*".^{vi} The Sustainable Development Goals under review during the HLPF 2022 are SDG 4 on quality education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 14 on life below water, SDG 15 on life on land, and SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals. The forum will also take into account the different and particular impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic across all Sustainable Development Goals and the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the Goals.^{vii}
5. This spotlight report aims to contribute to the expressed recognition in paragraph 41 of the 2030 Agenda that each country, and thus also Suriname, has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. In doing so, the report will focus on three of the five SDGs under review, namely SDG 4, 5, and 17.
6. The perspective of this report is the central transformative principle *Leave No One Behind*^{viii}, that aims at ensuring that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment.^{ix} This perspective will be applied to the SOGIE context of this report. In doing so, emphasis will be placed on paragraph 26 of the 2030 Agenda, in particular on Suriname's commitment to promote physical and mental health and well-being, and to extend life expectancy for all, universal health coverage and access to quality health care. Furthermore, to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information, and education.

I. SDG-Related Legislative and Policy Frameworks

I.1. Integration of the SDGs in the Multi-Annual Development Plans

7. Pursuant to Article 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname the government must develop a Multi-Annual Development Plan (hereinafter MADP), covering a period of five years. MADPs need to be presented to Parliament, the National Assembly of the Republic of Suriname (hereinafter DNA), for adoption. Therefore, MADPs have both the legislative and policy nature. After adoption, each MADP forms the foundation for policy and legislative actions during the five-year-term of that respective MADP. This report will reflect on the current MADP that covers the period 2022-2026^x and the preceding MADP of 2017-2021^{xi}.

I.1.1. Integration of the SDGs in the MADP 2017-2021

8. August 22, 2017, the MADP 2017-2021 was adopted by the DNA.^{xiii} The MADP 2017-2021 refers on pages 28 and 29 to the UN-Committee recognition of among others the possible serious challenges in implementing the SDGs. Therefore, five critical dimensions has been identified at the heart of the 2030 Agenda, namely: people, prosperity, planet, partnership, and peace. Based on these five critical dimensions, five crucial transformational principles, also referred to as the 5Ps, have been formulated, namely: Leave no one behind; put sustainable development at the core; transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth; build peaceful and effective, open, and accountable institutions that work for all; and forge new international partnerships.
9. The MADP 2017-2021 states on pages 37 and 38 that Suriname supports the UN SDGs. The MADP 2017-2021 refers to its section II.1, to underscore that it is based on the same principles and goals as the UN SDG, which are integrated in the plan. The MADP 2017-2021 also indicates that its development goals and outcomes will, like the UN SDGs, be operationalized by the line ministries and other national institutes, this in partnership with UN and other development partners. To realize the aforementioned, the primary objective of Suriname's development efforts is to ensure that every individual and group contributes to the Surinamese society. To achieve this main objective, the development policy is based on the following four pillars: Strengthening Development Capacity; Economic Growth and Diversification; Social Progress; and Exploitation and Protection of the Environment.
10. Of relevance to this spotlight report is the third pillar on *social progress*. According to MADP 2017-2021, social progress aims at improved welfare and wellbeing.^{xiii} This includes the existence of equal development opportunities for every citizen (good distribution of income, accessible, professionally oriented, and affordable education, good housing guaranteed, good and optimal health care present and available); law enforcement, security and safety are guaranteed; and the reformed social protection system is better able to identify social groups and to assess and reduce their vulnerabilities (poverty reduction, job creation).

I.1.2. Integration of the SDGs in the MADP 2022-2026

11. December 20, 2021, the MADP 2022-2026 was adopted by the DNA.^{xiv} Similar to the MADP 2017-2021, the MADP 2022-2026 is aligned with the SDGs. On page XI, of the executive summary of the MADP 2022-2026 it is stated that in 2050 Suriname will have a just society in which its values are fulfilled: *justice, inclusiveness, freedom equality and sustainability*. Furthermore, that within the system of law and order, everyone can decide for themselves to realize his/her own potential, while taking the sustainability of the environment in consideration. Therefore, within this framework, policy areas have been identified and long and short-term goals have been set. The MADP 2022-2026 continues by stating that the Sustainable Development Goals are integrated with the goals, outcomes, and indicators, and are therefore an essential part of the MADP 2022-2026.
12. On page 13 of the MADP 2022-2026, it is stated that goals, outcomes, and indicators are formulated based on the SDGs for every policy area. However, in selecting SDG outcomes and indicators for inclusion in the MADP 2022-2026 they were assessed on their relevance and feasibility. Policy areas that lack SDG outcomes and indicators, were provided with self-formulated outcomes and indicators. A detailed overview of the development goals, outcomes and indicators for the period 2022-2026 is provided in Annex A of the MADP 2022-2026.

I.2. SDG Linkages with Applicable Treaty Law

13. To get a good understanding of how the goals and targets reported on with this spotlight report relate to Suriname's obligations under Treaty law, the respective goals and targets are linked to Treaty law applicable to Suriname. The linking was done based on the Human Rights Guide to the Sustainable Development Goals Tool of the Danish Institute for Human Rights.^{xv}

I.2.1. SDG 4 Targets 4.5 and 4.a

14. Relevant treaties with respect to indicator 4.5.1 of **target 4.5** of SDG 4 on Quality Education are^{xvi}: Article 26.1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Articles 2.2, 3 and 13.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Articles 2.1, 28.1.d and 28.1.e of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Articles 10.c and 10.h of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Articles 24.1, 24.1.a, 24.2 and 24.2.b of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP), Articles 14.1 and 14.2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), Articles II and XII of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (ADRDM), Articles 1.1 and 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), and Articles 3, 13.1 and 18 of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural rights (Protocol of San Salvador). Relevant treaties with respect to indicator 4.a.1 of **target 4.a** of SDG 4 on Quality Education are^{xvii}: Articles 13.2 and 13.2.e of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Articles 9.1, 16.1, 16.2 and 16.3 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP), Article XII of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (ADRDM), Article 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), and Article 1 of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural rights (Protocol of San Salvador).

I.2.2. SDG 5 Target 5.6

15. Relevant treaties with respect to indicator 5.6.2 of **target 5.6** of SDG 5 on Gender Equality are^{xviii}: Articles 7, 17.1 and 17.2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Articles 3 and 12.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Articles 24.1, 24.2, 24.2.f, 34, 34.a, 34.b and 34.c of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Articles 5, 5.b, 14.2, 14.2.b, 16.1 and 16.1.e of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Articles 23.1, 23.1.b, 25 and 25.a of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP), Articles II and XI of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (ADRDM), Article 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), and Articles 3, 10.1, 10.2, 10.2.a, 10.2.b, 10.2.e, 10.2.f, 15.3 and 15.3.a of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural rights (Protocol of San Salvador).

I.2.3. SDG 17 Targets 17.16 and 17.8

16. Relevant treaties with respect to indicator 17.16.1 of **target 17.16** of SDG 17 on Partnerships for the Goals are^{xix}: Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Articles 2.1 and 11.1 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Relevant treaties with respect to indicators 17.18.1, 17.18.2 and 17.18.3 of **target 17.18** of SDG 17 on Partnerships for the Goals are^{xx}: Articles 2 and 22 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), Article 2.2 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Article 2.2 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), Article 2.1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 3 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Articles 4.1, 31.1, 31.1a, 31.1b, 31.2 and 31.3 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRDP), Article 1.1 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), and Article 3 of the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural rights (Protocol of San Salvador).

II. SDG 4 on quality education

II.1. Overview

17. This section will report from a SOGIE-perspective on the progress Suriname has made towards having readily available disaggregated data for all education indicators of the goal to 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, by 2030. Also, the progress made by schools in providing basic services, by type of service to every child, including those with a disability, that are gender sensitive and within a safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all will be reported on.
18. It should be noted that neither the strategic goal of the education policy area of the MADP 2017-2021, its associated general outcomes, nor the MADP 2021-2026 recognize SOGIE, in any way, as part of the cited diversity of the Surinamese society that requires a revision of the education system. Existing educational sexuality education practices in school-settings are irregular and not structural. Furthermore, there are reports of instances of addressing sexuality in the school-setting based on the hetero normative framework. Following to the findings of Schoenmakers et al.^{xxi} SOGIE-related issues are non-existent in education policies in part due to ethnic/cultural/religious-based-constraints felt by individuals. This is considered a hinderance in providing comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) as part of sexual and reproductive health and rights.
19. Another challenge is that the government is vested with the CSE-policy powers, but it does not have its own CSE experts at its disposal. This circumstance will require a joint policy-making approach. Additionally, the government will also have to negotiate with the CSO field to ensure the consistent availability of sufficient CSE experts for the successful implementation of any kind of CSE policies.
20. In 2016, according to Biharie, a legal scholar,^{xxii} the Surinamese educational institutions still have facilities, regulations, hetero normative thinking, and action patterns that are not gender neutral. LGBTQI-persons are experiencing stigma and discrimination within the formal education system. To illustrate the absence of a gender sensitive, safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all, Biharie refers to transgender related examples provided by respondents.^{xxiii} According to the respondents, transgender people are being banned from education because of their sexual orientation and sexuality. Transgender people are not allowed to teach unless they "behave and dress" according to their appearance. Also, bullying of specifically transgender people is a common phenomenon at educational institutions. The final example is the upholding of stereotypical gender defining dress codes and rules of conduct in educational institutions that have discriminatory effects on transgender people.
21. In 2017, Schoenmakers et al.^{xxiv} found that even though there is attention for the role that the educational system can play in sexuality education and sexual health care in Suriname, schools do not seem sufficiently capable of providing information that is regular and consistent. In theory, however, the school is mentioned as a very suitable institution for providing information. Interviewed teachers revealed that they struggle with the taboo of discussing sexuality or feel uncomfortable with the subject. On the one hand, this is due to their ethnic background, and on the other hand, because of their religious beliefs. Consequently, the knowledge they impart to the students is often biased and incomplete, leaving students with an incomplete and inaccurate picture of what sexuality entails.
22. However, Schoenmakers et al. emphasize that there is no complete lack of expertise in the country. There are various NGOs in Suriname operational in the area of reproductive health care and education and information. The employees of those NGOs do have the expertise and have been trained in transferring this knowledge. The problem, however, is that the NGOs work based on request. That allows them to provide tailor-made educational interventions to the requesting

school. The NGOs are not able to provide all schools with information, reason why a large group of students receive little or no sexual and reproductive health information.

23. Interviewed students explicitly expressed their need for more sexuality education. According to the students the NGOs possess more expertise in sexual and reproductive health education, this makes discussing related topics more comfortable with and for NGOs. Based on this information, it appears that CSOs can and must play an important role in providing sexuality education. Schoenmakers et al., observed that the government pays little attention to sexual and reproductive health education. This negligence at the side of the government contradicts the expressed attention to sexual and reproductive health education on paper, by including it in the development plan 2012-2016. Unfortunately, the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health education has not led to improvements of its provision, leaving the Surinamese youth dependent on the irregular and less structural provision by CSOs.
24. The Surinamese government is instrumental in guaranteeing the provision of sexual and reproductive health education. By using its legislative powers, the government as co-legislator is well positioned to guarantee regularity and consistency in the provision of sexual and reproductive health education. Schoenmakers et al., point out that the provision of good sexuality education in schools, requires the combining of the accessibility, expertise, and power aspects. Therefore, it is very important for Suriname to invest in an effective partnership between the educational system, CSOs, and the government. According to Schoenmakers et al., access to sexuality education can be guaranteed via the educational system. Sexual and reproductive health expertise can be guaranteed by the CSOs. To better enable foundations to provide sexuality education to students in schools, the government can use its co-legislative power and propose legislation with that aim to parliament. Schoenmakers et al., foresee that by joining these forces, Surinamese students will be able to receive regular and consistent information in the future. Therefore, these three strategic parties will have to enter into a dialogue for the purpose of reaching an agreement on their common goal to improve the sexual health of young people.
25. In 2016 the Ministry of Justice and Police established the Committee Diversity and Inclusiveness in response to UPR 2016 recommendations.^{xxv} The Committee was tasked with conducting public hearings to determine and report on the status of stigma, discrimination & acceptance of LGBTI persons in Suriname.^{xxvi} Among the invited organizations and institutions were the Primary Education Inspectorate Department, the Secondary Education at Junior Level Inspectorate Department and the Secondary Education at Senior Level Inspectorate Department. Of the invited Inspectorates, the latter did not participate.^{xxvii}
26. With respect to freedoms and social inequalities, outcomes of the focus groups revealed that LGBTQI persons do not enjoy freedoms to the same extend as the rest of society.^{xxviii} All respondents agreed that all human beings are born equal and therefore should enjoy equal freedoms. According to the respondents the established inequalities are manifested in forms such as ineligibility for certain functions, marriage, educational opportunities, family life, legislation, entitlement to secondary benefits, free expression of one's own feelings (e.g.: at the family doctor).^{xxix}
27. The public hearing report,^{xxx} continues with respondent's acknowledgement that stigma and discrimination are a reality for LGBTQI persons. Some progress has been made in recent years, allowing LGBTQI persons to express themselves more freely as a group and to be themselves. The public hearing also revealed the existence of a broad public support for the full enjoyment of all human rights by LGBTQI individuals.^{xxxi} However, at an individual level these perceived improved circumstances exist to a lesser extent. Issues faced by LGBTQI persons mainly arise in the home situation and at school, followed by the work situation. Problems mainly concern exclusion, rejection by the family, bullying, hate speech against LGBTQI persons, ineligibility for certain positions and certain facilities and ineligibility for promotions on discriminatory grounds.^{xxxii}

