

PART I:

OVERVIEW

Guyana is located on the north eastern coast of South America and is bordered on the east by Suriname, west by Venezuela, north by the Atlantic Ocean and south by Brazil. It has an area of 216000 sqkm. The coast is below sea level. Guyana has a population of 782,427 (1998). Women comprise 50.73% of the population. Geographically it is divided into ten regions for administrative purposes. Guyana is endowed with natural resources. The arable coastal land produces rice and sugar. The extensive interior forest areas provide timber and mineral resources, including gold, diamonds and bauxite. There is considerable potential for economic activities.

The country has a democratic form of government. Enshrined in the 1980 Constitution of Guyana, Article 29 (1), is the recognition by the Government of the principle of the Equality of women and men. This has also been enforced with the ratification of the CEDAW in 1981 and the Inter American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in 1995. The 1980 Constitution, however, is currently under review. Legislative reforms during 1995-1997 sought to correct deficiencies in the legal system which still discriminated against women, thus, paving the way for amendment which aims at correcting any deficiencies.

Since the declaration of the Decade for Women gender advocates have been examining women's position, trying to find ways for a more holistic approach for gaining major achievements towards equality and women's development.

Some of the achievements witnessed in Guyana could be classified as legislative, policy and structural.

Legislation

In the realm of legislative achievements the passing of the Domestic Violence Act in 1996 enables the police, social workers in governmental and non-governmental services to mediate and take official action in cases of domestic violence. Concern for violence against women was one of the critical areas of the Platform for Action. Other Acts relating to women have also been passed by Parliament, The Women's Affairs Bureau in collaboration with the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers successfully accessed funding to assist women in representation in legal matters. In addition, the Women's Affairs Bureau and the National Commission on Women organised women to give evidence to the Constitution Review Commission in 1998-99. A point to note is that two women are members of the 20 - person Constitution Reform Commission.

Policy and Structures

In relation to policy formulation, the Government approved the National Policy for Women in 1996. This brought into effect two mechanisms to support the work of the Bureau, namely, the National Commission on Women and the Inter-Ministry Committee.

In addition, Government has currently adopted a policy of Education and Training for Women to enable them to play a greater leadership role at all levels of the society. To give effect to this policy, Government, with part funding from UNDP, has implemented a project titled "Building Capacity for Gender in Governance, whereby the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute and the Resource and Documentation Centre have been established in 1997 and 1998 respectively.

The policy also states clearly that the strategy of mainstreaming gender across all sectors should be adopted thus. The national action plan for women addresses the areas of legislation, health education, agriculture, and employment also violence against women and girls and leadership training. Some action has been taken to address these areas by Women's affairs Bureau (WAB), in terms of its implementation programme. It is envisaged that more effective programming through both WAB and Inter-Ministry Committee will be formulated to address gaps in the near future. However, in other

sectors not addressed the Bureau has not taken any action to determine the situation of women and girls as a basis for programme planning.

Education and Training

The number of women and girls who access education in both the formal and informal sectors has increased. As a result of efforts made at both government and non-governmental levels data indicate that 68.7% females and 68.1% males had access at the tertiary level. In the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences females were 77% and 62% respectively, while at the Teachers Training Institution the enrollment figure for women was 84.4%.

In the Health Sector Training was organized for women in rural and hinterland communities. These programmes saw the development of a growing human resource base of local women capable of serving the needs in the community.

The issues of gender and equality and the advancement of women is represented at cabinet level by a senior minister of Government. This indicates that priority is placed on the issue. In relation to the achievement of other public policy goals inadequate staffing and funding resources allocated would deem it not to be of such high priority.

It is, however, recognised that an overall poorly functioning economy would necessitate reduced budgetary provisions across many sectors.

Access to Credit

The demand for high levels of collateral, as well as high interest rates puts formal credit beyond the reach of women, generally. It is estimated that the Institute of Private Enterprise Development which has not such strict rules for lending did, during the period 1986-1996, grant loans on a ratio of 4 men to 1 woman. Another response to assist women is the Revolving Loan Fund Programme of the Women's Affairs Bureau which funds women to implement micro projects.

The National Plan of Action

The Government of Guyana has identified the following critical areas of concern which also link with the Platform for Action:-

1. Women and poverty
2. Education and training
3. Women and health
4. Violence against women
5. Women in power and decision making
6. Women with disabilities
7. Situation of indigenous women

The issues of women and disabilities and the situation of indigenous women are of special concern for Guyana. The National Commission on Women has initiated action to determine the needs of women in these two critical areas.

Gender Mainstreaming

The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development states "that a key objective of Government should be to integrate gender in all Government agendas, policies and programmes, thus creating a culture within Government which is gender sensitive and where gender issues become the responsibility of all". The Government of Guyana has adopted this strategy in the National Policy on Women . At present, application of this strategy is limited, the best action being the participation of Gender and Development consultants and officials in the formulation of the draft National Development Strategy. The Ministry of Education has also initiated action to remove sex stereotyping in text books.

