

Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean



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The Situation in Guyana

March 2023¹

¹ This profile provides an overview of the legal and social context affecting persons with disabilities with the objective to support the Government and the [World Bank's commitments on Disability Inclusion](#) adopted at the Global Disability Summit in 2018, as well as the institution's Environmental and Social Framework. The profile is based on a literature review of publicly official available documents but especially based on the World Bank Regional Report '*Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development*'. This is a World Bank product co-financed by the Canada Caribbean Resilience Facility. The brief was prepared by a World Bank team led by María Elena García Mora and Naraya Carrasco that included Camilo Vargas Sosa, Melissa Zumaeta, Cristina Leria, Miguel Garza and Linda Anderson-Berry. It includes significant inputs from Sanjay Agarwal, Melike Egilmezler, María Inés García Calderón (edit) and Iván García Estébanes (design). For additional inquiries on disability inclusion in LAC, task teams, and/or country teams, through the project/country Social Development Specialists, should reach out to the regional focal point on disability inclusion in LCR, María Elena García Mora (mgarciamora@worldbank.org). For inquiries on disability inclusion globally, please contact the WB Disability Advisor Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo (cmcclainnhlapo@worldbank.org).

OPPORTUNITIES

- Continue supporting inclusive education through the Ministry of Education.
- To strengthen disaggregated data collection and targeted awareness campaigns for the participation of persons with disabilities.
- Support the Government of Guyana to establish platforms and mechanisms to include persons with disabilities at all levels of consultation and planning.
- Support the government of Guyana to participate in international and regional platforms for disability-inclusive disaster risk management to enhance the national response to climate change.

I. Objective

The objective of this note is to identify national entry points for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Guyana. This note was prepared to accompany the operationalization of the regional report '[Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean : A Path to Sustainable Development](#)'.² It will guide the Government and the World Bank to strengthen disability-inclusion at the country level. It is not an exhaustive analysis on disability-inclusion in the country.

Although the regional report establishes that the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean has progressed in the last two decades, much remains to be done to achieve their social and economic

² García Mora, María Elena, Steven Schwartz Orellana and Germán Freire. 2021. *Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

inclusion. In general, persons with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean are more likely to be poor and vulnerable, have fewer years of education, have poor labor market indicators, and are more frequent victims of discrimination, among many other gaps.

II. Persons with Disabilities at a Glance

It is estimated that around 15 percent of the global population—one billion people—are persons with disabilities.³ Approximately 750,000 of them live in the Anglophone Caribbean, (which includes Guyana), where they make up approximately 15 percent of the population.⁴

The Guyana National Population and Housing Census was conducted in 2012. Disability was included in the questionnaire and the type of disability was categorised based on function. However, response options for the cause and resulting limitations of disability differed from those recommended by the Washington Group. The official report estimated that around 3 percent of the population live with a limiting disability, but the census does not include any tabulated disability data or discussion. The report noted that disability demographic data are likely to be unreliable, and to significantly underestimate the prevalence of disability.⁵ This may be due to the respondents' understanding of the questions, and their reluctance to identify and disclose disability details due to stigma and shame. Disaggregated data are available on the official government website. A 2018 publication *The Education of Individuals with Disabilities in Guyana: An Overview*⁶ noted that about 48,519 people in Guyana—approximately 6.4 percent of the population—live with some form of disability.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has provided some disability data from the Guyana 2012 Census. Table 2 shows disability prevalence rate/1000 in the population by gender. It indicates a higher rate among females with visual disabilities and an otherwise generally even distribution.