28. Illustrative for the school-setting were the following examples.^{xxxiii} Harassments and/or bullying such as laughing at, commenting behind one's backs and looking down at, are the most common in the school-setting. According to the experiences of some of the respondents, boys with feminine behavioral characteristics are the most bullied. Children are mean to each other. Gender stereotypical upbringing at home is often cited as the cause of this. It is condoned when boys kick up a homosexual (pupil). Reportedly, no measures are being taken by the school management. Making negative comments to LGBTQI students, for example, occurs after gym class in the locker room.
29. Respondents also commented that teachers who do not know how to deal with or do not want to deal with LGBTQI children make the problem worse and encourage bullying. When teachers notice that children display behavior that divert from the stereotypical gender role expectations, they supposedly try to correct them. "*Many children have been emotionally damaged by it,*" said one respondent. Also pointed out is the observation that parents do not except gay or lesbian teachers. Cases were referred to, where parents tried to place their children in a different class or school, after becoming aware of the LGBTQI sexual orientation of a teacher.
30. Against the backdrop of the public hearing report and in support of the identified important role of NGOs by Schoenmakers et al., this spotlight report refers to Stichting Lobi Health Center the oldest and largest NGO active in the field of Sexual and Health care in Suriname.^{xxxiv} Since its inception in 1968, Stichting Lobi Health Center has been contributing to the national efforts to keep the Surinamese population healthy with its preventive, integrated and quality sexual and reproductive health services. Important to note is that Stichting Lobi Health Center gained the position of accredited member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the IPPF, in 2006. In 2017, Stichting Lobi Health Center got promoted by IPPF to a Tier-2 level organization due to its performance and the strong reduction of financial risks.^{xxxv}
31. Stichting Lobi Health Center formed a coalition with PAREA and Women's Rights Centre for the production and submission of a domestic stakeholders' contribution to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council on the status of human rights in the Republic of Suriname.^{xxxvi} In its contribution Stichting Lobi Health Center also reported the unmet need for structural integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in the national curriculum.
32. To substantiate this urgency, it referenced the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018 study that iterates the unmet need for family planning among youth aged 15 to 19 years.^{xxxvii} The unmet need for sexually active women, married and unmarried, aged 15 to 19 years was 59.7% respectively 74.8%. The age specific fertility rate per 1000 youth between 15 and 19 years was 64. The MICS further revealed that of the young women interviewed between 15 and 19 years, 30.1% had comprehensive HIV-knowledge, 30.8% had sex in the past 12 months and only 9.7% had done a HIV-test and knew their HIV-status. Of the interviewed young men between 15-19 years, 32.9% had comprehensive HIV-knowledge, 36.6% had sex in the past 12 months and only 5.3% did a HIV-test and knew their HIV-status.
33. The MICS 2018 figures presented in the previous paragraph are alarming, according to Stichting Lobi Health Center.^{xxxviii} By itself and in relation with the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation No. 24 on Article 12 of the convention,^{xxxix} this situation requires urgent policy actions. These actions must be directed towards the development and implementation of a structural policy that ensures that adolescents are empowered and strengthened in making informed choices whilst exercising their sexual and reproductive health rights. The policies must include in and out of school CSE to contribute to the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values of adolescents enabling them to protect and/or enhance their health, well-being, and dignity by making free, responsible and informed healthy lifestyle choices.^{xl}
34. Stichting Lobi Health Center also refers to the UN International Technical Guidelines on Sexuality Education (2018), which reiterates that '*curriculum-based sexuality education programs contribute to delayed initiation of sexual intercourse, decreased frequency of sexual intercourse, decreased*

number of sexual partners, reduced risk taking, increased use of condoms and increased use of contraception.^{xii} Aligned with the Guidelines Stichting Lobi Health Center negotiated a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in 2018 with the Ministry of Education on integrating CSE as a pilot in the curriculum of seven schools in areas where teenage pregnancies were prominent. Pregnancies are an objective indicator of sexually active youth; therefore, it was used as criterion for selecting the schools. Unfortunately, the finalization of the MoU was halted and consequently the implementation of the pilot, due to changes in political leadership, sidelining pivotal officials from the pilot and demonstrating a lack of (political) commitment.

35. On June 26, 2021, the Recovery Plan 2020-2022, submitted by the government, was approved by the National Assembly.^{xiii} Currently, the Recovery Plan 2020-2022 is being implemented and the measures to strengthen the social sector are contained in table 4.6. The measures with number 25 to 32 of the table relate to SDG 4.^{xiii} The measures mainly concern educational facilities, upgrading vocational education and improving school results. Making vocational education accessible at lower and higher vocational education level is addressed as measures 28. Increasing access to secondary education at junior level (VOJ) and at senior level (VOS), is addressed as measures 29. Both measures 28 and 29, are limited to physical facilities and the training of teachers in a new vocational education curriculum. SOGGIE-related access-barriers are not explicitly mentioned. The wording of the measures also makes it impossible to read-in a possible intention to address those access-barriers.
36. Only targets 4.1, 4.3 and 4.c of SDG 4 are included in MADP 2022-2026.^{xiv} Targets 4.1 and 4.3 have a focus on data related to the financial accessibility of education disaggregated by men, women, children, youth, and adults. The focus of target 4.c, is on the supply of qualified teachers and international cooperation in the field of teacher training.
37. Neither the Recovery Plan 2020-2022, nor the MADP 2022-2026, as the cornerstone policy instruments, recognize the need to integrate Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) into the national curriculum. Measures are therefore lacking. This silence about CSE raises eyebrows as the newly formed governing coalition showed political commitment immediately after its election in 2020 by inviting civil society, including the LGBT platform, to contribute to the establishment of a coalition policy agreement. Despite the input of NGOs active in the field of sexual and reproductive health, sexual and reproductive health has not made it into cornerstone policy instruments. It goes without saying that SOGIE-related matters are also not included in the cornerstone policy instruments.

II.2. Recommendations

38. The most general **recommendation** is that the government should develop a national CSE-policy based on the education system, focusing on both in- and out-school settings. The CSE-policy should also function as an instrument for raising awareness on SOGIE-related issues with the aim to reduce or eliminate existing inequalities due to discrimination. Immediate benefits will be the elimination of gender disparities and the creation of a gender sensitive, safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environment for all.
39. The government is furthermore **recommended** to integrate CSE in the national education curriculum at the different school levels, as well as in programmes targeting out of school adolescents and the training of teachers.
40. The government is also **recommended** to invest in an effective partnership with the educational system and NGOs active in the field of Sexual & Reproductive Health to improve the sexual health of young people.
41. The government is **recommended** to take measures to enable full compliance with the General Recommendation No. 24 on Article 12 CEDAW, in particular aimed at guaranteeing timely access

to the range of family planning services, sexual and reproductive health services, health education of adolescents, including information and counselling on all methods of family planning, and draft and submit State-reports on these measures.

42. The government is **recommended** to use the Yogyakarta Principles as a 'to do list' for the implementation of human rights for LGBTQI-individuals. Aligned with the recommendations resulting from the 2017 public hearings, the government could adapt relevant Yogyakarta actions to the Surinamese context. Subsequently, adapted actions should be assigned to line-ministries, based on the Decree regulating the ministerial tasks^{xiv}. In any case, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and the Ministry of Health have already been identified during the public hearings. For further legal safeguarding of human rights in the workplace the Ministry of Labor would be best positioned, while the Ministry of Internal Affairs would be most suitable for modernizing and regulating the gender concept.

III. SDG 5 on gender equality

43. This section will report from a SOGIE-perspective on the progress Suriname has made towards the enactment of laws and regulations that ensure universal access based on equality between women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. More specifically, what progress has been made in guaranteeing access to sexual and reproductive health care, information, and education, as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, by 2030.
44. It should be noted that the MADP 2017-2021 utilizes a restrictive approach of gender, in its chapter X on gender equality and empowerment of youth. According to the MADP 2017-2022, the gender policy is developed within two frameworks, the biological and societal framework.^{xlvi} The biological framework entails the classification of a person as male or female based on the sex characteristics at birth. It must be noted that this restrictive approach of gender does not leave any room to include SOGIE to the national gender policy.^{xlvii}
45. The social context approach followed by the MADP 2017-2021^{xlviii} refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being a man or woman and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys as well as the relationships among women and those among men. The MADP 2017-2021 considers gender as part of the broader socio-cultural framework with the segments class, race, poverty, ethnicity, and age.^{xlix} Again, it must be noted that the social context approach of gender, exclusively recognizes the male and female gender and therewith excluding other sexual orientations and gender identities.
46. The MADP 2017-2021 continues its gender conceptual framework with the statement that gender discrimination occurs when the sexes are discriminated against based on their role as male or female, thereby limiting or depriving them of their rights, opportunities, and resources.^l This narrow definition of gender discrimination does not include other sexual orientations and gender identities. Consequently, the definition does not recognize SOGIE-based discrimination as a form of gender discrimination.
47. Due to the restrictive approach of gender, the MADP 2017-2021 falls short with respect to gender. Because it does not address SDG 5 in conjunction with relevant treaty obligations, as set out in paragraphs 43-50, the MADP 2017-2021 fails to lay a foundation for achieving SOGIE-related gender equality in Suriname.
48. Explicit reference to gender in MADP 2022-2026 is found in Annex A: Goals, outcomes, and indicators, on page 190.^{li} With the header inclusiveness, SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Due to the sexual and reproductive health perspective of this spotlight report, reference is made to the healthcare section of Annex A: Goals, outcomes, and indicators.^{lii} Annex A refers to SDG 3 on ensuring a healthy life and promoting well-being for

everyone of all ages. The first target (3.1) refers' to a reduced maternal mortality rate.^{lviii} The second target (3.2) refers' to reduced preventable deaths of neonates and children under 5 years.^{liv} The third target (3.3) refers' to reduced number of cases of AIDS and tuberculosis, and controlled hepatitis and other communicable diseases.^{lv} The fourth target (3.4) is that premature mortality from non-communicable diseases has been reduced by a third through prevention and treatment.^{lvi} The fifth target (3.8) is that universal healthcare coverage, including protection against financial risks, access to quality essential health services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines is realized for everyone.^{lvii} The sixth target (3.c) is that the increased availability of health care funding and the recruitment, development, training, and retention of health professionals has been achieved.^{lviii}

49. Similar to the MADP 2017-2021, also the MADP 2022-2026 falls short with respect to gender. It also does not address SDG 5 and 3 in conjunction with relevant treaty obligations, as set out in paragraphs 43-50. Therefore, the MADP 2022-2026 continues the government's failure to lay a foundation for achieving SOGIE-related gender equality in Suriname. Furthermore, it should be noted that the MADP 2022-2026 also applies the narrow definition of gender that does not include other sexual orientations and gender identities. Consequently, the definition does not recognize SOGIE-based violence as a form of gender violence, including human trafficking, sexual and other forms of exploitation in the public and private spheres. Nor does it acknowledge the need for revised policy interventions and programs with a SOGIE-perspective to better enable LGBTQI-persons full and effective participation at all levels of decision making in politics, economic and public life.
50. Argued from a SOGIE-perspective, universal access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights is very important. According to the National Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan 2016-2020 of the Ministry of Health^{lix}, discrimination also poses a potential risk for suicide in Suriname, especially for LGBTI. The Plan states that among LGBTQI people, there is often severe and prolonged forms of suicidality and depression, associated with identity questions, self-image, stigma, interpersonal problems, low family support, isolation, loneliness, body image and hormone treatment in transgender. These findings are from a study among men who have sex with men (MSM) in Suriname that furthermore showed that 13.5 % of the respondents had suicidal thoughts in the previous year; among the transgender respondents this was even higher i.e. 27.8 %.^{lx}
51. The National Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan 2016-2020 furthermore found that suicide prevention is currently not integrated in primary and secondary education. However, on paper, suicide prevention is one of the policy priorities of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture (MINOW&C). MINOW&C's policy priorities also include mental health, nutrition (healthy diet, anorexia, obesity), sexual reproductive health, prevention of teenage pregnancy, abortion, alcohol and drug use, and crime. MINOW&C, in collaboration with UNICEF, is also working on a child-friendly environment in schools through the development of "child friendly standards", a concept that offers the possibility of integrating suicide prevention.^{lxi}

III.1 Legal framework on sexual health and rights

52. In the reporting period the legal framework on sexual health and rights in general and more specific in the context of SOGIE was insufficient in Suriname. This circumstance consequently hampered universal access to comprehensive sexual health and rights. To support this finding the following paragraphs will provide information including examples that relate to, the right to sexual health of transgender-persons, gender-based violence and discrimination, sexual harassment, and the right to marry and family life of LGBTQI-persons.