The issue of main streaming gender will continue to be provided in the national debate. There have been efforts in seminars, workshops, and in public debate to create an awareness of this strategy.

There is currently a greater recognition that women have a role to play in development and are making a meaningful contribution. By the same token, there is concern for the situation of boys and men, especially in relation to their education.

The Media

Change has not been significant especially with respect to the perception of the women in the media which continues to portray them in a negative mode.

Academic Institutions

Academic institutions have been addressing gender equality. Changes in the curriculum have been made in order to ensure this. Students in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Guyana, are encouraged to select options from a series of courses designed by the Women's Studies Unit (WSU) which deal with issues relating to Gender and Development. Another strategy which will inform the curriculum in WSU at University of Guyana is the community partnership project which involves the Unit in three regions - Atlantic Canada, University of Indonesia, and Universities in the English speaking Caribbean - University of Guyana and the University of the West Indies.

In this process of collaboration, curriculum and materials will be developed. Practice in skills required for working with women at community level in research and community

development projects will be sharpened. This should lead to leadership development and the empowerment of women. This partnership will address local needs within a comparative and global experience.

Other Departments of the University like the Institute of Distance and Continuing Education continue to attract to their programmes a significant number of women.

The Cyril Potter College of Education have addressed Gender and Development issues in its curriculum offerings. Programmes of the Technical Institute now feature an increased enrollment of women. NGOs, such as the Baha'is, and the Adult Education Association of Guyana are offering courses dealing with issues of concern to women.

Women and Globalization/Structural Adjustment

Globally the current environment of open economics, new trade regimes and competitive export industries rely significantly on female labour both waged and unwaged. Recent protectionist economic policies contribute to the external debt crisis, and influence the human condition in negative ways.

It has been the views of many developing countries that IMF conditionalities need to be modified in ways which will give consideration to the human dimensions of economic

adjustment. With globalization as with structural adjustment evidence shows an increase in poverty levels, the most disadvantaged being women, children and older persons.

The structural adjustment programme of the late 1980s brought untold hardships especially to women. Guyana has not escaped those hardships, the prolonged economic decline which lasted for about two decades has contributed to the country being rated in 1991 as one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. This drastic decline of Guyana's economic performance led to further adverse consequences. As a result, this crisis augmented poverty and the Guyanese society was plunged into extensive systemic poverty.

The Human Development Report (1996) states when income (as a measure of affordability of a pre-determined minimum basket of goods) is used, 78% of the population had incomes below the absolute poverty line and 35% fell below the critical poverty line. These and other factors contributed to a greater negative impact on women than men, particularly single female parents and their families. Poverty therefore, for women has special gender related problems that have rendered them much more vulnerable than men in society. Special attention must also be given to the situation of older persons, the majority of whom are women.

The Women's Affairs Bureau and the National Commission on Women have a critical role to play in monitoring the impact of adjustment programmes and globalisation so that timely intervention can be taken where necessary.

Conclusion

Gender issues and women's empowerment are central to development. The ability to create this awareness nation-wide, in order to increase the capacity for social development is one of the main tasks of the Women's Affairs Bureau. The staff of this Unit should be increased to a level which would make intervention and programming match the needs of the female population which the Bureau is mandated to serve. As mentioned earlier, training and education should be intensified in order to ensure that women gain the necessary skills and confidence to pursue economic activities in the interest of national development.

It is important also that all stakeholders at the policy level be sensitized to be able to ensure that in their sectoral plans consideration is given to flexible forms of employment for women. As one writer puts it "We need to feminize labour" as women are entering the labour force in greater numbers since 1995. The increasing rise in poverty particularly among women, the disabled, minorities and children and more importantly for women who head households calls for urgent and sustained action. It is hoped that

in the new millennium programmes for women will address this urgent need more effectively.

PART II: FINANCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL MEASURES

A: Financial Measures

2. The Structural Adjustment Programme of the late 1980s brought untold hardship especially to women. Guyana has not escaped those hardships. In addition, the substantial prolonged economic decline which lasted for about two decades has contributed to the country being rated in 1991 as one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere.

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Under these circumstances, specific financial measures to take women's equality and advancement into account have been inadequate. Government established a Poverty Alleviation Programme 1995-1998, out of which G\$45 million was allocated and administered by the Women's Affairs Bureau in efforts to address the specific situation of women and poverty recognising that women are the larger number of the poor. This financial provision represents 2.8% of the national programme funds for Poverty Alleviation, indicating non-recognition of the scope of practical and strategic gender needs of the female population. Programme were organised for women across the country in the following areas:

- Small Business Management
- Consciousness awareness and Needs Assessment
- Gender Training for Managers and Executives
- Computer Literacy Training
- Gender in Policy and Planning
- Political Leadership for Women and
- Gender Analysis in Policy and Planning

There were other programmes targetting vulnerable groups where women also benefitted from specific funding, such as:-

- provision of supplements to pregnant and lactating women; which was for 2 years
- and provision of skills training for young school leavers, women, and unemployed persons.

