



**Convention on the Elimination  
of All Forms of Discrimination  
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of  
Discrimination against Women**

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the  
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

**Third periodic report of States parties**

**Suriname\***

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\* The present report is being issued without formal editing. For the combined initial and second periodic report submitted by the Government of Suriname, see CEDAW/C/SUR/1-2, which was considered by the Committee at its twenty-seventh session.

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## A. INTRODUCTION

As mentioned in the previous report, Suriname ratified to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)* in 1993 (Instrument of Ratification submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations, S.G. no. LA41TR/221/1 (4-8) of 21 April 1993). In virtue of Article 27 of the Constitution, this Convention came into force for Suriname on 31 March 1993 (VB. 1999, no. 2). With the ratification of this Convention, Suriname committed itself to ensure that all forms of discrimination against women is eliminated and that the principle of gender equality is included in its national legislation. The combined initial and second report for the period 1 April 1993 through 31 December 1998 was submitted, and presented to the CEDAW Committee of the United Nations in June 2002. The present, third report covers the reporting period 1 January 1999 through 31 March 2002. In the compilation of this third progress report the choice has again been made for wide consultations with government and non-governmental organizations. The draft report was discussed extensively with representatives of government and NGOs at a conference in June 2004. In accordance with the guidelines of the CEDAW Committee, this third report covers the national legislation and the policy of government and NGOs since the previous reporting period.

Suriname has further signed the Convention of Vienna on Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action, and the Convention of Belem do Para concerning the Elimination of Violence against Women. In doing so, the country recognizes the importance of human rights. The Government of Suriname has committed itself not only to eliminate all forms of discrimination of women, but also to achieve complete equality and equity of men and women in the society.

In the Multi-annual Development Plan (M.O.P.) of the Government for 2001-2005 gender mainstreaming is mentioned, among other things, as a policy measure to ensure complete participation of women in social processes; to improve provisions for primary health care in order to ensure that these are better available to women and children throughout the country and to people in outlying areas; to establish and implement a rational social policy and protect the most vulnerable groups in society, among which women are identified as one of the target groups.

The National Gender Policy Bureau was established as a department of the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1997, and was opened in 1998. This institute was given the task to promote and monitor gender equality in Suriname. In March 2000, the National Gender Policy Bureau organized a national women's conference, during which progress was discussed with respect to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the framework for a national plan of action for the next five years. In June 2001, the Ministry of Home Affairs presented its Gender Mainstreaming Plan for the Government, which indicated the activities to be undertaken by the respective Ministries during the government's term of office 2000 – 2005 to apply a gender perspective in the entire national and sectoral policy. In November 2001 the National Gender Policy and the Integrated Gender Plan of Action 2000 – 2005 were presented, the framework of which had been discussed during the women's conference in 2000. The Integrated Gender Plan of Action includes the activities mentioned in the Gender Mainstreaming Plan for the Government and the activities that the NGOs considered priorities for the next years.

The Integrated Gender Plan of Action 2000 – 2005 mentions the following areas:

- ◆ Integration of gender in national policy and in all plans and projects;

- ◆ Capacity building in gender planning, conducting gender studies and gender analyses;
- ◆ Creating equal and equitable opportunities for men and women and elimination discrimination against women;
- ◆ Recognition that women's rights are special human rights;
- ◆ Combating all forms of violence against women;
- ◆ Encouraging the participation of women at all levels and in all sectors;
- ◆ Positive discrimination with respect to the number of women in executive positions;
- ◆ A start of making gender and impact analyses of the macro-economic policy;
- ◆ Promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication;
- ◆ Consultations with NGOs on priority issues.

In October 2001, the Ministry of Home Affairs published an assessment of four conventions, namely, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Inter-American Convention on Awarding Civil Rights to Women, and the Inter-American Convention on Awarding Political Rights to Women. The conventions were studied and a comparison was made with the national legislation. The assessment presented the shortcomings and necessary adjustments of the national legislation, highlighted discriminatory provisions in the laws, and made recommendations to eliminate shortcomings or make adjustments. The National Gender Policy Bureau concluded that a lot still needed to be done to improve the discriminatory position of women in Suriname. It was recommended that positive discrimination be introduced or increased and that everything necessary should be done to eliminate all discriminatory provisions against women in the existing laws as soon as possible. The report made specific recommendations for violence against women, namely that the Government should be involved more intensively with the problem of violence through regular public awareness activities, targeting young women and girls, and by setting up a database on domestic violence, so as to make an inventory of the phenomenon together with the actors concerned, and make it possible to develop a proper approach.

The National Gender Policy Bureau will be strengthened in order to monitor the national gender policy. At the same time, a network of gender coordination points within the different Ministries will be set up and maintained. The National Gender Policy Bureau will continue to facilitate the NGOs, in particular the women's organizations, but will also be responsible for giving advice and technical assistance to the different Ministries in developing and expanding the gender focal points.

In comparison with the previous reporting period, quite a lot of programmes, projects and activities for women and children were implemented. These ensued from government policy, which was directed towards improving the situation of women and children in Suriname, and from a number of programmes of international organizations, which supported the government policy. Mention can be made of the Micro Projects Programme of the European Union; the Community Development Fund Suriname (CDFS), which was set up with support from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the NGO Fund, the multiannual country programme of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Government (January 1998 through December 2002). The 5-year *Caribbean Gender Equality Programme* of CIDA supported the implementation of the above initiatives as well.

Furthermore, the 3-year programme of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was executed between October 1998 and January 2002. This programme was very important in promoting equality of men and women in Suriname, and aimed at building the capacity of the

Government, in particular the National Gender Policy Bureau, to formulate policy for women, and played an essential part in helping to formulate the National Gender Policy, the Integrated Gender Plan of Action, and the Gender Mainstreaming Plan for the Government, and in helping to establish a network for violence against women. This programme also contributed to increasing public awareness on CEDAW.

It is, therefore, not surprising that different surveys and studies were undertaken in the course of this reporting period, which provided a better insight into the situation of women and children, and which were very useful in drawing up the current report, since they provided information and data which were not previously available. Thus, the current report is again an extensive report and provides details, which were not previously available. Mention must be made of the following documents that were indispensable to gaining an insight into the situation of women in Suriname:

- Multiple Indicator Cluster System (MICS) in 2000, a product of the UNICEF-programme in collaboration with the Government, which provided basic data from different sectors with which the situation of children in Suriname could be assessed.
- National Report on the World Summit for Children (April 2001), which gives the situation of children in Suriname on the basis of the goals formulated during the World Summit of 1989.
- The Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname (2000/2001), a product of the UNIFEM-programme, which provides basic data and an analysis of the situation of women in Suriname.
- Selected Gender Statistics, a product of the General Statistics Bureau<sup>1</sup> in the framework of a project of CARICOM and the UN Statistics Division (UNSD), whose purpose was to give an impetus towards providing information on gender.

## **B. SOCIO-ECONOMIC SKETCH OF SURINAME**

### *Political Structure*

Suriname became a colony of the Netherlands in 1667. A people's representative was introduced in 1866, while general suffrage for men and women was introduced in 1948. The first political parties were formed shortly after the First World War, and the first general elections were held in 1949. Suriname acquired autonomous status within the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1954 and became independent on 25 November 1975. Both before and after independence, politics in Suriname were run by a large number of coalition parties, which were often founded on ethnic lines. After the military coup d'état of 25 February 1980, the military remained in power until 1987. The general elections of 1987 brought a civilian government to power again until 24 December 1990, when another coup d'état took place. General, free and fair elections thereafter took place in 1991, 1996 and 2000.

As mentioned in the previous report, the present Constitution of Suriname dates from 1987 and was last amended in 1992. The democratic structures are the same as described in the previous report. The Republic of Suriname is a democratic state, based on the sovereignty of the people and on respect for rights and freedoms (Constitution of the Republic of Suriname, Article 1 paragraph 2). The political power rests with the people and is implemented in accordance with the Constitution (Article 52 paragraph 1). The political democracy is characterized by participation and representation of the people of Suriname in establishing a democratic political system as well as participation in legislation

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<sup>1</sup> In 2003 the building of the General Statistics Bureau burnt down. All unprocessed data collected during the national census were lost, as a result of which essential information for this report is lacking.

and administration, directed towards maintaining and expanding this system (Article 52 paragraph 2). The Republic of Suriname is a decentralized non-federal state; the democratic structure consists of a regional level of government services, whose function, organization, competencies and procedures are laid down by law and are in accordance with the principles of participatory democracy and decentralization of government and legislation (Article 159).

#### *Natural Resources*

Suriname has the following natural resources: timber, potential hydroelectric power, fish, shrimp, bauxite, oil, iron ore, gold, and small amounts of nickel, copper and platinum. The main export products are bauxite, alumina, oil, rice, vegetables, shrimp, fish and fish products, timber and timber products.

#### *Environment*

Suriname has a unique place in the world because of its rich rain forests and biodiversity. By State Decree no. 65 in 1998, over 1.6 million hectares of primary tropical rain forest in western central Suriname were established as the Central Suriname Nature Reserve. This reserve connects three important protected areas of Central Suriname – the Raleighvallen nature reserve in the North, the Tafelberg nature reserve in the center and the Eilerts de Haangebergte in the South. The establishment of the Central Suriname Nature Reserve is the cornerstone of Suriname's commitment to development on the basis of environmental protection and gives Suriname a new leadership role in the conservation of tropical biodiversity in the world. On 29 November 2000, the UNESCO world heritage committee in Sidney, Australia, decided to inscribe the Central Suriname Nature Reserve on the World Heritage List.

Suriname is also party to a number of international and regional treaties and conventions, which recognize the necessity for the protection of the environment. The most important of these are: the Convention on the International Trade in Threatened wild Flora and Fauna (1973); the Amazon Cooperation Treaty (1978); the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992); and the Framework Treaty on Climate Change (1992). The Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment coordinates and implements the national policy on the environment. In 2002, the Minister installed a new National Environment Council, which advises the Government on its environmental policy.

#### *Social Benefits*

Suriname has a number of social benefits: old-age pension, child allowance, health insurance through the State Health Insurance Fund or private insurers, medical care and financial assistance. The total number of children for whom the Government pays child allowance annually has decreased throughout the years, while the number of persons who receive old-age pension annually has increased. People who are in financial need, can receive medical care and financial assistance. The financial assistance can be provided to an individual or to a household, while the amount of assistance depends on the size of the household. Although the amounts of the different benefits have been adjusted throughout the years, there have not been substantial adjustments. More details are provided under Article 13 of this report.

**Table B.1: General data of Suriname**

Surface area	163,820 km <sup>2</sup>
Population (mid-year)	Ca. 430,216 (tentative)
Average growth (1990-1999)	0.8%
Density	2.6 per km <sup>2</sup>
Tot. fertility rate (1995)	2.4
Literacy 1st quarter 1999 (Wanica+Paramaribo) (m)	84%
(f)	81%
Exchange rate (per US\$1)	
Monthly average 1998	406 SRG
1999	406 SRG
2000	886.37 SRG
Gross Domestic Product 1999	
fc (factor costs):	699,562 million SRG
Nominal growth	70%
Real growth	-0.84%
Gross National Product 1999	
Mp (market price)	775,192 million SRG
nominal growth	71%
National income/ capita 1999	1,402,160 SRG (tentative)
Export of goods	
1998	510,270,126
1999	511,770,147
2000	513,921,632 (tentative)
Import of goods	
1998	589,197,976
1999	539,011,932
2000	526,917,214 (tentative)
Consumption price index ('90 =100)	
1998	8.774
1999	17.446
2000	27.797

Source: General Bureau of Statistics, Statistical Yearbook 2000

**Table B.2: Main export products  
expressed in percentages of total exports**

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001
Bauxite	82.7	76.4	80.4	81.7
-Alumina	73.0	74.2	80.4	81.7
-Aluminum	9.7	2.2	0.0	0.0
Rice	4.8	3.3	2.6	2.7
<b>Shrimp and fish</b>	7.7	9.3	9.7	9.8
Timber	0.9	0.6	0.7	1.0
Oil	3.8	10.5	6.5	4.8
Total exports	100.0	100.0	100.0	<b>100.0</b>

Sources: Central Bank of Suriname; General Bureau of Statistics

## PART I

### Articles 1 and 2 Definition of discrimination and suitable measures

The previous CEDAW report already stated that the principle of equality of men and women is laid down in the Constitution of the Republic of Suriname. In the Government Declaration 2000 – 2005 the Government of Suriname stated that the national legislation should be brought in accordance with the conventions, which regulate the rights of women. In the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action for the Government of Suriname (June 2001) the following action point was included:

*“Set up structures and start to bring national legislation in accordance with – and aimed at compliance with – treaties regulating the rights of women”.*

In August 2001, the Committee on Gender Legislation was installed by the Ministry of Home Affairs, whose task included adjustment of national legislation, which, among other things, is in contradiction of the principles of the Constitution and CEDAW. The previous CEDAW report mentioned the laws that were in contravention of CEDAW. This initial report also stated that a draft amendment of the Penal Code had been drawn up, which recommended that the term “sex” be included in the articles, which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of one’s sex. The Council of Ministers approved of this draft in 1993 and the Minister of Justice and Police sent the draft to the State Council for advice. In accordance with the legal procedures, after the draft has passed the State Council, it should be sent to the National Assembly for discussion and adoption. This has not yet taken place.

Meanwhile, the Committee on Gender Legislation made recommendations to amend or abolish legal regulations that are discriminatory to women. The following draft amendments of articles concerned were submitted to the Minister of Home Affairs:

- Amendment of the Personnel Act, whereby Article 15, paragraph 1a shall be abolished, as a result of which the impediment to a woman attaining a permanent appointment is abolished; the right to salary during maternity leave is maintained (Art. 45, para. 4). Article 45 paragraph 4 shall be amended, as a result of which the female civil servant has the right to salary during this period of maternity leave; Article 47 paragraph 9 shall be amended, to abolish the unfair treatment of women for reasons of their reproductive nature, in the calculation of the period of active service; Article 69 paragraph 3, shall be abolished, which stated that the female civil servant could be dismissed upon entering into marriage.
- Amendment of Art. 4 of the Decree on Travel and Secondment (G.B. 1944 no. 84, as amended by S.B. 1993 no. 8), whereby female civil servants shall acquire equal positions as male civil servants.
- Addition to the Penal Code , which will include provisions to make domestic violence punishable, as well as more protection for victims. Awaiting the finalization of the special law on domestic violence, the Gender Legislation Committee has already recommended adjustments.
- Stalking will be made punishable in a separate law.



The draft amendments of the Penal Code Art 383a sub 3 (G.B. 1860, as last amended by S.B. 1983 no. 117) have been stayed in connection with the entry into force of the law on the Review of the Marriage Act of 1973, because many things that required revision have been removed by the revised Marriage Act. The amendment of the Accident Regulation Art. 6 paragraph 3 (G.B. 1947 no. 145, as last amended by S.B. 1983 no. 8) with respect to recognition of concubinage for payment of the breadwinner is on the list of priorities and a special committee will be installed for this matter. The Holiday Act Art. 8 paragraph 2 (S.B. 1975 no. 164c) is also a priority. The process for amending the State Decree in executing the Identity Act appendix I (S.B. 1976 no. 10) and the Nationality and Residence Act Articles 3, 8 paragraphs 3 and 6; 10 and 12 through 15 (S.B. 1975 no. 4, as last amended by S.B. 1989 no. 29), has commenced.

Amendment of the Election Act (S.B. 1987 no. 70, as last amended by S.B. 1987 no. 84) has not yet taken place, but the Committee on Gender Legislation is currently studying the required amendments. A Committee on Integral Evaluation of the Elections of 2000 was established by the Registry Office, which has been involved in the evaluation of the Electoral Regulations. According to the committee article 41 (married women on the list of candidates are placed under the name of the husband or late husband) is not in accordance with Articles 10 paragraph 2, and 23 paragraph 3 and 4 of the Civil Code.

The Committee on Gender Legislation prepared amendments of the Penal Code and the Civil Code. The proposed amendments of the Penal Code have been sent to the Ministry of Justice for screening. The Committee also prepared a bill on equal treatment of men and women and a bill on the establishment of a complaints bureau. These bills require further refining. The purpose of the complaints bureau is to receive complaints concerning compliance with the law on equal treatment of men and women. The bureau will also be given the task to conduct research and give advice, which aim at achieving corrective action. In comparison with the previous reporting period, in general gender has become more visible in policymaking.

### **Article 3 Human rights**

The initial report mentioned the human rights conventions and treaties, which have been ratified and signed by Suriname. The Convention of Belém do Para on the Prevention of Violence Against Women, should be added to this list, since Suriname ratified this convention on 13 December 2001 and ratification thereof followed on 19 February 2002. The Integral Gender Plan of Action 2000 – 2005 of the National Gender Policy of Suriname includes the amendments of discriminatory laws mentioned in Article 2 above, and also mention the following actions to be taken to improve the human rights of women:

- Install a multidisciplinary working group to realize a national maternity regulation and financing thereof. This is particularly important for small enterprises, for maternity leave is regulated in the civil service and in most collective labor agreements of large enterprises.
- Review the decree on the removal of incapacity to act by married women, so as to remove the loopholes, which still exist.
- Make women aware of their rights, their possibilities on the labor market and their position through awareness and education programs, training and through the media, using local languages. This will enable women to make conscious choices.

- Conduct studies and surveys to consult the people's opinion on legislation and rights in regard of maternity leave, concubinage, pensions, marriage, and violence, among other things.
- General awareness programs on human rights of women, also aimed at the youth, the interior and the districts.

During the implementation of the UNIFEM-program, gender-training programs for civil servants were initiated, while the National Women's Movement developed a CEDAW brochure in easy Dutch in 1999 to provide general information on CEDAW for the general public. Other important initiatives which were taken by the Government were the publication of the brochure *Wat is Gender Mainstreaming* (transl.: What is Gender Mainstreaming?) in June 2001 for policymakers, and promotion of gender policy through a series of visits to districts, during which the Government was represented at the highest level by the President of the Republic of Suriname, the First Lady, representatives of The National Assembly, Ministers and local government officials. In the speeches and activities of the government delegation, the focus was on promotion of gender equality, prevention of domestic violence and increased collaboration with civil society in both areas. The brochure on Gender Mainstreaming and the Integrated Gender Action Plan are being translated into English for further distribution, in particular in the region.

In early 2002 the Government started the construction of an office in the District of Nickerie, which would make it possible to decentralize facilities to provide assistance to victims of domestic violence. The office and staff will be made available to the Foundation Stop Violence Against Women. The Platform of Women's Organizations, which was formed in 2001 as a network of collaboration among six intermediary organizations, proclaimed the campaign 'Land for Women' in March 2002. A petition was handed to the Minister concerned, which centered attention on priorities to adhere to women's rights and to remove existing inequality and negative trends in the situation of women. At the initiative of the Women's Rights Center a committee was formed, comprising legal and gender experts from NGOs, the Anton de Kom University of Suriname and the Ministry of Justice and Police, which began the formulation in mid-2001 of a special law on domestic violence, and a training on domestic violence was organized for magistrates and lawyers in March 2003 with the assistance of external experts.

#### **Article 4**

#### **Positive discrimination**

The Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan of the Government of Suriname (June 2001) mentions the following points:

- Remove high gender inequality in the Judiciary through positive discrimination of women in the selection of persons to be trained as magistrates.
- Study possibilities to increase participation of women in politico-administrative bodies, in High Organs of State, and in senior management positions in civil service.
- Take the initiative to remove gender inequality in diplomatic service.
- Increase awareness of gender inequality on the labor market and improve access of women to the labor market.

The Ministry of Justice and Police recruited a policy advisor, who, in deliberation with other institutions, will set up the training of magistrates and develop the curriculum. The approach of positive discrimination of women was used, with due attention for guaranteeing the quality requirements: 9 women and 1 man were selected for further training.

