REPUBLIEK SURINAME

Essential Air Transport Service for Remote Communities in Suriname (SU-L1071)

Indigenous People Plan

PlanEHS

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1   Introduction

Suriname is a multi-ethnic country known for its cultural diversity and relative harmony among its different groups. Indigenous peoples constitute a significant portion of the population, contributing uniquely to the nation's cultural fabric, history, and connection with the land.

According to the 2012 census, Suriname's Indigenous population comprises 20,344 individuals, representing 3.8% of the country's total population of 541,638. The largest Indigenous groups are the Kali'ña (Kalina or Caribs), Lokono (Arawaks), Trio, and Wayana. There are also smaller Indigenous groups living in the southern interior, such as the Akurio, Apalai, and Wai-Wai, among others.

This socio-cultural analysis focuses on three Indigenous communities in Suriname: The Lokono, Kalina and Trio, for the proximity of the communities to the project. Each of these groups presents distinct cultural practices, and ways of life, yet they share common challenges regarding land rights, environmental conservation and socio-economic development.

This report seeks to provide an in-depth understanding of their socio-cultural context, the legal frameworks, the potential impacts of the project, and recommendations for mitigating adverse effects.

The Lokono (Arawaks) primarily inhabit the northern, coastal areas of Suriname. Known as "lowland Indigenous peoples," the Lokono have long-standing traditions that revolve around fishing, agriculture, and maintaining a close connection to coastal ecosystems. Their settlements are typically located near rivers, which are central to their livelihood and cultural practices. Despite increasing modernization in the coastal areas, Lokono communities continue to maintain traditional governance structures and cultural rituals, including ceremonies and oral storytelling that transmit knowledge across generations.

Similarly, the Kalina inhabit the coastal and riverine areas of Suriname, particularly in the northern regions. They are also known as a "lowland Indigenous people," and traditionally depended on fishing, hunting, and small-scale agriculture, cultivating crops such as cassava and plantains. The Kalina hold a deep connection to their ancestral lands, which are not only sources of livelihood but also spaces for cultural expression and spiritual practices. The Kalina maintain traditional social structures, with leadership often determined by a *Granman* or village chiefs. Decision-making is typically a communal process, with elders and community members playing important roles. Cultural identity remains strong, with oral traditions, spiritual practices, and ceremonies at the heart of their daily lives.

The Trio, in contrast, live in the isolated rainforests of southern Suriname, particularly in the Sipaliwini district. Their remote location has allowed them to maintain a largely traditional way of life, based on hunting, fishing, and subsistence agriculture. The Trio has a deep spiritual connection to the rainforest, and their social structure is organized around community cooperation, with decision-making typically conducted by a council of elders and shamans. In recent years, the Trio have faced pressures from external factors such as deforestation, mining, and the spread of modern amenities, which threaten their environment and cultural practices.

The legal framework in Suriname regarding Indigenous peoples is a critical component of this analysis, particularly considering the lack of formal land ownership rights for many Indigenous communities. Suriname has not yet fully recognized the territorial rights of its Indigenous population, despite international pressure and recommendations from bodies like the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Indigenous communities in Suriname often lack formal recognition of their traditional lands, which complicates their ability to assert control over natural resources and protect their cultural heritage.

The Indigenous Peoples have voiced concerns about the potential exploitation of their land for economic projects, including infrastructure development, mining, and logging. While the Surinamese government has made commitments to improve the recognition of Indigenous rights, there remains a gap between legal recognition and practical implementation.

For this project, adherence to international standards is essential. Specifically, the project must comply with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Environmental and Social Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples (ESPS 7). The primary is to ensure the protection and respect of Indigenous Peoples' rights in development projects. It aims to safeguard their cultures, territories, and traditional knowledge while promoting equitable participation in development benefits. ESPS 7 ensures that Indigenous Peoples are not negatively impacted by projects and that their cultural heritage and livelihoods are preserved. This standard underscore the necessity of Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) with Indigenous communities, ensuring that they are fully involved in all stages of the project. ESPS 7 also emphasizes the need for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), a process that guarantees Indigenous communities the right to be consulted on any project that may affect them and to give or withhold their consent based on adequate information.

This report will be structured as follows:

- **Background information**: This section provides an overview of the objectives and components of the project, offering context for the analysis and outlining the scope of the work.
- **Legal Framework for Indigenous Peoples in Suriname**: A thorough examination of the national and international legal frameworks relevant to Indigenous peoples, including international conventions, Suriname's constitution, and legislation related to land rights and natural resources. This section will also cover specific legal provisions for the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples
- **Sociocultural Analysis (SCA):** This section delves into the socio-cultural landscape of Suriname's Indigenous communities, with detailed profiles of the Lokono, Kalina, and Trio peoples. It will explore land tenure, economic activities, social structures, key non-governmental organizations (NGOs), education, healthcare, access to essential services, and vulnerability to environmental threats.
- **Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP):** This critical section will identify potential risks and impacts associated with the project, along with specific mitigation measures tailored to the Indigenous communities. It will include a detailed analysis of the impacts on the Trio community in Kwamalasamutu, as well as general impacts on Indigenous peoples. The IPP will also outline strategies for ensuring culturally appropriate consultations and the establishment of grievance mechanisms to address community concerns.
- **Implementation Arrangements and Monitoring**: This section will describe the framework for implementing the Indigenous Peoples Plan, including the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders. It will also detail the monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure that the project's impacts on Indigenous peoples are properly assessed and managed, and corrective

actions are taken when necessary. Monitoring indicators, instruments, and transparent reporting processes will be discussed to ensure accountability and inclusivity throughout the project's lifecycle.

2   General Scope

2.1 Socio-cultural analysis and Indigenous Peoples Plan Objectives.

Suriname is a small, open, commodity-based economy in the Amazonia that is vulnerable to external shocks and natural disasters. With an area of 164,000 km^2 and a population of around 623,000, 93% of the country's population and infrastructure are concentrated in the greater Paramaribo area and along the Atlantic coast, leaving isolated rural communities in the interior with little access to healthcare, food, and basic services.

Much of the country areas located further from the coastline are only accessible by boat or aircraft, exacerbating the development gap between the country's interior regions and the capital. The interior region is home to remote communities where 99% identify as Maroon (afro-descendent) or Amerindian (Indigenous).

By connecting communities and enabling the movement of people and resources, air transport plays a multifaceted role in facilitating access to basic services such as healthcare, education, employment, and essential goods.

General Objectives:

- Develop a comprehensive Indigenous Peoples Plan, ensuring the protection of the rights, interests and cultural heritage of the Indigenous communities. Safeguard the land, cultural traditions, and livelihoods of the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina peoples by adhering to national and international standards, including the IDB's ESPS 7.
- Promote Equitable participation and consultation. Facilitate inclusive and culturally appropriate consultations with the Indigenous communities, ensuring that their voices are heard and integrated into the decision-making process regarding the airport improvement project.

Specific Objectives:

- Analyze the socio-cultural context of the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina communities: Conduct a thorough analysis of their social structures, livelihoods, land use, cultural practices, education, health, and vulnerabilities to identify potential project impacts.
- Ensure Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC): Establish mechanisms for meaningful engagement, allowing the communities to fully understand and agree to the project's activities, impacts, and benefits.
- Identify key risks and mitigation measures: Evaluate the specific environmental, cultural, and social risks posed by the airport improvement project and develop clear strategies to minimize negative consequences for the Indigenous populations.
- Strengthen community resilience: Propose initiatives aimed at enhancing the resilience of Indigenous communities against environmental and economic threats, including improving access to essential services such as education, healthcare, and infrastructure.
- Monitor and evaluate impacts continuously: Set up a comprehensive monitoring system to track the social and environmental impacts on Indigenous communities throughout the project's lifecycle, ensuring adaptive management and corrective actions where needed.

2.2 Geographic Scope

The geographic scope of this analysis encompasses the areas where the airports are located and the Indigenous communities that may be directly or indirectly affected by the project. These locations are illustrated in Figure 1.
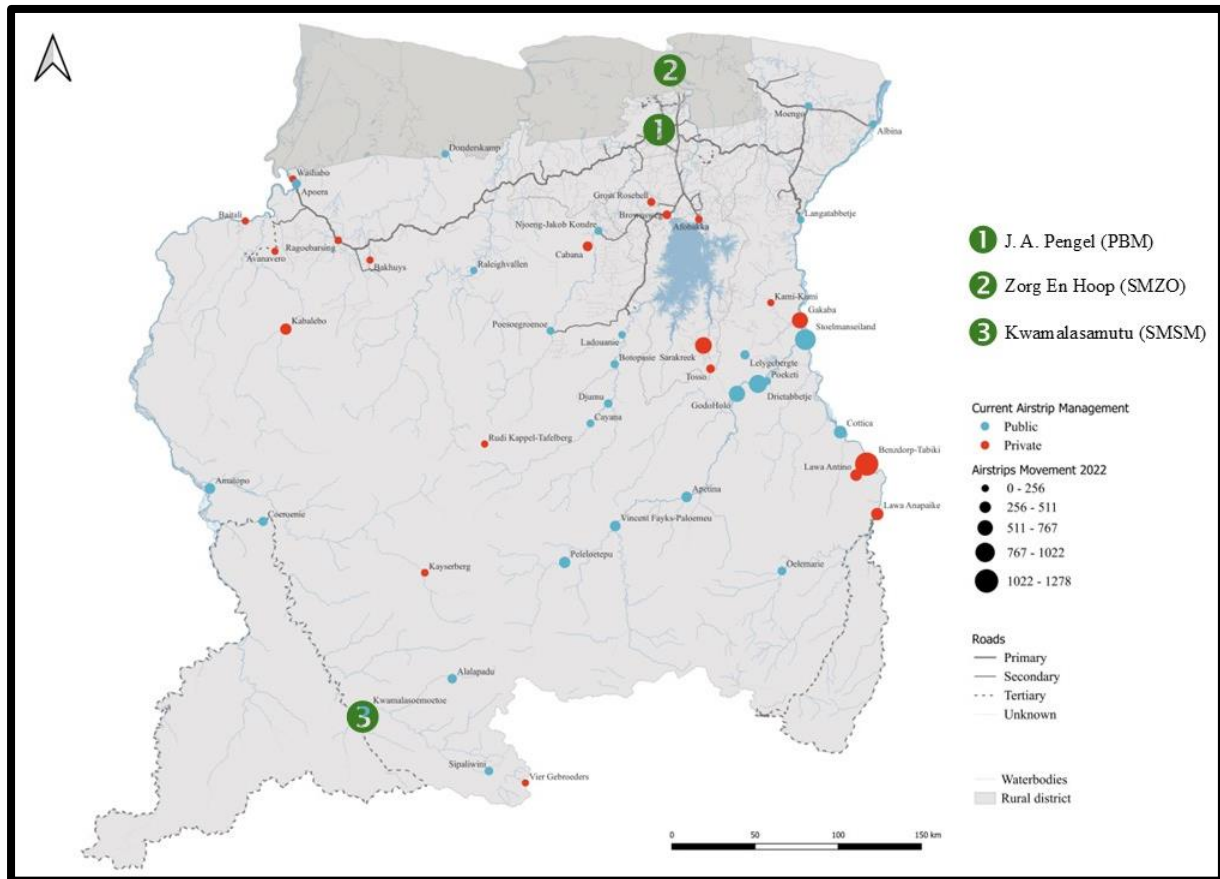
Figure 1 - Projects locations and existing airstrips in Suriname. Source ESRS

In the project areas, **three Indigenous communities can be found, the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina**, as shown in **Figure 2 and 3.**

No Maroons communities are identified in the project area of influence.
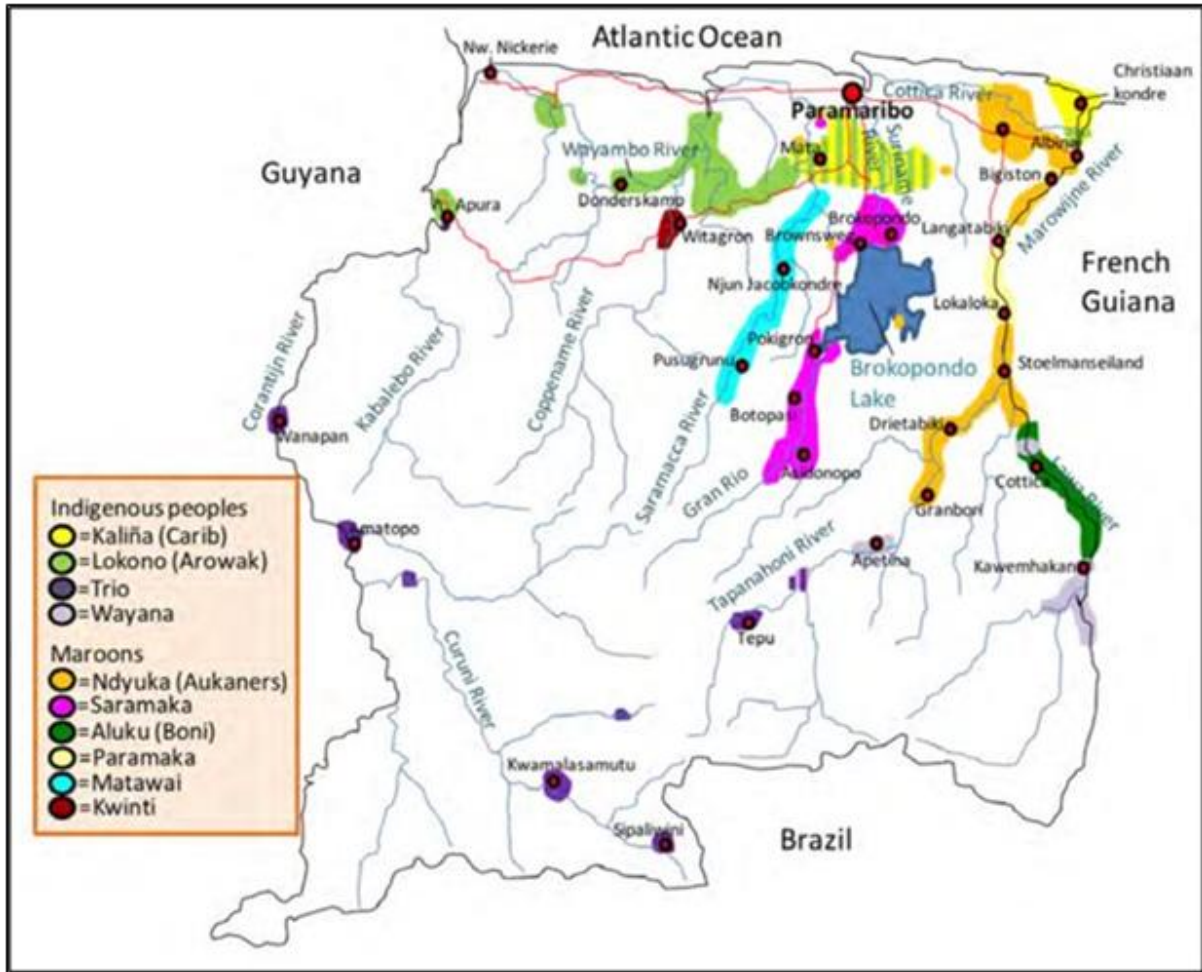
Figure 2 – Demarcation of Indigenous and maroon lands in Suriname (Heemskerk, M). Source: Heemskerk, M (2009)[1]

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[1] Report commissioned by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and Amazon Conservation Team Suriname. (2009). http://mariekeheemskerk.org/Reports/Demarcation_final May2009.pdf
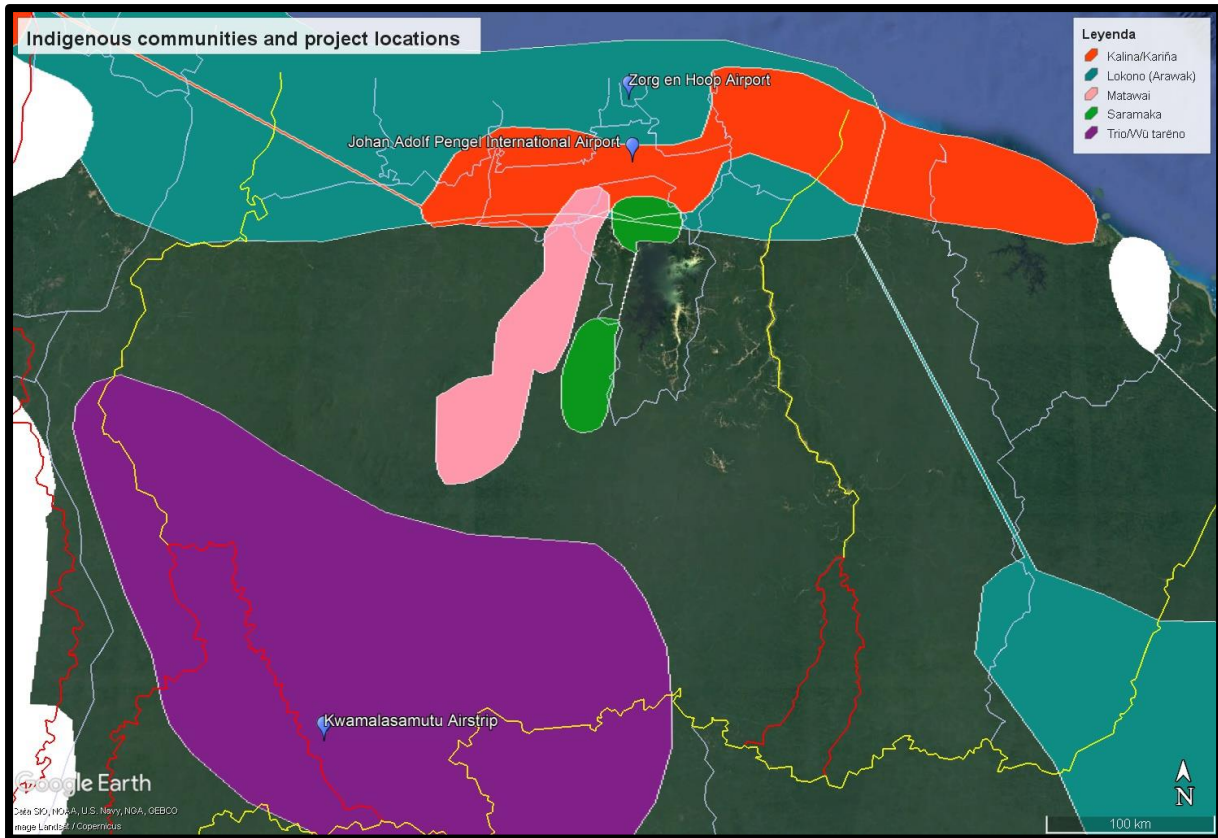
Figure 3 - Indigenous communities and project locations. Source: Prepared by the author using ARCQGIS: Native land Digital Territories [2]

2.2.1   Kwamalasamutu Airstrip Area

The **Trio Indigenous community** resides predominantly in the area surrounding the Kwamalasamutu Airstrip. The project activities in this region could have both environmental and social implications.

2.2.2   Zorg En Hoop Airport Area

While the **Lokono Indigenous community** resides in the general area surrounding **Zorg En Hoop Airport**, it is important to note that the airport itself is located within the urbanized portion of **Paramaribo City**, the capital of Suriname.

The airport itself is situated in a highly urbanized zone. Therefore, there is no Indigenous community directly within the airport's immediate area of influence. Given the airport's urban setting and its integration into Paramaribo's urban sprawl, it can be asserted that Indigenous peoples do not primarily sustain their livelihoods in this immediate vicinity.

This urban setting minimizes the direct cultural or economic impact on the Lokono, although some general impacts, such as changes in transportation or access to employment, should still be considered.

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[2]https://services6.arcgis.com/SC70xY1nSLm15pYn/arcgis/rest/services/Native_Land_Digital_territories/Featur eServer

2.2.3 Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport Area:

The Kalina community historically occupied lands in the area surrounding the Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport. The communities in the direct vicinity of the project are Hollandse Kamp and Wit Santie.