It is accepted that equality and women's advancement are catered for in the budgetary allocations of relevant sectoral ministries such as health, education, agriculture.

Women - specific policies and programmes are addressed directly by the budgetary provisions of the WAB, within the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security. Unlike some other government agencies, the Women's Affairs Bureau's budget has been low. This situation, however, was especially acute for the department. In 1998 it received \$3.3million or 0.4% of the subject Ministry's budgetary allocation; and 0.0065% of the overall country's budget. Included in the Department's allocation, is an amount totaling 16.3% which represents contributions to Non-Governmental Organisations to assist them in their programme implementation.

In 1999 the proposed Budget was cut by 55% for the department thereby approving a total of M\$3.2 or 0.4% of the Ministry's budget and 0.0063% of the national budget. Included in the Women's Affairs Bureau's budgetary allocation for 1999 are

contributions to the various Women's Non-Governmental Organisations. This represents 33% of the Department's Budget for 1999. The percentage seems negligible. However, of the remaining 67% only 40% go to direct programmes to benefit women, the remaining 27% is directed in other support services such as materials and other office supplies. Inflation and depreciation of the Guyana Dollar will make it almost impossible for the Department to complete the work programme formulated for 1999. Hence, the major task of the Women's Affairs Bureau will be to determine the priorities of its work programme within its limited financial resources.

Additional resources have been accessed from bilateral donor agencies for specific programmes/projects in 1996-1998 as listed below:-

- Small Business Training Manual for Micro-Enterprise Management - funded by Canada CARICOM Gender Equity Fund (CCGEF).
- Training for Trainers in Gender in Policy and Planning - funded by (CCGEF).
- Women's Human Rights Campaign against violence to women - funded by UNDP/UNICEF.

The WAB has not initiated programme action to monitor and quantify the contribution to the advancement of women, funded from the budgets of other sectoral ministries or from bilateral donor agencies. It is proposed to address this issue in the current work programme of the WAB or the NCW, subject to the availability of funds.

B: Institutional Measures

The passing of the National Policy for Women has paved the way for two mechanisms to be put in place in order to give support to the National Machinery. These are the National Commission on Women and the Inter-Ministry Committee. However, each of the national machinery's objectives represents a challenge that has been made difficult by inadequate staff and resources. In spite of this, the Bureau continues to operate with two technical officers. Other mechanisms that have been put in place for the advancement of women are the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute and the Research and Documentation Center which was funded by a 2 year start-up funding made available by the Government of Guyana (GOG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Plans for long term funding and financial sustainability are being developed.

Arrangements for follow up of implementation of agreements made at global conferences have been made specifically by the specialised agencies responsible. However, the

Ministry of Foreign Affairs plays a monitoring role through the setting up of inter-agency committees, comprising representatives of civil society and government to assist and report on follow-up actions. The National Commission on Women has responsibility for the preparation of the country report to CEDAW.

The Ministry's involvement across the range of institutional measures is incorporated into its national agenda for women.

The Women's Affairs Bureau liaises with one hundred and five non-governmental organisations. Its staff are also members of at least five national non-governmental organisations. There are also national committees comprising non-governmental women's organisations. Indirectly, some co-ordination will be effected since representatives of WAB and NGWOs also sit on the National Commission on Women. However, no formal mechanisms are in place for specific follow-up work by these Non-Governmental Organisations. The Women's Affairs Bureau collaborates with Non Governmental Organisations and other agencies for information and programme implementation on specific issues as well as follow up Post Beijing activities and other Regional programmes.

Access to credit is still out of the reach of many women. During 1996-1998 a new initiative, of the Commonwealth Youth Programmes in the establishment of a Small Business Credit Scheme. 50 women and 39 men have so far benefitted. Similar programmes are run by public and private agencies such as the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Institute of Private Enterprise Development (IPED)..

Though there has been improvement in women's representation at some levels of senior public office between 1993 and 1998, their numbers are still unacceptably low. At the level of Permanent Secretary there is a significant decrease in female representation from 1993 (33.3%) to 1998 (14.3%). This follows a trend of lower representation of women in higher Government office compared to previous years. There is on the other hand a positive indication of women overtaking their male counterparts in 1998 at the levels of Deputy Permanent Secretary, Principal Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary in the Public Service. Women now account for 52% of all such positions compared to 42% in 1993. At other lower levels of the Public Service women continue to dominate in the various occupational categories. Current figures reveal that of a total of 8,266 such positions, women occupy 6,153 or 73%.

PART III

A. Development of improved services and future actions

The Government of Guyana, in consultation with key NGO's has prepared a draft 5 year Programme of Action, 1999-2003. The formation of relevant policies, programmes, projects and positive action is expected. The key agents for actions in this forth-coming period will be the Women's Affairs Bureau, the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute (GWLII), and the National Resource and Documentation Center, supported by appropriate NGO's and NGO's as well as the specialized United Nations agencies

In addition, it is expected that the Women's Affairs Bureau, supported by the National Commission on Women and the donor community, will prepare, from the recommendation of the Issue Papers commissioned in 1997-1998, a needs assessment statement as a basis for advising on policy formulation.