In March 2001, the President of the Republic of Suriname, the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of Foreign Affairs signed the support form of the 50/50 campaign of the United Nations, which was coordinated by the *Women's Environment and Development Organization* (WEDO). They thus committed themselves – in line with the *Beijing Platform for Action* – to increasing the political power of women numerically. In Suriname the 50/50 campaign was a joint action of the women's organizations, led by the Women's Parliamentary Forum. The Government has committed itself to increase the capacity of the potential of female diplomatic cadre and use positive discrimination for the time being by nominating more women candidates for diplomatic posts. There is now heightened awareness of the importance of participation of women at the international level and slight progress has been made. But there are still too few Surinamese women at this level. Unfortunately, the greatest impediment to removing gender inequality is still the influence of the political parties in the national political culture in the nomination and selection of candidates for politico-administrative organs, high organs of state, diplomatic service, and senior management positions in civil service. There is still discrepancy between legislation and policy on the one hand, and practice on the other hand.

In the past years, there has been an increase in the number of working and job-seeking women in Suriname. The total number of working people in the Districts of Paramaribo and Wanica according to the Statistical Year Book (November 2000) of the General Bureau of Statistics was 85,713, of which 29,299 men and 56,414 women (ca. 65%). In 1998 the total number of working people was 88,816, of which 28,557 women (ca. 32%). The Department for Employment Mediation of the Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment registered the following data for job seekers between 1999 and 2002.

**Table 4.1: Number of registered job-seekers in the period 1999 - 2002**

Year	Male	Female	Total
1999	62	186	248
2000	157	201	358
2001	229	566	795
2002	363	783	1126

Source: Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment

## **Article 5 Elimination of prejudices**

Nothing has changed in this respect, and Suriname still holds the view that cultural traditions of the different ethnic groups may never be in contravention of the fundamental rights and freedoms of women, as laid down in international conventions. Elimination of prejudices is not included in the legislation of Suriname. It is up to NGOs and international organizations to try to change cultural traditions that may be in contravention of the conventions. In practice, there are still prejudices and stereotyping of women in the different cultures.

## **Article 6 Trafficking of women**

Analyses of the trafficking of women, pimping and prostitution cannot yet be made, for there is still insufficient systematic qualitative and quantitative information available. The trafficking of women and pimping are both punishable in Suriname. Although the trafficking of women is not visible, there is the impression among the authorities and women's organizations that trafficking of women does occur, in particular among foreign prostitutes, who are recruited on false promises. A special committee will be formed to look into trafficking of people in general. This committee will recommend policy measures and legislative measures, as well as guidelines, procedures for police and institutions. In practice, policy and legislation are not synchronous. The situation in Suriname with regard to prostitution has remained the same since the last report: there is still no official government policy and the exploitation and prostitution of women have not yet been included in the law.

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## PART II

### Article 7 Political and public life

According to Articles 41, 57 and 73 of the Electoral Regulations married women who are nominated should be registered under the name of the husband or deceased husband. There is a similar provision for the registration of women in the electoral register (Art. 15 of the Electoral Regulations). These articles were not amended in the present reporting period.

The proportion of male and female voters is more or less 50%. The share of women in the boards of the political parties increased in comparison with the previous reporting period from 15% to 20%. None of the 14 active political parties has a specific women's department in the party structures.

The position of women in government and the legislative bodies is demonstrated by the following:

- In the period 1996-2000 the speaker of the National Assembly was a woman, but in the period 1999 - 2002 this is no longer the case;
- In three consecutive administrative periods the deputy speaker of the National Assembly was a woman;
- 10 of the 51 parliamentarians in the reporting period was a woman (20%), which is an increase of 4% in comparison with the period 1996-2000;
- 2 of the 16 Ministers was a woman (13%), which is an increase of 6% in comparison with 1998;
- there is 1 female Deputy -Minister for the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing (similar position in 1998);
- the Minister of Home Affairs, who is also responsible for gender policy, in this administrative period (since 2000) is a woman;
- the Minister of Foreign Affairs in this administrative period (since 2000) is a woman.

Cultural factors in general form the basis for the unequal participation of men and women in public and political life. The influence of activities of women's organizations, and in particular the Women's Parliamentary Forum, is evident in the increase of the number of female candidates for the National Assembly and the increase in the number of female parliamentarians since the 1996 elections.

**Table 7.1: Composition of boards of political parties, 1999 and 2002**

No Parties	1999			2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
01 V.H.P.	21	0	21	17	3	20
02 N.P.S	13	2	15	12	3	15
03 K.T.P.I	11	3	14	8	3	11
04 S.P.A	9	5	14	8	3	11
05 D.A. 91	8	2	10	8	2	10
06 Pendawalima	9	0	9	9	0	9
07 H.P.P.	9	2	11	8	1	9
08 P.V.F.	7	0	7	7	0	7
09 B.V.D.	15	1	16	15	1	16
10 D.N.P. 2000				3	2	5
11 Pertjahah Luhur				9	5	14
12 Naya Kadam				8	1	9
13 Palu				12	0	12
14 D.O.E.				5	5	10
15 D.A.	9	4	13	9	4	13
16 N.H.P.				14	3	17
17 A.P.S.				8	4	12
18 N.P.L.O.				7	2	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>209</b>

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

**Table 7.2: Composition of politico-administrative organs 1991, 1996, 2000**

	1991				1996				2000			
	M	F	Tot	% F	M	F	Tot	% F	M	F	Tot	%F
Government	18	0	18	0%	18	2	20	10%	17	3	20	15%
Nat. Assembly	48	3	51	6%	43	8	51	16%	41	10	51	20%
District Council	87	13	98	13%	98	7	105	7%				
Local Council	524	107	536	17%	537	134	671	20%				
<b>Total</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>18%</b>				

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

Table 7.3: Parliamentarians from 1973 to 2000

Period	Name of Parliament	M	F	Total	% Women
1973 - 1977	Staten van Suriname	38	1	39	3
1977 – 1980*	Staten van Suriname	38	1	39	3
1985 – 1987	De Nationale Assemblée	26	5	31	16
1987 – 1991	De Nationale Assemblée	47	4	51	8
1991 – 1996	De Nationale Assemblée	48	3	51	6
1996 – 2000	De Nationale Assemblée	43	8	51	16
2000 -	De Nationale Assemblée	41	10	51	20

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

\*Note: after the military coup d'etat of 1980, the Constitution was abolished.

The participation of women in public and political life is still limited. Although no qualitative studies have been conducted on the causes, the following impediments are evident:

- women are responsible for the reproductive tasks in their family;
- a lack of adequate provisions for childcare throughout the day, i.e. mornings, afternoons and evenings;
- a lack of a specific policy and programmes from the government and political parties, directed towards increasing the number of women in political and senior management positions.

The position of women in the High Organs of State decreased in comparison with the previous reporting period. There is a total decrease from 28% to 23%. The decrease was highest in the Advisory Council, from 15% to 5%. In the Audit Office and Labor Advisory Board, the percentage of women remained the same, while the percentage of women in the Election Board rose from 22% to 44%. The chairing positions in all of these organs have always been men.

**Table 7.4: Participation in Constitutional High Organs of State, 1991 - 2002**

Organ	1991 M	1991 F	1991 Total	1998 M	1998 FV	1998 Total	2002 M	2002 FV	2002 Total
<b>State Advisory Council</b>	12	1 (8%)	13	2	11 (15%)	13	16	1 (5%)	17
<b>Audit Office</b>	4	0 (0%)	4	3	2 (40%)	5	3	2 (40%)	5
<b>Labor Advisory Board</b>	11	6 (35%)	17	10	5 (33%)	15	9	3 (33%)	12
<b>Independent Electoral Office</b>	9	3 (35%)	12	10	5 (33%)	15	0	0 (0%)	0
<b>Election Board</b>	9	1 (10%)	10	7	2 (22%)	9	5	4 (44%)	9
<b>Total</b>	45	11 (20%)	56	41	16 (28%)	57	33	10 (23%)	43

Source: Ministry of Justice and Police, 2002

The share of female lawyers and civil law notaries increased in this reporting period from respectively, 25% to 33% and from 10% to 22%. We expect this trend to continue, in view of the relatively high number of female students registered in the sub-Faculty of Law of the University of Suriname.

**Table 7.5: Practicing attorneys at law, 1998 through 2002**

Year	Male	Female	Total
1998	44	15 (25%)	59
2000	45	17 (28%)	62
2002	50	25 (33%)	75
Total	139	57 (29%)	196

Source: Foundation for Juridical Collaboration Suriname-Netherlands;  
From: *Vademecum voor de Rechtspraktijk 2003*

**Table 7.6: Practicing civil law notaries, 1990 through 2002**

Year	Male	Female	Total
1990	9	1 (10%)	10
1994	9	1 (10%)	10
1998	12	3 (20%)	15
2002	14	4 (22%)	18
Total	44	9 (17%)	53

Source: Association of Civil Law Notaries

As per 2002, the senior positions in the Police Corps of Suriname comprised 93 men and 11 women (10.6%). The total number of female Permanent Secretaries of Ministries is the same as in the previous reporting period, i.e. 4 of the 16, or 25%. The female Permanent Secretaries are in the Ministries of Social Affairs; Health; Transportation, Communication and Tourism; and Regional Development.



At the regional level, the administration is divided into legislative and executive bodies as well. The District Councils are legislative bodies and the District Commissioner's offices are executive bodies. The President appoints a District Commissioner for each District, who also chairs the District Council and heads the Commissioner's office. The District Commissioner (D.C.) is assisted by District Secretaries (D.S.), deputy Secretaries (Adj. Sec.), administrative supervisors (B.O.), deputy supervisors (O.B.O.) and assistant supervisors (Ass. B.O.). Each district is divided into administrative jurisdictions, each with its own local council. The districts (10) currently have a limited mandate, namely the maintenance of secondary and tertiary infrastructure (roads, irrigation, drainage); management of public markets; potable water supply; fire brigade provisions; local planning and budgeting; maintaining local public order; supervision of public health (incl. burial grounds).

The position of women in the regional administration has improved in comparison with 1998, in the sense that the number of women proportionally increased in the positions of District Secretary (6%), Deputy Secretary (6%) and Deputy Supervisor (12%). The number of female supervisors remained more or less the same. Only in the highest and lowest positions there was a decrease: the percentage of female district commissioners decreased from 14% to 9%, and the percentage of assistant supervisors from 53% to 47%.

**Table 7.7: Composition of regional administration per district and position in 2002**

District	DC			Secr			Adj.Secr.			B.O.			O.B.O.			Ass.BO		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Wanica	1	0	1	4	2	6	8	0	8	8	4	12	8	5	13	0	2	2
Par'bo N-O	1	0	1	5	2	7	2	1	3	8	6	14	0	6	6	1	1	2
Par'bo Z-W	1	0	1	2	0	2	5	2	7	7	6	13	3	3	6	0	2	2
Sipaliwini	1	0	1	4	1	5	5	0	5	29	5	34	9	8	17	0	4	4
Coronie	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	1	4	0	0	0
Saramacca	0	1	1	2	2	4	4	2	6	5	1	6	3	3	6	1	0	1
Brokopondo	1	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	2	5	2	7	0	4	4	0	1	1
Commewijne	1	0	1	6	2	8	3	0	3	7	3	10	2	0	2	2	0	2
Marowijne	1	0	1	2	0	2	4	0	4	5	1	6	7	3	10	2	0	2
Nickerie	1	0	1	3	1	4	1	0	1	5	0	5	2	2	4	7	1	8
Para	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	3	6	2	8	1	2	3	1	1	2
Total	10	0	11	29	13	42	37	5	42	85	33	11	38	37	75	14	12	26
		0			31			12			28	8		50			46	
		%			%			%			%			%			%	

Source: Ministry of Regional Development

The total number of women enrolled in civil service training in 1998/1999 was 213 (91%). This percentage decreased in 2001 and 2002 to 89%.

**Table 7.8: Civil servants enrolled in training courses, 1999-2002**

Training course	2000			2001			2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
V.A.A.O. 1st yr	12	63	75	8	77	85	5	83	88
V.A.A.O. 2nd yr	8	46	54	7	52	59	7	50	57
Pre-training 'Surnumerair'	5	66	71	14	84	98	7	62	69
'Surnumerair'	6	124	130	4	64	68	15	91	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>320</b>

V.A.A.O.= Advanced General Training for Civil Servants

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs

In 1994, the share of women in the civil service was 35%, while in 2002 this increased to 50% (18,145 of the 36,251 civil servants). The percentages among the lower, middle, higher and top positions were resp., 47%, 38%, 67% and 41% (see also under Art. 11).

**Table 7.9: Civil servants per ministry according to level, 2002**

Lower level			Middle level			Higher level			Top level			Not known
M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	
6300	7225	13525	7460	4536	11996	2931	5945	8976	624	439	1063	791
47%	53%		62%	38%		33%	67%		59%	41%		

Source: Cebuma 2002

Although the number of women enrolled in higher educational institutions increased considerably in the past years, and the number of female students enrolled in university now surpasses the number of male students, this is not reflected in the increase in the number of women in top positions of decision-making. According to the *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname* (2001), there are only 9% women in higher positions in University, 17% in the National Assembly, 19% in Government, 14% in boards of political parties, 5% of the medical specialists, 8% in diplomatic service. In 2001, the National Gender Policy Bureau developed a gender-mainstreaming plan, which should eventually lead to a national policy on gender equality in all sectors and all Ministries. The low involvement of women in decision making at the highest political levels is in great contrast with their active and often leading role at the community level. In many villages and other small communities it is often women's groups or women in community organizations who initiate and manage development projects.

The Women's Parliamentary Forum (VPF) started a 50/50 campaign, directed towards equal representation of women in policy and decision making positions, and towards enhancing gender awareness among men and women. In the framework of this campaign, signatures were collected, including those of the President and the Minister of Home Affairs. To enhance gender awareness, VPF will organize a gender trainers' course for political parties, so that they can have their own cadre trained to provide gender training within their own parties. The Ministry of Home Affairs supported an initiative of VPF in 2002 to initiate discussions on a gender-sensitive budgeting. Gender focal points

of different ministries participated in a workshop on this subject in November of that year. The workshop was financed by UNIFEM-Caribbean and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Suriname.

## **Article 8**

### **International participation**

Although there is an increased awareness of representation and participation of women at the international level and there has been a slight improvement, Surinamese women are not yet sufficiently represented at this level. The Republic of Suriname has 16 representations, of which 10 Embassies (1 of these also functions as the permanent representation with the Organization of American States), 4 consulates and 1 Permanent Representation with the United Nations.

In 2001, the first female ambassadors of Suriname were appointed, while in the entire reporting period 3 women were appointed as Consuls. In this period, two women held responsibility in the Permanent Representations with the Organization of American States and the United Nations. The number of female representatives in the period 1999-2002 increased excessively in comparison with 1998 (from 5 to 15, i.e. 200%). The high numbers of diplomats in, particularly the positions of Ambassador and Consul, ensue from mutations that took place during the reporting period. As per December 2002 there were 9 male Ambassadors and 2 female Ambassadors, while there were 3 male Consuls and 1 female Consul.

In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs there is a clear increase of the number of women in managerial positions. In the period 1998-2002, 16 of the 30 officials in a managerial position were women. Of the 14 men in a managerial position, 7 were heads of a supporting department; of the 16 women in managerial positions, 6 were heads or acting heads of a supporting department. Women held responsibility in the 5 geopolitical divisions. In 2000, the first female Minister of Foreign Affairs was appointed. The head policy advisor in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is also a woman. In the eradication of gender inequality, however, one impediment is that political parties still exercise great influence on the nomination of men and women for politico-administrative bodies, High Organs of State, diplomatic service, and decision-making positions within Government. One of the points of action of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, included in the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Suriname, is to give an impetus to removal of gender inequality in the diplomatic service.

In the framework of the globalizing changes in the world, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has enabled officials this past year to follow training to increase their knowledge. Use was also made of different diplomats' training courses offered by friendly nations. Female civil servants and women from NGOs are still predominantly visible at international meetings that concern women. Suriname is well represented by female civil servants as well as women from NGOs in meetings of international and regional women's organizations. At the invitation of international organizations like UNIFEM, UNICEF, other funds like the Gender Equity Fund of Canada, or at own initiative, women's organizations participate with or without government representatives, in meetings of, inter alia, the above-mentioned organizations abroad and in Suriname. The costs for participation in conferences abroad and for organizing local conferences are borne by the relevant international organizations.

**Table 8.1: Diplomats according to functions in de period 1999-2002, in comparison with 1998**

Function	1998			1999-2002		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Ambassador	10	0	10	19	2	21
Counselor	8	2	10	3	2	5
Consul	3	1	4	5	3	8
1st Secretary	2	2	4	4	3	7
2nd Secretary	0	0	0	4	2	6
3rd Secretary	0	0	0	2	3	5
Total	23 (82%)	5 (18%)	28 (100%)	37 (72%)	15 (28%)	52 (100%)

*Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002*

## **Article 9 Nationality**

Since the last CEDAW report, the legislation with respect to nationality has not changed. Thus, the discriminatory provision that a woman does not pay any costs when she is naturalized together with her husband, but that she does when she submits the application separately, still exists. The situation with regard to the nationality of the children has not changed either, as a result of which legitimate and natural children who have been acknowledged, in principle acquire the father's nationality, whilst not-acknowledged children acquire the mother's nationality. The Committee on Gender Legislation will present possible amendments for the law on nationality.

## PART III

### Article 10 Education

Formal education in Suriname is structured as follows:

#### Basic education (average 8 years)

- 2 years of pre-primary education (KO); and
- 6 years of primary education (GLO) or special education.

#### Junior secondary education (VOJ) (average 3 to 4 years)

- basic vocation-oriented education (EBO); or
- continued vocation-oriented education (VBO), including basic technical school (ETS); or
- secondary special education (VBO); or
- junior domestic education (LNO); or
- junior technical education (LTO); or
- junior vocation-oriented education (LBGO); or
- junior secondary general education (MULO).

#### Senior secondary education (VOS) (average 2 to 4 years)

- nurses' training A/B and related vocational training (COVAB); or
- secondary economic and administrative education (MEAO); or
- institute for natural resources and technical education (NATIN); or
- nursery school teacher training A (Kweek-A); or
- primary school teacher training; or
- senior secondary general education (HAVO); or
- university preparatory education (VWO).

#### Tertiary education (average 2 to 5 years)

- advanced training for nurses and related vocations (COVAB); or
- training for dental hygienists (JTV); or
- institute for advanced teacher training (IOL) with 21 different courses; or
- the polytechnic college (PTC) with 4 courses; or
- the academy for higher arts and culture education (AHKCO) with 2 courses (journalism and socio-cultural work); or
- the University of Suriname with 13 courses.

In the Caribbean, the education expenditures as a percentage of the Gross National Product are on average 4%. In Suriname, this percentage was 6% in 1990 and 5.5% in 2000. The Ministry of Education's share of the operational expenditures of the national budget is about 16%; in the 1980s, this was 25%. As far as investments are concerned, the Ministry's share of the national budget was 4% in 2001, and 8% in 2002. This Ministry employed 37% of the civil servants in 2001; 77% of these civil servants were teachers (Source: National Educational Plan Suriname). On the national budget, the share of education increased from 10.7% to 12.6% in the period 1998-2002. In spite of this increase, the Government is unable to finance the education sector in its entirety. There was a further deterioration in maintenance of schools and furniture in the reporting period as a result of decreased government income. In the past years, therefore, an increasing financial contribution is required from the students. Thanks to endeavors of teachers, school principals, neighborhood organizations and NGOs funds are raised and donor assistance acquired to renovate schools and

renew materials. But the great shortage of learning aids and physical problems still stagnate the educational process. Table 10.1 gives an overview of the financing of the educational sector between 1996 and 2000.

