



*Women & Gender Equality Commission (WGEC)*

# Annual Report (2021 – 2022)

Pursuant to the requirements of Resolution No. 86 which was passed in the National Assembly on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2009, this is the Tenth Periodic Report to the National Assembly on the status of the work of the Women and Gender Equality Commission.



**Women & Gender Equality Commission**

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# Acronyms

<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CISOCA</b>	Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CPAP</b>	Country Planning Action Plan
<b>DV</b>	Domestic Violence
<b>GO</b>	Governmental Organisations
<b>GTUC</b>	Guyana Trade Union Congress
<b>GPF</b>	Guyana Police Force
<b>HFLE</b>	Health and Family Life Education
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>IWD</b>	International Women's Day
<b>IPC</b>	Indigenous People's Commission
<b>LGBT</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>MoHA</b>	Ministry of Home Affairs
<b>MHSSS</b>	Ministry of Human Services & Social Security
<b>MoL</b>	Ministry of Labour
<b>NDS</b>	National Development Strategy
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>NIS</b>	National Insurance Scheme
<b>PAHO</b>	Pan American Health Organisation
<b>PSC</b>	Private Sector Commission
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Commission
<b>RCC</b>	Rights' of the Child Commission
<b>SASOD</b>	Society against Sexual and Other Discrimination
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nation Population Fund United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WGEC</b>	Women and Gender Equality Commission





## A Message from the Chairperson

This report represents the conclusion of the work of the Women & Gender Equality Commission from the year August 2010 when elections were held for the Chair and Vice Chair. Members were appointed under Resolution No 86 which was passed in the National Assembly on Thursday 21st May 2009; however, they could not have begun their work until elections were held for the positions of chairperson and deputy chairperson. Thus, with the Commission fully constituted and in accordance with the mandates of the Constitution we undertook our work with a fervor and commitment that was exhilarating. Once we got past the familiarization process with each other and our mandates, we began our work with much vigor and passion.

This passion has never waned and as we conclude our reporting process, which is a requirement by the National Assembly, we do so against a number of challenges which we and the country have had to deal with. Since the eighth and ninth annual report of 2019 and 2021 was laid, we were unable to present the other report because of extenuating circumstances of COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on staffing issues as well as our inability to undertake outreaches and bilateral meetings. Fortunately, we were able to use Zoom, extensively, for board meetings as well as conferences. This has served the Commission well especially for those Commissioners who were living out of town and who were not keen on travelling in crowded public transportation.

It is opportune at this time to give thanks to all the stakeholders who were responsible for electing us in the first instance, and their continuous commitment in participating in the various events organized by the Commission. They have always been vocal in their representation and never hesitated to make recommendations for the well-being of society. They were not only experts in gender issues, but they represented any issue they felt that would help the country. We believe that all Reports of the Rights Commission should be given the opportunity to be discussed at either a committee meeting or in the Assembly as a whole.

As we conclude our tenure, we want to thank the staff of the National Assembly, the Rights of the Child Commission, the Indigenous People's Commission, the Ethnic Relations Commission and the Human Rights Commission Secretariat who tried their level best to provide WGEC with the requisite assistance. We wish to acknowledge the support of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance for the guidance when we needed it.

We thank all the Members of Parliament and our stakeholders for their unstinting support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Indranie Chandarpal'.

Indranie Chandarpal  
Chairperson



**Gender  
disaggregated data  
must inform our  
decision-making  
process. It is an  
integral part of the  
strategy of gender-  
mainstreaming.**

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# Executive Summary

The period under review was in some ways challenging but interesting. The COVID-19 Pandemic continued to provide challenges but it has also offered a different perspective on how the mandate of the Commission could be carried out.

The Commission endeavoured to strengthen existing relationships and also to build new ones. The Commission renewed its partnership with the University of Guyana and the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers. It also sought to renew its relationships with various ministries through a series of courtesy calls.

## ***Financial Highlights***

The Commission received the sum of \$42,302,000 as its budgetary allocation. This was the same amount it had received in the previous year. Except for employment charges and statutory benefits to Commissioners, the Commission was able to expend its budget.

## ***Operating Highlights***

The Commission hired a new Chief Executive Officer and Administrative Assistant at the end of the first quarter of 2022. The Commission was able to complete an increased number of activities compared to the previous year. The Commission continued to utilize the Zoom platform for its statutory meetings as well as to complete a number of virtual panel discussions on topics related to its mandate.

This year saw the Commission completing a number of activities aimed at increasing its profile while providing opportunities to interact with its stakeholders' post COVID-19 restrictions. The Commission launched its strategic plan for 2021 – 2026 on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2022. It also held its first conference focused on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2022. Additionally, the Commission held a number of outreach activities in Region 3, 6 and 7.