Awareness Creation

There is evidence of a gradual acceptance within the Government of the strategy of mainstreaming. Women are becoming recognised as contributors to national development, and representation on committees and Boards is being sought from NGWO's. To illustrate- The National Development Strategy Committee; the Constitution Review Committee 1998-1999;

Nevertheless, there is the on-going need for awareness creation in the nation, across all age groups.

One positive factor is the emergence of new groups such as the Rural Women's Network, Women Across Differences (WAD), Community Based Organisations e.g.

The participation of representatives of some women's organisations on Committees responsible for drafting the National Development strategy provided opportunity for contributing to the national development planning process and for mainstreaming gender in the sectorial policies of the strategy.

Representation on the Constitution Review Commission was also invited from women's organisations. Submissions were also made by NGWO's calling for enforcing equality and women's human rights in the proposed revised Constitution of Guyana.

Legislation

In the post-Beijing period, legislation has been passed,

The Domestic Violence Act 1996

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1995

The Prevention of Discrimination Act 1997

Under the Termination of Employment and Severance Pay Act 1997, pregnancy or a reason connected with pregnancy does not constitute good or sufficient for dismissal.

There is recognition in the Constitution of Guyana 1980 of the importance of gender equality. However, representation has been made before the Constitution Review Committee for gender equality to be recognised as a Fundamental right and not merely as a guiding principle for Government's policies and programmes.

Of particular interest is the report on the study to monitor the Legal Status of Women in Guyana. This study was a component of the larger project. "Status of Women: Monitoring, Research and Policy" conducted by the NCW and funded by the CCGEF. Consultants were the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers and the Help and Shelter Agency. A detailed examination of the legislation passed over the last two decades, as well as the Constitution, was carried out and substantial recommendations made for amendments to the laws as well as for improved implementation measures.

Research and Information Collection

The National Commission on Women, in support of the work of the Bureau has made available a series of Issue Papers on the following areas of concern:

- Women and Poverty
- Women, the Environment and Sustainable Development
- Women and Human Rights
- The Girl Child
- Indigenous Women
- Women and Health
- Women and Disabilities

In addition, the project catered for a detailed examination of the legal status of women. Recommendations have been made for the amendment of some provisions in the Acts as well as for improved implementation e.g. education and sensitization of legal personnel, and the public including women themselves. This project was funded by the Canada CARICOM Gender Equality Fund.

The Commission has also completed the Guyana Report to CEDAW for the period 1994-1998.

This has been approved by the Cabinet

B. Obstacles to be overcome are:

1. The twin constraints of inadequate human and financial resources continue to be a limitation for the establishment of effective institutional mechanisms. Acknowledging this limitation, it becomes imperative for the Women's Affairs Bureau to address this problem creatively.
2. Weak and infrequent liaison with support agencies, both government and non-government.
3. Inadequate co-ordination with relevant NGO's to support implementation of programmes and projects.
4. Non-existence of a national umbrella women's organisation.

New areas/commitment

1. Analysis of the budgetary provisions at national level which benefit women
2. Programs to address the situation of indigenous women and women with disabilities
3. Strengthening the liaison with Ministry of Health and Ministry of Finance in terms of mainstreaming gender in policy and programmes.

Targets

1. A strengthened Women's Affairs Bureau
2. A stronger commitment to the National Thrust for Women.
3. Coordination of Human, Financial and Technical support for Women's Programmes.

Priority Areas of Concern

1. Women and Poverty
2. Women and Health
3. Human Rights of Women
11. Women and the Environment
12. The Girl Child

General Comments

In 1997-1998, the National Commission on Women, in terms of technical support to the Women's Affairs Bureau (WAB), commissioned issue papers on the areas of concern listed above. These papers were to provide the Bureau with information for policy and programme formulation. In addition, the project, which was funded by the Canada CARICOM Gender Equity Project (CCGEF), provided for the dissemination of the information in the Issue Papers through the conduct of:

- (a) round table discussions with women's groups in rural and urban hinterland areas.
- (b) a high-level seminar for senior policy framers and representatives of key agencies.
- (c) dissemination of the issue papers to key agencies engaged in programmes related to gender and development.

In the implementation of the round-table discussions, the problem encountered was in relation to attendance at the sessions. Much lead time is needed to ensure attendance and this proved difficult especially in some rural areas. Participation of Permanent Secretaries, in the high level seminar, was very disappointing.

Specific Comments

1. Women and Poverty

The programme dealt primarily with awareness building and development of self esteem. Course components related to skill development were included e.g. poultry rearing, elementary book keeping and entrepreneurial skills. NGWOs benefitted.

Funds allocated to the project were fully expended. Identification of poverty areas, and levels of poverty were yet known. The strategy adopted was to target members of women's organisations in rural areas.

