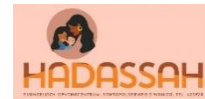




BINIBurgerinitiatief
voor Participatie & Goed Bestuur



Universal Periodic Review

Suriname

Submission to the Human Rights Council for the 4th Cycle of the Universal Periodic Review (2026)

(report submitted April 2026)

Joint submission

Main submitting organization:

Stichting Projekta (ECOSOC consultative status)

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Supporting submitting organizations:

- Burgerinitiatief voor Participatie en Goed Bestuur
- Stichting Wan Okasi
- PAREA
- Women's Rights Centre
- Hadassah
- Stichting Tehuis voor Vrouwen in Crisissituaties
- Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpschouffden in Suriname
- Inheems Kollektief Suriname
- Dynamic Legal Advice

A. Contributing and supporting organisations

Stichting Projekta, Organisation for Women and Development (est. 1993) is a Surinamese ECOSOC-accredited civil society organization that works on themes of democracy, good governance, and human rights, with a specific focus on gender equality and women's rights. Their main activities are advocacy, capacity building, and civil society movement building. This is their 2nd UPR submission.

Burgerinitiatief voor Participatie en Goed Bestuur (Dutch abbr. BINI, English name 'Citizens Initiative for Participation and Good Governance'), established in 2015, is a coalition of over 20 civil society organizations and over 10 individual citizens, working on human rights, participation, good governance, and sustainable development. This is their 1st UPR submission.

PAREA (est. 2014) is an association of LGBTQI+ professionals established in 2014, aimed at serving the local LGBTQI+ community in Suriname. It focuses on issues such as women's rights, gender inequality, and non-discrimination related to sexual orientation and gender identity

Stichting Wan Okasi is a civil society organization established in 2011, advocating for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Suriname, guided by the principles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Women's Rights Centre (WRC) Suriname (est. 1997) is a Surinamese women's rights organization specializing in domestic violence and gender-based violence. WRC's activities include research, capacity building and legislation. This is the 2nd UPR submission that they have worked on.

Stichting Tehuis voor Vrouwen in Crisissituaties (abbr: Sticris), established in 1985, is a shelter for women and children who have escaped domestic violence. The center has 13 family rooms, and about 52 residents. Residents receive housing, counseling and schooling. This is their 1st UPR submission.

Hadassah Shelter, established in 2020, is a shelter for mothers and their children who have escaped from domestic violence. The center has twelve apartments and currently houses approximately 38 permanent residents. Hadassah provides housing, support, education and skills training to the residents, until they are able to transition out independently. This is their 1st UPR submission.

Dynamic Legal Advice (est. 2024), is a Surinamese organization that provides legal advice and research, delivers legal services, carry's out projects at national, regional and international levels, and promotes justice and legal innovation. This is their 1st UPR submission.

Inheems Kollektief Suriname (IKSUR), founded March 20, 2015 is an Indigenous NGO dedicated to the holistic development of Indigenous communities, with a strong emphasis on fostering Indigenous entrepreneurship, advancing education, supporting social project development, enhancing production capabilities, and promoting agricultural and husbandry practices.

The Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS) is the representative organization of Indigenous traditional authorities in Suriname. The organization supports Indigenous communities through advocacy, policy engagement, legal awareness, and capacity strengthening at the national and international levels. VIDS seeks to ensure the recognition, protection, and effective implementation of Indigenous peoples' rights in accordance with international human rights standards.

B. Methodology

Projekta as lead organization formed a team to acquire information through desk research, to co-write and to edit texts. Collaborating organizations sent in prepared texts, based on desk research and/or on their own direct experiences, for paragraphs related to their specific issues, which were incorporated in the overall report. The draft report was continuously shared among co-writers for additional comments. The final document was shared with the partner organizations.