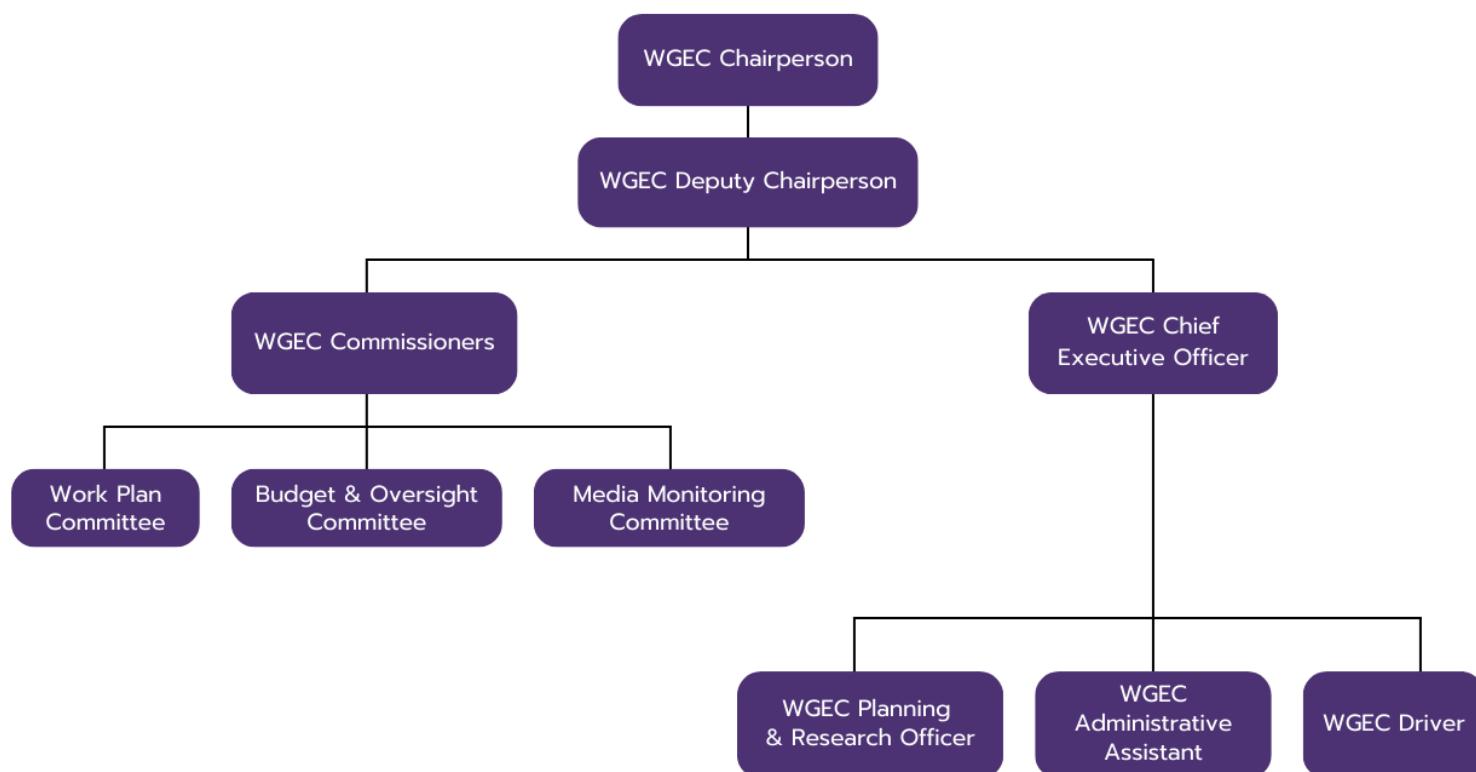
## ***Looking Ahead***

The Commission will continue to pursue its advocacy agenda. It will continue to operate in accordance with its mandate and its strategic plan. The Commission is expected to be renewed in the near term as the selection of new Commissioners has been concluded.

The Commission intends to focus more on research and planning and plans to hire an officer to reflect this. In support of its research agenda, the Commission will seek to strengthen.



# WGEC Organisational Structure



# Membership of the Commission

Members of the Commission consist of sixteen (16) persons who were sworn in on August 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 by H.E. President Bharrat Jagdeo. However, we have since lost one Commissioner to death and one other resigned.



**Shalimar Ali-Hack**  
*Women in Voluntary Work*



**Magda Pollard (Deceased)**  
*Chair of the Commission on Women*



**Sandra Hooper**  
*Rights of the Child Commission*



**Chairperson**  
**Indranie Chandarpal**  
*Women's Progressive Organisation*



**Karen Vansluytman Corbin**  
*TUC - Women Advisory Council*



**Renata Chuck-A-Sang**  
*Private Sector Commission  
(Resigned 2022)*



**Deputy Chairperson**  
**Cheryl Sampson**  
*National Congress of Women*



**Vanda Radzik**  
*Women in Voluntary Work*



**Patricia Singh**  
*Indigenous Peoples Commission*



**Gillian Burton**  
*Guyana Labour Union (Labour)*



**Ernestine Barker Logan**  
*Regional Women's Affairs Committees  
Regions 3, 4 & 10*



**Peter Persaud**  
*TAAMOG (Culture/Ethnic)*



**Gaietri Baron**  
*Guyana Agriculture & Workers'  
Union (Labour)*



**Nandranie Coonjah**  
*Regional Women's Affairs Committees  
Regions 2, 5 & 6*



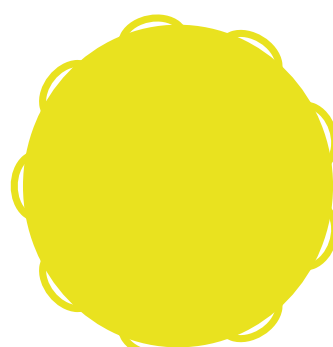
**Nicole Cole**  
*The Rastafarian Council  
(Culture/Ethnic)*



**Debra Ann Henry**  
*Guyana Nurses Association  
(Professional)*



**Bebbi Haliema Khan**  
*Regional Women's Affairs Committees  
Regions 1, 7 8 & 9*



*Ethnic Relations Commission  
(Vacant)*



**Hymawattie Lagan**  
*Women's Affairs Bureau*



# Mission, Vision and Mandate of the Commission

## *Vision*

An environment where the rights of women are recognized as human rights and gender equality is upheld.

