

Guyana and the IDB Group

# Partnering for Resilience



Copyright © 2024 Inter-American Development Bank ("IDB").

This work is subject to a Creative Commons license CC BY 3.0 IGO  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/igo/>)

The terms and conditions indicated in the URL link must be met and the respective recognition must be granted to the IDB.

Further to section 8 of the above license, any mediation relating to disputes arising under such license shall be conducted in accordance with the WIPO Mediation Rules. Any dispute related to the use of the works of the IDB that cannot be settled amicably shall be submitted to arbitration pursuant to the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) rules. The use of the IDB's name for any purpose other than for attribution, and the use of IDB's logo shall be subject to a separate written license agreement between the IDB and the user and is not authorized as part of this license.

Note that the URL link includes terms and conditions that are an integral part of this license.

The opinions expressed in this work are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Inter-American Development Bank, its Board of Directors, or the countries they represent.



# Message from His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana



Guyana is currently on a rapidly transformative development path. This accelerated development trajectory is supported by the recent discovery of large offshore oil and gas reserves and complemented by our richly endowed fertile agricultural lands, valuable mineral resources including bauxite, gold

and extensive pristine rain forest that covers 80 percent of our country, all underpinned by our visionary Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). Our development agenda is people focused with its singular main objective being the delivery of improved quality of life to all Guyanese in a manner that is sustainable into the long term.

Over the last few years, Guyana has experienced consistent high growth due to the deliberate economic policy choices we have made, and, on this basis, we are expected to remain one of the fastest growing economies, with double-digit growth rates expected in 2024 and beyond.

My government is committed to fostering and maintaining democracy, uniting our country, and undertaking a holistic development agenda to accelerate development for the benefit of all Guyanese. Within the first three years of being in office, we have demonstrated our commitment to these objectives by holding local government elections, launching a national initiative “One Guyana” that champions the cooperation and unification of the population in an era of unprecedented prosperity, making tremendous strides in increasing connectivity and closing the infrastructure gap, diversifying the energy mix with increased use of renewable energy, and accelerating the use of digital solutions to strengthen institutions, while supporting advancements in the health, education and social services.

Concurrently, we are strengthening institutions across the public sector to further increase efficiency and effectiveness and improve policies to enhance competitiveness. Strong new institutions are also being established, such as under the Natural Resources Fund Act, which governs the management of the oil revenues, use of funds for economic

development, and allows for savings for future generations. Additionally, a modern Local Content Act has been brought into law to give priority to Guyanese nationals and companies to benefit from the procurement of goods and services in the burgeoning oil sector. On the climate front, Guyana recently updated its LCDS to 2030 which outlines substantial measures to support green and resilient growth, including continued protection for our standing forests and investments in renewable energy sources, such as hydropower, solar energy, and the new gas to energy project, all of which are expected to advance the transition to cleaner sources of energy and reduce the cost of electricity by 50 percent by the end of 2025. Further, we have successfully negotiated the first ever sale of carbon credits from our standing forests resulting in US\$750 million of revenues, which is being used to fund development projects for our indigenous people and support climate adaptation efforts across the country.

Guyana continues to provide regional and global leadership, particularly in the crucial areas of food, climate, and energy security. Guyana chairs CARICOM Food Security committee, whose objective is to reduce the food import bill by 25 percent by 2025. On this front, my government is committed to working with our regional neighbours to increase food availability and food access through increased agricultural production and enhanced connectivity via trade partnerships. The building of a central food hub in Guyana, as well as the support linkages with Brazil and Suriname and the introduction of a regional ferry service initially amongst Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados are just a few actions that will help realise this goal.

On our part, these efforts are first and foremost aimed at improving the wellbeing of the Guyanese people, but they also align perfectly with the hemispheric development mandate of the IDB.

As we celebrate 47 years of partnership between the Bank and the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, we expect to continue this vibrant collaboration and friendship with the IDB Group. We acknowledge the role of the IDB’s management and staff over the years in fostering this partnership. We count on the Bank’s continued support as we chart a new and exciting path of development for our One Guyana.



# Message from Ilan Goldfajn President of the Inter-American Development Bank



Guyana's prospects are gaining international attention as the country continues to see record growth, with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) nearly quadrupling since 2019.

At the Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDB Group), we are looking forward to con-

tinuing to partner with Guyana to help seize this excellent momentum towards future sustainable and equitable growth.

The IDB Group has a long history of collaboration with Guyana to improve the well-being and opportunities of its people, dating back to our first operation in 1977. We worked together through multiple shocks, including the debt crises of the 1980s and 1990s, structural reforms in the 2000s, recovery from subsequent natural disasters that wiped out large swaths of its GDP, and ongoing social and institutional strengthening.

The IDB is one of Guyana's most trusted partners, investing nearly four billion US dollars of resources in close to four hundred operations-including grants and loans-since Guyana joined the IDB. This includes expanding access to social services and markets through infrastructure, boosting healthcare and nutrition, enhancing connectivity, gradually improving energy delivery, modernising public financial management, and strengthening the financial sector.

Guyana distinguished itself among emerging nations as one of the early few that pushed for sustainable development with the launch of its Low Carbon Development Strategy back in 2009.

Today, Guyana has updated its Low Carbon Development Strategy and has made it a central part of its economic development model. It is within this context that we collaborate with Guyana today.

With Guyana's booming private sector, IDB Invest is a strategic partner to help build capacity for companies to innovate and thrive. Of the current US\$173 million in approvals since 2020, US\$108 million alone were done in 2023. To complement this work, IDB Lab continues to support growing the local ecosystem for innovation and nature-based solutions, as well as gender diversity.

More recently, the IDB has partnered with Guyana and other regional countries to launch our ONE Caribbean Program an approach to adopt regional solutions to overcome challenges and embrace opportunities in Guyana and in the Caribbean.

Throughout our long-standing collaboration, Guyana remained committed to its development goals, particularly to fostering a resilient and sustainable economy. The stories in this publication, Partnering for Resilience, underscore the country's determined efforts to overcome challenges and adapt to changing times. The publication also brings alive the diverse voices and experiences of the Guyanese people in communities across the country, from indigenous mothers in the Rupununi region to national policy planners in key sectors.

The journey towards resilience is never a straightforward one. It requires continuous adaptation, innovation, and collaboration. However, it is a journey that Guyana has been undertaking for decades and is well-equipped to continue. We look forward to continuing to work together with Guyana in this journey to foster a sustainable, resilient and prosperous future for Guyana.



# Message from the Honourable Dr. Ashni Singh Senior Minister in the Office of the President with Responsibility for Finance and the Public Service



Guyana has found a dependable, relevant, and responsive development partner in the Bank for the past 47 years. This relationship has evolved since our membership from concessional lending during periods of challenging economic circumstances to our present reality of being amongst the

fastest growing economies in the world. The Bank has remained steadfast in its support to Guyana's development agenda and has managed to retain its position as Guyana's largest multilateral lender and main source of external financing.

Throughout the years, the Bank has provided more than US\$2.03 billion in sovereign loans, US\$112 million in technical cooperations and US\$145 million in investment grants to support development projects across Guyana. IDB Invest has approved over US\$168.3 million in loans to the private sector with an exponential increase expected in the coming years based on the development trajectory of the country.

Some of the key areas of interventions in recent years include support to energy, water and sanitation, infrastructure, housing, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Support in the energy sector contributed to the rehabilitation of the electricity distribution network across the country, reduction of electricity losses, and diversification of the energy matrix with renewable energy solutions. In the area of water and sanitation, this support has improved efficiency, quality, and sustainability of potable water services and sanitation infrastructure. Infrastructure support included improving drainage and irrigation systems, agricultural implements for farmers, widening transport corridors, and building safe and climate-resilient roadways along critical corridors such as the Sheriff Street-Mandela roadway. In the housing sector, the Bank's contribution supported infrastructure development of housing communities and making available affordable housing solutions to our population. In justice reform, this collaboration has enhanced and modernize the criminal justice system consistent with international best practices. More recently, the Bank's timely support to mitigate

the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, allowed Guyana to be amongst the first countries to re-open its border and economy.

Government acknowledges the Bank's increased investment in our private sector in recent years which supported agribusiness, sustainable tourism, financial market intermediation, manufacturing, and transport infrastructure. We look forward to the upcoming re-capitalisation of IDB Invest having a larger footprint and providing innovative financial products such as equity and quasi equity financing to our private sector. Equally, the support of IDB Lab in the areas of education, environment, and support to SMEs is notable and we look forward to an increased presence in these and other areas in keeping with its new capitalisation mandate to foster innovation.

In the new Country Strategy with the IDB Group for 2023-2026, we are focused on building resilient transport infrastructure, delivery of key services to the population in health, education and the social sectors while strengthening institutional capacity across key government agencies in keeping with our development agenda. This new strategy will allow us to leapfrog our development, that is, moving from historically broad-based support in multiple sectors to a more focused approach in key areas with high levels of investment to effectively close the infrastructure and human capital development gaps. This support will contribute to the Government's effort in making strategic investments to build a strong resilient non-oil economy, empowering our human capital while strengthening institutions to be more responsive to our new economic reality. This also presents the Bank with a unique opportunity to build on its existing presence and operations in Guyana while increasing its private sector support to contribute to more jobs, higher income, and improved standards of living.

I commend the responsiveness of the Bank in addressing some of Guyana's most pressing challenges, including support during the COVID-19 pandemic, enhancing competitiveness, diversifying the economy and efforts to combat the effects of climate change while promoting sustainable development.

Guyana continues to count on the Bank's support to advance our development agenda as we confront new and emerging challenges.

# Message from Anton Edmunds

## General Manager of IDB Caribbean Country Department



Over the past four and a half decades, the collaboration between Guyana and the IDB Group has catalyzed innovation and transformation in many areas, including in infrastructure, the social sector, institutional capacity building and fiscal management.

Dedicated teams at the Country Office and within executing agencies have played an important role in partnering with Government ministries and agencies to shape some of the success stories that are clearly visible today across the country.

With recent dialogues highlighting the need for a more integrated approach to addressing the unique issues facing the Caribbean, we at the IDB Group are responding with new initiatives such as ONE Caribbean, which seeks to take a regional approach to address some key and shared challenges. ONE Caribbean seeks to foster stronger collaboration and

synergy between IDB Group member states and within the IDB Group itself. The IDB Group comprises the IDB, IDB Invest and IDB Lab, which positively impact the region, working with governments, the private sector, and innovative entrepreneurs respectively. The IDB Group is especially well positioned to be a leader on climate adaptation and resilience, citizen and business security, sustainable development through private sector engagement, and food security – identified priority areas.

With the success of any partnership dependent on a shared vision and commitment to implementation, I am confident that as we look towards the future, our partnership with Guyana as well as other members of our Caribbean constituency, will see us as a collective, develop and deploy the solutions needed to improve the lives of our people. Guyana as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, is well positioned to play an important leadership role in advancing a regional development agenda even as it delivers on its own national interests.

The future of Guyana is bright, and we look forward to continuing to play a productive role in advancing the country's sustainable development agenda.

## Message from Lorena Solorzano Salazar IDB Guyana Representative



The IDB Group and Guyana have shared a strong development partnership for almost half a century. Reflecting on this collaboration, we extend our congratulations to the government and the people of Guyana for their vision and resolute efforts.

They have pioneered innovative solutions to their challenges, maximizing opportunities for resilient growth and sustainable development.

The country has evolved considerably overtime and at the Bank, we are honoured to be part of this alliance and remarkable journey. Today, we are experiencing a new Guyana. On the macro level Guyana continues to surpass expectations. The country grew by 62 percent in 2022, the highest growth rate in the world. It is expected to grow by an average of 25 percent per year over the next four years from 2023. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to generate development gains that the country needs, including sustainability and improve peoples' lives. The IDB is a key partner in this endeavor.

Through our ongoing dialogue, the government requested IDB's support in resilient infrastructure, human capital development, and strengthening institutional capacity.

Guyana aspires to leapfrog to higher levels of development, creating economic opportunities for all Guyanese to thrive. With this unpre-

cedented growth, the country graduated from concessional status in 2020, allowing us to expand our lending framework four times.

All our pipeline projects incorporate cross-cutting themes such as climate change, and gender and diversity. These will be integral to the design of future projects.

As Guyana's main development partner, the IDB Group has supported the country in addressing its sectoral priorities. During the previous Country Strategy with Guyana for 2017 to 2022, we approved US\$460.2 million dollars in public sector lending. During that period, our support was focused in the areas of public sector, social sector, and infrastructure. On the private sector side, we made significant progress. For the first time since 2008, IDB Invest approved several operations for US\$65 million through 2022 and US\$108 million in 2023 alone.

Under our new Country Strategy for 2023 to 2026, the IDB Group will continue to walk hand in hand with Guyana in a new development path. Our focus is not only on growing the economy but also on achieving lasting developmental impact considering Guyana's opportunities and the government's objectives for accelerating development.

Together, we will continue to partner with the government, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure interventions are meaningful, impactful, and contribute to improving the quality of public services and ultimately, people's lives. Our overarching goal is to foster sustainable and inclusive economic growth for all Guyanese.





Supporting Success in Education for Vulnerable Children through  
STEMGuyana Learning Pods Project.



# 1. Introduction

The Inter-American Development Bank Group (IDB Group) is the leading source of development financing for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Group contributes to improving lives by providing financial solutions and development expertise to public- and private-sector clients. The Group comprises the IDB, which has worked with governments for more than 60 years; IDB Invest, which serves the private sector; and IDB Lab, which tests innovative ways to enable more inclusive growth.