III.1.1. The right to sexual health of transgender-persons

53. Enjoyment of sexual rights and access to comprehensive sexual health by transgender persons is still poor. The government has no official policy that indicates any intention to improve this situation. While gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual harassment are being addressed, the policy and legal attention given to these topics is still insufficient. Also, the pace in which the government is trying to create safer environments is agonizingly slow.
54. With her study, Biharie has documented the various human rights violations that transgender people undergo. Suriname's health care system is not designed to provide that care to transgender people, so that they can reassign their sex in a medically safe and responsible manner. Transgender people do not have access to necessary medicines; gender reassignment operations are not done in Suriname and there are not even specialized psychologists or therapists. Respondents have identified this circumstance as a major shortcoming. According to the respondents, their gender reassignment process would be much easier if they had access to good medicines and good guidance from the necessary experts. According to the respondents, it is ideal that transgender children are guided by experts from an early age. That would reduce the risk of depression and lower transgender suicide rates.^{lxii}
55. To illustrate the shortcomings of the sexual health care in Suriname, respondents referred to the circumstance where transgender people do not have access to the right hormones for the reassignment process. Respondents indicated that because of this shortcoming in health care, transgender women in Suriname use the contraceptive pill as it contains oestrogen. However, that is not the right hormone treatment.^{lxiii}
56. The respondents also indicated that there is still a lot that needs to be done for transgender people in Suriname to enable them to participate without restrictions in society as full citizens with a positive self-image and without a feeling of imperfection.^{lxiv} This requires legislative and policy reform. Officially changing names and gender identity after gender reassignment is not regulated by law. As a result, transgender people must spend fortunes to achieve this through the courts. According to the respondents, the inability to change the gender identity on official documents, such as ID-cards, often leads to very humiliating situations; when "sir" is said to a transgender woman in crowded spaces, because that is stated on her ID.^{lxv}
57. Biharie notes that the respondents indicated that they experience more discrimination by Surinamese legislation than by the Surinamese people.^{lxvi} According to the respondents, the Surinamese legislative framework gives them a sense of being excluded. A quote (translated) from a transgender woman, states: *"There is no legislation for transgender people. I don't need any laws, but health laws; employment opportunities; ID-correction is important. I may not have to get married, and I may not have to have all the facilities as a straight person, but I do want to have a certain legal security."*
58. The claim made by the respondents in the study of Biharie, that transgender people must conduct long legal processes in order to enjoy their fundamental rights has become manifest in the case of *Yvanna* a transgender woman against the state of Suriname. After her gender reassignment surgery in April 2009, *Yvanna* has attempted to correct her first name and sex-indication on her birth certificate. This was refused to her by the Central Bureau for Citizen Registration (CBB), on the grounds that the Surinamese law does not provide for this. As a result, *Yvanna* was forced to request the court to order CBB to make the requested corrections to her birth certificate.
59. By decision of the Domestic District Court of January 12, 2011 (A.R.11-1445)^{lxvii} *Yvanna* was only granted permission to change her first names as requested. With a side note on the birth certificate, CBB complied with the decision and has registered *Yvanna* her new female first name in the registers of the Civil Registry. The requested correction of her sex-indication on her birth certificate was denied by the Court.
60. In response to the denial, *Yvanna* filed a new Court case requesting the correction her sex-indication on her birth certificate. This time, on January 11, 2017, the Domestic District Court ruled that Suriname has no legal prohibition to reassign one's sex.^{lxviii} The Court ruled that *in the*

case of post-operative transsexuals, a contradiction arises between the socio-psychological gender registration and the actual registration on the birth certificate. As a result, Yvanna finds herself in a daily situation that is incompatible with the right to respect her private life, which constitutes a violation of this right as referred to in Articles 17 Constitution of Suriname, 17 ICCPR and 11 AVR. Due to the continuous international trend, not only is the social acceptance of transsexuals taking place, but also the legal recognition of the gender identity of post-operative transsexuals. It is up to the State to choose from the number of instruments available; it is not the role of the District Court to indicate to the State which instrument is most suitable. Pursuant to Articles 106 and 137 of the Constitution, the Subdistrict Court gives a broader interpretation to Articles 17 and 64 -67a Civil Code and grants the request whereby the Civil Servant of the CBB is ordered to record on the side of the deed in the Registers of Births, the change of the applicant's gender.'

61. To the dismay of many, including the then Minister of Justice and Police, the Ministry of Internal Affairs under which the CBB resides, appealed the 2017 Domestic District Court decision.^{lxi} The State argued that the possibility of placing a side notice only exists regarding data that must be stated pursuant to the law, and that the gender reassignment is not such legally prescribed data. On 21 January 2022, the Appeal Court rendered its judgement,^{lxii} confirming the judgement of the District Court of January 11, 2017 (A.R. 15-5612). The Appeal Court ruled that in the present case there was a situation as referred to in Article 137 of the Constitution in which the application of the provisions which the State invokes, in the present case, conflicts with the fundamental rights of Article 8 and 17 of the Constitution. These provisions must then be declared unlawful and inapplicable.
62. In 2020 Somaroe, a legal scholar, referred to the District Court ruling of January 2017, where the Court reasoned that from a legal perspective, gender affects the state of a person. Somaroe, argues that rights and obligations are attached to 'the state of the person'.^{lxiii} Therewith, she concurred with the Court that the 'state of the person' consists of a set of circumstances that determine the person's legal status and distinguishes the individual from other members of society. Furthermore, that a recorded status (name, gender, place of residence) in a deed of the Civil Registry bares legal consequences for the individual.^{lxiiii}
63. Unfortunately, even though the highest Court of Suriname did establish that there exist no legal barriers to record a re-assigned sex and gender in the public civil registers, the CBB remains in a state of noncompliance with the ruling to make the necessary sex-indication corrections on Yvanna her birth certificate.
64. It is against this backdrop that the respondents of Biharie stated that because of stigma and discrimination, transgender people are regarded as less; be less successful; and have insufficient or no access to relationships, work, and health care. In this context a transgender woman made the following statement: *"That discrimination, has left almost the entire transgender community uneducated. When you talk to them, you already hear that they are not educated. And that has even more drawbacks. They are refused a job because they are considered to be unskilled. But why is that person not educated? Because of your opinion and attitude towards transgender people: you must cut your hair; you shouldn't walk like that; you shouldn't do this, and you shouldn't do that. It starts with the realization that one must understand that they feel like a woman and if the school board understands this, they will show more understanding that they can wear girls' clothes, for example. What does that take away from you when they come to school in girls' clothes? Does that mean your classes are declining or something? Perhaps many transgender people would now be bachelor's and Doctors if more understanding had been shown in school. But they don't get the chance. Even though they do their best at school, the situation and social environment are very demotivating."*^{lxv}

III.1.2. Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Discrimination

65. On the topic of Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) reference is made to Women's Rights Centre, a NGO established in 1997 with the main goal to provide services to eradicate all forms

of violence against women and to lobby and advocate women's rights from a broad perspective.^{lxxiv} Within the coalition formed with PAREA and Stichting Lobi Health Center, Women's Rights Centre contributed to the domestic stakeholders' contribution to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council on the status of human rights in the Republic of Suriname.^{lxxv}

66. According to Women's Rights Centre, women, girls, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women living with HIV, sex workers, migrant women, and girls in vulnerable situations^{lxxvi}, do experience SGBV, discrimination and stigmatization in the private and the public domain.^{lxxvii} Approximately 32% of women experience at least one act of physical or sexual violence perpetrated by their male partner. Non-partner violence against women is also prevalent, with sexual violence being the most common.^{lxxviii} In the period 2017-2020, a total of 34 women were killed of which 18 by their partner.^{lxxix} Some risk factors heightening women and girls' exposure to SGBV, are: young age, low educational level, pregnancy, and early cohabitation with a male partner. Also, social, and cultural attitudes contribute significantly to maintaining entrenched gender roles within society.^{lxxx}
67. In terms of laws and policies, Suriname has adopted the Inter-American model legislation on femicide.^{lxxxi} The model law^{lxxxii} calls for preventive measures^{lxxxiii} in addition to a repressive approach, to prevent, punish and eradicate gender-based murders of women committed by a partner, ex-partner, any individual or group of individuals with whom the women had or may have had an interpersonal relationship, or agents of the government.^{lxxxiv} However, SGBV response is not mainstreamed in government policy. Hence, there exists no targeted budget, standard operational procedures, or multi-sectoral approach. Article 500a (Penal Code), explicitly prohibits discrimination in the exercise of an office, profession or business based on a closed list of grounds that includes sexual orientation, but not, gender and health (HIV).^{lxxxv}
68. Articles 65 and 66 of the Police Penal Code prohibit indecent conduct by women on the street, in doorways or the proximity of drinking bouts.^{lxxxvi} It is common practice by law enforcement to apply these provisions on street sex workers. Since club sex work, except pimping,^{lxxxvii} is regulated through, for example, health and permit regulations but not criminally prohibited, only street sex work is illegal. This criminal approach to street sex workers makes them vulnerable to all kind of mistreatment from pimps, clients, and even police. Street sex workers shared stories of being robbed, raped and/or beaten. The illegality of sex work activities also impacts on sex workers' ability to stay safe from disease, as their illegal encounters happen quickly with little to no room for safe sex negotiations.