## *Mission*

1. Promote gender mainstreaming in all policies and programs.
2. Educate women and men on the benefits of gender equality and ending gender-based violence.
3. Recommend, with the use of evidence-based data, timely policy, and legislative initiatives to uphold women's rights and gender equality.
4. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming within the society

## *Mandates*

Constitutionally, the Women and Gender Equality Commission has the following functions:

1. Promote the issues related to the enhancement of the status of women, girls and gender issues;
2. Promote the integration of women's needs and interests and mainstreaming of gender issues;
3. Promote the empowerment of women;
4. Promote women's rights as human rights;
5. Raise the awareness of the contribution of women and problems faced by women including the recognition and value of unwaged work;
6. Promote women's needs, interests, and concerns in the wider spectrum of economic and social development and address both the practical and strategic needs of women;
7. Educate and monitor employees and the public on desirable employment;
8. Monitor compliance and make recommendations for the compliance with international instruments to which the Government;
9. Evaluate any system of personal family law, customs and practices or any law likely to affect gender equality or the status of women and make recommendations to the National Assembly;
10. Recommend and promote the implementation of legislation and the formulation of policies and measures so as to enhance and protect the status of women;

11. Promote, initiate or cause to be carried out research and the creation of databases on women and gender related issues including those health, especially reproductive health, violence against women and the family, and their socio-economic and political status, as the Commission may deem relevant or as may be referred to it by the National Assembly;
12. Promote consultation and cooperation with women's organisations in relation to decision making that affects the lives of women;
13. Recommend training and technical assistance to support initiatives by and for women and girls; and
14. Promote the participation of women in national decision-making.

# Review of Activities

## Statutory Meetings

Statutory meetings of the Commission were held each month utilising the Zoom platform. Some Commissioners opted to come to the Commission's office citing poor internet access. This made meetings hybrid in nature. The attendance report is attached as an appendix.

At each meeting, Commissioners were apprised of activities of the secretariat, inclusive of the status of implementation of decisions taken at the Commission's statutory meetings. At the statutory meetings, reports resulting from committee meetings as well as from Commissioners wishing to inform the body of their individual activities or other matters of concern are heard. See *Figure 1* for statutory meeting dates.

No.	Date of activity
117	January 27, 2022
118	February 24, 2022
119	March 24, 2022
120	April 28, 2022
121	May 25, 2022
122	June 23, 2022
123	July 28, 2022
124	August 24, 2022
125	September 28, 2022
126	October 26, 2022
127	November 23, 2022
128	December 14, 2022

*Figure 1.*

**Guyana's Current Vision – LCDS 2030**

- The LCDS 2030 is primarily focused on 4 main objectives.

**Creating New Incentives for a Low Carbon Economy**

**Sustainability Planning**

- Sustainable Forestry and Low Impact Mining
- Forest Climate Services
- Biodiversity
- Integrated Water Management

**Protecting against climate change and biodiversity loss**

**Climate Adaptation and Resilience**

- Climate Resilient Agriculture
- Climate Risk Assessment and Insurance
- Coastal Infrastructure
- Mangroves Restoration and Expansion
- Drought and Flood Management

**Stimulating future growth through clean energy and low carbon development**

**Green Jobs and Sustainable Livelihoods**

- Clean and Renewable Energy
- Digital Infrastructure

**Aligning with global climate and biodiversity goals**

- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Nationally Determined Contributions
- Aichi Targets on Protected Areas
- Leaders Pledge for Nature

**LOW CARBON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY GUYANA**

Pradeepa Bholanath



### Staffing

After more than ten years the Commission bid farewell to its two long-time staff, former Chief Executive Officer, Diana Swan Lawrence and Administrative Assistant, Deokumarie 'Maria' Raghubir. They were thanked for their service at a special meeting of the Commission.

In 2022, the Commission hired a new Chief Executive Officer and Administrative Assistant. They are Renata Chuck-A-Sang and Desiree Ramdeen respectively. The Commission also utilized the services of a temporary driver for outreach activities that were out of town. The position of Planning and Research Officer remained vacant.

During 2022 the Commission made a number of Courtesy calls to various entities. These courtesy calls were cordial and resulted in stronger and sustaining relationships in some cases.

### Courtesy Calls

1. The Commission paid a courtesy call to the commanding officer of Region 3 Commander Mahendra Siwnaraine. Among the topics touched on were the police relationship with the public, responses to domestic violence and sexual assault complaints and what could the Commission do to assist. The result was a four-day training on Stigma and Discrimination as well as basic counseling techniques for 30 officers. The training was facilitated by Bonita Harris.