The longstanding collaboration between the Government of Guyana and the IDB Group began on November 16, 1976, when Guyana became a member of the IDB (IDB Annual Report, 1976). The relationship has evolved significantly over time, spanning key sectors from its inception with agricultural support to social, economic and fiscal consolidation and different evolving financial conditions from concessional financing to ordinary capital today; the Bank's predominant source of financing. The main driver of the most recent developments has been the oil boom, which completely changed Guyana and the way the IDB works in Guyana.

The economy has grown by more than three times in 2023 since 2019 (Budget Speech, 2024). The current context represents a unique opportunity for the IDB Group to support the transformation of the economy and improve people's lives, which includes providing significantly higher levels of lending to the public sector and the growing private sector.



IDB President Ilan Goldfajn (*at right*) and President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali.



## 2. Evolution of the Partnership



Bartica Solar Farm: Diversifying the Energy Matrix in the Hinterland.



## 2. Evolution of the Partnership

The first IDB project in Guyana, approved in December 1977, was a US\$49.5 million loan for the Abari Water Control Project to support farm irrigation and drainage. The project demonstrated the kind of impact IDB projects aim to have. To date, total approvals to Guyana amounted to US\$2.03 billion, of which 70 percent were concessional ordinary capital loans, including 23 percent from the Fund for Special Operations (FSO), the Bank's original concessional lending window. Furthermore, since 1977, US\$112 million were approved in technical cooperations and US\$145 million in investment grants. A clear signal of the change in the Bank's more than 47-year relationship with Guyana is that of total loan approvals, 23 percent were approved over the last Country Strategy period between 2017 and 2022, increasing to 29 percent if 2023 is included.

Figure 1 reflects these dynamics and the higher level of recent approvals. Between 2010 and 2020,

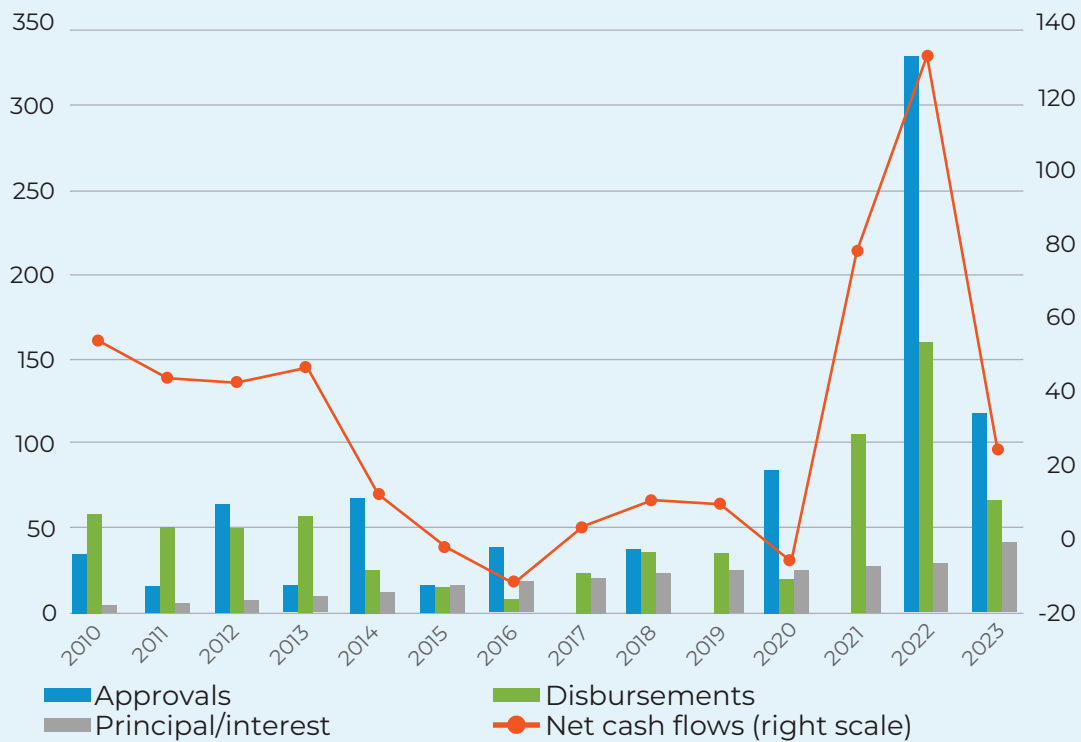
the average level of annual IDB approvals for development projects in Guyana was US\$35 million. The last year of concessional approvals was in 2020, when US\$86.4 million was approved corresponding to the 2019–2020 biennial. At that time, Guyana was already at the last stage of concessional borrowing, since the blend at the time was 70/30, that is, 70 percent ordinary capital and 30 percent concessional ordinary capital. Between 2021 and 2023, average annual approvals increased to US\$152 million, more than four times the annual approvals of the previous decade.

Similarly, disbursements to and principal /interest repayments from the Government of Guyana have also evolved. Between 2010 and 2013, disbursement levels were very high, averaging US\$55 million per year, while for the entire decade from 2010 up to graduation from concessional resources in 2020 disbursements averaged US\$35.5 million per year.



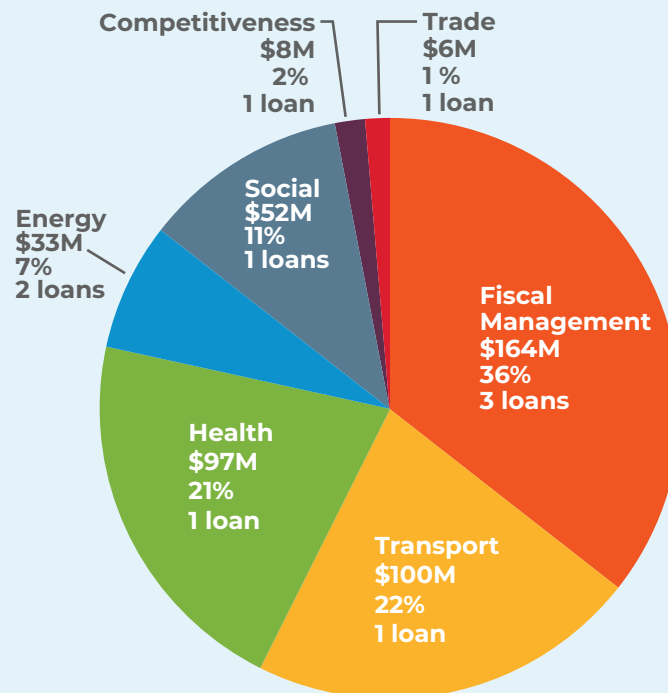
Former IDB President Luis Alberto Moreno (at left) and former President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana Dr. Bharrat Jagdeo at a meeting during the mid 2000s.

**Figure 1. Key IDB Operation Metrics in Guyana, 2010–2023 (Millions of US dollars)**



Source: IDB Portfolio Summary.

**Figure 2. Total IDB Approvals for Operations in Guyana by Sector, 2017–2022, US\$ Millions**



Source: IDB Portfolio Summary.

## 2. Evolution of the Partnership

Disbursements then averaged US\$112.7 million over 2021–2023. The recent higher levels of disbursements are expected to contribute significantly to Guyana’s economic development. Principal repayments increased from an average of US\$8.3 million per year over 2010–2020 to US\$18.3 million over 2021–2023, while interest payments increased from US\$8 million per year to an average of US\$15.2 million over the same period. Since disbursements were usually larger than principal/interest repayments, net cash flows were mainly inflows during that period. Net cash inflows from the IDB averaged US\$19.2 million over 2010–2020, including 2016, when there was a net cash outflow of US\$10.8 million. Net cash inflows boomed in 2021, reaching US\$132.8 million. Between 2021 and 2023, net cash inflows averaged US\$79.1 million per year (Figure 1 and Table 1).

The IDB has operated in several sectors in Guyana over the last six years, with the main areas of support in lending volume being fiscal management, transport, and health (Figure 2). During the previous 2017–2022 Country Strategy (extended through November 2023), a total of 10 projects were approved for US\$460.2 million. These included three loans supporting the government’s COVID-19 pandemic response for US\$86.4 million (fiscal management, social sector, and a contingent credit facility).

In 2022, the IDB approved the largest policy-based loan ever in Guyana for US\$130 million to support fiscal management and governance. Other large loans have included US\$100 million to the transport sector and US\$97 million to the health sector, both in 2022. Projects supporting economic diversification included the energy sector supporting renewable energy and transmission for US\$32.8 million, the competitiveness and innovation sector for US\$8 million, and the trade sector for US\$6 million. The two competitiveness and trade loans supported the development of the National Quality Infrastructure Program of the Guyana National Bureau of Standards, and the Electronic Single Window, respectively. In October 2023, the IDB approved a US\$90 million loan to Support Educational Recovery and Transformation in Guyana to strengthen the country’s human capital development. The loan is designed to expand access to safe and improved learning environments and enhance educational services for vulnerable students. The education loan is the first individual operation under the IDB’s Conditional Credit Line for Investment Projects (CCLIP) totaling US\$150 million for education.

**Table 1. The IDB and Guyana: Net Cash Flows and Components, 2010–2023 (Millions of US dollars)**

	Disbursements	Principal Repayment	Interest/Fees	Net Cash Flows
2010	60.2	1.4	4.0	54.7
2011	51.6	2.1	4.8	44.7
2012	51.4	2.5	5.3	43.6
2013	58.4	4.5	6.4	47.6
2014	26.3	5.3	7.4	13.6
2015	14.7	8.1	8.4	-1.8
2016	8.6	10.0	9.4	-10.8
2017	25.1	12.0	9.6	3.6
2018	36.1	14.5	10.6	11.0
2019	36.3	15.0	11.2	10.1
2020	21.8	16.0	11.3	-5.4
2021	108.3	17.7	11.1	79.4
2022	162.8	18.2	11.9	132.8
2023	66.9	19.0	22.7	25.2

Source: IDB.



# Summary of Key Outcomes of the Partnership



Over 320 new houses were constructed in hinterland communities.

- Reduced the homicide rate in target communities by almost half and increased the reporting of domestic violence cases which has resulted in safer communities.
- Supported 50,000 households that suffered from COVID-19 in Guyana by delivering electricity credits, cash transfers to sustain minimum levels of household income, and support for mostly women survivors of gender-based violence in the country who now benefit from the implementation of the Survivors Advocates Program.
- Major impact to urban vehicular mobility and safety in Georgetown by reducing vehicle operating costs, travel times, and road fatalities through the rehabilitation of a 7.1-kilometer-long major urban thoroughfare that connects critical parts of the city.
- Residents of greater Georgetown area (Regions 3 and 4) benefited directly from 374 housing improvement subsidies, 74 new homes, and a new community center delivered to citizens in the program, along with improved community roads, drains, and concrete sidewalks within these housing areas.

- More than 150 communities now access upgraded utility services with rehabilitation of the electricity distribution network that has contributed to reducing electricity losses and improving safety and reliability of the system.
- Providing renewable source of energy to the citizens of Bartica, Lethem, and Mahdia with new generation of 3.5 megawatt (MW) solar photovoltaic farms.
- Expectant mothers and neonates post-delivery in Regions 3, 4, and 9 directly impacted by Maternal and Neonatal health program via new healthcare infrastructure and service delivery, led by direct community-based involvement.
- Targeted communities in the Hinterland regions benefited from adequate housing, potable water and sanitation. Over 320 new houses with rainwater harvesting facilities and sanitation solutions were constructed thereby reducing deficits in access to water and sanitation by 55 and 88 percent, respectively.
- Impacted quality of life of 53,691 households, by improving water quality, continuity (24/7), and water pressure, and 1,200 individuals benefited from improved environmental and health impacts from the construction of 298 new septic tanks.



A new community center delivered to citizens in Sophia, Greater Georgetown.

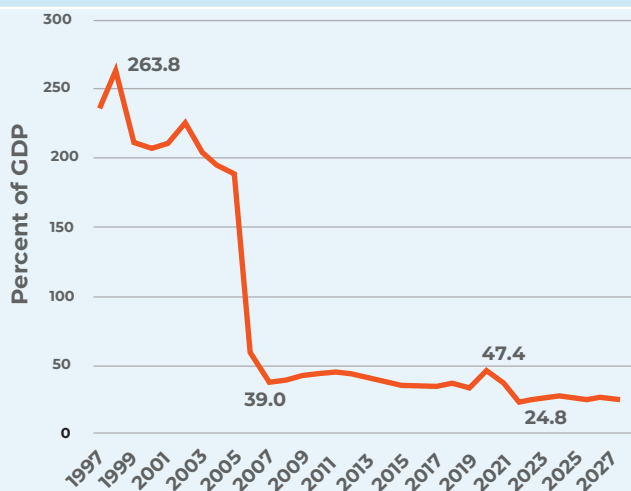
# 2.1 The IDB's Support to Guyana Debt Restructuring – the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative

Guyana's history of public debt has evolved from being vulnerable to unsustainable levels of public debt in the late 1980s to the current context of sustainable debt levels and declining debt-to-GDP ratios on the back of booming GDP growth. The unsustainable debt levels, which began climbing in the 1980s, significantly burdened public finance (Guyana's Debt Problem, 1987). External public debt as a share of GDP was reported to be as high as 585 percent of GDP in 1991, falling to 219 percent of GDP in 1996 (Ministry of Finance). External debt levels reached US\$2 billion in 1993 (IMF Country Report, 1998). In 1996, Guyana benefitted from significant debt relief by participating in the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and later the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI), which were both implemented by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. The HIPC Initiative began in 1996 to support low-income countries with unsustainable debt burdens, followed by the MDRI in 2005. In 1999, the IMF announced Guyana had met the requirements to

receive US\$410 million in debt relief. In 2007, the IDB provided debt relief for US\$356.5 million. Paris Club creditors also provided debt relief in the amount of approximately US\$793 million between 1996 and 2004 (Ministry of Finance).