Government has in 1998 established a committee to define poverty and provide national indicators to guide programme action.

Women's Affairs Bureau has provided start-up funds for women's organisations to implement some entrepreneurial activity.

Women and Health

Efforts have been made by the Commonwealth Secretariat to promote the strategy of mainstreaming Gender in the Health Sector. Tentative approaches have subsequently been made in terms of consultation on issues of interest to women.

The Ministry of Health has continued the delivery of programmes related to nutrition, the management of chronic diseases related to nutrition, the management of chronic diseases HIV/AIDS, HCH. In addition, efforts have been made to expand in hinterland areas, a situation which should be of benefit to indigenous women.

Special mention must be made of the work of traditional agencies such as the Red Cross, and of non-governmental agencies such as the Cancer Society, and the Guyana Responsible Parenthood Association whose work supports the principle of women's reproductive rights as human rights.

Human Rights of Women

The most significant action taken, by Government re: post-Beijing has been the passage of

The Domestic Violence Act in 1996 and

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1995

An in-depth programme to monitor and evaluate the content and implementation of this legislation was carried out in 1998 on funding provided by the Canada CARICOM Gender Equity Project. Wide-ranging recommendations have been made, one of the

most important calling for public education programmes for women and men, and targeting the Police Force and the legal practitioners at all levels of the judicial system. Initial educational programmes for officers and ranks of the Police Force have been conducted on funds provided by Canada CARICOM Gender Equity Fund (CCGEF). A special booklet on the Domestic Violence Act has been prepared by The Red Thread, a NGWO.

In the presentation to the Constitutional Review Committee 1998, the National Commission on Women (NCW) addressed the issue of Women's Rights as Human Rights, requesting provisions relating to recognition of the unwaged labour of women.

The Girl Child

Action by Government (Child Services)

- Appointment of Commission for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children 1993
- Establishment of a drop-in Centre for Children
- Ministry of Education programme for milk and biscuits for children continues.

- Government has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women

the National Policy on Women was approved by Parliament in 1996. An important feature of that policy was the establishment of

- A National Commission on Women
- The establishment of the Inter-Ministry Committee
- The policy also indicated approval of the strategy of mainstreaming gender in all Government policies and programmes.

The national focal point, designated the Women's Affairs Bureau, was established in 1981. It currently functions within the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.

The National Commission on Women has responsibility for maintaining a national dialogue on issues of concern to women, for advising the Minister of Human Services and Social Security on needed policies and programmes to address these issues, to give support to the Women to the Women's Affairs Bureau in programme formulation, and to prepare the draft Report to UN/CEDAW on the status of the programme in Guyana.

The Inter-Ministry Committee has responsibility for technical and professional support to Women's Affairs Bureau and to support relevant measures for mainstreaming gender in the ministries represented on the Committee and in Government agencies as a whole.

An evaluation of the functioning of these two bodies would reveal an acceptable level of fulfilment of their terms of reference, but more in-depth knowledge of issues, and greater participation would enhance that level of achievement.

The Government of Guyana, on funding accessed from the UNDP, has implemented the project titled "Building Capacity for Gender in Governance".

This project has seen the establishment of two institutions, namely the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute and the National Resource and Documentation Center. This project which is currently in its implementation phase has the potential for significantly enhancing the leadership capability of Guyanese women, and of providing an improved information base for on-going programme formulation.

Since Beijing 1995, efforts have been made to strengthen the Regional Women's Affairs Committee, established in 1986. The Committee comprises representatives of Non-governmental Women's organisations and agencies in each Region.

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned.	Commitment to further action/new initiatives.
1 Women and Poverty 3 Women and Health 9 Human Rights of Women in Guyana 11 Women and the Environment. 12 The Girl Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a consultancy by the NCW for preparation of an Issue Paper on the issues listed. - Round table discussion held in rural and urban areas to disseminate findings, to discuss recommendations and to ascertain the views of women's organisations. - Based on the recommendations set out in the Issue paper, the National Commission on Women to focus on this issue in its Plan of Action. Half-hour television programme on Women and the Environment. Video tape available.	Programme and projects to be formulated, therefore evaluation stage not yet reached.	Women's Affairs Bureau and other agencies e.g. National Commission on Women will continue with Programme development, and will collaborate with other government and non-governmental agencies in their programmes.

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned.
<p>Women and Poverty (contd.)</p> <p>Training and Technical Assistance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to Capital, Resources - Credit - Housing - Land 	<p>Sensitization programmes conducted in 9 out of 10 Regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Development Training for stake holders - Small Business Training - Training in Project preparation, implementation and Management and Management - Issue papers commissioned and Round table session held to share findings and recommendations. 	<p>Useful in determining needs and capacities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issues paper used to promote programme planning and implementation. <p>Obstacles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical Location - Religious and Cultural barriers. 	<p>Increase the number of women to receive credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change the quality and type of training from traditional to non-traditional in keeping with market trends and other saleable skills. - Increase Anti-Poverty program and sustainable Development Projects.