The planned activities, which involve the acquisition and installation of a new energy-efficient communication antenna to enhance air transport operations and revenue collection, as well as a detailed digital assessment for Airport Management Ltd (N.V. Luchthavenbeheer - LHB), are not expected to generate significant or differential impacts on the surrounding Indigenous communities. Additionally, the program will support training and capacity-building initiatives. Despite the proximity of these communities, the nature of the activities does not pose risks that would require special treatment or mitigation measures. Nevertheless, ongoing monitoring and continued engagement with the Kalina people will ensure that any concerns are addressed promptly, maintaining transparency and fostering positive relations.

2.3 Main components of the IPP

This Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) is structured around several key components designed to ensure a thorough understanding of the potential impacts on Indigenous communities and the implementation of appropriate mitigation and consultation measures. The report includes:

- **Legal Framework Analysis**: A comprehensive review of Suriname's national legal framework as it pertains to the rights and protections of Indigenous peoples. This includes an evaluation of the alignment between local laws and international standards, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) rulings and the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 169 on Indigenous Peoples.
- **Socio-Cultural Analysis**: An in-depth analysis of the socio-cultural characteristics of the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina communities. This includes a review of their social organization, livelihoods, cultural practices, education, health, and vulnerabilities, with a focus on how these may be impacted by the airport improvement project. This analysis is critical for identifying both the risks and opportunities associated with the project.
- **Impact Assessment**: A detailed evaluation of the specific social, cultural, and environmental impacts of the airport improvement project on each Indigenous community. This section examines both the direct and indirect effects on land use, resource access, and cultural integrity, ensuring that all potential risks are accounted for.
- **Mitigation Measures and Action Plan**: The development of specific mitigation strategies to address the identified impacts on Indigenous communities. This section includes a detailed action plan outlining the steps required to minimize negative impacts and enhance positive outcomes for the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina peoples.
- **Stakeholder engagement, including culturally appropriate consultations, grievance mechanism and a Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC):** Documentation of the consultations held with the Indigenous communities, ensuring compliance with the Environmental and Social Performance Standard 7: Indigenous Peoples This includes a schedule of past and future consultations, as well as an outline of the methods used to ensure meaningful and culturally appropriate engagement.

3 Program Description

This chapter presents a description of the **Essential Air Transport Service for Remote Communities in Suriname Program (SU-L1071),** including objectives, components, as well as the projects that are part of the Program.

3.1 Objectives

The program's general objective is to contribute to a safe and connected air transport sector for Suriname.

The specific objectives are to:

(i)   improve compliance with civil aviation safety and security standards; and

(ii)   improve quality and resilience of air transport infrastructure.

3.2 Components

The project has 3 main components:

Component 1: Improvements in the institutional and legal framework (US$4,000,000). This Component will finance the following activities

1. **Restructuration of Suriname's civil aviation system and institutional capacity strengthening**, through:

   (i)   developing a new aviation legal framework that will establish clear roles and responsibilities for CASAS, CADSUR, and the future accident investigation unit, and by addressing air transport policies to improve the financial sustainability of the civil aviation system, while incorporating climate mitigation and resilience measures under diverse climate scenarios and shared economic pathways (SPP);[3]

   (ii)   developing and supporting the organizational structure and establishing a Civil Aviation Master Plan (CAMP) for CASAS that incorporates climate change adaptation and resilience, as well as climate mitigation strategies for the sector[4], implementing a human resource development plan with recruitment, training, and retention strategies for inspectors in all critical areas, as well as restructuring CADSUR's workforce, focusing on meteorological personnel[5], ATC specialists[6] and auxiliary services; and

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[3]   This will include: (i) the development of the new legislative framework under which the civil aviation administration will be structured, considering the necessary compatibility with Suriname legal environment, including provisions to ensure that international air navigation meteorological services in Suriname will be available 24/7 and including the necessary delegations/authorities in the legislation; (ii) the development of the legal provisions for creating the recommended civil aviation structure, clearly defining its competences particularly in relation to financial management and personnel matters; and (iii) the provision of expert advice to the Ministry of Transportation, as required, during the approval process of new legislation. Additionally, the policy framework will be guided by ICAO's basket of measures for climate change mitigation and incorporate considerations to leverage climate scenarios for robust infrastructure planning including SPP1-2.6 - emissions decline to net zero after 2050 and SSP5-8.5 - emissions roughly double from current levels by 2050, as guided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

[4]   **ICAO Annex 16 - Environmental Protection** and **Greenhouse Gas Management and Mitigation at Airports**, ICAO 2022.

[5]   Including climate change data interpretation and use in civil aviation, considering different scenarios.

[6] CO_2 emissions from operations can be reduced through the optimization of air traffic management and ICAO has developed the Global Air Navigation Plan (GANP) and the Aviation System Block Upgrades (ASBU) initiatives in this regard.

(iii)   developing an economic plan/strategy to support CASAS and CADSUR, including a comprehensive economic study of the current air transport system, a study of the potential growth of aviation in Suriname including an initial financial, operational and regulatory risk scenario analysis, a review of the financial status of CASAS and CADSUR, a digital readiness assessment outlining their digital infrastructure needs and roadmap with an emphasis on addressing climate impacts in the aviation sector, a look at the revenue generated from overflight fees and a comprehensive economic analysis for ensuring a financially viable aviation system.

2. **Strengthening of CASAS' regulatory capacity, by:**
    (i)   developing regulatory documentation and guidance material, conducting a gap analysis of existing regulations and procedures followed, and developing updated frameworks for AIG, PEL, AIR, OPS, ANS, AGA, Environmental Protection and Safety Management Systems (SMS) misaligned with ICAO Annexes;[7] and
    (ii)   implementing comprehensive training programs: one oriented for managers to equip them with skills to develop sustainable plans for Suriname's civil aviation industry and another for inspectors to equip them with the necessary skills to conduct regulatory and oversight tasks effectively.[8]

3. **Strengthening sustainability policies and contributing to decarbonizing the sector,** by developing a State Action Plan for Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) that encourages sustainable production[9], distribution, and use.

4. **Gender and diversity actions**:
    (i)   Elaboration of a diagnosis, policy, and gender action plan to reduce gender gaps and encourage women's labor participation in the air transport sector[10], and
    (ii)   job internships program for women and People with Disabilities (PwD) in non-traditional jobs at the SMZO.

Component 2: Improvements in the air transport control and operations (US$5,000,000). This Component will finance the following activities:

1. **Enhancement of air navigation capacity and efficiency,** by assisting in reviewing and updating the national air navigation plan, with cost-benefit analysis and key performance indicators to address the implementation and maintenance of CNS infrastructure at optimal levels, prioritizing the national segment of the ATN (Aeronautical Telecommunication Network) and improving communication and surveillance coverage for air traffic control, as well as human resource development for ATM and CNS.[11][12]

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[7]   Additionally, comprehensive guidance manuals and handbooks for inspectors will be created.

[8]   It will also include on-the-job training for each specific procedure. The trainings will also include elements of resilience planning, disaster risk response and CC and aviation sustainability.

[9]   The ICAO and IATA encourages policies which are harmonized across countries and industries. SAF should not compete with food crops or water supplies or contribute to forest degradation. In Suriname, in accordance with national climate goals, production should be exclusively based on biomass. If crop-based production is necessary, the action plan must incorporate deforestation mitigation measures.

[10]   Including recruitment policies, equal wage, life-work balance gender-based violence prevention.

[11]   Specialist assessments will be conducted to identify gaps in ATM and CNS staffing and training. Based on this assessment, a comprehensive plan will be created to address these gaps and develop a skilled workforce, thru policies on staff recruitment and retainment.

[12]   For there to be effective implementation of the GANP and ASBU for this savings to be realized, individual countries have to take the necessary steps to update their legislation and/or regulations, develop plans and manuals and training of air navigation personnel in line with these initiatives.

2. **Establishment of an independent air Accident Investigation Authority (AIA),** operating autonomously and complying with international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).[13] This includes:

   (i)   capacity building and procedure development, with definition of procedures and protocols as well as staff training.

   (ii)   implementation of infrastructure and resources; and

   (iii)   acquisition of Search and Rescue (SAR) software and systems.

3. **Definition of a new international standard-based fee structure and collection mechanism** using new digital tools that will allow to better identify, quantify, and monitor the collection of the appropriate fees, resulting mainly from air navigation services provided to airlines, and that will be efficiently used to cover operations and maintenance of all airstrips nationwide.

4. Other improvements in air navigation surveillance, such as the development of updated flight manifests for domestic passengers and cargo for security and fee collection.

Component 3: Enhancement and maintenance of Suriname's air transport infrastructure (US$ 10,000,000). This component will finance these activities:

1. **PBM international airport interventions.** Activities will include:
   (i)   acquisition and installation of a new energy-efficient communication antenna, to improve air transport operations and fly-over revenues collection.

   (ii)   a detailed digital assessment for the Airport Management Ltd.; and

   (iii)   training and capacity building.

2. **SMZO domestic hub improvements.** Activities will include:
   (i)   rehabilitation/upgrading of existing land-side facilities considering mitigation and adaptation measures[14] to ensure resilient, safe, and secure air transport operations.

   (ii)   implementation of care facilities such as child-friendly bathrooms and lactation rooms.

   (iii)   acquisition and installation of energy-efficient[15] aeronautical equipment to ensure secure operation of the airport; and (iv) inclusion of people with

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[13]   Preliminary activities that are required for the establishment of the AIA, defined as conditions prior to the disbursement of the loan resources for Component 2, are already under process like the review and update of ICAO's CARS 014 regulations (Civil Aviation Regulations related to Aircraft Accident and Incident Investigation), the identification of sustainable financing and the legislative amendment required to establish this new authority. The development model for the AIA that has been recommended by a recent consultancy financed by the Bank (see **OEL#4**), with the support from ICAO, and agreed by the MTCT is the "Integrated Model" which consists of establishing an independent investigative body that will remain at the beginning administratively attached to CASAS. This structure allows leveraging CASAS's existing infrastructure while maintaining operational independence, serving as an efficient provisional solution until the necessary legislative changes are made to establish a fully independent authority, separate from the Attorney General, with its own budget, dedicated staff, and facilities, ensuring full operational autonomy and the ability to conduct independent and thorough investigations.

[14]   The operation is guided by the "**Technical guidance to align IDB group operations with the Paris Agreement** - Building Sector" (IDB 2024), regarding the application of minimum criteria for bioclimatic design, energy efficiency and renewable energy in the interventions on land-side airport/aerodrome facilities, including but not limited to green labels, use of low GHG construction materials, high energy performance of electrical/electronic systems and equipment, solar protection on windows, thermal insulation, solar reflectance, efficient glasses, natural ventilation, efficient air conditioning systems, efficient heating, efficient lightning, and efficient water consumption.

[15]   The equipment will follow energy efficiency standards and labelling (EES&L) in accordance with **IAE Achievements of Energy Efficiency Appliance and Equipment Standards and Labelling Programmes.**

disabilities and women at Zorg en Hoop aerodrome through labor and internships[16].

3. **Pilot for all-weather aerodrome modernization serving Amerindian communities**. Activities will include:

(i) works for the rehabilitation of Kwamalasamutu Aerodrome (SMSM) to optimize operations for safe and efficient transport services including school supplies, and health services, using climate-smart materials that are lightweight and that have proven their worth providing an all-weather surface for landing in similar contexts;[17]

(ii) acquisition and installation of energy-efficient[18] aeronautical equipment to ensure secure operation of the aerodrome; and

(iii) training and capacity building, including local communities (in particular Amerindians) for disaster and resilience planning, response, and maintenance of the airstrip.

3.3 Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the Program include air transport users, estimated at 465,000 per year, including Amerindian communities (3% of Suriname's total population) to a greater extent, by ensuring sustainable accessibility to very isolated regions of the country, improving safety conditions for operations and reducing the time and cost of transporting people and goods, which currently must be done by other modes of transport.

Expected results from the construction of the airstrips include narrowing gaps in essential services such as education and healthcare in remote areas by facilitating the efficient delivery of medical and food supplies, as well as enabling the transportation of teachers to schools or medical staff and patients to hospitals. Additionally, employment opportunities may be increased for women, People with Disabilities (PwD), and Trio populations through internships and capacity building for maintenance roles.

3.4 Costs and Financing

The total cost of the Project is **USD$ 20 million**. This financing will be provided entirely by a loan operation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

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[16] It is important to clarify that the loan resources will be used to facilitate the process of hiring new employees or interns (i.e. publication and promotion of vacancy announcements) and for training sessions, they won't be used to pay the salaries of employees or interns.

[17] Preliminary designs include lightweight and easy-to-transport technologies such as a Geoweb base with a reinforced top layer to improve the current conditions of runways. The Geoweb technology has been used for airstrip upgrading in similar contexts and presents the following advantages: (i) easier maintenance: low risk of rutting, erosion, or deformation; (ii) cost-effectiveness: stabilizes local soil material instead of transport material from elsewhere; (iii) installation equipment: less heavy equipment than conventional asphalt pavement; and (iv) versatility: can be customized to accommodate various soil conditions and site-specific requirements.

[18] The equipment will follow energy efficiency standards and labelling (EES&L) in accordance with **IAE Achievements of Energy Efficiency Appliance and Equipment Standards and Labelling Programmes.**

The project is structured as a **Specific Investment Loan**, to be financed with resources from the Bank's Ordinary Capital (OC). The execution activities along with the timeline and costs to be supported by the operation are in the Program Operations Manual (POM). The execution plan projects for civil works, technology systems, and institutional strengthening activities will take 72 months to complete, it is expected that the loan will be disbursed in six years.

4 Legal Framework for Indigenous Peoples of Suriname

Suriname recognizes the rights of Amerindian communities to their traditional lands. The country's constitution acknowledges the existence of Indigenous peoples and their rights to land and resources. In practice, however, the formal recognition and demarcation of these territories can be complex and may face challenges, including legal, political, and economic pressures. The government has been working towards better legal frameworks for land rights, but issues around land tenure and access to resources continue to be a concern for Indigenous communities[19]

Furthermore, the legal framework in Suriname regarding Indigenous peoples is a critical component of the analysis, particularly considering the **lack of formal land ownership rights** for Indigenous communities. Suriname has not yet fully recognized the territorial rights of its Indigenous population.

Suriname needs a comprehensive legal framework to protect and recognize Indigenous peoples. The legal framework regarding Indigenous peoples in Suriname has been a matter of ongoing concern and development, primarily due to the absence of formal recognition of Indigenous land rights. Despite international obligations, Suriname faces challenges in fully implementing legal protections for Indigenous peoples, with several draft legislations that still need to manage to be finalized.

Several legislations and laws in the country intersect with Indigenous populations' rights to life and livelihoods. As expected, many of these are related to land rights, natural resources, and ecosystem services. These legislations are as follows:

4.1 International Conventions and Agreements

Suriname is one of the few countries in South America that has not ratified ILO Convention 169. Nevertheless, it is a party to several international agreements that recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples:

- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR**) Suriname is bound by the ICCPR, which guarantees the rights of all peoples, including Indigenous peoples, to self-determination and protection of their cultural and property rights.
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**. This treaty, which Suriname has ratified, reinforces peoples' rights to dispose of their natural resources freely and the state's obligation to ensure that development respects the rights of affected communities.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)** Suriname is also a party to CERD, which mandates the elimination of racial discrimination, including the need to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples.
- **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)** While the UNDRIP, adopted in 2007, is not legally binding, it is an essential international standard for Indigenous rights. Suriname voted to favor the declaration, which emphasizes Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination, land, territories, and natural resources. However, implementing these principles remains a challenge at the national level.

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[19] **https://minorityrights.org/communities/indigenous-peoples-in-suriname/**

- **United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** is an expert body that monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It reviews periodic reports submitted by States Parties and makes recommendations to improve the protection and fulfillment of children's rights.
- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)** establishes legal standards for the elimination of gender discrimination. It requires States Parties to take affirmative action to promote gender equality and empower women in all aspects of life, including political, economic, social, and cultural spheres
- **Inter-American System of Human Rights** Suriname is a member of the Organization of American States (OAS) and is subject to rulings from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR). The IACHR has issued several critical rulings regarding Indigenous land rights in Suriname including the landmark case of the Kalina and Lokono v. Suriname. In its 2015 ruling the (IACtHR) mandated that the state of Suriname recognize the collective legal personality of Indigenous peoples. The court further required Suriname to establish an effective mechanism for the delimitation, demarcation, and titling of their territories, adopt domestic legal remedies to ensure adequate collective access to justice for these communities, and guarantee their meaningful participation through a consultation process[20]. Indigenous groups allies and advocates report that none of the legal provisions of the ruling have been established to date.[21]

4.1.1 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Performance Standards.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has its own set of Environmental and Social Performance Standards that are applied to its projects, including those that impact Indigenous peoples. These standards are encapsulated within the IDB's Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF), which guides how to engage with Indigenous peoples in a way that respects their rights, cultures, and livelihoods.

Given that the project will be financed by a loan from the Inter-American Development Bank, the environmental and social safeguards policies established in the Bank's Environmental and Social Policy Framework must be considered in its design, construction, and operation.

The ESPF highlights the respect for human rights at the center of environmental and social risk management and includes a specific standard on gender equality and on work and working conditions that is aligned with the main international conventions.

To guarantee open, transparent, and inclusive participation during the design and implementation of the project, the ESPF also includes an independent standard on stakeholder engagement and information disclosure that, among other improved provisions, requires clients to implement grievance mechanisms at the program/project level.

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[20] Inter-American Court of Human Rights. (2015). Kalina and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname. Judgment of November 25, 2015. https://www.corteidh.or.cr

[21] Minority Rights 2024 accessed at https://minorityrights.org/communities/indigenous-peoples-in-suriname/

Figure 4 -Environmental and Social Performance Standards Source: IDB, 2010.

Below is a summary of ESPS 7, 9, and 10 of the IDB's ESMP that are most relevant to this IPP:

ESPS 7 – Indigenous Peoples

Environmental and Social Performance Standard (ESPS) 7 recognizes that Indigenous Peoples, as distinct social and cultural peoples, are often among the most marginalized and vulnerable segments of the population. In many cases, their economic, social, and legal status limits their capacity to defend their rights to, and interests in, lands and natural and cultural resources, and may restrict their ability to participate in and benefit from development that is accordance with their worldview.

There is no universally accepted definition of "Indigenous Peoples." Indigenous Peoples may be referred to in different countries by such terms as "original peoples", "autochthonous peoples", or any other formally recognized Indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the ESPF, the term "Indigenous Peoples" is used in a generic sense to refer to distinct social and cultural peoples possessing some of the following characteristics in varying degrees:

   i. Self-identification as members of a distinct Indigenous cultural group and recognition of this identity by others.
   ii. Collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats or ancestral territories in the project area and to the natural resources in these habitats and territories.
   iii. Customary cultural, economic, social, or political laws and institutions that are separate from those of the mainstream society or culture.
   iv. A distinct language or dialect, often different from the official language or languages of the country or region in which they reside.

The objectives of this Standard are:

- To ensure that the development process fosters full respect for the human rights, collective rights, dignity, aspirations, culture, and natural resource-based livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples.
- To anticipate and avoid adverse impacts of projects on communities of Indigenous Peoples, or when avoidance is not possible, to minimize and/or compensate for such impacts.

- To promote sustainable development benefits and opportunities for Indigenous Peoples in a culturally appropriate manner.
- To establish and maintain an ongoing relationship based on Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) in a culturally appropriate manner with the Indigenous Peoples affected by a project throughout the project's life cycle.
- To ensure the FPIC of the Project-Affected Communities of Indigenous Peoples when the circumstances described in this ESPS are present.

ESPS 9 – Gender Equality

This ESPS recognizes, regardless of the cultural or ethnic context, the right to equality among genders as established in applicable international agreements. The pursuit of equality requires actions aimed at equity, which implies providing and distributing benefits and/or resources in a way that narrows existing gaps, recognizing that the existence of these gaps can harm people of all genders.

This ESPS aims at identifying potential gender-based risks and impacts and introducing effective measures to avoid, prevent, or mitigate such risks and impacts, thereby eliminating the possibility of reinforcement of pre-existing inequalities or creating new ones. For purposes of this ESPS, affirmative action specifically aimed at closing existing gender gaps, meeting specific gender-based needs, or ensuring the participation of people of all genders in consultations will not constitute discrimination or exclusion.