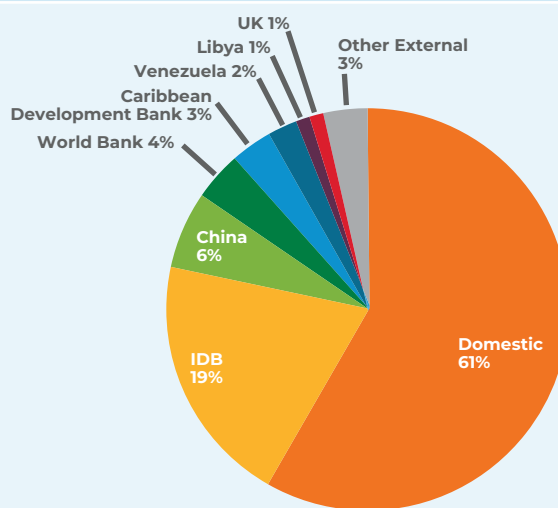
Total debt relief for Guyana by 2019 amounted to US\$2.1 billion, including US\$1.2 billion from Paris Club, HIPC and other debt relief initiatives as well as US\$827 million from the MDRI (IMF 2016, Ministry of Finance). These programs contributed to lowering Guyana's debt-to-GDP ratio from 264 percent in 1998 to 39 percent in 2007, then averaging 40 percent over 2007–2020 (Figure 3). After Guyana's oil-driven GDP boom started in 2020, the debt-to-GDP ratio declined further to 25 percent in 2022 and is projected to remain stable through 2028. The largest external creditors are the IDB, China, and the World Bank (International Development Association), which account for 19 percent, 6 percent, and 4 percent of total debt, respectively (Figure 4).

**Figure 3. Guyana: Public Sector Debt, 1997–2027 (Percent of GDP)**



Source: Ministry of Finance, IMF World Economic Outlook, October 2023.

**Figure 4. Guyana: Share of Public Debt by Major Creditor, December 2023 (Percent)**



Source: Budget Seech 2024, Ministry of Finance.

International Monetary Fund (IMF). 1998. Country Report No. 98/13. Washington, DC: IMF (April).  
 IMF, 1999, "Guyana to Receive Over US\$400 Million in Debt Relief," Press Release (April 14), available at: [www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/14/01/49/pr9917](http://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/14/01/49/pr9917)  
 IDB, 2007, "IDB Governors Approve \$4.4 Billion in Debt Relief for Bolivia, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua," Press Release (March 16), available at [www.iadb.org/en/news/idb-governors-approve-44-billion-debt-relief-bolivia-guyana-haiti-honduras-and-nicaragua](http://www.iadb.org/en/news/idb-governors-approve-44-billion-debt-relief-bolivia-guyana-haiti-honduras-and-nicaragua)  
 Paris Club, 2004, "The Paris Club Agrees to Reduce Guyana's Debt by US\$95 Million in Net Present Value Terms Under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative," Press Release (January 14), available at [https://clubdeparis.org/sites/default/files/node/field\\_treatment\\_files\\_attached/Prguya6870.pdf#:~:text=PRESS%20RELEASE%20THE%20PARIS%20CLUB%20AGREES%20TO%20REDUCE, Governments%20a%20reduction%20of%20Guyana's%20stock%20of%20debt](https://clubdeparis.org/sites/default/files/node/field_treatment_files_attached/Prguya6870.pdf#:~:text=PRESS%20RELEASE%20THE%20PARIS%20CLUB%20AGREES%20TO%20REDUCE, Governments%20a%20reduction%20of%20Guyana's%20stock%20of%20debt)  
 International Monetary Fund (IMF). 2016. Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)—Statistical Update. March. IMF, Washington, DC. Available at [www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2016/031516.pdf](http://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2016/031516.pdf)

## 2.2 IDB Invest and IDB Lab

For non-sovereign guaranteed support, between 2017 and 2023 IDB Invest approved 14 operations for a total of US\$173 million, including short-term revolving credit lines such as the Trade Finance Facilitation Program (TFFP). Before 2017, total private sector loan approvals in Guyana totaled US\$6.8 million between 1991 and 2008, including regional operations with activity in Guyana for US\$1.3 million, which highlights IDB’s increased activity in recent years. In 2023 alone, six operations were approved for US\$108 million, signaling growing opportunities in the context of the oil boom and growing confidence in the Guyanese private sector. Of the total, 26 percent of IDB Invest approvals were for the manufacturing sector, 23 percent for infrastructure, and 22 percent for agribusiness (Figure 5). The infrastructure projects include two loans supporting the purchase of the first-in-country mobile harbor cranes enhancing productivity and the logistics sector. One of the agribusiness loans, for US\$22 million, support efforts by Demerara Distillers Limited to expand food production and diversify its energy matrix to renewable sources of energy. A key role for IDB Invest includes providing advisory services associated primarily with conducting feasibility studies, energy audits, supporting green building certifications, and improving the capacity of potential and existing clients for successful private sector project

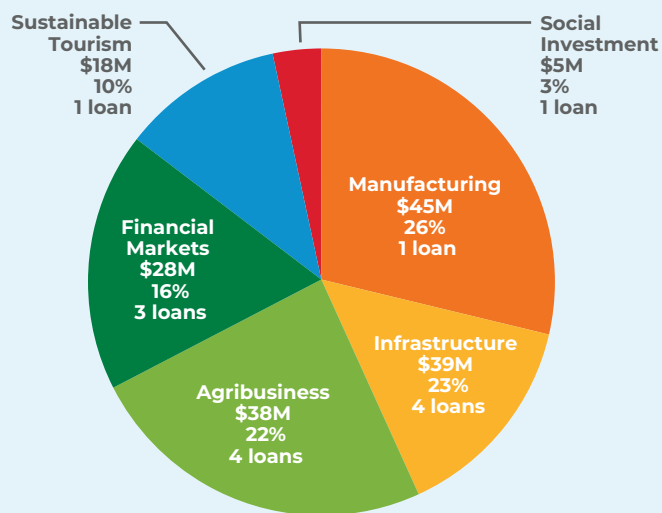
implementation. Tables 2 and 3 show the full list of projects approved since 2009. Table 2 lists long-term lending projects for the various businesses in Guyana, which reached a total of US\$140 million in approvals.

IDB Invest has approved several short-term revolving credit facilities, most to support lending to the private sector through commercial banks. IDB Invest worked with the Demerara Bank participating in the TFFP with three loans for a total of US\$28 million. The TFFP is a line of credit to be used for short-term international trade finance transactions to support local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). All revolving credit facilities are listed in Table 3.



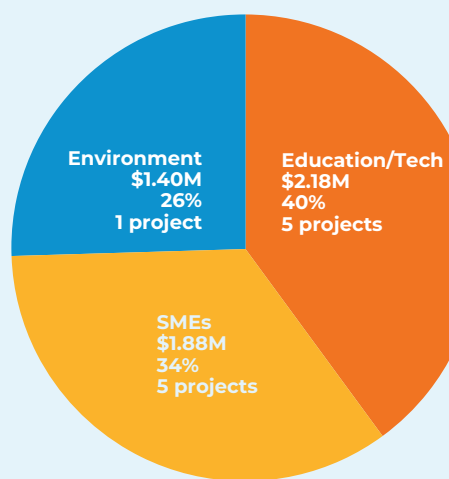
IDB Invest signing with Demerara Distillers Limited (DDL).

**Figure 5. IDB Invest Approvals to Guyana by Sector, 2017–2023, US\$ Millions**



Source: IDB.

**Figure 6. IDB Lab Approvals to Guyana by Sector, 2017–2023, US\$ Millions**



Source: IDB. Note: SMEs: small and medium-sized enterprises




**Table 2. IDB Invest Loan Approvals for Guyana, 2017–2023**

Project Name	Year	Millions of US Dollars	Business Segment
Fernandes Guyana Enterprise	2020	4	Agribusiness
Demerara Distillers Limited*	2020	22	Agribusiness
Fernandes Guyana Enterprise	2022	5	Agribusiness
Muneshwers Limited	2022	4	Transport
John Fernandes Mobile Crane Investment Project	2022	4	Transport
Four Points Georgetown	2023	18	Sustainable Tourism
Demerara Distillers Limited	2023	7	Agribusiness
Texila American University	2023	5	Social Investment
Muneshwers Limited	2023	26	Transport
Redstart Guyana	2023	45	Manufacturing
<b>Total</b>		<b>140</b>	

Source: IDB.

\*Includes US\$2 million in blended finance in addition to US\$20 million in IDB Invest loans.

**Table 3. IDB Invest Approvals for Short-term Revolving Credit Lines, Guyana, 2017–2023**

Project Name	Year	Millions of US Dollars	Business Segment
Demerara Bank Limited	2021	14	Financial markets
Demerara Bank Limited	2022	7	Financial markets
Farfan & Mendes Limited	2022	5	Energy
Demerara Bank Limited	2023	7	Financial markets
<b>Total</b>		<b>33</b>	

Source: IDB.

**Table 4. IDB Lab Approvals for Guyana, 2017–2023**

Project Name	Year	US Dollars	Business Segment
EcoMicro - IPED Green Finance for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency of MSMEs	2018	350,000	SMEs
Nexus Hub Tech Solutions	2018	150,000	Education/Tech
Digital Skills Training for Youth in Guyana	2019	350,000	Education/Tech
Developing Guyana's ICT Sector	2019	150,000	Education/Tech
Safe Lodges, Safe Guests, Safe Communities	2020	521,050	SMEs
Combatting Gender-Based Violence in Migrant and Host Communities in Guyana	2021	580,000	Education/Tech
Guyana's Learning Pods - Supporting Success in Education for Vulnerable Children	2021	950,000	Education/Tech
Securing the Future of the Barima Mora Passage Mangrove Ecosystems and Its Peoples	2022	1,400,000	Environment
Growing Guyana's Mature Microenterprise to SMEs through Technical Support, Financial Literacy and Access to Capital	2022	200,000	SMEs
TrueSelph: Democratizing access to AI	2022	150,000	SMEs
Guyana's Women Entrepreneurs: Realizing the Potential	2023	655,000	SMEs
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,456,050</b>	

Source: IDB.

Note: MSMEs: micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises; SMEs: small, and medium-sized enterprises.



Fostering digital talents among Guyana's children.

IDB Lab has approved a total of 11 projects for US\$5.5 million since 2017. Seven of those projects have been approved since 2020 for US\$4.5 million, or 82 percent of total approvals. The education/technology sector is the largest area of support, including the Guyana's Learning Pods – Supporting Success in Education for Vulnerable Children Project for US\$950,000 approved in 2021 for implementation by STEM Guyana. A total of 34 percent of approvals support SMEs in areas such as sustainable tourism, technology, and entrepreneurship. In the environmental sector, the Securing the Future of the Barima Mora Passage Mangrove Ecosystems and Its Peoples Project was approved in 2022 for US\$1.4 million (Figure 4). Table 4 presents the full list of IDB Lab approvals.

## 2.3 Partnerships with other Financing/Development Institutions



Water treatment plant constructed in partnership with the European Union at Diamond, East Bank Demerara provides improved water quality and level of service to more than 30, 000 persons.

Partnerships with other financial institutions support development not only because they contribute to strengthening the impact and volume of projects, but also because they lower the cost of lending or make resources available through special partnerships. The IDB Group has had five significant projects co-financed with other development partners. First, the IDB worked with the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to develop renewable energy projects in the Hinterland and other areas. Second, the IDB partnered with the European Union (EU) to co-finance two projects, one in the energy sector and the other in the water and sanitation sector. For another project for renewable energy, the IDB administers funds Guyana earned for environmental services through a bilateral agreement with Norway. Finally, the IDB has partnered with Global Affairs Canada to finance strengthening the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MHSS).

The Sustainable Energy Program for Guyana with the GEF was approved in July 2013 for US\$5 million. GEF grant funds and US\$1.25 million in counterpart government resources supported efforts by the Hinterland Electrification Company, Inc. (HECI) to promote renewable energy projects (off-and on-grid) in the Hinterland to date the operation has produced approximately 154 kW of off-grid solar photovoltaic (PV) systems in nine rural communities and 180 kW of grid-tied solar photovoltaic systems on seven public buildings, including secondary schools, tertiary institutions, and ministries in Georgetown. The operation is currently supporting the construction of the 150 kW Kato mini-hydropower project.