TABLE 1. Indicators between Persons with Disabilities vs. Persons without Disabilities

	Persons with disabilities (%)	Persons without disabilities (%)
Percentage of children attending school (3–18 years old) (ECLAC 2018)	59	81
Percentage of persons aged 18–59 who have completed secondary education (ECLAC 2018)	53	76
Percentage of persons aged 15–59 that are economically active (ECLAC 2018)	31	57
Employment rate	n/a	n/a
Access to internet (ECLAC 2018)	n/a	25
Household access to cellphones	n/a	n/a

TABLE 2. Disability Prevalence in Guyana

Functional disability	Male / 1000	Female / 1000
Seeing	10	13
Hearing	4	4
Communication	4	3
Remembering or concentrating	5	5
Self-care	-	
Walking	10	10
Upper body	5	5

Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) based on the National Population and Housing Census and United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2015) World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision

In 2019, the Guyana Government Department of Public Information (DPI) commissioned a disability survey and published disability statistics—presumably derived from the 2012 census and analysed in four regions across the country.⁷

³ World Bank and WHO, "World Report on Disability," 2011, https://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/report.pdf?ua=1. This prevalence is similar to the one reported for the Latin America and Caribbean region (14.7%) in the 2021 World Bank report "Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development", see <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/36628>

⁴ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, Human Rights and Persons with Disabilities in the Anglophone Caribbean (2018).

⁵ Guyana Population and Housing Census 2012. Preliminary Report. https://statisticsguyana.gov.gy/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2012_Preliminary_Report.pdf

⁶ Cheong KA, Kellems RO, Andersen MM, Steed K (2018). The Education of Individuals With Disabilities in Guyana: An Overview. *Intervention in School and Clinic*. 2019;54(4):246-250. doi:10.1177/1053451218782435

⁷ Guyana's Department of Public Information. June 2019. *More than 11,000 persons living with Disability in Guyana*. <https://dpi.gov.gy/more-than-11000-persons-living-with-disability-in-guyana/>

Table 3 shows the findings of this survey and indicates the number of persons with disabilities in each of four regions, and the proportion of this population in each disability category.

These findings have been projected to estimate the number of persons with disabilities in the country as a whole at approximately 11,000.

TABLE 3. Disability by function as a percentage of the total population in four Regions

Category	Region 2 (Pomeroon—Supenaam)	Region 3 (Essequibo Islands— West Demerara)	Region 5 (Mahaica Berbice)	Region 10 (Upper Demerara Berbice)
	1,249 cases	3,896 cases	1,588 cases	1,718 cases
Physical / mobility disability	40.1%	33.7%	38.7%	31.5%
Hearing / speech disability	20.6%	16.9%	20.2%	16.4%
Learning / cognitive disability	7%	11.7%	8.6%	14.3%
Visual / seeing disability	23.1%	29.2%	18.6%	28.5%
Mental health	7.4%	5.4%	10.5%	6.9%
Medical, other type of disability	1.8%	3.2%	3.3%	2.4%

Source: 2019 National Commission on Disability Survey

The data show that the greatest prevalence is in physical/mobility disability followed by visual disability. Data are generally consistent across regions, with the exception of Region 5 in which the proportion of persons with hearing impairment was marginally greater. Psychosocial disability is considered; however, there is no definition of what constitutes psychosocial disability. The numbers are small but significant.

Population growth in Guyana is slowing, and at the same time, as people live longer, the proportion of elderly people in the population is increasing. Disability increases with age, and it is expected that in the future there will be an increase in both the number and proportion of persons with disabilities across the total population. Currently, 7 percent of the population is over 65 years old, and it is estimated that by 2050, 14.9 percent will be above that age.⁸

III. Poverty and Vulnerability

While no official figures on the poverty and vulnerability of persons with disabilities are available, it is known that persons with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean are more likely to live in households that are poor, and are overrepresented among the vulnerable. In LAC, about 1 in 5

people living in extreme poverty has a disability, and nearly 70 percent of households with persons with disabilities are vulnerable to falling into poverty.⁹

IV. Education

[The Persons with Disabilities Act mandates](#) that (among other things) individuals with disabilities may not be excluded from free access to the country's compulsory general education, and that training programs must be available for teachers with students who have disabilities. Guyana currently has 11 special schools. However, these are unevenly distributed across the country, with six in the Georgetown area. Some special schools only serve specific populations, and none have teachers trained in special education. Despite improvements in special education, students with disabilities still face higher rates of poverty, lack of access to schools, and teachers who are not trained to best meet their needs. Further progress towards an inclusive education system is needed.