ON THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION BY SURINAME, OF THE THIRD CYCLE UPR RECOMMENDATIONS

Theme: Ratification of & accession to international instruments

UPR recommendation 97.12

1. The continued challenges affecting the functioning of the Constitutional Court of Suriname significantly undermine the State's capacity to operationalize its international human rights commitments.
2. The Constitutional Court was established in 2019 in accordance with article 144 of the Constitution to validate legislation, policy and international human rights agreements against the constitution. Appeals to the Constitutional Court can only be made through the Registrar and the court's decisions have to be co-signed by the Registrar.
3. The first five-year term of office of this court was 2020–2025. However, since 7 May 2025 the term of six of its members, including the Chair and the Registrar, expired. The government and the National Assembly have omitted to appoint a new Chair, Registrar and members. Thus, citizens have no access to a mechanism to validate legislation or policy decisions.
4. Elleson Fraenk, Dean of the Bar Association, in an interview on Jan 30, 2026,¹ stressed that submitted cases cannot be reviewed, nor is it possible to submit new requests for review and that in a period when new legislation (i.e. the new civil code) is being implemented and institutional changes considered, the lack of a fully functioning review mechanism has become problematic for the rule of law.
5. Members of the Court are appointed through processes in which political actors play a decisive role, as the National Assembly presents candidates to the President. There is a risk that independence, neutrality, impartiality, and credibility could be undermined if incoming governments seek to appoint politically affiliated individuals to the Court when members' five-year terms end. The five-year term is especially significant as it coincides with general election cycles.
6. Legal provisions for term limits, dismissal procedures, or reappointment are not clearly shielded from political discretion, so judges of the Constitutional Court could face implicit or explicit pressure to align decisions with political interests to secure continuity.
7. Since 2025, there has been a pattern indicative of gradual institutional paralysis. Several draft decisions remain pending and cannot be rendered, such as those concerning land allocation and mining legislation, which have direct implications for ITP collective land rights, access to natural resources, and the protection of their traditional livelihoods and cultural integrity.

Recommendations

8. Urgently restore the functionality of the Constitutional Court by appointing a Chair, Registrar, and full number of members, ensuring the Court is adequately resourced, including permanent institutional housing and administrative capacity.
9. Adopt legislative and constitutional safeguards to ensure independence of the Constitutional Court, including clear and transparent procedures for appointment, tenure, reappointment, and dismissal which are insulated from political influence and in line with international standards.
10. Formally strengthen the institutional status of the Constitutional Court, including clarifying its position vis-à-vis the judiciary and ensuring its protection as a core rule-of-law institution responsible for reviewing legislation and aligning it with international human rights obligations.
11. Establish a structured mechanism for systematic incorporation of ratified international human rights treaties into domestic law, including mandatory constitutional review of new legislation and policies for compliance with international obligations.
12. Ensure timely adjudication of all pending constitutional review cases and guarantee public access to constitutional review procedures.
13. Request and operationalize technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to support the ratification of outstanding core human rights instruments and the strengthening of domestic implementation, including capacity building for judges, legislators, and legal professionals.

Theme: National Human Rights Institution (NHRI)

UPR recommendations 97.13 through 97.20; 98.21

14. Despite repeated commitments, Suriname has persistently failed to establish and operationalize an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in line with the Paris Principles, a gap that has been consistently highlighted across multiple UN treaty body reviews.
15. While the State has taken some preliminary steps, including discussions on draft legislation and the existence of a Human Rights Office within the Ministry of Justice and Police, these measures do not begin to fulfil the requirements of an independent national institution.
16. Civil society organizations were consulted in the last quarter of 2022 on the drafting of legislation for the formal establishment of a Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles, but were not informed of the final draft document, and were not informed of and engaged in any subsequent developments.

Recommendations:

17. Expedite the formal and legal establishment of an independent National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) in full compliance with the Paris Principles.
18. Ensure transparent and participatory legislative processes for the NHRI, including the public disclosure of the draft NHRI law and meaningful consultation with civil society.
19. Guarantee adequate and sustainable funding, staffing, and institutional capacity for the NHRI, including adequate representation and an accessible complaint mechanism for individuals and vulnerable groups.

20. Establish a clear, time-bound roadmap for operationalization, including benchmarks for appointment of members, institutional setup, and accreditation with the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI).

Theme: Prohibition of torture & ill-treatment (including cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment)

UPR recommendations 97.31 through 97.33

21. In recent years, there has been a growing dissatisfaction of how traditional Indigenous lands are given away for mining and logging without the internationally recognized right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). Concessions have been issued in traditional lands to apparently influential individuals, including leading politicians, and there is an absence of legal recourse for Indigenous peoples.
22. Tensions escalated in May 2023, when a police station was destroyed by fire, and at least 10 trucks transporting wood were set ablaze when rioting took place in the Indigenous village of Pikin Saron. Two Indigenous men were shot by police.
23. Complaints regarding excessive force by police were investigated by the internal Personnel Affairs Investigation Department (OPZ), leading to questions about independence and impartiality. The results of this investigation, in addition to multiple petitions and protests by indigenous peoples' organizations in the past 2.5 years, led the Public Prosecutors Office to pursue prosecution of the police. A suspended prison sentence of 12 months, with a probationary period of three years, have been demanded against seven police officers standing trial in the Pikin Saron case. In her closing arguments, the public prosecutor stated that the officers used disproportionate force during the unrest in Pikin Saron on May 2, 2023.
24. The pathologist's report discloses that the gunshot wounds on both victims show that they were not fleeing. If that had been the case, the shots would have been found at a different height. Furthermore, the pathologist concluded that both men died from severe blood loss after remaining lying on the ground for an extended period. During a reconstruction at the crime scene, it was also established that both men were already lying on the ground when they were shot at close range by the police officers.²