The energy project with the EU, the Power Utility Upgrade Program (PUUP), was approved in June 2014 and closed in 2023. The total amount of the project was US\$64.6 million, with the IDB providing US\$37.6 million and an EU grant

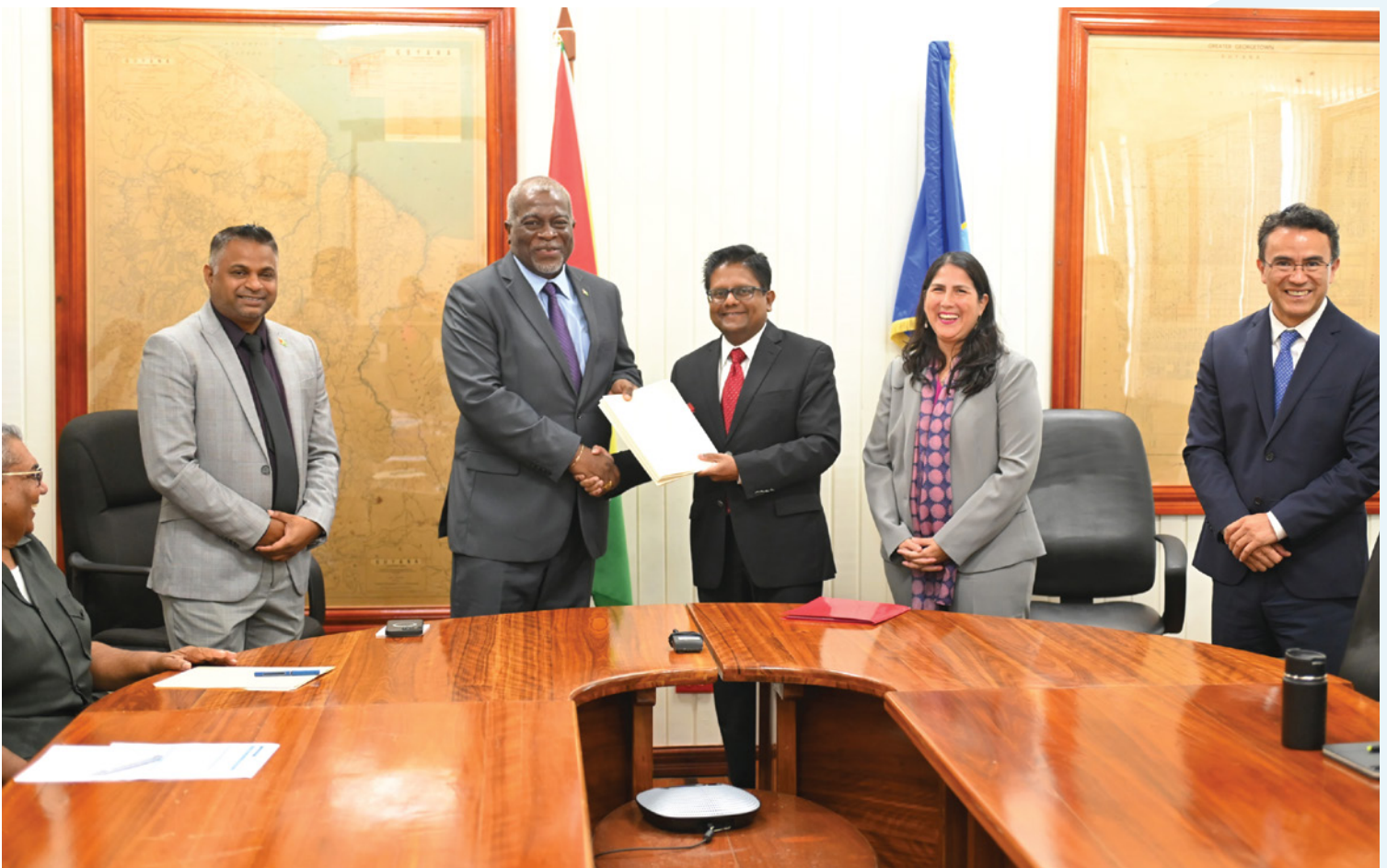


providing the balance of US\$27 million.

The project enhanced Guyana Power and Light's (GPL) operational and corporate efficiency to sustainably supply electricity in the long term. The project financed capacity-building activities through a Management Strengthening Program as well as other support services. The loan contributed to rehabilitating more than 600 km of the electricity distribution network and installed 41,058 smart meters in more than 150 communities, reducing electricity losses and improving system safety and reliability. GPL's Customer Information System was strengthened by linking customers to a transformer. A total of 1,642 transformers data was captured and relabeled, 93.5 km of feeder backbone and 102.7km of feeder spurs were mapped, and a total of 34,285 customer mapping and transformer linkages were completed.

The Water Supply and Sanitation Infrastructure Improvement Program, also cofinanced with the EU, was approved in July 2014 and has also closed. The total project amount was US\$27.8 million, with the EU and the IDB each financing half. The project contributed to improving the efficiency, quality, and sustainability of potable water services, including continuity (24/7) and pressure in four communities around Georgetown, improving the lives of people in 55,300 households. The project achieved important reductions on non-revenue water (NRW) rates, which declined from 70 percent to 40.3 percent in Sheet Anchor, from 73.5 percent to 55.3 percent in Uitvlugt; and from 73 percent to 66 percent in Diamond.

The Guyana Utility Scale Solar Photovoltaic Program (GUY SOL) was approved in June 2022 for US\$83.3 million under an agreement by which the IDB administers funds Guyana earned under



The Guyana Utility Scale Solar Photovoltaic Program (GUY SOL) framed within the Norway-Guyana partnership as part of the Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) will take the country to 19 percent renewables on its grid in about three years.



Implementing digital initiatives like overhaul and upgrade of the SCADA system to improve service and operations at the Guyana Power and Light Inc.

the Guyana-Norway Partnership. The project is supporting the diversification of the energy matrix by installing 33 MW of utility scale solar photovoltaic plants in Guyana.

In November 2023, the IDB approved a programmatic policy-based loan (PBL) for US\$30 million in partnership with Global Affairs Canada for the Support to Human Services Project. Global Affairs Canada is contributing up to CA\$120 million (approximately US\$88 million), such that the total value of the operation is approximately up to US\$128 million. The general objective is to strengthen the protection of vulnerable populations by enhancing the capacity of the MHSSS

to efficiently implement the social safety net through digital transformation of the ministry and by promoting gender empowerment through services for persons with disabilities, victims of gender-based violence, economic empowerment of women, and support for victims of trafficking-in-persons.

The IDB also continues to coordinate interventions with other development partners and institutions including the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Global Affairs Canada, Global Partnership for Education and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) among others.



# 3. Advancing the Development Agenda





## 3.1 Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy

Guyana has taken a groundbreaking approach to environmental sustainability, documented in its Low-Carbon Development Strategy 2030 (LCDS). Guyana's long history of environmental sustainability began with the first iteration of the LCDS in 2009. The document was updated in July 2022 after undergoing a 10-month public consultation process.

At the core of the model is the understanding that Guyana's forest cover is more valuable to the world standing than cleared. It recognizes the environmental service that Guyana's forest cover (the carbon sink) provides to the world. The Guyana-Norway Partnership has been instrumental in the process. Between 2009 and 2015, Guyana earned US\$220 million in payments for forest climate services from Norway, which were used for renewable energy projects and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Guyana was the first country to be issued jurisdictional carbon credits in December 2022. The Architecture for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Transactions (ART) issued 33.47 million TREES credits for 2016–2020, marking a milestone for a country receiving carbon credits for successfully preventing forest loss and degradation.

Utilizing the same principle of forest integrity management, Guyana signed an agreement with the Hess Corporation for the sale of carbon credits for a total of 37.5 million TREES credits for a minimum of US\$750 million between 2022 and 2032. Guyana received US\$150 million in 2023 for the sale of 10 million ART-TREES credits.

Key areas of the LCDS 2030 include (i) investing in clean energy and stimulating low-carbon growth, (ii) protecting against climate change and biodiversity loss, and (iii) aligning with global climate goals. The investment plans highlight the importance of promoting clean energy, creating employment opportunities, and supporting predominantly indigenous communities in the rural Hinterland. At least 15 percent of carbon credit revenues will be destined to support economic development in approximately 200 indigenous communities. Similarly, climate-resilient agriculture, climate risk assessments and insurance, and coastal infrastructure are also areas of growth and development highlighted in the LCDS. The strategy will be implemented through the LCDS Investment Plan, which will link financing with development objectives and track progress towards those objectives.



The Low Carbon Development Strategy acknowledges that Guyana's forest cover is more valuable to the world standing than cleared. (Image provided courtesy of the Government of Guyana)

## 3.2 IDB Group Country Strategy with Guyana 2023–2026



CCB General Manager Anton Edmunds and IDB team in meeting with Senior Minister within the Office of the President with responsibility for Finance and Public Service Dr. Ashni Singh.

The IDB Group's Country Strategy in Partnership with the Government of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana 2023–2026 aims to support the country's goal of sustainable and equitable growth. The Government of Guyana has specifically requested that the IDB's engagement significantly deepen and focus on specific sectors, with a lending envelope that is expected to be four times greater than in the previous cycle. In this context, the government would also like to see a much greater presence of IDB Invest, which has significantly expanded over 2020–2023.

Additionally, the government has requested support to the private sector in enabling access to credit to leverage new business opportunities stemming from Guyana's economic boom.

The Country Strategy aims to continue supporting Guyana's sustainable development and inclusive growth, as well as economic diversification of the non-oil economy.



In terms of key areas of support, the Country Strategy will focus on the strategic areas of:

(i) Resilient infrastructure development.

(ii) Human capital development focusing on improving health and education outcomes and social services

(iii) Strengthening institutional capacity.

The overarching objective of the Country Strategy will be to support private sector development in Guyana by deepening links with the booming economic sector and improving the business climate in the non-oil sector through productivity-enhancing resilient infrastructure projects and a better trained labor force. The IDB Group will contribute to transforming Guyana's newfound wealth into an agent of economic transformation for the whole economy, generating more investment and employment, and ultimately lifting standards of living across the country. Cross-cutting themes of the Country Strategy will be strengthening gender and diversity, climate change and environmental sustainability, and digitalization. The new Country Strategy is aligned with and will support Guyana's implementation of the LCDS and decarbonization objectives.

#### **Resilient Infrastructure Development**

Infrastructure challenges in transportation, energy, telecommunications, water and sanitation, and flood protection continue to represent key constraints to private sector development. In the face of increasing climate change risks, the development of high-quality, resilient infrastructure becomes fundamental. The estimated costs to close the resilient infrastructure gap through 2030 in Guyana vary between US\$9.4 billion and US\$23.8 billion, across multiple sectors such as electricity, transport, trade infrastructure, telecommunications, water and sanitation, and flood protection.

Guyana is leading CARICOM's Vision 25 by 2025, which aims to reduce food imports into the Caribbean by 25 percent by enhancing both public and private investment in the agricultural sector to strengthen regional food security, increase food production, and leverage

investments in logistics supporting regional trade. The government has identified several potential projects as well as production opportunities and constraints. The IDB Group could support this effort by creating knowledge through value chain studies and infrastructure and logistics planning, and by supporting projects in both the public and private sectors using modern agricultural technologies.

IDB Invest aims to support the achievement of the following strategic objectives: (i) increased access to resilient transport and water and sanitation infrastructure, as well as renewable energy generation assets to foster decarbonization efforts; (ii) increased connectivity and digital transformation through the deployment of fixed and mobile broadband networks; (iii) economic diversification and growth by facilitating the participation of local producers in domestic, regional, and global supply chains, including through trade finance facilitation mechanisms; (iv) increased availability of long-term funding for the productive sectors in emerging and established economic activities (i.e., sustainable tourism); (v) wider adoption of technology, climate-smart practices, and credit solutions for sustainable agriculture projects to address food security concerns, as well as for the manufacturing sector; and (vi) improved access to financial services by traditionally excluded households and businesses, deepening financial inclusion.

IDB Lab will support (i) the expansion of education/technology and digital and other skills development to increase employment, particularly of women; (ii) natural capital and climate-smart interventions in accordance with the LCDS; (iii) access to finance and support for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs); and (iv) strengthening innovation ecosystems via programs that target startup and early-stage enterprises and innovation for inclusion.

The focus continues to be on supporting the poor and vulnerable population by investing in resilient infrastructure, improving access to high-quality and affordable products, and creating income-generating opportunities that meet environmental and social safeguards and promote inclusion.





There will be continued focus on expanding education and digital skills.

### **Human Capital Development with a Focus on Health and Education, including Social Services**

#### **Health**

The government seeks to improve the quality of healthcare by purchasing medical supplies and equipment and developing hospital infrastructure. Some specific programs on the government's agenda include immunization programs, HIV/AIDs, chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs), and mental health. The government has consistently increased the allocation of its national budget to the health sector (US\$360 million in 2022, US\$410 million in 2023, US\$614 million in 2024) which shows its commitment to tackling the health challenges for the benefit of its population.

#### **Education**

The government aspires to have a world-class education system, which will require more

resources for teachers, learning materials, upgraded school infrastructure, and technology in the classroom. The COVID-19 pandemic strained the education system because of long-standing regional disparities in access to trained teachers, quality school infrastructure with basic services (water and electricity), teaching materials (such as textbooks), access to the Internet, and availability of digital devices. The government seeks to overcome these regional disparities and ensure equal access to quality education at all levels for all children, as well as increase the use of innovation and technology to improve educational delivery and learning outcomes to prepare students for today's requirements of work and citizenship. The government has consistently increased its allocation to the education sector (US\$350 million in 2022, US\$450 million in 2023 and US\$643 million in 2024) to better prepare its population for the new economic reality of Guyana.

#### Social Protection for Vulnerable Groups

Social safety nets in Guyana include a range of non-contributory social intervention programs, most under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MHSS), with others under the Ministries of Education, Amerindian Affairs, and Health. The MHSS has developed a “womb-to-tomb” approach for providing services. Its largest programs are Old Age Pensions, benefiting approximately 73,000 senior citizens with a monthly stipend of US\$158, and the Public Assistance Programme, benefiting 29,000 people with permanent disabilities or financial needs with a monthly stipend of US\$77. These programs have benefited from annual budget increases since 2020, and new increases were announced in Budget 2024, bringing the Senior Citizen's monthly stipend to US\$171 and the Public Assistance Program to US\$90 per month. Other areas of support include programs for survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, legal guidance, neglected and abused children, teenage mothers and single parents, and survivors of trafficking in persons.

