



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

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The Submitting Organizations

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). This is their 1st UPR submission.

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 (transl: 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.

Introduction

1. Since ratifying the CRPD in 2017, Suriname has made limited progress in implementing the rights of persons with disabilities. Based on documented cases, stakeholder engagement, and service provision by Stichting Wan Okasi, structural barriers persist across key sectors.
2. Persons with disabilities in Suriname continue to face exclusion in education, public services, economic participation, and decision-making processes. Accessibility—particularly mobility—remains a central barrier affecting the realization of multiple rights.
3. Disparities between urban and interior regions further exacerbate inequalities in access to essential services.

Methodology

4. This submission is based on qualitative evidence collected by Stichting Wan Okasi between 2024 and 2026, including:
 - documented casework and service user experiences;
 - stakeholder consultations with persons with disabilities and partner organizations;
 - ongoing monitoring of accessibility barriers in infrastructure, transport, and public services;
 - review of publicly available laws, policies, and statistical data.
5. The findings reflect recurring and systemic patterns observed across cases and are not based on isolated incidents.

Participation in policy processes (Recommendation 97.24)

6. Suriname supported Recommendation 97.24 on ensuring meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in policy processes.
7. Based on stakeholder engagement and participation in national processes, no structured or institutionalized mechanism exists to ensure such participation.
8. Engagement of organizations representing persons with disabilities occurs on an ad hoc basis and is not embedded in formal decision-making structures.
9. The absence of disaggregated data and structured consultation mechanisms further limits inclusive policymaking and monitoring, resulting in the systematic exclusion of persons with disabilities from decision-making processes.
10. These gaps indicate that meaningful participation of persons with disabilities, including in climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks, is not ensured in practice.
11. Recommendations to Suriname:
 - a) Establish institutional mechanisms ensuring the structured and meaningful participation of persons with disabilities in all policy processes.

b) Ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks.

Access to education (Recommendations 97.54 & 97.57)

12. Suriname supported Recommendations 97.54 and 97.57 on access to education for children with disabilities.
13. Evidence from documented cases indicates that no fully implemented inclusive education system exists.
Key barriers include:
 - lack of adapted learning materials;
 - shortage of trained and specialized teachers;
 - insufficient reasonable accommodations;
 - physical inaccessibility of school buildings.
14. Transportation barriers frequently result in irregular school attendance.
15. These factors contribute to higher dropout rates and limited progression to further education. Despite commitments, structural barriers continue to prevent full access and participation.
16. Suriname maintains a legal obligation for school attendance; however, the State has not ensured the necessary conditions such as accessible transport, adapted facilities, and trained personnel to enable children with disabilities to comply with this obligation. As a result, children with disabilities are subjected to a legal requirement without corresponding guarantees of access.
17. Recommendations to Suriname:
 - a) Remove structural barriers to education for children with disabilities.
 - b) Ensure availability of inclusive materials, trained teachers, and reasonable accommodations.
 - c) Strengthen policies to guarantee equal access and participation.

Education in rural areas (Recommendation 97.55)

18. Suriname supported Recommendation 97.55 on ensuring access to education in rural areas.
19. Evidence shows significant disparities between urban and interior regions.
20. Specialized services and rehabilitation facilities are concentrated in urban areas, while access in the interior remains limited.
21. Lack of accessible and affordable transportation further restricts school access.
22. Recommendations to Suriname:
 - a) Allocate targeted funding to ensure equal access to education in rural and interior areas.
 - b) Develop accessible and affordable transportation systems for students with disabilities in rural areas.

Inclusive education (Recommendations 97.56 & 98.40)

23. Suriname supported Recommendations 97.56 and 98.40 on inclusive education.
24. No comprehensive national strategy for inclusive education has been developed or implemented to date, including budget allocation, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms.
25. Children with disabilities face overlapping barriers related to infrastructure, support services, and transportation.
26. These challenges are more pronounced in interior regions.
27. Recommendations to Suriname:
 - a) Develop and implement a comprehensive national inclusive education strategy, based on research and broad sector-wide consultations
 - b) Progressively roll out accessible infrastructure and structured support systems around schools nationwide.

Legal framework and social protection (Recommendation 98.52)

28. Suriname supported Recommendation 98.52 on adopting comprehensive legislation.
29. There is no comprehensive legal framework ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities. Suriname has not signed or ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. As a result, individuals are unable to submit complaints to the UN Committee, and no international inquiry mechanisms are applicable. This significantly limits access to accountability and remedies.
30. No national CRPD implementation plan, coordinated governmental mechanism, or independent monitoring body exists.
31. Accessibility standards are not legally enforceable.
32. Access to healthcare remains limited for persons with disabilities due to physical inaccessibility, financial constraints, and limited availability of specialized services, particularly in rural and interior regions.
33. Persons with disabilities face significant barriers in accessing employment, including the absence of inclusive labour policies, reasonable accommodations, and targeted measures to support labour market participation.
34. Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by poverty. The monthly disability allowance of SRD 4,550 (approximately USD 114) is significantly below the national poverty line of SRD 7,810 ((approximately USD 200) for a single-adult household.ⁱ
35. Based on observed living conditions, this amount does not meet the cost of living.

36. The allowance is not legally guaranteed and can be adjusted administratively, resulting in financial insecurity.
These conditions affect access to basic needs, including food, healthcare, and independent living.
37. Recommendations to Suriname:
- a) Adopt comprehensive CRPD-aligned legislation.
 - b) Establish a national implementation and monitoring framework.
 - c) Legally guarantee disability benefits.
 - d) Align the amount and allocation of disability benefits with the national cost of living, while also ensuring that those with extra needs receive extra benefits.

Non-discrimination and accessibility (Recommendation 98.53)

38. Suriname supported Recommendation 98.53 on non-discrimination and accessibility.
There is no specific legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability across sectors. No dedicated anti-discrimination legislation or enforcement mechanisms exist, resulting in a gap between constitutional guarantees and practical protection.
39. While the Constitution of Suriname guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination, this principle has not been translated into specific legal protections for persons with disabilities.
40. Public infrastructure, transportation, and digital services remain largely inaccessible.
41. No policy framework or formal recognition of sign language exists in Suriname. This limits access to public information, services, and communication for persons with hearing impairments.
42. Recommendations to Suriname:
- a) Enact legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability.
 - b) Establish and enforce accessibility standards for public infrastructure, transport, and digital services.

Conclusion

43. The findings in this submission indicate that, despite formal commitments, implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities in Suriname remains limited.
44. Structural barriers, lack of legal frameworks, and insufficient policy implementation continue to restrict equal participation and access to services.
45. Without concrete, measurable, and time-bound actions, the gap between international obligations and lived realities will persist.

ⁱ General Bureau of Statistics. (January 2026). *Suriname Basic Indicators: Basic Indicators 2026-I (Plus link factors per Division/Major Group of the CPI)* (p. 47). <https://statistics-suriname.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/Basic-Indicators-2026-I.pdf>

Annex: Partners for the Joint Submission

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