Children and youths with disabilities in Latin America and the Caribbean have experienced significant barriers to accessing education.¹⁰ In Guyana, persons with disabilities aged between 3 and 18 are less likely to attend school than their peers

⁸ Figure Demographic pyramids for Guyana, projections 2020 and 2050. Source: <https://www.populationpyramid.net/guyana/2050/> based on Census data

⁹ García Mora, María Elena, Steven Schwartz Orellana and Germán Freire. 2021. Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development. Washington, DC: World Bank.

¹⁰ García Mora, María Elena, Steven Schwartz Orellana and Germán Freire. 2021. Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development. Washington, DC: World Bank.

without disabilities, and are, therefore, less likely to graduate from secondary school. While 81 percent of 3–18 year olds attend school, this figure drops to 59 percent for school-goers with disabilities; 76 percent of 18–59 year olds graduate from secondary school while only 53 percent of those with disabilities graduate.¹¹

V. Skills, work and labor outcomes

The Disability Act addresses the right of persons with disabilities to work without discrimination. It is designed to ensure employers provide equal opportunities regardless of physical disability, and offer equal terms and conditions. However, these provisions are not actively supported or enforced and persons with disabilities continue to face exclusion, discrimination, and barriers to meaningful employment.

Inactivity, rather than employment rates, explains the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labor market in Latin America and the Caribbean. When persons with disabilities seek employment, they tend to find work in low-skilled positions, especially in urban areas. The economic impact of having a household member with disabilities is also evident in high unemployment rates of heads of households.¹² The ECLAC (2018) report estimates that the prevalence of inactivity of persons (15–59) is 31 percent among those with disability compared to 57 percent among those without disability.

VI. Voice and Agency

Excluded groups lack voice and agency because they are denied platforms to speak, and participate in making decisions. In Guyana, the legal framework contains restrictions, or excludes persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities from voting or standing for office.

Article N° 159, paragraph 3 of the Constitution provides that “No person shall be qualified to be so registered who on the qualifying date is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in Guyana.” Additionally, article N° 155(1) of the Constitution provides: “No person shall be qualified for election as a member of the National Assembly who...(b) is a person certified to be insane or otherwise adjudged to be of unsound mind under any law in force in Guyana.”

However, Guyana expressly mandates assisted voting for persons with disabilities, including selection of an assistant of their own choosing. The Representation of the People Act of 1975, Section N° 73, subsection 1 states: “The presiding officer, on the application of any voter who is incapacitated by blindness or any other physical cause from voting in the manner prescribed by section 72 and who takes an oath in Form 21, [may] mark the ballot paper of such elector in his presence and in the manner directed by him.” But further, Section N° 73 provides in subsection N° 2 that: “The presiding officer may at the request of any elector who is incapacitated in the manner prescribed in subsection (1) and who has taken the oath in Form 22 and is accompanied by a friend, permit such friend, if he is an elector entitled to vote at the polling place, immediately after he has voted on his own behalf and notwithstanding that his finger has been immersed in electoral ink, to accompany the elector into the voting compartment and mark his ballot for him: provided that no person may mark the ballot paper of more than one elector as his friend.”

VII. Disaster Risk Management

Legislation supporting Disaster Risk Management is currently in draft form. A version for consultation was released in 2019. The draft legislation makes no specific provision for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable sectors of society.

Some of Guyana’s institutions are: 1) The Office of the Prime Minister responsible for the National Emergency Operations Centre Civil Defence Commission (CDC),¹³ 2) Under the Ministry of Agriculture, the Hydromet Department’s job is to observe, archive and understand Guyana’s weather and climate. It provides meteorological, hydrological, and oceanographic services for Guyana’s national needs and international obligations. 3) The Department of Environment has an Office of Climate Change¹⁴, and 4) the Department of Human Services and Social Protection is responsible for social inclusion in the field.