Some of the challenges facing the social services programs include incomplete coverage, as some vulnerable people are unaware of the programs or live in areas that make access to them difficult; the targeting of beneficiaries; and the evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of programs. Non-contributory cash transfers in Guyana have relatively low coverage of the population living in poverty, reaching 27 percent of persons in extreme poverty, 20 percent in moderate poverty, and 19 percent in a situation of vulnerability (Stampini et al. 2021; Table 1). To promote the wellbeing of the population living in poverty, the IDB will support the strengthening of non-contributory cash transfer programs and related social and human services, supporting senior citizens, gender empowerment, and persons with disabilities. To increase the efficiency of implementation of these programs, the IDB Group will support the digital transformation of the MHSS.

#### Strengthening Institutional Capacity

Guyana’s booming economic context raises the importance of strengthening institutional capacity. The government has repeatedly stated



Kick-off workshop for the Program to Support Climate Resilient Road Infrastructure Development (GY-L1081).



its objective to leverage the oil boom to transform the economy by implementing policies to support the business climate, human capital development, and economic diversification. This would contribute to creating more jobs and achieving higher levels of income, benefiting all Guyanese.

The high volume of development actions the government seeks to implement is expected to add pressure on the current legal and regulatory framework, public financial management, and public services in general.

An ongoing area of collaboration is electronic government systems, which received support for

their design through a fiscal management PBL and a technical assistance program from the IDB including support to the procurement framework to enhance execution of the capital expenditure budget.

Strengthening institutional capacity is a line of work in Guyana, as it can contribute to streamlining project development and improving public service delivery. Considering the increased portfolio, the IDB will continue supporting the Government of Guyana in enhancing skills, knowledge, and procurement and contract management.



IDB team with counterparts of the project executing unit at a site visit in Georgetown.



# 4. Spotlight on Development Achievements



The Citizen Security Strengthening Programme (CSSP) included infrastructure upgrade and a community-based strategy supporting crime reduction and prevention.



### Institutional Capacity

The Bank has financed several projects supporting institutional capacity in Guyana over the years, with the largest projects approved for fiscal management linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, as discussed earlier. Prior projects supporting the justice system include the Citizen Security Strengthening Programme approved in 2014 for US\$15 million and the Support for the Criminal Justice System Project approved in 2016 for US\$8 million. The citizen security project aimed to reduce homicides, burglaries, robberies, and domestic violence, including by reducing offender recidivism at the national level. The project had several achievements including helping to reduce the homicide rate in target communities by almost half and increasing the reporting of domestic violence cases which has resulted in safer communities. The project also supported the introduction of technology such as DNA analysis to strengthen criminal investigations. The criminal justice system project aimed to reduce the high concentrations of the prison population in Guyana. Its main achievements included establishing the country's first-ever Law Reform Commission, which ensured a systematic approach to legal reforms; a Restorative Justice Unit to rehabilitate non-violent offenders; and regional Hope and Justice Centres to provide integral support to victims of gender-based violence.

#### **The IDB approved three loans in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic:**

(i) Program to Strengthen Public Policy and Fiscal Management in Response to the Health and Economic Crises Caused by COVID-19 in Guyana, for US\$34 million.

This PBL supported establishment of the National COVID-19 Task Force to enable interagency planning, as well as to make COVID-19-related information readily available through a dedicated webpage. The loan also supported the suspension of disconnection of services for public utility services such as water and electricity.

(ii) Support to Safety Nets for Vulnerable Populations Affected by Coronavirus in Guyana, for US\$30.4 million. To counter the impact of the pandemic, this project provided financial support to maintain minimum levels of household income through existing cash transfer programs, such as the Old Age Pension and Public Assistance Program administered by the MHSS. The project also enabled the Government of Guyana to provide an electricity credit, paying for electricity for one month for households consuming less than 75 KWH monthly. Finally, the project supported implementation of the Survivors Advocates Program, which provides support services to the (mostly women) survivors of gender-based violence. The program benefited almost 50,000 households.

(iii) The Contingent Credit Facility (CCF) Loan for COVID-19, for US\$22 million supported public finances by covering extraordinary expenditures related to the health emergency.

In 2022, the IDB approved the largest PBL ever to Guyana, the second part of the Program to Strengthen Public Policy and Fiscal Management in Response to the Health and Economic Crises Caused by COVID-19, for US\$130 million. The project promoted economic and fiscal recovery in the post-pandemic period, supporting key policy developments such as enactment of telecommunications regulations after the sector was liberalized and the monopoly of the single telecommunications provider ended in 2020; the government's external debt policy framework; the Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability Action Plan; and the medium-term fiscal framework for 2021–2024, including revenue and expenditure projections and the identification of fiscal risks, such as those associated with climate change.

### Transport

An important recently completed project in Guyana's transport sector was the Sheriff Mandela Road Development Project for US\$34.5 million, which aimed to enhance mobility and



Sheriff Street, Georgetown.

safety by reducing vehicle operating costs, travel times, and road fatalities. The specific objectives were to (i) rehabilitate, improve, expand, and construct roads, streets, sidewalks, and bikeways; (ii) improve road safety; (iii) strengthen the institutional capacity of the executing agency; and (iv) provide for road maintenance. A total of 7.1 km were rehabilitated, including by widening transport corridors and improving drainage, in coordination with utility companies. The roadworks were completed in 2022.

More recently, in 2022, the IDB approved the Program to Support Climate Resilient Road Infrastructure Development, a US\$100 million loan with US\$17 million in counterpart funding. The main objective is to advance Guyana's safe, efficient, and climate-resilient road and associated infrastructure. The specific objectives are to improve road service quality and utility services along the East Bank Demerara

corridor through corresponding infrastructure improvements. The road development will be along the 23 km stretch between Good Success on the outskirts of Georgetown and Timehri, in close proximity to the Cheddi Jagan International Airport.

### Housing

The Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Program approved in 2017 allocated US\$28.5 million to housing. The main objective was to improve the quality of life in urban and peri-urban Georgetown through better access to adequate housing and basic infrastructure for low-income populations, and through improved accessibility and mobility services. The main area of focus for housing development was to provide quality housing and basic infrastructure solutions through home improvement subsidies, subsidized core homes, consolidation of existing



housing areas with the construction of roads, drains, walkways, lighting and community spaces, and institutional strengthening of the Central Housing and Planning Authority (CHPA). As of 2023, the project had provided 374 housing improvement subsidies and handed over 74 core homes, with an additional 81 homes under construction. The program has improved 29 km of community roads, 5.2 km of reinforced con-concrete drains, and 3.36 km of concrete sidewalks within housing schemes in the greater Georgetown area (Regions 3 and 4). The program also completed construction of a new community center with a playground, sports field, and meeting area. Finally, the program identified the challenges of manual registration and beneficiary selection seen during program implementation. In response, in 2023 the CHPA launched the Core Home and Home Improvement App to support the beneficiary identification and selection as well as allocation and supervision processes using digital tools. This open-source solution provides both accoun-

tability and transparency to the process by allowing applicants to access digital sign-up forms and open information on the progress of their housing allocation. It also reduces processing times by at least 30 percent. To date, the CHPA app has concluded the selection process for 120 beneficiaries and notified 50 beneficiaries of home improvement subsidies and engaged another 50. A total of 610 people have downloaded the app.

### Energy

Interventions in Guyana's energy sector aim to support diversification of energy generation sources, address access to electricity in the Hinterland and modernize transmission and distribution grid infrastructure.

The Global Environmental Facility (GEF), approved 10 years ago, set the scene for diversification and access support to the Hinterland Utility HECL, developing on- and off-



Presentation of cores homes and improvement subsidies to beneficiaries of the Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Program.

micro grids powered by solar photovoltaic panels for government schools, health facilities and buildings.

This intervention was followed by the Power Utility Upgrade Program (PUUP) approved together with the EU in 2014 to rehabilitate over 600 km of the electricity distribution network across more than 150 communities, reducing electricity losses and improving safety and reliability of the system.

A PBL for US\$11.64 million approved by the IDB in 2018, Strengthening the Energy Sector, mainly supported sustainability interventions and diversification of the energy matrix by developing cleaner energy sources for electricity generation. Institutional strengthening activities included model contracts for Production Sharing Agreements and corresponding templates; a National Grid Code for the electricity sector; and an update of the study on System Expansion of the Generation System, projecting future electricity demand, among other things.

Another energy sector project is Strengthening Energy Matrix Diversification originally approved in 2018. This project continued supporting diversification of the energy matrix in the Hinterland with 3.5 MW of generation through solar photovoltaic farms in Bartica, Lethem, and Mahdia, while investing in the reinforcement of transmission infrastructure to improve reliability and stability of the Demerara-Berbice Interconnected System.

Building on the experience garnered from smaller solar photovoltaic farms in the Hinterland, the Guyana Utility Scale Solar Photovoltaic Program approved in 2022 for US\$83.3 million will deliver the country's first utility-scale solar farms. This project is not a loan, as it is based on payments Guyana has earned from Norway as part of Guyana's bilateral agreement with that country outlined in the LCDS. The objective is to support diversification of the energy matrix through development of

solar power solutions in several communities for a total power-generating capacity of 33 MW. The operation is consistent with Guyana's objective to rely mostly on renewable sources for power supply by 2041, as stated in the LCDS 2030 (July 2022).

### **Government Support for Private Sector Development**

The government has undertaken several operations directed towards private sector development, including the following:

**1. Sustainable Agricultural Development,** a US\$15 million program approved in 2016 to increase productivity of the agricultural sector while maintaining sustainable and climate-resilient use of natural resources through such activities as producing high-quality data, providing support for medium-size and small farming operations, and increasing sanitary and phytosanitary standards and access to meat processing facilities. Activities financed by the project include the agricultural survey completed in 2023, an incentive program to support the adoption of improved agricultural technology by small farmers, institutional infrastructure support for the Guyana Food Safety Authority, and construction of an abattoir.

**2. Enhancing the National Quality Infrastructure for Economic Diversification,** a US\$9 million project approved in 2016 for and expanded by US\$8 million in 2022. The project aims to support economic diversification and exports by strengthening the quality of national infrastructure and financing the development of a laboratory to test products at the Guyana National Bureau of Standard. The overall objective is to improve the quality of export products in order to meet international quality standards, and to reduce the cost of meeting those standards for the private sector.

**3. Establishing an Electronic Single Window for Trade,** a US\$6 million program approved in





2018. Once completed, this project has the potential to significantly increase private sector productivity. The general objective is to improve trade facilitation by developing an electronic single window to reduce the time and cost of trade processes. The main driver to reduce the time to clear customs will be through the simplification and digitalization of trade procedures, while at the same time improving transparency and accountability for all participating agencies and the private sector.

### IDB Invest

As mentioned above, IDB Invest started approving several operations in 2020 for the first time since the last IDB Invest project was approved 2009. IDB Invest approved a total of 14 operations for US\$173 million between 2020 and 2023. Some of the operations featured in the beneficiary stories below include the following:

- **Demerara Distillers Limited (DDL)**, which signed a US\$22 million loan in March 2023 to promote food security and climate action in Guyana. IDB Invest provided a US\$15 million loan and a US\$5 million working capital liquidity line to this operation. The remaining US\$2 million of the loan is made up of blended finance resources

from the Clean Technology Fund, managed by IDB Invest. The transaction finances the expansion of DDL's capacity for juice and milk production, as well as construction of a 3.25 MW self-consumption solar photovoltaic energy generation system with battery storage to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels.

- **Muneshwers Limited**, which signed a US\$4 million loan in September 2022 to finance the purchase of the first mobile crane in Guyana, expanding the capacity to handle cargo at port facilities. Previously, cargo handling was limited to vessel cranes to load and discharge containers on ships.

- **John Fernandes**, which signed a US\$4 million loan in December 2022. The loan will support the procurement of another mobile harbor crane, further enhancing the logistics services sector.

- **Farfan & Mendes**, which obtained a US\$5 million loan through the Revolving Credit Facility to develop and expand commercial and utility-scale solar photovoltaic energy-generating capacity. The loan, which has a five-year tenor, will finance the company's working capital needs to advance the use of renewable energy



Demerara Distillers Limited's juice packaging facility.



Signing of IDB Invest Corporate Loan facility with John Fernandes Limited.

in Guyana. This special financial instrument is not included under the approved loans as it is a revolving facility and depends on credit usage.

**IDB Lab**

IDB Lab is the innovation laboratory of the IDB Group, driving innovation with a focus on technology and entrepreneurship to implement innovative ideas, with the development objectives of benefiting poor and vulnerable populations and activating new engines of sustainable growth. In Guyana, IDB Lab projects have focused on education and skills development, agriculture, and capacity-building for microenterprises. Projects featured among the beneficiary stories include the following:

- **Securing the Future of the Barima Mora Passage Mangrove Ecosystems and Its Peoples** This US\$1.4 million grant in 2022 was complemented by counterpart financing of US\$1.7 million, for a total of US\$3.1 million. The objective is to develop a framework to secure and finance

protection of the Barima Mora’s unique ecosystem while working with indigenous people and migrants who live within or near this site to build awareness of the importance of the mangrove. The second phase of the project will be complemented by the IDB Amazonia Forever Program, making US\$1 million more available in 2024.