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned
<p>Education and Training</p> <p>Violence Against Women</p>	<p>Guyana Women's Leadership Institute established.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legislation enacted in 1996 - public Education Programs - Training of Counsellors - Production of Police Officers - Production and Distribution of Household Guide to Domestic Violence. 	<p>Obstacles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early pregnancy and marriage - Low remuneration for teachers - Females in remote areas are denied educational opportunities due to lack of human resources. - Absences of proper mechanism for reporting - Insensitive magistrates and Judges. - Some Law enforcement Officers and public Authorities still uphold traditional views that men are superior. 	<p>Continue support for Hinterland Scholarship to the Tertiary Educational Institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up and maintain shelters and half-way houses - Provide Legal Aid - Unified system of Data collection at Police Stations, Courts and Health Facilities - Amend Legislation - Train Judiciary and persons involved at entry points - Create Family Court - Develop proper support services for victims - Create and strengthen community networks to handle problems of Abuse and Violence

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned
7. Women in power and decision making	Training in Leadership and decision making for women in Political parties, in parliament, and Trade Union Women.	<p>Lessons Learned</p> <p>Women have been able to work across political lines and deal with the issues.</p> <p>Women trained were selected by their political parties.</p>	<p>Increased women's capacity to participate in decision making and executive bodies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the capacity of women to reach at the target of 30% on decision making bodies. - Increase women's equal access to full participation in power structures and decision making on governmental bodies and public Administration entities.
Women and armed conflict.	Not dealt with.		

Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned.	Commitment to further action/new initiatives
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<p>8. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women</p> <p>Project: Building Capacity for Gender Equity in Governance</p> <p>Establishment of institutional structures.</p>	<p>1. National Policy on Women 1996</p> <p>1.1 Establishment of National Commission on Women</p> <p>1.2 Strengthening of 1998 Inter-Ministry Committee</p> <p>2. Approval of the Strategy of mainstreaming across sectors.</p> <p>2.1 Mainstreaming gender in the National Development Strategy.</p> <p>3. Re-organisation and strengthening of the Regional Women's Affairs Committee.</p> <p>4. Establishment of the GWLI - Government/UNDP in start-up phase.</p> <p>- Establishment of National Resource and Documentation Center - GOG/UNDP</p> <p>5. Submission by NCW to Constitutional Review Committee</p>	<p>Programmes of sensitization and orientation required to equip members.</p> <p>Stronger support required by senior/top policy framers in relevant ministries.</p> <p>Limited understanding of issues and the strategy of mainstreaming.</p> <p>Financial Constraints which limit contact across geographical areas e.g. hinterland.</p> <p>Possible difficulty in adequate funding support by Government after start-up phase.</p> <p>No difficulty encountered.</p>	<p>Strong commitment on the part of Government at Ministerial level and including Women's Affairs Bureau.</p> <p>- Donor Agency Support</p> <p>Positive response from Committee members and support of GAD; personnel and UN agencies.</p> <p>Women's Affairs Bureau with technical support from</p>
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Critical Areas of Concern	Examples of successful policies, programmes and projects to implement the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action (Indicate any targets and strategies set and related achievements).	Examples of obstacles encountered/lessons learned.	
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<p>Institutional support agencies.</p> <p>Status of Women's Affairs Bureau.</p>	<p>6. Strengthening of linkages with Civil Society - 105 NGO's/CBOs.</p> <p>6.1 Subvention for NGOs</p> <p>6.2 Collaboration in policy/programme formulation and in observances of specific programmes addressing issues of concern e.g. violence against women which feature in the International calendar.</p> <p>7. WAB achievement in maintaining a credible degree of survival as the national focal point for promoting the advancement of women.</p> <p>8. Budget allocations for 97/98/99 have decreased by 10%</p>	<p>More substantial funding support for programmes of NGO's.</p> <p>Absence of national umbrella organisation.</p> <p>Inadequate core staff. Core responsibility for policy/programme formulation, review and monitoring of GAD issues becoming recognised and implemented.</p> <p>Plan by the NCW and WAB to examine the budget to ascertain quantum of dollars spent on women did not materialise due to unavailability of consultant.</p>	<p>Strong and dedicated commitment to the programme which wins collaboration and co-operation from GAD agencies and personal, both funding and technical.</p> <p>Will be carried through if technical and funding assistance is available.</p>
<p>Public spending on the female population.</p>			

8. Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women

The National Policy on Women was approved by parliament in 1996. An important feature of that policy was the establishment of

- A National Commission on Women
- The establishment of the Inter-Ministry Committee
- The policy also indicated approval of the strategy of mainstreaming gender in all Government policies and programmes.

The national focal point, designated the Women's Affairs Bureau, was established in 1981. It currently functions within the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security.

The National Commission on Women has responsibility for maintaining a national dialogue on issues of concern to women, for advising the Minister of Human Services and Social Security on needed policies and programmes to address these issues, to give support to the Women's Affairs Bureau in programme formulation, and to prepare the draft Report to UN/CEDAW on the status of the programme in Guyana.