The objectives of this Standard are:

- To anticipate and prevent adverse risks and impacts based on gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and when avoidance is not possible, to mitigate and compensate for such impacts.
- To establish actions to prevent or mitigate risks and impacts due to gender throughout the project cycle.
- To achieve inclusion from project-derived benefits of people of all genders, sexual orientations, and gender identities.
- To prevent SGBV, including sexual harassment, exploitation, and abuse, and when incidents of SGBV occur, to respond promptly.
- To promote safe and equitable participation in consultation and stakeholder engagement processes regardless of gender, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity.
- To meet the requirements of applicable national legislation and international commitments relating to gender equality, including actions to mitigate and prevent gender-related impacts.

ESPS 10 – Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

This ESPS recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and stakeholders, especially project-affected people, as a key element that can improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and contribute significantly to the project's successful development and implementation. This ESPS is consistent with the objective of implementing the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in the environmental decision-making process, and access to justice in environmental matters.

For this ESPS, "stakeholder" refers to individuals or groups who:

- Are affected or likely to be affected by the project ("project-affected people") and

- May have an interest in the project ("other stakeholders").

The objectives of this Standard are:

- To establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement that will help the Borrower identify stakeholders, especially project-affected people, and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them.
- To assess the level of stakeholder interest in and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be considered in project design and environmental and social performance.
- To promote and provide the means for effective and inclusive engagement with project-affected people throughout the project's life cycle on issues that could potentially affect or benefit them from the project.
- To ensure that appropriate information on environmental and social risks.

4.2 Constitution of Suriname

While Suriname's constitution, adopted in 1987, does not explicitly recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples, it does affirm general human rights principles and property rights. Article 41 of the constitution gives the state ownership of all natural resources, which creates tension concerning Indigenous land rights, as Indigenous communities claim ancestral lands that are often considered state property under national law and mineral and other licenses to use these lands have been given to private companies including multinational organizations. [22]

4.3 Land and Natural Resources Legislation

Under Suriname's legal framework, the state holds ownership of all land not privately titled, including the land traditionally occupied by Indigenous Peoples. There is no statutory recognition of Indigenous peoples' collective land rights or specific legal provisions for recognizing Indigenous territories. Indigenous communities often have informal use of their ancestral lands but lack legal titles, making them vulnerable to land concessions granted by the government for mining, logging, and other activities without their consent. These legislations are as follows:

Table 1. Land and Natural Resources Legislation

Legislation	Natural Resources Edict
L-Decrees, specifically Decree Principles of Land Policy (Decreet Beginselen Grondbeleid). S.B. 1982 no. 10, S.B. 1983 no. 103, as last amended by S.B. 2003 no. 8.	Art. 1 presents a founding principle of Suriname land policy, namely that "All land to which others have not proven their right of ownership is domain of the State."
Forest Management Act of 1992 (Wet Bosbeheer), S.B. 1992, no. 80.	Art. 41, subsection 1: a. The customary law rights of the Indigenous inhabitants of the interior, with respect to their villages and settlements as

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[22] World Bank (2019) Suriname Competitiveness and Sector Diversification Project (SCSD) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Planning Framework

Legislation	Natural Resources Edict
	well as their agricultural plots, will be respected as much as possible. b. In the case of violations of the customary law rights as mentioned under a., and appeal may be made to the President ... Art. 41, subsect
Forest Management Act of 1992 (Wet Bosbeheer), S.B. 1992, no. 80.	Art. 41, subsection 1: a. The customary law rights of the Indigenous inhabitants of the interior, with respect to their villages and settlements as well as their agricultural plots, will be respected as much as possible. b. In the case of violations of the customary law rights as mentioned under a., and appeal may be made to the President ... Art. 41, subsection 2 proposes the allocation of community forest concessions.
The Nature Conservation Decree (Natuurbeschermingsbesluit), S.B. 1986	"Insofar as villages and settlements of the Indigenous Peoples from the interior are situated in the areas designated as nature reserves, the rights acquired by force thereof shall be respected". Traditional customs may be followed if they do not contradict other national laws, such as the national hunting law.
The Nature Conservation Resolution (Natuurbeschermingsresolutie), 1998	"Insofar as villages and settlements of the Indigenous Peoples from the interior are situated in the areas designated by this State Decree as nature reserves, the rights acquired by force thereof shall be respected, unless: a) The general interest or the national goal of the reserve that has been established is impaired, a) Determined otherwise"
Mining Code (Decreet Mijnbouw), S.B. 1986 no. 28)	Upon applying for the right of exploration, a list must be made of the villages in and in the vicinity of the plot applied for (Art. 25.2). "[E]ntitled parties and third interested parties of plots" (i.e. Indigenous Peoples and Maroons) must allow the concession holder to execute his activities on the designated areas (Art. 47). The holder of a mining right shall give "reasonable consideration" to the interests of entitled parties and third interested parties and he shall implement the activities

Legislation	Natural Resources Edict
	"causing as little damage as possible" to those interests (Art. 48).
State Decree on the Job Descriptions of Departments (Staatsbesluit Taakomschrijving Departementen), S.B 1991 no. 58 as amended by S.B 2005 no. 94	Assigns the Ministry of Regional Development the task of "maintaining relationships of the central Government with dignitaries and inhabitants of the interior". The legal framework does not define the rights, function and obligations of traditional authorities.
Draft Law Protection Communities and Living Environment (Concept Wet Bescherming Woon- en Leefgebieden), Proposed modification of Decree Principles of Land Policy Decreet (S.B. 1982 no. 10, as last amended by S.B. 2003 no. 8).	Once this law is implemented, no new tenure rights may be granted on government land that is part of Indigenous and Maroon residency and living areas, and no mining or other concessions will be granted overlapping with these areas. Existing concessions in the named areas will be withdrawn, unless economic activities are already taking place in these areas. Development projects in these areas only may be executed after an FPIC procedure and community consent. This draft law has not yet been promulgated.

Source: World Bank 2019[23]

4.4 Legislation Collective Rights ITP

In 2021, a draft act on Collective Rights ITPs was submitted to Parliament. This framework act should provide the basis for existing acts to be revised and new acts to be developed. The act aims to comply with the international human rights, guaranteeing legal certainty for everyone and legal protection of the collective rights of Indigenous peoples.

The new draft act tries to strike a balance between traditions and the general public interest. Legal rules are largely based on the law and partly on customs. Rights are based on traditions; the traditions need to be understood to know exactly what those rights are. The traditions are known to the people themselves, and that makes it complex. The rights are not the same legal concepts as those known in western law; they have autonomous characteristics.

version. It is expected that the act is approved prior to May 2025. The prioritized acts to design and get approved after the framework act is endorsed, are:

- FPIC (Free Prior and Informed Consent)
- Integration of Traditional Governance in decentralized Governance
- Appealing institute (to settle conflicts)
- Demarcation of IPR lands.

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[23] Ibid

5 Institutional Framework

The program will be implemented by the Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism (MTCT) through the N.V. Luchthavenbeheer[24] (LHB). The LHB will be responsible for general and technical coordination; planning, monitoring, and evaluation; financial management; procurement administration; environmental, health, and safety management; and communications activities. This PIU would be financed by the project and would be composed of at least: a project manager, an air transport infrastructure specialist, a legal advisor, an environmental and social specialist, a procurement specialist, and a financial specialist.

The institution responsible for the proper management and implementation of this Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) is the Ministry of Transport, Communication, and Tourism (MTCT), Project Execution Unit (PEU), in compliance with Interamerican development Bancks Environmental and Social Performance Standards No 7, Indigenous Peoples, as well as the ESPS N 1, Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, No 9, Gender Equality and Sandard 10, Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure and the national and international legal framework appliable.

Additionally, a social specialist will be hired to oversee the treatment and application of the IPP. The required profile of the social specialist should include:

- Advanced degree in social sciences, anthropology, or a related field.
- Experience working with Indigenous communities, specifically in Suriname or similar contexts.
- Expertise in Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes and community consultation.
- Knowledge of international standards on Indigenous peoples' rights, including IFC Performance Standard 7 and ILO Convention 169.
- Strong skills in conflict resolution, cultural sensitivity, and stakeholder engagement.
- Proficiency in local languages or demonstrated ability to work with translators to ensure effective communication with Indigenous groups.
- Ability to coordinate with government bodies, NGOs, and community leaders to ensure proper implementation and monitoring of the IPP.

Additionally, the MTCT must detail all the institutional arrangements made for the collaboration and successful implementation of this IPP

The IDB, as the financing agency, will provide support, monitoring, and if necessary, advise on the implementation of this Plan.

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[24] Parastatal organization of the MTCT whose purpose is to maintain and operate Suriname's international airport.

6   Sociocultural Analysis (SCA)

6.1 Ethnic Groups

Suriname's ethnic diversity is a legacy of its colonial history and the migrations that shaped its society. The population includes a rich mix of ethnic groups, each contributing unique cultural, linguistic, and historical elements to the nation

- **Indigenous Peoples:** The Indigenous Peoples is Suriname's original inhabitant group, present for thousands of years before European colonization. Among them are the Lokono (Arawak), Trio, Wayana, and Kalia communities, primarily residing in the interior regions. These groups have distinct languages, traditions, and land-use practices that reflect a deep connection to the environment. Suriname's Amerindians maintain a rich heritage in traditional crafts, agricultural practices, and hunting methods. They rely on the forest for both subsistence and cultural rituals, including the use of medicinal plants, which are integral to their traditional knowledge. Cultural events include traditional storytelling, dances, and crafts such as basket weaving and pottery, which they share with younger generations and, occasionally, with the broader Surinamese society.

- **Maroons:** They are descendants of enslaved Africans who escaped from plantations and formed autonomous communities in Suriname's dense rainforests during the 17th and 18th centuries. These resilient groups resisted colonization and established unique societies with rich traditions, deeply rooted in African heritage. The primary Maroon groups are the Aucaner (or N'djuka), Saramaka, Paramaka, Aluku, Kwinti, and Matawai. Maroons have preserved African spiritual practices, languages, and societal structures. They are known for their unique crafts, including vibrant textiles and wood carvings, as well as their distinct drumming and dancing traditions. The Maroon communities also practice a form of communal land ownership and self-governance, with a leadership system led by local chiefs. They celebrate traditional festivals that honor ancestors and involve community rituals, music, and dance. They play a crucial role in Suriname's cultural identity, bringing African customs and values into modern Surinamese society. However, they face challenges related to land rights, environmental degradation, and social inclusion. Many Maroon communities are situated near areas of mineral extraction, and they often contend with issues related to the environmental and health impacts of these activities. They work with government and international NGOs to secure their lands and improve living conditions within their communities.

- **Creoles**: The Creole population in Suriname largely descends from enslaved Africans who were brought to Suriname during the colonial era. Following emancipation, Creoles moved into Suriname's urban areas and took on various roles in the development of the country. Over time, a mixed Creole population also emerged due to intermarriages between people of African descent and Europeans, creating a unique blend of African and European heritage.

- **Hindustanis**: Originating from India, mainly from regions like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Hindustanis were brought to Suriname as indentured laborers following the abolition of slavery. They represent one of the largest ethnic groups in Suriname today, with a strong presence in agriculture, business, and government. Their cultural heritage is evident in

Suriname's cuisine, language (with the widespread use of Sarnami, a Hindi dialect), and religious practices, including Hindu and Islamic traditions.

- **Javanese**: Creoles are of African or mixed African-European descent, with roots tracing back to slavery and colonial intermixing. Creoles primarily live in urban areas and are often prominent in the arts, politics, and education, making significant contributions to Surinamese society. Their heritage reflects a blend of African, European, and Indigenous influences, resulting in a unique cultural expression.

- **Chinese**: A smaller but notable ethnic group in Suriname, with a heritage tracing back to Chinese immigrants who arrived mainly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

- **Mixed Ethnicities**: Many Surinamese individuals have mixed ancestries, blending various ethnic backgrounds and contributing to the country's cultural diversity.

- **Others:**
  - Lebanese: A smaller community mainly involved in trade and commerce.
  - Brazilians: Represent a growing immigrant population, primarily in the mining industry.
  - Europeans: Particularly those of Dutch descent, reflecting Suriname's colonial history. They contribute to the educational, technical, and professional sectors of the economy.

According to the First Biennial Update Report to the United Nations in 2022, the composition in percentage of ethnic groups is as follows:

Table 2. Ethnic Diversity of Suriname's population

Ethnic Group	Percentage
Hindustani	27,4%
Creoles,	17.7%;
Maroons	14.7%;
Javanese	14.6%
Mixed	12.5%.
Amerindians	3,7%
Other	7,0%
Chinese	1,8%

Source: Biennial Update Report to the United Nations (2022)

6.1.1 Indigenous and Maroons

Indigenous peoples and Maroons play significant roles in Suriname's cultural and historical landscape. According to the 2012 census, Suriname's Indigenous population comprises 20,344 individuals, representing 3.8% of the country's total population of 541,638. In addition, there are 72,553 Maroons, constituting 14.7% of the total population. This means that Indigenous and Tribal/Maroons peoples

represent almost 20% of the population. The largest Indigenous groups are the Kali'ña (Kalina or Caribs), Lokono (Arawaks), Trio, and Wayana. There are also smaller Indigenous groups living in the southern interior, such as the Akurio, Apalai, and Wai-Wai, among others.

The following table shows the communities identified and their location.

Table 3. Ethnic Diversity of Suriname's population

Group	Communities		Location
Indigenous peoples	Kalina (Carib)	14	Coast/ savannah belt
	Lokono (ARowak)	15	
	Mixed Kalina/Lokono	2	
	Trio (Tiriyo)	10	South
	Wayana	5	
	Mixed Trio/Wayana	1	
	Total # indigenous communities	**47**	
Maroons	Saramaka	70-80	Upper-Suriname River / District Brokopondo
	Ndyuka/Aukaners	70-75	Tapanahony & Cottica River
	Paramaka	11	Marowijne River
	Aluku (Boni)	1	Lawa River
	Matawai	17	Upper-Saramaka River
	Kwinti	2	Coppename River
	Total # Maroon communities	**171-186**	

Source: KAMBEL, 2006.

The population of Suriname includes four distinct indigenous peoples and six maroon tribes, residing in about 230 villages scattered throughout the country.

As was identified in the section *2.2 Geographic Scope,* in the project areas **three Indigenous communities can be found, the Lokono, Trio, and Kalina**, as shown in **Figure 2 and 3. No Maroons communities are identified in the project area of influence.**

6.1.2   Vulnerable Peoples

Vulnerability refers to the inability to access benefits or an increased likelihood of experiencing adverse impacts. Vulnerable groups are more susceptible to negative effects from nearby projects and often have limited opportunities to benefit from them. This concept of vulnerability is frequently associated with factors such as poverty, social status, gender, ethnicity, age, physical or mental abilities, race, and political or religious affiliation. In many urban settings, marginalized populations tend to live in industrial areas that are deemed less desirable.

Several influential factors contribute to vulnerability, including geographical location, environmental degradation, health status, education levels, social networks, housing conditions, access to basic services, economic stability, experiences of conflict or displacement, and cultural or legal barriers. These elements exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals or groups, making them more prone to adverse impacts and reducing their ability to benefit from projects. Below are specific factors likely to influence vulnerability in Suriname.

Ethnicity

The Maroon and Indigenous communities in Suriname experience significant vulnerabilities compared to the general Surinamese population. Their vulnerability primarily arises from their reliance on land and natural resources, which are increasingly threatened by extractive industries and large-scale infrastructure projects. Moreover, individuals from these communities who have migrated to urban areas often face social and economic exclusion, largely due to ethnic discrimination. Additionally, their relatively recent migration to cities like Paramaribo means they typically lack land ownership, established social networks, and other forms of capital that could provide a buffer against adversity. This combination of factors renders them more susceptible to negative impacts and restricts their access to resources and opportunities compared to other segments of the population.

Gender

Women-headed households in Suriname face heightened vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity, influenced by multiple contextual factors. Elements such as social safety nets, legal rights, and the level of women's economic participation contribute to these disparities. The Gender Inequality Index for Suriname highlights the increased vulnerability of female-headed households, indicating lower labor participation rates and per capita income for women compared to men. Although women in Suriname typically have, on average, one year more of education than their male counterparts, these disparities persist, underscoring the challenges faced by women in achieving economic security and food stability.

Age

Youth are generally vulnerable due to their dependent status and often have a reduced likelihood of directly benefiting from the economic advantages of development projects. In the context of construction projects, children and young people are particularly susceptible to potential health impacts related to air quality and traffic safety risks, given their developing respiratory and cognitive systems. Additionally, seniors aged 60 and older face vulnerability as they often rely on fixed incomes, such as state pensions (AOV). They are also more prone to health issues, including impaired respiratory function and mobility challenges, which can further increase their vulnerability.

Disability

Individuals with disabilities, whether physical or mental, may be more vulnerable to the impacts of projects. This increased vulnerability stems from their lesser likelihood of experiencing direct economic benefits and potential limitations regarding mobility and cognition, which could elevate their risk of encountering traffic safety hazards.

6.2 Suriname's Indigenous Peoples

Among the Indigenous groups, the largest in number and most knowns are the Kari'na (also known as Carib), Lokono (or Arawak), Trio (Tirio or Tareno), and Wayana. There are also smaller groups, such as the Apalai, Wai-Wai, Okomoyana, Mawayana, Katuena, Tunayana, Pireuyana, Sikiiyana, Alamayana, Maraso, Awayakule, Sirewu, Upuruy, Sarayana, Kasjoeyana, Murumuruyo, Kukuyana, Piyanakoto Sakëta. and others. In some cases, only a few individuals remain from these groups within Suriname's borders.

The distribution of Indigenous communities is notably concentrated in certain districts. In 2012, 71% of the Indigenous population resided in the districts of Paramaribo, Para, and Sipaliwini, making these areas home to the majority of Indigenous peoples. Wanica and Marowijne combined accounted for an additional 17%, indicating the prominence of these five districts in Indigenous settlement patterns.

Table 4. Indigenous Peoples by District 2012.

District	Number	Percentage
Paramaribo	4087	20,1%
Wanica	1766	8,7%
Nickerie	734	3,6%
Coronie	15	0,1%
Saramacca	1028	5,1%
Commewijne	423	2,1%
Para	5134	25,2%
Marowijne	1673	8,2%
Brokopondo	120	0,6%
Sipaliwini	5364	26,4%
Total	20344	100,0%

Source: VIDS 2020.

The Kalina and Lokono peoples primarily inhabit the northern part of Suriname, and they are often referred to as "lowland" Indigenous peoples. Conversely, groups like the Trio, Wayana, and other Amazonian peoples reside in the southern regions, classified as "highland" Indigenous groups due to their geographical locations.

A major challenge for Indigenous Communities in Suriname stems from the country's legislative framework. The absence of legislation addressing land and resource rights poses a significant threat to these communities, especially as Suriname's natural resources—such as oil, bauxite, gold, forests, and biodiversity—attract increasing interest. Despite multiple rulings from the Inter-American Court of Human Rights calling for the creation and enforcement of such legislation, little progress has been made. Suriname is one of the few South American nations that has not ratified the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Convention 169, a key international instrument for Indigenous rights. However, the country did vote in favor of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, signaling some level of commitment to Indigenous issues on the international stage.

Despite the data from the 2012 Census, there is a lack of detailed demographic information about specific Indigenous tribes or villages in Suriname. The populations of many Indigenous communities are too small to be individually reported, particularly at the village level. Furthermore, migration patterns and the practice of counting all individuals associated with a village—regardless of their current residence—complicate the collection of accurate and up-to-date demographic data for these communities.

6.2.1   Land tenure in Suriname

Land tenure in Suriname is a particularly complex issue for Indigenous communities, who do not have legal collective title to their traditional lands. Currently, Indigenous communities possess what is

known as "entitlement lands," meaning that while individuals or families may not have formal ownership of these lands, they are still recognized as inhabitants of the village. This lack of legal recognition creates numerous challenges for Indigenous groups, as the absence of land titles exposes them to the risk of land loss or appropriation.