- **Guyana’s Learning Pods – Supporting Success in Education for Vulnerable Children**, a grant approved in 2021 for US\$950,000, complemented by counterpart financing of US\$1.2 million for a total of US\$2.2 million. The objective is to extend and mainstream a system of learning pods in Guyana that will provide children 7-15 years of age with access to a hybrid education /technology model for supplemental education and improved learning outcomes. The project supports STEM Guyana.
- **Digital Skills Training for Youth in Guyana**, a US\$350,000 grant approved in 2019, complemented by counterpart financing of





Preparation of the farm beds for planting by Indigenous women under the Barima Mora Passage program.

US\$355,000 for a total of US\$705,000. The objective is to work with the local private sector to deliver relevant digital and life skills for young people and to transition them to employment opportunities.

• **Guyana’s Women Entrepreneurs: Realizing the Potential**, a US\$655,000 grant approved in 2023, complemented by counterpart financing of US\$825,000, for a total of US\$1.48 million. The project will help equip female-led businesses in Guyana with the financial and technical support needed to demonstrate strong growth and emerge as bankable entities. The project is managed by Action Invest Guyana.

• **TrueSelph Democratizing Access to Artificial Intelligence**, a US\$150,000 grant approved in 2022, complemented by counterpart financing

of US\$66,600, for a total of US\$216,600. The objective is to develop software capturing the digital persona of a person for practical applications, such as having conversations with someone and obtaining information.

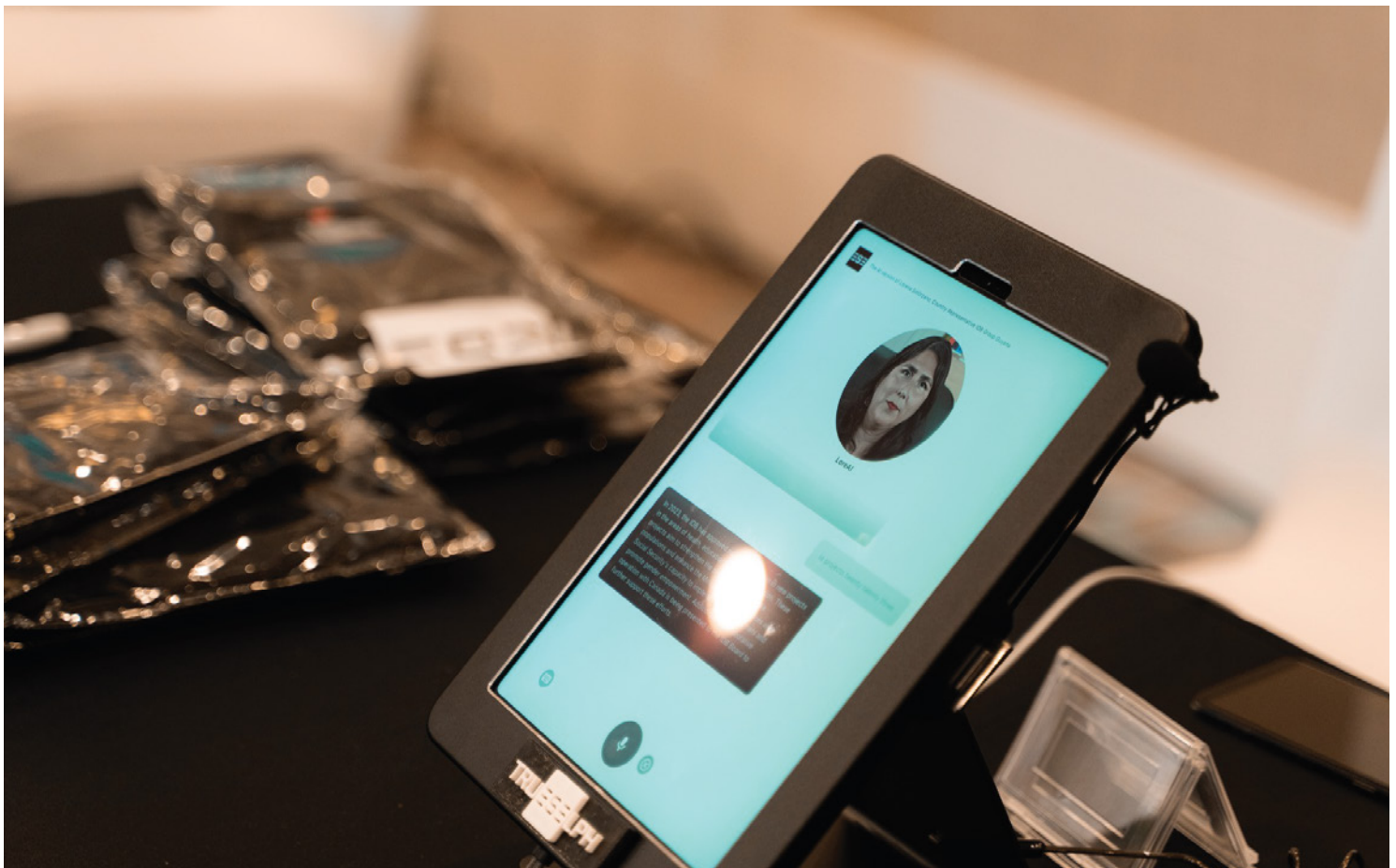
• **Combating Gender-based Violence in Migrant and Host Communities in Guyana**, a US\$580,000 project approved in 2021, complemented by counterpart financing of US\$580,000, for a total of US\$1,160,000. The objective is to improve delivery of services and implement campaigns to mitigate both the impact and incidence of gender-based violence against migrants and other vulnerable populations in Guyana. The project is being implemented by the National Coordinating Coalition Incorporated, a non governmental organization.



• **WE3A Strengthening Women Entrepreneurs in Value Chains**, a multi-country initiative with Guyana as one of the beneficiaries. For this project, IDB Lab partnered with the Thunderbird School of Global Management at Arizona State University and the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative. Launched by the Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry Guyana in 2022, the project aims to strengthen women-led/owned SMEs by enabling value-chain integration and building capacity to start or improve businesses through high-quality training, resources, networks, and development opportunities.



Launch of the Bankability Fund, part of Guyana's Women Entrepreneurs: Realizing the Potential project.



TrueSelph Democratizing Access to Artificial Intelligence (AI) is leading new AI innovation in Guyana.





IDB team of the Guyana Country Office in Georgetown.



# 5. Stories of Resilience





# Innovative Solutions to Enhance the Delivery of Education in Challenging Times



Nicola Johnson.

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools in Guyana to close, traditional face-to-face learning was abruptly disrupted. Most schools in the coastal regions swiftly transitioned to online learning. However, those in hinterland and rural communities grappled with challenges. There was limited connectivity, infrastructure, and resources, including the digital hardware needed to facilitate continued learning for all students.



Support to safety nets for vulnerable populations during the pandemic included interventions for persons living with disabilities, the elderly, and others.

With the Ministry of Education's policy of Leaving No One Behind, the team led by the Minister quickly innovated, ensuring the continued delivery of education during a challenging time.

The IDB helped set the process in motion when it approved a US\$30.4 million operation (GL-L1077) for Guyana in December 2020, during the period when schools were closed, to help support safety nets for vulnerable populations. While the operation aimed to help a broad set of vulnerable groups affected by the Coronavirus, including low-income families, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and disadvantaged women, it also provided resources to respond to the adverse impact of the pandemic on the delivery of education.

"With that we were able to do a lot in terms of getting to students in hard-to-reach hinterland and riverine communities in particular," Nicola explained. Learning materials were developed and dispatched while radio programs came on stream.

Since the pandemic, support from the IDB has evolved with the approval of a US\$90 million operation (GY-L1079), Support for Educational Recovery and Transformation, approved in October 2023. The investment aims to expand and improve access to safe learning environments and education services especially for vulnerable students across Guyana. New schools will be built in hinterland and riverine communities while existing facilities will be upgraded. The schools will all be equipped with Internet connectivity, electricity, and water and sanitation.

Additionally, a mentorship program will be piloted to enhance the effectiveness of teachers in the classroom, and the ministry's Regional Special Needs Education Diagnostic and Treatment Center for special needs students, the first of its kind in Guyana, will be strengthened. As part of an investment grant with financing provided by the Global Partnership of Education through the IDB (GY-G1009), the ministry will also



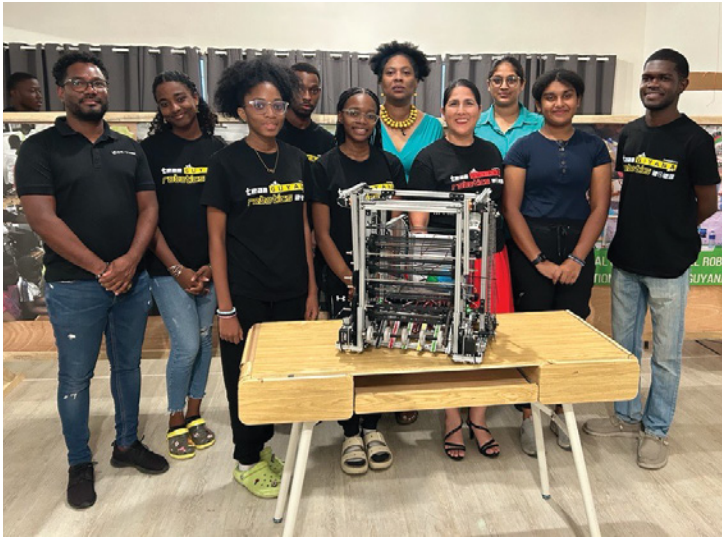
establish a Leadership Academy providing head-teachers and regional education officers with professional development.

“We in essence will be able to narrow the learning gaps that currently exist,” Nicola explained. “We will have better leaders in schools. I think that with these interventions, more students will be excelling at our national and regional assessments because we are strategic in our approach, looking not only at our infrastructure... but [also at] teachers and addressing their needs.”

Nicola looks forward with optimism to a more resilient and transformed education sector in Guyana and praises the IDB’s role in supporting that effort.

“The support that the IDB has given to us has been tremendous, during the pandemic and even after,” she concluded.

## Fostering Digital Talents among Guyana’s Children



The Learning Pods Project also creates exposure for Guyanese children to participate in international robotic challenges.

“I feel happy when I come to STEM classes,” says 12-year-old Fernando Sewpersaud, as he excitedly talks about learning to use computers and making robots.

In indigenous villages like St. Ignatius, Rupununi, where Fernando lives, connectivity is limited and opportunities for digital upskilling are few.

Through the Guyana Learning Pods Project—Supporting Success in Education for Vulnerable Children, the nonprofit tech organization STEM Guyana is partnering with IDB Lab to pilot an

innovative education model that supports the use of technology tools and supplementary learning in core subjects.

The project is designed to provide small groups of children with access to a connected learning platform, establishing learning pods at public spaces in approximately 40 communities to foster science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) skills with the support of an in-person facilitator and an online teacher.



Students at the STEM Learning Pod in St. Ignatius, Rupununi.





While Fernando is one of 14 learners who attend weekly sessions at the STEM Learning Pod in St Ignatius Village, overall the project is expected to reach 1,000 children across Guyana.

Fernando's classmate, 10-year-old Kishawn Headley, is also fascinated with the sessions on computers and robotics. "Robotics is nice to do because you build things without the book...and we build different robots," Kishawn says. "Before this class," he adds, "I never went to any computer class."

While the sessions impart basic digital competencies, STEM Coach Mariam Sava also points to the impact on students' overall performance.

"I like to see children learning...and from the parents and teachers I have received reports that they have improved in their reading skills. They work in groups. Some work in robotics and some



Kishawn Headley.

do reading," she says, adding that the initiative in a broader sense gives learners the opportunity to gain a solid foundation to develop into critical thinkers.

## Mekalya Buchoon Teaches Mom to Navigate the Web



Little Mekalya Buchoon and Mom, Melissa.

Melissa Buchoon is a community health worker in Mainstay Village and a mother of four. With a busy schedule managing her household, caring for her children, and maintaining a full-time job, she has almost no time to learn about modern technology.

But less than a year ago, that all changed and not in the way she would have imagined.

When she learned that a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning pod had been established at the Mainstay Lake Primary School for students in Grades 1 to 10, Melissa saw it as a great learning opportunity for her daughter, and she soon signed up little Mekalya Buchoon, age seven, for the classes.

Melissa reports that since starting with the learning pod, her daughter had advanced in



reading, math, and other core subjects at school. Most exciting has been the robotics and technology session, where the children learn basic digital talents like navigating the Internet, accessing email, conducting research for homework, and other general knowledge questions.

And now, in a twist, Mekalya is even teaching her mom.

“What I was taught back then is different to what they are learning now...We did not have the opportunity to have a gadget like the computer,” Melissa explains. “So now, when I don’t know something, Mekalya knows it!” Melissa explains.

## STEM Pods Encouraging Learning and Better Performance

“Math has become easier...English is my favorite subject...[and] I am pronouncing words better and reading better,” reports 10-year-old Jasmine Pearson, a student at the Mainstay Lake Primary School nestled in Mainstay/Whayaka, an indigenous lakeside village in Region Two.

Prior to joining the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning pod in 2020, Jasmine had challenges at school with these subjects. But now she is doing better in these core areas and, with a rounded foundation encouraged at the STEM pod, Jasmine hopes to ace all her subjects at the National Grade Six Assessments (NGSA).

At the learning pods, students are placed in groups so they can learn together. Sessions include educational video games and animated television shows. The activities are designed to stimulate the children’s interest in science and technology as well as teach them basic life skills.

Elianna Charles, a first grader who also participates in the STEM classes at Mainstay, also likes her STEM classes, particularly “writing and learning about fractions and parts of a flower.”

Whether it’s math, English, reading – or learning about parts of a flower – the STEM classes are clearly improving learning outcomes for both Jasmine and Eliana and their classmates.



