



# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2027

February 16, 2024

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This strategic plan is designed to provide an integrated approach to addressing the complexities and impact of ethnic relations in Guyana through the involvement of all stakeholders from the various sectors of society, to ensure the plan's success and sustainability. Regular monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of strategies will be essential to address emerging challenges and foster lasting positive change.

To ensure an effective Strategic Plan, the following areas were covered within this document, and each of the categories expanded upon in parallel to the twenty- four constitutional functions of the ERC.



The Strategic Plan reviewed the ERC's twenty-four constitutional functions and condensed them into four overarching Strategic Objectives:

- (i) Promote awareness and tolerance of ethnic diversity.
- (ii) Develop enhanced means of dispute resolution.
- (iii) Address perceptions of socioeconomic disparities.
- (iv) Foster the promotion of a Guyanese identity.

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) has developed a three-year strategic plan (2024 to 2027) to optimally respond to its constitutional mandate. This document was drafted through a participatory process, incorporating contributions made by various stakeholders. The Commission conducted several stakeholder engagements to ascertain the issues affecting various Constituencies as they relate to ethnic relations. The views expressed by the stakeholders were reviewed and considered in the drafting of this Strategic Plan 2024- 2027. Constituency engagements, Regional Stakeholder meetings, discussions among Commissioners, and contributions from the staff of the Secretariat.

## Overview

The Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC) is guided by twenty- four functions as outlined in Article 212 D of the Constitution of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. These functions are the guiding principle that underlined the vision of the Commission for the next three (3) years. The ideal vision of the Commission is to work with all stakeholders Nationwide, to achieve a state whereby acts of ethnic discrimination and intolerance are eradicated from our society. In contrast, the Commission acknowledges that it is an ideal that can only come over time, the vision to achieve at the end of the three years lead to efforts that will have a major impact on reducing ethnic discrimination and intolerance, which should then be evident by a reduced number of cases flagged by the Media Monitoring Unit and received by the Investigative Unit of the Commission.

To enable a society that is respectful, tolerant, and understanding of the diversity of each ethnicity in Guyana. Work towards the elimination of all forms of ethnic discrimination and intolerance. Safeguard values that exemplify, the principles of harmony and good relations at all times, through the Commissioner and staff of the Commission. Fortify efforts to promote education and awareness of all religions, cultures, and races in Guyana.

## The Vision

The Vision of the Ethnic Relation Commission encapsulates:

- Optimally achieving the constitutional mandate
- Educating and informing the public to foster ethnic harmony
- Fulfil its mission as a national agent of social transformation.

## Mission Statement

To commit all energies towards achieving the mandate of the Commission with dedication and efficiency. Collaborate and create inclusive, diverse spaces to foster harmony and good relations among all. Execute the functions of the Commission in a manner that is non-partisan, professional, and transparent.

## Strategic objectives

The strategic plan is structured around the ERC's twenty-four (24) constitutional functions and condensed into four overarching strategic objectives:

- (i) Promote awareness and tolerance of ethnic diversity.
- (ii) Develop enhanced means of dispute resolution.
- (iii) Address perceptions of socioeconomic disparities.
- (iv) Foster the promotion of a Guyanese identity.

## BACKGROUND

### Historical Context

The creation of the ERC represents one of the major developments emerging from the constitution reform process of 1999. The reform process was one of the CARICOM-brokered measures to address the racial and political upheaval in the country in the aftermath of the disputed 1997 election. Accordingly, the CARICOM AGREEMENT on Measures for Resolving Current Problems (the Herdmanston Accord), signed in January 1998, states: “Among the matters to be addressed by the Constitutional Reform Commission [CRC] will be measures and arrangements for the improvement of race relations in Guyana, including the contribution which equal opportunities legislation and concepts drawn from the CARICOM Charter of Civil Society can contribute to the cause of justice, equity, and progress in Guyana.” In direct response, the CRC made provisions for the creation of an ethnic relations Commission as the primary institution for fostering ethnic harmony in Guyana.

The ERC began its work in 2002 and operated until 2011. After a seven-year hiatus, the ERC was reconstituted with the swearing-in of ten new Commissioners on February 22, 2018. The life of that Commission came to an end in 2021. The Commission was recently reconstituted with the swearing-in of (10) ten new Commissioners in March 2023 by H.E. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

### ESSENTIAL TERMINOLOGY AND CONCEPTS ON ETHNICITY

Upfront, we must define two concepts that, if misapplied or misunderstood, can cause the ERC to inadvertently exclude from its purview distinct groups of Guyanese. The two concepts are (i) ethnicity, and (ii) race. They are considered key to providing the context of the strategic plan.

#### DIFFERENTIATING BETWEEN ETHNICITY AND RACE

The terms “race” and “ethnicity” are often but incorrectly used interchangeably. However, the drafters of our constitution seemed aware that the words have different meanings. In the entire document, the words “race” and “racial” are used only **fifteen times**, but the words “ethnic” and “ethnicity” appear **fifty-eight times**. The fact that the ERC was not named the Race Relations Commission, as done in some countries, further confirms the importance the Constitution attaches to the meaning of ethnicity.

**Race** is defined as a concept of dividing people into groups based on certain inherited physical characteristics, such as skin colour, facial features (Britannica), while **ethnic** is defined as a large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background (Merriam Webster)

Persons of the same race can belong to different ethnicities or ethnic groups. For example, our Amerindians are of the same race but are of nine separate nations or ethnic groups.

This interpretation of ethnicity matters significantly to the ERC. Thinking of Guyana as a land of only six peoples or races overlooks the ethnic and interethnic issues that many Guyanese may face outside of these few broad categories. The Commission’s strategies and programs will be attuned to the fact that ethnicity is a wider reality than race.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE ETHNIC RELATIONS COMMISSION**

In designing the strategic plan, a foundational task was to analyze the mandate of the ERC as spelled out in the Guyana constitution. The constitutional provisions for the ERC are contained in Articles 212A to 212F.

Article 212D lists the ERC's twenty-four functions (TABLE 2). This lengthy list, running over four pages in the constitution, speaks to the complexity of the commission's mandate. Scrutiny of it, however, reveals that it contains a mix of **ends** and **means**. In addition, several functions overlap in their meaning or intention. For proper strategic planning, we must first streamline the complete list. This was undertaken in three steps.