2. The Commission paid a courtesy call on the Commissioner of Police Mr. Clifton Hicken where we were introduced to all of the women on his executive team. Commissioners were invited to be part of the force's welfare programme which hosts several outreach activities in rural and depressed communities as part of the Force's strategy for crime prevention. Since that meeting the Commission have been able to reach out to the Commander of Region 4 on matters of urgency. We were able to access statistics of rape and domestic violence reports nationally for 2020 and 2021.
3. We paid a call to the Minister of Local Government and Regional Development where issues of gender responsiveness at the regional level were raised. There was a promise made to work more closely with the Commission on such matters. The Commission is seeking to have gender-mainstreaming be part of local government processes. To this end, the Commission proposed that the *Regional Gender Affairs Committees* be given a statutory mandate.
4. We met twice with the Minister of Human Services and Social Security once virtually and then in person. We had interactions which focused on preparations to draft the Sexual Harassment Bill as well as the Domestic Violence now being called the Family Violence Bill. The meetings were cordial and always ended with promises to renew efforts to work more closely.
5. The Commission also paid a courtesy call on the Minister of Amerindian Affairs Ms. Pauline Sukhai. The issue of increasing women's participation by finding ways for women to empower themselves through entrepreneurship and community development as well as the issue of increasing women's leadership in Amerindian communities was discussed. It was acknowledged that women needed more encouragement and to have more confidence in themselves to be able to step up to leadership within communities.  
  
Access to healthcare by women especially as it relates to sexual and reproductive health was also raised. The incidence of teenage pregnancies is higher in rural communities. It was also acknowledged that access to justice particularly in rural communities was still problematic. Interior courts, it was felt needed to be held more frequently for more timely resolutions. Information from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions indicated that some Toshaos and village councilors were attempting to deal with matters of rape and sexual offences occurring in their communities. It was reiterated that such matters must be reported to the police.
6. The United Nations Resident Coordinator, Ms. Yesim Oruc, paid a courtesy call to the Commission. She met with the Chairperson, Commissioner Hooper and the CEO. She was briefed on the history of the Commission, the work of the Commission and



what the Commission envisaged for the future. Possible areas of collaboration were also discussed. The UN representative pledged to support the work and mandate of the Commission wherever possible.

### *Outreach Activities*

Outreach Activities were conducted in Region's 10, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 for the period under review. The Commission endeavoured to work with Gender Affairs Committees in the respective Regions as far as possible.

In 2021, in an effort to get a sense of what communities were experiencing as a result of the pandemic, the Commission visited communities in Region 3, 5 and 10. Persons spoke of their loss of income and the resultant stress. For these activities we were able to draw upon the experience of Regional Health Service resources for coping mechanisms to deal with the impact of the COVID-19. We also drew upon the resources of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security Women's Leadership Institute Women's Innovation and Investment Network to advise on livelihood pivots.

#### *Region 3 (West Demerara)*

In Region 3, Outreaches were held at Barnwell, Lenora and Patentia in November of 2021. These activities were organized with the assistance of the Gender Affairs Committee of Region 3. The Commission would like to thank its Chairperson Ms. Geeta Persaud for her enthusiastic support.

#### *Region 6 (Corentyne)*

Outreaches were held at Skeldon, Mibicuri, Black Bush Polder and Tain in October 2022. They were well

attended. Topics discussed included Gender and Development, Health and Wellness and empowerment through entrepreneurship.





### *Region 4 (St Cuthbert's Mission)*

The Commission also visited the community of St Cuthbert's Mission as part of its outreach programme in November 2022. On this outreach the Commission was accompanied by a representative of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The community was engaged on a variety of issues including Access to Justice, Gender Based Violence, Domestic Violence Labour Laws and You, Health and Wellness and Empowerment through Entrepreneurship. One outcome was the expressed desire to form a women's group to encourage entrepreneurship and to offer each other support.



### *Partnerships*

The participants felt the training received was beneficial not only for their work life but for their home life too. Several participants related that they had put into practice some of the techniques learnt at home with pleasing results. The facilitator noted that some of the participants were still struggling with stigma issues and recommended further sessions.

The Women and Gender Commission was able to establish closer relationships with a number of organisations. This was an outcome of several bilateral meetings held. The Commission has established a memorandum of understanding with the Caribbean Family Planning Association Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Observatory. This agreement speaks to data sharing as well as more collaboration especially on advocacy activities.

The Commission renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the University of Guyana. The MOU will see the Commission continuing its support to the Institute of Gender Studies to increase access to gender and development courses



### *Training Conducted*

Region #3 Counseling Skills Training Workshop for Stigma, Discrimination & Violence Reduction Tuesday, August 9 to Friday, August 12, 2022 – 9 am to 4 pm at the Leonora Police Station's training room. Objective: To increase participants' knowledge and skills for violence reduction. The methodology was participatory, interactive, experiential, reflective, and respectful. There were 17 participants, 5 males and 12 females. The sessions were facilitated by Ms. Bonita Harris.

and to increase the familiarization of the student body and wider afield with the gender perspective. The Commission has also undertaken to provide scholarships to women in STEM provided they familiarize themselves with gender concepts through courses offered by the Institute. The University and the Commission have also agreed to collaborate on a research agenda inclusive of data gathering among other things.



The Commission has also committed to working more closely with the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers. The Association accompanied the Commission on several of its outreach activities where their members presented on legal topics that were of interest to attendees. They were also able to advise attendees on various legal matters. The Association has and will advise the Commission on legal matters of mutual concern. The collaboration with the Association has served to make members of the public more aware of the laws of Guyana and in particular those laws that particularly affect women.