The Inter-Ministry Committee has responsibility for technical and professional support to Women's Affairs Bureau and to support relevant measures for mainstreaming gender in the ministries represented on the Committee and in Government agencies as a whole.

An evaluation of the functioning of these two bodies would reveal an acceptable level of fulfilment of their terms of reference, but more in-depth knowledge of issues, and greater participation would enhance that level of achievement.

The Government of Guyana, on part-funding accessed from the UNDP, has implemented the project titled "Building Capacity for Gender in Governance".

This project has seen the establishment of two institutions, namely the Guyana Women's Leadership Institute and the National Resource and Documentation Center. This project which is currently in its implementation phase has the potential for significantly enhancing the leadership capability of Guyanese women, and providing an improved information base for on-going programme formulation.

Since Beijing 1995, efforts have been made to strengthen the Regional Women's Affairs Committee, established in 1986. The Committee comprises representatives of NGOs and Agencies in each of the ten administrative regions.

Vision

A truly democratic society in which women and men can develop their fullest potential and in which each enjoys the fundamental human rights to live in a safe environment and to experience quality living, freedom and justice.

I. POPULATION AND FERTILITY

Table I.1: Population by sex, 1995-1998, Guyana

Year	Total	Female	Male
1995	773,410	392,351	381,059
1996	777,648	394,501	383,147
1997	778,795	395,083	383,712
1998	782,427	396,925	385,502

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.

The female population continues to remain slightly higher than the male at approximately 50% and 49% respectively.

Table I.2: Population by age group and sex, 1998, Guyana

Age Group	Total	Female	Male
0 - 4	71,773	34,481	36,952
5 - 14	230,666	114,761	115,905
15 - 49	437,979	223,140	214,839
60+	48,527	25,991	22,536

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.

The population is a youthful one with more than half (55.9%) being reflected in the 15-49 age group. Further, the females in this age group account for 28.5% of the total population of the country.

Table 1.3: Population by urban/rural distribution (selected years), Guyana

Year	% Urban	% Rural
1991 ¹	30.8	69.2
1993 ²	31.1	68.9
1996 ³	36.0	64.0
1998 ⁴	37.1	62.9

Source: 1 & 2. Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.
3. PAHO, 1997
4. PAHO, 1998

While the population continues to be a predominantly rural one, the data reflects a steady increase of the urban population.

1a. Population growth rate

The population growth rate between census periods 1980-1991 has been negative and is reflected as - 0.44% (Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana).

PAHO (1997) estimates an Annual Rate Population Growth for the period 1995-2000 of 1.04%.

PAHO (1998) reflects an Annual Population Growth Rate for the year 1998 of 1.0%.

1b. Total Fertility rate

The indication is that the total fertility rate maintains a steady 2.3 as

follows:-

	Total Fertility rate (per woman)	Time Period
Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana	2.36	1991-1996
PAHO (1997)	2.3	1995-2000
PAHO (1998)	2.3	1998

1c. Fertility rate for women aged 15-19 (no date available)

II. MORTALITY

Table II.1: Life Expectancy by sex (selected years), Guyana

Year	Female	Male
1994 ¹	70	63
1996 ²	69	63
1997 ³	67.9	61.1
1998 ⁴	68.1	61.3
1996-2000 ⁵	67.9	61.1

Sources: 1. Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana
2 & 3. Ministry of Health, Guyana
4. PAHO (1998)
5. PAHO (1987)

Table II.2: Infant, Under-Five and Maternal Mortality rates by (available) year, Guyana

Description	Year			
	1995	1996	1997	1998
Infant mortality rate (Per 1,000 live births)	27.8	24.2	32.0	22.9
Under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	24.6	30.3	39.0	—
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	172.0 ¹	200.0	—	124.6

Sources: Ministry of Health (MCH Unit) & Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.
¹PAHO (1997)

III. HEALTH

Table III.1: Health Care access by year, Guyana

Description	Year		
	1995	1996	1997
Number of Physicians per ten thousand population	3.0	3.8	2.8
Number of Nurses per ten thousand population	8.0	8.0	9.4
Number of Hospital beds per ten thousand population	35.9	35.9	38.8

Source: Bureau of Statistics, State Planning Secretariat, Guyana.

Reproductive Health

Table III.2: Contraceptive use (all methods) women, Guyana

Year	% Contraceptive Use
1995	31.0
1996	31.0

Sources: PAHO (1997)
PAHO (1998)

Table III.3: Births attended by trained health personnel, Guyana

Year	Pre-natal	Birth
1995	95	93
1996	95	93

Sources: PAHO (1997)
PAHO (1998)

Table III.4: HIV adult prevalence rates, Guyana

Year	Prevalence Rates	
1989	Commercial Sex Workers	25%
1992-95	Male STD patients	21%
1993	Pregnant women	3.7%
1995	Pregnant women	7.1%
1997	Blood Donors	3.2%
1998	General Adult Population	3 to 5%
1998	14-24 years old pregnant women	3%

IV. GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

**Table IV.1: Primary and Secondary Education by sex, 1996/97
Guyana**

Level	Total	Female	Male
Primary	102,000	50,225	51,77
Secondary	62,043	31,845	30,198
Combined Total	164,043(100.0%	82,070(50.1%)	81,973 (49.9%)

Source: Digest of Educational Statistics of Guyana, 1996-1997
The female/male ratio, therefore is 5:4.9

IVa *1991 Ratio literate females to males at ages 15-24

F : M

7 : 3

* This is the latest data available.