III.1.3. Sexual Harassment

69. According to Women's Rights Centre,^{lxxxviii} sexual harassment violates human rights. Sexual rights are directly infringed, while the right to employment and a decent living standard is indirectly infringed. Moreover, it further exacerbates the vulnerable position of women, girls, and LGBTQI-persons with less or no access to further education, information, and technology, especially in remote areas.
70. Women's Rights Centre noted that both employees and employers, recognized sexual harassment as a serious problem in the most recent available research on sexual harassment in selected private and public departments (2011). One in five women, and one in ten men respondents had experienced sexual harassment more than once. The research links sexual harassment to structural and cultural factors such as unequal gender relations, hierarchical organization structures, a sexualized context, and a 'macho' culture.^{lxxxix}
71. Suriname submitted its National Report to the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, in 2011. According to the National Report the Government had installed the National Committee on Gender Legislation. This Committee consisted of various departmental representatives and non-state actors, including representatives of the University of Suriname and women's organizations. This Committee has prepared the Draft law on Stalking, the Draft Law on Sexual

Harassment, and the Draft Law on Prevention of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace. The law on Stalking is now presented to the Parliament for approval.^{xc} The National Report also noted that in collaboration with the U.N. Trust Fund, the Foundation Ilse Henar Hewitt (NGO) was executing a project to eliminate sexual harassment at the workplace.^{xc} In addition to the Government ten organizations (private and public) have committed to enact policy on the issue.^{xcii}

72. Following the enactment of anti-discrimination criminal law reforms in 2015,^{xciii} the initial three draft laws were merged to two on respectively preventing and combating workplace related violence and sexual harassment^{xciv} and the promotion of equal treatment in employment^{xcv}, and re-submitted to parliament in July 2019. The anti-discrimination criminal law and the two draft laws provide explicit protection to LGBTQI-individuals.^{xcvi} While the LGBT-Platform was consulted in the drafting phase of the draft laws, it is noteworthy that in January 2020, several NGOs dedicated to women's rights received a letter from The National Assembly requesting their feedback on the Draft Laws.^{xcvii} After they promptly provided the requested feedback the NGO's received no further notice on progress made. Since January 2020, no major developments can be reported towards the enactment and adoption of necessary robust and comprehensive legislation and policies to effectively prevent and punish all forms of rights violations based on sexual orientation or gender identity in all settings.^{xcviii} The draft laws are still under debate.^{xcix}
73. In November 2020, during the *16 Days of Activism to End Gender Violence*, the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Youth Affairs informed the media that both draft laws are under debate by Parliament and emphasized the importance of addressing this problem, consequently called on employers to anticipate on legislation and to implement policies at their workplace to prevent violence".^c

III.1.4. The right to marry and family life of LGBTQI-persons

74. Regarding the optimal experience of the right to marry and family life of LGBTQI persons, it is obvious that the government consciously opposes any recognition. The government even refuses to recognize and comply with Court decisions rendered in 2017 and 2022. The refusal to recognize the Court decisions is manifested in the appeal of the 2017 court ruling and the subsequent developed gender policy in 2019 that ignores SOGIE.
75. On 30 March 2022, M.A. Castelen and S.M.D. Sitaram, both attorneys at law, filled two petitions with the Constitutional Court of Suriname. One of the petitions challenged the compatibility of Article 80 of the Civil Code with the Constitution and treaty law. Article 80 of the Surinamese Civil Code (as last amended on January 19, 2004 (SB 2004 no. 25), which stipulates that only one man and one woman can marry each other at the same time. The state interprets and applies the provision as one that does not recognize same-sex marriages. Pursuant to Article 12 paragraph 1 Constitutional Court Act in conjunction with Article 106 and Article 144 paragraph 2 sub a of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court is requested to review and judge on the compatibility of Article 80 of the Civil Code with the right of non-discrimination and the right to respect for private and family life as set out in the binding law provisions of Articles 17, 23 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and/or with the provisions of Articles 11 and 17 paragraph 2 of the American Convention on Human Rights (AVRM) binding on everyone and/or Articles 8 and 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname (GW).
76. On May 13, 2022, the petition challenging the administrative decision not to recognize a same-sex marriage, was resubmitted. The administrative decision was taken by the State of Suriname, the Central Bureau for Citizen Registration (CBB), being the competent government body. CBB decided not to recognize a same-sex marriage concluded abroad and, as a result, not to register the legalized foreign marriage certificate, at least not as a marriage certificate, in the registers intended for that purpose. Pursuant to Article 13 paragraph 1 Constitutional Court Act in conjunction with Article 144 paragraph 2 sub b of the Constitution, the Constitutional Court is requested to review and judge the administrative decision on the compatibility with the right of non-discrimination and the right to respect for private and family life as included in Articles 8 and 17 of the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname.

77. The submission of the Constitutional Court petitions is a follow-up action by PAREA to its participation, with Stichting Lobi Health Center and Women's Rights Centre, in the joint domestic stakeholders' contribution to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council on the status of human rights in the Republic of Suriname.^{ci} PAREA was established on August 14, 2014. It is an association of lesbian, gay, bi- and transsexual (LGBTI) professionals in Suriname and serves as a support network for the LGBTQI community in Suriname. By combining professional and social networks of its members, PAREA gives back to society, but to the LGBT community specifically. PAREA is active in several fields: Human Rights, Training and Education, Awareness and Health.^{cii} The Constitutional Court informed the petitioners that it will render its decision in the first quarter of 2023.
78. PAREA noted in the joint UPR 2021-submission^{ciii}, that Suriname exclusively guarantees the right to family life through marriage for couples of opposite sexes with Article 80^{civ} in conjunction with Article 138^{cv} Civil Code. This circumstance is incompatible with the constitutional prohibition to discriminate on the bases of sex.^{cvi} Article 80 Civil Code is therefore considered a wrongful and discriminatory legal barrier to full enjoyment of the right to family life through marriage^{cvi} for same-sex partners.
79. PAREA pointed out, that Article 80 Civil Code is archaic and contradicts more recent social security laws, the Housing Rental Act of 2020, the General Pension Act of 2014, and the National Basic Health Insurance Act of 2014.^{cvi} The current social security laws equate marriages and long-term joint households as forms of cohabitation. Therefore, partners of both types of relationships are offered equal protection.^{cix} The legislator used a gender-neutral definition of partnerships in the current social laws.^{cx} Reference could be made to "*the spouse of a tenant or the partner of the tenant*" in the Housing Rental Act of 2020. Also, "*the partner of the deceased participant*" by the General Pension Act of 2014 and "partner" by the National Basic Health Insurance Act of 2014.
80. With respect to the discriminatory nature of Article 80 of the Civil Code, PAREA refers to another form of discrimination that unfolds at the Central Bureau of Citizen Registration (CBB). Based on the opposite-sex element of the Article 80 marriage definition, CBB refuses to recognize and register valid marriages of LGBTQI-persons from foreign jurisdictions. The refusal by CBB violates Article 136 Civil Code^{cx} and the HCCH 1961 Apostille Convention,^{cxii} to which Suriname is a party. The refusal also violates Article 137 of the Civil Code,^{cxiii} which stipulates that presented valid foreign marriage certificates must be registered in the public marriage register. Furthermore, the refusal is inconsistent with the opinion of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on gender identity and same-sex marriage of November 24, 2017.^{cxiv} It is undisputable that by not (properly) registering marriage certificates of LGBTQI-persons, Suriname discriminates against LGBTQI-spouses. Consequently, Suriname deprives them from the ability to prove their marital status before law and in practice, as stipulated in Article 153 Civil Code,^{cxv} and therewith from the full enjoyment of the legal certainties provided by the marriage.
81. During its review at the 39th UPR session on November first, 2021, Suriname was recommended to use the ongoing Civil Code revision process, to make Article 80 gender neutral. Unfortunately, Suriname did not support the recommendation, whilst the revision process was not utilized, and the revised Civil Code was adopted by Parliament on March 3, 2022, leaving the marriage law untouched.^{cxvi}
82. While PAREA acknowledges the general understanding that the sole interest served with child adoption is the wellbeing of the child,^{cxvii} it cautions that there is no valid ground for exclusively granting the legal possibility to child adoption to spouses of opposite-sex.^{cxviii} The exclusion of LGBTQI spouses is discriminatory. The discrimination of LGBTQI persons manifests itself via Article 342k paragraph 1 in conjunction with Article 342m paragraph 1 sub c of the Civil Code, stating that only married couples can request the adoption of a child. Read in relation with Article 80 Civil Code, LGBTQI persons are excluded from getting married in Suriname.
83. The eligibility requirement of marriage for child adoption must apply equally to all lawful marriages. However, read in conjunction with Article 80 Civil Code only opposite sexes are

allowed to marry each other. Furthermore, in practice foreign deeds of LGBTQI matrimonies are not recognized by Suriname. For these reasons it is obvious that the current marriage-requirement excludes all non-opposite-sex spouses from the equal entitlement to adopt a child. Article 342 paragraph 1 under d Civil Code refers explicitly to the maximum permitted age difference between the male and female spouse with the child to be adopted, which adds to the exclusionary effect of the marriage-requirement. The fact that LGBTQI married couples are ineligible to adopt a child, due to the opposite- sex element of the marriage requirement, constitutes a discriminatory and unfair treatment based on sexual orientation.

III.2. Legal framework on reproductive health and rights

84. In the reporting period the legal framework on reproductive health and rights was insufficient in Suriname. When zooming in on reproductive health care and rights of LGBTQI persons, availability of comprehensive tailored reproductive health care is almost absent in Suriname. The assessment of existing legal and policy instruments reveals that while still insufficient, the available reproductive health services have a strong focus on (heterosexual) women. This circumstance consequently hampered universal access to comprehensive reproductive health and rights. Due to the scarcely and absolute minimal availability of comprehensive tailored reproductive health care for LGBTQI persons, relevant data is lacking. This makes that LGBTQI-persons, are systematically and severely underserved when it comes to reproductive health.

85. Reproductive health care services, such as maternal health, abortion, cervical cancer preventive care, are insufficiently available in terms of comprehensiveness as well as the number and geographical spreading of health care facilities. Consequently, persons in Suriname, including LGBTQI-individuals, lack the full enjoyment of the right to health, in particular reproductive health, that meet the AAAQ (Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality) Framework standards as set out by the ESCR Committee in particular.

86. For this reason, the following paragraphs will be limited to validated reproductive health information related to all women, girls, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women living with HIV, sex workers, migrant women, and girls in vulnerable situations in Suriname. The focus will be placed on data related to maternal health, abortion, and cervical cancer.

III.2.1. Maternal health

87. In July 2020, the current government came in office.^{cxix} Immediately after the government took office in 2020, an economic recovery trajectory was initiated with the IMF as strategic partner.^{cxx} In this context, a series of austerity measures are being implemented. These measures also have a huge impact on the total health care system, and therefore also on sexual and reproductive health care. A circumstance of concern relates to the measures whereby pregnant women are being removed^{cxixi} from the Basic Health Insurance.^{cxixii} According to the government, this measure is necessary and taken on the grounds of suspicion that the removed women were not eligible for this social insurance.^{cxixiii} With this measure, the government is trying to clean up the database of insured persons and thereby reduce the overall amount of provided subsidies. To receive basic health insurance again, the women must reapply and adhere to very complex, non-transparent and lengthy procedures. Due to this circumstance, a large group of women has been deprived of adequate child and maternal health care. Members of Parliament have asked for urgent correcting measures to end this undesirable situation.^{cxixiv} Despite many promises of improvement by government authorities, this undesirable situation continues.

88. Women's Rights Centre points out that Suriname belongs to the top five countries with the highest maternal mortality ratio (MMR), which is another alarming fact in relation to women's SRHR.^{cxixv} The Surinamese MMR is estimated at 120 (2017) and corresponds with the MMR of 130 of the maternal mortality survey (2010-2014), with an average of 12 maternal deaths per year (2010-2018).

89. With an MMR 160 the rural interior has the highest MMR, followed by the urban areas Paramaribo and Wanica (MMR 145), the rural coastal area (MMR 120) and the Nickerie area (MMR 80). The highest percentage of the deaths is among maroon women (37%) and women in poverty (69%). Preliminary data on ethnic disparities shows that maroon women had the highest maternal mortality ratio (184 per 100,000 live births) and the highest still birth rate (25 per 1,000 babies born) (2016/ 2017).
90. Maternal mortality occurs during pregnancy, childbirth, and the post-partum period. Most women die during the post-partum period (63%) of which (84%) occur in health care facilities, mainly in urban hospitals. The main causes of maternal mortalities are infections (27 %) obstetric (9%) and non-obstetric sepsis (18 %), bleeding (20%), high blood pressure (14%), indirect causes, other than non-obstetric sepsis (14%).
91. Substandard care in health facilities and lack of postnatal care are among the factors associated with poor maternal health. Most maternal deaths occurred in hospitals (84%) and were due to third delay, meaning that the health care provided in the health care facility was insufficient. Substandard care factors were observed in 95% of all maternal deaths and were mostly related to health professionals and most likely resulted in death in 47% of the cases. A high rate of deaths (63%) occurred in the post-partum period, presumably due to inadequate quality of postnatal care. There is no standardized national postnatal care program or guideline for hospitals. Other factors are inadequate financial and geographical service accessibility, teenage pregnancies, risk factors such as anaemia, obesity, diabetes and hypertension, domestic violence, and traditional practices.^{cxxvi}
92. Closely related to maternal health are the stillbirths. Suriname has a very high stillborn rate of 15.6 stillbirths per 1,000 babies born (2016/2017); the second highest of the region. The neonatal mortality rate is also very high at an estimated 12 per 1,000 live births (MICS, 2018).