Several panel discussions were held for the period under review. They covered several topics of interest

to the Commission and focused on various issues related to its mandate. See the *Appendix 1A* for the attendance table.

### 1. *The Role of Social Benefits in Achieving Gender Equity*

In observance of International Women's Day 2022 a panel discussion featured a discussion on 'The Role of Social Benefits in Achieving Gender Equity'. The speakers were Commissioner Bebbi Khan, who spoke on what are some of the social benefits available locally and how to access them. UNWomen Caribbean Multi-office Representative Tonni-Ann Brodber, spoke about the importance of having adequate social protection systems that recognize the distinct barriers vulnerable populations including women and girls face. She posited that our social protection systems must become fair and gender responsive. She urged that research and data gathering is an important step to achieving this.

### 2. *Is food security important to achieving gender equality?*

The next panel discussion occurred in April and focused on food security. The panelists were drawn from CARICOM, The Guyana School of Agriculture and the University of Guyana. Steven Baugh, Programme Manager at CARICOM addressed issues related to the region becoming more food secure. He stressed that women had a role to play and would be able to increase their participation in the sector if their access to resources were more



equitable. Resources such as land, financing and education were deemed important to success. Data on current and future market demand was deemed critical for commercial success. Ms. Parris of the GSA also spoke about the need for funding to do research on climate resilient varieties and product development. She talked about the necessity of doing agro-processing to create value added products and to reduce food wastage. Dr. Mellissa Ifill reiterated the need for data to inform strategies to increase women's participation. Interventions should take into consideration the impact of cultural practices on increasing women's participation in economic sectors. Traditionally women have less access to land and other assets that they can use to leverage financing and that often stymies their full participation.

3. *The future of work, what does it mean for women?*

In June, the Commission hosted another panel discussion. This time the focus was on 'The future of work. The COVID-19 pandemic forced changes in the way we work and going forward people are choosing to work differently. Women were especially vulnerable during the pandemic partly due to the fact they are over-represented in the informal work sector. It was posited that for women to increase their participation in economic sectors, the burden of care work has to be equitably shared. Technology will have an increasing effect on the way we work, allowing persons to have more options. There has been an increase in what is being

referred to as the 'gig economy' where people are choosing what projects or activities to work on and for how long.

4. *The Constitution and Women, what you should know.*

The topic of Guyana's Constitution was the focus of July's Panel Discussion. Attendees were educated on the Constitution and how it could be used to uphold their rights. Participants were informed that the Constitution in many ways was a proactive Constitution in the recognition of women's rights. However, citizens still had the responsibility to hold office bearers accountable.

5. *Let's talk about sexual and reproductive health. Why is it important to Gender Equality?*

Access to quality sexual and reproductive health is important to a woman's life and impacts greatly on her agency. It was recommended that the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Board include representation from Women's organisations like the Guyana Association of Women's Lawyers. Sexuality education must be delivered fully and completely in all schools. Teenage pregnancy per capita in Guyana remains too high. Sexually transmitted diseases are also rising particularly in the youth demographic. Reproductive cancers are also an issue of growing concern.

Each session was recorded and that recording is posted to the YouTube channel of the Commission: [Women and Gender Equality Commission](#).



## *Alleya Collins*

Ms. Collins entered the Faculty in September 2021 to read for the BSc. Degree in Agriculture amidst challenging circumstances. She was presented with the option of No-Pay Leave or resignation by her employer if she wanted to pursue her studies. She chose the former.

In her desire to be sponsored, Ms. Collins then approached the Guyana Public Service Ministry seeking sponsorship, only to be told that the Ministry had already awarded its quota for that academic year. Her determination to seek higher education led Alleya to make the decision to be self-sponsored with the commitment of her family.

Since her admission to the programme, Alleya has demonstrated stellar academic performance and currently has a GPA of 3.5. She has also been very interactive during classes and often takes the leadership role among her peers.

Coming from a working background, she has demonstrated the kind of attitude that says, she is eager to learn. In continuing her pursuit for success Alleya is focused and determined to achieve her goals.

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**2022-23 MAGDA POLLARD  
WOMEN IN STEM  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**





## *Nicholette Gouveia*

Ms. Gouveia was selected because she was the best female student performer. As a second year student of a 4-year Bachelor of Science in Chemistry student, she has demonstrated dedication, consistency and determination both as a student and a worker.

She connects well with the material and benefits well from her learning experience by being prepared for her practicals.

Most students take some time to find their footing in the first year of university, a task made even more challenging because of the online learning modalities. Ms. Gouveia demonstrated focus and determination as she achieved and maintained a high academic performance.

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**2022-23 MAGDA POLLARD  
WOMEN IN STEM  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**



# *Christine Halley*

Miss Halley has performed extremely well in her first year of studies being the only student in her class to have obtained a perfect 4.0 score. She has proven to be a very disciplined and hardworking student and well deserving of her achievements. She is an excellent role model for girls in the STEM field.

She is pursuing the Associate of Science degree in Petroleum Engineering at the University of Guyana. She has chosen to be a Petroleum Engineer because Guyana is beginning its journey in the oil and gas sector and she believes it is in her best interest to do the same.

She has also indicated the need for financial support as both of her parents are older and no longer in any permanent employment.

