



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW 2024



**Creating a Resilient and Sustainable Future
for the Next Generation**

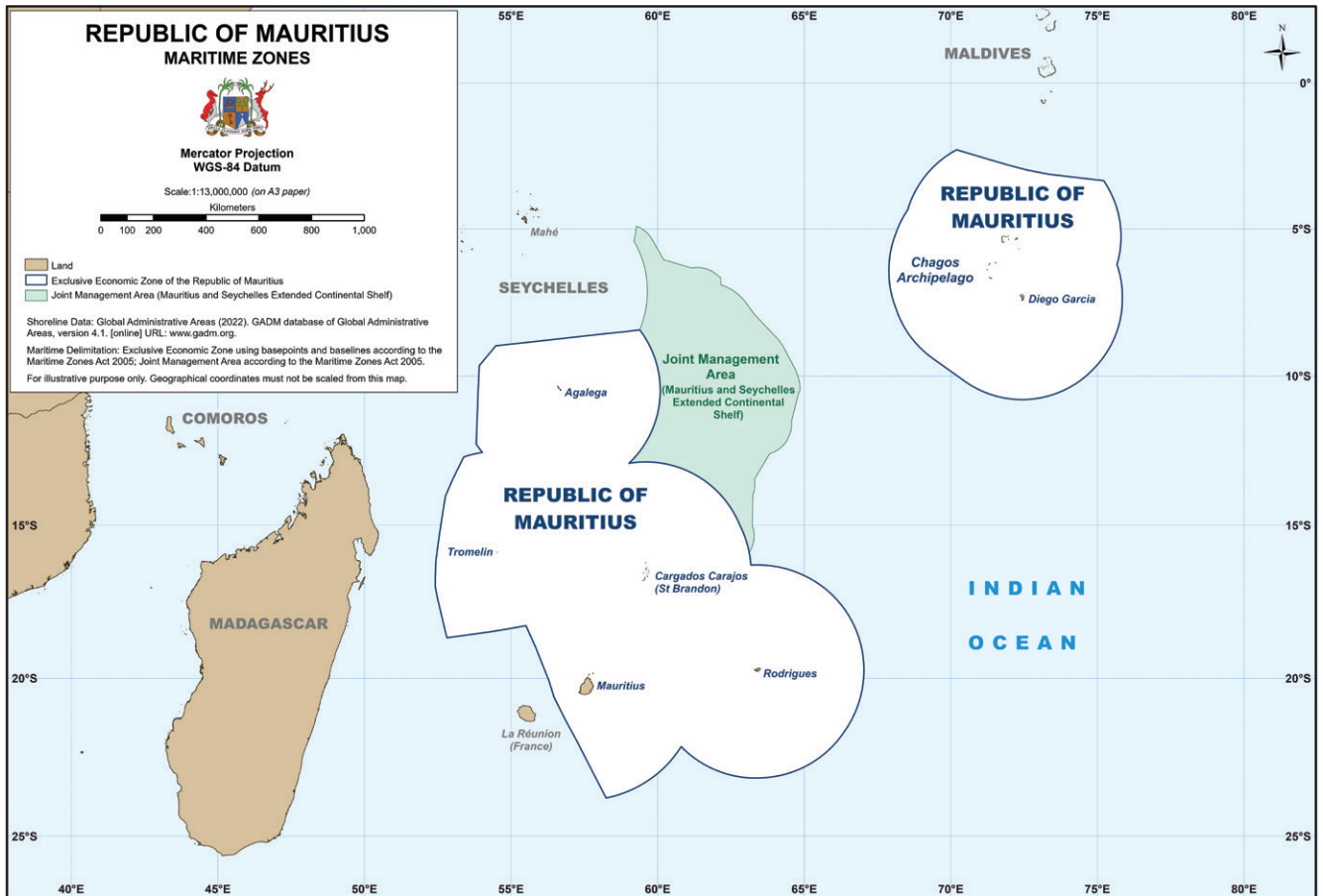
Published by

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade,
14th Floor, Newton Tower, Sir William Newton Street,
Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius

www.foreign.govmu.org

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FOREWORD BY PRIME MINISTER



It gives me great pleasure to present the second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report of the Republic of Mauritius to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) of the ECOSOC.

Since 2015 Mauritius has embarked, with great commitment, on the ambitious journey to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Agenda 2030 which are fully incorporated in our national development priorities.

Mauritius presented its first VNR Report in 2019 which enabled us to, *inter alia*, develop a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and an SDG Communications Strategy to ensure inclusiveness and a multi-stakeholder participation in the process.