III.2.2. Abortion

93. Referencing Stichting Lobi Health Center,^{cxxvii} Suriname applies a criminal law approach to abortion, making it illegal, regardless of the risk to the pregnant women's life, pregnancy in the case of rape or incest, or fetal malformation incompatible with life. This makes Suriname one of the less than 20 countries in the world^{cxxviii} with such inhuman criminal standards that are coercive in reproductive decision making^{cxxix} and therewith it violates international human rights law and standards.^{cxxx} In 2018, in the case *Manuela and family against El Salvador*, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) confirmed that legislation that bans abortion in all circumstances is not compliant with international human rights standards and therefore called on EL Salvador to amend its legislation.^{cxxxi} In 2019, in the context of EL Salvador's criminalization of abortion, this case was filled under number 13.069, with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights by the IACHR.^{cxxxii}
94. Although the Surinamese government claims that it does not enforce the abortion criminal laws,^{cxxxiii} it fails to justify why it does not amend the laws accordingly to the 2017 urge by the IACHR to adopt comprehensive, immediate measures to respect and protect women's SRHR, including legal and safe abortions,^{cxxxiv} to create an environment in which women can fully enjoy their right to health.^{cxxxv}
95. It is public knowledge that because of the illegal status of abortions, women, and girls in need of an abortion resort to unsafe abortions with serious health threats. Not seldom, women end up at the emergency room of the Academic Hospital with complications due to unsafe abortions causing serious health threats. Another result of the illegality of abortion is the absence of reliable abortion-related data because abortions done in hospitals are inaccurately registered as dilation and curettage. Nonetheless, estimated numbers of annual abortions are ranging between 5.000 and 10.000.^{cxxxvi} Furthermore, due to its illegality, abortions are not covered by health insurance packages, causing adverse financial affects hampering access to safe abortion services, including effective pre- and post-abortion counselling services aimed at harm reduction and future

unwanted pregnancies as an integrated part of comprehensive SRHR-policies. This means that while safe abortion is available mostly to wealthy women, it is an additional violation of the right to health for poor women and the most marginalized, who might undergo financial risks to access this service. Furthermore, abortions, including medical abortions with Cytotec, occur without proper medical guidance and information on the potential risks and adverse effects.

96. The Surinamese government has committed towards the progressive implementation of the commitments of the 2013 Montevideo Consensus^{cxvii} and those of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action. The latter were reaffirmed at the 2019 ICPD Nairobi Summit, by Suriname.^{cxviii} On March 4, 2021, while visiting Stichting Lobi Health Center, the Health Minister expressed his commitment to amend the current legal abortion ban in all circumstances.^{cxvix}
97. These commitments fit seamlessly with the legal obligation deriving from core human rights documents in particular Article 16 sub e, CEDAW requesting all appropriate measures to ensure women can decide *"freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights."* Also, Article 36 paragraph 2 of the Constitution of Suriname,^{cxl} Article 12 (CEDAW) and Article 12 (ICESCR), request availability and access to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by women, while the CEDAW Committee's General Recommendation 24 paragraph 31c requests to in particular prioritize the amendment of legislation criminalizing abortion in order to withdraw punitive measures imposed on women who undergo abortion.^{cxli}
98. However, it is indisputable that Suriname falls short in complying with its SRHR legal obligations arising from constitutional and treaty law,^{cxlii} causing severe adverse financial and health implications for financially unsustainable women, girls, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women living with HIV, female sex workers, migrant women, and girls in vulnerable situations in Suriname. The severe adverse effects are mostly with women belong to the poorer quintiles in society and are in dire need of an abortion.

III.2.3. Cervical cancer

99. Stichting Lobi Health Center emphasizes that cervical cancer is a preventable disease.^{cxliii} According to the WHO, cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women internationally,^{cxliv} but the second most common cancer and the leading cause of death amongst women with cancer in Suriname.^{cxlv} Stichting Lobi Health Center refers to the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission's claim that women's reproductive cancers, including cervical cancer, are considered an *"integral part of women's health policy to achieve both universal health care and the Sustainable Development Goals"*.^{cxlvi}
100. The 144th session of the WHO Executive Board called for an acceleration initiative amongst member states to eliminate this preventable disease.^{cxlvii} The call led to the establishment of the Global Strategy, which is aligned with human rights instruments upholding health as a human right as well as linking it to the SDGs, setting the screening coverage target at 70%.^{cxlviii} Suriname is still far from reaching the set target. The Surinamese National Cancer Control Plan 2019-2028 in its latest situation analyses found an estimated cervical cancer screening coverage of less than 20%.^{cxlix} The majority of preventive screening is done by Stichting Lobi Health Center. Amongst the women diagnosed with cervical cancer 80% are diagnosed in a late stage, of whom 50% had no prior preventive screening.^{cl}
101. In 2017, 2018 and 2019 Stichting Lobi Health Center supported by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) initiated a series of pilot and follow-up projects to develop and test a national screening model for the country with a community-based approach and a survey on barriers to screening. The results of these projects were presented at a National Symposium in June 2018 and integrated into the National Cancer Control Plan.^{cli} Unfortunately, the Ministry of Health has not taken any follow-up initiatives to develop and implement a national cervical cancer screening plan. This with the aim to improve the response to this preventable disease and avoid unnecessary related deaths.

102. The absence of national comprehensive cervical cancer screening program that includes a budgeted national cervical cancer control policy, undermines the reproductive health and rights of women in Suriname. This circumstance denies all women, girls, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women living with HIV, female sex workers, migrant women, and girls in vulnerable situations in Suriname the full enjoyment of the right to health and access to adequate SRHR services that meet the AAAQ- Framework (Availability, Accessibility, Acceptability and Quality) standards as set out by the ESCR Committee in particular.^{clii}

III.3. Gender Policy

103. Policies, and thus also policies on gender, are considered soft law.^{cliii} The Gender Bureau of the Ministry of Internal Affairs is the authority responsible for the development of national gender policies.^{cliv} June 2019 the Gender Bureau adopted its Gender Action Plan 2019-2020^{clv} and the subsequent Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035^{clvi}.

104. The Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 indicates that Suriname has included a long-term goal in accordance with SDG 5.1.^{clvii} That goal is to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, nationwide. Realization of that goal is envisioned by having amended, strengthened, approved and in force all necessary legislation to promote gender equality and eliminate gender-based discrimination in Suriname by 2035.

105. Furthermore, the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 acknowledges that actions are needed against intersecting forms of gender-based discrimination against women and girls.^{clviii} For the realization of the long-term goal, an amendment to Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Constitution has been identified as crucial, for enabling the recognition that women from rural areas, Maroon women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex women are exposed to intersecting forms of discrimination.

106. According to the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035, Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Constitution needs to be amended before the exposure of women from rural areas, maroon women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women to intersecting forms of discrimination can be recognized. The government qualified the legislative amendment as a long-term activity for which it allocated a disturbing 10 to 15 years, based on the argument that amending the Constitution requires a two-thirds majority vote.^{clix}

107. First, Article 8 paragraph 2 never needed any amendment. The Article is the classic non-discrimination provision and states: *'No one shall be discriminated against based on birth, sex, race, language, religion, origin, education, political opinion, economic position or social circumstances or any other status.'* The personal and material scope of this provision is similar to that of Article 26 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and Article 1 of the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights (IACHR). The personal and material scope of both the ICCPR and IACHR have been extensively elaborated on by academics, treaty bodies and international, regional, and national Courts.

108. In that regard reference is made to paragraph 10 of the ruling the Court of Appeal of Suriname of January 2022. The Court of Appeal upheld the judgement of Domestic District Court of 2017, while emphasizing that: *'with regard to the substantive assessment of the present case by the Court of Appeal, the Court of Appeal puts forward the following. Article 8 of the Surinamese Constitution (GW) provides that no one may be discriminated against based on his birth, sex, race, language, religion, origin, education, political opinion, economic position or social circumstances or any other status [emphasis added by the court]. This should also include discrimination based on sexual orientation such as that of transgender-persons. A transgender-person is understood to mean someone whose gender identity and/or gender expression (as is the case with Yvanna) does not correspond to the sex assigned at birth. The prohibition of discrimination is also laid down in Article 26 ICCPR and Article 24 AVR/M, to which treaties Suriname is a party.'*^{clx}

109. If the government was insufficiently aware of the personal and material scope of Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Constitution, the ruling of 2022 provides the necessary clarity. The Court of Appeal judgement makes the allocated 10 to 15 years by the Gender Bureau to amend Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Constitution redundant.
110. Alarming fact is that while the Gender Bureau allocated 10 to 15 years in 2019 to amend the Article 8 paragraph 2 of the Constitution, no actions have been registered towards that goal since then. Now, three years further, and with the 2022 judgement at hand, it is expected that the Gender Bureau can start with the development and implementation of the actual policies and measures to protect women from rural areas, maroon women, indigenous women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women against all intersecting forms of discrimination.
111. Notably, the Gender Action Plan 2019-2020 makes no mention of this a long-term activity, with associated activities aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination to which rural women, maroon women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women are exposed.

III.4. Recommendations

112. In relation to sexual health, it is **recommended** that the government enhances the comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of the mental health services by also including the specific mental health demands of the wide SOGIE-spectrum. Examples of unaddressed mental health needs are depression leading to suicide due to sexual-orientation related discrimination and mental health care as part of the professional support in the gender and sex reassignment process.
113. With respect to sexual orientation and gender identity, it is **recommended** that the government, as co-legislator, enacts and adopts comprehensive legislation and policies that prevent all forms of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and provide appropriate civil and criminal legal remedies to victims of these forms of discrimination.
114. Regarding the sexual and reproductive health of transgender-persons, it is **recommended** that the government urgently complies with the January 2022 ruling of the Appeal Court. In this context, the government is recommended to review and where necessary revise existing policies and measures on gender, gender re-assignment and on supplementing the civil status registers in accordance with a re-assigned gender and sex to make them compatible with the Constitution and related binding legal provisions of human rights treaties.
115. Furthermore, the government is **recommended** to develop and implement tailor made comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services related to transgender-persons and their families. These services should, inter alia, include health education, medication facilities and mental and physical health.
116. With respect to sexual and gender-based violence, discrimination, and stigmatization, it is **recommended** that the government as co-legislator incorporates the Inter-American Model legislation Femicide in its entirety in the Criminal Code and in line with it, develop, dedicate adequate resources, and carry out a comprehensive multi-sectoral policy approach, in particular protocols aiming at enhancing and guaranteeing the provision of professional sexual and gender-based violence services.
117. The government is also **recommended** to reform the criminal regime through the inclusion of gender and HIV-status in article 500a of the Penal Code and by abolishing the offence of 'indecent conduct by women on the street, in doorways or the proximity of drinking bouts', while increasing the capacity on all levels of the Ministry of Justice and Police and the Ministry of Health on the human rights of sex workers.

118. Furthermore, it is **recommended** that the government guarantees and facilitates an in-depth public debate including with SOGIE and women’s organizations and labor unions as input for the current draft legislation around sexual harassment at the workplace, while simultaneously investing in awareness-raising around sexual rights, for specific target groups in culturally appropriate language.
119. Finally on sexual health and rights, the government is **recommended** to reform the legal and policy frameworks on the right to family life, in particular amending Article 80 of the Civil Code, to eliminate all direct and indirect forms of discrimination against LGBTQI people.
120. Specifically on reproductive health and rights, the government is **recommended** to develop and implement a comprehensive AAAQ standardized, budgeted national cervical cancer control program that ensures a continuum of effective healthcare (prevention, screening, treatment, and rehabilitation), with due regard to the social determinants of health.
121. With respect to the decriminalization of abortion, the government is **recommended** to initiate and facilitate with reasonable time-bound targets, the abortion decriminalization process as part of a national debate on the development and implementation of comprehensive SRHR-policies, based on evidence-based data and adequate research on (un)safe abortions and their impact on women’s health.
122. On maternal mortality, the government is **recommended** to develop and implement in partnership with relevant stakeholders maternal healthcare policies and measures that ensure accessible, sufficient and timely obstetric care for all women; a national budgeted postnatal care program; national protocols and guidelines addressing the main causes of maternal mortality during pregnancy, childbirth and the post- partum period; a national maternal mortality surveillance system and a national monitoring mechanism that closely observes the trends in maternal deaths.