Jasmine Pearson.



## Better Yields with Climate-Smart Techniques



IDB team and counterparts of the project executing unit at a demonstration farm in Berbice.

Mareo Dhanraj is enjoying his most lucrative days as a productive cash crop farmer in the Bath Settlement in Region Five. But things were not always this way.

For years, like other small farmers in Guyana, Mareo contended with the adverse effects of climate change. Increased periods of unseasonal dry spells and heavy rainfall caused great losses, especially for crops such as eschallot, celery, lettuce, pak choi, and sweet pepper.

Although Mareo learned about new farming technology and techniques such as shade houses, adaptation costs were too high for the small producer. However, thanks to Guyana's Sustainable Agricultural Development Program (SADP) financed by IDB loan GY-L1060, his farm is now equipped with a shade house outfitted with a drip and sprinkler irrigation system.

This support to small farmers like Mareo is part of a strategic intervention of SADP to help improve Guyana's agricultural productivity. Interventions are expected to boost the quality of produce and the income of small and medium-sized farmers. Activities include providing farming materials and technical support aligned with climate smart farming practices.

"Before, I had to manually water the plants with a hose, which was time-consuming," Mareo explains. "In the dry weather, the canals are low, and I had to get up early in the morning in the hot sun to get the water to the field. The sprinkler system has solved this problem."

The SADP is also establishing demonstration farms at several locations, including Fort Wellington, to facilitate the transfer of technology and best practices for farming and livestock rearing. At the West Coast Berbice location, Mareo learned about mulching, cost-effective fertilizer application, and pest control, techniques he has since implemented and that have helped him attain bountiful harvests year-round.

"I have been able to increase productivity to about 70 to 80 percent and have been able to cut a lot of cost on fertilizer," he said. "I am also doing more than one crop at the same time."

As a result, Mareo now supplies three large buyers, a step up from one less than a year ago and a clear sign that he is making the most out of the assistance provided to him under the SADP.



Mareo Dhanraj.

## Embracing Farming Technology to Enhance Efficiency

Nawaz Bacchus stands behind his brand-new small land tiller. His days of using a shovel under the hot sun to prepare farming beds for cultivation are over.

For years, Nawaz relied on the traditional manual method for land preparation commonly used by Guyanese small producers. It is time-consuming and labour-intensive, and the challenge is exacerbated during extreme dry weather due to climate change.

“Preparation of the land was hard, and the time was long,” the farmer recalls.

Today, Nawaz’s work in the field has become significantly easier and more efficient with the tiller he acquired from the Government of Guyana through the Sustainable Agriculture Development Program (SADP).

“Now both the length of time and the manual labour have been reduced to about 75 percent due to the tiller. The land is also better prepared and will give you better production,” relates Nawaz, who cultivates okras, boras, tomatoes, and pak choi on a one-acre field at Anna Regina in Region Two.

Nawaz is one of 3,500 farmers in Guyana who have benefited from the SADP, either through training or inputs to support climate-smart agriculture practices to help increase productivity.

“I have received valuable advice to become a better farmer, in terms of better production and caring for my crop, which overall makes me a better farmer,” says Nawaz, looking forward to an abundant harvest from his current crop.



Nawaz Bacchus is one of 3,500 farmers in Guyana who have benefited from support interventions to boost agricultural productivity.







## Strengthening Extension Services for Sustainable Food Production



Jumain Hubbard is one of more than 240 extension officers trained under Guyana's Sustainable Agricultural Development Program financed by the IDB.

As a Crop Extension Officer in Region Two, Jumain Hubbard spends most of his workday in the fields interacting with farmers and hearing about both their challenges and successes. More importantly, he offers technical advice and other support to help farmers thrive.

"I smile when I see the changes, from seeing a farmer struggling and then getting equipment or the implement to help increase production year-round," Jumain says.

Jumain is one of 10 extension officers serving the region attached to the National Agricultural and Research and Extension Institute (NAREI). He is also one of more than 240 extension officers trained under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Program (SADP) financed by an IDB loan (GY-L1060).

"We are here to help farmers in promoting their livelihood, making it sustainable and continuous," he explains. "The SADP was designed to help farmers continue earning by me being able to receive the relevant technical training so I can work better with them."

A key component of SADP is to strengthen the agricultural innovation and extension system in Guyana, recognizing the crucial role extension plays in boosting agricultural productivity, increasing food security, improving rural livelihoods, and promoting agriculture as an engine of pro-poor economic growth. Extension provides a critical support service for rural producers to meet the new challenges confronting agriculture.

In Region Two, Jumain and his colleagues serve more than 6,000 cash crop farmers, 80 percent of whom are smallholders. Crops grown include red beans, cassava, bora, okra, pepper, and tomato.

"We have seen an increase in the acreage that we normally cultivate...Our data will show that we moved from, let's say if we had 2,000 acres, we moved to 2,200-2,500 acres, so we have seen the increase. This project for me was very impactful on the lives of these farmers," Jumain contends.

To complement the agricultural extension system, SADP is financing the construction of a modern laboratory at La Bonne Intention to improve food production standards and ensure compliance with regional and international market standards. Additionally, the program is conducting a national agriculture survey – the first such survey in three decades – to help strengthen resource management, adapt to climate change, and guide agriculture policy formulation.



## Model Farm Positively Influencing Livestock Farmers

For most of her life, Sachi Hercules knew only the traditional way of rearing small ruminants using methods imparted through generations, and not driven by science. Sachi is a small livestock farmer from Seafield Village in West Coast Berbice, a primarily farming region of Guyana.

This all changed when she started participating in training sessions at the Fort Wellington Demonstration Farm established under the Sustainable Agricultural Development Program (SADP).

“I have gained knowledge of how to properly construct pens for the animals I rear. The training has widened my horizon and knowledge about care for animal and farming techniques and diseases that could be present on my farm, and me not knowing about it and how to go about treating and caring for the animals that are in my care,” Sachi conveys.

In Guyana, poultry and small ruminants are reared mainly on small farms, and production is



Inputs to farmers include the provision of breeding animals.

sometimes low. The demonstration farm helps farmers adopt technology and techniques that the Ministry of Agriculture is promoting to help address these production challenges in the livestock industry.

Sachi notes that production on her farm has increased as she has gained knowledge about how to prevent diseases and mortality among the livestock.

In addition to the demonstration farm that has helped farmers like Sachi, SADP also finances a grant incentive program (non-cash) for small and medium-sized farmers, and supports government efforts to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary standards for access to markets and infrastructure that will increase value and sales volume of meat and dairy products. An innovative abattoir is under construction at Onverwagt, West Coast of Berbice, to help elevate meat processing to international standards and facilitate the government’s push to ramp up beef production for export.



Sachi Hercules is a livestock farmer in Berbice.

## Pioneering Innovation for More Efficient Port Operations



Chandradatt Chintamani is the General Manager of Muneshwers Limited.

At Port Georgetown, vessel cranes laboriously load and offload containers from ships. But this will soon change.

Guyana's shipping industry is poised for a transformation with the acquisition of two innovative mobile harbor cranes, an investment by two Guyanese companies driven to enhance operational efficiencies, especially at an important moment in Guyana's economic context.

"Guyana is the only country in the Caribbean where vessel cranes are still used," notes Chandradatt Chintamani, General Manager of Muneshwers Limited, one of the country's largest port operators, with approximately 30 percent of the market share.

Vessel cranes that travel aboard host vessels from one location to the next occupy considerable space and move about 10 to 14 containers per

hour. Prior to Guyana becoming an oil-producing nation, such cranes were considered appropriate to accommodate demand. But with the increase in cargo traffic to Guyana, this type of operation is no longer viable.

"The acquisition of the mobile harbor crane allows us to welcome gearless vessels into Guyana," Chintamani explains. "These are larger vessels not equipped with their own cranes, but which can carry a higher volume of cargo."

Each of the newly acquired harbor cranes can move between 20 and 24 containers per hour; almost double the output of a vessel crane. In addition, each crane will improve cargo handling capacity from the current 60,000 20-foot equivalent unit (TEUs) per year to 109,0000 per year in 2025. This project output will allow for meeting expected annual growth of cargo traffic of around 16 percent for each operator.

"We anticipate that now, we can load and offload every vessel in one tide. Guyana is a tidal port, which means vessels can only come in and depart on the tide, Chintamani said. "All the vessels will now have more rotations in the waters of the Caribbean rather than an additional 12 or 24 hours wait here."

However, while a mobile crane undeniably adds to overall efficiency, enhances capacity, and opens more opportunities for port operators to grow and thrive, the investment is not cheap.

In this instance, Muneshwers Limited entered into a partnership with John Fernandes Limited, another local shipping company, to acquire the two mobile harbor cranes to improve the port infrastructure in Georgetown. Both companies secured financing support from IDB Invest.



The local shipping industry will also benefit from the new cranes, as they will reduce the costs paid by vessel owners/charterers and could also redound to the benefit of consumers.

“We are expecting that the reduction in the cost for chartering the vessel can be passed on,

through the reduction in freight charges for the consignees in Guyana,” an optimistic Chintamani says. “The new vessel cranes bring Guyana on par with Caribbean market standards, and the partnership with John Fernandes Limited, creates a platform to transform the local shipping industry,” concludes Chintamani.

## WE3A Enabling Women Entrepreneurs to Shape Their Dreams



Approximately 600 Guyanese women have been engaged in the WE3A project.

At Charity in Region Two, Wanica Persaud operates a small home-based catering service and a chain of snackettes that also serve local schools on the Essequibo Coast. But she dreams of owning a restaurant.

Through the WE3A: Strengthening Women Entrepreneurs in the Value Chain Project, Wanica

is accessing a suite of specialized business training that will contribute to realizing that dream.

Known for its three components – Aspire, Activate and Accelerate—the project offers business training via innovative digital media that provide opportunities for participants to connect with the

productive network. The Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Guyana (WCCIG) is the local implementing partner.

"The women in this program are learning to find ways to move their business forward," Wanica explains. "For some who don't have a business, it gives them a way to dream and see that they can accomplish and can do something for themselves,"

This is important, she believes, because, "as women when you are at home you often feel that you can't move to do anything because it is like a fixed mindset."

Indeed, across the Caribbean, women entrepreneurs face structural barriers often stemming from preconceived notions of gender roles and norms and biases. And women find it more challenging to access the finance and productive resources needed to start and grow a business. "As a woman in business, it is definitely challenging," Wanica admits. "Time management is a challenge for me."

We3A is designed to offer some solutions. The "Aspire" component has trained corporations on the "why" and "how" to include businesses owned or led by women in their value chains.

"Activate" is designed with women entrepreneurs in mind, acknowledging their time constraints and the reduced opportunities they have to gain business training. Through online training, support sessions, and webinars, participants finish with a robust business plan of their own.

Wanica is one of approximately 600 Guyanese women engaged in WE3A from communities across Regions Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six.

"I was very happy with this program because we don't have much training and the people here don't know much about AI technology," Wanica explains. "We are not technology-friendly yet, so I was happy this program has that for us. One of the main take-away points for me is the managing of finances and doing a day-to-day income and expenditure."

A mother of two and an employer of at least eight local women, Wanica is confident her business will grow and thrive with the new skills and innovation imparted by WE3A, particularly as regards her financial management skills.

"I have already started putting that in place into my business so I can make it grow more efficiently," she concluded.

## Improving Maternal and Neonatal Outcomes for Indigenous Women through Strategic Interventions

One month before the birth of her eighth child, 41-year-old Marisa Edwards journeyed to the Lethem Maternity Waiting Home to await her first delivery at the Lethem Regional Hospital. Six of her seven previous babies were delivered at home in Sawariwau, a Wapishan Village in the South Rupununi located over 70 miles away from the hospital.

"I saw the doctors during one of their outreach visits and they identified my pregnancy as high-risk, and recommended I come here, so I came with them," Marisa says, sitting comfortably on her bed at the maternity waiting home. Here, she is just a few steps away from the hospital's maternity ward.





Marisa Edwards .

In far-flung villages like those in the Rupununi and Pakaraimas, home births are common among indigenous women due to many factors, including distance to a health facility and cultural norms. Travel from some of these communities to the hospital can take five to seven hours, making it difficult for pregnant women to seek timely care if needed.

Under the Support to Improve Maternal and Child Health Program supported by IDB

financing (GY-L1058), Guyana implemented key interventions in the hinterlands to improve access to and the use and quality of reproductive, maternal, and newborn health services. This included improvement and/or establishment of maternity waiting homes in Georgetown, Annai, and Lethem for women with high-risk pregnancies like Marisa, so they can be closer to a hospital and access timely care if needed.

“I am resting good right here. I enjoy the days with my friends, the ladies who come from the various villages,” Marisa relates.

Aside from the maternity waiting homes, the community health platform was strengthened to enhance services in the villages. This involved training and equipping community health workers (CHWs) and designing an incentive package to promote the use of maternal and neonatal health services. CHWs do outreach, contact health workers if needed, and work with the communities to ensure that pregnant women have a birth plan and family or community members ready to help their children when they go deliver or when they go to the maternity waiting home.



Lethem Maternity Waiting Home.

## A Source of Clean and Sustainable Energy Just at the Right Time

At Lethem, a Guyanese town bordering Brazil, burgeoning commerce continues to drive rapid demand for electricity.

“When I came here, the total peak demand would have been about 700 kilowatts... Presently, our peak is 1700 kilowatts,” says Lethem Power Company’s Chief Executive Officer Thurston Semple, who transferred to the location eight years ago.