Recommendations:

25. Establish an independent oversight mechanism to investigate allegations of police misconduct, excessive use of force and ill-treatment, ensuring full independence from the police chain of command and compliance with international standards.
26. Adopt and enforce clear use-of-force regulations aligned with international norms and ensure mandatory human rights training for law enforcement personnel.
27. Ensure use of independent forensic expertise where appropriate and ensure that victims and their families have access to effective and timely remedies.
28. Ensure the effective implementation of the right to free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and strengthen legal protection to prevent escalation.
29. Join and implement the UN regional agreement on access to information, public participation and justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazu Agreement)

Theme: Human rights & poverty

UPR recommendations 97.22; 97.39 through 97.41; 98.36

30. A human rights approach to poverty reduction is grounded in human rights frameworks, accountability, non-discrimination, equality, and progressive realization. Accordingly, non-monetary deprivations—such as lack of access to health care, education, and adequate living standards—constitute human rights violations attributable to the State.
31. Multidimensional poverty in Suriname affects up to 73% of large households, with disproportionately high rates among children and working-age adults raising families. These deprivations extend beyond income poverty and include limited access to education, health care, food, and basic services, constituting a failure to progressively realize economic and social rights in line with international obligations.³
32. Education remains unequal in both access and quality. A significant proportion of poor households are headed by individuals who have not completed lower secondary education (63.8% compared to 41.8% in better-off households), and in 20.6% of poor households, not all school-aged children attend school. Over 43% of the labour force has only primary education, while access to tertiary education remains limited, constraining upward mobility and reinforcing intergenerational poverty.⁴
33. Food insecurity is acute and widespread, affecting approximately 61% of the population and nearly 80% in the interior, highlighting severe geographic disparities. Since 2021, macroeconomic reforms (subsidy reductions, fiscal consolidation, and the introduction of value-added tax) implemented in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund, have significantly increased the cost of living. These measures have exacerbated existing inequalities and strained already under-resourced public services, contributing to shortages in health care, including medicines and personnel, and accelerating the outflow of essential workers.⁵
34. The social impact of these measures has been uneven and discriminatory. As public sector wages stagnated or declined in real terms and job security weakened, many women, who are overrepresented in sectors such as education, health care, and clerical services, experienced a direct loss of income and economic stability.
35. As household incomes declined and public services became less accessible or more costly, women have increasingly absorbed the responsibility for caregiving, food preparation, and sustaining household welfare.
36. Indigenous and Maroon communities in the interior face compounded barriers, including geographic isolation, limited access to social protection, and exclusion from compensation schemes due to weak civil registration systems and digital access gaps. Persons with disabilities, older persons, and informal workers encounter systemic obstacles in accessing social assistance, while pension levels have not kept pace with inflation.

Recommendations:

37. Adopt and implement a comprehensive, rights-based national poverty reduction strategy, with measurable targets, disaggregated data, and explicit alignment with human rights obligations.
38. Establish an inclusive national social security framework that ensures adequate and differentiated coverage for informal workers, persons with disabilities, older persons, and populations in the interior.
39. Invest in equitable access to quality education at all levels, including measures to reduce school dropout, and expand secondary and tertiary education opportunities
40. Remove administrative and structural barriers to accessing social services, including simplifying registration processes, strengthening civil registries, expanding digital and physical access points, and ensuring that mechanisms are inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Theme: Right to an adequate standard of living; land and property rights**UPR recommendations 97.85; 97.87; 97.88; 97.90; 97.94**

41. Discrimination against ITPs is pervasive and across all areas of human rights, as many times acknowledged in reports, conclusions and recommendations of other human rights treaty bodies such as the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, UN special mechanisms on Indigenous Peoples, as well as within the Inter-American human rights' system.⁶
42. The main obstacle to access to justice is the fact that ITP collective rights and land rights are still not legally recognized and laid down in law. The ITP authorities are not legally recognized, nor are the communities themselves. Access to justice is impaired for ITPs owing to their relatively low educational level, language barriers, a lack of transportation to the capital, difficulties with acquiring legal aid, access to information, ethnic discrimination, and strong prejudices, to name a few. ⁷
43. ITPs are increasingly confronted with land allocations to outsiders on their traditional lands. If an outsider acquires land in tribal areas, he/she can deprive the ITPs of their traditional living and spiritual areas. Goldmining, logging, agribusiness activities threaten living areas and land rights.
44. In October 2025, the representatives of the Indigenous communities and its umbrella organization Association of Indigenous Traditional Leaders (VIDS) presented their Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) protocol to the President and the Speaker of the National Assembly. The President stated that the protocol will serve as a starting point for further steps, including the demarcation of territories, the recognition of collective rights, and the beginning of an effective process to achieve the recognition of Indigenous and Tribal peoples in the constitution.