Guyana has a well organised disaster management process—based on the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) supported Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) framework—and has a Civil Defence Commission that has formed the National DRM Platform with membership and high-level representation across all DRM

¹¹ Source: ECLAC 2018 based on census 2010.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Web page: <https://cdc.gy>

¹⁴ Web page: <https://climatechange.gov.gy/en/>

stakeholders and government sectors.¹⁵ The Secretary for the National Commission for Disability represents persons with disabilities on the Platform. Operational DRM plans directly reference persons with disabilities and other marginalised and vulnerable sectors of the population. At the community level, community-based DRM Officers consult with persons with disabilities or their representatives as part of the planning process. It is interesting to note that while this is part of the official process, participation is not always facilitated—for example, sign language interpreters are not always available and meeting rooms are not always accessible. At the community level, DRM attempts to identify each person with a disability and support their specific needs for warnings. This may include such approaches as a bell crier or door knocker to deliver the messages personally.¹⁶

Official warning messages are disseminated as weather (or other hazard) alerts and come from civil defence bodies via social media or as news information. There is no official warnings system, and CAP enabled warnings have not yet been considered (although training has been provided through CDEMA and the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation (CMO)). Sign language interpretation with televised or web-based video warnings and information is rare. However, throughout the COVID-19 response, televised warnings and information have usually included sign language. There is no hazard-related information produced in Braille and there is no systematic use of Braille in signage in public buildings or public spaces.

Both formal and informal communication networks are relatively robust and effective. In townships and highly populated locations, the use and uptake of internet-enabled devices such as smart phones and tablets, and mobile phones is relatively high, and social media is accessed extensively. In more remote areas, the opposite is true, with high dependence on natural and environmental signs to understand weather patterns and determine levels of threat—*“there are some animals that live in the river, when they come out on to the banks, people know that the river will flood and go over the banks, so they move away.”*¹⁷

Emergency management—including warnings, preparation and evacuation planning—has not been a high priority in Guyana. In general, population do not consider the country to be at high risk of natural hazard impacts. Unlike other Caribbean countries, Guyana is not (currently) in the hurricane zone, and floods, droughts and tropical storms are deemed mostly minor level and manageable, and without significant humanitarian



Photo: © Thomas Vrieth | Dreamstime.com

and/or economic consequences. The major floods of 2005 were an exception.

However, evidence from semi-structured interviews suggests a high level of awareness of changing regional weather patterns. *“People are concerned about reliability of traditional knowledge and climate change when patterns are changing—particularly seasonal patterns.”* This, together with the COVID 19 pandemic—in which the death toll and disruption to the local economy and lifestyles has been severe, will likely raise the priority to pass the DRM legislation and develop a national early warning system that includes persons with disabilities and all other marginalised and vulnerable sectors.

Guyana has a national climate resilience agenda that supports inclusive adaptation to climate change. However, it seems to focus on physical and economic adaptation of agricultural

¹⁵ Government of Guyana (2021). Civil Defense Commission. <https://government.gy/agency/169>

¹⁶ Information based on interview with Community Based DRM officer Ms Mariea Harrinarine Wednesday 27 January 2021

¹⁷ Information based on interview with Community Based DRM officer Ms Mariea Harrinarine on Wednesday, 27 January 2021.

and industrial sectors rather than the social dimensions and impacts of climate change.

VIII. Legal and Policy Framework

Guyana strive for inclusion and full exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities through the following legal international instruments: 1) Guyana signed the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#) in April 2007 but did not ratify it until 2014. The Optional Protocol has not yet been signed. 2) Guyana is committed to the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) of 2015, which pledges that “no one will be left behind” and to “endeavor to reach the furthest behind first”, who are the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Disability is referenced in the SDGs and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements, and data collection and monitoring of the SDGs. Commitments and goals are being pursued through the country’s National Economic and Social Development Plan (2013–2025). 3) Guyana signed the [Paris Agreement](#) (2015) in 2016. This was ratified and entered into force later the same year. These instruments build on the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) and acknowledge that all countries, in their efforts to mitigate the risks of climate change, should respect their obligations on human rights, including “the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations.” 4) Guyana has committed to [The Sendai Framework for DRR 2015–2030](#), which recognizes persons with disabilities and their representatives as essential stakeholders in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and acknowledges the importance of disability inclusive disaster preparedness, response and recovery, and the need for accessible technology and communications. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) 2017 Data Readiness Review¹⁸ which assesses data for the indicators for the global targets of the Sendai Framework, and identifies current gaps, notes that a range of data are disaggregated by disability. This includes the number of injuries, deaths and missing persons, the number of dwellings, and the number of people whose livelihoods were disrupted or destroyed by the disasters.