**Table 10.1: Financing of the educational sector (1996 - 2000)**

**Estimated expenditures in \*mln. SRG and in %**

	1996	%	1997	%	1998	%	1999	%	2000	%
<b>Operational costs</b>										
Education	10,725.50	95.6	10,647.50	96.2	17,541.00	92.6	27,494.00	94.0	45,000.20	94.9
Culture	210.50	1.9	255.30	2.3	542.40	2.9	702.97	2.4	965.90	2.0
Sports and youth affairs	285.70	2.5	277.60	2.5	856.90	4.5	1,052.40	3.6	1,430.50	3.0
Sub-total	11,221.70	100	11,180.40	100	18,940.30	100	29,249.37	100	47,396.60	100
<b>% of the budget</b>		<b>19.9</b>		<b>16.0</b>		<b>15.6</b>		<b>13.6</b>		<b>17.8</b>
<b>% of the civil service budget</b>		<b>10.0</b>		<b>8.8</b>		<b>10.7</b>		<b>9.2</b>		<b>12.6</b>
<b>Investments</b>										
Education	100.00		100.00		100.00		100.00		78.07	
% of the budget		2.6		5.4		2.0		3.1		0.8
% of the civil service budget		0.1		0.1		0.1		0.0		0.0
<b>Developments</b>										
External financing	3,192.08		2,784.75		1,237.10		2,179.00		796.40	
Community development and education	261.82		114.49		405.50		2,751.00		1,518.00	
Sub-total	3,453.90		2,899.25		1,642.61		4,930.00		2,314.40	
% of the budget		6.7		5.3		3.3		4.9		2.3
% of the civil service budget		3.1		2.3		0.9		1.5		0.0
Total sector education and community development	14,775.60		14,179.65		20,682.91		34,279.37		49,789.07	
% of the civil service budget		13.2		11.2		11.7		10.7		13.2
<b>Estimation of all sectors</b>										
Operational costs	56,510.40		70,033.30		121,467.40		214,448.90		265,636.00	
Investments	3,820.30		1,861.70		4,913.60		3,202.20		10,003.80	
Development	51,513.80		54,810.00		49,847.70		101,643.70		101,871.60	
<b>Total civil service budget</b>	<b>111,844.50</b>		<b>126,704.90</b>		<b>176,228.70</b>		<b>319,294.80</b>		<b>377,511.50</b>	

Sources: Min. Finance/ Financial Note 1997 - 2000 and Planning Office /Annual Plan 1997 - 2000

Until 1998, there were no women in senior management positions of the Ministry of Education. In 1999, a woman was appointed, but she was active in this function only for a few months. The Ministry has 4 Permanent Secretaries, none of whom is a woman. At present, 3 of the 15 Deputy Permanent Secretaries are women (20%). In primary schools, 183 of the 325 principals are women (56,3%); in junior secondary schools, 49 of the 84 (58,33%); in senior secondary schools 8 of the 13 (38,09%). The Anton de Kom University of Suriname has a board and three faculties. The University Board consists of 9 members. Between August 1997 and 13 September 2000, 2 of the 9 members were women (22.22%). Since 13 September 2000, the University Board consists of 8 men and 1 woman (11.11%). Each Faculty has a dean and a secretary, as well as a department head for each department. The number of women academic staff of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname varied in the Faculty of Social Sciences between 27 of the 55 persons (49.09%) in 1998 to 24 of the 50 in November 2002 (48%). In the Faculty of Medical Sciences 5 of the 15 academic staff were women (33,33%) in 1998, and this decreased to 6 of the 19 in 2002 (31.58%). In the Faculty of Technological Sciences there was a decrease: 20 of the 63 academic staff in 1998 was a woman (31.74%), and in 2002 this decreased to 27.53% (19 of the 69). Table 10.2 gives an overview of the number of women in management positions in the different faculties between 1998 and February 2002.

The Bureau for Education Information and Study Facilities of the Ministry of Education is responsible for providing education on study possibilities in Suriname and abroad. The Information, which is accessible to everyone and does not focus on women, gives particular emphasis to formal education. Since the bureau does not have any units in the districts, the people in the rural districts and the interior do not get the information. There are two NGOs which also provide education on studies, namely the Foundation for Youth Welfare and the National Women's Movement. The Foundation for Youth Welfare organizes annual educational fairs, which provide information to youth on formal education as well as various forms of non-formal education. The National Women's Movement focuses its information on education to girls and women, in the framework of its programme 'Non-traditional women's jobs'. Through mass media, information is given on technical training in formal and non-formal education. The Ministry of Education supports these initiatives through its School Radio programmes and through the programmes of the Education and Awareness Departments.

**Table 10.2: Management of the faculties of ADEK University**

Faculty Boards of ADEK University								
	2Jan 1998		20 Jan 2000		15 Jan 2001		15 Feb 2002	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<b>Social Sciences</b>								
Dean	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Secretary	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1
Business Administration	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Sociology	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Agogical sciences and Education	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Economics	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0
Law	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Public Administration	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Medical Sciences</b>								
Dean	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Secretary	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
Medicine	4	0	4	0	4	0	4	0
Physical Therapy	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Technological Sciences</b>								
Dean	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
1st Secretary	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2nd Secretary	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Agrarian Production	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Mineral Production	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Electrical Engineering	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Infrastructure	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Environmental Sciences	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Civil Engineering	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Mathematics and Physics	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Biology and Chemistry	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b> 24%	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b> 19%	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b> 13%	<b>21</b>	<b>6</b> 22%

Source: Gender Focal Point of the Ministry of Education



In April 2002, the General Bureau of Statistics published *Selected Gender Statistics of Suriname*. This publication gives data with respect to the number of teachers according to sex and school type, and the number of lecturers at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the number of students according to sex, the number of registered students at tertiary level and the number of registered students per district. Table 10.3 shows the number of teachers according to sex and school type. Table 10.4 shows the number of students according to sex and school type, Table 10.5 shows the number of registered students at tertiary level according to sex.

**Table 10.3: Number of teachers according to sex and school type for school years 1997/1998 through 1999/2000**

	Teachers 1997/98			Teachers 1998/99			Teachers 1999/00		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Pre-primary	-	659	659	-	633	633	-	560	560
Special education	6	169	175	5	130	135	5	169	174
Primary	369	2431	2800	369	2501	2870	360	2485	2845
Junior secondary general	260	641	901	288	685	973	264	704	968
Junior pre-vocational	162	388	550	154	399	553	151	389	540
Junior technical	62	20	82	144	45	189	98	32	130
Elementary technical	17	5	22	27	7	34	25	7	32
Junior domestic science	4	35	39	2	30	32	2	18	20
Elementary pre-vocational	19	36	55	27	53	80	7	47	54
<b>Total</b>	<b>899</b>	<b>4384</b> <b>83%</b>	<b>5283</b>	<b>1016</b>	<b>4483</b> <b>82%</b>	<b>5499</b>	<b>912</b>	<b>4411</b> <b>83%</b>	<b>5323</b>

Source: *Selected Gender Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics*

**Table 10.4: Number of students according to school type for school years 1998/99 and 1999/2000**

School type	Students 1998/1999			Students 1999/2000		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Pre-primary	7395	7136	14531	6246	6022	12268
Special education	625	268	893	705	299	1004
Primary	32741	31112	63853	31526	29892	61418
Junior secondary general	6283	9510	15793	5843	9320	15163
Junior secondary pre-vocational	2555	4657	7212	3045	4745	7790
Junior technical	2765	132	2897	2029	107	2136
Elementary vocational	817	609	1426	988	588	1576
Elementary technical	431	35	466	501	39	540
Domestic science	-	391	391	1	346	347
Pre-vocational	289	148	437	268	110	378
Senior secondary	2673	5060	7733	2967	5645	8612
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56574</b>	<b>59058</b> <b>51%</b>	<b>115632</b>	<b>54119</b>	<b>57113</b> <b>51%</b>	<b>111232</b>

Source: *Selected Gender Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics*

**Table 10.5: Number of registered students at tertiary level  
(school years 1998/1999 through 2000/2001)**

	1998/1999			1999/2000			2000/2001		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
ADEK University	1196	1656	2852	1091	1553	2644	1046	1699	2745
Inst. For Advanced Teacher Training	-	-	-	318	932	1250	394	1584	1942
Inst. For Technical Teacher Training	21	3	24	21	3	24	33	3	36
Academy for Higher Art and Culture Education	44	136	180	44	138	182	50	134	184
<b>Total</b>	<b>1261</b>	<b>1795</b> <b>59%</b>	<b>3056</b>	<b>1474</b>	<b>2626</b> <b>64%</b>	<b>4100</b>	<b>1523</b>	<b>3348</b> <b>68%</b>	<b>4907</b>

*Source: Selected Gender Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics*

In total, the percentage of female teachers remained stable between 82% and 83%. The highest percentage of women teachers is found in (pre) primary schools, and the lowest percentage in technical schools. The percentage of girls in the different school types (up to senior secondary level) between 1998 and 2000 remained the same (51%). The number of women students at tertiary level is steadily increasing from resp. 59% in school year 1999-2000 to 64% in school year 2000-2001, and 68% in school year 2001-2002. In the period 1999-2000 and 2001-2002 the share of female students at the Anton de Kom University rose from 21% to 64%. Per faculty the rise in female students was as follows:

Social Sciences:                   from 65% to 69%  
 Medical Sciences:                from 54% to 56%  
 Technological Sciences:        from 21% to 64%

As far as students per district are concerned, the tables of the publication *Selected Gender Statistics of Suriname* of the General Bureau of Statistics (April 2002) give data for 1997 to 2000. For the districts of Coronie and Brokopondo no data are available for junior secondary, while the District of Sipaliwini does not have a junior secondary school.

**Table 10.6: Number of registered students per district (school year 1999/2000)**

	Pre-primary			Primary			Junior secondary general		
	M	F	TOT	M	F	TOT	M	F	TOT
Paramaribo	2737	2607	5344	15351	14866	30217	3481	5596	9077
Wanica	1232	1355	2587	5997	5624	11621	836	1356	2192
Para	167	354	521	1336	1208	2544	102	176	278
Nickerie	684	681	1365	2608	2393	5001	711	1103	1814
Coronie	49	43	92	207	178	385	NB	NB	NB
Saramacca	284	224	508	995	956	1951	164	207	371
Brokopondo	165	166	331	666	608	1274	NB	NB	NB
Commewijne	422	361	783	1653	1513	3166	325	609	934
Marowijne	243	269	512	1278	1361	2639	224	273	497
Sipaliwini	167	176	343	1453	1185	2638	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6150</b>	<b>6236</b> <b>50%</b>	<b>12386</b>	<b>31544</b>	<b>29892</b> <b>49%</b>	<b>61436</b>	<b>5843</b>	<b>9320</b> <b>61%</b>	<b>15163</b>

Source: Selected Gender Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics

**Table 10.7: Registered students in 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 at the three faculties of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname**

	1999/2000			2000/2001		
	M	F	TOT	M	F	TOT
<b>Social Sciences</b>						
Agogical Science and Education	26	62	88	20	86	106
Business Economics	195	377	572	203	406	609
Planning Economics	39	42	81	32	42	74
Sociology	5	21	26	5	46	51
Public Administration	90	130	220	72	186	258
Law (day)	127	376	503	113	360	473
Law (evening)	140	123	263	132	139	271
Business Administration	23	56	79	24	52	76
	<b>645</b>	<b>187(65%)</b>	<b>1832</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>1317(69%)</b>	<b>1918</b>
<b>Medical Sciences</b>						
Physical Therapy	8	24	32	8	27	35
Medicine	158	169	327	131	151	282
	<b>166</b>	<b>193(54%)</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>178(56%)</b>	<b>317</b>
<b>Technological Sciences</b>						
Agrarian Production	25	31	56	23	32	55
Mineral Production	49	36	85	46	37	83
Electrical Engineering	82	24	106	95	32	127
Infrastructure	56	47	103	72	65	137
Environmental Sciences	5	22	27	7	33	40
Mechanical Engineering	63	4	67	63	5	68
	<b>280</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>204(40%)</b>	<b>510</b>
	<b>1091</b>	<b>544</b> <b>21%</b>	<b>2635</b>	<b>1046</b>	<b>1753</b> <b>64%</b>	<b>2745</b>

Source: Selected Gender Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics

The *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)*, a study carried out by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing in collaboration with UNICEF in 1999/2000, mentions that about 78% of all children attends primary school. In the urban areas this is 81.6%, in the rural areas of the coast it is 81.9%, while school attendance is considerably lower in the interior (61.2%).

**Table 10.8: Percentage of children of primary school age attending school 1999-2000**

		Sex				Total	
		M		F		% attending	Number
		% attending	Number	% attending	Number		
<b>Distric</b>	Paramaribo	80.9	472	80.9	427	80.9	899
	Wanica	80.9	309	86.4	280	83.5	590
	Nickerie	86.2	134	78.9	141	82.4	275
	Coronie	76.0	23	70.8	22	73.5	44
	Saramacca	83.8	33	84.6	35	84.2	68
	Commewijne	84.3	46	93.0	39	88.3	85
	Marowijne	77.1	87	80.9	76	78.9	164
	Para	81.0	75	81.0	58	81.0	132
	Brokopondo	69.2	56	82.2	65	76.25	121
	Sipaliwini	49.3	204	54.5	174	51.7	378
<b>Area</b>	Urban	81.6	661	81.7	589	81.6	1250
	Rural	80.7	476	83.3	452	81.9	928
	Interior	57.8	303	64.9	275	61.2	578
<b>Age</b>	5	1.8	161	6.2	159	4.0	320
	6	76.6	183	80.3	165	78.4	348
	7	87.5	207	89.3	164	88.3	370
	8	92.2	177	94.6	147	93.3	324
	9	89.4	182	95.0	177	92.2	359
	10	91.1	195	94.7	176	92.8	372
	11	90.4	158	90.5	176	90.5	334
	12	72.4	178	75.0	152	73.6	330
<b>Total</b>		<b>76.3</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>78.7</b>	<b>1316</b>	<b>77.5</b>	<b>2756</b>

Source: Suriname Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2000

No clear difference has been established between school attendance of boys and girls. Access to schools in the interior is usually impeded by a lack of adequate schools, materials, qualified teachers and teacher houses. School attendance of girls in the interior is further impeded by notions of the Maroon and Indigenous people who live in that area of the reproductive and social role of girls. As a result, girls have to assist their mothers on the farming plot or in the home during sowing or harvesting times, which is at the cost of their school attendance.

In general, the number of female students exceeds the number of male students in Suriname. This is particularly the case at Junior Secondary Pre-vocational (LBGO), Junior Secondary General (MULO), Domestic Science, Senior Secondary (VWMKO), the University, and the Institute for Advanced Teacher Training (IOL). But the number of male students exceeds the number of female students at technical schools and in primary school. As already mentioned in the previous report, enrolment is a reflection of gender patterns. Although all forms of schools and education are equally open to boys and girls, LBGO and Domestic Science can still be considered school types providing training in so-called traditional women's jobs, while

technical schools train students in so-called traditional men's jobs. In 2001, in the framework of the UNIFEM Programme *Women and Sustainable Human Development*, the Projekta Foundation made a short documentary entitled *Gender and Education*, in which teachers and students expressed themselves. This, as well as a sample survey in preparation of the documentary, clearly showed that there are still stereotypical role patterns of men and women in textbooks, programmes and teaching methods at primary schools, that boys and girls are treated and punished differently by the teachers, and that boys are more often called "difficult" and "unmanageable". Most curricula currently used in primary schools were developed in the 1980s by the Curriculum Development Department of the Ministry of Education. The curricula are used throughout the country in all schools. In 1998 this department started with the assessment of the curricula. According to the Ministry of Education, due account will be given to gender aspects during revision. In 2000, a start was made with revision of the primary school curricula for geography, history and natural science.

The Surinamese law does not have any gender impediments with regard to access to scholarships and other study allowances. Table 10.9 shows the total number of scholarships awarded for studies in Suriname and abroad in the period 1998-2002. More scholarships are awarded to boys for studies abroad, which are usually higher-level studies that cannot be done in Suriname.

**Table 10.9: Scholarship awarded for studies in Suriname and abroad, 1998-2002**

Year	Scholarships for outside Suriname, 1998-2002				Scholarships for Suriname, 1998-2001				
	M	F	% F	Total	M	F	% F	Unknown sex	Total
1998	62	36	37%	98	837	400	31%	56	1293
1999	44	27	38%	71	936	370	27%	68	1374
2000	42	9	18%	51					
2001	22	5	19%	27	537	253	65%	38	828
2002	20	3	13%	23					
Total	190	80	30%	270	2310	1023	29%	162	3495

Source: Ministry of Education, Bureau for Education Information and Study Facilities

In general, more scholarships are awarded to girls for studies in Suriname than to boys. Exceptions are for studies at the Institute for Natural Resources and Technical Studies (NATIN). As far as the Faculty of Medical Sciences is concerned, about equal numbers of scholarships were awarded to boys and girls in 2001, while in the preceding years more male students than female students were awarded a scholarship.

**Table 10.10: Number of scholarships awarded in Suriname, according to school type**

	1998			1999			2001		
	M	F	Unknown	M	F	Unknown	M	F	Unknown
Senior secondary	67	152	11	62	211	11	29	58	3
Teacher training	19	196	5	13	215	8	3	115	4
NATIN	92	52	3	84	55	4	53	27	4
Commercial school	27	121	10	37	143	5	21	73	3
Medical sciences	30	22	3	29	39	12	29	26	7
Social sciences	93	188	14	84	206	18	64	190	13
Technological sciences	56	30	7	50	28	8	42	23	3
Academy of Higher Arts and Culture Ed.	4	4	1	1	3		1	3	
Inst. For Advanced Teacher Training	12	72	2	10	36	2	11	22	1
Total	400	837	56	370	936	68	253	537	38
Total per year	1293			1374			828		

*Source: Ministry of Education, Bureau for Education Information and Study Facilities*

Girls and boys are awarded identical certificates and diplomas in Suriname. As far as examination results are concerned, there is no gender-specific information available to enable a comparison of results on the basis of sex.

According to the law and in practice, there is no discrimination between male and female teachers with the same qualifications. But there are still arrears in the interior in comparison with the urban areas, for teachers in the interior usually have lower qualifications than the teaching certificates required for teaching in the urban area. In 2000, 89% of all teachers at (pre) primary schools in Suriname were women. In 2002, there were a total of 514 teachers employed in the interior, 131 of whom were men and 383 women (74,5%).

In formal education there are no policies and/or programmes for lifelong education. On a small scale, NGOs implement literacy programmes both in Paramaribo and in the interior, which are attended primarily by women (ca. 95%). Further official data on enrolment or obstacles to participation of particularly women in these programmes are not available. The most recent data on the literacy rate of the Surinamese population are data published in the household survey 1993-1997 of the General Bureau of Statistics. The general literacy rate for the entire population was estimated as 90.5%, i.e. men 91.6% and women 89.5%. The data were not subdivided into age groups. In the *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)*, the percentage of literates of 15 years and older (1999 through 2000) was estimated at 86.2%. To determine this percentage, the indicator used was the ability to read the newspaper without too much effort. In the rural areas, and in particular the interior, there was a much lower literacy rate, namely 87% in the districts and 52.1% in the interior, but 93% in the urban areas. On the whole, the literacy rate of women is lower than men (73.7% versus 83% among men). The MICS report published the following literacy rates in the different living areas:

Urban areas: 94.1% (M) 91.8% (F)  
 Rural areas: 89.0% (M) 84.9% (F)  
 Interior 65.9% (M) 44.4% (F)

MICS gives the following results for the drop out percentage at primary schools in the period 1999-2000 (Table 10.11). The average percentage among boys is 7.14%, and among girls 6.06%. There are no data available on the dropout percentage at other school types. No qualitative studies were performed in this reporting period.