Recommendations:

45. Recognition of the collective rights, and of Indigenous and Tribal peoples.
46. Recognition and protection of demarcated territories of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples
47. Compulsory use of the process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) in consultations and interactions with Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

48. Immediate halt to allocation of land within living areas and tribal lands of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.
49. Implementation of the OAS judgements pertaining to Indigenous and Tribal Peoples with the full and meaningful participation of ITPs.

Theme: Right to health

UPR recommendations 97.44 through 97.46

50. Progress in ensuring equitable access to quality health care remains limited and structurally uneven. The State has not ensured sustained investments in rights-based health legislation, policies, and programmes that address underlying determinants of health disparities.
51. Evidence from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)⁸ indicates significant systemic gaps: 62% of households report at least one chronically ill member, 34% report disability, and approximately 40% of households lack full health insurance coverage - rising to 61% among the poorest households, underscoring persistent inequities in access to essential services.
52. The health system is further strained by the over-centralization of specialized care in the Academic Hospital Paramaribo, which provides around 60% of hospital care, 90% of intensive care, and all top clinical services. The hospital faces severe financial constraints, staff shortages, brain drain, and inconsistent availability of medicines and supplies, undermining service quality and access, especially for vulnerable and rural populations.
53. Healthcare accessibility outside the capital city is limited, with low numbers of clinics and primary care doctors. In the interior, where Indigenous and Tribal Communities live, most clinics are staffed by healthcare assistants instead of doctors. Those in need of more specialized care must travel to the city, which is prohibitively expensive.
54. Implementation of a national mental health plan remains insufficient to address a worsening crisis. Suriname continues to record among the highest suicide rates in the region, with 68% of cases linked to pesticide self-poisoning. Suicide is a leading cause of death among persons aged 15–39, with rising attempts among youth aged 16–25, and 36% of adolescents (10–18) reporting suicidal thoughts, highlighting critical gaps in prevention, early intervention, and psychosocial support.
55. These trends are driven by intersecting socio-economic stressors, including financial hardship, relational instability, high-stress environments, and the continued availability of highly lethal means.

Recommendations:

56. Increase public expenditure on health, with maintenance of critical infrastructure, and transparent procurement and supply chain management to address recurrent shortages.
57. Develop and implement a health sector national human resources plan, including retention incentives, rural deployment schemes, and continuous professional training to mitigate shortages and brain drain.
58. Decentralize service delivery by strengthening primary healthcare networks in rural and interior regions, including expansion of clinics, mobile units, and telemedicine services.
59. Ensure targeted maternal and reproductive health services in rural communities

60. Implement a national suicide prevention strategy that includes restriction of access to lethal means (notably pesticides) and crisis response services.
61. Integrate mental health services into schools, including routine screening, early identification, and referral systems for children and adolescents, making use of, and expanding the program of care-coordinators in schools.
62. Ensure meaningful participation of civil society, including organizations representing women, youth, LGBTQIA+-persons, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous and Tribal communities, in the design, implementation, and evaluation of health policies.

Theme: Sexual & reproductive health and rights

UPR recommendations 97.47 through 97.49; 98.37 98.39; 98.47; 98.48

63. Suriname has reduced maternal mortality over time, but the level remains high and points to persistent weaknesses in the availability and quality of maternal health services. PAHO reports that the maternal mortality ratio was 96.5 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2020.⁹
64. Suriname has a National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy 2020–2030, but legal and practical barriers continue to undermine effective access, especially for adolescents. A 2023 UNFPA Caribbean legal review¹⁰, which includes Suriname, found that the minimum age at which adolescents may access sexual and reproductive health services without parental consent is not expressly legislated, and that this can result in the denial of sexual and reproductive health services and contraception to adolescents.
65. PAHO estimates that Suriname’s adolescent fertility rate was 46.9 live births per 1,000 girls aged 15–19 in 2024, which demonstrates the need for age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health information, confidential and youth-friendly services, and effective access to contraception throughout the country, including in rural and interior areas.¹¹
66. Abortion remains criminalized in Suriname. The 2023 UNFPA Caribbean policy brief classifies Suriname among the countries in the region where termination of pregnancy is prohibited with no statutory exceptions.
67. Criminalization creates uncertainty among medical professionals and contributes to denial of safe and accessible care, with foreseeable consequences for women’s and girls’ health, dignity, and autonomy.