Historically, the government has attempted to resolve this issue by offering individual land titles. However, this solution has been met with mixed reactions. Some Indigenous community members view it as a way to secure personal land ownership and autonomy, but others argue that individual land titles undermine the collective nature of Indigenous landholding systems. This division has sparked internal conflicts, as collective land rights are often seen as essential to preserving the social, cultural, and economic integrity of Indigenous communities. The debate over land tenure thus continues to be one of the most pressing issues facing Indigenous peoples in Suriname today.

One of the key legal milestones in the fight for Indigenous land rights in Suriname was the 2015 ruling by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) in the case Kalina and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname. The court recognized the rights of Indigenous communities to collective land ownership and ordered the government to take concrete steps to demarcate and title these lands. However, the implementation of this ruling has been slow, and Indigenous communities continue to face legal and practical challenges in securing their territories[25].

6.2.2   Economy of Indigenous communities

The economy of Indigenous communities in Suriname is predominantly based on subsistence activities, such as hunting, fishing, and small-scale agriculture. These activities are deeply rooted in traditional practices and provide the foundation for food security and cultural preservation. Indigenous peoples also engage in the use of ancestral medicines, combining their intimate knowledge of the environment with practices passed down through generations.

However, many Indigenous communities, particularly those living in remote areas, face significant economic challenges. A large percentage of the population relies on state subsidies for basic infrastructure and services, such as schools, health centers, and roads. Approximately two-thirds of the Indigenous population in Suriname live below the poverty line, with limited access to essential services such as quality education, healthcare, clean drinking water, and electricity.[26]

Furthermore, environmental degradation caused by mining activities has severely impacted Indigenous livelihoods. For example, mercury pollution from illegal gold mining has contaminated rivers and water sources, threatening the health of Indigenous peoples and the sustainability of their traditional economic activities[27] and further contributing to their economic marginalization. It is important to note that the pollution of rivers did not happen anywhere near the project areas, but it affected the Mataway communities in Suriname.

6.2.3   Government structures

Indigenous governance in Suriname maintains its traditional structures. Each Indigenous group is governed by a paramount chief, known as the *Granman*, supported by village chiefs (or Kapiten) and

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[25] Inter-American Court of Human Rights. (2015). Kalina and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname. Judgment of November 25, 2015. https://www.corteidh.or.cr
[26] VIDS 2020, Baseline Report of the Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Suriname
[27] World Bank (2019) Suriname Competitiveness and Sector Diversification Project (SCSD) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Planning Framework

administrative assistants. Governance is typically hereditary, with authority passing from father to son, based on leadership qualities.

The Traditional authorities in the interior have the following roles, representing their responsibilities and duties:

- A political and administrative role, including maintaining relations with the national Government.
- A socio-cultural role; taking care of the well-being of his community, protecting the tribe against adverse external influences. In addition, customary authorities are often the religious leaders of their group.
- A juridical role; enforcing law and justice in his territory.
- A function as land stewards and managers.

At the heart of Indigenous decision-making is the *krutu*, an extended meeting where important matters concerning the community are discussed. These meetings can involve a wide range of topics, including land management, legal issues, and interactions with the national government. The *krutu* provides a forum where village chiefs, elders, and the general community can voice their concerns and come to collective decisions.

Indigenous governance structures are not only concerned with local community matters but also play a significant role in safeguarding the rights and lands of Indigenous peoples. In recent years, Indigenous leaders have become more actively engaged in national and international advocacy efforts to protect their lands and cultural heritage from encroachment by external stakeholders, such as mining companies. For instance, the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS) has been a critical actor in pushing for land rights recognition and the preservation of Indigenous culture and traditions

6.2.4   Key NGOs and their role in Indigenous development.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a critical role in advocating for the rights and development of Indigenous communities in Suriname. Both local and international NGOs work on a variety of issues, from environmental conservation to healthcare and education.

As Non – State Actors the following International Organizations among others engage in advocating wellbeing and sustainable development of Indigenous Peoples:

- Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Wildlife Fund (WWF)
- *Conservation International (CI):* CI-Suriname is helping to protect nature in one of the greenest and most biodiverse countries on Earth58. Conservation International Suriname is focused on supporting national policy for green economic development by supporting land use planning and demonstrating the value of ecosystem services in Suriname. Their motto is that 'people need nature to thrive' and use science-based knowledge to try to improve policy and increase awareness to help sustainably manage their natural resources. CI-Suriname has been conducting part of a regional climate change and avoided deforestation project funded by the German Development Bank KFW since late 2009. In Suriname, the emphasis of this project lies on support for the Government of Suriname in its efforts to develop its Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system. This is a key element of REDD+ — an international mechanism to reduce emissions from

deforestation, forest degradation and through forest conservation — which the country is currently working towards implementing. Their achievements include producing a forest cover map, a historical deforestation map, and provided training and software in land use planning.

- *Amazon Conservation Team:* The Amazon Conservation Team Suriname Foundation has entered into partnerships with Indigenous and Maroon communities in order to protect and preserve the biodiversity, culture and healthcare within the boundaries of Suriname. The organization's activities commenced in 1999, in the South-West of Suriname with the traditional healthcare program and mapping of the homelands of the Trio Indigenous tribe. The Amazon Conservation Team Suriname Foundation was officially founded on 2 September 2002, as a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), under Suriname law. The foundation was established with the objective of preserving our ecosystem and all biological organisms in it, with special focus on human beings. Programs mainly focus on social and educational purposes; namely developing and managing a series of scientific projects, and other projects oriented on the protection of nature and culture in Suriname.

On a **national level,** the Organization for Indigenous Peoples in Suriname (OIS) and the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS) work to advocate for Indigenous rights, focusing on issues such as land demarcation, education, healthcare, and the preservation of cultural traditions.

- *Organization for Indigenous Peoples (OIS):* they represent the Indigenous Peoples in Suriname. The OIS is advocating the rights of the Indigenous population in Suriname by striving to improve their marginal position and promoting their culture. The International Day of Indigenous Peoples on August 9, being a national holiday in Suriname, is one of the main achievements of the OIS. OIS is also advocating the recognition of land rights and other collective rights of Indigenous Peoples in order to guarantee their habitat.
- *Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS):* is a union of village leaders of all Indigenous villages in Suriname. According to this organization it is not an NGO but a structure of traditional authorities. **As the national body of the Indigenous Traditional Authority, is the recognized interlocutor with the government of Suriname for all policy matters concerning Indigenous Peoples.**
  VIDS has a technical and administrative office. Many projects have been implemented since the establishment in 1992 including demarcation of Indigenous lands, strengthening of traditional authority structures; assistance to villages; health, education and culture projects, various studies and publications.

6.2.5   Education access and challenges

Education is one of the major challenges faced by Indigenous communities in Suriname. According to an UNICEF study[28], in 2018, while approximately 85% of children complete primary education, the rates of completion drop significantly at higher education levels. Only 23% of children complete upper secondary education, and among Indigenous children, this rate is even lower. Only 8 percent of all Indigenous peoples complete upper secondary education. Furthermore, 60% of the Indigenous peoples do not have reading foundational skills, while 81% of children do not have numeracy foundational skills. Limited access to schools, particularly in rural areas, contributes to high dropout

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[28] UNICEF (2019) Surinam Education Facts Sheets. Analyses for learning and equity using MICS data

rates. In many Indigenous communities, primary education is the highest level available, forcing students to travel long distances or relocate to continue their education.

Early Child Education (ECE) lays the foundation for Early Child Development (ECD). This relates to providing children between the ages of 3 and 4 years the opportunity for nursery school learning prior to pre-primary or kindergarten, which is not compulsory in Suriname. The proportion of Indigenous children aged 36-59 months who participated in such nursery school learning opportunities during the MICS 2018 study was 36.6% of the 81 children surveyed and the lowest percentage of all population groups

Additionally, the quality of education in Indigenous areas is a significant issue. Teachers often lack the resources and training necessary to effectively educate students in these communities. Many Indigenous children also face language barriers, as the primary language of instruction is Dutch, while Indigenous languages are often spoken at home.

For the Indigenous Peoples in Suriname, primary education is the highest accessible level in their own region. It is only quite recently that junior secondary schools have been established at Zanderij, Albina and Apoera. Only the Nickerie district provides senior secondary education in addition to the capital city of Paramaribo. Primary schools are available in large villages. The government provides free transportation for children from surrounding smaller villages without a school. In order to receive secondary education, children from Indigenous Peoples must travel to school by bus or boat, or they have to move out of their village to a place where there is a secondary school. In order to pursue higher education, Indigenous youngsters experience many logistical challenges that come with high costs, including housing in the city and the costs for education itself. It should therefore come as no surprise that percentages of further education among Indigenous peoples show increasingly lower figures, which human rights organizations, including the UN Human Rights Council and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, have pointed out to Suriname for decades as the structural disadvantage of Indigenous children.

The government has taken some steps to address these issues by building junior secondary schools in some remote areas. However, disparities in educational outcomes remain, and Indigenous students continue to face higher dropout rates and lower educational attainment compared to the national average

6.2.6   Healthcare and traditional medicine

Healthcare access in Suriname is highly unequal, with Indigenous communities in the interior experiencing limited services compared to the coastal population. The Foundation for Primary Health Care Suriname (Medical Mission - MM) is a key organization providing medical services to people living in these remote areas.

The MM is a private foundation, which was founded out of a cooperation of three religious organizations that jointly provide medical services to the people living in the sparsely populated and difficult to access interior of Suriname. The foundation aims to promote and ensure the well-being of the population in Suriname, all driven by the motive to conduct the Gospel in Word and deed, according to primary healthcare principles. There are strong indications that a serious health gap exists between the interior population and that of the rest of the country.

According to MM analysis the most prevailing health problems observed among the Indigenous peoples, are the following: Malaria, respiratory ailments, anemia, pregnancy-related problems, sexually communicable diseases, problems regarding hygiene, restricted access to sanitary facilities

(no latrines in most villages) and safe drinking water (villagers obtain their drinking water from creeks and rivers)

In recent years new trends, especially the gold mining boom with an influx of companies, 'foreigners' and money, has destabilized traditional life and traditional leadership and brought besides income opportunities for some, also new health risks along for the peoples in this area, who are dependent on the waters from the creeks and rivers. The most common diseases nowadays are: Cervical Cancer, Leishmaniases, Malaria, Mercury contamination and HIV34.

In addition to formal healthcare, traditional knowledge and medicine are essential aspects of Indigenous culture in Suriname. There are great differences in lifestyles, cultures and views between the Indigenous peoples living in the lowlands and those living in the southern hinterland, and also among the peoples themselves and villages depending on origin and settlement. The closer they live to the main town of the district, the greater the influence of Western culture and thinking.

The Medical Mission collaborates with the Amazon Conservation Team to integrate traditional healing practices with modern healthcare services. This collaboration emphasizes the use of cost-effective traditional methods for treating diseases, particularly in the Trio community, and strengthens community participation in healthcare. The main goal to search for possibilities for the integration of traditional medicine into the mainstream healthcare of the Medical Mission.

6.2.7   Water and electricity

Access to essential services like water and electricity varies significantly across Indigenous communities in Suriname. According to the MICS[29], in 2018 94.4% of Indigenous peoples have access to a basic drinking water supply (although not always tap water) and 94.7% had access to improved water sources. Especially in terms of gender, this meant progress, as women and girls then had a smaller workload, since they were responsible for the collection of water in 49.4% of the cases compared to 41.4% men. In general, a maximum of 30 minutes per day was spent on water collection.

A study was made in 2018, where water samples were taken, which showed that Indigenous peoples were a major risk group for E. coli (a fecal bacteria) infection, as were other ethnic groups in rural areas. [30]

Nevertheless, river contamination from gold mining, especially mercury pollution, poses significant risks to communities relying on natural water sources.

Regarding electricity, according to the 2012 Census, most Indigenous households were connected to the electricity grid of the Energy Company of Suriname (EBS) or the government, provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources or Ministry of Regional Development, The remainder received electricity from neighbors (6.9%), a generator (4%), solar energy (0.6%) or other means The number of households without an energy supply was 5.5%, while 5.7% still used a kerosene lamp and 2.2% relied on alternative sources.

6.2.8   Vulnerability and environmental threats.

Decades of discrimination in various areas, such as education and employment have contributed to Indigenous peoples and Maroons being among the most disadvantaged groups in the country.

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[29] UNICEF (2019) Surinam Education Facts Sheets. Analyses for learning and equity using MICS data
[30] VIDS 2020, Baseline Report of the Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Suriname

Ongoing threats to their community and increased vulnerability due to ongoing environmental threats due to deforestation, mining, and other extractive activities on their ancestral lands. Gold mining, both legal and illegal, has led to significant deforestation and mercury contamination of rivers, affecting the Lokono's ability to fish and farm. Logging operations, often conducted without proper consultation with Indigenous communities, have further degraded forested areas that are vital to the Lokono's subsistence practices.

The principal issue underlying both Indigenous groups' vulnerability in Suriname is the lack of land rights and legal recognition. Unlike some countries that have established systems to grant collective land titles to Indigenous peoples, Suriname has yet to adopt a legal framework that acknowledges Indigenous land tenure. As a result, Indigenous communities often find themselves in conflict with external entities, such as mining companies or logging operations, that receive concessions from the government to exploit resources on lands traditionally used by Indigenous groups. In the 2015 Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) landmark ruling in the Kalina and Lokono Peoples v. Suriname, the court recognized the collective land rights of the Kalina and Lokono peoples and ordered the Surinamese government to demarcate and title their territories. The ruling also emphasized the need for Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) when developments impact Indigenous lands. However, as of the most recent updates, Suriname has been slow in implementing the court's ruling, leaving the Indigenous populations in a precarious legal situation regarding their lands.

Even though the Lokono, Kalina and Trio have lived on and used the lands they currently occupy for several centuries, they have neither private nor communal titles. Under the Suriname constitution, all land no-one can prove ownership is considered State-land. This includes all land in the interior where the Indigenous Peoples and Maroons live. Specific laws, such as the Forestry Law of 1992, demand that the customary rights of interior populations living in communities be considered if third parties exploit the resources in an area where these peoples live. However, the law does not provide measures to protect these rights or define consultation, compensation, and appeal procedures. Where these procedures have been commented upon, they either are vague or do not function. The ACT reports about rights to land and resources for Suriname's Indigenous peoples and Maroons in general, and the legal context of these rights specifically (provides more extensive analyses of this matter.

Like other Indigenous populations of Suriname, the Lokono, Kalina and Trio distrust development activities in and around their communities; without legislation that provides for legal recognition, land titles, and consultations, development activities are seen as an imposition on Indigenous communities without the necessary consultations[31]. Infrastructural developments like roads and airstrips have always been double-edged swords for Indigenous communities. While airstrips may increase the accessibility of Indigenous communities to government services and improve market access for goods and services, they can also provide opportunities for access to the resources of the communities, a threat to cultural heritage and assimilation. Indigenous communities prioritize the preservation of their cultural heritage. Development projects that threaten sacred sites disrupt traditional practices or lead to cultural assimilation are met with resistance. They advocate for initiatives that respect and integrate their cultural values.

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[31] VIDS 2020, Baseline Report of the Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Suriname

6.2.9 Gender Analysis

In Suriname, gender inequality persists as a significant societal challenge, affecting women across political, economic, and social dimensions. While there has been notable improvement in areas like health and education—where gender parity scores are high—women still experience significant barriers in the labor market and political participation. According to the Global Gender Gap Index, Suriname has made progress in education, where female enrollment often surpasses male enrollment.

However, this advancement in education has not yet translated into equitable workforce participation or representation in leadership roles. Women's labor participation rate remains at 43%, well below men's 68%, with wage disparities further widening the economic gender gap. Additionally, only 14.7% of seats in the National Assembly are held by women, underscoring their underrepresentation in political decision-making and governance inequality is also exacerbated by a lack of comprehensive gender-sensitive data, which limits the development of effective policies. Existing data primarily focus on basic sex-disaggregated statistics without delving into underlying social norms, thereby obscuring the root causes of issues like gender-based violence (GBV). Domestic and intimate partner violence remain widespread, despite Suriname's ratification of the Belém do Pará Convention, an international commitment to preventing violence against women. Social stigma limited judicial support, and insufficient protective services further compound the issue, leaving many cases of GBV unaddressed. Local NGOs and international organizations are actively working to improve access to support services and advocacy, yet deep-seated structural barriers continue to impede substantial progress in reducing gender-based violence.

Gender disparities within Suriname's indigenous communities, such as the Lokono, Trio, and Kaliña, are particularly pronounced. These communities often adhere to traditional gender roles, which assign women primarily to caregiving and domestic tasks, limiting their economic independence and educational attainment. Adolescent pregnancy rates are high in these communities, largely due to limited access to reproductive health services and education. This challenge reflects a broader lack of healthcare and social services, often exacerbated by the remoteness of indigenous territories, which hampers the government's outreach and support efforts.

Additionally, indigenous women immunities face specific risks related to GBV, with instances of intimate partner violence reportedly high but frequently unreported. Cultural norms, community structures, and geographical isolation make it difficult for women to access legal protections or victim support services, leaving many without adequate recourse. Structural inequalities, including the limited provision of healthcare and legal assistance, increase the vulnerability of indigenous women to various forms of violence.

The relationship between indigenous communities and their land is another dimension where gender and socio-economic vulnerabilities intersect. Communities rely on land and natural resources for subsistence and income, and large-scale industrial projects often threaten these resources. This threat disproportionately affects indigenous women, who depend on local resources to support household economies.

6.3 Trio Indigenous Community and Kwamalasamutu Trio Community

The Trio Indigenous group in Suriname has a long and complex history, deeply connected to the country's southern rainforest regions. In the 1960s, the Trio were significantly impacted by Baptist missionaries, resulting in a process of acculturation that altered their traditional way of life. The missionaries introduced new religious and cultural values that led the Trio to become increasingly dependent on manufactured goods, gradually displacing their reliance on traditional knowledge and practices. This shift not only affected their social and cultural framework but also had significant environmental consequences, such as the over-extraction of natural resources, which further eroded their traditional ecological balance
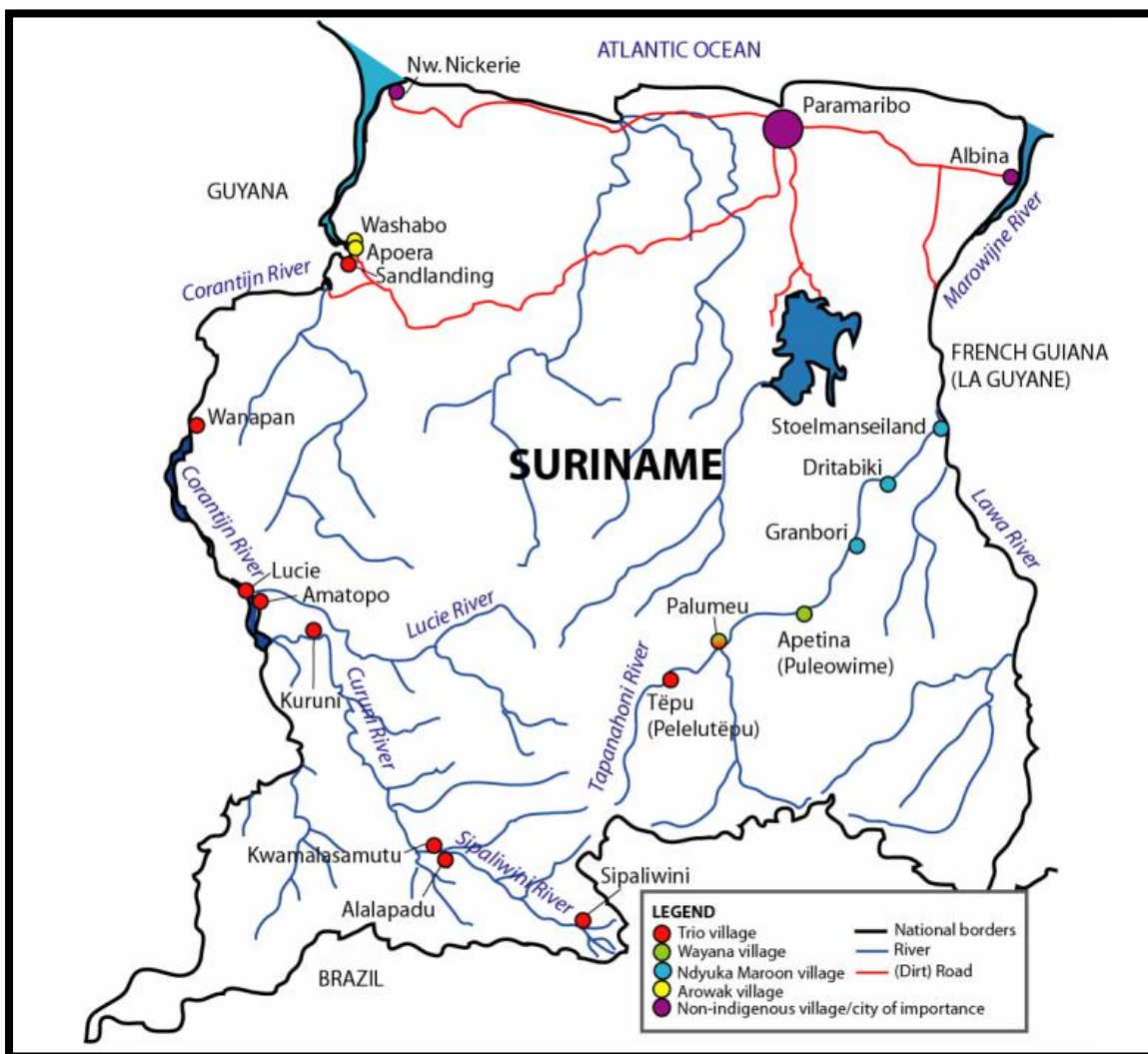
Figure 5 -Communities in Suriname with the present Trio communities, nearby communities of other Indigenous and Maroons groups and cities of national importance. Source: ACT, 2007

Kwamalasamutu, the largest settlement of the Trio peoples, is home to nearly half of Suriname's Trio population. Located in the remote southern Sipaliwini district, Kwamalasamutu has become the political and cultural center of the Trio community. As of 2024, the village is estimated to have a

population of approximately 1,300 peoples[32], making it a key hub for Indigenous life and governance in Suriname.