**Table 10.11: Percentage of children starting in grade 1, who eventually reach grade 6, 1999 - 2000**

		% grade 1 that reaches grade 2	% grade 2 that reaches grade 3	% grade 3 that reaches grade 4	% grade 4 that reaches grade 5	% grade 5 that reaches grade 6
Sex	M	94.0	97.5	97.2	92.9	82.7
	F	97.9	97.1	98.2	91.3	85.2
District	Paramaribo	100.0	99.1	98.5	94.9	92.1
	Wanica	98.7	98.8	98.3	96.0	92.1
	Nickerie	97.0	94.6	100.0	82.1	75.4
	Coronie	100.0	100.0	88.9	100.0	88.9
	Saramacca	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Commewijne	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.0	90.0
	Marowijne	90.7	84.7	100.0	89.2	68.5
	Para	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Brokopondo	86.7	100.0	100.0	92.3	80.0
	Sipaliwini	81.5	92.9	85.0	71.4	45.9
Area	Urban	100.0	99.3	98.9	94.4	92.8
	Rural	96.6	95.3	98.2	91.3	82.5
	Interior	84.8	96.2	91.9	86.1	64.5
Total	100	95.8	97.3	97.6	92.1	83.8

Source: Multiple Indicator Cluster System (MICS) Suriname

Contrary to the policy at senior secondary schools, teenage mothers are not admitted to all junior secondary schools. The argument used is the possible negative influence on other students. Teenage fathers, however, are allowed to continue school. In Suriname ca. 17% of annual deliveries are registered to mothers younger than 20 years. According to the policy plan for children 2002-2003 of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing (February 2002, with UNICEF support), there are high numbers of teenage pregnancies because adults give insufficient priority to sexual education for children and prefer to avoid communication about sex. Teenagers themselves are often aware of contraceptives, but do not apply the knowledge. Girls generally suffer more from the consequences of teenage pregnancies than boys. The young mother is often unable to take care of the child emotionally, socially and financially, and the economic and development chances for mother and child are impeded.

There are no specific legal regulations in sports and physical education, which are part of the curricula of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary schools in Suriname. Specially trained teachers teach physical education. In sports organizations, the participation of girls and women is encouraged, especially in rounders, basketball and soccer. There is an increase in the participation of girls and women in sports activities, in regular education and in the training courses as sports leaders. The influence of cultural factors – especially religion – which in the past formed an impediment to the participation of girls and women in sports and physical education has decreased slightly. In the period 1998-2002 the number of female teachers of physical education was ca. 87%. There is a slight decrease in comparison with 1998.

**Table 10.12: Physical education teachers, 1998-2002**

Year	M	F	Total
1998	11	104 (90%)	115
1999	11	103 (90%)	114
2000	17	110 (87%)	127
2001	17	114 (87%)	131
2002	15	123 (89%)	138
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>554 (87%)</b>	<b>625</b>

*Source: Ministry of Education, Ms. Overeem*

Through the subjects natural science and biology and the project Basic Life Skills information on health in general and reproductive health in particular is given in primary and secondary schools. The Lobi Foundation plays an important role in educational programmes. This NGO is often consulted by the government, school principals and teachers and also provides family planning information and sex education at various schools and for private organizations, including women's organizations. These activities are still in contravention of Articles 533 and 534 of the Penal Code, which have not yet been amended.

Women's organizations also provide information on women and everything that has to do with women's development and their position in society. Many students and schools make use of these possibilities, and also visit the NGO Johanna Elsenhout Women's Documentation Center for more information.



## Article 11 Labor

The share of the Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment (ATM) on the national budget went from 0.57% in 1998 to 0.43% in 2001, and 0.88% in 2002.

**Table 11.1: Share of Ministry van ATM in the annual estimated government budget 1998- 2002 (x SRG. 1 miln)**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
ATM	962.5	1140.0	1971.3	2873.1	8226.8
	0.57%	0.39%	0.35%	0.43%	0.88%
Total	169660.6	289611.2	549806,7	666234,0	931024,3

*Source: Ministry of Finance*

The state has ratified the following conventions:

- *Night Work Convention* (I.L.O., no. 41) on 15 June 1976. In view of this convention and urged by different social groups, including trade unions, Suriname removed the prohibition on night work from its legislation by state decree 1983 no. 91, since the prohibition of night work was regarded as discrimination of women. The Ministry of ATM is considering the ratification of ILO Convention no. 89, which is an amendment of ILO Convention no. 41.
- *Employment Policy Convention* (I.L.O., no. 122) 15 June 1976.
- The International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Ecosoc), in 1976. This convention lays down the obligation for Suriname to treat male and female workers equally.

The following I.L.O. conventions are deemed important for ratification by the state, also because these are in accordance with CEDAW and the Constitution. Since these conventions have not yet been ratified by Suriname, there is no legislation in this regard either:

- *Maternity Protection Convention* (I.L.O. 2000 no. 183). This ILO Convention was not yet submitted to the National Assembly in this reporting period. It is expected that employers, especially small entrepreneurs, will persist in their objections against implementation of this convention, in particular with respect to the costs related to maternity leave and indemnification of delivery. Ratification might lead to fewer women being employed, which would further weaken the position of women on the labor market.
- *Equal Remuneration Convention* (I.L.O.1951 no. 100). This convention cannot be ratified yet because Suriname does not have a job classification system. This system is linked to a fixed salary system. Moreover, Suriname does not have a general system of minimum wages either.
- *Discrimination Convention (Employment and Occupation)* (I.L.O. 1958 no. 111).
- *Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention* (I.L.O. 1981 no. 156). Ratification is impeded, because the obligations that ensue from this convention on the short term are extremely costly for the Surinamese economy.

Under the auspices of the Ministry of ATM, the National Steering Group "Women Workers' Rights" was installed, comprising representatives of trade and industry, trade unions, government and women's organizations. Between 1996 and 1999 various activities were developed in the framework of the ILO project "Training and information on women workers' rights". The steering group, which has meanwhile been disbanded, produced the following documents, which are still available for the formulation of policy on women workers' rights:

- research report 'Women in technical jobs';
- research report "Working conditions of workers in textile shops";
- report "Evaluation of gender equality in Surinamese labor legislation and collective labor agreements";
- report "Sexual harassment at work".

Posters, which were produced at the time, are still up to date and available for distribution.

The following legal measures were taken at the national level to guarantee the right to work:

- Constitution, Article 26 paragraph 1 gives every citizen the right to work in accordance with his/her capacities. This is underlined as one of the fundamental social laws.
- The Labor Law and the Civil Code do not distinguish on the basis of sex, and are applicable to every employee.
- In the Police Regulations an article that used to be discriminatory towards the employment of married women and women with children, has been removed.

In Suriname, the Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment (ATM) is responsible for the national labor policy, while the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of ATM are responsible for the policy on equality of men and women in the work place. Tables 11.2 and 11.3 give data on employed and unemployed people in Paramaribo and the district of Wanica. Data for other districts are not available. The unemployment rate is available only for Paramaribo and the district of Nickerie (see Table 11.4).

**Table 11.2: Employed population in households  
in the districts of Paramaribo and Wanica according to age group p/yr.**

Age group	1998			1 <sup>st</sup> half 1999*		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
15 – 19	1896	251	2147	1228	0	1228
20 – 24	9101	3000	12101	5272	1499	6771
25 – 29	10437	5071	15508	5771	4818	10589
30 – 39	17724	8976	26700	11385	8314	23036
40 – 49	11925	7231	19156	9862	7041	20080
50 – 59	7870	3554	11424	4796	2635	85431
60 – 65	751	319	1070	1817	772	2589
Total	59704	28402	88106	47756	25078	72834

Primary Source: General Bureau of Statistics  
Secondary Source: Labor Statistics Dept., Ministry of ATM  
(\*tentative data)

**Table 11.3: Unemployed population in households  
in the districts of Paramaribo and Wanica according to age group**

Age group	1998			1 <sup>st</sup> half 1999*		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
15 - 19	470	684	1154	1318	636	1953
20 - 24	1195	1939	3134	727	1454	2181
25 - 29	1593	1662	3255	591	909	1818
30 - 39	1107	1150	2257	1636	1363	2999
40 - 49	262	413	675	1090	1318	2408
50 - 59	0	0	0	0	455	455
60 - 65	0	0	0	0		
Total	4627	5848	10475	5361	6451	11812

*Primary Source: General Bureau of Statistics*

*Secondary source: Labor Statistics Dept., Ministry of ATM  
(\*tentative data)*

**Table 11.4: Unemployment rate,  
Districts of Paramaribo and Wanica, 1996 – 1999**

Year	M	F	Tot
1996	7.9	16.4	10.9
1997	7.4	16.0	10.5
1998	7.0	17.0	11.0
1 <sup>st</sup> half 1999*	10.4	20.0	14.0

*Primary Source: General Statistics Bureau*

*Secondary source: Labor Statistics Dept., Ministry of ATM  
(\*tentative data)*

The data are available for the period until the first half of 1999 and relate to the two largest districts, namely Paramaribo and Wanica, which together have about 70% of the total population. Since there have not been recent studies on the causes of unemployment among women, there are no data available to make an analysis. Experience of the Ministry of ATM with unemployed women in its labor mediation efforts and vocational training shows that women still prefer traditional women's jobs. As a result, women miss the chance to get a job in the technical field. The vocational choice is an important factor of unemployment among women in Suriname. Because of impediments regarding childcare, women are further restricted in their choice of a job with irregular working hours. In workshops for unemployed people, the Ministry of ATM has noticed that among certain groups of unemployed women there is a lack of motivation and lack of perseverance among some women in the lengthy process to acquire a suitable place of employment. In areas where there are no labor mediation offices, a lack of information is often an important aspect, because the unemployed are dependent on traditional methods of information transfer and often cannot be informed in time of vacancies. A lack of information and limited access to capital are further impediments for unemployed women, who might want to set themselves up as micro-entrepreneurs.

The Ministry of ATM uses the following instruments to eradicate unemployment among women: vocational training, labour exchange and guidance of micro-entrepreneurs. The Foundation for Labor Mobilization and Development (SAO), which comes under the Ministry of

ATM, aims at organizing vocational training for dropouts and job seekers. The training courses are short (6-9 months) and focus on training both men and women for technical jobs, as entrepreneurs, and in business-specific courses. The data show that fewer women than men participate in the SAO training courses.

**Table 11.5: Overview of female participants in regular SAO training courses 2000 – 2002**

	2000	2001	2002	Tot	
Technical training	2	1	2	5	0.8%
Training for micro-entrepreneurs	91	8	0	99	15.5%
Traditional women's jobs	26	97	411	534	83.6%
Total number of women	119	106	413	638	100%

*Source: Labor Mobilization and Development (SAO), Ministry of ATM*

As evident from Table 11.5, between 2000 and 2002 there were 2273 persons enrolled, of whom 638 were women (28%). Most women enrolled for traditional women's jobs (83.6%) such as sewing. The low participation of women in technical training courses is related to the existing traditional ideas of the roles of working men and women. To increase the number of women enrolled in technical training, the National Women's Movement (NVB) implemented the project "Women in non-traditional jobs", part of which was done in collaboration with SAO. The programme of the National Women's Movement distinguishes itself from other training courses by the specific guidance and didactics used for the target group, the empowerment of the women concerned in different areas, the direct guidance for women to the labor market, the post-training guidance, and the special attention given to awareness.

**Table 11.6: Overview of women participating in regular SAO training courses 1999 – 2002 (including women in non-traditional jobs training)**

	2000	2001	2002	NVB	Tot	
Technical training	2	1	2	40	45	7%
Training for micro-entrepreneurs	91	8	0	0	99	15%
Traditional women's jobs	26	97	411	0	534	78%
Total number of women	119	106	413	40	678	100%

*Source: Labor Mobilization and Development (SAO), Ministry of ATM*

The Expertise Center "Women and Business", which was set up by the Ministry of ATM in June 1994, aimed at giving support and guidance to starting micro-entrepreneurs. The Center is no longer operational. The tasks of the center have been taken over by the Foundation Productive Working Units (SPWE), which also comes under the Ministry of ATM, and which directs its attention towards improving micro-entrepreneurs and small entrepreneurs, both men and women. Between 1999 and 2002, SPWE organized various training activities, during

which 422 people were trained. The training courses included techniques for negotiating and presentation, financial management, basic marketing, business management, basic accounting, advanced accounting, logistics management, personal leadership, and writing a business plan. Table 11.7 shows the data on persons trained.

**Table 11.7 Overview of persons trained by SPWE between 1999 – 2002**

Year	M	F	Tot
1999	32	30	62
2000	15	35	50
2001	66	73	139
2002	97	74	171
Total	210	212	422

*Source: SPWE, Ministry of ATM*

Two NGOs, namely the National Women's Movement (through the Institute for Women Entrepreneurs) and the Women's Business Group Foundation, have provided training courses to strengthen the skills of micro-entrepreneurs. The training of the National Women's Movement consisted of the following modules: basic accounting; advanced accounting; financial administration; cost price calculation; marketing; financial management; writing a business plan. The workshops concerned chicken farming, plant propagation, budgeting, and presentation techniques for persons and products during fairs. Guidance was provided both in the office and at the work place. Guidance in the office usually had to do with developing the idea of the micro-entrepreneur into a business. Guidance at the work place concerned the practical application of theoretical knowledge. 536 of the trained persons were women (99%).

**Table 11.8: Training courses by National Women's Movement/  
Inst. for Women Entrepreneurs 1998 – 2002**

Year	Training courses	Workshops	Guidance	Tot
1999	44	0	36	80
2000	65	0	48	113
2001	46	51	26	123
2002	56	116	54	226
Total	211	167	164	542

*Source: National Women's Movement*

The Women's Business Group Foundation (WBG) was established in 1993. It is a network of women entrepreneurs who, for the larger part, come from the branches handicraft, textile, food processing, and skin and hair care. WBG tries to stimulate and strengthen entrepreneurs in an innovative manner. In 1998 the foundation was professionalized and the Bureau of the Women's Business Group was established. Through its business advice and training (BAT) Unit and its Project Development and Guidance (POB) Unit, the organization provides various services, such as business advice for starting and/or established entrepreneurs; assistance to entrepreneurs in writing their business plan; entrepreneurship training; guidance in business organization; credit mediation; identification and development of projects which guarantee sustainable livelihoods for women in local communities; assistance to foundations and other organizations in developing project ideas. Besides these regular services, there are also

general and branche-specific network meetings and specific workshops and training, which aim at meeting the needs of the entrepreneurs per branche, but also at helping to find solutions for specific problems which entrepreneurs have. Between 1999 and 2001, the following trainings/workshops were held (Source: Women's Business Group Foundation):

- Training Business Management, Marketing and Quality Improvement, in collaboration with the organization Black Migrant and Refugee Women in the Netherlands. The same training was offered to non-literate women in the interior by using images and symbols.
- Workshop Home Improvement (17 women).
- Training Basic Human Resource Management. The training was adapted to the situation of the participants. Subjects discussed included organizational structure, description of the organization, position description, staff profiling, staffing and staff assessment. (10 women).
- Workshop Handicraft: making jewelry and stuffed toys. (10 women).
- Training Salon Management and Aroma Therapy: basic techniques for skin and hair care. (12 women).
- Workshop Business Administration: keeping a balance sheet and drawing up a profit and loss account. (10 women).

As mentioned in the previous report, the right to a free choice of occupation is properly laid down in the law. In practice, there appear to be impediments. The share of women in the agricultural and industrial sectors is structurally low. Unfortunately, the most recent data is from 1996, when the share of women in the agricultural and industrial sectors were, resp. 9.5% and 5.1%. In part, the relatively low percentage of women in the agricultural sector could be because women are not acknowledged as producers and income providers, and as such remain invisible in labor statistics. Furthermore, people who are active in the informal sector, including many women, do not register as employed, among other things because of their fear of paying taxes, or because they are not licensed, or because they produce on an irregular basis.

A survey conducted by the National Women's Movement in two neighborhoods of Paramaribo showed that the existing gender inequality at macro-economic level is clearly reflected at the household level. In the neighborhoods, namely Palissadeweg (semi-rural area) and Munderbuiten (urban area) there are twice as many men as women involved in the labor process and men were also indicated as the main source of income for families. Although the phenomenon of working mothers has a long history in Suriname, the data from the survey in Munderbuiten and Palissadeweg show that resp. 36% and 47% of the mothers have a fulltime paid job outside the home. This means that 64% of the women of Palissadeweg and 53% of the women at Munderbuiten are housewives. In spite of the important contribution of women to the income of the family, there is still a strong notion, especially among men, that men are responsible for providing the family income. Men in general ignore the role of women as income providers, as appears from the fact that 0% of the men on the Palissadeweg and only 17% of those at Munderbuiten indicated women as an important source of income for the family. Furthermore, 29% of the men at Palissadeweg and 61% of those at Munderbuiten said they do not support women working outside the home. The notion that the man is the income provider of the family is therefore an important reference in the socialization of children, and it is therefore an important ideological instrument in maintaining gender inequality in society.

The ideas of gender continue into choice of jobs, as also appears from the data on the presence of primarily women in traditional women's occupations, such as administrative and service-rendering jobs (nurses and teachers), while the majority of men are found in technical jobs and management positions. (Source: *Survey Report on Gender Socialization In Two Selected Communities: Palissadeweg and Munderbuiten*, December 2000, by Dr. Julia Terborg for the National Women's Movement and financed by UNICEF).

There are no data available on the position of women in non-traditional jobs, but the data on the position of girls and women in technical education are self-evident.

**Table 11.9: Girls in technical education**

	1998/1999			1999/2000		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
LTO	2765	132 (5%)	2897	2029	107 (5%)	2136
NATIN	789	203 (20%)	992	784	235 (23%)	1019
Total	3554	335 (9%)	3889	2813	342 (11%)	3155

Source: *Inspectorate Primary Education and Inspectorate Junior Secondary Education*  
Ministry of Education

As far as the position of women in senior management positions is concerned, the data for the civil service clearly show the under-representation of women in top positions and their over-representation in lower positions. But there is also a positive trend, namely that women in higher vocational and university studies are increasingly choosing non-traditional studies (except the purely technical jobs) in the productive and commercial sectors, which in the near future will have consequences for the choice women make in these fields.

Employees are generally properly protected against arbitrary dismissal. In the Constitution, dismissal without good reason or for political or ideological reasons is prohibited for both men and women. According to the Dismissal Permission Act, dismissal by the employer without the required permission by the Minister of Labor, Technological Development and Environment, is invalid. Besides this, the Dismissal Board gives further protection, since pregnancy, childbirth and marriage are also invalid grounds for dismissal in the private sector. Moreover, according to information from the Ministry of Labor, Technological Development and Environment, the Tripartite Dismissal Committee has never sanctioned dismissal owing to unfitness as a result of repeated pregnancies.

The right of employees, both men and women, to follow vocational training, is laid down in the Constitution and the Civil Service Personnel Act. The right of civil servants to apply for study leave is laid down in the Personnel Act, but not further regulated in a state decree. In the Collective Labor Agreements the right of employees to follow training is guaranteed. According to information, neither the civil service nor private employers object to their employees following vocational training. Only when the training concerned would not have any direct use for the employer, and the training is to be followed during working hours, do employers object.

Although there was no national survey on salary structures in Suriname between 1999 and 2002, it may be assumed that both legally and in practice the principle of equal wages for equal work applies. Since women generally form part of the lower wage groups, women, however, usually earn less than men. According to the Government Automation Department

(CEBUMA), about 53% of the civil servants who were in the lower ranks in 2002 were women, while 41% in higher positions were women.