More businesses are being established and public services are expanding at the hospital, schools, and police stations— all requiring reliable energy supply.

Thurston notes that the 1 MW Lethem solar photovoltaic farm commissioned in August



Lethem Solar PV Farm.

2022 “came at the right time” and is beneficial both for the company and the community, especially the more than 1,500 customers connected to the grid.

An investment in Guyana’s sustainable/cleaner energy solutions, the solar photovoltaic farm is financed through IDB loan GY-L1066, Strengthening Energy Matrix Diversification. The wider intervention involves installing 3.15 MW of solar photovoltaic power, connected to three mini-grid systems. A 1.5-megawatt solar farm at Bartica has been commissioned, while a 0.65-megawatt plant is under construction at Mahdia.

“Prior to the Lethem solar farm, all the generation came from diesel generator sets...and we would



Lethem Power Company’s Chief Executive Officer Thurston Semple.



run two, three, four sets depending on the load,” Thurston explains. Now, he says, the solar farm “provides a portion of the energy required. If the peak load for the day is 1500 kilowatts, we usually get between 700-800 at peak” from the solar farm.

This enables Thurston and the team to operate more efficiently, conduct maintenance, and improve the reliability of supply. Integration with a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System also means that the team now has for the first time a computerized system

for managing operations. Moreover, the CEO indicated that the Lethem has to date recorded diesel savings of more than 441,417 litres, 358,210 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub>, and 1,697 megawatt hours (MWh) of energy.

“This plays a very important role in the development that is coming and which is happening currently...The solar farm provides that stability helping us to maintain good power supply to the community and all the customers,” Thurston relates.

## STEM Students Earn Places at Prestigious Secondary School



Tyra Stephney and Richard Gordon with schoolmates.

Tyra Stephney and Richard Gordon of Mainstay/Whayaka village are convinced that their science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) classes are making their

families, school, and community proud. Both young students performed outstandingly at the National Grade Six Assessments (NGSA) in 2023, securing placements awarded at the

prestigious Anna Regina Secondary School, which secured the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate “School of the Year” award from the Caribbean Examinations Council in 2022.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, the school that Tyra and Richard were attending, Mainstay Lake Primary School, was forced to close. Soon after, STEM online classes were launched through the Guyana Learning Pod Project supported by IDB Lab, Tyra, Richard and other pupils began attending. The learning pods were designed to help minimize learning loss during the pandemic, especially in low-income and vulnerable communities of Guyana. The pods cater to students in grades 1 through 10 and classes are conducted in-person by a teacher or online by a facilitator.

“It really helped me a lot,” says Tyra, now a Grade

Seven secondary student. “When you come to STEM classes, you get to like doing schoolwork.” She believes the tutoring supplements her school lessons in English, math, and science. She also enjoys learning about technology, especially robotics.

“I learnt to build robots out of blocks, and I know how to program it,” says Richard. He emerged as the best graduating student at his primary school following the NGSA. Now an Eighth Grader at the secondary level, Richard says that STEM learning pod continues to positively impact his studies.

“I improved a lot from Form One to Form Two,” he declared.

Under the three-year STEM project, learning pods have been piloted in 40 vulnerable communities across Guyana, benefiting some 1,000 students – with Richard and Tyra proudly among them.

## Home Ownership Changing Lives

Junior Roberts’ face radiated with happiness, with his brand-new home standing tall in the background. But for Junior, a carpenter, the path to this moment had been anything but smooth.

Many years ago, Junior and his family began squatting on a plot of land on the dam in the state in Sophia, a developing community outside Georgetown. The family’s simple dwelling was made from used materials and offered a cramped refuge for Junior’s wife and four children.

“It was not a big house, and we never used to get water and electricity,” Junior shares, recalling his struggles. However, he remained hopeful for a better future.

Nine years later, Junior applied to the Ministry of Housing and Water for a house lot in Sophia. His application was approved, but Roberts could not



Junior Roberts in front of his new home.



afford to build a house so the family moved their existing living structure onto the land. But, as the family expanded with grandkids, the need for adequate housing became urgent.

“It was not easy. I wanted better for my family but as a poor man, building a proper house would take years as material and labour costs are not easily affordable to me,” Junior points out.

That changed through the government’s Adequate Housing and Urban Accessibility Program (AHUAP), which is supported by IDB loan GY-L1031. The program aims to improve the quality of life in urban and peri-urban Georgetown through better access to adequate housing and basic infrastructure for underserved communities, coupled with improved accessibility and mobility services.

This is achieved through two subprograms: the Home Improvement Subsidy, and the Core Home Support. The first focuses on repairs to roofs, walls, and floors, as well as interventions

to address overcrowding and sanitation improvements. It aims to support over 1,500 people. The second subprogram provides single family homes. Acknowledging the need to address vulnerable populations, the program promotes inclusiveness by prioritizing households led by single parents, female heads, and people with disabilities.

Junior and his family are one of 250 households that have so far benefited from the core homes. “My life has improved a lot because you don’t have to think about certain things— you have lights, you have water— everything now you have, and I see that as a big plus,” Junior says with contentment.

Now a proud homeowner for the first time, Junior plans to extend the house to fully accommodate other members of his extended family – marking the continuation of a journey that has transformed not just Junior Roberts’ home, but also the lives within it.



Over 250 households have so far benefited from core homes in Guyana.

## Transforming Lives through Improved Water and Sanitation

Pensioner Rohit Persaud spends his time helping to raise his grandchildren while managing a small roadside greens and vegetable stall a short distance from where he lives in Diamond, a thriving East Bank Demerara housing scheme with schools, police stations, banks, supermarkets, and offices dispensing a variety of services all the comfort Persaud needs in his old age.

But before these flourishing developments, things were not quite the same. In particular, poor water quality posed a health risk and a lack of water pressure made running a household problematic.

That changed thanks to a US\$16.8 million Water and Sanitation Project cofinanced by the IDB and European Union. Several new water treatment plants were built, including one at Diamond, Region Four, providing improved water supply services to the hundreds of residents between

Diamond and Herstelling.

“The water now has been coming in a more forceful way and is clean for human consumption,” reports Persaud.

Similar plants were constructed at Uitvlugt, Region Three to service areas between Cornelia Ida to De Kinderen, and at Sheet Anchor, Region Six to service Goed Bananen Land to No. 19 Public Road. The plant at Shelterbelt in Georgetown was also rehabilitated.

These infrastructural investments have enabled Persaud and the other 53,000 other residents on the coastland to do their household chores and gardening with ease.

“This improvement means a lot,” explained Nandkrishna Mohan, another Diamond resident. “We depend on water, and we depend on quality water that we can use for all things.”



Nandkrishna Mohan.



The water treatment plant at Diamond, East Bank Demerara has contributed to improved water pressure and supply.



The project also included components to improve sanitation, reduce non-revenue water, and strengthen the institutional capacity of Guyana Water Inc. (GWI). More than 300

households now enjoy the comfort of a flush toilet and accompanying sink in their home, and GWI has reported a reduction in water losses and more capable management teams.

## Upgrades to Guyana Power and Light Are Paying Dividends



Amir Dillawar, Program Coordinator at the Guyana Power and Light Inc.

Guyana Power and Light (GPL), Guyana's main electricity supplier, continues to implement targeted initiatives to improve the efficiency and reliability of service to its growing customer base.

Through the Power Utility Upgrade Program (PUUP) cofinanced by the IDB and the European Union, GPL responded to the core of its challenges with network infrastructure upgrades, enhancing operation efficiency and strengthening management.

Amir Dillawar, a seasoned employee at GPL, served as Program Coordinator of PUUP during its close-out phase. He explains that the program paid great attention to upgrading infrastructure and the roll-out of smart meters.

These infrastructure upgrades and the strengthening of GPL's senior management team have

contributed to improvements in various areas of the utility's operations.

"The program was key to the utility being able to reduce what is known as losses," Amir says. "A lot of work also went into restructuring and streamlining processes, ensuring that GPL can operate from the human resources standpoint in an effective manner."



Through the Power Utility Upgrade Program (PUUP) cofinanced by the IDB and the European Union, GPL responded to the core of its challenges with network infrastructure upgrades.

Amir highlights that GPL was able to reduce losses from 31.4 percent in 2013 to somewhere in the vicinity of 26 percent at the end of 2022. “This means that we are now able to deliver more power to our customers because less is loss in the network,” he explains.

Additionally, to enhance operational efficiency, GPL technicians and engineers were trained to better utilize the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) System. Similar strengthening was done within GPL’s System Planning and Research Department.

The PUUP closed in May 2023, but Amir reports that GPL today is way better equipped to tackle common and new challenges than it was prior to commencement of the program more than half a

decade ago. He adds that other IDB-supported interventions in the energy sector, including the ongoing Energy Matrix Diversification and Institutional Strengthening of the Department of Energy (EMISDE) Program (GY-L1066), will complement earlier successes achieved under the PUUP. Under that operation, a 69 KV transmission infrastructure is being reinforced with the installation of a backup transmission line between the Kingston and Sophia Substations.

This will help avoid lengthy power outages in the event of a trip on the transmission line. Moreover, vital equipment will be installed at four substations to provide support to the transmission system.

## Safe Paths for Pedestrians

Before 2021, when construction worker Simon Nurse stepped out for an evening stroll along the Sheriff/Mandela Road he sometimes felt like he was taking his life in his hands. The then narrow-two lane road was a congested corridor of vehicular traffic without sidewalks for pedestrians or cycle lanes.

“It was very dangerous for people using the road, especially pedestrians,” Simon recalls.

In 2018, more than 20,000 vehicles were reported traversing the Sheriff/Mandela Road daily. At peak hours, vehicular traffic reached 1,500 per hour vehicles, even though the road had a capacity for only 1,300.

Recognizing the growing danger to lives and limbs, the government of Guyana invested to expand the roadway.

The design consciously incorporated pedestrian safety at its core. With support from the IDB, the Sheriff/Mandela Road enhancement project facilitated widening of approximately 7.1 km of

roadway along what is one of the country’s main urban corridors.

Sprawling sidewalks were installed as well as pedestrian crossings, guardrails, traffic signs, and clearly marked traffic signals at strategic locations. Bus stops were demarcated, and pedestrian-actuated signals were installed.



Simon Nurse.





As part of upgrade to the Sherriff Street-Mandela roadway, sidewalks were installed as well as pedestrian crossings.

Moreover, for the first time in Guyana, there are cycle lanes. At night, streetlights now illuminate the roadway, discouraging motorists from using their high beam lamps, which could hamper the sight of incoming drivers and cause an accident.

Pointing to the raised sidewalk design and the physical separation of the sidewalks from the

vehicular traffic, Simon says “I feel safe and comfortable walking on these sidewalks now.”

He adds that traffic lights and pedestrian crossings have brought “orderliness to the corridor, making it easier for pedestrians to maneuver along the roadway,” especially during heavy traffic.

## New Sheriff/Mandela Roadway Brings Relief to Commuters

We all know the frustration of sometimes getting stuck in traffic causing us to be late for work. But for years this was the experience every day for Anil Algoo, a machine operator in the West Bank Demerara who travels approximately 30 km from his home to work at Cummings Lodge on the outskirts of Georgetown.

“We had a lot of traffic build up and it was not nice,” Anil reflects.

In June 2012, the IDB approved Guyana’s Road Network Upgrade and Expansion Program (GY-L1031), which included the Sheriff/Mandela roadway, a main artery connecting the East Coast Demerara to the East Bank Demerara.

The latter route connects to the West Bank and West Coast thoroughfare accessible via the Demerara River bridge.

The improvements spelled relief for Anil.

“I now arrive at work five minutes early on most days,” he notes, adding that thanks to expansion of the road, he can also drive heavy-duty vehicles with ease and less fear of an accident.

Indeed, in addition to reducing travel times, the project aimed to enhance safety, reduce road fatalities, and reduce vehicle operating costs.

The operation also included design and development of a Road Safety Action Plan for Guyana as well as institutional strengthening of key public sector departments responsible for managing the country’s transport infrastructure.



Anil Algoo.



## How Solar Energy Is Empowering Indigenous Women



Noreen Alfred and Anita Baretto.

The energy sector in Guyana is traditionally a male-dominated workplace, but in recent times the current has been gradually shifting towards gender equality.

In the booming border town of Lethem and across Region Nine, this change is evident with the training of indigenous women to install and repair solar panels. Almost every household in the scattered and scenic villages of the region is equipped with a solar panel provided by the government of Guyana, so there is need for local capacity to conduct repairs.

Noreen Alfred resides in St Ignatius Village and is one of 32 women in the region who benefitted from training in basic solar photovoltaic technology conducted by the Board of Industrial Training. The training was carried out through the IDB-supported Women Economic Empowerment Programme.

“I believe that women should be taking up positions where they are not just engaged in household work but are also involved in their community development,” says Noreen. She points with pride to the significant development in Lethem and its environs, and to the use of

greener energy like solar as a way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Similar training was conducted in the mineral-rich town of Bartica, Region Seven. In all, 78 women from 19 villages have been trained in Regions Seven and Nine. The women advise and assist villagers on the purchase and installation of solar panels, and are on call when a panel malfunctions or goes out.

“It really came in helpful for the community,” said Anita Baretto, another beneficiary of the training who lives in Quarry, a Central Rupununi village. She tells of repairing a damaged solar panel at the guest house in her community with the aid of a woman colleague.

In short, in today’s Guyana villagers no longer depend solely on their menfolk to fix and maintain power supplies in their homes—a step forward in bridging the gender equality gap in the energy sector.



Women’s involvement in the renewable energy sector is key for sustainability and growth.