This year, the SEP was expanded to include not only the public and private sectors, and civil society as dialogue partners, but also the academia as a distinct group of stakeholders for the first time. Such expanded institutional arrangements are expected to provide greater synergy for the acceleration of the implementation of the SDGs.

The 2024 VNR process identified the need for Mauritius to improve its monitoring and evaluation framework and strengthen statistical processes and data collection capability.

Mauritius has data availability for 75% of the SDG indicators. The Government of Mauritius is,

therefore, putting the necessary resources for upgrading the institutional and human capacity requirements to bridge the data gap.

The achievements highlighted in our second report bear testimony to our staunch resolve to mobilise the resources required to accelerate the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs.

As we share our country experience in the implementation of the SDGs, we are hopeful to mobilise the interest of stakeholders, and local and international partners, in providing support to address challenges identified in our report through a holistic and inclusive approach.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly eroded hard-won development gains and the overall progress achieved in the implementation of the SDGs. During those trying times, national resources, through various forms of stimulus packages, had to be mobilised to safeguard jobs, sustain livelihoods and prepare for steady socio-economic recovery.

Although efforts towards recovery following the pandemic are on a positive path, the emergence of geopolitical tensions continues to overshadow development perspectives, especially for remote small island economies. SIDS like Mauritius were already facing existential threats due to climate change, food insecurity, the energy crisis, and the difficulty to integrate global value chains. Geopolitical tensions have superimposed yet another layer of acute challenges which exacerbate the vulnerabilities of SIDS and hamper our efforts to successfully drive our national SDGs agenda.

Notwithstanding exogenous shocks and stressors, our second VNR Report 2024 highlights the relative resilience of the Mauritian economy while acknowledging our limitations and challenges.

We seek to demonstrate how the adoption of robust regulatory frameworks and institutional reforms can promote trust and confidence among national stakeholders and international partners.

The Report highlights that higher economic growth, decreasing unemployment rate, additional investments and FDI as well as increasing exports are crucial to enhancing sustainability and resilience of our economy.

The recent introduction of a more progressive tax regime and a narrowing of the gender pay gap in the private sector have brought greater equity and fairness (SDG 10) and helped reinforce inclusiveness in the society.

Mauritius continues to consolidate its Welfare State system. It is adapting its development strategies to bolster resilience in key sectors. We are also investing heavily in social protection, health, and education, whilst ensuring that gender mainstreaming remains central in government policies.

Mauritius is sustaining the purchasing power of its population through various income allowances and in-kind support to vulnerable households (SDG 1). According to the World Bank, these are projected to have positive outcomes with the proportion of persons living below USD 6.85 (2017 PPP) a day, declining from 10% in 2023 to 7% in 2026.

Under the Paris Agreement, Mauritius submitted its revised NDCs in 2021 and is committed to reducing its GHG emissions by 40% by 2030. The national commitments also include an increase of 60% of energy needs from green sources and the phasing out of coal in electricity generation by 2030.

The expected cost of implementation of the NDCs amounts to USD 6.5 billion for both adaptation and mitigation measures. Out of this amount, Government has undertaken to provide unconditional support to the tune of USD 2.3 billion representing 35% of total financial needs. The remaining 65 per cent share amounting to USD 4.2 billion will rest on crucially needed support from international partners.

The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events battering our shores are notably higher. As a consequence, there is a surge in flash floods that have severely impacted lives and livelihoods, critical infrastructure, as well as natural and ecological system. These climate-related damages cause huge economic and financial losses.

In order to address these pressing issues, Mauritius is already investing massively in mitigation and adaptation measures. We are making use of nature-based solutions such as mangrove plantation, coral farming, as well as seagrass mapping and blue carbon evaluation as part of our adaptation strategy to protect our marine eco-system.

At the international level, Mauritius firmly supports the strengthening of the rules-based multilateral system to enhance international cooperation and unlock effective, long term and affordable financing for development, including climate finance, which delivers urgent and requisite solutions to fulfil the 2030 Agenda.

As envisaged under SDG 17, robust partnerships with friendly countries, the UN system, and regional and international organisations are essential for SIDS like Mauritius to stay on course to deliver on the transformative progress required for achieving Agenda 2030.

We believe it is equally important to create the right ecosystem for future generations to flourish on solid foundations bolstered by digital technologies and innovative solutions. That is why Mauritius is leveraging on Science, Technology and Innovation for the smooth transition to an Inclusive, High Income and Green Economy.

Our Second VNR Report attests to the pursuit by Mauritius of SDG transformation with a real determination and to the tangible progress we are making despite the challenges in our way.

This is in line with the commitment all UN Member States undertook in 2015. And this is the promise we need to keep to leave no one behind.