As far as discriminatory provisions with respect to the reproductive function of female civil servants are concerned, the Committee on Gender Legislation of the Ministry of Home Affairs prepared amendments of the Civil Service Personnel Act. All civil servants, both men and women, are entitled to pension when they reach the age of 60 years and meet the requirements laid down in the Civil Service Pension Act of 1972. This benefit is possible, because civil servants pay a fixed percentage of their salary into a pension fund. In view of the high inflation, pensions have lost their value, and at present it is being discussed to index pensions. Besides the pension regulations, every resident who has reached the age of 60 years is entitled to a benefit from the General Old-Age Pension Fund (AOV). The available data from the fund for the period 1999-2001 show that women form on average 53% of the number of people registered with AOV.

**Table 11.10: AOV period 1999 - 2001**

Year	M	F	Total
1999	17086 (47%)	19374 (53%)	36460 (100%)
2000	17506 (47%)	20046 (47%)	37552 (100%)
2001	17553 (46%)	20282 (54%)	37815 (100%)

*Source: Ministry of Social Affairs,  
Dept. Research and Planning*

Only a limited number of employees in the private sector have pension plans. In this regard, retired civil servants usually have a more favorable position than retired employees from the private sector. According to the *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname* by S. Ketwaru (UNIFEM, 2001) it appears that in the period prior to 1998 only 2% of the women in Paramaribo and Wanica enjoyed a pension. Data after 1998 are not available. In the private sector most collective labor agreements include a pension arrangement, although widowers and orphans hardly ever are entitled to the pension of the female partner or their mother. The larger enterprises do have a pension plan and some employers prefer to pay a monthly amount, which can be paid into a pension plan or insurance, by choice of the employee.

Suriname does not have unemployment benefits. Unemployed citizens can get financial and medical assistance from the Ministry of Social Affairs on the basis of criteria that have been laid down. In 1998, about 60% of the people registered for medical assistance were women. After that year, no gender-specific data have been kept, as a result of which the information cannot be updated. In the private sector medical provisions are usually laid down in Collective Labor Agreements, such as: medical treatment, optical and dental care, pregnancy and childbirth. Employers have to see to it that their employees have proper medical treatment and care (in a hospital). The costs of these provisions can be covered partially or entirely, taking into account that the law states that if costs are



covered partially, these may not exceed 20% of the employee's salary. In most cases health provisions also apply to the employee's family members (Source: Ministry ATM).

Female civil servants are entitled to 12 weeks of paid maternity leave, i.e. 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after childbirth. The State Health Insurance Fund covers the costs of delivery. Private enterprises who have signed a Collective Labor Agreement with their employees have a similar arrangement, whereby the costs are indemnified in part or in whole. Some of the larger enterprises have a modification in the sense that the female employee, in deliberation with the physician, can decide how to distribute the maternity leave before and after childbirth. In practice, women continue to work for up to 2 weeks before the expected date of delivery. Because there is no general maternity leave regulation, employees of enterprises or employers who do not have a collective labor agreement (shops, private households) are not ensured of paid maternity leave. Although this needs to be studied further, it has been reported to women's organizations that repeated pregnancies can be reason for dismissal owing to unfitness.

Since the previous report, there have been no new developments with respect to a general maternity leave act on the basis of 14 weeks of paid leave. Further to the advice of the Committee in 1994, a more recent advisory committee has recommended, analogous to the general old-age pension regulation, to create a general maternity leave regulation which would create a fund into which monthly payments could be made and which would be used to finance maternity leave for all women. This would prevent the expenditures from burdening the small entrepreneurs and households (e.g. servants).

The discriminatory regulation in the Suriname Accident Regulation (SOR) under Article 6 paragraph 3 has not yet been amended. According to this provision, the wife of a male employee can receive a benefit, but the husband of a female employee cannot. Furthermore, a woman who lives together with her partner without being married cannot receive a benefit either. Only if she has children who are acknowledged by the male employee, can she receive a benefit. The position of concubines is regulated in the civil service accident regulation, however.

In the previous report mention was already made of the discriminatory provision in the State Health Insurance Fund (SZF) with respect to the voluntarily insured category, and there has been no change: the unemployed partner (younger than 60 years) of the woman is not co-insured, unless he has been declared disabled; this is not the case with the unemployed wife of the male employee.

There are no data available on the numbers of men and women in permanent or temporary employment, or people who work from their homes, and in particular women. Provisions and legislation in this regard are still lacking in Suriname. Homeworkers are not yet included in the labor statistics.

With regard to the discriminatory provisions concerning the reproductive function of the female civil servant, the Committee on Gender Legislation of the Ministry of Home Affairs has, as already mentioned, prepared an amendment to the Civil Service Personnel Act.

The Labor Act and the Civil Code do not allow dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy, childbirth and marriage. The maternity leave granted to the female civil servant still has discriminatory provisions and can therefore be considered a sanction on the basis of her reproductive function. The Ministry of

Home Affairs has also made a recommendation to amend this article in the Civil Service Personnel Act.

The protection of motherhood and the prohibition of heavy or dangerous labor by pregnant or breastfeeding women have not yet received special attention in negotiations between employers and employees. There are no special provisions in Collective Labor Agreements with respect to this matter. In general, the collective labor agreements do pay attention to prohibiting irregular working hours after the 28th week of pregnancy.

Suriname has various childcare possibilities for children 0-8 years for working parents: crèches or daycare centers, often combined with a nursery school (2-4 year olds). From a survey conducted in 2000 by the Anton de Kom University of Suriname for the Foundation Klimop it appears that in Suriname there are 103 possibilities of childcare for children, the majority of which (84, or 82%) are in Paramaribo, 1 (1%) in the interior and 18 (17%) in the remaining districts. Most of these daycare centers are privately owned (91%). The government has 9 crèches (9% of the total), all of which are in Paramaribo. Two of the daycare centers are located in hospitals. It is noteworthy that these two crèches are the only ones providing both daycare and night care. Although childcare is regarded as a necessity in the interior, this is still done within personal networks, with the exception of one daycare center in Brokopondo-Centrum, while after the above-mentioned survey, one crèche was set up in 2001 in Masiakriki on the Upper Suriname River by a woman's organization, and one at Klaaskreek in the District of Brokopondo by cooperating women's organizations.

Most parents who use a daycare center for their children do so because of work and/or studies (61%), while 22% of the children are placed to give them an opportunity to play with others. The Klimop survey showed that the daycare centers have the following characteristics:

- The centers in the districts and the interior are less favorable than in Paramaribo.
- The centers primarily offer care for children with the emphasis on sanitation and nutrition. The aspects of child education and stimulation of development are insufficiently stressed, possibly owing to a lack of special vocational training.
- The centers are generally open Mondays through Fridays, varying between 8-2 hours per day and 4 hours per day.
- Most children come from the lower middle classes.
- In quite a large number of the centers there is a lack of staff.
- There is a poor distribution of the facilities.

The need to develop a national policy on early childhood development (age group 0-8 years) has been underlined by NGOs. Part of this is a law on childcare, which includes the licensing of daycare centers and the minimal criteria, which such centers should meet. A bill on childcare was drafted in 1996. This draft was the result of years of discussions and endeavors of the Public Health Bureau and a number of NGOs, among which the Foundation for Human Development, and forms the basis for the introduction of rules for childcare. The bill aims at improving the quality and quantity of daycare centers for children, and developing standards for implementation and supervision. This bill was approved in September 2001 by the Council of Ministers. In the framework of the IDB project *Legislation on Early Childhood Development*, which started in 2002, the bill will be assessed again, after which consultations with relevant institutions and organizations will take place to formulate an revised bill.

The Directorate of Youth Affairs organizes after-school care as follows:

- Homework guidance programmes for primary school children;
- Programmes for creative expression, sports and games.

This after-school programme takes place in some 10 locations in Paramaribo and 15 locations in the districts, which each cover a cluster of schools. There are also private initiatives, but these are not registered, as a result of which no information is available.

There are no legal provisions in Suriname for women to provide breastfeeding during working hours. Nor are there provisions that enable parents to leave their work when their children need them, and provisions for men and women to combine their family life and work through flexible working hours.

## Article 12 Health

The right to health is one of the fundamental rights laid down in Article 36 of the Constitution. The State is obliged to provide health care, to improve living and working conditions, and to provide health education. The state should also create conditions for an optimal satisfaction of the basic needs for health care. The policy on health care, as well as the coordination and monitoring of the health sector, are the responsibility of the Ministry of Health. Suriname has always had a reasonably well-developed health care system and an extensive network of intramural and extramural provisions.

**Table 12.1: Budget Ministry of Health (X SF. 1 million) 1998 – 2002**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Budget Ministry of Health in billions SRG	5,633.7	2,500	13,900	15,268. 4	26,354. 7
% nat.budget	1.7	1.2	5.2	2.82	3.56

*Source: Ministry of Finance, financial notes*

The following actors are important in national healthcare:

- The Ministry of Finance (finances healthcare through income from taxes and from the State Health Insurance Fund);

- The Ministries of Health and Social Affairs and the State Health Insurance Fund (SZF) as public funders;
- The health services (public health care services, general practitioners, medical specialists, NGO services).

**Table 12.2 Vital statistics and health indicators in Suriname**

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2000 after adjust- ment
Average population	408,665	413,428	418,921	424,590	420,261	447,953	
Live births	8717	9393	10794	10221	10144	9804	
Deaths	2696	2894	2878	2814	3060	3090	
Crude birth rate/ 1000	21.32	22.72	25.77	24.07	21.11	21.9	
Crude mortality rate/ 1000	6.59	7	6.87	6.63	6.37	6.9	
Perinatal mortality rate/ 1000 total births	12	14.5	12.4	11.6	13.2	19.6	35.8
U-1 mortality rate/ 1000 live births	15.4	16.4	14.9	13.6	16.8	17.8	20.2
Maternal mortality rate/ 100,000 live births	-	31.9	37.1	39.8	29.6	91.8	153

*Source: Death causes in Suriname 2000, BOG, April 2002*

The following government services are part of the structure of the Ministry of Health and offer both preventive and curative care:

- The Regional Healthcare Services (RGD): primary health care in the coastal area, including a number of rural areas. The RGD offers medical treatment, immunizations, reproductive healthcare services, and dental services in collaboration with the Youth Dental Care Foundation. RGD covers about 32% of the population, most of whom are non-paying social card holders (85%) and part of the SZF insured people (15%).
- The Public Health Bureau (BOG): health education, disease control and inspection of public health, epidemiological surveillance, environment inspection, food and drug inspection, supervision of the government laboratories.
- The Psychiatric Center Suriname (PCS).
- The Alcohol and Drugs Bureau: prevention of alcohol and drugs abuse, and counseling of addicts.
- The Pharmaceutical Company of Suriname (BGVS).
- The Dermatological Service, including HIV/AIDS eradication. Since 1996, the activities of the former National HIV/AIDS Programme in the fields of policymaking, education, control, etc. are coordinated by this service. The activities in the field of sexually transferable diseases (STDs) were included in the package of provisions. The name was changed to National STD/HIV Programme. The intention is to hold a national consultation on the eradication of HIV/AIDS to assess the policy and structures.
- The Bureau for Medical Guidance: counseling and medical services to children and youth.

- Three Government hospitals: 's Lands Hospital (Paramaribo), the Academic Hospital (Paramaribo) and the Nickerie Regional Hospital (District of Nickerie), all in the coastal area.

Individuals and organizations also make a valuable contribution to health care in Suriname. In Paramaribo there are two private hospitals, and the Government has delegated the health care of the interior entirely to the Medical Mission Foundation, which is a collaboration of three religious organizations. The Medical Mission has 48 polyclinics in the interior, all but 1 (the boat clinic) with possibilities for childbirth. The Medical Mission employs 5 physicians, 10 nurses, 80 health assistants, 36 polyclinic assistants and 30 laboratory assistants and covers a total of 52,295 people, of whom about 80% Maroons and 20% Indigenous people. The Medical Mission trains local people as much as possible to become health assistants. The foundation is subsidized by the state: the Ministry of Health pays for primary care in the interior, including the costs for transportation to Paramaribo for treatment in hospital, while the Ministry of Social Affairs pays the costs of hospitalization for patients who are transported by the Medical Mission to Paramaribo.

The Lobi Foundation gives education and assistance in reproductive healthcare, including family planning, in its clinics in Paramaribo, Nieuw-Nickerie and Moengo in the district of Marowijne. The foundation is a primary health care organization, and officially recognized to provide such services. The ProHealth Foundation focuses its attention on the health of women and children, particularly in deprived areas in the coast and the interior. ProHealth is particularly active in conducting studies (esp. in the field of reproductive healthcare and HIV/AIDS) and in involving the population in health policies and implementation. Various other NGOs are active in the field of HIV/ AIDS prevention and eradication, Pap smear and breast cancer examinations, drug and alcohol prevention and eradication, information and education on chronic diseases, and malaria eradication.

Under influence of the financial and economic crisis and the consequences thereof on the budget of the Ministry of Health, a number of small, local organizations have taken initiatives in these past years to contribute through projects and activities supported by international donor organizations. They have managed to build and furnish clinics, conduct training and studies, realize provisions for water, sanitation, and so forth.

According to the *National Health Accounts Study*, conducted by *Management Sciences for Health* and *Hecora*, in the year 2000 Suriname spent some 105 million Surinamese guilders (ca. US\$ 79 million) on healthcare, which is a per capita expenditure of ca. US\$ 180. This was about 9.4% of the Gross National Product in the year 2000. In Latin America and the Caribbean ca. 4% to 8% of the GDP is spent on average on healthcare. In the expenditures, the government spends (44%) about the same as the private sector (42%) on healthcare, while 14% comes from external donors, including large amounts as contribution from Dutch Development Aid to the so-called RLA regulation to send patients abroad for further treatment. The contributions from households consist mainly of contributions of SZF insured parties, holders of social cards, and contributions from privately insured persons. The people insured with SZF contribute for their medicine, while people who have a social card issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs contribute towards their medicine and hospitalization.

In health care expenditures, 55% goes to secondary care (public and private hospitals, medical specialists, laboratories, medicines in hospitals), while 34% is spent on prevention and primary healthcare (BOG, RGD, Medical Mission, general practitioners), and 11% to other aspects, such as training and administration. In the *Health Sector Reform Study* a number of observations are mentioned with regard to the medical services. As far as access of women to medical services is concerned, the following observations are important:

- Lack of routine screening for cancer (Pap smear, mammograms);
- Complications of pregnancies indicate the need for improved prenatal care and a better management of high-risk pregnancies.

Through the Ministry of Social Affairs, 24% of the population is insured. An analysis of the data of the household survey of the General Bureau of Statistics (1999-2000) shows that 36% of the households who have a social card for medical care issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs do not belong to deprived groups. Analysis of the data further showed that 23% of the households which are deprived does not have a social card for medical care (Source: White Paper "Health Sector Reform In Suriname"). The part of the population covered through the State Health Insurance Fund is 28% (especially civil servants). Private enterprises cover 15%, while 2% of the population has a private insurance. This means that about one third of the population (32%) does not have a medical insurance. There are no data to show the share of women in private and public medical insurance.

**Table 12.3 Persons insured with State Health Insurance Fund**

Category	1999	2000	2001
Civil servants	87,943	89,738	91,533
Police and fire brigade	4,418	4,508	4,598
Voluntary private insurance: individuals	152	157	158
Voluntary private insurance: families and businesses	9,351	9,540	9,733
Total	101,864	103,943	106,022

Source: SZF

Note: Ca. 55% of the SZF-insured persons are women

The number of patients per physician in urban areas is 1:1500, which according to WHO norms (1:3000) is an over-representation of physicians, while non-urban areas have a shortage of physicians. In the interior, access to physicians is less than in the other parts of the country: 0 : 23,534. (Sources: *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname*, Sh. Ketwaru; UNIFEM, 2001 and *Health Conditions in Suriname 1996*, W. Bakker; PAHO/WHO). In general, the people of the interior have reasonable access to the services of the Medical Mission, which are free of charge, so that there are no financial impediments to the primarily poor people of the interior. Contrary to the vertically organized health care system in Paramaribo and the districts, the Medical Mission combines preventive and primary healthcare with curative care and possibilities for hospitalization. Although it might be concluded that the

interior, with its relatively small population, has access to about 60% of the available polyclinics in the country, there are a high number of polyclinics in the interior because the people live widely spread. The clinics are visited weekly or monthly by a physician, while the people in other parts of the country do have daily access to a physician. Physicians of the Medical Mission see about 10 to 15% of the total number of patients.

Vaccination coverage of children is 72.4% in Paramaribo, and 90.3% and 81.8 % in, respectively, the districts of Wanica and Nickerie, which, after Paramaribo, are the two areas with the highest number of residents. Pap smears are lower, namely 24.6% in Paramaribo and 35% and 21.4% in Wanica and Nickerie. It appears that people with a better education and a better socioeconomic position in society make more use of these services, possibly because of a higher awareness of the importance of cancer prevention.

The General Bureau of Statistics (1999) indicated that the birth rate varied in the period 1990-1999 between 20 and 26 per 1000. In the Caribbean, Suriname is known as one of the countries with the lowest fertility rate. The man-woman rate is almost equal. (Source: Situation and Response Analysis Report HIV/Aids in Suriname (SARA), J.Terborg, ProHealth, 2002). Mortality data for the period 1999-2002 are not available. The mortality data of the period before 1999 show that people in Suriname die unnecessarily of diseases that can be prevented and/or managed better, such as malaria, diarrhea, acute infections, malnutrition, complications during pregnancies. This indicates that there is space for improvement of preventive healthcare. There are also increasing numbers of deaths due to chronic diseases like diabetes mellitus and high blood pressure, hence there is a need to apply a more effective management.

**Table 12.4: Most predominant causes of death in Suriname according to age and sex (classified according to ranking of PAHO ICD-10)**

Men 15-44 years			Women 15-44 years		
No.	Cause of death		No.	Cause of death	
1	External causes of death	114	1	Neoplasm	29
2	Cardiological diseases	50	2	HIV/AIDS	28
3	HIV/Aids	48	3	External causes	27
4	Neoplasm	19	4	Cardiological diseases	17
5	Other gastrointestinal diseases	12	5	Maternal death	9

*Source: Causes of death in Suriname 2000, BOG/ Epidemiology Dept., April 2002.*

Contraceptives are available throughout the country – with and without prescription. In the districts and the interior, the Regional Health Services (RGD) and the Medical Mission are responsible for supplying contraceptives. There is a special financial arrangement for persons who hold a social card issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Housing. This ministry bears the cost of services provided by the Lobi Foundation. The MICS study showed that

42.1% of married women use birth control. The pill is the most popular method (25% of married women). Second most popular is sterilization among women (9.3% of married women). The IUD, contraceptive injection and the condom follow. Less than 1% applies the rhythm method, withdrawal, or male sterilization. Contraceptives are used most in the urban area, i.e. 51.2%; in rural areas usage is 45.1% and in the interior only 3.7% use contraceptives. Distribution according to age of women using contraceptives shows that the age-group 20-29 years is the highest user (50%). (Source: *MICS Survey 2000*, Suriname Government in collaboration with UNICEF). The Lobi Foundation is currently implementing a project to encourage the use of the female condom. The project aims at learning about women's experiences with the female condom and to establish whether the use of the female condom helps to empower women in the field of sexual reproduction.