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**2022-23 MAGDA POLLARD  
WOMEN IN STEM  
SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT**



## Conferences

The Commission held two conference events for the period under review. The first was done as the launch of its Strategic Plan on July 30<sup>th</sup> at the Regency Hotel. The second was a Conference on CEDAW on November 30<sup>th</sup> at the Regency Hotel.

### *Strategic Plan 2021–2026 Launch*

The Commission officially launched its 2021–2026 Strategic Plan July 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 at the Regency Hotel. Over 100 persons who were invited from several stakeholder groups, from several Regions, participated. After listening to the presentations by Commissioners on the strategic plan, participants were asked to share their thoughts and to give specific ways the Commission could partner with their respective organisations and communities. One theme that kept repeating itself was that persons wanted to see the Commission being more visible in the Regions. It was felt that issues related to women in the Regions would be better ventilated and decisions arrived at if similar forums were held in the Regions at that level where women could discuss freely and arrive at solutions and make decisions and further be given the resources to implement. To this end the Commission committed to having more activities in the Regions as indicated by the Strategic Plan.

The plan also came in for criticism as not being inclusive enough and not detailed enough in some respects. It was noted that marginalized communities were insufficiently defined and as such the plan failed to demonstrate the alignment of the gender justice work to the needs of the diversified populations in the segment. It was also felt that issues

related to the LGBTIQ+ community were not mentioned in specific and the language used in the document did not demonstrate modern inclusivity





### *CEDAW Conference*

As part of its observance of Sixteen Days of Activism, the Commission held its first annual conference on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2022. The event featured presentations from the UN Resident Coordinator Her Excellency Yesim Oruc and Dr. Kathleen Scott. The participants were over a hundred and came from several regions and agencies. The Convention informs much of the work of the Commission. It is also obligated to ensure public knowledge of CEDAW is increased. To this end the second half of the event featured participant interactions while they discussed how CEDAW could be applied to various aspects of life – health, education, employment, justice, environment and safer cities.

An outcome of the conference was participants felt more attention needed to be given to public education on CEDAW. The Education working group recommended that teachers be sensitised to gender biases they may have. It was felt that students were treated differently based on their gender in terms of what they were encouraged to pursue, and disciplinary actions taken. It was also felt that some textbooks displayed biases in terms of language used to refer to certain occupations or skills. The Environment and Climate Change working group was concerned that while women were disproportionately affected by disasters they were not as present in the decision-making spaces.

### *Expositions*

On December 10<sup>th</sup> 2022, the Commission participated in the first Human Rights Exposition at the Arthur Chung Convention Center. The event was hosted by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance. Several attendees and participants engaged with the Commission on the work of the Commission. Copies of its annual reports as well as posters and material regarding the use of the law to uphold rights were distributed. A slideshow presentation on various aspects related to gender equality, gender based violence and the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ran for the duration of the event. In the spirit of the season, a piece of black cake was everyone who interacted with the booth. That was well received.






### *Advertisements*

The Commission completed three media campaigns utilizing public service advertisements it had developed in 2019 with messaging on sexual harassment and family violence. The three advertisements were also translated into the main indigenous languages and were played in rotation on National Communication Network (NCN) regional radio stations in the respective areas during the period August to December 2021 and then again in August to December 2022. We also ran the PSAs on NCN's urban stations 100.1 and 98.1 respectively for the period November to December 2022.

The Commission also placed advertisements in the National Newspapers during the month of November and December 2022 to encourage the elimination of violence against women as part of its observance of the sixteen days of activism against gender-based violence. Those advertisements featured replicas of Family Violence and Sexual Harassment posters previously developed. These campaigns served to lift the profile of the Commission as well as to educate citizens on the issue of violence in the home as well as gender-based violence.






The Women & Gender Equality Commission  
Invites you to a Panel  
Discussion #IWD2022:

## The Role of Social Benefits in achieving Gender Equity

3 Speakers\ 3 Perspectives  
What is the local situation?  
What is happening globally?  
What innovation is possible?

March 9th 2022 - 6pm  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85413718151?pwd=dTJrUjYzS9OMXRzH2MYjVhMUNtQT09>




The Women & Gender Equality Commission  
hosts

THE CONSTITUTION AND WOMEN: WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT IT?

A Virtual Panel Discussion

July 20th, 2022 - 6pm

Please Register to join the Discussion

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83061567331?pwd=NXpFakpUTzRjS1BzUW5VNmNRU1pYdz09>


Meeting ID: 830 6156 7331  
Passcode: 272992

### OUR SPEAKERS:

-  Melinda Janki, Legal Research Consultant
-  Guyana Association of Women Lawyers
-  Dorota Ryzy is an international Human Rights Lawyer currently in Guyana with the IRI Programme.
-  Renata Chuck-A-Sang, WGEC Moderator



592-231-5276  
Peter Rose & Anira Streets, Queenstown, Georgetown  
office@wgec.gov.gy




# WGEC Outreach

## Activity - Wakenaam

SUN. JUNE 12TH, 2022  
10 AM - 3 PM \*LUNCH PROVIDED

- Learn about the Women & Gender Equality Commission
- Learn about livelihood resources
- Learn about health and wellness resources for your community?
- What is your COVID-19 Experience?

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The Women & Gender Equality Commission  
hosts

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH - WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO GENDER EQUALITY?