### **Separation of MEANS and ENDS**

We start with two definitions. Simply defined, MEANS are the roads toward a destination, while ENDS are the destinations.

So, for instance, Article 212D(p) states: To "investigate on its own accord or request from the National Assembly or any other body any issues affecting ethnic relations." This is a MEANS, as it tells the ERC how to perform its task (the road it must take). This function does not inform the commission what is the goal or the destination to be reached, as Article 212D(b), on the other hand, does and as such categorized as an END: To "promote the elimination of all forms of discrimination based on ethnicity."

The MEANS include the actions an agency such as the ERC would be expected to undertake, such as:

- i. investigating
- ii. monitoring and reviewing
- iii. training and educating
- iv. conduct dispute resolution
- v. consulting and partnering
- vi. recommending and reporting to the National Assembly.

The functions of the Ethnic Relations Commission as outlined in Article 212 D of the Constitution are listed in the following table and categorized according to 'means; and 'ends.'

**TABLE 2: ERC's CONSTITUTIONAL FUNCTIONS (Article 212D)**

		MEANS	ENDS
1	a) provide for equality of opportunity between persons of different ethnic groups and to promote harmony and good relations between such persons;		✓
2	b) promote the elimination of all forms of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity;		✓
3	c) discourage and prohibit persons institutions, political parties and associates from indulging in, advocating or promoting discriminatory practices on the ground of ethnicity;		✓
4	d) foster a sense of security among all ethnic groups be encouraging and promoting the understanding, acceptance and tolerance of diversity in all aspects of national life and promoting full participation by all ethnic groups in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the people;		✓
5	e) promote educational and training programmes and research projects which provide for and encourage ethnic peace and harmony;	✓	
6	f) encourage and create respect for religious, cultural and other forms of diversity in a plural society;		✓
7	g) promote arbitration, conciliation, mediation and like forms of dispute resolution in order to secure ethnic harmony and peace;	✓	
8	h) establish mechanisms and procedures for arbitration, conciliation, mediation and like forms of dispute resolution that would ensure ethnic harmony and peace;	✓	
9	i) recommend to the National Assembly criteria to be considered for the purposes of deciding whether any person has committed acts of discrimination on the ground of ethnicity;	✓	
10	j) investigate complaints of racial discrimination and make recommendations on the measures to be taken if such complaints are valid, and where there is justification therefore refer matters to the Human Rights Commission or other relevant authorities for further action to be taken;	✓	
11	k) monitor and review all legislation and all administrative acts or omissions relating to or having implications for ethnic relations and equal opportunities and, from time to time, prepare and submit proposals for revision of such legislation and administrative acts and omissions;	✓	

12	l) immediately report to the National Assembly and to all relevant authorities any proposed legislation, which the Constitution thinks, may be contrary to the constitutional provision relating to ethnicity;	✓	
13	m) promote equal access by persons of all ethnic groups to all public or other services and facilities provided by the Government or other bodies;		✓
14	n) promote and encourage the acceptance and respect by all segments of the society of the social identity and cultural inheritance of all ethnic groups		✓
15	o) promote cooperation between all bodies concerned with the fostering of harmonious ethnic relations;	✓	
16	p) investigate on its own accord or on request from the National Assembly or any other body any issues affecting ethnic relations;	✓	
17	q) identify and analyse factors inhibiting the attainment of harmonious relations between ethnic groups, particularly barriers to the participation of any ethnic group in social, economic, commercial,	✓	
	financial, cultural and political endeavours and recommend to the National Assembly other relevant public or private sector bodies how these factors should be overcome;		
18	r) monitor and report to the National Assembly on the status and success of implementation of its recommendations;	✓	
19	s) study and make recommendations to the National Assembly on any issue relating to ethnic affairs, including conducting studies to determine whether race relations are improving;	✓	
20	t) monitor and make recommendations to the National Assembly and other relevant public and private sector bodies on factors inhibiting the development of harmonious relations between ethnic groups and on barriers to the participation of all ethnic groups in the social, economic, commercial, financial, cultural and political life of the people;	✓	
21	u) consult with other bodies and persons to determine and specify the perceived needs of the various ethnic groups for the fostering of harmonious relations;	✓	
22	v) train and enlist the aid of such persons and acquire such facilities as the Commission deems necessary to accomplish its functions;	✓	

23	w) make recommendations on penalties, including the prevention of any political party or any persons from participating in elections for a specified period, to be imposed for any breach of provisions of this Constitution or of any law dealing with ethnicity;	✓	
24	x) do all other acts and things as may be necessary to facilitate the efficient discharge of the functions of the Commission.	✓	



## POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

To embed strategic planning into the reality of the Guyana situation, we undertake here a situation analysis using a PESTEL framework. A PESTEL analysis describes the political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal aspects of importance to planning. The Commission has undertaken consultations across the various constituencies and at the regional levels, to gauge the current state of ethnic relations, identifying areas of tension and cooperation. Through this process, the Commission was able to identify key issues affecting various ethnic communities. (ANNEX 1.1)

As the strategic plan has a three-year horizon, the analysis will look beyond today's conditions up to 2027. This allows the plan to remain relevant over the entire planning period at a minimum. The PESTEL analysis includes two other features. One, only factors that bear on the mandate of the ERC are included. Secondly, for each factor, implications for strategic planning are explored, several of which are key planning factors.