According to Surinamese law, a married woman does not need her husband's permission to make use of healthcare, but the involvement of the partner is required for family planning. Dr. B. Adams conducted a study in 2000 on the fertility of Maroons in 4 of the 65 villages along the Upper Suriname River for the National Women's Movement. This study showed, among other things, that social and cultural norms influence the reproductive behavior of the Saramaccan Maroons and the decisions they take in this regard. Men and women are more highly esteemed if they have more children. Pregnancies are therefore important and encouraged; the use of contraceptives is discouraged. The existence and acceptance of polygamy in this area also influences the fertility of men and women. The ceremonies, which take place when boys and girls reach the phase of 'ripeness' according to their tradition, and the general notion that children are born with sexual feelings, which cannot or may not be controlled, also play a role. The study furthermore showed that cultural and social norms play an important part, but that there are variations among the villages studied, which is also an indication that cultural norms are influenced by more factors, such as economic factors, the level of education, the amount of information available on contraceptives. (Source: *Survey Report on Maroon Fertility in Four Selected Maroon Villages in the Interior of Suriname* Dr. B.U. Adams for the National Women's Movement).

The MICS report (2000) shows a clear relationship between the woman's level of education and contraceptive use. It appears that contraceptive use among women without any education is 8.9%, while among women with primary school education this is 32.6% and among women with at least secondary education it is 52.7%. As already indicated above, sterilization of women is the second most popular form of contraception. The previous report already mentioned that sterilization cannot take place against the will of the women. If a medical specialist is to conduct a sterilization procedure, he/she is obliged to inform women properly of the risks of the procedure. If the specialist does not provide information or gives insufficient information and there is damage, the woman concerned can submit a complaint against the specialist with the Medical Tribunal, or institute a civil process in court, or institute a penal process on grounds of abuse.

The situation with respect to abortion has not changed and is still punishable by law. (Penal Code, Article 309, paragraphs 355-358). The interventions are therefore registered as Dilatation and Curretage (D&C) and for the larger part carried out in hospitals. But they are not covered by health insurance. According to the Medical Registration Department of the Ministry of Health, the price for a D&C procedure increased about 500% between 1997 and 2002 (SRG 50,000 - SRG 450,000).



The law still prohibits information and education on contraceptives (Penal Code. Artt. 533 and 534), although this is considered a dead letter. Education programmes are still provided by the government (the health education department of the Public Health Bureau, the National STD/HIV Programme, the Regional Health Services) as well as NGOs (the Medical Mission, the Lobi Foundation, the ProHealth Foundation), and they are accessible and available to both men and women.

According to the MICS survey (2000) the majority of women between 12 and 49 years know about HIV/AIDS (92.6% in urban areas, 92% in rural areas and 82% in the interior). Knowledge of prevention is on average 66.8%. Accurate knowledge of the manner in which HIV/AIDS is transmitted is lower among women in the interior. The role of education in the eradication of HIV/AIDS is important, for the knowledge about HIV/AIDS and the possibilities of prevention is almost eight times higher among women with at least junior secondary education than among women who had never been to school. The MICS survey showed that 18.6% of the women without schooling is informed, versus 39% of the women with primary school education, and 70.3% of the women with at least a junior secondary school education. It appears that 55% of the women of reproductive age know where they can go for an HIV/AIDS test. Women in the urban area were better informed than women in the rural areas and the interior (MICS 2000). HIV tests in Suriname are done only on a voluntary basis. According to the MICS survey, about 10% of the Surinamese women were tested for HIV/AIDS as per 2000, i.e. 12% in urban areas and resp. 8.7% and 7.6% in rural areas and the interior. Women in the age group 15-19 years are least tested. The number of HIV-positive women rose between 1998 and 2000 from 4.1% to 6.35% of the total number of Surinamese women. There is also an increase among men, albeit lower, namely from 3.29% to 4.79%. The mortality rate due to AIDS among women in 2000 was 1.84% and in 2001 this was 1.75%. (Sources: General Statistics Bureau Population Statistics, March 2002; SARA. ProHealth, May 2001).

Young women and female prostitutes, and especially women from lower social environments, form risk groups for HIV/AIDS and should be given special priority. The situation with regard to prostitution has remained unchanged since the previous report.

A survey of HIV/AIDS in the gold mining sector (1998) showed, among other things, that women in the interior and the rural areas are a special risk group, because of their behavior on the basis of culture and traditions, their low knowledge of HIV/AIDS, their weak economic position, their low level of education, their social and geographic isolation, and their lack of access to healthcare and information (Source: SARA report). The report furthermore stated the following:

- only 15% of the women said they consistently used a condom;
- the high mobility of goldmines and prostitutes facilitates the spread of STD/HIV/AIDS;
- teenage girls, mainly of the Maroon communities, are vulnerable owing to their limited knowledge of and experience with practicing safe sex and effective negotiations with partners;
- there is an increase in the spread of HIV in villages, because prostitutes have sexual relations in the villages.

**Table 12.5: Overview of number of persons tested for HIV/AIDS and number of infected persons, period 2000- 2002**

Year	Total infected persons		Total tested persons		Total infected persons/ Total tested persons in %	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
2000	164	153	1035	1495	16%	10%
2001	141	130	953	2245	15%	6%
2002	194	187	1551	4068	13%	5%

*Source: Dermatological Service*

**Table 12.6: Number of HIV positive persons 1997 - 1999**

Year	M	%	F	%	Total	%
1997	96	53%	86	47%	182	100%
1998	96	53%	88	47%	184	100%
1999 (Jan - March)	27	56%	21	44%	48	100%

*Source: Dermatological Service 1999*

*Note: No gender-specific data before 1997*

Special attention is given to young people and women, in particular pregnant women. In the national programme efforts are made to test as many pregnant women as possible for HIV. There is no legal framework for prevention and treatment strategies for HIV/AIDS at the national level. The results of a workshop organized by the National AIDS Programme form the basis for a bill submitted to The National Assembly. The bill has not yet passed the Assembly. A medical exam is required for certain occupations (military, pilots, etc.), but the law does not prohibit employers from making a diagnostic AIDS test a condition to employing or dismissing someone. Besides the government institutions, a large number of NGOs contribute to the prevention and eradication of HIV/AIDS in the form of research, workshops, group discussions, information meetings, radio and TV-programmes, seminars and so forth at local, regional and national levels, as well as the care and guidance of HIV/AIDS patients and their families, advocacy, and creating possibilities to do tests: Foundation Mamio Namenproject, Foundation Claudia A, Pepsur, Foundation Maxi Linder, the Red Cross Suriname, Projekta Foundation, ProHealth Foundation and Lobi Foundation, which together with the government and the UN organizations carry out an HIV/AIDS programme in Suriname.

Cervical cancer and breast cancer are the most prevalent cancers among Surinamese women, and the most frequent malignant neoplasm (respectively 16% and 13%). Among women with cervical cancer, 43% is in the age-group 25-40 years (Source: Situation and Response Analyses Report HIV/AIDS report). Women with health insurance have easy access to Pap smears and other related services. Pap smears are made in hospitals and RGD clinics, where the Lobi Foundation provides

services. In a 15-year period, the number of Pap smears done by the Lobi Foundation alone rose to 57%. In 1997, the Lobi Foundation started a national Pap smear survey for the Ministry of Health. Education on cervical cancer generally has a good reach, although women in the interior make fewer Pap smears than in other parts of the country. This is probably due to the lack of information on cervical cancer and the possibility to prevent this form of cancer. Between May 1998 and August 2001, women could have themselves examined free of charge for cervical cancer. A total of 59,000 women had a Pap smear made, in the age groups 30-40 years (34%), 40-50 years (22%), and 50-60 years (23%). In 1.08% (643 women) a malignant deviation was found, and an invasive carcinoma was found among 25 women. Between 22% and 55% of the women among whom cervical cancer is discovered, dies each year (Source: *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname*).

The care of mothers and children is considered an important task of the Ministry of Health. There have been special provisions for pregnant women, mothers and infants for years. The Public Health Bureau (BOG) prepares the policy on prenatal care and consultation bureaus. Pregnant women can receive prenatal guidance in all RGD clinics and in the prenatal clinics of the hospitals. After childbirth, all consultation bureaus provide guidance in care of the infant. The consultation bureaus for pregnant women and infants are managed by three NGOs, namely the White and Yellow Cross, the Green Cross, and the Diakonessen Wijkarbeid. The Bureau for Woman and Childcare of 's Lands Hospitaal is also responsible for postnatal care. The bureau provides childcare, information on contraceptives, information on reproductive health of women, and in particular screening for cervical cancer.

According to the Ministry of Health, there are some 10,000 deliveries per year in Suriname. Nationally, there are about 15% teenage deliveries, on the basis of the total number of live births. Of these 15% teenage deliveries, 7.3% are in Paramaribo, 2.3% in Wanica and 1% each in the districts of Para, Nickerie, Marowijne and Sipaliwini. Circa 80% of the deliveries take place in hospitals. To a lesser extent deliveries also take place in polyclinics and at home, under the guidance of trained health workers. The fewer polyclinic and home deliveries are due to the lack of midwives.

The provisions in CEDAW on free services to pregnant women no longer apply in Suriname since the 1990s. The primary provisions made available by the government in the framework of care of mothers and children are in fact free of charge, but under pressure of the economic recession, a small contribution is required from the clients if they wish to make use of secondary care.

Pregnant women are discriminated if they apply as voluntary insured to the State Health Insurance Fund (SZF) or a private health insurance fund, for women have to undergo a pregnancy test as one of the conditions to be admitted to the insurance. If the test is positive, the woman has to bear the costs of the pregnancy and delivery herself.

The official maternal mortality rate between 1985 and 1990 fluctuated according to the Epidemiological Department of the Public Health Bureau (BOG) between 3.1 and 10.5 (per 100,000), while in the period 1991-1994 this was between 63.8 and 122. A survey of BOG showed that there is often miscoding and misclassification of the cause of death, because maternal mortality is insufficiently recognized. A survey conducted by BOG of maternal mortality between 1995 and 1999 in 4 hospitals in Paramaribo showed that there is also serious under-reporting. After a further adjustment of the official data and the data from the

hospitals, maternal mortality was established between 45.9 (1995) and 108.4 (1999). The actual rate is higher than the data based on officially reported cases. Maternal mortality among Surinamese women of fertile age is thus one of the most important causes of death. Bleeding and hypertension cause maternal mortality during pregnancy. The transportation of women from outlying villages to a hospital, or the non-availability of blood in the hospital are also important causes of death.

### Article 13 Economic and social life

Data from 2000 show a high poverty rate in Suriname. A general indicator, published by the Ministry of Social Affairs, shows that 48% of the population (207,025 persons) receives some kind of social support, while 20% of the population (86,260 persons) lives in extreme poverty, in the sense that there is a lack of daily food (UNDP, 1999). Estimates by Neri (1999) and Menke (2000) show that in 1999 and 2000 the poor made up resp. 76.45% (336,300 persons) and 72.3% (318,200 persons). According to Menke, the largest number of poor people lives in Paramaribo, but the most intense poverty is in the interior (*Poverty Report UNDP / Menke 2000*). UNDP consultant Vanus James says in appendix 1 to his report *Social Development and Poverty Eradication Strategy* that through different scenarios he is able to establish that about 20% of the population fits the category of extreme poor, in particular older persons, disabled persons, and children (86,260 persons). More exact estimates would be possible if there were more accurate data. According to James, using the general Foster, Greer, Thorbecke (FGT) poverty indicators, the estimates presented are based on findings of Neri and Menke (1999) and of Menke (2000). These estimates are in line with those presented in 1999 by the Institute of Social and Economic Studies (1999). The estimates by Neri and Menke (2000) were adjusted owing to the inflation, and are based on monthly individual needs.

**Table 13.1: Selected poverty indicators, 2000**

Category	Estimate	
Poverty line on monthly basis	NA	SRG 101,060
Estimated food poverty rate per person	63.11%	278,000 persons
Food poverty deficiency	<b>30.27%</b>	SRG 30,590
Food and non-food poverty line per month	NA	SRG 154,730
Food and non-food poverty rate per person (Neri and Menke, 1999)	76.45%	336,300 persons.
<b>Food and non-food poverty rate (Menke, 2000)</b>	72.3%	318,200
Food and non-food poverty deficiency	43.62%	SRG 67,493

Source: *Social Development and Poverty Eradication Strategy*, V. James, UNDP, 2000

The economic crisis makes victims among women and children. Data show that poverty is highest among women, in particular single women who are heads of households. The *Situation Analysis of Women in Suriname* (2001), a product of the UNIFEM Programme *Women and Sustainable Human Development in Suriname*, states that a lack of access to employment in the formal sector forces women into informal economic activities, which are often characterized by poor working conditions,

health risks, irregular working hours and irregular and low income. In the Multi-annual Development Plan 2001-2005 the Government has formulated a combination of measures for rapid economic growth, strengthening of poor people, and care and security as spear points for its strategy to eradicate poverty.

Table 13.2 shows the intensity of poverty per district or living area. The districts are divided into three kinds of living areas, i.e. urban (Paramaribo and Nickerie), rural coast (Coronie, Commewijne, Para, Saramacca and Wanica), and the interior (Brokopondo, Marowijne and Sipaliwini). The poverty ranking is given in the right column, from most intense (1) to least intense (10).

**Table 13.2: Poverty ranking of the districts**

District/ Living area	Ranking
Urban	Least intense
District Nickerie	9
District Paramaribo	8
Rural areas in the coast	Intense
District Coronie	4
District Commewijne	6
District Para	5
District Saramacca	10
District Wanica	7
Interior	Most intense
District Brokopondo	3
District Marowijne	2
District Sipaliwini	1

*Source: Social Development and Poverty Eradication Strategy, V.James, UNDP, 2000*

The Government makes available social provisions for people who need them: general old-age pension (AOV), financial assistance (FB), medical assistance (GH) for disadvantaged groups, and child allowance (AKB). Table 13.3 gives an overview of the number of persons entitled per benefit between 1994 and 1999. More recent data are not available, nor are the data gender-specific.

**Table 13.3 Overview of persons entitled per benefit**

Benefits	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
AOV	32,709	33,463	34,531	34,176	35,208	36,460
FB	9,438	9,555	10,308	10,150	9,071	8,613
GH-poor	17,398	23,317	24,987	27,565	24,935	23,111
GH- less poor	13,826	21,869	26,798	28,317	27,475	24,792
AKB	24,975	23,422	21,982	20,325	18,364	15,924

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs

At the request of parents and caregivers, child allowance is provided for legitimate, adopted, recognized and natural children, children through marriage and foster children, to a maximum of four children per family. Persons who already receive child allowance due to their employment in the civil service or in the private sector, cannot receive child allowance. The child allowance rose from SRG 60 in 1996 to SRG 300 in 1999. Table 13.4 gives the number of persons entitled per district in the fourth quarter of each year.

**Table 13.4: General child allowance****Number of children entitled per district 1998 – 2002 (4<sup>th</sup> quarter)**

District	Year				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Nickerie	4216	3219	2979	2985	2774
Coronie	249	218	209	188	175
Saramacca	1287	1160	1094	1006	915
Wanica	7535	6537	6064	5598	5146
Paramaribo	15461	13012	12132	11077	10195
Para	1456	1325	1319	1257	1197
Brokopondo	1228	1024	916	900	872
Commewijne	2626	2354	2166	1901	1741
Marowijne	2175	1925	1779	1573	1403
Sipaliwini	5466	4853	4273	3850	3445
Total	41699	35627	32931	30335	27863

Source: Administration and Payment of Social Benefits/ Min. Social Affairs

Although there is no uniformity, it seems that in the Collective Labor Agreements of large enterprises the right of employees to child allowance depends on the right to child allowance of the partner elsewhere. If the child allowance of the partner is higher, the employee is not entitled. If it is lower, the difference is paid out. In general, the term 'employee' in collective labor agreements refers to both men and women, while the term 'partner' depends on whether or not concubinage is recognized.

The report *Social Development and Poverty Eradication Strategy* of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) of 2000 indicates that 60% of the Surinamese population lives below the poverty line and that there are few possibilities to escape the circle of poverty. The government administers a system of financial assistance for families, households and individuals who can apply for assistance.

Only 1 person per family can apply for financial assistance, while more persons per household can enjoy financial assistance. There is no information on the share of women, nor are the data kept gender-specific, but according to information from the Ministry of Social Affairs the majority of the persons registered is female. The amount of the benefits has been adjusted throughout the years, though not substantially. Table 13.5 shows the number of persons entitled per district. Table 13.6 shows the development of financial assistance.

**Table 13.5: Financial Assistance**

**Number of entitled persons per district in the month of December**

District	Year				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Nickerie	575	480	389	526	614
Coronie	110	102	76	77	74
Saramacca	292	263	252	258	242
Wanica	1026	1022	950	1148	1143
Paramaribo	2573	2659	2343	2680	2570
Para	258	248	261	295	313
Brokopondo	-	-	-	-	-
Commewijne	367	332	328	383	368
Marowijne	536	532	481	559	512
Sipaliwini	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5737	5638	5080	5926	5836

*Source: Research and Planning/ Administration and Payment/  
Ministry of Social Affairs*

**Table 13.6: Development of financial assistance in Sur. guilders**

Category	1994	1999
Single	270	3,000
Household of 2 adults	405	6,000
Household of 3 persons	540	-
Household of 4 persons	675	-
Household of more than 4 persons	900	10,000
Household of 1 adult + 1 child	-	4,500
Household of 2 adults + 1 child	-	7,500
Household of 2 adults + 2 children	-	9,000

*Source: Ministry of Social Affairs*

Every citizen who turns 60 years is entitled to old-age pension. Table 13.7 gives the number of persons per year entitled to old-age pension (AOV) in the reporting period.

**Table 13.7: General old-age pension (AOV)****Number of persons entitled per district 1998 – 2002 (month of December)**

	Year				
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Nickerie	2753	2847	2938	2891	2959
Coronie	389	387	280	382	372
Saramacca	1168	1206	1248	1349	1357
Wanica	4840	5069	5266	5529	5632
Paramaribo	17767	18443	18892	18862	19096
Para	1244	1298	1333	1360	1357
Brokopondo	627	655	686	655	683
Commewijne	2061	2126	2181	2225	2271
Marowijne	1250	1309	1351	1349	1399
Sipaliwini	3109	3120	3277	3213	3338
Total	35208	36460	37452	37815	38464

*Source: General old-age pension fund / Min. Social Affairs*

For the period 1999 through 2001 there are gender-specific data for the number of persons entitled per district. See Table 13.8.

**Table 13.8: General old-age pension per district, 1999 - 2001**

District	Year					
	1999		2000		2001	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Nickerie	1444	1403	1463	1475	1411	1480
Coronie	185	202	180	200	182	200
Saramacca	604	602	607	641	659	690
Wanica	2478	2591	2556	2710	2658	2871
Paramaribo	8421	10022	8618	10274	8564	10298
Para	672	626	684	649	701	659
Brokopondo	287	368	298	388	282	373
Commewijne	1055	1071	1086	1095	1092	1133
Marowijne	635	674	658	693	656	693
Sipaliwini	1305	1815	1356	1921	1328	1885
Total	17086	19374	17506	20046	17533	20282

*Source: General old-age pension fund/ Min. Social Affairs*

Table 13.9 shows the development of the amount of AOV benefit in Surinamese guilders for the period January 1994 through June 2000.



**Table 13.9: Development of AOV-benefit in Sur. Guilders**

Date of entry into force	AOV
Per 1 January 1994	900
Per 1 October 1995	4,500
Per 1 February 1997	9,000
Per 1 November 1997	15,000
Per 1 January 1999	25,000
Per 1 January 2000	30,000
Per 1 June 2000	35,000

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs

Persons in need for free medical care ( GH) can apply to the Ministry of Social Affairs if they submit a request and meet the criteria. About 75% of the Surinamese population has a health insurance through the State Health Insurance Fund (SZF), or through the Ministry of Social Affairs. About half (55%) of the SZF-insured persons are women, while circa 60% of the persons entitled to GH according to the Ministry of Social Affairs are women.

