

# GEF SGP NEWSLETTER

*August 2025*

International Day **YOUTH** 2025, let the Future Begin!



## Hey, Changemakers!

Today, we celebrate International Youth Day 2025, and this year, it's not just a celebration, it's a call to action!

Why? Because young people like you are the heartbeat of progress, the spark behind innovation, and the energy fueling a brighter, bolder tomorrow. You're not just the leaders of the future, you're the changemakers of today.

Just like a young tree needs sunlight, water, and care to grow strong, young minds need opportunities, education, and support to thrive. Today is about amplifying your voice, recognizing your impact, and igniting your potential.

### This Year's Theme & Slogan

**Theme:** Youth Empowerment for a Sustainable Future

**Slogan:** Empowering Youth, Building Tomorrow

### What does that mean? It means the world is counting on you to:

- Drive sustainability: Protect the planet, power the green economy, and shape a digital future that works for everyone.
- Lead with innovation: Tackle the world's biggest challenges with creativity and fresh ideas.
- Step up as leaders: Take charge in your communities, your countries, and the world.

### Why Youth Day Is a Global Wake-Up Call

International Youth Day is more than a date on the calendar; it's a worldwide movement with a bold mission and unstoppable energy. It's about shining a spotlight on your voice, your challenges, your wild ideas, and your power to make a difference. According to the United Nations, there are approximately 1.2 billion young people worldwide, representing about 16% of the global population., the future isn't something to wait for; it's something you're already building.

Of course, the journey isn't without obstacles. From unemployment and unequal access to education to mental health struggles and discrimination, there are barriers that still need breaking. And that's exactly why today matters.

### So What's the Big Deal About Youth Day?

Here's what International Youth Day is really about and why you should care:

#### • Raising Awareness

It's time to talk openly about the issues young people face: education gaps, job access, mental health support, gender equality, and digital literacy.

#### • Fighting for Youth Rights

From local governments to global organisations, we're pushing for real policies that protect, uplift, and empower young voices.

#### • Inspiring Leadership

The next great leader, innovator, or visionary? It could be you. This day reminds the world that young people deserve a seat at every decision-making table.

#### • Championing Sustainability

Climate justice, equality, and digital access, young people are already leading the charge. Let's give them the stage (and the resources!) to go even further.

#### Your Voice = Real Change

Whether you're launching a project, mentoring your peers, creating content, or leading conversations, you're making waves. This Youth Day 2025, the message is loud and clear: You're not just the future, you're the now.

So speak up, stand out, and stay fired up. Because when youth rise, everything gets better.

#YouthDay2025 #LeadTheChange #VoicesOfTomorrow

# **YOUTH** Voices, Greener Futures: SGP Guyana Champions Young Changemakers

SGP Guyana is putting youth at the heart of environmental action. By partnering with young people and youth-led organisations, the programme is sparking awareness on urgent issues like climate change, turning concern into creativity and action.

Tapping into the tech-savvy spirit of today's generation, SGP-funded projects encourage youth to capture and share powerful local stories through tools like participatory video, amplifying voices from the hinterland to the coast. Inspired by trailblazers such as the North Rupununi District Development Board (NRDDB), the South Rupununi Conservation Society (SRCS), the Guyana Marine Conservation Society (GMCS), Natural Conservatives Guyana Inc. (NCG), etc., these stories will help shift national conversations and influence how communities think, feel, and act on the environment.

But it's not just about storytelling, it's about decision-making power. There is a Youth Focal on the National Steering Committee (NSC), the main decision body of the SGP, which champions and ensures youth issues are addressed and youth interests are mainstreamed in all SGP projects.

From projects designed and led by young leaders to platforms that let them innovate and inspire, SGP Guyana is sowing the seeds for a future where youth are not just beneficiaries, but bold architects of a greener, more resilient Guyana.



## **Stay Connected — Stay Inspired!**

Follow us on social media for updates, success stories, and tips on how YOU can continue rocking the world of sustainability!

Follow our journey and join the conversation:



# From Seeds to Strength: GCOPD's Climate-Smart Farming Transforms Lives

*Empowering the Next Generation to Cultivate Change and Champion Sustainability*



Participants from the Schnoord SEN School Region 3 transplanting seeds in their Seedling House

**Project Title:** Climate Resilient Actions for Food Security for Persons with Disabilities CRAFS 4 PWDs

**Period:** September 2023 – February 2025

**Status:** Successfully completed with measurable outcomes.

**Funding:** USD 50,000 (approx. GYD 10 million)

## Project Spotlight: Planting Seeds of Empowerment

In a bold step toward tackling food insecurity, the Guyana Council of Organisations for Persons with Disabilities launched the CRAFS 4 PWDs project, an inspiring initiative designed to equip persons with disabilities with the tools, skills, and resources to thrive in climate-smart agriculture.

This transformative project wasn't just about farming; it was about building confidence, independence, and resilience in communities across Guyana.



Participants from the open Doors Centre Region 4 involved in a Seedling House cultivating training

## What GCOPD Achieved

- Conducted hands-on workshops in climate-smart, organic farming tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Created accessible training manuals in print, audio, and graphic, rich formats to ensure no one was left behind.
- Constructed five fully functional 24 ft x 30 ft shade houses in Regions 3, 4, and 6.
- Partnered with NAREI and Green Agro Services & Supplies to provide expert technical guidance.