POLITICAL ANALYSIS	
FACTORS	IMPLICATIONS
<b>Political system.</b> At its core, Guyana has a Westminster political system. A simple parliamentary majority is required to pass the annual budget and all pieces of legislation (save those dealing with some constitutional amendments).	Historically, the election period in Guyana has been the root cause of ethnic conflict. Therefore, efforts must be amplified to properly ensure peaceful ethnic relations and pre, during, and post the elections.
<b>Political parties.</b> Guyana's political party system is still dominated by the predominantly Indo-based PPP/C and predominantly Afro-based APNU+AFC. Historically, small parties have not been able to secure a large number of votes. Notably, several new parties contested the 2020 election, which collectively accounted for approximately 2% of the total votes cast.	The weak electoral performance of third parties in Guyana meant that voter preferences have remained wedded to the two main ethnic-based parties, the PPP/C and the APNU+AFC, which have a high probability of leading to a similar ethnic divide during the election period.
<b>General and regional elections.</b> Historically, elections in Guyana are flashpoints for ethnic rivalry and conflict. The country has witnessed election-related civil disturbances, destruction of property, injuries, and homicides. The election period for, 2011 and 2015 saw a decline in such negative election-related occurrences. Events in the aftermath of the 2020 Election, however, have cast serious doubt on whether the country can have an	The ERC will develop a robust electoral-related strategy that will directly focus on reducing the ethnic rancor and social disorder that elections bring to Guyana. The 2025 election will be the Commission's primary focus for the year 2025, as the first election after the controversial 2020 election, it would be a severe test of the country's social and political viability.

election period free of unrest in the near future.	
<p><b>Constitutional reform:</b> The ERC was birthed by a Constitutional reform process, in 1999 when finding solutions to the country's ethnic problem occupied the top of the agenda. As outlined in the Legal Analysis, Constitutional reform is again needed to ensure that the enforcement powers of the ERC are strengthened.</p>	<p>The constitutional reform process is likely to address some of the challenges faced by the Commission in the execution of its mandate.</p>

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS	
Factors	Implications
<p><b>The oil boom:</b> The economy of Guyana, with the benefit of new oil revenues, is projected to grow exponentially throughout the next few decades and well beyond. The quality of life of citizens and the government's capacity to spend are likely to expand accordingly.</p>	<p>Firstly, the government's increased capacity to spend can lead to larger subventions for agencies such as the ERC.</p> <p>The second implication revolves around the question of whether economic prosperity has a salutary effect on ethnic conflict. This question is discussed under Social Analysis below.</p>

SOCIAL ANALYSIS	
Factors	Implications
<p><b>Ethnic Factors:</b></p> <p>Since Guyana is a pluralistic society and comprises several ethnicities which involves dimensions of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Language</li> <li>II. Culture</li> <li>III. Religion</li> <li>IV. Place of origin</li> <li>V. Race (expanded below)</li> </ul>	<p>The differences and uniqueness among all ethnicities present challenges in understanding and accommodating the nuances of each ethnic group, such as the various indigenous languages. In addition, Guyana lacks a clearly defined meaning of ‘Guyanese Culture and Identify.’</p>
<p><b>Population composition:</b> The population census of 2012 breaks down the Guyana population into the following categories:</p> <p>Indians: 39.8%</p> <p>Africans: 29.2%</p> <p>Mixed: 19.9%</p> <p>Amerindians: 10.5%</p> <p>Others: 0.6%.</p>	<p>Guyana remains an ethnically diverse society. The impact of the growing proportion of citizens that identify as mixed origin based on inter-racial unions is a significant area for analysis to determine whether mixed relations have improved ethnic relations or contrary.</p>
<p><b>Demographic shifts:</b> The two migration shifts of note are: (i) the movement of coastlanders to the hinterland probably due to gold mining and (ii) the growing influx of economic and political migrants from neighbouring Venezuela and the Caribbean.</p> <p>iii) influx of foreign workers into the oil and gas sector and its sub-sectors.</p>	<p>These shifts have produced a more diverse population in some parts of Guyana. In addition, the influx of foreigners widens the number of ethnic nuances in Guyana. This new layer of ethnic matters arising from the integration of migrants into Guyanese society, adds a distinctly new level of consideration to the work of ERC. Such as the language barrier between Spanish, and African migrants.</p>
<p><b>Social mobility:</b> With increasing oil wealth, the movement of more persons and families into the Guyana middle class is anticipated. Expected outcomes include increased personal earnings, generous government welfare programs, and greater economic opportunities.</p>	<p>With the ripple effects in social mobility, expected with the increase of oil and gas development in Guyana, concerns about disparities become more apparent. The Commission will need to take comprehensive measures to ascertain the validity of the perceived disparities and make the findings public to inform discussions and decisions.</p>

<p><b>Positive Ethnic Relations:</b> It is important to highlight the positive aspects of ethnic relations in Guyana, inclusive but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•High levels of tolerance and respect for each other's beliefs and practices, celebration of religious and cultural observances by all ethnic groups.</li> <li>•Increased integration of ethnicities, as evidenced by mixed communities, inter-racial marriages, and more social interaction.</li> <li>•Sharing of a common language, a national culture, and national symbols.</li> <li>•The unifying effect of external threats, such as Venezuela's claim to Guyana's territory.</li> </ul>	<p>The amplification of these positive areas and best practices will aid in the improvement of ethnic relations in Guyana. The Commission's role in highlighting these positives and building upon them to strengthen and maintain these areas will be a useful asset in the delivery of its mandate.</p>
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TECHNOLOGICAL ANALYSIS	
Factors	Implications
<p><b>E-connectivity.</b> The main technological issue with a bearing on the work of the ERC is the wide and growing Internet and telecommunication infrastructure across Guyana. Many Hinterland communities are in tele- contact with the coast. Cell phones have long become ubiquitous.</p>	<p>The increased presence of this communication infrastructure across Guyana allows individuals, groups, communities, and organizations to maintain conversation and contact, which will serve the benefit of the Commission.</p>
<p><b>Social media.</b> The use of social media by Guyanese will spread. Social media will continue to be viewed as a threat to political stability in Guyana as a forum for hate speech and willful incitement of racial hostility</p>	<p>As a forum for hate speech, social media continues to be a challenge to regulate and monitor. The Commission will, however, capitalize on the positive uses which social media, as a mechanism to spread awareness.</p>