At the regional level, Guyana has not signed the [Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities](#) (CIADDIS),¹⁹ which is the first

regional legal framework for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities.²⁰ Guyana has been a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) since 1973. In 1997, Heads of Government of CARICOM signed [the Charter of Civil Society](#), which addresses the rights of persons with disabilities in its Article N° 14: “Every disabled person has, in particular, the right a) not to be discriminated against on the basis of his or her disability; b) to equal opportunities in all fields of endeavor and to be allowed to develop his or her full potential; and c) to respect for his or her human dignity so as to enjoy a life as normal and full as possible.” In terms of [The Kingston Accord \(2004\)](#), as part of CARICOM, Guyana participated in the First Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Disability, where this Accord was developed. The Accord develops CARICOM’s model on disability policy and legislation, encourages best practices for services for persons with disabilities in the Caribbean, and affirms that every Caribbean citizen has the same human, civil, social, political, economic, and cultural rights. Also, Guyana signed the [Declaration of Pétion Ville \(2015\)](#), which was signed by all 15 CARICOM States to reiterate their commitments to the CRPD.

With respect to national regulation, [Guyana’s Persons with Disability Act of 2010](#) seeks to: “promote and protect the full and equal enjoyment of rights; to facilitate the enforcement of rights; to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability; provide for the welfare and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities; and to establish the National Commission on Disabilities.” The Act sets out responsibilities to provide Government services. Among them are a requirement for some sign language and sub-titling in national television by 2020; building codes for access to persons with disabilities; and access to public transport. It also includes provisions against the concealment of persons with disabilities. In addition, [The Friendly Societies Act](#) Chapter 36:04 enables and gives legal status to (among others) organisations and benevolent societies that represent and support persons with disabilities. Also, the Central Housing Authority publish and police building codes and guidelines. Guyana’s national building codes are based on The Caribbean Unified Building Code (CUBIC), which was developed by the Council of Caribbean Engineering Organisations (CCEO), because of its adoption and general acceptance within the Caribbean region. The code includes requirements for building size, occupancy, fire safety within floor areas, exit requirements, and access for persons with disabilities. Lastly, to update the **National Registry of Persons with Disabilities**, the National Disabilities Commission (NCD) is

¹⁸ https://www.preventionweb.net/files/54718_saintvincentandthegrenadinesvct.pdf

¹⁹ “Inter-American Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities,” Pub. L. No. A-65 (1999), <http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/signs/a-65.html>.

²⁰ While both the CRPD and the CIADDIS are international instruments designed to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, they differ in their respective understandings of disability. The CIADDIS merges the medical model of disability with some elements of the social model of disability.

conducting a national disability survey at the household level to produce a register of persons with disabilities. This activity started before 2020 and accelerated in response to the COVID 19 pandemic. Surveyors have noted that many people hide their disabilities and problems because of stigma, and because they are ashamed, and that these behaviours are pronounced for intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.

IX. World Bank engagement on disability inclusion in Guyana

Guyana—Education Sector Program Project (P174244): All training under the Project will include sensitization to students with disabilities. This will complement the ongoing

Guyana Education Sector Improvement Project (GESIP) which incorporates disability sensitivity training into teacher training for all school levels. The tablets used by the Project support closed caption/narration and teachers will be trained to help students use this feature. Before starting, the National Commission on Disability will be informed of the Project so their feedback can be incorporated into implementation.

The World Bank Guyana Country Engagement Note FY16–18 does not mention persons with disabilities. The World Bank Guyana Country Diagnostics 2020 (SCD)²¹ only mentions disability as one of the reasons for persons to not participate in the labor force.²²

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Relevant Figures

The regional report does not contain relevant figures for Guyana.