Figure 6 -Kwamalasamutu village. Source: National Coordinator Suriname (2014)

The village was established in 1975, but the process of consolidation of various nomadic tribes from the region began earlier, during the late 1950s and early 1960s, when Baptist missionaries started gathering people into more permanent settlements. Initially, these settlements were located upstream along the Sipaliwini River, but due to increasing population density and the need for better hunting grounds and water sources, the community eventually moved to its current location.[33]

The Trio, like many other Indigenous groups in the region, refer to themselves collectively as Tareno, a term that encompasses various tribes that have come together in Kwamalasamutu.

Although the Trio are the largest of these groups, and their language, called Tareno, serves as the lingua franca for the community, the village is a diverse amalgamation of tribes. The area inhabited and used by the Trio people is concentrated in the south of the Sipaliwini province of Suriname and the northern parts of Brazil; also, there is a sub area that reaches into Guyana.

According to a Trio Baseline Study[34],, the average Trio woman has 3.53 children, reflecting traditional family structures with relatively high fertility rates. The average household size is 4.25 people, larger than the national average of 3.94 people per household in Suriname. The community's demographic profile is composed of 51% women and girls, while children under the age of six constitute 17% of the population. School-aged children (between six and fifteen years) make up 24.2%, while young adults

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[32] United Nations Caribbean (2024), Access to clean water for Indigenous Suriname village Kwamalasamutu rehabilitated https://caribbean.un.org/en/261496-access-clean-water-indigenous-suriname-village-kwamalasamutu-rehabilitated

[33] Marieke Heemskerk and Katia Delvoye 2007, Trio Baseline Study: A sustainable livelihoods perspective on the Trio Indigenous Peoples of South Suriname

[34] Ibid.

aged 16 to 24 account for 15%. The elderly (60 years and older) represent 7.8% of the population. These statistics illustrate the relatively young and growing nature of the population, which is reflective of the broader demographic trends in Indigenous communities across Suriname.

Table 5. Community Demographic Profile (2012)

Age groups	Percentage
0-6 years old	17%
7 -16 years old	24.2%
17 -24 years old	15%
25-59 years old	36%
60 years or more	7,8%

Source: Baseline Study (2018). Census 2012

The Trio Community has a specific infrastructure where the different social festivities take place, as shown in the image below.

Figure 7 Building for cultural events and ceremonies

Figure 8 Building for cultural events and ceremonies

For meetings between authorities or for more formal events they use a different building, as shown in figure 7

Figure 9 Building for institutional meetings

6.3.1   Land and Territorial Use

The traditional territory of the Trio extends beyond the borders of Suriname, into northern Brazil and parts of Guyana. This cross-border territorial use highlights the fluidity of Indigenous land demarcations, which often do not align with the geopolitical boundaries established by modern states. The Trio's homeland, concentrated in the southern region of Suriname's Sipaliwini Province, is characterized by dense tropical rainforests and rivers that have historically served as the backbone of their subsistence practices. These lands provide essential resources for hunting, fishing, and small-scale agriculture, all of which remain central to the Trio's way of life.

Despite the vital connection the Trio maintain with their ancestral lands, formal recognition of these territories remains a challenge. The lack of legal land titles and demarcation has led to ongoing disputes over land use, especially as mining and logging companies increasingly encroach on Indigenous territories. International organizations and local NGOs, such as the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT), have advocated for the legal recognition of these lands and have collaborated closely with the Trio to develop sustainable land management practices that protect both their cultural heritage and the biodiversity of the region.

Below are images of the types of housing located in the community:

Figure 10 Kwamalasamutu community

Figure 11 Kwamalasamutu community

6.3.2   Social structure

The Trio Indigenous group of Suriname inhabits both organized formal settlements, and smaller, more dispersed villages throughout the rainforest. Due to their history of acculturation, particularly following the arrival of missionaries in the mid-20th century, the Trio's settlements are generally more organized and structured compared to other Indigenous groups in Suriname. The influence of external stakeholders, such as missionaries and development organizations, has led to a relatively formalized settlement structure that includes permanent houses, community buildings, and areas for farming and communal activities. Despite this organization, the Trio remains underrepresented in Suriname's national government structures, limiting their political influence and access to resources.

Family life among the Trio is organized around kinship, with households often consisting of both nuclear and extended family members. This practice reflects traditional Indigenous values of collective care and support for the most vulnerable members of society, such as the elderly, children, and those who are ill. Trio households are typically centered around these vulnerable individuals, with family structures adapting to meet the needs of those who require care. This collective approach to family life fosters strong bonds of kinship and interdependence within the community.

Leadership within the Trio community is deeply rooted in wisdom, experience, and respect for elders. Elders play a crucial role in the decision-making process, and their authority is derived from their extensive knowledge of the community's history, culture, and environment. Leadership is also based on shared responsibilities, with younger members of the community supporting the elders in various

tasks, including hunting, communal rituals, and ceremonies. These shared activities reinforce social cohesion and ensure the continued transmission of cultural knowledge across generations.

The paramount leader of the Trio, known as the *Granman*, holds significant authority within the tribe. The title "*Granman*" is derived from the Sranan Tongo language, a creole widely spoken in Suriname, and it refers to the highest-ranking chief within Indigenous and Maroon communities. The current *Granman* of the Trio, Jimmy Toeroemang, ascended to this position on September 19, 2021. He succeeded his grandfather, Ashongo Alalaparoe, who had served as *Granman* from 1997 until his passing in 2021. This transition of leadership marks the continuation of a family legacy and reinforces the importance of lineage and heritage in the Trio's political and social structures.[35]

Despite the centrality of elders and traditional leadership structures, the Trio community has faced significant social and cultural shifts in recent decades. There has been a gradual rise in individualism, which has begun to replace the traditional collective care system and new social dynamics have begun to erode traditional structures of care and governance. This shift has led to social challenges, including an increase in petty theft, drug use and trade, prostitution, and gender-based violence (GBV). These issues represent a significant departure from the Trio's traditional values of communal responsibility and collective care, posing new challenges to the cohesion and stability of the community. It also represents a direct challenge to the authority of traditional leaders and elders, who have historically played a key role in maintaining social order and guiding the community through periods of change.[36]

Additionally, the increasing encroachment of outside influences, including illegal logging, mining, and land use by multinational corporations, has strained the Trio's leadership structures. Leaders like *Granman* Jimmy Toeroemang are now tasked with balancing the preservation of traditional cultural practices with the need to engage with external actors to protect the Trio's land and resources. This dual role presents a new set of challenges for contemporary Trio leaders, who must navigate the complexities of modern governance while safeguarding their community's cultural identity and autonomy.

The following table shows the actual traditional structure of governance in Kwamalasamutu Community and the leaderships.

Table 6. Structure of governance Kwamalasamutu

Function	Name
Granman	Toeroenmang, Jimmy
Head-Captain	Shonshonson, Wakoeroeman
Captain	Moeshe, Menio
Captain	Puttoena, Sheddida
Captain	Koemoe, Oewawa
Head-Basja	Nola, Amessaja
Basja	Inarew, Shalome
Basja	Sinkara, Mikowe
Basja	Sinkara, Reitia

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[35] Green Growth Suriname, (2024) *Granman* Jimmy Toeroemang. https://greengrowthsuriname.org/granman-jimmy-toeroemang/
[36] Marieke Heemskerk and Katia Delvoye (2007), Trio Baseline Study: A sustainable livelihoods perspective on the Trio Indigenous Peoples of South Suriname

Function	Name
Basja	Waachpi, Jakoeta

Source: Consultation event, 2024 and Josta Nieuwendam (2024)[37]

6.3.3 Economic activity and livelihoods of the trio people.

The Trio people of Suriname have traditionally relied on subsistence activities to support their livelihoods, with a focus on farming, hunting, and the extraction of non-timber forest products. Agriculture is primarily based on shifting cultivation, also known as slash-and-burn farming, where land is cleared, used for a few seasons, and then left to regenerate while farmers move on to new plots. This practice is common among Indigenous and Maroon communities in Suriname's interior and has sustained the Trio for generations, providing them with essential food sources such as cassava, bananas, and various tubers, which are cultivated in a large network of shifting plots surrounding the village.

The Trio people continue to engage in hunting, fishing, and gathering, with these activities being non-seasonal and conducted throughout the year. They rely on the forest for a variety of uses, including building materials (trees for houses, canoes, and furniture) and crafting tools like paddles and ropes. Their traditional practices demonstrate a deep knowledge of forest ecosystems, ensuring sustainability and respect for natural resources. The Trio also cultivates farms near their homes, while some farms are located further away. Women are actively involved in agriculture and produce traditional handicrafts, which are occasionally sold to visitors or in local markets.

While subsistence farming remains central to the Trio economy, they have also started to engage in the market economy, particularly in sectors such as wage labor, gold mining, and forestry. Some Trio members have taken up jobs in the gold mining industry, a sector that is both a source of income and a source of environmental concern due to the illegal operations and mercury contamination affecting the Trio's traditional lands. Forestry and eco-tourism also provide opportunities for wage labor, as the Trio people participate in these industries to support their households.

The majority of the population in Kwamalasamutu subsists on a combination of fish, bushmeat, and crops, especially cassava, grown on their shifting cultivation plots. However, the isolated location of the village poses significant economic challenges. The village is largely self-sufficient due to its remote location, with access to Paramaribo, Suriname's capital, being limited to expensive air transport. This isolation increases the cost of goods and services, creating a heavy reliance on external aid and limiting opportunities for incomes.

Attempts have been made by development organizations to introduce permanent agricultural systems to replace shifting cultivation, which some view as inefficient and environmentally unsustainable. However, most of these initiatives have not been successful, as the Trio people have not widely adopted permanent farming practices. The traditional shifting cultivation system, despite its perceived inefficiencies, aligns with the Trio's cultural and environmental understanding of land use, making it difficult to replace with more modern agricultural techniques.

Several key sectors hold the potential to significantly improve the economic well-being of the Trio people if managed properly. Among these are mining, agriculture, forestry, and tourism. Mining,

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[37] Josta Nieuwendam (2024), Consultancy to Support rural electrification with renewable energy, potable water and telecommunications in Suriname. SCA and IPP.

particularly for gold and bauxite, has already become an important source of income for some Indigenous and Maroon communities, though it also presents serious environmental risks, especially from mercury contamination. Proper regulation and the enforcement of environmental protection laws are crucial to ensure that these industries do not harm the Trio's traditional lands.

Forestry is another important sector for employment, particularly for building materials and small-scale timber production. With the right training, capital, and forest management practices, the Trio could benefit economically from sustainable forestry initiatives that align with their traditional ecological knowledge. This sector also has the potential to create jobs, generate income, and contribute to the local economy in a more sustainable manner than mining.

The growing eco-tourism industry presents new economic opportunities as well. The Trio's unique culture, traditional knowledge, and pristine natural environment attract tourists interested in experiencing Indigenous lifestyles and the biodiversity of Suriname's interior. However, this sector is still in its early stages and requires investment in infrastructure, capacity-building, and marketing to fully realize its potential as a source of income for the Trio people.

Water transport remains the most common means of moving goods and people in Suriname's interior, though air transport to and from Paramaribo is also available at high costs. The high cost of transportation exacerbates the economic isolation of Kwamalasamutu, limiting the ability to participate fully in the national economy. The cost of goods in these remote areas is much higher than in the coastal zones, and this economic isolation increases the Trio's dependence on subsistence farming and hunting to meet their daily needs. The limited access to external markets also restricts the Trio's ability to commercialize products such as handicrafts, non-timber forest products, or agricultural goods.

In 2020, the Trio still largely relied on their self-sufficient lifestyle, with only limited involvement in wage labor or market-based economic activities. Their dependence on external aid remains substantial, particularly in times of environmental stress or when natural resources are depleted due to over-exploitation or contamination.

6.3.4 Education

Educational facilities in Trio communities lag significantly behind those in Suriname's coastal zones. The school in Kwamalasamutu lack basic infrastructure, qualified teachers, and essential resources, which hinders educational progress.

Only three out of twelve teachers are certified, with the rest being teaching assistants[38]. This shortage of trained educators affects the quality of instruction, leaving students with limited access to effective learning environments. Furthermore, many children must attend schools in distant locations like Apoera, forcing families to relocate temporarily to ensure their children's access to education. This presents a heavy burden, particularly for families who rely on subsistence activities in their local villages.

Educational achievement among the Trio remains low. Heads of households have attended school for an average of just 2.8 years, with literacy rates reflecting this minimal exposure to formal education. While literacy in the Tareno language is relatively high due to past efforts by missionary groups, literacy in Dutch—the official language of instruction and administration in Suriname—remains low,

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[38] Marieke Heemskerk and Katia Delvoye (2007), Trio Baseline Study: A sustainable livelihoods perspective on the Trio Indigenous Peoples of South Suriname

particularly among women. This linguistic barrier further restricts Trio children from accessing broader educational opportunities and connecting with national systems of governance and commerce.

People in Kwamalasamutu only have access to primary education, as there are no secondary schools within the immediate areas. This lack of infrastructure forces children and young adults seeking education beyond the primary level to migrate to other regions. As a result, educational attainment in Trio villages is severely constrained, limiting long-term opportunities for socio-economic mobility and cultural preservation through formal education.

6.3.5   Health

Healthcare in Trio communities is primarily provided by the Medical Mission Primary Health Care Suriname (MZ), which operates clinics in key locations such as Kwamalasamutu, Sipaliwini, Alalapadu, and Tëpu. While these clinics offer basic health services, their capacity to address the community's complex health needs is limited due to their remote locations and understaffing. For more isolated villages, accessing these clinics can be extremely difficult, and transportation challenges often result in delays or lack of access to necessary treatments.

In an effort to address some of these challenges, the Amazon Conservation Team (ACT) established a traditional medicine clinic in Kwamalasamutu as part of its Shamans and Apprentices Program. This clinic is operated by local healers and their apprentices, drawing on traditional Trio medicinal knowledge to treat various health conditions. While this initiative helps to preserve traditional healing practices, it is also a reflection of the Trio's limited access to modern medical resources.

Common health issues in the Trio communities include respiratory infections, diarrhea, malaria, and parasitic infections such as leishmaniasis. Malnutrition remains a serious concern, especially among women and children. The Trio's diet, which relies heavily on cassava and other carbohydrate-rich but nutrient-poor crops, often lacks essential vitamins and minerals, contributing to poor health outcomes. Failed cassava harvests and food shortages exacerbate these nutritional deficiencies, leaving the community more vulnerable to disease and limiting physical development, particularly in children.

Although there is a basic care center, the community lacks adequate access to healthcare and health centers. Additionally, in the event of any medical emergency, the only transportation option available to the community to reach a healthcare service is by aircraft, which is also beyond the community's budget.

6.3.6   Vulnerability

The Kwamalasamutu community in Suriname faces numerous challenges that render them vulnerable to both environmental and socio-economic pressures. Their traditional way of life, deeply connected to the natural environment, is under increasing threat from deforestation and other extractive activities on their ancestral lands.

Several factors contribute to the growing vulnerability of the Trio, including a growing dependence on cash economies, which encourages the overexploitation of wildlife and plant resources. With increasing demand for cash income, many Trio people are drawn into activities such as wildlife trade and unsustainable resource extraction, putting further pressure on the already fragile ecosystem. The loss of traditional knowledge about sustainable ecosystem management compounds this problem, leaving the Trio ill-prepared to adapt to the rapidly changing environmental and economic landscape.

Additionally, the community is poorly prepared for extreme weather events and other natural disasters, which are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change. Population growth in larger Trio settlements like Kwamalasamutu has led to localized overexploitation of forest resources, straining the environment's capacity to regenerate. This, coupled with external influences such as market integration, results in the weakening of traditional ecosystem management practices, leaving the Trio more vulnerable to both environmental and economic instability.

Moreover, the Trio face significant barriers in education, healthcare, and access to formal employment opportunities, further exacerbating their vulnerabilities. Discrimination and marginalization from mainstream Surinamese society make it difficult for the Trio to advocate for their rights and access government services. Their low levels of Dutch literacy limit their ability to participate fully in national economic and political systems, while their geographical isolation restricts access to markets, education, and healthcare.

In summary, the Trio's vulnerability is a complex mix of environmental degradation, socio-economic marginalization, and loss of traditional knowledge. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes both the protection of their environment and the enhancement of their access to education, healthcare, and sustainable livelihoods.

6.4 Lokono Indigenous community

The Lokono, also known as the Arawak, are one of the Indigenous peoples of Suriname, historically resided in the coastal and riverine regions. However, many have migrated to urban areas, including Paramaribo, in search of better economic opportunities and access to essential services. Despite this migration, they continue to face significant challenges in education, health care, cultural preservation, and economic integration.

6.4.1 Social Structure

The Lokono are one of the major Indigenous peoples of Suriname. The community belongs to the Arawakan linguistic family and is among the earliest known inhabitants of the coastal regions of South America and the Caribbean, including present-day Suriname.

The Lokono have a traditional social structure centered around family and community. Typically, they live in small, close-knit villages where leadership is vested in a village chief or captain, often chosen through consensus among the elders. Decision-making is generally collective, with both male and female leaders, although men predominantly hold leadership positions. Family units are often extended, emphasizing kinship ties and community cooperation, which are crucial for the social cohesion of the Lokono.

Taking into consideration all the Indigenous communities in Suriname, the 2012 census indicated that around 65% of Indigenous peoples lived in their own villages, while 35% resided outside these communities, primarily in urban areas like Paramaribo.[39] According to the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (2020), the Indigenous population in Paramaribo is approximately 4,087 persons.

6.4.2 Cultural identity

The Lokono people possess a deep connection to their ancestral lands, considering their territory as integral to their identity and way of life. This connection is reflected in their cultural practices, which include rituals, festivals, and the use of traditional languages. The Marowijne River plays a central role in their cultural identity, serving as a source of sustenance and spiritual significance. They view all living and non-living elements of their environment as interconnected, a belief that guides their careful management and respect for the land.