LEGAL ANALYSIS	
Factors	Implications
<p><b>ERC's constitutional mandate.</b> The Guyana constitution adequately spells out the powers, functions, and structure of the ERC. The mandate captures some aspects of ethnic relations issues and identifies a list of mechanisms that the ERC can use. The ERC is also empowered “to do all other acts and things as may be necessary to facilitate the efficient discharge of the functions of the Commission.”</p> <p>Outside of the ERC provisions, the constitution also enshrines protection from discrimination by way of the Representation of the Peoples Act, Racial Hostility Act, Article 149 Cap 23:01, and Equality before the Law Article 149D.</p>	<p>The ERC can design and execute initiatives with a wide range of objectives and strategies to achieve its mandate.</p>
<p><b>Scope of legal powers.</b> The constitution does not grant the ERC the powers to summon witnesses, enter premises, require the production of information and documents, and enforce compliance.</p> <p>The ERC's 2019 inquiry into the hiring practices at the Guyana Elections Commission (GECOM) exposed this limitation. The Commission was forced to qualify its findings by saying that the refusal of GECOM's Human Resources Manager to cooperate did not allow for extensive deliberations and a more informed conclusion.</p>	<p>The absence of these powers significantly affects the effectiveness of the Commission in the execution of its mandate. However, the moral force of ethnic issues being what it is, the ERC can be optimistic that it can, more often than not, persuade others to cooperate and comply.</p> <p>However, the Commission will seek the course of action to recommend to the National Assembly to be granted these powers.</p>

## APPROACH

Addressing the areas of ethnic relations as identified in the Situation Analysis requires a multi-faceted approach involving various strategies and interventions. Through extensive consultations with stakeholders and at the Commission level, the following areas will be implemented over the next few years.

The strategic plan is structured around the ERC's twenty-four (24) constitutional functions and condensed into three overarching strategic objectives, each of which further specifies the various approaches to be taken to execute each of the following Strategic Objectives:

- (i) Promote awareness and tolerance of ethnic diversity.
- (ii) Enhance means of dispute resolution.
- (iii) Address perceptions of socioeconomic disparities.
- (iv) Foster the promotion of a Guyanese identity.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Promote awareness and tolerance of ethnic diversity.

### Education and Awareness

**1.1 Cultural Awareness Programs:** - Implement educational programs to increase awareness and understanding of Guyana's diverse cultural heritage. - Promote cultural exchange initiatives that celebrate the unique richness of each ethnic group in Guyana.

**1.2 Awareness of Access to Opportunities:** - Support initiatives to spread awareness on access to education and vocational training available to ensure all ethnic groups make use of these opportunities. Take necessary steps to ensure there is ethnic balance in employment and educational opportunities both in the public and private sectors.

**1.3 Education and Sensitisation Programs:** - Develop curriculum enhancements that teach tolerance, diversity, and the history of ethnic relations in Guyana. Promote cultural exchange programs in schools to foster understanding among students. Promoting education about the history and impacts of racism, as well as fostering awareness of implicit biases and stereotypes, to help individuals recognize and address racism.

Creation of 'Harmony Clubs' to ensure student-led initiatives to promote understanding of the unique characteristics of each ethnic group. The continuation of awareness sessions in schools, countrywide.

**1.4 Preservation of History:** Development of initiatives such as publications and other projects that highlight and record the positive contribution of the various ethnic groups to the development of Guyana. Develop a comprehensive project for the **intergenerational** transfer of cultural, religious, and other ethnic knowledge and values.

**1.5 Media and Communication:** - Encourage responsible media reporting that avoids perpetuating stereotypes and promotes positive narratives. -Execute media campaigns that highlight successful collaborations and partnerships among diverse communities and people—maximizing on the use of social media, television, and radio, and hosting and participating in various public events to capitalize on larger gatherings.

In addition, collaborations, training, and cross-exchanges with media organizations, such as the Guyana Press Association and the Guyana National Broadcasting Authority, among others to ensure collective efforts are permeated through all media coverages.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Develop enhanced means of dispute resolution.**

- 2.1 Enhancement of legislation and Policies:** Review and update existing legislation to strengthen the mandate of the Ethnic Relations Commission.
- 2.2 Conflict Resolution Programs:** Establish community-based conflict resolution programs to address disputes peacefully and prevent escalation. Train community leaders in conflict resolution and mediation techniques.
- 2.3 Support for Victims:** Providing support services and resources for victims of racism, including counselling, legal aid, and advocacy, can help mitigate the negative impacts of discriminatory experiences.
- 2.4 Media Monitoring and Investigation:** The Commission through its media monitoring and investigation units two of the foremost departments that are exposed and handling complaints or flagging violations such as ethnic discrimination, racial hate speech, religious intolerance, etc. Hence the techniques and tools necessary to improve the delivery of those responsibilities will be prioritised. Training and capacity building in areas of dispute resolution, media monitoring, and investigations, in addition to the acquisition of necessary tools, is expected to bolster the output of these departments and the Commission more holistically.
- 2.5 Electoral Mission:** To ensure that the Commission readily prepares and takes the necessary measures to mitigate ethnic-related eventualities associated with the election period, a comprehensive strategy will be developed to address Election 2025. The strategy will involve initiatives leading up to the election cycle that will aid in calming the atmosphere of racial tension that tends to permeate. In addition, the Commission trained and expanded its monitoring and investigative capabilities during the pre-and post-election periods to adequately provide nationwide coverage. The strategy will involve mechanisms to broker peace in anticipation of any unrest that affects race relations in the country. All key stakeholders involved in the process will be brought on par with the plans to ensure they support the efforts of maintaining peace, harmony, and good relations throughout the election period.

## **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Address perceptions of socioeconomic disparities.**

- 3.1 Historical Review:** The historical context of ethnic relations in Guyana has been generally discussed at many forums, an accurate account that acknowledges both the positive and negative aspects needs to be documented to fully understand the root causes of ethnic tension, including historical events, economic disparities, and political factors. The Commission will undertake to document the same within a publication.

**3.2 Current Assessment** Through extensive consultation held with stakeholders across the country, the Commission noted that there were diverging views on the disparities in benefits derived from social and economic development. Therefore, to substantiate or dispel such perceptions, the Commission will undertake specific research to determine the allocation of state resources, (inclusive but not limited to land, and scholarships disaggregated by racial groups of Guyana. These findings will be published publicly and will serve to better inform the Commission's actions as necessary.

**3.3 Community Engagement and Dialogue** - Facilitate regular community forums to provide a platform for open dialogue between different ethnic groups. The aim is to have open and honest discussions about race and racism within communities to help promote understanding, empathy, and solidarity among people from different backgrounds. In addition, the Commission will encourage community-led initiatives to address shared concerns.

#### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Foster the promotion of a Guyanese identity.