Pravind Kumar JUGNAUTH
Prime Minister

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2024 Voluntary National Review (VNR) report of the Republic of Mauritius highlights the achievements, experiences as well as the gaps and challenges identified in the implementation of the SDGs since 2019. The 2024 Report provides a snapshot of Mauritius' resilience and engagement as the economy transitions to an Inclusive, High Income and Green Economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing multiple global crises have exacerbated inherent vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), like Mauritius. Geopolitical tensions, climate change, inflationary pressures, the commodity and energy crises, an ageing population as well as difficulty to integrate global value chains challenge the resilience of the economy. Though overall progress on the SDGs regressed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius ensured its socio-economic recovery by safeguarding jobs and sustaining livelihoods of the population.

The 2024 VNR report features good practices and shares Mauritius' experience in tackling these gaps and challenges across the 17 SDGs. Despite overwhelming pressures on public finances, Mauritius continues to consolidate its welfare state by alleviating poverty, improving access to education and enhanced healthcare services as well as reducing inequalities by reinforcing its social protection system.

In 2023, the Mauritius economy grew by 7.1% and unemployment rate fell to 6.3%. However, such progress is constrained by the effects of climate change as well as frequent disasters such as intense cyclones and flash floods, that have heightened economic loss.

Moreover, sea level rise, marine pollution, coastal degradation and ocean acidification have increased the vulnerabilities of Mauritius.

In order to mitigate these climate-related challenges, Mauritius has updated its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2021. The target is to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% by 2030, achieve 60% of our energy requirements from green sources as well as a total phase out of the use of coal from electricity production by the same date. A Land Drainage Masterplan, developed in 2021, also forms part of the mitigation plan.

MAURITIUS IS COMMITTED TO ACCELERATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ITS 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs).

However, the cost of mobilising adequate financing for the SDGs and the overall development of the economy is challenging, particularly as Mauritius transitions to High Income status and balances macro-fiscal priorities.

The VNR process also highlights the need for Mauritius to enhanced stakeholder coordination and engagement, improve monitoring and evaluation framework, and strengthen statistical process and data collection capabilities.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) consolidated efforts to ensure a multi-stakeholder consultative process that includes representatives from the public and private sectors, NGOs and Academia. The institutional mechanism in place was also strengthened to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

Mauritius reports 75% of data availability for the SDGs. However, there is need to strengthen capacity at all levels to ensure adequate monitoring and appropriate reporting for remedial measures to be taken.

Mauritius, as a SIDS, transitioning to High Income status, advocates for an urgent reform of the international financial architecture that would bridge the finance divide while enhancing inclusiveness and *leave no one behind*. Science, Technology and Innovation (STI), new and existing partnerships, a review of the criteria for countries which are no longer eligible to access concessional financing as well as alternative and innovative financing mechanisms are vital to achieve our vision.

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Mauritius consists of the islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agalega, Tromelin, Cargados Carajos (Saint Brandon) and the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia and any other island comprised in the State of Mauritius. Mauritius has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of around 2.3 million km². The resident population in the Republic of Mauritius, was estimated at 1.26 million as at end 2023.

Mauritius is fully committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, Mauritius has further strengthened its development approach by bolstering its actions for an Inclusive, High Income and Green Economy¹.

Since independence on 12 March 1968, Mauritius has focused on ensuring the welfare of its population while consolidating efforts for its socio-economic development. Over the years, much progress has been achieved through incentives, measures, programmes and projects that have safeguarded unity in the country and strengthened solidarity amongst the population. As Mauritius moves forward to enhance its developmental agenda, it is important for all stakeholders to consolidate actions towards accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Since the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) report in 2019, the global international context has changed drastically. The outbreak of the COVID-19 in 2020, disruptions in global supply chains, heightened geopolitical tensions as well as food and energy insecurity have significantly undermined the progress made so far in the implementation of the SDGs.

Such exogenous global challenges have exacerbated inherent vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing State (SIDS) like Mauritius. Mauritius, which graduated to High Income status by the World Bank in 2020, was reclassified as an Upper Middle-Income country in 2021. Growth prospects have, however, rebounded with the post-COVID-19 recovery as well as the positive impact of measures adopted and resources redirected to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amid the confluence of such challenging circumstances worldwide, Mauritius has effectively accelerated efforts to realising the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs. In line with our national priorities, Mauritius is strengthening its actions for sustainable development.

Despite the escalating geopolitical tensions and persistent challenges impacting on the daily livelihoods of the population, Mauritius reiterated its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and *leave no one behind*. Mauritius renewed this commitment during the SDG Summits in 2019 and 2023.