Recommendations:

68. Fully implement the National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy 2020–2030 through a funded action plan with measurable targets on maternal mortality, adolescent pregnancy, contraception access, and geographic equity.
69. Guarantee confidential, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services throughout the country and clarify in law or binding policy that adolescents can access contraception and other essential SRH services without unnecessary parental consent barriers, consistent with their evolving capacities.

70. Expand access to safe and affordable contraceptives and family planning information, including for adolescents, low-income women, and women in rural and interior communities, through the public health system and national insurance mechanisms.
71. Adopt and implement age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in and outside schools, focused on prevention of adolescent pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, consent, and access to services.
72. Decriminalize abortion and remove legal, administrative, and practical barriers to safe abortion and post-abortion care, in order to protect the rights to health, privacy, dignity, and equality of women and girls.

Theme: Right to education

UPR recommendations 97.52; 97.53; 97.55; 97.56

73. There are disparities in education completion rates based on geographic and socioeconomic status. Secondary school completion rates for children from the hinterland are as low as 15 percent. Limited economic opportunities require children to work rather than continue their education.
74. Findings from UNICEF indicate that by Grade 6, at most 63% of children have the numeracy and reading skills, respectively, that they should have acquired by Grade 3. Eleven percent of women have completed tertiary education, while among men this share is only 5.4 percent. Only 8% of the population completed a higher education and only 15.5% finished high school. 18.4% had no education or only kindergarten.¹²
75. Structural deficiencies continue to undermine both access and quality of education in the hinterland. These include persistent shortages of qualified teachers, limited availability of secondary-level facilities, inadequate infrastructure, lack of water and electricity, insufficient maintenance of school buildings, inadequate housing for teachers, and transportation challenges.
76. Indigenous and Tribal children are disproportionately affected by these conditions. In many cases, education in their communities is limited to the primary level, with significant barriers to continuing secondary education. These challenges are compounded by systemic disruptions, including delayed school openings compared to coastal areas, and recurrent flooding leading to prolonged school closures. In addition, teacher absenteeism and delayed deployment, sometimes linked to inadequate government support for transportation, further compromise the continuity and quality of education in these regions.

Recommendations:

77. Increase education funding, with targeted investments in the interior to ensure adequate infrastructure, learning materials, and safe school environments.
78. Implement a comprehensive teacher deployment and retention strategy for remote areas, including incentives, housing, transportation, and timely remuneration.
79. Ensure inclusive and equitable education for Indigenous and Tribal children and children with disabilities, including removal of structural barriers.

Theme: Violence against women; sexual and gender-based violence**UPR recommendations 97.63 through 98.46**

80. Suriname has received extensive and consistent recommendations during the third cycle of the Universal Periodic Review to strengthen its response to gender-based violence, including improving access to shelters, expanding survivor support services, ensuring accountability, and adopting a comprehensive, multisectoral approach.
81. Some steps have been taken, such as a civil society-led revision of the Domestic Violence Law, which was approved by the Council of Ministers and is pending submission to parliament, and the inclusion since June 2025 of domestic violence and gender-based violence modules in police, prosecutorial and judicial training curricula.
82. The State has adopted legislation addressing sexual harassment in the workplace; however, its scope is limited to the private sector and does not extend protection to public servants, thereby leaving a significant portion of the workforce without adequate legal safeguards.
83. Data provided by shelters such as STICRIS and Hadassah indicate that existing capacity is insufficient, with victims regularly being turned away due to lack of space. Services are heavily concentrated in Paramaribo, leaving women in rural, interior and remote areas with significant access barriers. In addition, prolonged shelter stays due to the absence of reintegration and housing solutions point to systemic shortcomings in long-term support. Both shelters report chronic underfunding, shortages of qualified personnel, and the absence of predictable and structural government financing, resulting in a continued reliance on donor funding.

Recommendations:

84. Swiftly table, adopt and operationalize the revised Domestic Violence Law.
85. Amend existing legislation on sexual harassment in the workplace to ensure equal protection for public servants.
86. Expand mandatory Domestic Violence and Gender Based Violence training to the Army/Defense Forces and the Faculty of Law of the University of Suriname.
87. Increase the availability, capacity and geographic accessibility of shelters, particularly in interior and underserved regions.
88. Ensure sustainable and adequate government funding for shelters, including operational costs, qualified personnel and support programmes.
89. Develop and implement long-term reintegration and housing solutions for survivors.