A Virtual Panel Discussion

August 17th, 2022 - 6pm

### OUR SPEAKERS:

Please Register to join the Discussion

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87121682962?pwd=NkR6SE1HVGPXMHI5MEZoUGJybUlsQT09>


Meeting ID: 871 2168 2962  
Passcode: 647038

-  Patricia Sheerattan Bisnauth, CEO, Caribbean Family Planning Association
-  Umadai Rattan, MD Women's Health Specialist
-  Sadie Amin, Attorney, Human Rights Advocate
-  Renata Chuck-A-Sang, WGEC Moderator



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# WGEC Outreach



## Activity - Bartica

WED SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2022  
10 AM - 3 PM \*LUNCH PROVIDED

- Learn about the **Women & Gender Equality Commission**
- Learn about laws you can use to protect your rights
- Learn about livelihood resources and training opportunities
- Learn about health and wellness resources for your community?
- What is your COVID-19 Experience?

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# WGEC Outreach




## Activity - St. Cuthbert's Mission /Pakuri

SAT NOVEMBER 12TH, 2022  
10 AM - 3 PM \*LUNCH PROVIDED

- Learn about the **Women & Gender Equality Commission**
- Learn about laws you can use to protect your rights
- Learn about the role of Gender in Development
- Learn about livelihood resources and training opportunities
- Learn about health and wellness resources for your community

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## WOMEN & GENDER EQUALITY COMMISSION

### INVITES YOU TO ITS INAUGURAL

# CEDAW CONFERENCE 2022


TOWARDS FULL IMPLEMENTATION

- **WHAT IS CEDAW?**
- **WHAT IS ITS IMPORTANCE?**
- **WHAT PROGRESS HAVE WE MADE?**
- **WHAT ARE OUR REPORTING OBLIGATIONS?**
- **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**



#### SPEAKERS

- Dr. Kathleen Scott, IGS, University of Guyana
- Her Excellency Ms. Yesim Oruc - UN Resident Coordinator
- Hon. Minister Dr. Vindya Persaud
- Hon. Minister Gail Texiera, Parliamentary Affairs & Governance




#### INVITEES

Public Agencies, NGO's, Activists, Feminists Politicians,

#### WORKING GROUPS;

- HEALTH
- ENVIRONMENT
- EDUCATION
- EMPLOYMENT
- JUSTICE
- SAFER CITIES



#### WHERE:

### Regency Hotel

Hadfield Street, Georgetown  
9am - 4pm

CALL US FOR MORE INFO  
**592-231-5276**

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www.wgeg.gov.gy



# Financial Summary

In 2021 the Commission received its budgetary allocation of \$ 49,402,000. Of this, the sum expended was \$39,573,289. The unspent sum of \$9,828,711 was accounted for as unspent employment and statutory benefits allocations. In 2022, the Commission received a budgetary allocation of \$42,303,000. Of this, the sum expended was \$37,404,000. The unspent sum of \$4,899,543 was largely resultant from employment and statutory benefits allocations. Budgetary allocations for 2023 were approved for the sum of \$48,466,000.

Agency: 61 Rights Commissions of Guyana  
Women and Gender Equality Commission

Details of Revenue and Expenditure	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Revised 2022	Budget 2023
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>39.574</b>	<b>42.304</b>	<b>37.404</b>	<b>48.466</b>
<b>Recurrent Revenue</b>	<b>39.089</b>	<b>42.304</b>	<b>37.404</b>	<b>48.466</b>
Subsidies and Contributions from Central Government	39.089	42.304	37.404	48.466
Revenue from Operations	-	-	-	-
Sale of Goods and Services	-	-	-	-
Fees, Fines, etc.	-	-	-	-
Rents, Royalties, etc.	-	-	-	-
Other Recurrent Revenue	-	-	-	-
Interest Received	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Receipts	-	-	-	-
<b>Capital Revenue</b>	<b>0.485</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Capital Grants from Central Government	0.485	-	-	-
Sale of Assets, etc.	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Capital Revenue	-	-	-	-
<b>External Grants</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
External Grants	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>39.574</b>	<b>42.304</b>	<b>37.404</b>	<b>48.466</b>
<b>Recurrent Expenditure</b>	<b>39.089</b>	<b>42.304</b>	<b>37.404</b>	<b>48.466</b>
<b>Total Statutory Expenditure</b>	<b>17.217</b>	<b>17.217</b>	<b>15.527</b>	<b>17.311</b>
Statutory Wages and Salaries	-	-	-	-
Statutory Benefits and Allowances	17.217	17.217	15.527	17.311
Employment Cost	7.916	9.916	6.876	11.348
Wages and Salaries	7.916	9.916	6.876	11.348
Overhead Expenditure	-	-	-	-
Other Recurrent Charges	13.956	15.171	15.001	19.807
Materials, Equipment and Supplies	1.656	1.656	1.780	1.800
Fuel and Lubricants	0.034	0.034	0.048	0.124
Rental and Maintenance of Buildings	0.050	0.050	-	-
Maintenance of Infrastructure	-	-	-	-
Transport, Travel and Postage	0.595	1.764	0.814	3.120
Utility Charges	0.506	0.506	0.517	0.506
Other Goods and Services Purchased	6.268	6.268	3.329	4.400
Other Operating Expenses	1.173	1.219	3.885	5.883
Education Subventions and Training	3.674	3.674	4.628	3.974
Rates and Taxes and Subventions to Local Authority	-	-	-	-
Subsidies and Contributions to Local and International Organisation	-	-	-	-
Pensions	-	-	-	-
Internal Interest	-	-	-	-
External Interest	-	-	-	-
<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>0.485</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
Capital Expenditure	0.485	-	-	-
<b>Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Financing</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(0.000)</b>	<b>-</b>
External Loans (Net)	-	-	-	-
External Loans - Disbursements	-	-	-	-
External Loans - Principal Repayments	-	-	-	-
Internal Loans (Net)	-	-	-	-
Internal Loans - Disbursements	-	-	-	-
Internal Loans - Principal Repayments	-	-	-	-
Net Decrease/(Increase) in Cash and Bank Balances	-	-	(0.000)	-