Annex 2. Legal framework analysis

A legal and institutional analysis of 30 countries across the Latin America and Caribbean region²³ examined the strengths and weaknesses of existing national frameworks for key issues related to the World Bank’s commitments on disability inclusion. The principal purpose of the data is to support research and policy discussions about how legal and

institutional frameworks influence the social inclusion of persons with disabilities and their meaningful participation in society. In analyzing existing national legal frameworks on disability inclusion, the principal benchmarks for the study are (a) the universally ratified Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; (b) the World Bank’s Ten Commitments to Disability-Inclusive Development; and (c) The World Bank Environmental and Social Framework and accompanying Good Practice Note on Disability. There is insufficient information for an in-depth analysis of the legal and institutional framework, but existing protections are described in section VIII above and in the Table below.

²¹ The Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) is a report produced by the World Bank for a partner country (usually every five years). It determines how a country can end poverty and boost shared prosperity, and the challenges that stand in the way of those twin goals. Source: <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/collections/51faed2a-0a03-5122-8e91-7d9e28a0a3f6>

²² Guyana had a Country Engagement Note FY16–18 and the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) is in preparation covering FY23–26, with World Bank Board discussion scheduled for May, 2023. The World Bank Group’s CPF is based on a comprehensive analysis of the country’s development challenges, and consultations with the government, private sector, civil society and development partners. It outlines key objectives and development results through which the World Bank Group intends to support the Government’s efforts to advance social and economic development.

²³ García Mora, María Elena, Steven Schwartz Orellana and Germán Freire. 2021. *Disability Inclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Path to Sustainable Development*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Guyana (GY)	
1. Principle of non-discrimination. Does the legal framework...?	
1.1	Recognize the principle of non-discrimination on the basis of disability? Yes
1.2	Recognize the duty to provide reasonable accommodation as an element of non-discrimination? No
1.3	Apply to private enterprises/companies? No
1.4	Include physical, mental, intellectual and sensory impairments? Partial
1.5	Devote specific protection to women/girls with disabilities? No
1.6	Devote specific protection to children with disabilities? Partial
1.7	Devote specific protection to older persons with disabilities? No
1.8	Devote specific protection to indigenous persons with disabilities? No
1.9	Cover direct and indirect discrimination? Yes
1.10	Provide for measures to prevent, eliminate or compensate any form of discrimination on the basis of disability? Yes
Does the Constitution...?	
1.11	Expressly prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability? No
1.12	Include protections for persons with disabilities among provisions on fundamental rights? No
1.13	Reflect a social model orientation of disability? No
2. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society. Does the legal framework...?	
2.1	Recognize the effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis? No
2.2	Provide equal opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural spheres? No
2.3	Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to be actively involved in decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities? Yes/Partial
2.4	Recognize the equal capacity before the law of persons with disabilities? No
2.5	Promote training of public servants on the rights of persons with disabilities? No
3. Accessibility. Does the legal framework...?	
3.1	Recognize the principle of universal access? No/Partial
3.2	Recognize access to communication? No
3.3	Is sign language recognized as an official national language or otherwise given official recognition? No
3.4 Access to physical environment and transportation	
3.4.1	Mandate universal access for public buildings and other public facilities (private/government offices) including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces; and including accessibility standards for public buildings? Yes
3.4.2	Mandate universal access to transport infrastructure and services? Yes
3.4.3	Provide for subsidized access to transport? No
3.4.4	Mandate reasonable accommodation to access services for the public? No
3.5 Access to Information	
3.5.1	Mandate public information for persons with disabilities in accessible formats and technologies without additional cost? (including Braille, tactile communication, audio, plain-language, human-reader, augmented modes, etc.) No
3.5.2	Allow for the use of alternative modes of communication and other accessible means for official interactions (i.e. use of sign languages, Braille, etc.)? No