Theme: Persons with disabilities: independence, inclusion

UPR recommendations 97.57; 98.40; 98.52 and 98.53

90. Since ratifying the CRPD in 2017, Suriname has made limited progress in implementing the rights of persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities continue to face exclusion in education, public services, economic participation, and decision-making processes.
91. The lack of legal frameworks and insufficient policy implementation continue to restrict equal participation, while accessibility and mobility remain a challenge. Disparities between urban and interior regions further exacerbate the inequality in access to essential services.
92. Accessibility remains a major structural barrier. Public buildings, transportation systems, and essential services are largely not designed to accommodate persons with physical or sensory impairments. These challenges are further exacerbated in the interior, where geographic isolation compounds the lack of accessible services and infrastructure.
93. The lack of reliable, disaggregated data, including statistics on education, employment, and poverty, hinders evidence-based policy development and effective monitoring. Without such concrete, measurable, and time-bound actions, the gap between international obligations and lived reality will persist.¹³

Recommendation:

94. Adopt and implement comprehensive disability rights legislation in line with the CRPD, including explicit prohibition of discrimination, enforceable accessibility standards, and a clear framework for inclusive education at all levels, supported by adequate funding, data collection systems, and monitoring mechanisms.

Theme: Children: definition; general principles; protection

UPR recommendations 97.77; 97.78; 97.84; 98.49; 98.50; 98.51; 98.60

95. The Government of Suriname, with support from UNICEF, launched the Child Ombuds Institute in April 2025 as an independent body mandated to receive and investigate complaints, advocate for children's best interests, and ensure accountability to national and international child rights standards. However, as the Ombuds Institute is not yet operational, cases cannot be investigated, and relevant institutions cannot be held accountable.¹⁴
96. Legislation in Suriname provides a framework for protecting children from violence, with provisions aligned to Article 19(1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child reflected in the Constitution, Penal Code, Civil Code, the Act on Eliminating Domestic Violence, and the Act on Care Institutions. However, these measures remain insufficient, as key forms of violence such as bullying, psychological abuse, neglect, and physical violence in schools, are not regulated by law.¹⁵
97. There is a near universal acceptance of forms of violent "discipline" in Suriname, such as slapping or caning. These are accepted forms to discipline children and are not prosecuted. The Ministry of Education has given instructions to schools against the use of corporal punishment, but this still occurs because of its general acceptance by society.

Recommendations:

98. Operationalize the Child Ombuds Institute, ensuring its independence, adequate resources, and accessibility to all children, including those in rural and interior regions.
99. Adopt comprehensive legislation prohibiting all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment in all settings (home, schools, alternative care, and institutions), in line with CRC standards.
100. Develop and implement a national child protection strategy, addressing prevention, reporting, investigation, and response to all forms of violence, including corporal punishment, psychological violence, bullying, and neglect.
101. Conduct nationwide awareness and behaviour change campaigns to eliminate social acceptance of corporal punishment and promote positive, non-violent forms of child-rearing.

Theme: Children: protection against exploitation**UPR recommendations 97.79 through 97.83**

102. Children are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation, sometimes as a result of human trafficking, including in informal mining camps in Suriname's remote interior. In addition, children who work in small-scale gold mines risk exposure to mercury and cyanide.¹⁶
103. In the capital of Paramaribo, children engage in street vending but also resort to selling goods along busy roadways and take on informal jobs in other sectors, leaving them vulnerable and exposed to dangerous equipment, chemicals, and unregulated working conditions. Children in migrant populations, especially those with irregular legal status residing in the country, are particularly vulnerable to both sex and labor trafficking.
104. In addition, children may be subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in illegal goldmining camps. Suriname's laws do not sufficiently prohibit commercial sexual exploitation of children because while it is criminal to have a sexual relationship with a child under the age of 16, the use of a child under age 16 for commercial sex is not criminally prohibited.¹⁷
105. Children aged 12-16 years are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labor because they are not legally required to attend school nor are they legally permitted to work. The compulsory education age (12 years) does not extend to the minimum age for employment (16 years).¹⁸

Recommendations:

106. Amend legislation to explicitly prohibit all forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children, including the use, procurement and offering of children for commercial sex.
107. Align the compulsory education age with the minimum age for employment to eliminate the legal gap that increases children's vulnerability to the worst forms of child labour.
108. Strengthen prevention, identification and protection mechanisms for children at risk of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, particularly in remote and high-risk areas.