Sources: Ministry of Education and Bureau of Statistics,
Guyana and Census, 1991.

V. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Va Unemployment Ratio (1998)

F : M
18.1 : 8.4

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Guyana

Table V.1 % of Labour Force engaged in Agriculture, Industry and Services Estimated % of Labour Force engaged in Agriculture, Industry and services by Sex, Guyana, 1993*

	Total Number	% of Force	% Female	% Male
Total Labour Force	245, 492	100.0	31.7	68.3
Agriculture	36,889	15.0	34.5	65.5
Industry	64,019	26.1	21.3	78.7
Services	136,652	55.7	44.9	55.1

Source: HIES, Tables 1.7.1 and 1.8.1

**Table V2 : % of Labour Force by Employment Status
Estimated Labour Force by employment Status and
Sex, Guyana, 1993**

Employment Status	Total Number	% of Total labour Force	% Female	% Male
Total Labour force	245,492	100.0	31.7	68.3
Self-employed	96,085	39.1	35.2	64.8
Regular Salaried	128,718	52.4	33.9	66.1
Casual Labour	19,685	8.0	18.9	81.1

Source: HIES, 1993, Table 1.8.1

Please note that Tables V.1 and V.2 are based on the Household and Income Expenditure Survey (HIES) of 1993. Since there has been no significant structural or other change within the labour force, these estimates will by and large remain the same.

Vb % of children aged 10-14 who are working (No information available)

VI. ECONOMY

National Accounts Aggregates	1995	1996	1997	1998
GDP at factor cost (USM)	590.1	626.5	---	---
GNP at factor cost (USM)	510.9	552.8	495.0	---
Per capita GDP (US\$)	766.0	808.3	723.2	---
Per capita GNP (US\$)	663.0	713.2	795.8	---

Source: Per capita GDP (US\$) Bureau of Statistics, State Planning Secretariat.

VII. INCOME AND POVERTY

VIIa % Household income per capita (No information available)

VIIb % of population below poverty line 1993 1994 1995 1996
43% - - -

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Guyana.

Table VII.1: Proportion of children under age 5 under weight, Guyana

Year	Male		female	
	Moderate	Severe	Moderate	Severe
1992	25.7	3.2	27.4	2.8
*1993	-	-	-	-
*1994	-	-	-	-
*1995	-	-	-	-
*1996	-	-	-	-
*1997	-	-	-	-
*1998	-	-	-	-

*Date not available

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana

VIII EDUCATION

VIIIa 1991 - Adult literacy rate (15 yrs and over)

Total Population	Male	Female
96.5	97.1	96.1

Source: Women's Affairs Bureau, Guyana.

VIIIb 1996/7 - Net Primary Enrolment Ratio.

Male	Female
5.1	5.0

VIIIc 1996/7 - Net Secondary Enrolment ration

Male	Female
3.0	3.1

Source: Ministry of Education and Bureau of Statistics, Guyana.

IX. HUMAN SECURITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Table IX.1 Total # of serious crimes by year, Guyana

	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>
	3425	3676	3233

Source: Criminal Investigation Department, Guyana.

Table IX.2 # of persons in prison by-sex and year, Guyana

	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>
Male	1553	1633	1695
Female	<u>70</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>70</u>
Total	<u>1623</u>	<u>1713</u>	<u>1765</u>

Source: Prisons Head Office, Georgetown, Guyana

X. HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

Xa - Floor area per person (1998)

Minimum size for habitable room is 100 sq. ft for 2 persons

Minimum size for habitable room is 50 sq. ft for 1 person

Source: Ministry of Housing, Guyana

Xb - Persons per Room

1992 No. Of persons per room excluding kitchen & bathroom: 1.4 persons

Source: Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.

SOURCES

Bureau of Statistics, Georgetown, Guyana.

Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), 1993, Bureau of Statistics, Guyana.

The Planning Unit, Ministry of Education, Georgetown, Guyana.

State Planning Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana.

Maternal and Child Health, Ministry of Health, Georgetown, Guyana.

Criminal Investigation Department, Guyana Police Force

Prison's head Office, Georgetown, Guyana.

Pan American Health Organisation/World Health Organisation
(PAHO/WHO)

- (i) Health Situation in the Americas- Basic Indicators, 1997
- (ii) Health Situation in the Americas - Basic Indicators, 1998.

Xd Population relying on traditional fuels for energy use - 90-95%

Source: Women's Affairs Bureau