IV. SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals

IV.1. Overview

123. This section will report from a SOGIE-perspective on the progress Suriname has made towards, firstly: enhancing the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology, and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, in particular developing countries. Secondly: enhancing capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to significantly increase the availability of high- quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, by 2020.
124. On SDG 17 on partnerships for the Goals, reference can be made to the UPR-cycles of 2016 and 2021. Suriname complied with its UPR-reporting obligation during the 2016 and 2022 UPR-cycles. The compliance can be interpreted to as a strategy to enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships on knowledge and expertise sharing towards achieving the SDGs.
125. The 2016 UPR-session was Suriname’s second review cycle. The review took place based on the country-report, a UN compilation report, and a compilation of the CSO reports. The compilation of CSO reports, did not include CSO-reports submitted by local CSOs. The third evaluation cycle of Suriname during the 2021 UPR session, again took place based on the country report, a UN compilation report, and a compilation of the CSO reports. The difference this time,

was that the compilation of the CSO reports included Surinamese CSO reports for the first time. One of the Surinamese CSO submissions was the joint submission by three sexual and reproductive health and rights focused NGOs.

126. Suriname belongs to the GRULAC group in the UN-context. This group constitutes Latin America and the Caribbean. The GRULAC Group has a regional mechanism, Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, in place to monitor progress in the implementation of the SDGs. The Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development was created in May 2016 as a regional mechanism for the follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals, their targets, their means of implementation and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development.^{clxi}
127. This Mechanism held its Fifth meeting on Sustainable Development in San Jose, Costa Rica, from March 7-9, 2022. The outcome document of the 5th meeting is entitled '*Concerns conclusions and recommendations on Sustainable Development agreed at intergovernmental level at the Fifth Meeting*'.^{clxii} Represented by Albert Ramdin, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Business and International Cooperation, Suriname participated virtually in the 5th meeting of the Forum. On Wednesday 9 March, Suriname participated actively in the 10.45 - 11.45 a.m. peer-learning session: *Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.^{clxiii} For this reason, it can be assumed that Suriname has also agreed with the conclusions and recommendations included in the outcome document.
128. The Civil Society Participation Mechanism (MeSCALC) in the Sustainable Agenda and the Forum of Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was adopted during the Second meeting of the Forum of LAC Countries in Santiago, Chile on April 22, 2018.^{clxiv} So far, however, Surinamese civil society organizations have not actively participated in the mechanism. On the other hand, individual Surinamese CSOs, and SOGIE-related CSOs, have strong work relations with international, regional and national strategic partners.
129. With reference to the MADPs' silence about SOGIE, but also the resistance that SOGIE-issues experience from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the context of gender policy, it is not surprising that Suriname has not taken any SOGIE-specific actions in the context of SDG 17.
130. The Civil Society Participation Mechanism of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, adopted a Declaration in 2021, entitled: *The Organizations of the Society Civil Latin America and the Caribbean before the decade of action for the implementation of Agenda 2030. Message to the IV CEPAL Forum- March 2021*.^{clxv} In the third paragraph, the CSOs declare that it is important to stop widespread violence, mainly towards children, adolescents, young people, the elderly, women, the LGBTQI+ population, indigenous people, Afro-descendent, migrants, informal workers, such as street vendors, sexual workers, people with disabilities and people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. According to the CSOs, this must change to avoid the deterioration of the Latin American and Caribbean populations. In the tenth paragraph, the CSOs restated that it is an ethical and humanitarian duty to consider all of the most vulnerable groups facing the COVID19 crisis. Therefore, they demanded that care must also be given to women, girls and LGBTQI+ communities as the risk to suffer multiple forms of gender-based violence is higher due to the forced quarantine.
131. As active participant in the Fifth meeting on Sustainable Development in San Jose, Costa Rica, from March 7-9, 2022, Suriname also reaffirmed the commitment to *ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls*.^{clxvi} Suriname also reaffirmed the renewed commitment to *end poverty in all its forms and dimensions and hunger everywhere, to further promote sustainable development, including inclusive economic growth, promoting social inclusion, to combat inequalities within and among countries as well as to respect and promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including the right to development, and to ensure*

gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls throughout their life course, and peaceful and inclusive societies in which no one is left behind while preserving the planet for future generations.^{clxvii}

132. Suriname also welcomed the ongoing regional efforts to *achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls throughout their life course*, and recalls the *Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030*, adopted at the thirteenth session of the *Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean*, and notes the *Santiago Commitment*, adopted at the fourteenth session of the *Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean*, as well as the *sixty-first and sixty-second meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women*, and underscore that *realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls throughout their life course will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and that the protection and full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and in this regard recommend further mainstreaming of a gender-responsive approach into national sustainable development policies, programmes and strategies, and emergency and recovery responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.*^{clxviii}
133. While no Surinamese SOGIE-based CSO took part in the Civil Society Participation Mechanism meeting, it is still important to highlight the press release of March 8, 2022.^{clxix} The press release heads: *“Participants in Forum on Sustainable Development Urged for Averting Setbacks and Achieving Gender Equality in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Government authorities, international officials and representatives of civil society commemorated International Women’s Day at the regional gathering that is taking place in Costa Rica. According to the article, representatives of civil society expressed their concern over the inroads made by authoritarian proposals in diverse governments of the region with public policies that cause setbacks to human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights.
134. Against that expressed concern over setbacks reference is made to a comparison of the position of the Surinamese government on received recommendations on SOGIE during the UPR cycle II (2016) and cycle III (2021). While on the one hand there was a slight increase of SOGIE-related recommendations from seven in 2016 to nine in 2021,^{clxx} the number of supported SOGIE-related recommendations tumbled from six in 2016 to three in 2021, without an explanation by the Surinamese government.^{clxxi}
135. Cycle II (2016) Suriname received the following seven recommendations. (1) Develop and implement training programmes for current and trainee police officers to address stigmatisation and discrimination of LGBTI persons, from Ireland. (2) Take all necessary steps to adopt legislative and other measures to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, from the Netherlands. (3) Enact legislation that specifically addresses discrimination against LGBTI individuals, from Australia. (4) Adopt specific legislation to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, from Chile. (5) Take effective steps for the country’s legal framework to protect the rights of LGBTI people, from Brazil. (6) Intensify measures to prevent and sanction violence against LGBTI persons, from Chile. (7) Adopt legislation and promote measures to prevent discrimination based on race, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity, from Mexico. Suriname fully supported six of the seven recommendations. The recommendation made by Mexico was supported in part on the aspects of race and disability.
136. Cycle III (2021) Suriname received the following nine recommendations. (1) Continue taking measures to eradicate all forms of violence and discrimination against women, girls and LGBTI persons, from Chile. (2) Strengthen the efforts to combat all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, children and LGBTI persons, from Italy. (3) Seek training for law enforcement and judicial officers to ensure accountability for gender-based violence and discrimination against LGBTI communities. Those three recommendations were supported by Suriname., from the United Kingdom^{clxxii} The following six recommendations were noted by

Suriname.^{clxxiii} (4) Consider passing legislation that specifically addresses discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, from Argentina. (5) Enact legislation to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, from Australia. (6) Take the necessary steps towards the adoption of legislative and other measures to explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, from Fiji. (7) Make Article 80 of the Civil Code gender neutral to guarantee the full enjoyment of the right to family life by LGBTI+ persons, from Iceland. (8) Review and make compatible with applicable law, all policies and measures on gender recording in the deeds of the Civil Registry, to allow supplementing the registers of birth following gender and sex re-assignment, from Iceland. (9) Enact legislation that specifically addresses discrimination against LGBT persons, from Israel.

137. In 2022, the UN-ECLAC produced the fifth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean “*A decade of action for a change of era*”.^{clxxiv} The report highlights that of the 45 countries that will present their Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2022, eight are from Latin America and the Caribbean. Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Suriname will present for the first time. El Salvador and Jamaica will do so for the second time. While, Argentina will report for the third time and Uruguay for the fourth time.^{clxxv} Annex IV.A1 of the UN-ECLAC report, contains table IV.A1.1 with information on the coordination mechanisms for the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, per Latin American and the Caribbean state, up to November 2021.^{clxxvi}
138. According to table IV.A1.1, Suriname had no information available on its coordination mechanism. There was also no information available on the nature of the coordination mechanism (Ad hoc or not) and the technical secretariat. The only information available is that the most recent voluntary report will be that of 2022.^{clxxvii} The absence of these data indicates that the territorialization process of the 2030 Agenda that was gaining ground in Suriname is facing stagnation. According to the first *Annual Report on Regional Progress and Challenges in Relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, published by ECLAC in 2017, Suriname was among some of the Latin American and Caribbean countries that placed great emphasis on the territorialization process, through specific actions.^{clxxviii}
139. While the territorialization process of the 2030 Agenda may have slowed down or halted, it must be noted that Suriname formally installed its SDG Commission, on February 25, 2022.^{clxxix} This was reported by the Minister Albert Ramdin of Foreign Affairs, International Business, and International Cooperation (BIBIS). The committee is made up of representatives from all 17 line-ministries, to ensure that the SDGs are implemented in each ministry. According to the disseminated information, the SDG committee is charged with the inventory and reporting within the ministries to the government.
140. Minister Ramdin reiterated that the aim of the SDGs is to provide guidance to Suriname's national and international policy. Therefore, the working group is also tasked with producing an action plan for the implementation of the SDGs. This will ensure that bottlenecks and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals can be identified and addressed. Everything that is done under policy formulation will be derived from these objectives. Ramdin iterated the Ministry of BIBIS' commitment to fully support the committee in this project. Ramdin also revealed that there will be a platform for cooperation with the business community and the private sector. The cooperation between the Netherlands and the United Nations Suriname will contribute to support the project. With the presidency of the Caricom in the picture, Suriname will present the SDGs for the first time this year. This will take place during a Caricom meeting in July. Minister Ramdin believes it is important that Suriname contributes to the implementation of SDGs within and outside the CARICOM. According to the minister, it is important to radiate good leadership as a country.

IV.2. Recommendations

141. With respect to the resistance of the government to recognize SOGIE in the context of comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as in the context of gender, the government is **recommended** to revise the existing legal and policy frameworks on gender to make them more inclusive for SOGIE. This would allow for the development and application of a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights strategy.
142. The government is **recommended** to set up a support system with the aim to guarantee and increase the participation of CSOs in the field of SOGIE in the Civil Society Participation Mechanism of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development actively and consistently.
143. The government is **recommended** to revise its position from noting to supporting the six recommendations on the SOGIE recommendations it received during the UPR cycle III (2021). This should be demonstrated via concrete implementation activities.
144. The government is **recommended** to revitalize the territorialization process of the 2030 Agenda complementary to the SDG Commission and include SOGIE CSOs

V. Civil Society participation in SDG implementation

V.1. Assessment of civil society space around the SDGs (and in general)

145. This section will shed some light on the involvement of CSOs specialized in sexual and reproductive health and rights, in particularly SOGIE-oriented CSOs, have in monitoring and implementing the SDGs. A brief overview will be presented on the SOGIE-related work CSOs have done in Suriname to ensure that no one is left behind, including LGBTQI-persons. It will demonstrate how the CSOs have demanded and carved out as much as possible the necessary space for themselves to contribute to the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs, 4, 5 and 17.
146. Based on the previous sections it has become clear that the Surinamese government has not yet managed to facilitate the systematic, consistent, and active participation of SOGIE-CSOs in its policy and legal making processes. A similar situation was observed at the regional level by the Civil Society Participation Mechanism of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development in the preambular part of its 2021 Declaration.^{cbxxx} The Civil Society Participation Mechanism stated that while its constitution in 2018 is acknowledged as a major advancement, it has not been enough to ensure significant dialogue between government representatives and civil society organizations in regional forums.
147. Surinamese CSOs active in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights, including SOGIE specific CSOs, have made several efforts to improve their partnership with the government. This has been done with the aim to prevent existing and new public policies and legislation to cause setbacks to human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights. The CSO contributions are considered necessary to enable Suriname to deliver on its commitment to create sustainable development for all, and thus without leaving anyone behind.
148. Aside from national level partnerships, CSOs have also actively engaged in effective international strategic partnerships with, among others, various diplomatic missions such as the USA, EU, Netherlands, Canada, Brazil, France, and Argentina. Effective partnerships are also forged with regional and international organizations, such as CVC, PANCAP, IPPF, ILGA and the UN-bodies. Finally, reference can be made to strategic partnerships with sister-organizations such as COC in the Netherlands and SASOD in Guyana.