Theme: Cooperation with international organizations

UPR recommendations 97.92; 97.93

109. Suriname has still not met the requirements set by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in the Kali'na and Lokono case¹⁹. Meanwhile, the Indigenous peoples have self-demarcated their lands and presented this to the government.
110. In 2023, the National Assembly made amendments to the draft bill on Collective Rights of Indigenous peoples and Tribal peoples that was submitted by the government in 2021. The Indigenous and Tribal peoples have not been consulted for the amendments, and the VIDS has formally communicated that they do not support the proposed amendments. The current government has moved toward enacting a Law on the Protection of Residential Areas without Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). This law was also formally rejected by the VIDS.

Recommendations:

111. Timely and full implementation of all judgments made by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.
112. Formalize the submitted national FPIC protocol to prevent further and more serious violations of the rights of Indigenous peoples in government actions.

Theme: Rights related to marriage & family

UPR recommendation 96.23

113. In March 2022, the compatibility of Article 80 of the previous Civil Code with treaty law was challenged before the Constitutional Court of Suriname, by a same-sex married couple. In January 2023, the Constitutional Court of Suriname decided that the provision was exclusively drafted for heterosexual marriages and did not have the intention to exclude same-sex marriages. For that reason, Article 80 was not found discriminatory and was consequently upheld.²⁰
114. The Constitutional Court also found that marriage and family law of Suriname is silent on LGBTIQ+ family and privacy rights, which is inconsistent with Suriname's obligations under treaty law, such as the American Convention on Human Rights. According to the Court, updating Suriname's legislation in accordance with treaty law is the prerogative of the legislator.
115. In December 2024, the National Assembly approved the revised Civil Code.²¹ During the revision process, human rights defenders undertook initiatives aimed at making the Civil Code provisions on personal and family law gender neutral. All those initiatives proved futile; Suriname continued to refuse marriage by LGBTIQ+ persons in the 2024 Civil Code and text and scope of the new Article 33 remained identical to that of Article 80 of the previous Civil Code.²²
116. In October 2025, a coalition of human rights defenders led by Projekta held an informative session on the need for an inclusive Civil Code, which was attended by the Standing Committee for Human Rights of the National Assembly.²³ Following this event the coalition was received by the Committee in November 2025 to discuss the need to make the areas of property law, family law, and inheritance law of the Civil Code LGBTIQ+ inclusive. A draft of a proposed revised law was handed to the Committee, who promised to proceed toward implementing the necessary amendments.²⁴

117. Suriname adopted a 2021-2035 Gender Vision Policy that strives to eradicate discriminating stereotypes and gender discrimination,²⁵ but the policy is silent on LGBTIQ+ topics. On page 67 the policy document does make reference to LGBTIQ+ issues related to SDG 5.1 that aims to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls everywhere. In this context the CEDAW Recommendation 11b is included in the Policy document. It calls for the amendment of Article 8, paragraph 2 of the Constitution to recognize intersecting forms of discrimination against rural, Maroon, Indigenous, women with disabilities, and lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex women.
118. The Policy document indicates that amending the Constitution is not easy, as a two-thirds majority vote is required. For this reason, the document allocates 10-15 years for implementation.

Recommendations:

119. Implement the promised changes to the Civil Code in the areas of property law, family law, and inheritance law, to make it inclusive for LGBTIQ+ persons.
120. Integrate LGBTIQ+ rights into national gender and equality policies, including revising the Gender Vision Policy to explicitly address sexual orientation and gender identity.
121. Establish a time-bound legislative roadmap to eliminate discriminatory provisions in the Constitution and statutory law.