Lokono peoples inhabit the Lower Marowijne River area in northeastern Suriname, bordering French Guiana. It is among the four largest Indigenous groups in Suriname and is known as the "Peoples of the Lower Marowijne." Lokono established their villages inland along streams.

The Lokono people have a rich cultural heritage, which includes a unique language, spiritual beliefs, and artistic traditions. However, urbanization and integration into Paramaribo's society have put these traditions at risk. Many Lokono families report a decline in the use of the Lokono or Arawak language[40], as children are primarily exposed to Dutch or Sranan Tongo, the dominant languages of Suriname.

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[39] VIDS 2020, Baseline Report of the Situation of Indigenous Peoples in Suriname
[40] Willem J. A. Pet. (2011) A Grammar Sketch and Lexicon of Arawak (Lokono Dian), SIL International. https://www.sil.org/system/files/reapdata/90/56/45/90564558109971050115741497077250122669/e_Books_30_Pet_Arawak_Suriname.pdf

6.4.3   Economic activities

The Lokono, in traditional villages along rivers and forested regions, practices subsistence agriculture, fishing, and hunting. Historically, they managed their territories through traditional knowledge systems, rotating agricultural fields, and relying on the forests for hunting and medicinal plants. Both men and women participate in agriculture activities.

Farming is a household activity in which all household members participate in all stages of production. Men usually undertake land preparation, especially when "slash and burn" production methods are practiced. On the other hand, women typically focus on tasks such as sowing seeds, nurturing plants, and harvesting.[41]   However, there are increasing cases of women singly undertaking agricultural projects, often with project funding. Women have complained about gender discrimination in their requests for land and assistance in their agricultural projects[42]. Village leaders have also reported that, with an increasing number of Indigenous men in the communities partaking in the cash economies of logging and mining, women are increasingly becoming the sole undertakers of farming.[43]

Traditionally, men were responsible for hunting and working the land, while women were responsible for farming. However, the operational costs of hunting have led to a decline in the activity and the development of specialists in hunting and gathering. Women and men also engage in several other skills activities, including jewelry making, cotton weaving, and hammocks. Men also make utensils such as baskets, cassava presses, sieves, musical instruments. These are sold in the villages and shops in the capital city.

The Indigenous peoples of the lowland areas are less dependent on subsistence activities although, as already noted, there is a trend towards more self-sufficiency. They have more purchasing power through more access to financial sources, as they often live near district towns. Relatively well-stocked shops can be found there. In the lowlands people are less dependent on boat transport because many villages can be reached by road with private or public transportation. The preservation of agricultural lands nevertheless remains important as a tradition and because it provides fresh and cost-effective food, which has become increasingly important in recent times.

Nevertheless, like agriculture, hunting and fishing remain important activities for cost-effective protein sources for their diet and as sources of income.

Indigenous peoples who live in the urban areas are an important ethnic market for traditional foods, rituals, spices, clothing, crafts and other consumer articles from Indigenous villages. As the Lokono become more integrated into the market economy, they participate in wage labor across various sectors, including forestry and government jobs. The increasing access to financial resources and urban markets allows for greater purchasing power, though traditional practices remain essential for food security. In lowland areas, shops are more readily available, reducing reliance on subsistence activities while preserving agricultural traditions.

6.4.4   Land connection

Lokono's community have a deep material and spiritual connection to their land and natural resources, viewing all living and non-living elements as interconnected and possessing protective

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[41] FGDs (2023) with indigenous women, women, and youths
[42] Ibid
[43] Ibid

spirits. Their spiritual beliefs lead them to restrict access to certain areas, the felling of specific trees, and the hunting of certain animals.

The Marowijne River is central to the cultural identity and traditions of the Kalina and Lokono peoples, who view their land as an integral part of their existence. They protect their land not only for their own needs and those of future generations but also out of a deep respect for the environment instilled by their ancestors. Maintaining balance between humans and nature is crucial for the Kalina and Lokono, a responsibility that falls to their shamans, known as piay or semechichi, who can discern disturbances in this balance through spiritual guides called jakoewa.

Certain areas within their ancestral territory are considered sacred or spiritual, with restricted access based on their worldview. Near Galibi and the Marowijne River, these include Kumakande, Korotoko yume, Sek'seki savanna, Alakoeserie bate, Masjipe Itjoeloe, and Kanawa. Near Alfonsdorp and Wane Kreek, the sacred sites include Dede Betre, Balakaiman, and Awaradaja. In the Bigiston area, Jorka-creek and Zwampoe are notable sacred sites.

6.4.5 Education

Education among the Lokono community faces significant challenges. According to the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders, educational facilities in Lokono areas lag behind those in urban centers, with limited access to resources and qualified teachers. Many Lokono children attend schools in more distant locations, which can pose logistical challenges for families.

The education system in Suriname does not fully accommodate the cultural and linguistic diversity of Indigenous peoples, resulting in challenges for Lokono students. Those living in Paramaribo have better access to educational facilities compared to those in rural areas, yet they still face language barriers, discrimination, and a curriculum that does not reflect their heritage.

There are a few government initiatives aimed at increasing Indigenous enrollment in schools. However, a lack of specific programs designed to include Indigenous perspectives in the educational curriculum remains a major issue. The United Nations has advocated for educational reform in Suriname to address the specific needs of Indigenous populations, including the Lokono.

While primary education is available, secondary education options are scarce, forcing many students to travel to Paramaribo for further studies. The literacy rates in the Lokono language are relatively high, attributed to missionary education efforts. However, literacy in Dutch, the official language, remains low.

Several factors contribute to the educational challenges faced by the Lokono. These include inadequate infrastructure, a lack of trained teachers, and economic barriers that necessitate children's participation in household labor or income-generating activities. As a result, educational attainment remains low, impacting the community's long-term socio-economic prospects [44]

6.4.6 Health

Healthcare services for the Lokono community are limited, particularly in remote villages. The Medical Mission Primary Health Care, Suriname, operates clinics in some locations, but access remains a significant challenge. According to the Amazon Conservation Team, a traditional medicine clinic has

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[44] World Bank (2019) Suriname Competitiveness and Sector Diversification Project (SCSD) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Planning Framework

been established in the community, operated by local healers. This initiative recognizes the importance of traditional knowledge and practices in maintaining health and wellness.

Health issues in the Lokono community include respiratory infections, diarrhea, and malaria, exacerbated by poor access to healthcare facilities. Malnutrition is a pressing concern, especially among women and children, resulting from dietary deficiencies and food shortages. Failed harvests, particularly of cassava, have heightened the reliance on carbohydrate-rich but nutritionally poor diets.

Health care access in Paramaribo is considerably better than in remote Lokono communities; however, the quality and cultural appropriateness of care remain issues. Lokono residents in Paramaribo can visit public hospitals and clinics, but there is often a lack of trust in the health care system due to cultural differences and language barriers. Additionally, health professionals are not always trained in culturally sensitive practices.

6.4.7   Vulnerability

The Lokono community faces significant vulnerabilities stemming from environmental threats. Logging operations often occur without proper consultation with Indigenous communities, further degrading vital forest areas (Corte Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, 2015).

The dependence on natural resources for subsistence poses challenges for the Lokono, particularly as external pressures from cash economies increase. Factors such as population growth, changing environmental conditions, and external influences on land use exacerbate vulnerabilities, leading to a loss of traditional knowledge regarding sustainable practices. The Lokono, like many Indigenous groups, face systemic discrimination and marginalization. The ongoing struggle for land rights and recognition poses additional challenges to their cultural preservation and socio-economic development.

Finally, the Lokono have limited political representation in Paramaribo, and their interests are often overlooked by local authorities. The absence of institutional mechanisms to address Indigenous rights in the urban setting further exacerbates their vulnerability to poverty, discrimination, and cultural erosion.

6.5 Kalina community

The Kalina people, also known as Caribs, are one of the most prominent Indigenous groups in Suriname, with historical ties to the broader region of the Guianas, including parts of Venezuela, Brazil, and French Guiana. In Suriname, the Kalina primarily reside in coastal and riverine areas, particularly in the districts of Marowijne and Para, and along the Coppename and Maroni Rivers. They are part of Suriname's rich Indigenous heritage and maintain a distinct cultural identity despite the challenges posed by modernity and encroaching external influences.

Figure 12 -Kalina community location. Source: Alvarez 2016

Kalina communities have historically been semi-nomadic, relying on their deep knowledge of the forest and river ecosystems for their livelihoods. Over the centuries, they have interacted with both colonial powers and other Indigenous groups, which has shaped their cultural and social landscape. Today, the Kalina are in a complex position, balancing traditional practices with the pressures of a modernizing state.

Most Kalina villages are situated in the eastern coastal regions of Suriname, with smaller communities spread throughout the hinterlands. They share the landscape with other Indigenous groups, such as the Lokono, and a growing number of Maroons (descendants of escaped enslaved Africans).

6.5.1 Language

The Kalina language belongs to the Cariban language family and is still spoken in some communities. However, as with many Indigenous languages in Suriname, it faces decline, particularly among the younger generations, who increasingly favor Dutch or Sranan Tongo, the lingua franca. Efforts to

revitalize and preserve the Kalina language are ongoing, often spearheaded by elders and local activists.

6.5.2 Land and territorial use

For the Kalina, land is not merely a resource; it is central to their identity, culture, and spiritual life. Traditionally, the Kalina used their land for rotational agriculture, hunting, fishing, and gathering. These activities were practiced in harmony with the environment, utilizing a deep knowledge of the ecological cycles of the forests and rivers. Kalina agriculture typically involves slash-and-burn farming, a method that allows for soil regeneration. Crops such as cassava, yams, and bananas are staples of their diet. The forest provides additional resources, such as medicinal plants, wild fruits, and materials for crafting tools and housing.

The Kalina also engage in hunting and fishing. The rivers, particularly the Maroni, are rich in fish, while the forests provide peccaries, birds, and smaller mammals. These practices are conducted according to traditional ecological knowledge, ensuring that natural resources are not overexploited.

Despite their long-standing presence in Suriname, the Kalina face significant challenges in securing legal recognition of their land rights. The government of Suriname does not fully recognize Indigenous land tenure, which leaves Kalina territories vulnerable to encroachment by logging, mining, and agricultural development. Large-scale extraction projects, such as bauxite and gold mining, have had devastating environmental impacts on Kalina lands, polluting rivers and leading to deforestation.

In the early 2000s, the Kalina, alongside other Indigenous and Maroon communities, began advocating for stronger land rights and territorial autonomy. These efforts culminated in legal cases brought before international courts, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, which ruled in favor of Indigenous land rights. However, implementation of these rulings remains inconsistent, and the Kalina continue to face the threat of losing their ancestral lands to development projects.

6.5.3 Social Structure

Kalina society is organized around extended family groups or clans. These clans are typically matrilineal, meaning that descent and inheritance are traced through the mother's line. Each clan has its own distinct identity and is responsible for particular social and ritual functions within the community. Leadership within the clans is usually vested in elders, who are highly respected for their knowledge of tradition, history, and spiritual practices.

Kalina communities are tightly knit, with social roles clearly defined by age, gender, and family responsibilities. Collective decision-making is central to Kalina society, particularly when it comes to matters affecting the entire community, such as land use, conflict resolution, and relations with outsiders.

While many Kalina communities maintain traditional governance structures, they must also navigate the Surinamese state's political framework. Local chiefs play a crucial role in liaising between the community and the national government. However, there is often tension between traditional leadership and formal state authority, particularly when it comes to issues of land rights and development.

6.5.4   Economic Activities and Livelihoods

Historically, the Kalina have practiced a subsistence economy, relying on a combination of agriculture, hunting, fishing, and gathering. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of their economic activities, with cassava being the most important crop. The Kalina process cassava into a variety of products, including cassava bread and ferine, which are not only consumed locally but also traded with neighboring communities.

In recent decades, some Kalina have increasingly engaged with the market economy, selling agricultural produce, crafts, and fish in local markets. Handicraft production has become a source of income, particularly for women. These crafts are sold to tourists and in urban centers like Paramaribo.

Tourism has also provided new economic opportunities. Some Kalina communities have begun offering eco-tourism experiences, showcasing their cultural heritage and natural environment to visitors. However, this shift toward a market-based economy has also introduced new vulnerabilities, such as dependency on external markets and fluctuating income levels.

Hunting and fishing are equally crucial for subsistence. Kalina men typically hunt small game in the forests, while fishing is often a communal activity, with both men and women participating. Fishing takes place in the rivers and along the coast, where the Kalina use both traditional methods, such as fishing with nets and traps, and modern techniques, such as motorized boats.

6.5.5   Education

Education access for the Kalina in Suriname remains a significant challenge. Many Kalina communities are located in remote areas with limited infrastructure, making it difficult for children to attend school regularly. Even when schools are available, they often lack adequate resources, trained teachers, and culturally relevant curricula.

Recognizing the importance of cultural relevance in education, there have been efforts in Suriname to introduce bilingual education in Indigenous languages. These aims to teach children in both Kalina and Dutch, helping to preserve the Kalina language while also improving educational outcomes. However, such initiatives are still in their infancy and face challenges related to funding, teacher training, and government support.[45]

6.5.6   Health

The health of the Kalina people in Suriname is shaped by both traditional practices and access to modern healthcare services. In remote Kalina communities, access to health facilities is limited, and people often have to travel long distances to receive medical care. Malnutrition, waterborne diseases, and maternal health issues are common due to the lack of adequate health services.

Moreover, environmental degradation, particularly from mining and logging activities, has led to pollution of rivers and forests, impacting the health of Kalina communities who rely on these ecosystems for their water, food, and medicine. Mercury contamination from gold mining is a significant public health issue, leading to cases of mercury poisoning in communities located near mining operations.

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[45] •   UNICEF. (2019). Surinam Education Facts Sheets. Analyses for learning and equity using MICS6 data.

Despite these challenges, traditional medicine remains an integral part of Kalina health practices. The Kalina possess extensive knowledge of medicinal plants and healing techniques, passed down through generations.

6.5.7   Culture

The Kalina, also known as the Caribs, have a rich cultural heritage that is deeply connected to their environment and community practices. Their cultural identity is expressed through their language, spirituality, rituals, oral traditions, arts, and interaction with the natural world. Despite facing significant external pressures from colonization, modern development, and globalization, the Kalina people in Suriname have managed to preserve many elements of their traditional culture while also adapting to contemporary changes.

Kalina spirituality is deeply rooted in their connection with nature. They believe that the world is inhabited by spirits that reside in the forests, rivers, and animals. These spirits play a crucial role in maintaining the balance between humans and the environment. The Kalina traditionally conduct ceremonies and rituals to honor these spirits, especially during important events such as harvests, fishing trips, and healing ceremonies.

Shamanism holds an important place in Kalina culture, with shamans acting as intermediaries between the human world and the spirit world. Shamans are responsible for healing, divination, and guiding the community in spiritual matters. They use a variety of traditional techniques, including the use of medicinal plants, to treat illnesses and communicate with the spirit world.

Oral traditions are an essential aspect of Kalina culture, serving as the primary means of passing down history, values, and knowledge from one generation to the next. The Kalina have a rich repertoire of myths, legends, and folktales that explain the creation of the world, the origins of the Kalina people, and their relationships with the natural world and other tribes.

Though many Kalina people have been introduced to Christianity through contact with missionaries, traditional beliefs continue to play a significant role in their spiritual life. In many communities, Christianity and Indigenous spiritual practices coexist, resulting in a unique blending of traditions.

An intriguing aspect of the Kalina's cultural traditions is their specific astronomical knowledge, particularly their understanding of constellations and their observations of the sun's annual course, such as solstices, equinoxes, and the sun's zenith passage, as well as their tracking of lunar phases and the apparent movement of the Milky Way.[46]

The Kalina culture uses two fundamental concepts: zenith and nadir as poles, and the horizon as a primary reference circle. In the past, the Kalina believed the universe was structured into three levels. The Earth was depicted as a flat, quadrangular platform, considered the dwelling place of humans, with their villages conceptually located at the center. These villages were surrounded by forests, believed to be the domain of spirits and animals under the guardianship of the Forest Lord, Kurupi, and the Woman, Tikoke. Finally, the land was encircled by rivers, home to the "water people."

This cosmological view reflects the deep connection the Kalina maintain with their environment, emphasizing the sacredness of natural spaces and their spiritual guardians, elements that still resonate within their cultural identity today.

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[46] • Magaña, Edmundo (1988), Orión entre los Kalina de Surinam, Conferencia Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, 17 de mayo de 1988.

6.5.8   Vulnerability and resilience

The Kalina people are highly vulnerable to environmental changes, particularly those resulting from industrial activities like logging, mining, and deforestation. These activities not only threaten their traditional lands but also disrupt their access to clean water, food sources, and medicinal plants. Pollution, especially mercury contamination from gold mining, has had severe health impacts on Kalina communities, affecting their long-term ability to sustain their traditional livelihoods.

Climate change presents additional challenges, as rising sea levels and extreme weather events increasingly threaten the coastal and riverine areas where many Kalina live. These environmental pressures compound existing social and economic vulnerabilities, making it harder for the Kalina to maintain their way of life.

The Kalina people are highly vulnerable to environmental changes, particularly those resulting from industrial activities like logging, mining, and deforestation. These activities not only threaten their traditional lands but also disrupt their access to clean water, food sources, and medicinal plants. Pollution, especially mercury contamination from gold mining, has had severe health impacts on Kalina communities, affecting their long-term ability to sustain their traditional livelihoods.

6.5.9   Kalina´s Communities in the AID of the Project.

Hollandse Kamp

Hollandse Kamp is an Indigenous village located on the southern side of the Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport, with a population of approximately 250 people. According to The ESIA prepared for N.V. Luchthavenbeheer in 2019[47], the village is led by Captain Theo Jubitana, who also serves as the chairman of the Association of Indigenous Village Leaders in Suriname (VIDS). The village consists of three living centers and is connected to the national electricity and water supply grids, provided by the NV EBS and SWM companies, respectively.

Although Hollandse Kamp does not have its own school, educational services are available at Zanderij Centrum, located about 1 km from the village. Other essential services, such as the police, doctor, and fire brigade, are also situated in Zanderij Centrum. The village itself lacks governmental offices, supermarkets, and other formal services, relying on nearby towns for these needs.

The community is engaged in agriculture and some residents work at the airport or in Paramaribo. Villagers also hunt and fish on nearby communal lands. Hollandse Kamp features a football field and a community center, which serves as the venue for village meetings and gatherings. The village has one blackwater creek running through it.

In 2016, the population of Hollandse Kamp organized a protest when part of their communal lands was allocated to the Airport Authority (NV Luchthavenbeheer) by the government.

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[47] Expansion of the J.A. Pengel International Airport Project Suriname (2019), Environmental and Social Impact Assessment. P-All consultants N.V.

Figure 13 Aereal Photograph Hollandse Kamp

Wit Santie

According to The ESIA prepared for N.V. Luchthavenbeheer in 2019[48] Wit Santie is an Indigenous village located to the north of Johan Adolf Pengel International Airport, led by Captain Patrick Mandé. With a population of approximately 1,100 people, it is larger than Hollandse Kamp and sits at the end of the Kennedy Highway. The village has a rural atmosphere, with several roadside stalls along the main road where locals sell seasonal fruits, traditional foods, hammocks, and artisanal crafts.

On the northwestern edge of the village lies a cassava factory, although it has not been successful. To the west of the village are the Kaloti Suriname mint house and the Jan Starke Education and Recreation Center, where some villagers have found employment, along with opportunities at the nearby airport. The village is served by several Chinese-owned shops, adding to the local economy.

Wit Santie is connected to the national electricity and water grids, provided by EBS and SWM, respectively. The village has a football field, home to the active local club SV Parawe, which competes in the Para Sportbond league. There is also a community center used for village meetings. Notably, the village has a large Hindu shrine at its center, a reflection of the community's cultural tolerance and diversity.

Public services, such as police, healthcare, and the fire brigade, are located in nearby Zanderij Centrum. Wit Santie also boasts a technical school, adding educational infrastructure to the village.