## Who Benefitted

A total of 137 persons with disabilities, including those who are blind/visually impaired, deaf, physically disabled, or with intellectual disabilities, now have new skills and opportunities. Beneficiaries were trained at:

- Resource Unit for the Blind, Region 4
- Open Doors Centre Annex, Region 4
- Sophia Special Education Needs (SEN) School, Region 4
- New Amsterdam SEN School, Region 6
- Schnoord Learning Centre for Diverse Needs, Region 3

## Youth in Focus:

- Young persons with disabilities from the Resource Unit for the Blind, Sophia SEN School, New Amsterdam SEN School, and Schnoord Learning Centre gained hands-on climate-smart farming experience in school-based shade houses, sowing seeds for the future, literally and figuratively.
- Participants learned sustainable agriculture skills, built confidence, and earned income from produce sales.
- Inclusive shade houses provided accessible training environments, empowering youth to contribute to food security and community resilience.

## Harvesting Success

The project generated impressive outcomes:

- Resource Unit for the Blind – 700 heads of lettuce & 57 bok choy harvested, earning GYD 140,000
- Open Doors Centre – Lettuce, pak choy & celery sales brought in GYD 107,000
- Sophia SEN School – 50 lettuce heads sold for GYD 8,000

Crops were sold to restaurants, guest houses, and community members, proving that inclusive farming can feed both stomachs and ambitions.

## Impact Highlights

- Reduced food insecurity and improved self-reliance among persons with disabilities.
- Strengthened community ties through collaborative farming.
- Advanced six UN Sustainable Development Goals, from ending poverty and hunger to promoting climate action and sustainable land use.

## Sowing Skills, Harvesting Hope

The CRAFS 4 PWDs project is more than a success story; it's proof that when inclusion meets innovation, communities flourish. Through climate-smart agriculture, GCOPD has cultivated not just crops, but hope, dignity, and sustainable livelihoods for persons with disabilities across Guyana.

# LFU Guyana Inc. Plants the Seeds of Change in Region 10

*Empowering Youth, Growing Communities, and Cultivating a Food-Secure Future*



*Grow-UP interns participating in a budding exercise on the Educational Tour to NAREI in Region 4*

**Project Title:** Grow-UP Agricultural Internship Through Sustainable Agricultural Practices in Region 10

**Period:** March 2023 – November 2023

**Status:** Successfully completed with measurable outcomes.

**Funding:** USD 15,721 (approx. GYD 3.14 million)

### **Project Spotlight: Sowing Skills, Harvesting Hope**

In Region 10, farming is no longer just about the land; it's about opportunity, innovation, and community resilience. LFU Guyana Inc., the local branch of Linden Fund USA, has turned agriculture into a platform for empowerment through its Summer Agricultural Internship Programme & Seedling House Initiative.

This forward-thinking project connects students from the University of Guyana and the Guyana School of Agriculture with local farmers, blending classroom learning with real-world farming. Thanks to vital support from SGP in 2023, the programme grew, literally, through the construction of a 20 ft x 20 ft Seedling House, delivering high-quality, low-cost seedlings to the community and driving climate-smart agriculture.

### **Growing More Than Crops – What LFU Did**

- **Internship Programme:** Matched tertiary students with experienced farmers for hands-on agricultural training.
- **Seedling House Construction:** Built by Linden Technical Institute interns under local contractor supervision.
- **Farmer Resources:** Published a Shade House Booklet to share sustainable growing techniques.
- **Youth Volunteer Programme:** Engaged secondary school students in structured farming activities.
- **Community Outreach:** Created brochures to raise awareness and recruit volunteers.
- **Integrated Seedling Production:** Fed directly into ongoing internships and local farms.

### **Who Benefitted**

- **2023 Internship:** 10 tertiary students & 5 farmers.
- **2024 Volunteers:** 12 secondary students (ages 11–16) who gave 343 hours to seedling care.
- **Women Kitchen Gardeners:** 7 community women involved in the programme's early seedling production.
- **Local Farms:** Benefited from both donated and purchased seedlings.

### **Youth in Focus**

From the classroom to the soil, youth are at the heart of this initiative:

- Internship placements for tertiary students.
- School-based volunteer programme approved by the Regional Education Officer.
- Skills development in sustainable farming, seedling cultivation, and agribusiness.

### **Harvesting Success**

- 25 trays of seedlings grown passion fruit, bora, okra, pepper, and tomato.
- GYD 5,700 earned from sales, reinvested into the project.
- Fully operational Seedling House serving as a community farming hub.
- Increased agricultural literacy through publications and farmer resources.

### **Impact highlights**

- Strengthened food security in Region 10.
- Boosted agricultural skills among youth and farmers.
- Empowered women through hands-on community roles.
- Ensured sustainability through reinvestment of sales revenue.

### **Sowing Hope for Tomorrow**

From seed to harvest, LFU Guyana Inc. is proving that when you invest in people, you grow more than crops; you grow stronger, self-reliant communities.



*Grow-UP interns building a plant box for one of the partner farmers.*