**4.1 Formalise Definition:** Work with academic, cultural, and other stakeholders to develop a clearly defined meaning of 'Guyanese Culture' and 'Guyanese Identity' as the basis of coordinating initiatives that promote the unity of being identified by the Guyanese Identity rather than by several races or ethnicities.

**4.2 National campaign:** Develop a national campaign to spread awareness of the Guyanese Identity, and promote national pride and patriotism.

**4.3 Generate Material:** Work towards publishing and developing media content to highlight the unity of Guyanese culture and promote the positive aspects of the Guyanese identity.

#### COLLABORATIONS

The Ethnic Relations Commission is cognizant of the fact that to effect meaningful change, then all stakeholders must contribute to the efforts and mandate of the Commission. These initiatives outlined within each of the Strategic Objectives will be best implemented in combination and with sustained collaborations from individuals, communities, governments, and organizations.

##### Local Stakeholders

- i. **Public Sector:** Collaborations with state agencies that will aid in the delivery of the mandate of ERC. With the priority on exchanges between those agencies that relate most with the general public, with targeted training on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI). The agencies that will be engaged are inclusive but **not limited to:**
- Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and Governance
  - Ministry of Local Government
  - Regional Democratic Councils
  - Village leaders and Toshao
  - Ministry of Health,
  - Ministry of Home Affairs,
  - Ministry of Human Service and Social Security,
  - Ministry of Housing and Water,



- Ministry of Education, with specific emphasis on maintaining the existing relationship between ERC and schools, to ensure the principles of harmony and good relations are reaching students across Guyana.
- ii. **Private Sector:** To ensure initiatives such as training on Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) are also delivered to workplaces in the private sectors, particularly those that have high volumes of public engagements daily, such as banks, hospitals, schools, hospitality sectors, among others.
- In addition, collaborations with the private sector will involve technical and financial or other support to initiatives that the Commission is focused on executing to achieve its Constitutional mandate.
- iii. **Political Parties:** Engagements with Government Ministers and Political Leaders of all political parties will be a priority of the Commission, to ensure they are reminded of their obligations as leaders of the country to set an example in the relations among each other and with all else. To ensure their actions are consistent with the principles of harmony and good relations as outlined in the Constitution of Guyana, through article 212D.
- iv. **Academic, Women, Youth, and Civil Society Organizations:** The Commission will expand upon relations with grassroots organizations, trade unions, and academic institutions, particularly the University of Guyana, to expand the reach of its work and to receive valuable insights and support to achieve the objectives.
- v. **Religious and Cultural Leaders:** With Guyana being such a pluralist society, engagements that have been previously established through the composition of the Commission will be maintained and strengthened, where possible expanded to ensure these leaders can collaborate on executing the mandate of ERC. While also enhancing mechanisms for exchanges.

### International Collaboration

The Commission recognizes that many of the ethnic challenges faced in Guyana may be unique to our society, however, it also acknowledges that many countries across the globe face varying degrees of ethnic issues, of which many have tried and tested numerous methods to alleviate such challenges. Hence, the ERC will endeavor to capitalize on best practices and learn from the experiences outside of Guyana, to then tailor those strategies to the needs of our society. In efforts to explore these options, the Commission will engage with:

- i) **Diplomatic Corps:** Through existing relationships between the Commission and Diplomatic Missions present in Guyana, there will be a prioritization of cultural exchanges and other initiatives to bring more awareness to the contributions of various ethnicities to Guyana. Support for training and capacity building of staff and Commissioners, in various areas. Inclusive of dispute/conflict resolution, educational awareness, electoral monitoring, and investigation.
- ii) **International Organisations:** The Commission will explore partnerships with international organizations to share best practices and experiences. Leverage external support for capacity building and technical assistance. Inclusive of the United Nations, the Organisation of American States, and the European Union
- iii) **Technical and Like-Mind Agencies:** To widen the scope of knowledge and techniques that the Commission currently utilizes in the execution of its work, partnerships, and exchanges will be created between universities and other Institutions involved in peacebuilding, research, and teachings on ethnicities, diversity, and inclusion.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A formidable challenge facing the ERC is how to measure its performance and impact. The importance of this measurement is twofold: (i) to track progress towards stated goals, and (ii) to measure if and how people's lives and situations have changed. Given the importance, we have picked up this challenge in this strategic plan by employing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

To adequately, track, monitor, and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the various initiatives, the Commission will ensure the following areas are effectively in place:

- i) **Strategic Leadership:** The Commission will ensure that its Commissioners are informed of all areas relevant to its work, to ensure oversight into the effective implementation. Further, the Commission will ensure senior management is well trained to enhance leadership skills to best support the execution of the initiatives of the Commission, in addition to effective team building exercises to ensure that all staff are efficient and consistent with the delivery of the mandate.
- ii) **Performance Metrics:** establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of each project against baseline data. Conduct regular assessments and evaluations to adjust strategies based on feedback and outcomes.
- iii) **Community Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement mechanisms for continuous community feedback to ensure that strategies are responsive to evolving needs and concerns.

### Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Our KPIs are of three types: STRUCTURE, PROCESS, and IMPACTS, the following section defines these based on a blend of best practices to ensure both validity and ease of use.

#### STRUCTURE (input indicator)

Structure refers to elements such as policies, pieces of legislation, institutions, procedures, and systems put in place to achieve the stated strategic goals. It is an input measure. Performance improvements can be either the introduction of a new structural element, the activation of a dormant one, and/or improvements to an already existing one. Examples would be the granting of powers to the ERC to subpoena documents, the activation of the Prevention of Discrimination Act, the Racial Hostility Act, or the addition to the school curriculum of multicultural education.

#### PROCESS

New rules (a structure) may be written but not implemented. Process therefore refers to the efforts to give effective meaning to structures. It emphasizes implementation—substance over form. The process is an input measure.

#### IMPACTS (Outcome indicator)

Impacts are the direct results or felt benefits for individuals, groups, and communities. They can be usefully divided into (i) short-term (or initial) outcomes — such as changes in knowledge, awareness, skills, attitudes, opinions, and motivations; (ii) medium-term (or intermediate) outcomes — such as changes in actions, behaviors, practices, policies, and decisions; and (iii) long-term (or final) outcomes — defined as ultimate changes in conditions or the situation (example: the reality of equal opportunity in public procurement). Impacts are typically measured by direct feedback from citizens, such as through opinion, satisfaction, and perception surveys.