According to the ESIA presented in 2018, in 2016, tensions arose when two villagers from Wit Santie were arrested, sparking a protest. The conflict stemmed from the government's decision to allocate

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[48] Ibid.

communal land from both Wit Santie and Hollandse Kamp to the NV Luchthavenbeheer for airport expansion. Opinions on this land redistribution vary within the village. Those living closer to the airport runway generally hold stronger opposition to the expansion, feeling more directly impacted by the changes. Interestingly, although slightly more than half of the villagers prefer to retain their traditional lands, the percentage is lower than in Hollandse Kamp.
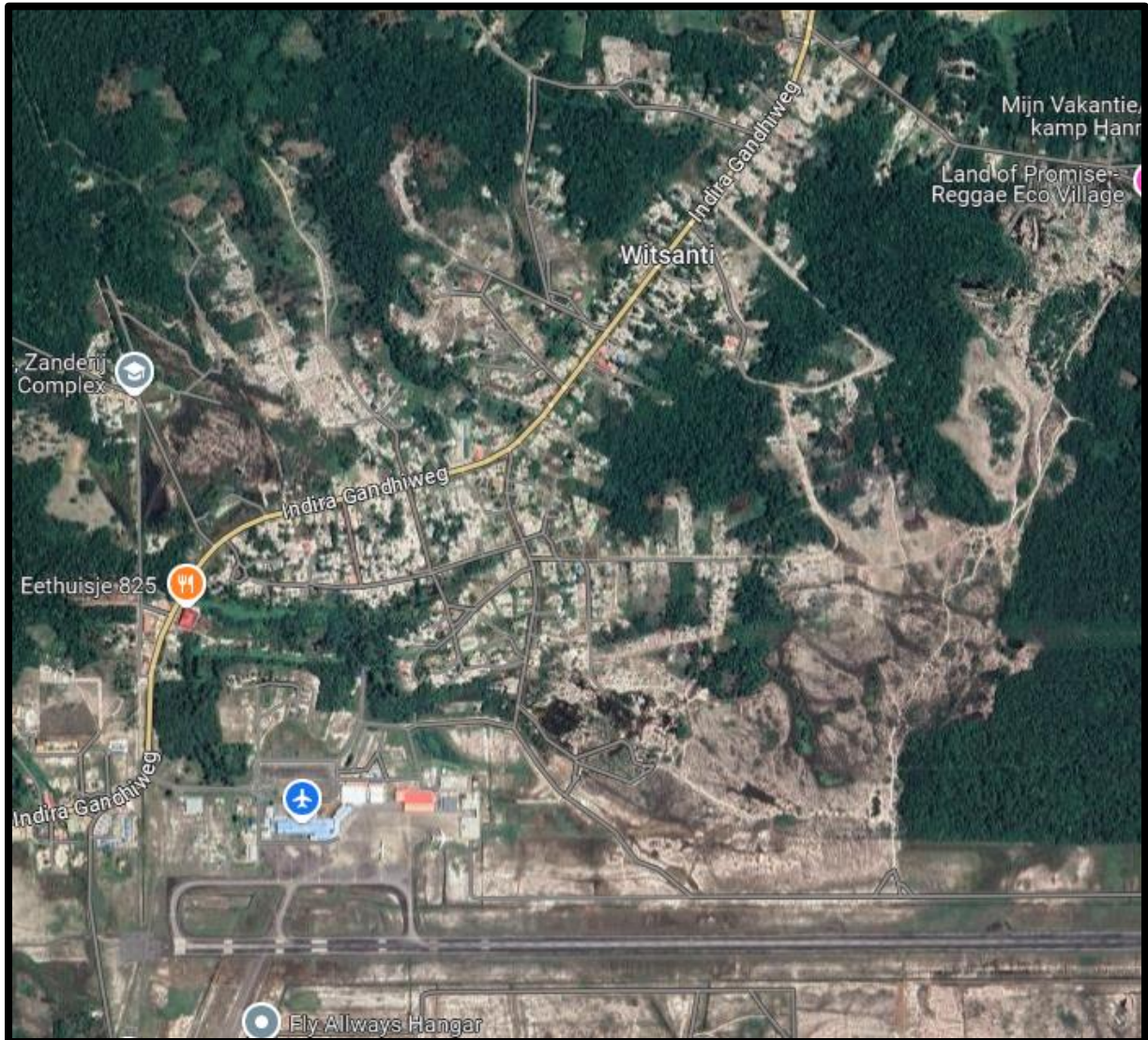

Figure 14 Aereal Photograph Wit Santie

7   Indigenous Peoples Plan

7.1 Potential Risks and Impacts; Mitigation Measures

7.1.1   General Impacts for Indigenous Peoples.

This chapter describes the potential environmental and social impacts and risks for the projects of the representative sample of the Essential Air Transport Service for Remote Communities in Suriname Program (SU-L1071), on the Indigenous Peoples.

Based on the socio-demographic analysis and specific characteristics of the communities, examined in the preceding paragraphs, it is concluded that the communities will be affected by the same impacts identified and analyzed in the environmental impact study presented (chapter 5 of the ESA). Moreover, given that these are Indigenous communities, and particularly due to their vulnerability, the following additional risks are identified in the table below.

Table 7. General impacts and risks to communities

Project Stage	Potential impacts and risks
Design	• Lack of meaningful consultations with Indigenous communities leading to resistance to the project • Lack of consideration of the social, cultural, and ecological impacts of project design on Indigenous communities • Failure to develop an Indigenous Peoples Plan in the project design
Construction	• Pollution: Increased air traffic brings noise and air pollution. Noise can disturb wildlife and disrupt hunting activities, while emissions from aircraft contribute to air quality degradation. • Disease Introduction: Increased contact with construction workers can introduce diseases to which the Indigenous community has low immunity, leading to potential health crises. • Conflicts and Tensions: Differences in values and lifestyles between the Indigenous community and newcomers can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. • Unequal Economic Benefits: While some community members might benefit economically, others may be left behind, exacerbating income inequalities. • Gender inequality and increased Gender-Based Violence and prostitution because of contact between construction workers and Indigenous women and men. • Cultural Appropriation: Outsiders might commercialize or exploit Indigenous culture without permission, leading to misrepresentation and loss of control over cultural assets.
Operational Phase	• Increased cost burden on the community. • Risk of Conflicts and Cultural Tensions. Impacts on local community and workers for the non-attention to the claims and complaints. • Deterioration of the airstrip due to lack of proper maintenance measures

7.1.2   Mitigation measures

Based on the impacts and risks identified, there is presented a detailed mitigation measures for each stage of the project.

Design Stage

Table 8. Design Stage: Mitigation Measures

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
Lack of Meaningful Consultations with Indigenous Communities	Develop a Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)	• Conduct early and continuous consultations with Indigenous leaders and community members. • Ensure that meetings are culturally appropriate and use the Indigenous language, providing translators where necessary. • Organize public hearings in areas where Indigenous peoples reside to gather concerns, and, for the Trio community, use Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) practices in all stages of project planning.

Construction Stage

Table 9. Construction Stage: Mitigation Measures

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
Pollution (Noise and Air Quality Degradation)	Implement an Air Quality, Noise and Vibrations Management Plan.	Emissions Control Measures: • Ensure all construction equipment is maintained in accordance with manufacturer's specifications. • Implement dust suppression measures as necessary in unpaved areas. • Prohibit incineration of non-vegetative wastes (e.g., refuse) at construction sites. • Reduce unnecessary idling of construction equipment and delivery trucks when they are not in active use. • Covering of work vehicles transporting dusty materials to prevent dispersion of materials beyond the site. • Establish and enact a comprehensive grievance procedure in the event of receiving complaints related to dust and/or exhaust emissions.

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
		Noise Control measures: • Ensure maintenance of all construction equipment in accordance with manufacturer's specifications to minimize noise emissions. • Strategic Work Scheduling: Plan construction, modification, and rehabilitation activities to take place during daylight hours when heightened noise levels are generally more acceptable to the surrounding community. • Develop and implement a comprehensive Construction Communications Plan to proactively notify neighboring receptors about upcoming construction activities. • Discourage unnecessary idling of construction equipment and trucks to minimize noise emissions and environmental impact
Disease Introduction	Develop a Health Protection and Disease Prevention Plan	• Provide mandatory health screenings and vaccinations for all construction workers before entering Indigenous areas. • Educate both the workers and the Indigenous communities about disease prevention, including the distribution of preventive health materials and hygiene supplies. • Establish a medical unit within or near the Indigenous communities to provide immediate healthcare access and quarantine if necessary.
Conflicts and Tensions (Between Indigenous Community and Newcomers)	Implement a Conflict Resolution and Cultural Sensitivity Program	• Provide cultural sensitivity training for all project staff and construction workers, emphasizing respect for Indigenous values, norms, and traditions. • Establish a community liaison officer who is Indigenous or has deep knowledge of the community's customs to mediate potential disputes. • Set up dialogue sessions between the community and project personnel to promote understanding and cooperation.
Unequal Economic Benefits	Develop an Inclusive Economic Opportunities Program	• Prioritize the hiring of Indigenous workers and provide skills training programs tailored to the project (e.g., construction, hospitality, and management). • Create microfinance opportunities or grants for Indigenous entrepreneurs to

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
		• start businesses linked to airport services (e.g., local handicrafts, tourism). • Ensure transparent communication on employment opportunities, ensuring that both men and women in the community have equal access.
Gender Inequality and exclusion of Indigenous Woman	Gender-Sensitive Stakeholder Engagement	• Map key Indigenous women leaders and organizations. Ensure consultations address gender-specific challenges, using culturally appropriate formats, Indigenous languages, and trusted community networks. • Establish gender-sensitive communication channels and regularly report project results with gender-disaggregated data, focusing on Indigenous women's perspectives.
	Gender-Focused Grievance Mechanism	• Implement a grievance mechanism that addresses the unique needs of Indigenous women, providing culturally relevant, anonymous, and accessible reporting channels. • Involve trusted Indigenous women as liaisons to facilitate grievance processes with respect for cultural sensitivities.
	Training and Capacity Building	• Provide gender sensitivity training for project personnel, focusing on Indigenous women's roles, rights, and protection from gender-based violence (GBV). • Promote awareness among Indigenous women about their rights, employment opportunities, and participation in decision-making roles.
	Safe and Inclusive Work Environment	• Establish an anti-discrimination policy addressing gender and cultural diversity and ensure inclusive employment opportunities for Indigenous women. • Provide safe, culturally appropriate facilities for women in project areas, including separate sanitation where applicable.
	Safety Measures for Women and Vulnerable Groups	• Design project infrastructure to improve Indigenous women's safety, such as secure paths and enhanced lighting. • Partner with Indigenous organizations for culturally appropriate support services related to GBV, ensuring accessible resources for those affected.

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
Increased Gender-Based Violence and Prostitution	Gender Protection and Safety Protocols	• Establish zero-tolerance policies against gender-based violence (GBV), harassment, and exploitation, with strict consequences for violations. • Collaborate with local NGOs to offer gender-based violence awareness programs for both construction workers and the Indigenous community. • Create safe reporting mechanisms for Indigenous women to report abuse confidentially and ensure legal support and counseling services for victims. • Provide monitoring teams and community patrols to prevent illegal activities such as prostitution around the project areas.
Cultural Appropriation	Cultural Heritage Protection and Rights Agreement	• Create legal agreements between the Indigenous community and project developers to ensure intellectual property rights over cultural expressions. • Consult the community before any use of Indigenous symbols, rituals, or knowledge for tourism or commercial purposes, ensuring proper compensation. • Develop a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) to protect cultural sites and prevent unauthorized access to sacred locations. • Provide cultural awareness programs for workers and visitors, explaining the significance of local traditions and cultural heritage.

Operational Stage

Table 10. Operational Stage: Mitigation Measures

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
Increased cost burden on the community	Generate local employment opportunities	• Generate local employment opportunities within the maintenance program
Deterioration of the airstrip due to lack of proper maintenance measures	Maintenance Management Plan	• Allocate Funds or seek external support to offset the costs of fuel and grass maintenance currently borne by the community.

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
		• Establish a structured maintenance plan to ensure airstrip safety and longevity, with clear responsibilities for upkeep and funding from the project. • Adopt international best practices regarding the airstrip safety and maintenance. • Assure compliance with current national regulations.

	Training Program for Local Capacity Building	• Conduct workshops tailored for Indigenous communities and project personnel. Training topics should include:
		  o Basic induction in environmental and community safety
		  o Communication Systems
		  o Risk assessment and control. Security of persons, movable and immovable property. Electrical work and road safety
		  o Procedures for minimizing ecological disruption and preserving Indigenous cultural heritage
		  o Risk control related to airstrip maintenance and safety.
		• Adopt international best practices regarding the airstrip safety and maintenance.
		• Assure compliance with current national regulations.

Risk of Conflicts and Cultural Tensions	Develop a Culturally appropriate Grievance Redress Mechanism.	• Create a transparent grievance redress mechanism to handle complaints from both community members and workers. Ensure the mechanism is culturally sensitive, accessible to all, and offers a confidential, supportive environment, especially for cases related to GBV. • Implement a system for reporting and monitoring grievances, with quarterly reviews shared with community leaders, including Indigenous representatives and traditional authorities.

Impact to Avoid	Mitigation Measure	Action Description
	Implement Cultural Heritage Preservation measures	• In collaboration with Indigenous leaders, identify culturally significant areas to safeguard, ensuring that operational plans respect traditional values and Indigenous practices.
	Assure formal inclusion of Indigenous Leadership	• Assure Indigenous leaders, including both male and female representatives are part of decision-making processes.

7.1.3 Specific Impacts and mitigation measures for the Trio Community in Kwamalasamutu

In addition to the impacts and risks described, the project can potentially impact the Trio Indigenous community in the Direct Area of Influence in the following ways:

Road and Traffic Impacts

Impact Assessment

Impact Description	Limited mobility for community members		
Impact Nature	Negative	Positive	Neutral
Magnitude	Low	Medium	High
Scope	Restricted (OA)	Local (DAoI)	Extended (IAoI)
Duration	Transitory		Permanent
Probability	Low	Medium	High
Accumulation	Non-cumulative		Cumulative

Impact Discussion

During the period when airstrip improvements are underway, if air services are suspended, and considering that the mobility of goods, services, and people is primarily by plane, there will be limited mobility for the community members.

This impact is classified as negative, low magnitude, localized in the direct influence area, and transitory in nature (only occurring during construction) for preparation and demobilization activities.

Mitigation Measures

• Information and Community Participation Program: Implement a comprehensive Early Communication Strategy, ensuring proactive engagement with local communities well in advance of construction. Use multiple communication channels (local radio, social media,

printed materials) to keep residents informed about disruptions and planned mitigation efforts, providing information to neighbors about the project duration, scheduling, and mitigation measures for possible risks and impacts.

- Establish a Road Safety and Traffic Management Program in the ESMP.
- Establish an Efficiency Monitoring System during construction to minimize downtime. This could include the use of specialized equipment and a well-coordinated work schedule to reduce project delays and, therefore, the duration of air service disruption.
- Implement a Community Liaison Office within the Indigenous communities that will operate as a constant communication point between the project management team and the local population. This office can coordinate emergency transportation needs and address unforeseen disruptions.

Economic development

Impact Assessment

Impact Description	Impacts goods and services		
Impact Nature	Negative	Positive	Neutral
Magnitude	Low	Medium	High
Scope	Restricted (OA)	Local (DAoI)	Extended (IAoI)
Duration	Transitory		Permanent
Probability	Low	Medium	High
Accumulation	Non-cumulative		Cumulative

Impact Discussion

There is a negative impact on the economic activity of the Kwamalasamutu community, due to the inability to transport goods during construction, as most of the population's essential goods and basic supplies are transported by air, affecting the connectivity and accessibility for local residents who rely on air transport and bringing:

- Risk of food shortages and increased prices or market fluctuations.
- Additionally, the Werephai Cave archaeological site, which attracts tourists, may see a reduction in visits due to flight disruptions during the runway rehabilitation phases.

These impacts are considered <u>negative</u>, of <u>medium</u> magnitude, of a <u>transitory</u> nature, and geographically distributed in the <u>indirect influence area</u> of the project.

Mitigation Measures

- Implement an Information and Community Participation Program in the ESMP, providing information to neighbors about the project duration, scheduling, and mitigation measures for possible risks and impacts.
- Establish an early supply and contingency transportation plan by boat for essential goods, if required
- Establish an advanced Airstrip Closure and Alternate Access Plan, which includes early scheduling of alternative air or boat transport options for essential goods and services. The plan should also involve collaboration with local leaders to ensure it meets community needs.

- Establish a Grievance Management Mechanism for the Project.

Health impacts and risks

Impact Assessment

Impact Description	Medical care and emergency attendance		
Impact Nature	Negative	Positive	Neutral
Magnitude	Low	Medium	High
Scope	Restricted (OA)	Local (DAoI)	Extended (IAoI)
Duration	Transitory		Permanent
Probability	Low	Medium	High
Accumulation	Non-cumulative		Cumulative

Impact Discussion

The construction activities for the rehabilitation and improvement of the Kwamalasamutu airstrip may lead to temporary disruptions in flight schedules, affecting the connectivity and accessibility for local residents. In the event of a medical emergency, the community uses airplanes to access medical support in Paramaribo. These disruptions could negatively impact emergency medical care if needed.

Furthermore, Indigenous communities rely on the aircraft for emergency medical transport, which is often unaffordable due to high operating costs and limited community resources.

The impact on residential use is categorized as low negative for the entire work. These impacts are of a transitory nature.

Mitigation Measures

- Implement an Information and Community Participation Program in the ESMP, ensuring adequate communication with neighbors about the construction schedule and potential disruptions.
- Establish a Grievance Management Mechanism for the Project.
- Establish an early warning system, with coordination with the Foundation for Primary Health Care Suriname (Medical Mission - MM) authorities for emergency treatment, both for the community and for workers on-site.
- Establish an emergency air transport system for medical or other emergencies
- It is recommended to create a Subsidy Program for Emergency Medical Flights: Explore partnerships with regional health services or NGOs to provide subsidies or periodic funding for emergency medical flights for Indigenous communities.

7.2 Informed Consultation and Participation (ICP) with Indigenous Peoples.

As part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, it is essential to ensure that the consultation with indigenous peoples is culturally appropriate, transparent, and effective in addressing the concerns and expectations of the affected communities.

This Chapter sets out the general principles of participation and a collaborative strategy to identify stakeholders and plan a participatory process in line with Environmental and Social Performance Standard 10: "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure" along with ESPS 1 "Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts", ESPS 2 "Labor and Working Conditions", ESPS 4 "Community Health, Safety and Security", ESPS 6 "Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources", ESPS 7 "Indigenous People", ESPS 8 "Cultural Heritage" and ESPS 9 "Gender Equality".

Two meaningful consultations were carried out in October 2024. The first included all key stakeholders and Indigenous and Maroon communities and was held in Paramaribo. The second one was with the Trio Indigenous communities in Kwamalasamutu. Details of the stakeholder event are registered in the Consultation Report – Support to the Air Transport Sector in Suriname (SU-L1071). Moreover, as part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, a Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) was obtained and also registered on the report.

7.2.1 General Principles of ESPS 7 Applicable to the Program.

The objective of the consultation process is to promote the engagement of the affected population and other interested parties from initial stages of the project and throughout the project's life cycle. Stakeholders will be informed on Projects description, its potential environmental and social impacts and the mitigation measures planned to ensure adequate environmental and social management during the execution of the works, and their subsequent operation.

The Indigenous communities of Suriname endured a long history of need for meaningful consultations on development actions in their communities.

Consultations with the Indigenous communities of Paramaribo and Kwamalasamutu are essential to mitigate the potential adverse impacts and enhance the project's positive impacts in these two communities.

Without national legislation and consultation requirements, international best practices, and IDB's ESPS 7 should be considered.

An element of ESPS 7 is the **Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)** from Indigenous communities in circumstances where projects:

- Affect their lands or territories.
- Lead to relocation.
- Impact their cultural heritage.
- Involve the utilization of their traditional knowledge.

In addition, it is necessary to acknowledge and respect the distinct cultures, languages, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples. The Bank also recommends "meaningful consultation," which is defined as a two-way process that:

- Provides stakeholders with timely, relevant, and understandable information.

- Allows stakeholders to express their views, concerns, and preferences.