149. Regarding the efforts to partner with the government, reference can be made to the crucial involvement of SOGIE-CSOs in the organization and implementation of the 2017 hearings held by the Ministry of Justice and Police, the wake of the 2016 UPR review.^{clxxxii} Also, the input provided by the LGBT-platform for policy and legal reform during the political consultations held by the current government in 2020.^{clxxxiii} Finally, the participation of PAREA and Women's Rights Centre in the UPR-Committee constituted by the Ministry of Justice and Police in 2020.
150. From 2011, each year, the LGBT-platform organizes SOGIE-awareness and acceptance activities during October in Suriname.^{clxxxiiii} These activities include the hoisting of the rainbow flag by all supporting individuals, private businesses, political entities, and government agencies. Zooming in on the government, it must be noted that the former First Lady has demonstrated to be a supporter in hoisting the flag in 2013, despite backlashes from religious groups.^{clxxxv} A public statement of support was also made towards the creation of an inclusive policy environment for SOGIE in 2017, by the Minister of Justice and Police, Mrs. Jennifer van Dijk-Silos.^{clxxxvi} In the context of the inception of Pride Month the minister emphasized that LGBT rights are also human rights. She added that the Ministry of Justice and Police will do its part as a partner in pursuing the recognition and respect of the human rights of LGBT-persons. In that context, the Minister indicated that the board of the LGBT Platform Suriname will be invited by her to discuss a strategy for acceptance and regulation.
151. The sharp contrast with these publicly displayed forms of government support was demonstrated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, of the same cabinet. The Ministry appealed the 2017 Domestic District Court ruling in favour of Yvanna, a transgender woman, allowing her to supplement her civil registry certificates in line with her sex and gender reassignment.^{clxxxvii} This was to the dismay of many, including the Minister of Justice and Police.^{clxxxviii} With this action the Ministry of Internal Affairs indisputably communicated that it would not adopt a SOGIE inclusive approach. Therewith, the Ministry of Internal Affairs also signalled that it has made a conscious decision to operate in a manner that does not guarantee that no one is left behind.
152. Another contradiction manifests itself with respect to the Declaration of Paramaribo initiative launched by PAREA in 2017.^{clxxxix} It is a joint initiative with several private sector partners who commit towards creating a workplace where there is no discrimination based on SOGIESC. In 2021, the 5th annual signing session was held, adding more private sector partners to the already impressive list of over seventy private businesses. But notably the largest employer in Suriname, the government, has not yet aligned itself with the initiative. PAREA hopes the government will follow the example set by the private sector.^{clxxxix}
153. Reiterating paragraph 81 of this spotlight report, contradiction between public statements and actions of the government is also observed with respect to the negotiated draft MoU in 2018 between Stichting Lobi Health Center and the Ministry of Education. The MoU aims at integrating Comprehensive Sexual Education as a pilot in the curriculum of seven schools in areas where teenage pregnancies were prominent. The finalization of the MoU was halted and consequently the implementation of the pilot, due to changes in political leadership, sidelining pivotal officials from the pilot and demonstrating a lack of (political) commitment.
154. Paragraphs 35 and 36 of this spotlight report provide another example of the weak partnership between the government and CSOs. The Foundation Ilse Henar Hewitt and several other NGOs dedicated to women's rights, have been consulted by State organs in the context of the draft laws on promoting equal treatment in labor issues and on prevention and combatting of violence and sexual intimidation in work setting. However, after prompt provision of substantive contributions, CSOs are notoriously left in the dark and not further included as partners of the drafting process.
155. Due to the reluctance demonstrated by the government to recognize sexual and reproductive health and rights of LGBTQI-persons, PAREA petitioned the Constitutional Court on the discriminatory nature of the applicable marriage laws. In the preparatory phase of the petition the petitioners had some valuable exchanges with the OHCHR-IE SOGIE Team. The Constitutional

Court case is elaborated on in paragraphs 129 to 137 of this spotlight report. Petitioning the Constitutional Court was considered necessary by the petitioners to stop the persistence of discriminatory exclusion of LGBTQI-persons from a legally recognized marriage. The applicable legal and policy frameworks on marriage have the effect of leaving LGBTQI-individuals behind in the context sustainable socio-economic development. According to the petitioners' interactions between them and the government have proven to be unfruitful, as the latter remains unwilling to amend the applicable discriminatory marriage laws and policies based thereon.

156. The assessment of the space sexual and reproductive health and rights CSOs, including SOGIE-oriented CSOs, have in contributing to the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs in Suriname, reveals a strategy where CSOs have been involved by subsequent governments only to create a favorable optic, as being inclusive. There is little evidence of a sincere intention to involve CSOs to substantially contribute to the development of comprehensive and inclusive policy and legal frameworks.

V.2. Recommendations

157. Therefore, the government is **recommended** to recognize and address SOGIE as a cross-cutting and multidisciplinary theme of the government policy.

158. The government is also **recommended** to ensure that the announced platform for collaboration with the business community and the private sector includes the full participation of CSOs, including SOGIE-oriented CSOs, on an equal footing with all other platform parties.

159. Finally, the government is **recommended** not to approach the participation of CSOs as something optical, but as essential. Collaboration should be more focused on content and results and should simultaneously follow a needs-based approach and a rights-based approach.

Annexes

Annex 1

Rapportage Hearings Commissie Diversiteit & Inclusiviteit. Hoe is het gesteld met stigma, discriminatie & acceptatie van LGBTI-personen in Suriname? Ministerie van Justitie en Politie, 2017

Annex 2

Letter LGBT-Platform "Nationale hearing en consultatieronde nieuwe regeercoalitie voor het te samenstellen nieuw regeerakkoord"

End Notes

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- ⁱⁱ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A/RES/70/1
- ⁱⁱⁱ Letter requesting to be inscribed on the list of countries participating in the voluntary national review (VNR's) to take place at the 2022 HLPF, dated 29 September 2021
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- ^v E/HLPF/2021/5, p. 137,
https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/29836Compilation_of_Main_Messages_2022_VNRs.pdf
- ^{vi} <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf#hlpf2022>
- ^{vii} <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf#hlpf2022>
- ^{viii} Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015. Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A/RES/70/1, Preambular section paragraph 2; Declarative section paragraphs 4, 26, 48, 72, and 74 sub (e)
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^{xcⁱⁱⁱ} Articles 175a, 176 and 500a of the LAW of 30 March 2015, containing further amendment of the Criminal Code (GB 1911 no.1, as last amended by SB 2012 no.70) in connection with revision of the Criminal Code, (SB 2015 no. 44) p. 145.

[https://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wijzigingen-na-2005/wet-wijz-wetboek-van-strafrecht-\(30-maart-2015\)/](https://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wijzigingen-na-2005/wet-wijz-wetboek-van-strafrecht-(30-maart-2015)/)

^{xc^{iv}} Draft law containing provisions regarding the prevention and combating of violence and sexual harassment with regard to labor (Violence and Sexual Harassment Work Act), <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/ontwerp-wetten-bij-dna/in-behandeling/ontwerp-wet-geweld-en-seksuele-intimidatie-arbeid/>

^{xc^v} Draft law containing provisions on the promotion of equal treatment in employment (Equal Treatment of Labor Act), <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/ontwerp-wetten-bij-dna/in-behandeling/ontwerp-wet-gelijke-behandeling-arbeid/>

^{xc^{vi}} Draft Violence and Sexual Harassment Work Act. Article 5 Paragraph 1 states: *'Every employer is obliged, after consultation with the trade union competent to the collective labor agreement or internal consultation, to establish in writing a policy to prevent violence and sexual harassment in the workplace and to register and solve cases that have occurred'*. Paragraph 3 states: *'The written policy includes the following aspects': (m.) 'Specific measures to protect: Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex workers'*, <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/ontwerp-wetten-bij-dna/in-behandeling/ontwerp-wet-geweld-en-seksuele-intimidatie-arbeid/> and

Draft Equal Treatment of Labor Act. Article 4 paragraph 1 states: *'The employer may not discriminate based on race, sex, religion, skin color, ethnic origin, national origin, social origin, political opinion, disability, HIV positive status, family responsibility, age, pregnancy or marital status at entering into the employment contract, providing training to the employee, in terms of employment, working conditions, promotion and termination of the employment contract'*. Paragraph 2 states: *'In particular, the employer is prohibited from making a distinction based on': (j.) 'Sexual orientation'*, <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/ontwerp-wetten-bij-dna/in-behandeling/ontwerp-wet-gelijke-behandeling-arbeid/>

^{xc^{vii}} Accompanying letter from the National Assembly dated 16 January 2020, reference nr. 9520

^{xc^{viii}} Feedback from resource person Ivan Patrick Liesdek; Research, Archives & Documentation PAREA Suriname

^{xc^{ix}} <https://dna.sr/wetgeving/ontwerp-wetten-bij-dna/in-behandeling/>

^c <https://www.gfcnieuws.com/ministerie-van-awj-komt-met-wetgeving-geweld-op-de-werkplek/>

^{ci} <http://pareasuriname.com/in-maart-2021-hebben-para-suriname-womens-rights-centre-stichting-lobi-health-center-gezamenlijk-een-schaduwrapport-ingediend-bij-de-verenigde-naties-ten-behoeve-van-de-3e-upr-sessie-voor-surinam/>

^{cⁱⁱ} <http://pareasuriname.com/>

^{cⁱⁱⁱ} PAREA, Stichting Lobi Health Center and Women's Rights Centre, *Stakeholders' contributions to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) working group of the Human Rights Council in the occasion of the upcoming review of the Republic of Suriname, November 2021*, P. 9-10, <http://pareasuriname.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Suriname-Written-joint-CSO-contribution-to-the-third-Universal-Periodic-Review-Full-report-PAREA-Lobi-WRC.pdf>

^{c^{iv}} Article 80 of the LAW of December 28, 1859, concerning the introduction of a new legislation in the West Indian Colonies (G.B. 1860 no.4), last amended by S.B. 2004 no.25 (Civil Code), states: *'The man can be bound by marriage with only one woman at a time, the woman with only one man.'* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{c^v} Article 138 Civil Code, states: *'The nullity of a marriage can only be ruled by a court'* in conjunction with Article 139 Civil Code, that states: *'The annulment of a marriage entered into in violation of Article 80 can be sought by the person who is bound by a previous marriage to one of the spouses, by the spouses themselves, by the relatives in the ascending line, by all those who have an interest in the declaration of nullity, and by the prosecution. If the nullity of the earlier marriage is upheld, the existence or non-existence of that marriage will have to be decided in advance.'* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{c^{vi}} The Constitution of the Republic of Suriname. Article 8 paragraph 2 states *'No one should be discriminated against on the basis of birth, sex, race, language, religion, origin, education, political opinion, economic position or social circumstances or any other status'*, <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/grondwet-suriname/>

^{c^{vii}} American Convention on Human Rights, Article 17; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 23(1); Universal Declaration on Human Rights, Article 16; International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 10.