## IMPLEMENTATION RISK MANAGEMENT

Implementation risks are of several types. TABLE 4 categorizes and describes them and proposes actions to manage their impacts.

**TABLE 4: IMPLEMENTATION RISK MANAGEMENT**

Risks	Description	Risk reduction (The ERC should:)
<b>Political risks</b>	Lack of government support for the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with the government to sell a strategic plan.</li> <li>• consult with individuals in cabinet and civil society who can function as patrons.</li> </ul>
	Political instability worsens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prioritize high-impact actions.</li> </ul>
<b>Financial risks</b>	Budgets for work plans are only partly approved by the government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• conduct long-term budget planning.</li> <li>• prioritize goals and actions.</li> <li>• publicly lobby the government.</li> <li>• seek support from the donor community.</li> </ul>
<b>Compliance and collaboration risks</b>	People and institutions may be disinclined to work or fully cooperate with the ERC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seek more enforcement power through legislation changes.</li> <li>• mobilize public support for plans.</li> <li>• publicly name and shame non-compliers.</li> <li>• lock in compliance through Memoranda of Agreement and social contracts.</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional risks</b>	Resistance to change, and organizational inertia within the ERC.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increase the ownership of the plan by ERC commissioners and staff by providing opportunities for their input and feedback in workshops and meetings.</li> </ul>
	Change in composition of commissioners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• activate article 212B 4(a) to allow for continuity in the work of the Commission through extended terms for Commissioners.</li> </ul>
	Lack of skills and capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institute capacity building through staff training, hiring of experts, and soliciting of volunteers.</li> </ul>
	Responsibilities and functions that belong to other agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• form or join interagency committees.</li> <li>• exchange board membership.</li> <li>• use other Whole-of-Government approaches.</li> </ul>
	Policy diffusion and dilution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use monitoring and progress reporting.</li> <li>• mark and celebrate successes.</li> </ul>

### **SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES**

The staff of the Commission is bonded to uphold and execute the mandate of the Commission under their contractual obligations. Currently, the Departments of the Commission do not operate under the guidance of established Standard Operating Procedures, hence challenges with continuity and other administrative issues occur as a result. Under new management, the Commission is currently working with each department to develop SOPs in a formalized manner, which will be the Commission in the long term.

The systems and procedures that should be developed will be public-friendly (by, for example, being transparent, consistent, and predictable) and efficient (by, for example, being standardized and modernized). Accordingly, complaints handling should be made more user-friendly. Media monitoring should work with detailed regulations on free and prohibited speech. Investigations should follow standard protocols. Coordination between the commission and secretariat should be streamlined and codified.

### **SKILLS**

Staff training will be required for several aspects of the strategy such as on the implementation of various training programmes to be executed by ERC. The required training programs, trainers, and other resources can best be obtained from international sister agencies that have experience in such work. It is recommended therefore that the ERC seeks the assistance of the donor community to recruit trainers from agencies such as the Equality and Human Rights Commission of the UK.

### **LEADERSHIP**

The ERC is not a mere complaints authority or a talk-shop agency. The mission of the commission requires leadership that is enthusiastic about social transformation and nation-building.

At the operational level, the Commission must be guided by the clear lines of responsibilities between the Commission and the Secretariat. The Commissioners should be involved in the setting of policies, the monitoring of the performance of the Secretariat, and the building of partnerships, resource mobilization, advocacy, and capacity-building.

The Secretariat should be responsible for the execution of the decision of the Commissioners. It must be geared for systematic and autonomous action and continuity of programs across changes in the composition of the Commission.

For continuity in leadership, the staggered tenures of Commissioners, allowed by the constitution, is a mechanism that should be exploited to the fullest. Added to that, nominating bodies should consider reappointments of their representative.

## ANNEX 1

### TRAINING: Enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Building a Better Workplaces

The Commission's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programme will evolve beyond a mere workplace initiative to become a comprehensive commitment and lifestyle, aiming to cultivate a society where individuals from diverse backgrounds are esteemed, respected, and enabled to thrive.

#### **The Importance of DEI:**

DEI guarantees the recognition and celebration of the unique strengths and perspectives each team member brings to the table. Embracing diversity unlocks pathways to fresh ideas, creativity, and innovation. Equity ensures equal opportunities for growth and success, irrespective of one's background or identity. Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging, where every voice is heard and valued, nurturing a culture of cooperation and respect.

**Strategies for Advancement:** To advance DEI significantly, the Commission will purposefully work towards establishing more inclusive workplaces in both public and private sectors. Efforts to promote DEI in the workplace will encompass, but not be limited to:

- i) **Enhanced Hiring Practices:** Reviewing hiring processes to guarantee inclusivity and impartiality, making a conscious effort to actively recruit candidates from diverse backgrounds to build teams reflective of our society's diversity.
- ii) **Comprehensive Training and Development:** Investing in training programs that champion diversity and inclusion empowers employees to advocate for change. Equipping them with the necessary tools and resources fosters a culture of inclusivity.
- iii) **Formation of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** Establishing ERGs focused on different diversity aspects provides safe spaces for employees to connect, share experiences, and drive positive transformations, serving as crucial allies in fostering an inclusive workplace.
- iv) **Impact on Organizational Culture:** Prioritizing DEI not only fortifies organizational culture but also enhances business outcomes. Research indicates that diverse teams are more innovative, adaptable, and better equipped to serve diverse customer bases. Inclusive workplaces also enhance employee engagement, retention, and satisfaction levels.

By embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Commission can foster workplaces where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered to succeed. Such environments will ensure that diversity is celebrated, and upheld, and will promote equity and inclusion for all.

## ANNEX 2

The Ethnic Relations Commission conducted stakeholder engagements to ascertain the issues affecting various Constituencies as they relate to ethnic relations. The views expressed by the stakeholders were reviewed and considered in the drafting of this Strategic Plan 2024- 2027.