# Recommendations

1. There should be harmonization of data collection across agencies so that it is completed in terms of sex, age range and geographical disaggregation.
2. Data on women's health access should be made available for interrogation.
3. It has been nearly thirty years since the passage of the Medical Termination of pregnancy Act, a study on the status of implementation and resulting impact should be done.
4. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Advisory Board should have statutory representation from women's organisations like the Guyana Association of Women Lawyers, The Guyana Obstetrics and Gynecology Society etc.
5. Gender responsive budgeting should be practiced by every government department
6. A CEDAW Committee should be constituted and would be responsible for monitoring the country's progress towards fulfilling the State's obligations. The network of ministerial gender focal points should sit on the committee.
7. Review of the jury pool regulation with a view to widening the pool of persons eligible to serve as jurors.
8. The mandate of the regional gender affairs committees as it relates to their role in regional governance should be dictated by statute to Regional Councils.
9. The Gender Affairs Bureau should be more robust in the implementation of gender mainstreaming protocols.
10. Steps should be taken to ensure the Health and Family Life Education syllabus is fully implemented nationally. It is still lagging in terms of a full national rollout. The Commission is concerned about the increase of social issues in schools around pregnancy, violence and bullying.
11. Rural communities must be afforded an avenue to access local content opportunities as well as government procurement processes.
12. More women should be encouraged to take up careers in STEM related fields.
13. Elder care facilities similar to the Palms should be available in each Region as people are living longer but especially women.

## Appendix 1A — Virtual Discussions

Date	Title	Speakers	Attendees
March 9, 2022	The role of social benefits in achieving gender equity	Comm. Haliema Khan, Tonni Brodber, UNWomen	62
April 20, 2022	Is food security important to achieving gender equality?	Steven Baugh, Caricom, Dr. Melissa Ifill, UG, Grace Parris, GSA	64
June 1, 2022	The future of work, what does it mean for women?	Dr. Paulette Henry, UG, Dr. Diane Glasgow, UG, Nadene Gilbert-Ramcharan, GCCI, Anjie Lambert, GCCI	62
July 20, 2022	The Constitution and women, what you should know.	Melinda Janki, Attorney, Kean Trotman, GAWL, Dorota RZYZ, IRI	36
August 17, 2022	Let's talk about sexual and reproductive health. Why is it important to Gender Equality?	Rev Patricia Sheerattan Bisnauth, CFPA, Umadai Rattan, MD, Women's Health Specialist, Sadie Amin, Rights Defender.	32

Figure 2. Several panel discussions were held for the period under review. They covered several topics of interest to the Commission and focused on various issues related to its mandate. Please visit our youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@womenandgenderequalitycomm6108>

## Appendix 1B — Attendance Report

#	Name	11/24/2021	12/15/2021	2/28/2022	3/23/2022	4/27/2022	5/25/2022	Total
1	Indranie Chandarpal	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
2	Cheryl Sampson	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
3	Shalimar Ali- Hack	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
4	Ernestine Barker- Logan	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
5	Gaiettri Baron	1	1	1	1	1	0	5
6	Gillian Burton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Renata Chuck-A-Sang	1	1	1	1	-	-	4
8	Nicole Rhonda Cole	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
9	Nandranie Coonjah	1	0	1	0	1	0	3
10	Debra Ann Henry	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
11	Sandra Hooper	0	1	1	1	1	1	5
12	Ruth Howard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	Bebbi Haliema Khan	1	1	1	0	0	1	4
14	Hymawattie Lagan	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
15	Peter Persaud	1	1	1	0	1	1	5
16	Vanda Radzik	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
17	Patricia Singh	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
18	Karen Vansluytman- Corbin	1	1	1	0	1	0	4

Figure 3. Women & Gender Equality Commission - Statutory Meeting Attendance for the past six months.

## Appendix 1C — Attendance Report

#	Name	28/2	23/3	27/4	25/5	22/6	27/7	24/8	28/9	26/10	23/11	14/12	Total
1	Indranie Chandarpal	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
2	Cheryl Sampson	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
3	Shalimar Ali- Hack	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5
4	Ernestine Barker- Logan	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	8
5	Gaietri Baron	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10
6	Gillian Burton	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	4
7	Nicole Rhonda Cole	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11
8	Nandranie Coonjah	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	4
9	Debra Ann Henry	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	4
10	Sandra Hooper	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	9
11	Bebbi Haliema Khan	1	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	7
12	Hymawattie Lagan	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
13	Peter Persaud	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	7
14	Vanda Radzik	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	7
15	Patricia Singh	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
16	Karen Vansluytman- Corbin	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	8
17	Renata Chuck-A- Sang	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11

Figure 4. Women & Gender Equality Commission - Statutory Meeting Attendance for 2022.