- Incorporates stakeholder input into project decision-making processes.

7.2.2 Informed consultation and participation principles.

According to the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Environmental and Social Performance Standard (ESPS) 7, projects that affect Indigenous peoples must adhere to the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). The following general guidelines must be followed:

- Engagement and Participation: A robust engagement process must include representative bodies (e.g., councils of elders) and provide sufficient time for decision-making in line with Indigenous protocols.

- **Early Initiation**: Engagement begins at the earliest stages of project development and continues throughout the project lifecycle.

- **Inclusivity**: All affected parties, especially vulnerable and marginalized groups, are identified and included in the consultation process.

- **Cultural Appropriateness**: Communication methods and materials are tailored to the cultural contexts and languages of the stakeholders.

- **Accessibility**: Consultations are held at times and locations convenient for stakeholders, minimizing barriers to participation.

- **Transparency**: Information about the project, its potential impacts, and mitigation measures is disclosed openly and honestly.

- **Responsive Feedback Mechanisms**: Stakeholder inputs are documented, considered, and addressed, with feedback on how their contributions influenced project decisions.

The general guidelines of the participation process, the following requirements established according to Performance Standard 7 "Indigenous Peoples" must be met:

- The borrower will respect and consider the rights of Indigenous peoples and individuals enshrined in the corresponding legal obligations and commitments, which will include relevant national and international legislation and Indigenous legal systems. These systems are recognized in national legislation.

- Whenever possible, adverse impacts on Indigenous communities affected by the project should be avoided.

- If it is not possible to avoid adverse impacts after exploring alternatives, the borrower will minimize or provide restoration or compensation for such impacts in a culturally appropriate manner and proportionate to the nature and extent of these impacts and the vulnerability of the Indigenous communities affected by the project.

- The borrower will undertake a process of engagement with the Indigenous communities affected by the project, as required by Performance Standards 1 and 10. This process includes stakeholder analysis and engagement planning, information disclosure, consultations, and participation in a culturally appropriate manner. Additionally, the process will include the following: (i) Participation of representative bodies and organizations of Indigenous peoples (such as councils of elders or village councils), as well as members of the Indigenous communities affected by the project; (ii) Allowing sufficient time for the decision-making processes of Indigenous peoples; (iii) Inclusion of Indigenous consultation protocols when they exist.

- The borrower and the Indigenous communities affected by the project will identify mitigation measures in line with the mitigation hierarchy described in Performance Standard 1, as well as opportunities for culturally appropriate and sustainable development benefits.

- The borrower will ensure that the agreed-upon compensation measures are delivered in a timely and equitable manner to the Indigenous communities affected by the project.

- Information about the Program and the projects to be executed must be disclosed in the relevant local language, in a manner and format that is culturally appropriate and accessible to illiterate and semi-literate audiences, and through channels suitable for the diverse groups of stakeholders.

7.2.3 Stakeholder Mapping and identification of key actors

Stakeholder mapping is essential to ensure that all relevant parties, including Indigenous communities, are properly identified and included in the consultation process.

This mapping should include:

- Indigenous councils and leadership bodies (e.g., Village Council of Kwamalasamutu).
- Local Indigenous organizations and representatives
- Government bodies responsible for Indigenous affairs.

A stakeholder mapping is already presented in "Annex 1 Stakeholder Engagement Plan" of the project's ESA/ESPM.

Previous the consultation event, to ensure the participation of Indigenous Peoples (IP) in Suriname and promote their rights, representation, and well-being, the MTCT sent official notes to the following organizations, inviting them to participate to the meetings:

a- Mulokot Foundation[49].
b- Eenheid en Solidariteit voor Alliantie en Vooruitgang (ESAV) Platform
c- Platform Collectieve Inheemse Eigendommen
d- Kapiten Dorp Matta
e- Kapiten Dorp Pikin Poika
f- Vereniging van Inheemse Dorpshoofden (VIDS)
g- Organisatie van Inheemsen in Suriname – OIS 1
h- Organisatie van Inheemsen in Suriname – OIS 2
i- Organisatie van Samenwerkende Inheemse Dorpen van Para, Wanica en Commewijne

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[49] **https://mulokot.com/who-we-are/**

j- Jimmy Toeroenmang (Kwamalasamutu Village *Granman*)

7.2.4 Conducting culturally appropriate consultations

To ensure meaningful consultation, the following steps should be taken:

- Provide Accessible Information: Share all relevant project information, including potential impacts and benefits, in the local language and delivered in ways that suit the community's cultural context, using culturally appropriate formats (e.g., oral presentations, community meetings, visual aids).

- Allow Time for Review: Give the community adequate time to review the information and consult internally.

- Recognize and respect the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their rights to self-determination, land, resources, and cultural heritage.

- Apply the principles of FPIC to all activities of the projects and the communities.

- Ensure all segments of the community—women, men, elders, youth, and marginalized groups—have opportunities to participate.

- Respect for Decision-Making Processes: Consultations should allow sufficient time for Indigenous communities to reach consensus through their traditional governance structures.

- Recognize the roles of Indigenous women and ensure their participation. Address gender-specific impacts and benefits.

- Conduct consultations that respect Indigenous cultures, languages, traditions, and decision-making processes. In the case of the two communities, consult with respective village leaders and Indigenous representative organizations such as VIDs.

- Maintain open communication, share information transparently, and be accountable for incorporating Indigenous inputs into all project management phases.

- Involve Indigenous liaisons or cultural mediators who can facilitate communication and bridge cultural gaps.

- Schedule Meetings Respectfully in the Communities: Arrange consultations at times and locations convenient for the community, considering cultural events and subsistence activities.

- Establish a Grievance Mechanism (GM) that is accessible and culturally appropriate channels. Use focal points in the community as entry points for the GM.

Recognizing the roles of women in Indigenous communities is crucial for ensuring that the consultation process is inclusive and comprehensive. Women should have opportunities to express their views on the project, especially regarding impacts on:

- Health and Safety: Including access to healthcare during the project.
- Economic Opportunities: Potential effects on traditional livelihoods and the participation of women in economic benefits generated by the project.
- Cultural Heritage: Protecting Indigenous knowledge and cultural traditions from external commercialization.

7.2.5 Free, Prior and Informed Consent. (FPIC)

Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a fundamental principle outlined in the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) Environmental and Social Performance Standard 7 (ESPS 7) on Indigenous Peoples. This principle is vital for ensuring the protection of the rights of Indigenous communities and is mandated by international standards such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the International Labor Organization Convention 169 (ILO 169), which Suriname has not ratified. FPIC ensures that Indigenous communities like the Trio in Kwamalasamutu have the right to give or withhold consent to any project that may affect their lands, resources, cultures, or livelihoods.

In accordance with the provisions of this plan and considering the specific characteristics of the communities within the project's area of influence, it is considered necessary, for the proper compliance with the IDB's policy, to carry out a FPIC with the Trio community, located in Kwamalasamutu.

The key Requirements of FPIC Under IDB ESPS are:

- **Free**: Consent must be granted voluntarily, without any form of coercion or undue influence. The Trio community should feel empowered to make decisions regarding the project based on their own interests and cultural practices.
- **Prior**: The process of obtaining consent should occur well before the commencement of any project activities. This ensures that the Trio community has adequate time for discussion, internal consultation, and consideration of the potential impacts of the project.
- **Informed**: The community must receive comprehensive information about the project in a manner that is understandable and accessible. This includes details about the project's objectives, potential environmental and social impacts, and the measures that will be implemented to mitigate these impacts. The information should be presented in the local language and culturally appropriate formats, ensuring that all community members can comprehend the implications of the project.
- **Consent**: The decision to provide or withhold consent must be made through a transparent and culturally respectful process that incorporates the traditional governance structures of the Trio community. It is essential that this process reflects the collective will of the community, recognizing their social and cultural norms.

An initial engagement was performed by MTCT, and the date and time of the consultation was set. This public consultation is part of the stakeholder engagement process.

During the **Consultation Event that took place on October 17th, 10 am in Kwamalasamutu, although** FPIC had not been formally requested, the community expressed spontaneous support to the project. At the end of the event, the *Granman* stated that they were very happy with the project and gave their full support and consent. This statement was made voluntarily, without any prior request for FPIC.

As informed in the consultation Report, the event can be described as transparent and meaningful, as clear communication was provided regarding the project's scope, potential impacts, and mitigation measures. This information was delivered in the community's native language, with proper invitations extended to all relevant members. Based on these factors, it can be concluded that the event was conducted in accordance with IDB's Standard 7

Given that the event adhered to IDB's Standard 7, and the community responded positively, it was decided to record their verbal consent as part of the process towards obtaining formal FPIC. While the consent was not provided in written form, it was verbally expressed and recorded with the approval of the *Granman*.

7.2.6 Consultation report

The following is a minimum content outline of the Consultation Report:

1. Participation strategy: Description of how the consultation process was developed (prior coordination with authorities, key stakeholders, methodology, selection of topics to be addressed, etc.).
2. Stakeholder mapping (groups, institutions or people who were invited) and selection criteria of the invited stakeholders, Invitation mechanism.
3. Dissemination: Invitations issued and publications of the event on institutional websites and media.
4. Website and term.
5. Analysis of the people who participated compared to the guests.
6. Gender-disaggregated data of participants.
7. Materials submitted and/or published during the consultation process.
8. Queries made and responses (Proposals, claims or questions made by the different stakeholders, and how they were addressed).
9. Indication of how the proposals and/or complaints received were incorporated/or will be incorporated into the design of the project. Any formal agreement reached with the persons consulted.
10. The main conclusions on positive or negative perception of the project by the participants, including the agreements.
11. Elements collected from the consultations and included in the final version of the ESIA and ESGP.
12. ANNEX. Copy of the presentation made (it must be ensured that the impacts and mitigation measures of the specific project have been presented).
13. ANNEX. Sample copy of invitation letters sent.
14. ANNEX. Copy of the acknowledgments of receipt of the sending of the invitation letters.
15. ANNEX. List of invited people.
16. ANNEX. List of participants: interested persons/affected persons, governmental, institutional, and general population participants.
17. ANNEX. Photographs of the activity.

The consultation report must be published on the institutional website of EA, as communicated to the persons participating in the consultation meeting.

7.3 Grievance Mechanism

7.3.1 Principles of the GRM management System

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) aims to arbitrate the means and mechanisms to facilitate the receipt of concerns (queries, complaints, grievances, suggestions) from the stakeholders affected by the projects and respond to them, in order to resolve the concerns anticipating potential conflicts. It makes it possible for immediate issues, including any form of Gender Based Violence (GBV), to be addressed in a way that is transparent, relevant for the Barbados scenario, and easily reachable by all groups within the impacted populations

The mechanism is without consequences. The method will not prevent people from using administrative or judicial remedies. The Implementing Agency shall discuss the mechanism with the impacted communities during its community engagement process and as necessary to protect the Project's interests. In cases where it is not possible to avoid conflicts, negotiation should be promoted, and efforts should be made to reach a resolution so that all involved parties benefit from the solution.

This mechanism should operate throughout the entire project cycle, being available for stakeholders to present their concerns or grievances throw-out the preparation, construction and operation phases. The complaints and grievances management procedure should cover the reception process, management or handling of the complaint, and the documented closure thereof.

As soon as the full details of the finished project are known and accepted, it will be the Implementing Agency's obligation to update and change this procedure or complaint mechanism.

The Independent Consultation and Investigation Mechanism (MICI) of the IDB is also available. Access to MICI does not depend on exhausting the recourse offered by the Program's GRM. All MICI processes, including the procedural requirements for filing a complaint, are regulated by the MICI Policy, available on its website **https://www.iadb.org/mici/**. Claimants can also contact MICI by email at **mechanism@iadb.org** for additional information.

The Program and its projects will have a feedback / claims management system that includes their entry / reception, analysis, monitoring, and resolution.

The principles of the GRM are:

- The interaction/claims management system will have mechanisms in accordance with the local context and the sociocultural characteristics of the groups involved in each project to be financed by the Program, with special consideration and respect for the most vulnerable groups (Youth, Women, people with disabilities, migrants, people belonging to Indigenous communities, among others).
- The procedures for complaint, the process that will follow, the deadline and the resolution mechanisms will be widely disseminated for the knowledge of interested parties and complainants.
- In all cases, a record will be kept of the reception, analysis and resolution of claims and conflicts.

7.3.2 Guidelines GRM management System

In general, the Mechanism will follow the following guidelines:

- **Proportional:** The Mechanism will proportionally consider the level of risk and possible negative impacts on the affected areas.

- **Culturally appropriate:** The Mechanism will be designed to consider the local customs of the area.

- **Accessible:** The Mechanism will be designed in a clear and simple way so that it is understandable to all people. There will be no cost related to it.

- **Anonymous:** The complainant may remain anonymous, as long as it does not interfere with the possible resolution of the complaint or problem. Anonymity is distinguished from confidentiality in that it is an anonymous complaint, the personal data (name, address) of the complainant are not recorded.

- **Confidential:** The Program will respect the confidentiality of the complaint. Information and details about a confidential report will only be shared internally, and only when it is necessary to report or coordinate with the authorities.

- **Transparent:** The process and operation of the Mechanism will be transparent, predictable, and readily available for use by the population.

7.3.3   Specific Measures for Indigenous Communities:

In addition to what is established in the ESA regarding the grievance mechanism, **it will need to take into consideration the existence of Indigenous communities and specific vulnerabilities in the area. This is to ensure that it serves as a channel that can be effectively utilized by all members of the Indigenous communities analyzed in this document.**

To ensure that the GRM is culturally sensitive and accessible to Indigenous communities, the following measures will be implemented:

- **Culturally Appropriate Design:** The GRM will be tailored to reflect the local customs, languages, and sociocultural contexts of the Indigenous communities, particularly the Trio community in Kwamalasamutu. This includes providing information in the local language and using culturally relevant communication methods.

- **Inclusive Procedures**: Procedures for lodging complaints will be communicated through community leaders, local gatherings, and culturally significant venues to ensure that all community members, including women, youth, and elders, are informed and able to participate.

- **Targeted Outreach**: Special outreach efforts will be made to educate vulnerable groups within the Indigenous community about the GRM. This may include workshops, informational materials, and community meetings designed to empower individuals to express their grievances.

- **Supportive Mechanisms:** The GRM will include trained facilitators who can assist Indigenous individuals in articulating their concerns and navigating the complaint process. These facilitators will be knowledgeable about the specific cultural and social dynamics of the community.

- **Anonymity and Confidentiality**: Complainants from Indigenous communities may choose to remain anonymous, with procedures in place to protect their identity while ensuring that the resolution process is effective. Confidentiality will be strictly maintained for all grievances, and information will only be shared internally when necessary.

- **Feedback and Improvement**: The GRM will incorporate a feedback mechanism to continuously improve the process based on community input. Regular assessments will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the GRM and make necessary adjustments to enhance its accessibility and responsiveness.

● **Empowerment of Indigenous Voices:** The GRM will ensure that the voices of Indigenous peoples are prioritized in the resolution process. This includes giving special attention to the concerns of women, youth, and other marginalized groups within the Indigenous communities.

7.4 Indigenous People Plan Schedule

the consultation, update, and execution schedule for the plan is framed within the preparation, approval, and operation calendar of the Project to identify and carry out in a timely manner the necessary before the start of construction.

A proposed schedule is presented below, based on the actions developed in this document. An update of the IPP implementation schedule will be required once the start dates of the works are available. At that time, a detailed chronology must be established.

Table 11. Activity Timeline

No	Activity	Prior to Loan Approval	Prior to Start of Construction	During Construction Phase	Prior to Operational Phase
1	IPP First Version	▓			
2	Publication of the IPP on IDB Website	▓			
3	Adjustments to the First Version of the IPP	▓			
4	Publication of the Second Version of the IPP	▓			
5	Stakeholder Events		▓		
6	Update of the IPP (Third Version)		▓		
7	Review and Approval of Agreements for the Updated IPP		▓		
8	Publication of the third Version of the IPP		▓		
9	IPP Implementation • Mitigation programs correctly executed • Monitoring and evaluation • Quarterly report			▓	

No	Activity	Prior to Loan Approval	Prior to Start of Construction	During Construction Phase	Prior to Operational Phase
10	Evaluation and Monitoring of the IPP				
11	IPP Final Report				
12	IPP Audit				

7.5 Monitoring and Reporting

This monitoring and control plan outlines the key components necessary to ensure the effective implementation of the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) for the Project. The plan establishes clear procedures for tracking progress, assessing the effectiveness of mitigation measures, and ensuring compliance with national and international safeguards.

The Ministry of Transport, Communication, and Tourism (MTCT), through the Project Execution Unit (PEU), is responsible for the execution of this plan. A dedicated social specialist will be hired to lead the monitoring efforts, ensuring cultural sensitivity, community participation, and compliance with the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) process.

7.5.1 Objectives of the monitoring plan

- Ensure the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) is effectively implemented.
- Assess the adequacy and impact of mitigation measures outlined in the IPP.
- Identify and address potential issues early in the project cycle.
- Guarantee ongoing, meaningful engagement with Indigenous communities.
- Ensure compliance with relevant international standards, such as IFC Performance Standard 7, ILO Convention 169, and national laws on Indigenous rights.

7.5.2 Monitoring indicators

The following indicators will be used to track progress and assess the effectiveness of the IPP

- Consultation and Participation
  - ✓ Number of consultation meetings held with Indigenous communities.
  - ✓ Number of Indigenous community members (men, women, youth, elders) participating in meetings.
  - ✓ Feedback and concerns from the community adequately addressed.
  - ✓ Level of engagement in decision-making processes, including FPIC.
- Implementation of Mitigation Measures
  - ✓ Extent to which cultural sites and sacred areas are protected.
  - ✓ Incidents of conflicts or disputes between construction workers and Indigenous communities.
  - ✓ Employment of local Indigenous workers in the project and access to skills development programs.
- Health and Social Impacts
  - ✓ Disease outbreaks as reported in Health monitoring reports for Indigenous communities.
  - ✓ Gender-based violence incidents or other social tensions arising from project activities.
- Economic Impact
  - ✓ Number of Indigenous businesses supported or created in connection with the project.
  - ✓ Participation rates of Indigenous people in project-related economic opportunities (e.g., employment, entrepreneurship).
  - ✓ Distribution of compensation or benefits to affected community members.

7.5.3   Monitoring instruments

- Monitoring reports by contractor firm and MCTC
- Interviews: Regular surveys and interviews with community members, leaders, and project workers will be conducted to gather qualitative and quantitative data.
- Community Feedback Mechanism: Establish a grievance redress system that allows Indigenous community members to report issues or concerns confidentially. All grievances will be logged, investigated, and addressed within a specific timeframe.

7.5.4   Reporting

The social specialist will prepare detailed quarterly reports summarizing the progress of the IPP implementation, community feedback, environmental and social indicators, and any challenges or issues encountered. These reports will be shared with the MTCT, the Indigenous community, and relevant stakeholders.

An annual assessment will be conducted to evaluate the long-term impact of the project on Indigenous communities. This report will include recommendations for adjusting the IPP to improve outcomes.

7.5.5   Corrective actions

If monitoring indicates that mitigation measures are not being effectively implemented or are not producing the desired outcomes, corrective actions will be taken. These may include:

- Revising or strengthening mitigation measures.
- Additional consultations with the Indigenous community to identify alternative solutions.
- Improving capacity-building programs to enhance community participation.
- Enhanced training for workers on cultural sensitivity and conflict resolution.

7.5.6   Monitoring and transparent reporting of participation process

The final phase of the consultation process involves continuous monitoring and transparent reporting. The project team must:

- Provide regular updates to Indigenous communities on project progress and any changes to mitigation measures.
- Involve Indigenous representatives in monitoring activities to ensure cultural and environmental impacts are minimized.
- Prepare and publish a public consultation report summarizing the process, outcomes, and how community inputs were incorporated.

7.5.7   Budget and Resources

A budget will be allocated for the monitoring and evaluation of the IPP, including resources for:

- Hiring the social specialist and local community liaison officers.
- Conducting field visits and environmental assessments.
- Organizing community meetings and training workshops.
- Implementing grievance mechanisms and feedback systems.

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