Below is a summary of the stakeholder sessions held and those who participated in each session:

### CONSTITUENCY MEETINGS

#### Constituency Meetings list

##### Islamic Bodies (Aug 18, 2023)

1. Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat
2. Essequibo Ahmadiyya Organisation
3. Guyana Islamic Forum
4. Guyana Islamic Trust
5. Guyana United Sadr Islamic Anjuman
6. Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana (CIOG)
7. Anjiman Hifazatul Islam

##### In Absentia

8. Mr. Nazir Hakh President, Anjiman Hifazatul Islam

##### Hindu Bodies (Oct 11, 2023)

1. Guyana Central Arya Samaj
2. Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha
3. Guyana Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha
4. Hare Krishna Iskcon Movement Guyana
5. Sri Sathya Sai Baba Organisation of Guyana
6. Viraat Sabha
7. Guyana Pandits Council
8. Tulsie Bissessar, Sai Baba
9. Parasram Samaroo President, Guyana Maha Kali All Religious Organisation
10. Sis. Nandi President, Brahma Kumaris Spiritual Organisation, Raj Yoga Centre,

##### Indian Bodies (Oct 11, 2023)

1. Indian Commemoration Trust

##### In Absentia

2. Indian Action Committee

**Indigenous Bodies (Oct 11, 2023)**

3. National Amerindian Development Foundation
4. The Amerindian Action Movement of Guyana
5. Melena Pollard, NTC/Toshao
6. Colin Klautky, GOIP

**In Absentia**

7. Amerindian Peoples Association (In Absentia)

**Inter-Religious Organisation (IRO) (Oct 10, 2023)**

1. Central Islamic Organisation of Guyana (CIOG)
2. Al-Mustafa Islamic Trust
3. Ahmaddiyya Muslim Jama'at
4. Christian Brethren
5. Science of Spirituality Meditation Centre
6. Bramha Kumaris World Spiritual Organisation (Raja Yoga Centre, Guyana Chapter)
7. Universal Peace Federation
8. Muslim Youth League of Guyana
9. Baha'í Faith
10. Carl Williams, Family Federation
11. Ronald Mc Garrell, Family Federation

**Women bodies (Aug 21, 2023)**

1. Guyana Hindu Dharmic Sabha Mahila Mandalee
2. Guyana Nurses Association
3. Lutheran Church Women
4. National Congress of Women
5. Red Thread Women's Development Project
6. The Salvation Army Home League
7. National Committee of Sister's Affairs
8. The Mother's Union Diocese of Guyana
9. Women's Advisory Council
10. Women For Change
11. Women's Progressive Organisation
12. Young Women's Christian Association of Guyana
13. Assemblies of God Women's Ministry
14. Association of Women Entrepreneurs
15. Outreach Ministries International Women's Group
16. Guyana Association of Women Lawyers
17. Guyana Women Miners Association
18. Guyana Women's Artist

**In Absentia**

19. Women's Advisory Council

**Labour bodies (Aug 21, 2023)**

1. Guyana Postal & Telecommunication Workers' Union
2. Clerical & Commercial Workers Union
3. Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Guyana
4. Guyana Bauxite & General Workers Union
5. Guyana Labour Union
6. Guyana Taxis Service Association
7. Guyana Teachers Union
8. Guyana Trade Union Congress (GTUC)
9. National Union of Public Service Employees
10. Printing Industry & Allied Workers' Union
11. Union of Agricultural & Allied Workers
12. United Mini Bus Association
13. University of Guyana Workers Union
14. National Association of Agricultural Commercial & Industrial Employee

**In Absentia**

15. Ms. Brigitte Hudston General Secretary Amalgamated Transport & General Workers' Union
16. Mr. Seepaul Narine President of Guyana Agricultural & General Workers' Union
17. Mr. Vinent Bowman National Union of Public Service Employees
18. President University of Guyana Senior Staff Association Faculty of Technology, University of Guyana
19. Mr. Bruce Haynes President University of Guyana Workers Union

**Youth bodies (Aug 22, 2023)**

1. Alliance for Change Youth Arm (Youth For Change)
2. Church of Christ Youth Group
3. Dharmic Golden Om Youth Organization
4. Dharmic Naujawan (Dharmic Youth)
5. Empowering Queers Using Artistic Learning (EQUAL)
6. First Assembly of God
7. Full Gospel Fellowship
8. Generation Next
9. Guyana Central Arya Samaj-Youth Organisation
10. "Guyana Conference of Seventh Day Adventist"
11. "Guyana Congregational Young People's Union"
12. Guyana Junior Chambers International
13. Guyana Youth & Student Movement
14. Joshua Youth Generation
15. Outreach Youth Ministries International
16. The Guyana Anglican Association Youth Arm
17. University Of Guyana Student Society
18. Volunteer Youth Corps
19. Youth Advocacy Movement
20. "Rotaract Club of University of Guyana
21. Guyana National Youth Council



### In Absentia

22. Ms. Karen Butter Youth Leader Central Baptist Youth Fellowship
23. Ms. Rovone Norton Leader of the Church of Christ Youth Group
24. Chairperson Empowering Queers using Artistic Learning (EQUAL)
25. Pastor Wilbert Lee Youth Pastor First Assembly of God
26. Youth Leader Guyana Central Arya Samaj-Youth Organization
27. Pastor Marvyn Smith Youth Director Guyana Conference of Seventh Day Adventist
28. Mr. Ominell Boyce General Secretary Guyana Congregational Young People's Union
29. Ms. Patricia Gray President of Guyana Girl Guides Association
30. Mr. Ramsey Ali President of Guyana Scouts Association
31. Secretary Indian Action Committee Youth Group
32. Ms. Shondell France Youth Leader Joshua Youth Generation
33. Chairperson Leo Association of Guyana
34. Oreletta John District Youth Leader Methodist Youth Club
35. Bro. Noel Adonis Chairman of Provincial Board Moravian Youth Club
36. Mr. Neil Bacchus Secretary Muslim Youth League
37. Mr. Imran Ally Snr. Vice-President Muslim Youth Organization of Guyana
38. Mr. John Edghill Director, Youth Ministries Outreach Youth Ministries International
39. Mr. Mark December President Presbyterian Church of Guyana Youth Arm
40. Mr. Ivan Betham Executive Officer The President Youth Award Republic of Guyana
41. President Dr. Mohammed Irfan Ali Chairperson of Progressive Youth Organization
42. Father Joseph Bishop-in-Charge The Roman Catholic Youth Office
43. Mr. Bruce Gibson/ Ms. Goldie Scott Secretary/CEO Volunteer Youth Corps
44. General Secretary Young Men's Christian Association