**Table 13.10: Number of persons eligible for medical care per district who received medical care (GH)**

District	Year				
	1998*	1999*	2000*	2001*	2002*
Nickerie	3378	3711	4179	318	4396
Coronie	686	573	473	892	879
Saramacca	1527	1573	1132	1019	861
Wanica	10893	4883	8549	10764	11250
Paramaribo	30728	33234	17182	16776	13740
Para	1457	1323	1886	1614	1440
Brokopondo	229	70	65	70	35
Commewijne	2576	2171	2067	2223	1970
Marowijne	1686	1804	2053	2266	2187
Sipaliwini	121	88	95	208	274
Total	53281	49430	37681	36150	37032

Source: Research and Planning/ Min. Social Affairs ( \* files of General Social Care Division)

Depending on their income, persons can receive free medical care, but everyone is expected to contribute to the financial costs. Table 13.11 gives the income criteria on the grounds of which someone is classified as "poor" or as "less poor", while Table 13.12 gives the amount of own financial contribution between 1994 and 1999.

**Table 13.11: Income criteria for free medical care (in Sur. Guilders)**

Category	1 Jan.1994	1 Jan. 1995	1 Oct. 1995	1 Jan. 1999
Poor	<1,100	<3,000	<10,000	<20,000
Less poor	1,100 - 2,200	3,000 - 6,000	10,000 - 20,000	20,000 - 30,000

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs

**Table 13.12: Own financial contribution to medical care (in Sur. Guilders)**

	1 Jan. 1994	1 Jan. 1995	1 Oct. 1995	1 Jan. 1999
<b>Medicine</b>				
Poor	10	25	75	150
Less poor	25	50	150	300
<b>Per 1 hospitalization day</b>				
Poor	25	50	150	300
Less poor	100	200	600	1200
<b>Administration</b>				
Poor				1000
Less poor	10	25	75	2000

Source: Ministry of Social Affairs

As already mentioned in the previous report under Article 11, Suriname has a Pension Act, which regulates old-age pension, disability benefits, widow and orphans pension, widower pension and temporary pension in the civil service. The partners' position has remained unchanged since the previous report. In practice, however, the Pension Fund does pay out the partner of the deceased civil servant, if he/she can prove at least 10 years of cohabitation with the deceased person, and has children. The law should also guarantee the widower's pension of the first wife.

The Accident Regulation for Civil Servants defines as next of kin the widow/widower, the minor children of the female civil servant, the legitimate, legitimized and acknowledged minor children of the male civil servant, the person with whom the civil servant cohabited, the surviving minor, acknowledged, non-acknowledged children, foster children of the female civil servant, and the children acknowledged in the cohabitation by the male civil servant. Employees in the private sector and their next of kin are also entitled to a benefit if he/she meets an accident in carrying out his/her work. The entitlement ensues from the obligation of the employer to conclude an accident insurance to cover liability arising from accidents. The sanctions on non-compliance are fines and even imprisonment. Article 6 paragraph 3 of the Accident Regulation does discriminate against the next of kin of female employees. The benefits from the Accident Regulation, Child Allowance, General Old-Age Pension, Medical Care and Financial Assistance are paid directly to the persons concerned.

There is a relatively large number of micro and small entrepreneurs, who make up about 14.2% of the total number of employed persons. These enterprises use family labor and are very creative in their orientation (*Social Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy*, Institute of Social and Economic Studies, ISS. The Hague and Paramaribo for the IDB, August 1999). In this stage of development, some are feasible, but a considerable part is not able to survive. Although formally women and men have equal access to bank loans and mortgages, in practice few women apply for loans. Married women still need their husband's permission if they want to stand surety for a third party. A woman without a partner, who applies for a loan, often has difficulty finding someone to be a guarantor. The lack of data on financing applications of women with commercial banks makes a comparison with other credit institutions, such as cooperatives, impossible.

As far as access to cooperatives is concerned, it appears that more than half of the members of the two largest savings and credit cooperatives, namely Godo and De Schakel, are women. The Credit Cooperative Godo reported a total of 19,749 members between 1999 and 2002, 52% of whom were women. 47% of the persons who were awarded a loan or credit in this

period were women. The Board of Supervisors consists of 40% women, and two-thirds of the Management Board is women.

At the end of the period 1999-2002 there were 4356 members registered with credit cooperative De Schakel, 53% of whom were women. In 1999, men made up 805 of the persons to whom a business credit was awarded, but in 2002 only women were awarded such a credit (100%). The management of De Schakel consists for 45% of women.

**Table 13.13 Credits and members of De Schakel,  
1998 - Nov 2003**

Description	Nov 2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
<b>Credits (general total)</b>	<b>780,891,000</b>	<b>728,086,000</b>	<b>575,000,000</b>	<b>264,298,000</b>	<b>232,995,000</b>	<b>142,498,000</b>
Men (number)	157	292	287	259	293	
Men (amount)	416,432,000	419,546,000	380,241,000	145,566,000	136,642,000	
Women (number)	205	321	229	229	263	
Women (amount)	319,459,000	308,540,000	194,159,000	116,232,000	90,353,000	
Gender unknown (number)	3	Na	1	1		
Gender unknown (amount)	45,000,000	Na	600,000	2,500,000	6,000,000	
<b>Number of members</b>	<b>4,426</b>	<b>4,356</b>	<b>4,004</b>	<b>3,819</b>	<b>3,703</b>	<b>3,559</b>
Men	47.5%	47.1%	47.0%	49.0%	48.4%	48.4%
Women	52.1%	52.5%	52.0%	51.0%	52.0%	52.0%
Other	0.5%	0.4%	1.0%	Na	Na	Na
<b>Business credits</b>	<b>101,975,000</b>	<b>100,050,000</b>	<b>114,000,000</b>	<b>34,280,000</b>	<b>14,385,000</b>	<b>8,511,000</b>
Amount women entrepreneurs	26,700,000	30,700,000	12,600,000	4,940,000	380,000	4,821,000
Amount men entrepreneurs	38,255,000	42,670,000	38,830,000	21,750,000	2,403,000	3,690,000
Gender unknown	37,020,000	26,680,000	62,570,000	7,590,000	11,602,000	

*Source: Credit cooperative De Schakel*

The other savings and credit cooperatives had a 20% - 25% share of female members in 1998. Besides a general savings and credit facility, Godo also has a revolving fund for female micro-entrepreneurs, in order to finance feasible small economic activities. Since April 2001, De Schakel operates a credit fund for female entrepreneurs together with the National Women's Movement and the Women's Business Group Foundation (*Uma Kraka Fonds*), which allows credits to a maximum of US\$1000.

According to the Directorate of Sports Affairs of the Ministry of Education, the participation of women in sports activities has grown in the past ten years, both in recreational sports and in competitive sports and top sports. At national, regional and international levels, Surinamese

women usually have excellent achievements in swimming, track and field, tennis and bodybuilding. In general, women sporters make up 15% of the total. Rounders seems to be a specific women's sport (100% women), while the share of women in swimming (44%) and volleyball (42%) is also relatively high. The majority of schools provide physical education for boys and girls. Schools in the interior are the exception, since sports accommodations are usually lacking. In general, the availability of adequate accommodations for sports and recreation is a problem, because finances for maintenance and construction are usually lacking. In spite of the impediments, activities are organized with special efforts from non-governmental neighborhood and sports organizations. Table 13.14 gives data on the share of men and women in various sports in Paramaribo and the districts of Nickerie (rural) and Brokopondo (interior). Data on other districts were not available.

**Table 13.14 Registered sporters according to type of sport in Paramaribo, Nickerie and Brokopondo in 2000**

	Paramaribo		Nickerie		Brokopondo		Total	Total M	Total F	% F
	M	F	M	F	M	F				
Basketball	832	178	0	0	12	0	1022	844	178	18%
Volleyball	258	170	0	0	29	10	467	278	189	41%
Rounders	0	354	0	200	0	240	794	0	794	100%
Soccer	11947	886	642	72	360	160	13967	12849	1118	8%
Swimming	159	134	0	0	0	0	303	169	134	45%
Total	13106	1731	642	272	392	410	16553	14140	2413	17%

*Source: Ministry of Education, Directorate of Sports*

Suriname has a rich culture, which originates in the settlement of various ethnic and cultural groups throughout time. The diversity of Surinamese society forms the point of departure for the policy on culture, which is directed towards an extension and deepening of the knowledge, values and backgrounds of cultural expressions, in order to develop a national cultural identity. There are quite a large number of non-governmental cultural organizations (foundations and associations) in Paramaribo, the districts and the interior. Some of them receives subsidies from the government. According to information from the Directorate of Culture, which is responsible for providing subsidies to cultural groups, the majority of the groups consist of women. Women contribute much to the presentation of cultural traditions of the different ethnic groups through craft, dance, song, music, religion, literature, drama and (plastic) art. Music and art form the domain of men. There has not been an adequate inventory of cultural organizations, nor a clear policy on subsidies by the government.

## Article 14 Rights of rural women

Problems facing Surinamese agriculture are poor export performance, stagnated increase of cultivated land, inefficient use of land and water resources, low revenues and low labor production, and insufficient product and market development, which are rapidly eroding competitiveness. The whole agricultural sector employs workers of parastatals and large private companies as well as small farmers.

**Table 14.1 Surface Area (ha) of cultivated land according to type of agriculture 1990 - 1995.**

	1990	1991	1993	1995
Small-scale Agriculture	21256	28922	32250	33619
Large-scale Agriculture	48486	49693	45586	41963
Total	69742	78615	77836	75582

*Source: General Statistics Bureau, Yearbook 1996.*

The agricultural population is aging, as young people do not consider agriculture to be a sector worth entering because of low wages, hard work and lack of social benefits. The Terms of Reference for the Agricultural Sector study in the document *Er is toekomst voor de landbouw* (transl.: "Agriculture Has a Future". Agriforum 2002 working document) states that the agricultural sector provides an estimated 10% of GNP, 15% of national employment and 15% of export revenues. Despite large government investments, growth in the agricultural sector has been stagnant for the last decades. More than 80% of the budget of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries goes to wages and salaries, particularly of lower-level employees. According to the Multi-annual Development Plan (MOP) 2001-2005, general government policy with regard to encouraging production in the interior is aimed at encouraging eco-tourism, cottage industry, logging and timber processing.

**Table 14.2: Working agricultural population by status 1993 - 1996.**

	1993		1994		1995		1996	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Entrepreneurs	136	52	166	0	201	163	201	54
Self-employed	1470	136	2045	280	3105	193	1936	131
Employees	1955	172	1702	45	1357	0	2147	72
Unpaid Family Workers	360	188	110	0	48	197	509	270
Unknown	0	0	349	0	48	0	221	0
Total	3921	548	4372	325	4759	553	5014	527
% Working Population	7.6%	2.0%	8.5%	1.2%	8.7%	2.0%	8.7%	1.8%

*Source: General Statistics Bureau, 1998.*

The government and NGOs carry out projects in the rural districts and the interior on agricultural production, economic strengthening, utilities, transport, radio and telecommunications. In cooperation with international donors, the government has set up funds to facilitate government bodies and NGOs in the execution and supervision of these projects. Examples are: the Micro Projects Programme of the European Union that is already operational, the Community Development Fund Suriname, and the Interior Development Fund that is being set up.

The MOP 2001-2005 recognizes the special role of women in the interior and lists measures to improve the position of women, in particular by encouraging adult education, health care, agriculture, crafts and marketing. As women in the interior are mainly involved in cottage industry, agricultural production and processing, they will be able to profit from government-initiated support.

There are no statistical data on the share of women in agricultural production and development since 1999. Though existing obsolete data do not correctly reflect the position of women in agriculture, as the contribution of women is not approached in terms of productive labor, the participation of women in agriculture is known to be great, in the coastal area as well as the interior. In formal agriculture, women mainly participate in agro-industry, generally in low-paid unskilled jobs. Women's participation in informal agriculture consists of selling produce, food processing and home industry. Women who want to produce for the market are faced with long distances, poor infrastructure, lack of affordable transport and storage in Paramaribo, and the narrow range of available products.

Women in the interior are involved in slash-and-burn subsistence agriculture, which can only partly meet the demand for their staple food (rice). With NGO support, women in a number of villages mainly along the Upper Suriname River, are being trained and supervised in modern cultivation and marketing techniques. Due to their relatively recent introduction, effects of these new techniques cannot yet be measured. In the MOP 2001-2005 the government states that the sale of commercial agricultural products will be studied in cooperation with NGOs, while incentives for permanent agriculture will be offered. By the end of the reporting period,

the government had yet to present a formal programme detailing this promise contained in the M.O.P.

Generally speaking, women in agriculture are not involved in the development of agricultural policy. Of the 51 members of the National Assembly, 10 (19.6%) are women. Four of these women parliamentarians (40%) hail from rural areas, two from the coastal area and two from the interior.

**Table 14.3: Gender of parliamentarians from districts and interior**

Districts		Interior		Total	
M	F	M	F	M	F
2	3	6	1	8	4

*Source: Archive, Library and Documentation Department of The National Assembly, 2002*

Twelve of the 51 parliamentarians are from rural areas (including the interior), which is 23.5% of the total number of parliamentarians. Seven are from the interior. Rural (districts and interior) women parliamentarians thus make up 50% of the total number of rural parliamentarians. The number of women parliamentarians from the interior is 10% of all parliamentarians from the districts and interior, 12.5% of the parliamentarians from the interior, and 10% of all women parliamentarians nationwide.

The average percentage of women in local administration is 32%. The districts that can be considered rural areas (Nickerie, Coronie, Saramacca, Commewijne, Para) and the districts covering the interior (Sipaliwini, Brokopondo, Marowijne) are generally below the national average. The districts of Coronie and Brokopondo are exceptions, with women in resp. 50% and 53% of local administrative positions. Though the average number of women in local administration is low, their appointment to this level is positive, particularly with regard to the image of women in non-traditional leadership positions. Women's participation in local administration generally drops as distance to and difficulty of communication with Paramaribo increases, and if communities are more traditional.

**Table 14.4: Women in local administration, 2002**

	M	F	Tot
Wanica	29	13 (31%)	42
Parbo NE	17	16 (49%)	33
Parbo SW	18	13 (43%)	31
Sipaliwini	48	18 (28%)	66
Coronie	5	5 (50%)	10
Saramacca	15	8 (35%)	23
Brokopondo	8	9 (53%)	17
Commewijne	21	5 (20%)	26
Marowijne	21	4 (18%)	25
Nickerie	19	4 (18%)	23
Para	12	5 (30%)	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100(32%)</b>	<b>313</b>

Source: Offices of the District Commissioners, Ministry of Regional Development

**Table 14.5 Composition of local administration by district, position and gender in 2002**

District	District Commissioner			District Secretary			Deputy Secretary			Administrative Supervisor			Deputy Administrative Supervisor			Assistant Administrative Supervisor		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
Wanica	1	0	1	4	2	6	8	0	8	8	4	12	8	5	13	0	2	2
Par'bo NE	1	0	1	5	2	7	2	1	3	8	6	14	0	6	6	1	1	2
Par'bo SW	1	0	1	2	0	2	5	2	7	7	6	13	3	3	6	0	2	2
Sipaliwini	1	0	1	4	1	5	5	0	5	29	5	34	9	8	17	0	4	4
Coronie	1	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	1	4	0	0	0
Saramacca	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	2	6	5	1	6	3	3	6	1	0	1
Brokopondo	1	0	1	0	2	2	2	0	2	5	2	7	0	4	4	0	1	1
Commewijne	1	0	1	6	2	8	3	0	3	7	3	10	2	0	2	2	0	2
Marowijne	1	0	1	2	0	2	4	0	4	5	1	6	7	3	10	2	0	2
Nickerie	1	0	1	3	1	4	1	0	1	5	0	5	2	2	4	7	1	8
Para	1	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	3	6	2	8	1	2	3	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>(%)</b>		<b>0</b>			<b>31</b>			<b>12</b>			<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>50</b>			<b>46</b>	
		<b>%</b>			<b>%</b>			<b>%</b>			<b>%</b>			<b>%</b>			<b>%</b>	

Source: Offices of the District Commissioners, Ministry of Regional Development

Women have little influence in local government, i.e. village councils, as women are traditionally not considered people able to contribute to good governance. However, in many regions of the interior the opinions and expertise of women are taken into account. Of the 212 village leaders – 25 head captains and 187 captains (Maroon and Indigenous peoples) – 5 captains were women (2.3%, all Maroon). All chiefs and paramount chiefs are men. Women are appointed as *basyas*, which are assistants to the village head / captain, but unlike their male counterparts, women assistants are



given tasks that reflect traditional female roles, such as organizing village feasts, village hygiene, etc. Male *basyas* are involved in village governance. Women's participation in development work in rural areas and the interior is usually aimed at sustainable development and is usually supervised by NGOs.

The government has transferred responsibility for healthcare in the interior to the Medical Mission, including family planning policy and STD education. The Medical Mission focuses on primary health care and manages 48 polyclinics and medical posts distributed over the interior. Health care in the interior is not optimal due to a shortage of doctors and the lack of facilities for specialists, and thus total absence of specialist health care. As a result, patients from the interior must travel to Paramaribo for specialist treatment, which is expensive. Availability of medicine is not optimal either and the polyclinics is too spread out because of the scattered population.

Table 14.6: Number of registered patients of the Medical Mission by region

Region	Patients
Central Suriname	1304
Western Suriname	2152
Djumu	7998
Laduani	8000
Brokopondo	8286
Stoelmanseiland	7894
Drietabbetje	5175
Indigenous Territory	2148
Total	47654

*Source: Medical Mission 2001*

According to the Medical Mission, the most common health problems in the interior are malaria, anemia, problems related to pregnancy and labor, STDs, hygiene problems, limited access to sanitation (latrines are absent in most villages) and safe drinking water (villagers obtain drinking water from creeks and rivers). Preventive healthcare is almost completely lacking in the villages. Although children are generally vaccinated, there is no information on nutrition, hygiene, chronic disease, breast and cervical cancer. There are no special facilities for prenatal care. Vegetables are generally lacking in the diet of the interior. Though prized, meat and fish are not always available due to poverty, traditional or seasonal limitations.

The 2001 SARA report (Situation and Response Analysis Report on HIV/Aids in Suriname, J.Terborg, ProHealth) identifies Maroons and Indigenous People in the interior as risk groups in the national HIV-AIDS programme. They are second with regard to highest numbers of HIV-positive cases and STD prevalence. Studies among a number of Maroon and Indigenous communities have shown that women know clearly less about transmission and prevention of STDs and HIV/AIDS than men. Main reasons were cultural factors, limited schooling and limited access of women to alternative and customized sources of information. The Medical Mission coordinates the execution of the STD/HIV-AIDS programme in the interior; its goal is to reduce AIDS-related mortality and sexual transmission of HIV and other STD's among the population of the interior. The Medical Mission has opted for a strategy for improving STD services by integrating STD/HIV management into its regular activities. Activities within this strategy are: syndrome-base approach to STD treatment, education, training of healthcare assistants, condom distribution and promotion, research and surveillance, formulating policy, and psychosocial support. Most HIV tests are performed based on clinical indications. As in hospitals in Paramaribo, HIV screening of, among others, visitors to prenatal policlinics is offered as part of prenatal care, so without pre-counseling. Though the majority of health care workers are trained in HIV counseling, their expertise and skills are hardly used. Trained local educators and counselors face different obstacles to effective education and counseling of patients with STD's, such as obstacles related to culture and tradition, and difficulty in tracing sexual contacts, often because sexual partners do not live in the interior. As a protocol is lacking, there is also some confusion among health care workers about HIV test procedures. Condom distribution is also one of the most important activities of the Medical Mission in the context of HIV/AIDS prevention. Since 2001 villagers can obtain condoms at shops, service stations, offices, youth organizations and women's organizations. It is still not possible to monitor the distribution and use of condoms. Training key persons from the communities in the interior and production of educational material are important aspects of HIV-AIDS prevention.