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- ¹ TV program *ABC Magazine 4*, Suriname, Jan 30, 2026
- ² Information on court session with regard to police officers is from the newspaper *Starnieuws* of 4 February 2026
- ³ Technical Note No IDB-TN-2971 Suriname Poverty and Equity Assessment, Diether W. Beuermann et al, Inter-American Development Bank, Country Department Caribbean Group, July 2024
- ⁴ Technical Note No IDB-TN-2971 Suriname Poverty and Equity Assessment, Diether W. Beuermann et al, Inter-American Development Bank, Country Department Caribbean Group, July 2024
- ⁵ Technical Note No IDB-TN-2971 Suriname Poverty and Equity Assessment, Diether W. Beuermann et al, Inter-American Development Bank, Country Department Caribbean Group, July 2024
- ⁶ Information from VIDS
- ⁷ Information from IKSUR and VIDS
- ⁸ Technical Note No IDB-TN-2971 Suriname Poverty and Equity Assessment, Diether W. Beuermann et al Inter-American Development Bank, Country Department Caribbean Group, July 2024
- ⁹ <https://hia.paho.org/en/country-profiles/suriname>
- ¹⁰ https://caribbean.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/policy_brief_november_2023_strengthening_the_legislative_framework_governing_srhr_in_the_caribbean.pdf
- ¹¹ <https://hia.paho.org/en/node/168>
- ¹² Idem pp.40 - 41
- ¹³ Information from *Stichting Wan Okasi*, an organization serving the interests of persons with disabilities.
- ¹⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/guyanasuriname/press-releases/suriname-launches-child-ombuds-institute#:~:text=UNICEF%20has%20long%20championed%20the,for%20children%20across%20the%20country.&text=%E2%80%9CCongratulations%20to%20the%20Government%20and,%2C%20protected%2C%20and%20filled.%E2%80%9D>
- ¹⁵ Maya Manohar, Does the national legislation of Suriname protect children from violence in their home and at school? *Academic Journal*, 2020, 11, 7-24,
- ¹⁶ Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor
- ¹⁷ Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor
- ¹⁸ Bureau of International Labor Affairs, 2022 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor
- ¹⁹ (Judgment of November 25, 2015. Series C No. 309).
- ²⁰ <https://constitutioneelhof.sr/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/CH-03-Besluit-d.d.-31-januari-2023-Art.-80-BW.pdf>
- ²¹ WET van 5 december 2024, houdende vaststelling van een nieuw Burgerlijk Wetboek (Burgerlijk Wetboek), S.B. 2024 no 164, <https://www.sris.sr/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/S.B-2024-no.-164-Burgerlijk-Wetboek.pdf>
- ²² ‘Rechten’ LGBTQ-gemeenschap niet opgenomen in project ‘Nieuw Burgerlijk Wetboek’ <https://dwtonline.com/rechten-lgbtq-gemeenschap-niet-opgenomen-in-project-nieuw-burgerlijk-wetboek/>; Women’s Rights Centre Suriname, **ERKENNING EN INCLUSIVITEIT VAN GELIJKE RECHTEN VOOR LGBT-PERSONEN OMSTREDEN IN SURINAME**? <https://wrcsuriname.org/2024/08/09/erkenning-en-inclusiviteit-van-gelijke-rechten-voor-lgbt-personen-omstreden-in-suriname/>
- ²³ **NIEUW BURGERLIJK WETBOEK BESCHERMT LGBTQ+-GEMEENSCHAP NOG NIET VOLLEDIG** <https://dagbladdewest.com/2025/10/25/nieuw-burgerlijk-wetboek-bescherm-t-lgbtq-gemeenschap-nog-niet-volledig/>
- ²⁴ Commissie Mensenrechten DNA bespreekt voorgestelde wijzigingen in het Burgerlijk Wetboek https://www.srherald.com/suriname/2025/11/14/commissie-mensenrechten-dna-bespreekt-voorgestelde-wijzigingen-in-het-burgerlijk-wetboek/?fbclid=IwY2xjawQmkPFleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBicmlkETIxeTRKYzhVb05LZzB0ckt6c3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjIyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHq_INyt5CSrC5PkkU7Oei6rev1kdUMrWtuSm5iakJ3oWBIHm25Sdc5xf6ryD_aem_y-eaYp7MZmY0ffimMqWxeg
- ²⁵ Gendervisie-Beleidsdocument 2021-2035 -<https://gov.sr/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/3-juli-nederlandse-printversie-gender-vision-policy-document-2021-2035-1.pdf>

Annex: Partners for the Joint Submission

Lead submitting organization

Full Name:	Stichting Projekta, Organisatie voor Vrouwen en Ontwikkeling (English: Projekta, Organization for Women and Development)
Acronym:	PROJEKTA
Note:	NGO accredited in consultative status with the ECOSOC
E-mail:	info@projekta.sr
Full address:	Mathoeralaan 32, Paramaribo, Suriname
Contact person:	Sharda Ganga, Director
Social media:	www.facebook.com/ProjektaSR
Website:	www.projekta.sr
Logo:	

Co-submitting organizations

Full Name:	Burgerinitiatief voor Participatie en Goed Bestuur (Citizens' Initiative for Participation and Good Governance)
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Logo:	

Full Name:	Women's Rights Centre
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E-mail:	wrcsur@gmail.com
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Contact person:	Carla Bakboord, Chair
Website:	www.wrcsuriname.org
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Logo:	

Full Name:	Professional Associates for Representation, Equality and Acceptance
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Contact person:	Rachel Wittenberg
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Website:	--
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Logo:	

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Contact person:	Seran Naarden
Social media:	--
Website:	--
Logo:	

Full Name:	Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden in Suriname (English: Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname)
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Full Name:	Inheems Kollektief Suriname (Translation: Indigenous Collective Suriname)
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