	Guyana (GY)
3.5.3 Mandate accessibility of information and technology including electronic services?	No
3.5.4 Provide accessibility standards for audio-visual media?	Partial
1. Education. Does the legal framework...?	
1.1 Expressly recognize the principle of an inclusive education system and articulate the aims of inclusive education?	No
1.2 Prohibit the exclusion of persons with disabilities from the general education system?	Yes
1.3 Cover all levels of education for persons with disabilities?	Partial
1.4 Ensure access of persons with disabilities to the general education system?	Yes
1.5 Include reasonable accommodation based on individual student's requirements?	Partial
1.6 Plan for persons with disabilities to receive support and individualized support within the general education system?	Partial
2. Health. Does the legal framework...?	
2.1 Provide persons with disabilities with health services of the same quality and standard of free or affordable health care as provided to other persons?	Yes
2.2 Provide for access to reproductive health to persons with disabilities?	No
2.3 Provide health services needed by persons with disabilities specifically to minimize and prevent secondary disabilities?	Yes
2.4 Mandate the creation of funds/public programs for rehabilitation services?	Yes
2.5 Recognize free and informed consent of persons with disabilities and establish ethical standards for the provision of public and private health care?	No
3. Work and Employment. Does the legal framework...?	
3.1 Prohibit discrimination in the workplace, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, and provide safe and healthy working conditions?	Yes
3.2 Mandate the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector?	No
3.3 Establish a quota system for the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector?	No
3.4 Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures which may include affirmative action programs, incentives and other measures?	Partial
3.5 Mandate reasonable accommodation in the workplace?	No
4. Participation in political and public life. Does the legal framework...?	
4.1 Contain restrictions or exclusions on the right to vote for persons with disabilities, such as an exclusion based on legal capacity?	Yes
4.2 Persons with disabilities might be denied the right to stand for office on account of discriminatory qualification criteria excluding them.	Yes
4.3 Guarantee equal and effective access to voting procedures, facilities and materials in order for persons with disabilities to exercise their right to vote, including reasonable accommodations and other measures for accessibility?	No
4.4 Include representation of persons with disabilities in the legislature by way of quotas or other positive measures?	No
4.5 Expressly mandate assisted voting for persons with disabilities, including selection of an assistant of their own choosing?	Yes
4.6 Provide for voting for persons who are in long-term institutions or home-bound?	No
4.7 Include accessibility standards for the internet?	No
4.8 Accessibility standards for polling stations?	No

Guyana (GY)	
5. Social Protection. Does the legal framework...?	
5.1 Recognize disability-related expenses in social protection programs?	No
5.2 Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to access public housing programs?	Partial
5.3 Prohibit discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services?	No
6. Protection in situation of risk. Does the legal framework...?	
6.1 Work towards the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk/emergency including armed conflict, public health emergencies, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters?	No
1. National Monitoring	
1.1 Does the State have focal points within Government from which to implement the Convention?	Yes
1.2 Does the State coordinate within Government to facilitate related actions in different sectors and at different levels?	No
2. Establish an independent monitoring	
2.1 Does the State have a framework with independent mechanisms to implement and monitor the Convention?	Yes
2.2 Does the designated framework meet the requirements of independence?	No
3. Participation in monitoring	
3.1 Has the State taken measures to involve civil society?	Yes
3.2 Has the State taken measures to involve persons with disabilities?	Yes
3.3 Has the State taken measures to include gender perspectives?	No
3.4 Has the State taken measures to allow those with disabilities to participate in public matters affecting them?	Yes
3.5 Has the state taken measures for participation in the monitoring process and the preparation of the State report?	No

Annex 3. Stakeholder mapping²⁴

There is a range of government bodies and disability support organisations in Guyana that aim to provide practical support to meet the day-to-day needs of persons with disabilities. The National Commission on Disabilities (NCD) maintains a register of these organisations. All are close to and trusted by their communities, but most are under-funded and depend on the commitment and enthusiasm of dedicated staff and volunteers to support their services. The bodies which advocate most strongly for persons with disabilities are the Guyana Council of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities (GCOPD) and The National Commission on Disability (NCD). Both entities are well organised, have strong relationships with government, and are well placed to influence policy. However, neither organisation appears to be meaningfully consulted or included in the early phases of planning and policy development, or policy implementation.