Cultural standards and expectations dominate decisions with regard to reproductive health. Offspring are important for the honor and status of men and as security in old age and the continuation of the family. Offspring is even more important to rural women as helpers in their care-giving and production work. Infertile women are failures in the eyes of their community and partners. It is not uncommon for men in the interior to have multiple children because of the Maroon system of polygamy. In some villages the majority of men (74%) have children with more than 1 woman. The numbers of children men have ranges from 0 to 17, while the number of children women have ranges from 0 to 11. These numbers may be high, but most men (94%) say they would like more children. On average, boys become sexually active between the ages of 10 and 13 years, and girls between 13 en 15 years. However, in all villages surveyed there were girls who were between 10 and 12 when they had their first sexual experience. This is considered normal in the communities and within the cultural traditions.

**Table 14.7: Age at first sexual contact of women informants, per village**

Age at First Sexual Contact	Masiakriki	Malobi	Futunakaba	Pokigron	Total	Total Number
10 - 12	26.6	32.4	16.0	5.3	23.2	33
13 - 15	48.4	29.4	24.0	57.9	40.8	58
16 - 18	6.3		20.0	26.3	9.9	14
19 - 21			12.0	10.5	3.5	5
Don't know	7.8	38.2			12.7	18
Never had sex	10.9		28.0		9.9	14
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Total Number	64	34	25	19		142
Average	13.29	12.72	15.44	15.42		

Source: 'Survey Report on Maroon Fertility in Four Selected Maroon Villages in the Interior of Suriname.' B. Adams for the National Women's Movement, 2002

**Table 14.8: Age at first marriage of women informants, per village**

Age at First Marriage	Masiakriki	Malobi	Futunakaba	Pokigron	Total	Total Number
12-14	21.9	32.4	8.0	10.5	20.4	29
15-18	51.6	20.6	28.0	57.9	40.8	58
19-20	3.1		24.0	10.5	7.0	10
21 +	4.7	2.9	4.0	5.3	4.2	6
Don't know	1.6	35.3		5.3	9.9	14
Not married	17.2	8.8	36.0	10.5	17.6	25
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Total Number	64	34	25	19		142
Average	15.73	14.95	17.94	17.44		

Source: 'Survey Report on Maroon Fertility in Four Selected Maroon Villages in the Interior of Suriname.' B. Adams for the National Women's Movement, 2002

**Table 14.9: Age at first child of women informants, per village**

Age at First Child	Masiakriki	Malobi	Futunakaba	Pokigron	Total	Total Number
12 - 15	15.6	14.7	4.0	5.3	12.0	17
16 - 19	25.0	35.3	32.0	63.2	33.8	48
20 - 24	7.8	8.8	28.0	15.8	12.7	18
25 - 28		2.9	4.0	10.5	2.8	4
Never had a child	51.6	38.2	32.0	5.3	38.7	55
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Total number	(64)	(34)	(25)	(19)		142
Average	16.81	17.76	19.35	19.06		

Source: 'Survey Report on Maroon Fertility in Four Selected Maroon Villages in the Interior of Suriname.' B. Adams for the National Women's Movement, 2002

Generally speaking, contraceptive use in rural areas and the interior is low, as female fertility is considered very important. The survey of Maroon fertility along the Upper Suriname River carried out by B. Adams in 2002 for the National Women's Movement, showed, among other things, a slight change among young women and men, partly under pressure of the poor financial / economic situation. Contraceptive use is lowest among men with only primary education who live further from Paramaribo. The condom is the most common form of contraception. The reason men do not use contraceptives is so that their partners bear as many children as possible. Contraceptive use among women is very low (an average of 6% of women surveyed) because of cultural notions, unequal gender relations, fear of ostracism should they not meet cultural standards regarding fertility, low educational levels and lack of information about STDs and HIV-AIDS. Here, too, it is apparent that contraceptive use is higher in villages nearer to Paramaribo and where women are better educated (17% in Pokigron, the village with the highest level of education – everyone has been to school, most beyond elementary school), compared to 0%, 3% and 5% in Futunakaba, Malobi (97% without schooling) en Masiakriki (62% without schooling) respectively.

**Table 14.10: Age of women using contraceptives, per village**

Village	Contraceptive use		Total	Total number
	Yes	No		
Masiakriki	5.1	94.9	100.0	59
Malobi	2.9	97.1	100.0	34
Futunakaba		100.0	100.0	17
Pokigron	16.7	83.3	100.0	18
Total Number	7	121		128
Total	5.5	94.5	100.0	

*Source: 'Survey Report on Maroon Fertility in Four Selected Maroon Villages in the Interior of Suriname.' B. Adams for the National Women's Movement, 2002*

The women who know about contraceptives are familiar with the condom, the pill, injections and local herbal remedies. According to a Lobi Foundation report on the female condom project, Maroon women in the interior were among those most enthusiastic about its use, when a number of NGOs carried out a pilot project in 2001 on the feasibility of widespread introduction of the female condom in Suriname. Men as well as women are familiar with herbal contraceptives and abortives. Generally men as well as women object to abortion.

#### *Social Benefits*

Benefits such as child allowance, financial assistance and general old-age pension, and benefits for the disabled, are also paid to citizens in the interior and the districts by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Obstacles identified by the government with regard to this are poor infrastructure and logistics, which substantially increase the costs of paying the benefits on a monthly basis as required. For this reason the benefits are paid once a year.

## *Education*

The results of the 2001-2002 Junior Secondary Education admission exams for primary school students indicate low scores for students from the interior, namely the districts of Marowijne, Brokopondo and Sipaliwini. A total of 9035 students participated in the exams, of whom 3.1% in Marowijne, 2.1% in Brokopondo and 3.2% in Sipaliwini. Of 4395 students in Paramaribo, 2447 (55.7%) passed for Junior Secondary General Education and 664 (15.1%) for Junior Secondary Pre-vocational Education. Of 282 students in Marowijne, 102 (36.2%) passed for Junior Secondary General Education and 92 (32.6%) for Junior Secondary Pre-vocational Education. There were 185 candidates in Brokopondo, of whom 49 (26.5%) passed for Junior Secondary General Education and 74 (40%) for Junior Secondary Pre-vocational Education. Of the 292 candidates in Sipaliwini, 63 (21.6%) passed for Junior Secondary General Education and 97 (33.2%) passed for Junior Secondary Pre-vocational Education (Source: Ministry of Education). There are no gender-specific data on students.

Junior Secondary Education is hardly available in the interior. Children who want to follow Junior Secondary Education need to move to Paramaribo, which means that parents incur high costs for school and housing. Virtually no students who have studied in the capital return to the interior, partly because of lack of job opportunities there. In the past decades the government has focused on guaranteeing primary education in the interior, which is a problem because of the lack of funds. The previous report indicated that 61% of children in the interior have no access to formal education. This percentage has fallen in the reporting period: the percentage of children in the interior that does not attend school is now 50% (Source: Department of Education in the Interior, Ministry of Education).

The government is struggling with a structural shortage of teachers (with regard to numbers and quality), teacher houses, suitable teaching facilities and materials. The government and boards of denominational schools are also faced with the educational demands of relatively small populations and the lack of adequate communication and transport in their areas. The Kenki Skoro Foundation, an NGO, carried out the most recent large-scale survey of the educational situation in the interior in 1998. Data from this survey are still relevant for the reporting period as the situation in the interior has not undergone rapid change.

The government has not carried out literacy programmes in the interior since March 1998. Some NGOs such as the Protestant Educational Project Foundation, the National Women's Movement and the Maisja Foundation taught literacy classes to women of a few villages in the interior. However, the problem of illiteracy has not changed much in comparison with the previous report. This means that the majority of the population of the interior is still illiterate, that the women receive markedly less education than men, and that the lack of education for women is an obstacle to obtaining information, production and employment.

Except for religious and cultural activities, rural women hardly participate in outdoor activities, on the one hand because there are little or no such activities, on the other hand, because women – for lack of alternatives – spend most of their time on production and housework (about 13 hours a day). Even so, the number of women's organizations being founded is steadily increasing. The organizations are private initiatives and arise from the rural need for economic and social development. Most of these organizations have no legal status, but are recognized by the village leadership. The activities of the local organizations relate to, among other things:

- Small-scale agricultural production combined with marketing;
- Other economic activities such as small-scale tourism and chicken-farming;
- Introducing credit systems;
- Acquiring and running machines (practical technology);
- Widening access to basic facilities such as water, electricity and sanitation; adult education, including literacy;
- Organizing day-care for children;
- Educational activities with regard to health.

It is mainly NGOs that are involved in training individual women (including literacy, agricultural courses, training aimed at economic strengthening of women) and capacity building of leaders of women's organizations in the interior. Some local women's groups network and collaborate with larger women's organizations beyond their territories or with professional and commercial organizations, and focus on building the capacity of their own organization or its members.

No government policy has been developed to support or guide women in formal and informal agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries organized agricultural educational programmes in 2001-2003, in the form of a training series 'Good Agricultural Practices' held in rural areas. The courses ranged from culture techniques, cultivation, plant reproduction, composting, poultry breeding, to pesticide use. Ministry officials estimated that women made up 20% of those trained, on average. The table below contains an overview of trainings organized in the District of Commewijne in 2001-2002.

**Table 14.11: Training activities in Commewijne by gender**

Activity	M	F
Substituting Vegetable Protein for Animal Protein and Personal Hygiene	0	16
Flower Cultivation (Tamanredjo)	5	16
Vegetable Cultivation (Meerzorg)	11	9
Plant Reproduction Techniques (Tamansarie en Moengo)	29	6
Beekeeping Information Day (Tamanredjo)	22	3
Poultry-breeding (Nieuw-Amsterdam, 2001)	18	13
2 Composting Trainings (Oost-Westverbinding)	21	3
Total Number of People Trained	106	66 (62.3%)

**Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries**

The government, via the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, plans to develop an Agricultural Plan in 2003, which will involve all stakeholders and which will give ample attention to the position of women in general and that of women in rural areas and the interior in particular. Some NGOs support women and women's organizations in building their marketing potential, for instance through product differentiation and stimulation of collective marketing of agricultural products, which reduces the costs for individual women farmers, and through guidance in the broadening of marketing opportunities.

Formally speaking, agricultural credit and agricultural loans are available to men as well as women through existing banks and credit cooperatives. The credit cooperatives GODO and De Schakel provide credit to self-employed people. Women in the interior, however, have limited access to such credit because the credit institutions do not have branch offices in the interior due to the poor infrastructure and the geographical isolation, and because the credit systems are not adapted to the situation of the inhabitants of the interior. For example, women in the interior are not able to pay off loans on a monthly basis, or lack collateral.

Furthermore, there are villages or areas in the interior without a monetary economy, so that many women there have no financial income. A survey carried out by the National Women's Movement in 1998 among women of the Upper Suriname River showed that 14% of the women had no financial income whatsoever and depended entirely on their husbands and relatives in and outside the village. A third of these women received no support at all. Of the women who did have an income, 50% derived it from agriculture, 10% from a government job, 10% from her partner and 7% from government benefits (financial assistance or general old age pension). General old age pension was the only source of income for women over 65 years. (Source: Survey Women's Economic Empowerment Upper Suriname River Area. National Women's Movement for UNICEF, 1998). Men generally have other sources of income, such as hunting, fishing, transport services, woodcarving, logging, timber processing, gold mining and construction. The fact that many women have no or little income makes them extremely dependent on their partner, children or other relatives. Through the National Women's Movement some local women's organizations started to experiment with developing a credit system from a traditional rotating credit association, which provides loans to members and non-members without collateral. So far, these credit systems have had positive results.

Little has changed between 1998 and 2002 with regard to the problem of non-tribal women's access to land. Women still have little access to land for agricultural purposes. The percentage of women that has requested and received land has hardly increased and is only 1% according to the Situation Analysis of Women (2001). The NGO Platform for Women and Development, a network of intermediary women's organizations, has been conducting a campaign 'Land for Women' since March 2002, which is aimed at increasing the number of women applying for and being granted land. Tribal women have an extra problem to acquire title to land. People in the interior – men and women – can only obtain individual title to land on the basis of the so-called L-Decrees, a title that does not match notions in the interior of collective and inalienable land ownership. In recent years appeals have been made to the government via NGOs and Maroon and Indigenous organizations to solve the problem of tribal land rights. In the MOP 2001-2005 the government described the problem of land rights as rather complex. The government has granted concessions near certain villages to persons and companies from outside to engage in economic activities (logging, gold mining). This has resulted in conflicts between the local inhabitants and the concessionaires. The locals were prevented from carrying out their economic activities, such as hunting, logging and agriculture. The government has indicated that it will solve the land rights problem through legislation, in consultation with the people of the interior and with the support of multilateral organizations. The government has not taken any steps to ratify ILO Convention 169, which recognizes the land rights of indigenous and tribal peoples.

Generally speaking, there is little technology in the interior. The few machines are almost entirely controlled and managed by men. Various NGOs have turned to increasing women's access to technology in the interior, by acquiring machines that reduce women's workloads (agricultural tools

and equipment; machines for processing raw materials; telecommunication technology; technology to produce power, etc.) and by training women in the use, upkeep and management of these machines.

Water and sanitation facilities in the interior are far inferior to those in other parts of the country, and people there rely on rainwater or creeks and rivers. This type of water supply can pose a health hazard, particularly because of the increase of (illegal) gold mining activities and associated mercury pollution. According to the Sector Analysis of Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation in Suriname (PAHO/WHO, 1998), about 63% of the urban population and 34% of the rural population, including the interior, has access to flushing toilets. The lack of adequate facilities drives people to use creeks, bushes and the river for sanitary purposes, which increases the danger of contagious disease. The lack of safe water and good sanitation particularly affects women, as they are directly involved in household work and the care of sick family members. Different projects have been developed through the years to improve the water supply. The Strategic Plan is important for rural areas and the interior, as it aims to improve 15 water supply systems in rural areas and 27 in the interior between 1994 and 2015. However, the plan has not yet been realized because of lack of funding. It is expected that via the EU Micro-projects Programme, and via the Community Development Fund and the Fund for the Development of the Interior, various potable water projects will be realized by local organizations and NGOs.

Alternative energy sources such as solar, hydro-, wind and bio-energy, which are essential to sustainable development and sustainable poverty eradication in the interior are not present. Diesel-powered generators, both polluting and expensive, partly because of the high cost of transporting fuel, are the norm in the interior. Women are generally excluded from their use, upkeep and management. The most important roads in the interior are in bad condition and the high costs of transport (over land, water and by air) make transporting goods and services in the interior extremely expensive. Though communication in parts of the interior has improved through the installation of fixed cellular phones and radio transmitters in multiple areas, many villages are cut off from communication with the rest of the country. Radio contact is possible via short wave transmission. In the past every village had a radio transmitter, but these were destroyed during the war in the interior (1986-1992). Television reception is limited to a very small part of the interior. Because women in the interior are hardly involved in the administration of their village, they hardly, if ever, participate in planning and decisions with regard to electricity, transport and communication.

Traditionally the vast majority of Maroons live in houses averaging 20 m<sup>2</sup> with on average 5 inhabitants. The living space does not meet international and national standards: at least 45 m<sup>2</sup> according to the Low Income Shelter Programme that the government is implementing in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and NGOs. In 2002 the government started a public housing programme in the village of Pokigron along the Upper Suriname River. Besides this initiative, no programme or policy has yet been developed to tackle the housing problem in the interior.



## PART IV

### Article 15 Equality before the law

Men and women are equal before the law (Constitution, Article 35, paragraph 2). The previous CEDAW report of the Republic of Suriname indicated that this principle is not reflected in all statutory regulations. During the proclamation of the 2000-2002 Government Policy Statement by the President of the Republic of Suriname, the government stated that national legislation will be brought in line with and be aimed at compliance with the conventions on women's rights. In October 2001 a report of the Ministry of Home Affairs was published which contained the results of a test against the following four conventions:

- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence Against Women (Convention of Belem do Para)
- The Inter-American Convention on Civil Rights for Women
- The Inter-American Convention Political Rights for Women

Shortcomings in the national legislation were identified in this report and recommendations were made to amend it.

Action item 5 of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action of the Surinamese government (June 2001) states that the Ministry of Home Affairs will realize this promise during the period of office of the current government (through 2005). On 12 March 1999 the Commission on Legislation on Violence Against Women was installed and formalized by Decree of the Minister of Home Affairs of 11 August 2000, no. 6436/2000. The commission was involved in the first CEDAW report and was therefore unable to propose legislation. The Integral Gender Plan of Action 2000-2005 (November 2001) names the following specific actions which will be taken:

- Encourage affirmative action for women where inequality still exists
- Encourage positive images of women in society
- Evaluate Decree C-11 and the Personnel Act
- Set up structures and start bringing national legislation in line with conventions on women's rights
- Repeal discriminatory stipulations in the Personnel Act
- Gender training for government officials, aimed at applying a gender perspective in screening laws and rights, projects and programmes
- Amendment of the Accident Regulation to recognize concubine status for benefits after the death of the male partner
- Amendment of the Safety Act, so that pregnant women and breastfeeding women receive extra protection at work
- Revision of the decree to lift legal incapacity of married women, to close loopholes
- Follow-up for the ILO project Women Workers' Rights (including education on sexual harassment at work, investigation of gender equality in the Labor Act, etc.)
- Start amendment of Labor legislation from women's point of view

## **Article 16**

### **Marriage and family relations**

As indicated in the previous CEDAW report, marriages in Suriname can be entered into according to the Civil Code and according to the Asian Marriage Act, which consists of the Hindu Marriage Act and the Muslim Marriage Act. The differences between these marriages are mainly the age limits for marriage partners, the solemnization of marriage and the manner of divorce. The National Gender Policy Bureau, which evaluated four international conventions in 2001, recommended maintaining a single marriage act in Suriname, which would require parental approval up to the ages of 21 or 18, regardless of sex. It also recommended prohibiting child marriages.

Despite the lack of statistical data on the matter, it was also noted that in practice girls and young women in some ethnic groups, and sometimes boys and young men as well, enter into arranged marriages, whether or not against their will. This regards the moment of marriage as well as the choice of partner. In an evaluation report of October 2001 mentioned earlier, the National Gender Policy Bureau recommended prohibiting arranged marriages for women. The National Gender Policy Bureau also recommended adapting the grounds for divorce and stipulations with regard to permission to marry, and to legislate rape of women within marriage and expulsion of the woman. The Ministry of Justice and Police has included the action point "Supplementing and amending Articles of the Penal Code to recognize violence against women and domestic violence as a separate statutory injustice" as Item 1 of the Gender Mainstreaming Plan of Action of the Surinamese Government.

The Articles of the Civil Code that contradict the principle of equality with regard to parental authority and custody of children, and the selection of a surname (Articles 71, 353, 383a subparagraph 3, and 403) have not yet been amended. The Act on Equality in Inheritance, which is aimed at abolishing the distinction between legitimate and natural children in inheritance law, entered into force as of 22 March 2000. The bill on the right to be heard has been submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval; the bill on parental visitation rights is still being prepared. The parental visitation rights should establish rights between the parent without custody and the child, also in situations other than divorce. The right to be heard provides for hearing minors in court decisions that involve them during civil law cases.

Outdated legislation with regard to the right and access to contraceptives has not yet been amended, so that distribution of such items is still legally forbidden, though in practice the government supports family planning and the distribution of contraceptives. The first report mentioned the possibility that contraceptives might become less accessible for poorer women due to the bad economic situation. The National Gender Policy Bureau recommended government subsidization of contraceptives, but this recommendation has not yet been implemented. In 2001 the Women's Rights Center (WRC) took the initiative to set up a committee that would focus on a separate chapter of the Civil Code on domestic violence. The NGOs are concerned because amendment of legislation is proceeding so slowly, which is an impediment in practice.

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