^{c^{viii}} Article 80 Civil Code dates back to 1859. Article 80 Civil Code dates back to 1859. The Housing Rental Act is from 2020 while the General Pension Act and the National Basic Health Insurance Act are from 2014

^{c^{ix}} Surviving relatives and partners from marriage and long-term joint households are recognized as equal and receive equal protection from social security laws. See for example: Article 9 of the LAW of 26 February 2020, containing special rules regarding the rental and renting of living space and the establishment of a Tenancy Committee. (Housing Rental Act 2020) (S.B. 2020 no.53), states: *'The spouse of a tenant or the partner of the tenant with whom there is long-term joint household for at least two consecutive years, whether or not with minor children living at home, and who is registered in the population register at the same address of the rented accommodation is co-tenant by operation of law, as long as the accommodation is the main residence of the spouse or intended partner, regardless of whether the rent and lease was concluded before or after the marriage or partnership was entered into. In the absence of a co-tenant as referred to in the first sentence, an adult child of the tenant may act as co-tenant, insofar as it is present in the family.'* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wetten-na-2005/huurwet-woonruimte-2020/>; Article 1 of the LAW of 9 September 2014, containing rules on the introduction of a

general pension scheme (General Pension Act 2014), defines surviving relatives under (e) as: (1) *the partner of the deceased participant, (2) the legal and legitimate or adopted children born from the marriage of the deceased participant, or foster children living in for care who are minors and (3) the long-term joint household of the deceased participant born natural or recognized children or foster children living at home who are minors.* Under (g), a partner is defined as (1) *the spouse of a participant or (2) the person who maintains a long-term joint household with a participant.*

<http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wetten-na-2005/wet-algemeen-pensioen-2014/>; Article 1 of the LAW of 9 September 2014, containing rules on the introduction of basic health insurance (National Basic Health Insurance Act) (S.B. 2014 no. 114), defines partner under (j) as: (1) *Spouse of a participant or (2) the person who maintains a long-term joint household with a participant.* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wetten-na-2005/wet-nationale-basiszorgverzekering/>

^{cx} See for example the Explanatory Memorandum of the Housing Rental Act 2020 on Articles 9 to 12 on the rent protection of the family. It states: *‘Articles 9 to 12 regulate the rent protection of the spouse or partner of the tenant. If there is a marriage or partnership, the spouse or partner of the tenant becomes co-tenant by operation of law. In the event of a partnership, there must be a long-term joint household between the tenant and partner for at least three consecutive years, whether or not with minor children living at home, and registered in the population register at the same address of the rented accommodation. Important here is that the spouse or partner of the tenant becomes a co-tenant by operation of law, as long as the living space serves as the main residence of the spouse or intended partner. It is not important whether the rent and lease was concluded before or after the marriage or partnership was entered into. The fact that, in addition to marriage, unmarried cohabitation is also taken into account, is in keeping with Surinamese and Caribbean reality.’* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/wetten-na-2005/huurwet-woonruimte-2020/>

^{cx1} Article 136 Civil Code states: *Marriages entered into in a foreign country, either between residents of Surinam, or between them and others, are of value, if they are performed according to the form, customary in that country, provided that the promulgation of marriage, according to the second section of this title, within Suriname, without any objection to the marriage, and the said residents have not acted against the provisions contained in the first section of the same title.’*

<http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{cxii} The Convention of 5 October 1961 Abolishing the Requirement of Legalisation for Foreign Public Documents (HCCH 1961 Apostille Convention) facilitates the use of public documents abroad. The purpose of the Convention is to abolish the traditional requirement of legalisation, replacing the often long and costly legalisation process with the issuance of a single Apostille certificate by a Competent Authority in the place where the document originates.

<https://assets.hcch.net/docs/b12ad529-5f75-411b-b523-8eebe86613c0.pdf>

^{cxiii} Article 137 Civil Code states: *‘Within one year after the return of the spouses in Suriname, the deed of marriage, entered into in a foreign country, must be transferred to the public marriage register of their place of residence.’*

<http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{cxiv} Advisory Opinion OC-24/17, Inter-Am. Ct. H.R. (ser. A) No. 24 (Nov. 24, 2017), declaring that: change of name and the rectification of public records and identity documents to conform to a person's gender identity are protected by the American Convention on Human Rights. Additionally, the Court maintained that states must extend all existing legal mechanisms—including marriage—to same-sex couples. http://www.corteidh.or.cr/docs/opinion/es/seriea_24_eng.pdf

^{cxv} Article 153 Civil Code states: *‘The existence of a marriage cannot be proven other than by the deed of execution, entered in the registers of births, marriages, except in the cases provided for in the following articles.’*

<http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{cxvi} <https://dna.sr/nieuws/parlement-geeft-toestemming-wijziging-surinaams-burgerlijk-wetboek-door-te-voeren/>

^{cxvii} See Article 342l Civil Code, paragraph 1 sub a that states: *‘a request for adoption can only be granted if: (a) the requested adoption is manifestly in the best interests of the child to be adopted;’*; Article 342m paragraph 1 sub c that states: *‘Unless it appears earlier that a request for adoption cannot be accepted, the decision on it will be postponed if and as long as: (c) less than three years have elapsed since the day on which the adopters married each other;’* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{cxviii} See Article 342l Civil Code, paragraph 1 sub d that states: *‘a request for adoption can only be granted if: (d) neither of the adopters is less than eighteen years older than the child, and moreover the man is no more than fifty and the woman no more than forty years different in age from the child.’* <http://dna.sr/wetgeving/surinaamse-wetten/geldende-teksten-tm-2005/burgerlijk-wetboek/>

^{cxix} Suriname in de startblokken voor nieuwe regeermacht. <https://president.gov.sr/actueel/2020/suriname-in-startblokken-voor-nieuwe-regeermacht/>

^{cx} IMF Statement on Technical Discussions with Suriname, 20 November 2020

<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/11/20/pr20350-suriname-imf-statement-on-technical-discussions-with-suriname>

^{cxxi} See SUN-online newspaper article, 12 May 2022, *Sozavo uitgehold, armoedebestrijding op bord president. Zwangeren geen toegang tot zorg*

https://sun.sr/Details/17523_9Ih4i2aBERFWog07PZM6ayaFaf3eVhrylkhDjuEKiKjy1ME1HDxKb3uorFMXoEzyfwdwGh62Pn3FMnhwvDgXj3wcFcFccFcFc_0301027Rabparm.jpg

^{cxixii} Wet van 9 september 2014, houdende regels over de invoering van een basiszorgverzekering (Wet Nationale Basisverzekering). S.B. 2014, no. 114,

http://www.dna.sr/media/76886/SB_2014_no_114_Wet_Nationale_Basiszorgverzekering.pdf

^{cxixiii} <https://dagbladwest.com/2021/05/12/besparing-na-opschoning-bazo-kaartenbestand-nog-onbekend/>

^{cxixiv} See DWT-online newspaper article, 16 August 2021, *Sampie wil kortere procedure voor Bazokaart zwangeren.*

<http://dwtonline.com/laatste-nieuws/2021/08/16/sampie-wil-kortere-procedure-voor-bazokaart-zwangeren/>

^{cxixv} PAREA, Stichting Lobi Health Center and Women's Rights Centre, *Stakeholders' contributions to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) working group of the Human Rights Council in the occasion of the upcoming review of the Republic of Suriname, November 2021*, p. 6, http://pareasuriname.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Suriname_Written-joint-CSO-contribution-to-the-third-Universal-Periodic-Review_Full-report_PAREA-Lobi-WRC.pdf

^{cxixvi} Moedersterfte in Suriname. Rapport ter Bevordering van Verhoogde Verantwoording en Multisectorale Inzet om Moedersterfte in Suriname te Voorkomen. Ministerie van Volksgezondheid. Maart 20

National Maternal Health and Mortality Reduction Priority Plan, July 2019 - September 2020 Suriname. Ministerie van Volksgezondheid.

^{cxvii} PAREA, Stichting Lobi Health Center and Women's Rights Centre, *Stakeholders' contributions to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) working group of the Human Rights Council in the occasion of the upcoming review of the Republic of Suriname, November 2021*, p. 5-6, http://pareasuriname.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Suriname_Written-joint-CSO-contribution-to-the-third-Universal-Periodic-Review_Full-report_PAREA-Lobi-WRC.pdf

^{cxviii} See the world map on abortion laws at <https://reproductiverights.org/worldabortionlaws>

^{cxvix} See Accelerate progress - sexual and reproductive health and rights for all: report of the Guttmacher -Lancet Commission; www.thelancet.com Vol 391 June 30, 2018 - "Forcing a woman ... to continue a pregnancy that she does not want, violates the right to decide freely whether and when to bear a child-and the right to have that decision respected and guaranteed by government"

^{cxv} M.A. Castelen, *Women's Reproductive Health Rights the Rule of Law and Public Health Considerations in Repealing the Criminal Laws on Abortion in the Republic Suriname*, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2009, https://books.google.nl/books/about/Women_s_Reproductive_Health_Rights_the_R.html?id=d5vznAEACAAJ&hl=en&output=html_text&redir_esc=y

^{cxviii} OAS, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, IACHR Urges El Salvador to End the Total Criminalization of Abortion, http://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2018/042.asp

^{cxviii} OAS, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, IACHR Brings El Salvador Case before IA Court, https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2019/255.asp

^{cxviii} Combined initial and second periodic report of Suriname, CEDAW/C/SUR/1-2, (2002) at 65 under "Reproductive Health"

^{cxviii} OAS, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), 'IACHR Urges All States to Adopt Comprehensive, Immediate Measures to Respect and Protect Women's Sexual and Reproductive Rights', October 23, 2017. https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/media_center/PReleases/2017/165.asp

^{cxv} See Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR Committee), General Comment No. 14 (2000) on the Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health (Art. 12 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights), contained in Document E/C.12/2000/4.

^{cxv} See Suriname Progress Report on the implementation of the Montevideo Consensus 2013-2017 from the Ministry of Home Affairs (Dr. Julia Terborg - 2018)

^{cxv} See ECLAC, Montevideo Consensus on population and development

https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/21860/15/S20131039_en.pdf

^{cxv} See ICPD Nairobi Summit, <https://www.nairobisummitcpd.org/search/site/suriname>

^{cxv} See the daily newspaper De Ware Tijd, 'Minister wil abortus bespreekbaar maken', March 5, 2021, <http://www.dwtonline.com/laatste-nieuws/2021/03/05/minister-wil-abortus-bespreekbaar-maken/>

^{cxv} M.A. Castelen, *Women's Reproductive Health Rights the Rule of Law and Public Health Considerations in Repealing the Criminal Laws on Abortion in the Republic Suriname*, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2009, https://books.google.nl/books/about/Women_s_Reproductive_Health_Rights_the_R.html?id=d5vznAEACAAJ&hl=en&output=html_text&redir_esc=y

^{cxv} See UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), CEDAW General Recommendation No. 24: Article 12 of the Convention (Women and Health), 1999, A/54/38/Rev.1, chap. I

^{cxv} M.A. Castelen, *Women's Reproductive Health Rights the Rule of Law and Public Health Considerations in Repealing the Criminal Laws on Abortion in the Republic Suriname*, University of Toronto, Toronto, 2009, https://books.google.nl/books/about/Women_s_Reproductive_Health_Rights_the_R.html?id=d5vznAEACAAJ&hl=en&output=html_text&redir_esc=y

^{cxv} PAREA, Stichting Lobi Health Center and Women's Rights Centre, *Stakeholders' contributions to the 39th session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) working group of the Human Rights Council in the occasion of the upcoming review of the Republic of Suriname, November 2021*, p. 4-5, http://pareasuriname.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Suriname_Written-joint-CSO-contribution-to-the-third-Universal-Periodic-Review_Full-report_PAREA-Lobi-WRC.pdf

^{cxv} https://www.who.int/health-topics/cervical-cancer#tab=tab_1

^{cxv} Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan Suriname 2019 - 2028 (dr. Els Dams)

^{cxv} See Accelerate progress - sexual and reproductive health and rights for all: report of the Guttmacher -Lancet Commission; www.thelancet.com Vol 391 June 30, 2018

^{cxv} See EB/144/SR/13- 30 January 2019

^{cxv} Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020

^{cxv} Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan Suriname 2019 - 2028 (dr. Els Dams)

^{cl} Presentation for the National Symposium on Cervical Cancer June 2018 (Els Dams)

^{cl} See Preparatory Pilot towards a National Cervical Cancer Screening Program (Model for a Roll Out Screening per District), End Report - Stichting Lobi Health Center, Nensy Bandhoe (December 2017); Presentation Barriers to Screening for the National Symposium on Cervical Cancer June 2018 (Nensy Bandhoe)

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^{cl} K.W. Abbott and D. 'Snidal, *Hard and Soft Law in International Governance*', eastlaw.net, 2000, p. 422

^{clv} STAATSBEESLUIT van 10 oktober 1991, houdende instelling en taakomschrijving van Departementen van Algemeen Bestuur ("Besluit Taakomschrijving Departementen 1991") (S.B. 1991 no. 58), gelijk het luidt na de daarin aangebrachte wijzigingen bij S.B. 2002 no. 16). https://dna.sr/media/18325/besluit_taaomschrijving_departementen_1991.pdf

^{clv} Genderactieplan 2019-2020 van juni 2019. <http://homeaffairs.gov.sr/media/1061/3-juli-nederlandse-printversie-genderactieplan-2019-2020-1.pdf>

^{clv} Gendervisie-Beleidsdocument 2021-2035 van juni 2019. <http://homeaffairs.gov.sr/media/1060/3-juli-nederlandse-printversie-gender-vision-policy-document-2021-2035-1.pdf>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tHCG4RGViaY>

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