- [Guyana Council of Organizations for Persons with Disabilities \(GCOPD\)](#): The umbrella body that represents most organizations for persons with disabilities (OPD's) in Guyana, working in advocacy and capacity building, and with all types of disabilities.
- [The National Commission on Disability \(NCD\)](#) was created by an Act of Parliament and is accountable to the President of Guyana. It comprises 12 members selected by agencies and organizations, and appointed by Cabinet. Its primary role is to change policies and police laws protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The secretary of the NCD represents the interests of persons with disabilities at the National DRM Platform.
- [The Guyana Community Based Rehabilitation \(GCBR\) Program](#) aims to promote community involvement and help persons with disabilities and their families to meet their own needs within local communities. The GCBR

²⁴ This is a living document that is constantly being updated. Therefore, the list of stakeholders may change from time to time. Following appropriate accessibility features (sign interpretation, closed caption) is key to ensure that persons with disabilities can efficiently and openly participate in meetings and consultations.

Program works with persons with disabilities in four main areas: vision, hearing and speech, movement, and learning; it seeks to develop the self-esteem and self-reliance of persons with disabilities, and help them to integrate into mainstream society. It also trains volunteers to work with persons with disabilities and their families.

- **Guyana Society for the Blind—(GSB)** seeks to empower blind persons. It provides one-to-one training in which persons are matched with other persons with disabilities so they can learn these skills from those who would have already gained experience.
- **Guyana Association for the Visually Impaired:** The primary focus of the association is the preservation of sight, the prevention of blindness, advocacy, and empowerment of persons with blindness and visual disabilities through education and training. The association promotes and teaches reading and writing in Braille.
- **The National Commission on Disability (NCD)** is appointed by and accountable to the President of Guyana. It was officially launched in 1997 and is now governed by the Persons with Disability Act 2010. It has 12 members selected by agencies and organizations and appointed by Cabinet. The NCD coordinates a multi-sectoral approach to help persons with disabilities live full and productive lives, influence policies, police laws protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, and provide information on disability issues in Guyana. The Office of the Prime Minister is responsible to see that existing and developing policies and legislation complement the 2014 Disabilities Act.
- **The Caribbean Development Bank:** The Caribbean Development Bank has launched the Disability Assessment Project (2018) to develop evidence-based projects and services to mainstream disability in the region. The project seeks to provide robust disability data in social, economic, and political domains; examine the differential impacts of disability and its intersection with other vulnerabilities associated with sex, age cohort (children, youth, elderly and working age), ethnicity, and race (as relevant); identify constraints and enablers to equal participation of persons with disabilities compared those without in growth sectors of the formal and informal economy; and examine vulnerabilities to natural disasters, economic shocks and climate change.

Annex 4. Glossary—Empower with words

- Language used on disability varies across countries and cultures. In a country context, it is useful to ask persons with disabilities which words and phrases they prefer. It is also important to find out whether an individual is willing to disclose their disability. When describing an individual, do not reference his or her disability unless it is clearly pertinent to the issue or story.
- It is recommended to use ‘person-first language’, which puts the person before his or her impairment (a person who uses a wheelchair, a person with visual impairment) which is in line with the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).
- The use of terms such as “handicapped”, “a person suffering from...”, “mentally retarded”, “able-bodied/normal”, “the disabled”, “the blind”, “paraplegic”, “wheelchair-bound” are not recommended. Disability is not an illness and hence it is important to refrain from using terms such as healthy versus sick.

The following brief glossary provides guidelines to portray individuals with disabilities in a respectful and balanced way with language that is neutral:

- Person(s) with disabilities
- Person who is blind/ or person with visual disabilities
- Person who is deaf/ person who is deaf or hard of hearing/ person with hearing disabilities: Many people in the Deaf community prefer the use of a lowercase “d” to refer to audiological status and the use of a capital “D” when referring to the culture and community of Deaf people.
- Person who is deaf/blind
- Person with mobility/physical disabilities
- Person using a wheelchair/a wheelchair user
- Person with intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Person with albinism
- Person with short stature or little person
- Person with psychosocial disabilities
- Person with Down syndrome
- Organization of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)
- Assistive devices (white cane, hearing aid, wheelchair, tricycle).