### **Christian bodies (Aug 22, 2023)**

1. Church of Christ
2. Family Foundation for World Peace & Unification
3. Freedom Life Ministries
4. Guyana Conference of Seventh-Day Adventist
5. Church of God
6. Outreach Ministries International
7. Chruch of Christ
8. Full Gospel Fellowship
9. Weslyn Church
10. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
11. The Hareyuya Church aka The Alleluias Church
12. Lamaha Park Church of Christ
13. Methodist Church

### In Absentia

14. Bishop Terry Thomas Ambassadors for Christ Ministries
15. Dr. Raphael Massiah Chairman Georgetown Ministers Fellowship
16. Rev. Veleka Austin Chairperson Guyana Congregational Union
17. Bishop Francis Alleyne, Guyana Council of Churches (GCC)
18. General Bishop, Reverend, Doctor John Oswald Smith, C.C.H., Chairperson
19. Ms. Wendy Hermanstine, General Secretary, The Guyana United Apostolic Mystical Council

20. Mr. Phillip Rose, Treasurer, The New Amsterdam/ Canje Christian Council
21. Rev. Eldon Anderson, District Superintendent, The Wesleyan Church
22. Bishop Terry Thomas Zadok Ministers Fellowship (Umbrella Body)

#### **Private Sector bodies (Aug 25, 2023)**

1. Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association
2. Guyana Manufacturers and Services Association
3. Guyana Forest Products Association

#### **In Absentia**

4. The Secretary, Imogen Ferdinand, Berbice Chamber of Commerce and Development Association
5. The President, Leekha Rambrich, Central Corentyne Chamber of Commerce
6. The President, Mr. Kester Hutson, Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry
7. The President, Lyndon Younge, Linden Chamber of Industry, Commerce and Development
8. Admin Secretary, Mr. D'anjou, Shipping Association of Guyana
9. Mrs. Roslyn Kirton, The Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana
10. The President, Upper Corentyne Chamber of Commerce
11. The Chairman, Komal Singh, Guyana Private Sector Commission
12. The President, Ganesh Jaigobin, Essequibo Chamber of Commerce and Industry
13. The President, Christopher Nascimento, Private Aircraft Owner's Association of Guyana
14. The President, Daniel Gajie, Rupununi Chamber of Commerce and Industry
15. The President, Reuben Charles, Guyana Association of Private Trawler Owners and Seafood Processors
16. The President, Ms. Patricia Helwig, Guycraft Producers Association Inc.
17. Chairperson, Communications Committee, Guyana Association of Bankers Inc.

#### **African bodies (Aug, 28, 2023)**

1. All African Guyanese Council
2. Guyana Rastafarian Council
3. House of Ancient NyahBinghi
4. International Decade for People of African Descent Assembly-Guyana
5. Pan-African Movement (Guyana Branch)
6. The Empowerment Trust

#### **In Absentia**

7. Ms. Violet Jean-Baptiste Head African Cultural and Development Association
8. Dr. Rudy Guyan Chairman of Forum for the Temples of Kamaatic Spirituality
9. Dr. Eric Phillips Director Guyana Reparations Committee

#### **Regional outreaches**

1. **Region 10 Stakeholders' Meeting: October 12th**  
Venue: Linden McKenzie Area - Watooka Guest House

- Regional Executives inclusive of; Mayor Mr. Sharma Solomon, Regional Chairman Mr. Deron Adams, Councillors for both Mayor and Chairman's office, and 25 residents.
2. **Region 2 Stakeholders' Meeting: October 14th**  
Venue: Cotton Feld Secondary
    - Regional Chairwoman Ms. Vilma DaSilva, Mayor Mr. Devin Mohan, Superintendent of Police Mr. Kemraj Shivbaran, councilors, and 70 stakeholders from neighboring communities.
  3. **Region 6 Stakeholders' Meeting: October 28th**  
New Market Primary – No. 63 Village, Corentyne, Berbice
    - Regional officials inclusive of Vice-Chairman Motee Sankat, NDC Chairman Imran Gamchan, and 70 stakeholders.
  4. **Region 9 Stakeholders' Meeting: November 6th**  
Lethem Central- Amerindian Hostel Boardroom
    - Regional Chairman Mr. Bryan Allicock, The Mayor Mr. John Macedo and their respective councilors, and 150 stakeholders from neighboring villages, including Moco Moco, Quarrie, St. Ignatius, Lethem Central, and Haiwa.
  5. **Region 1- Mabaruma Stakeholders' Meeting: November 8th**  
Mabaruma- Learning Resource Centre
    - Regional Chairman Brentnol Ashley, The Mayors' office, and 114 stakeholders from nearby villages, including Hosororo, Warapuri, Wauna, Kamwatta, White Water, Barimanobo, Bumbury, Sugar Hill, Mabaruma Settlement, Hobo Hill, Kobenumo Hill, Arucuru and Yarakita.
  6. **Region 1- Moruca Stakeholders' Meeting: December 18<sup>th</sup>**  
**Paloma Benab - Santa Rosa, Moruca District.**
    - Regional officials, including Toshao Maurice Torres (Secretary to Village Council for Santa Rosa), Whanita Phillips (former Toshao of Santa Rosa), Toshao Samuel Miguel from Manawarin, councilors, and 130 stakeholders from Paloma and neighboring communities from Acquero, Hobediah, Rincon, Waramuri, Manawarin, Parakeese, Mora, Santa Rosa Village, Kumaka, Kabucalli, Seven Miles, Kumaka Kwebana Road and St. Peter's Island.
  7. **Region 7- Bartica Stakeholders' Meeting: December 20th**  
Bartica Community Center Ground - Bartica, Region 7.
 

Regional officials, including Mayor Mr. Mark Murray, Regional Chairman Mr. Kenneth Williams, Deputy Superintendent/Deputy Commander of Region 7, Mr. Oswald Pitt, Councilors, police officers, and 200 residents from central Bartica and neighboring areas, including Agatash, Byderabo, Dagg Point, Potaro Road, Moracamp, Kalcoon, and other Riverine zones.