¹ Source: Budget 2023/24

This second VNR report is an opportunity for Mauritius to review progress made under each of the 17 SDGs as well as better understand the interlinkages across the goals. As we share our experience in the implementation of the SDGs, it is also opportune for stakeholders to contemplate future actions to address challenges identified through a holistic and inclusive approach.

VOLUNTARY

That encourages transparency

STATE-LED

Strong leadership of Government

CONSOLIDATING PARTNERSHIPS

Among major stakeholder groups

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Considers local circumstances

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE REVIEW

The second VNR report of the Republic of Mauritius has been developed in accordance its development priorities. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (MFARIIT) leads the VNR process at national level.

Preparations for this second VNR report kick-started in December 2023, with the First VNR Global Workshop held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A briefing meeting was held with SDG Focal Points and representatives of all Line Ministries to mobilise government stakeholders and inform on arrangements put in place to start preparations for the VNR 2024 report, bearing in mind the key VNR submission dates.

In order to ensure better coordination and collection of data and/or information for the report, Lead Organisations were requested to meet within their respective Working Groups. A survey questionnaire was also circulated to all stakeholders to gather relevant information to assess progress made in the implementation of the SDGs since the publication of the first VNR report in 2019, and gauge actions intended to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

Consultative sessions were also organised with each stakeholder group to further sensitize them to contribute to the VNR process. Coordination meetings were held with each stakeholder group to understand institutional arrangements in place at their level that ensure SDG integration and coordination with their respective members. These include private sector umbrella organisations, namely Business Mauritius and the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), as well as the Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS), the national platform of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in Mauritius. Stakeholders from Academia, namely the University of Mauritius, the University of Technology, Mauritius, the Open University of Mauritius and the Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC), have also been consulted as a major group for the first time. Respective stakeholders were requested to provide inputs and identify good practices to showcase partnerships and innovation in the implementation of the SDGs.

Consultations were also conducted in Rodrigues island with all stakeholders, including representatives from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) and the different Commissions and/or departments, as well as representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), the private sector in Rodrigues and MRIC.

Information received was analysed and assessed in consultation with Lead Organisations and Statistics Mauritius, during a number of Coordination Meetings.

Progress reported on each SDG was validated during the meeting of the National Steering Committee on the SDGs, in which participated all stakeholders, including public and private sector, NGOs and Academia. The United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Mauritius attended the National Steering Committee as Observer.

Following the drafting of the VNR 2024 report by MFARIIT, a validation workshop was held to fine-tune the report. All data mentioned in the VNR report are valid as at April 2024.

STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

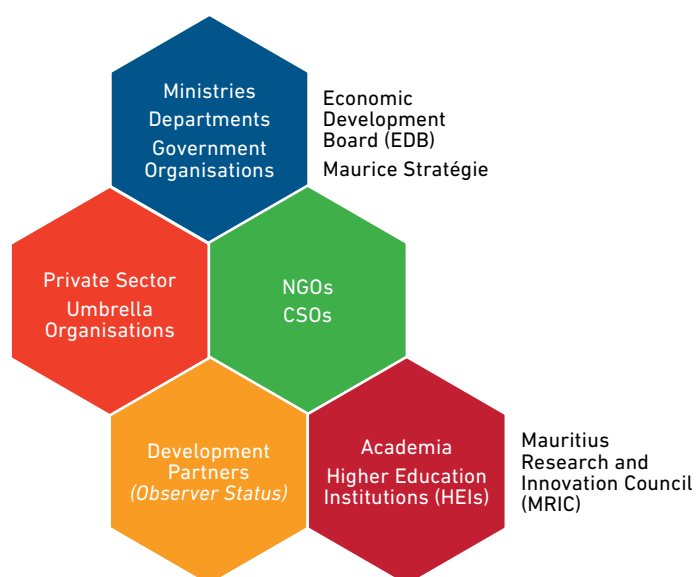
The VNR 2019 report highlighted amongst others the importance of sustaining a coordinated and inclusive approach for the implementation of national policies, including the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs.

With a view to giving effect to this recommendation, the MFARIIT undertook to develop a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the SDGs and set up a permanent unit within the MFARIIT.

Despite challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic which constrained such prospects, the MFARIIT engaged with Line Ministries to establish a structure, using existing working arrangements that would facilitate the flow of information and reporting on implementation of the SDGs.

The mandate of the National Steering Committee on the implementation of the SDGs, under the chair of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was approved on 29 January 2021. The Steering Committee was tasked with providing overall strategic oversight and direction to the process in view of coordinating, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs.

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL SDG STEERING COMMITTEE



In order to ensure proper delivery and reporting, Working Groups were set up under each of the seventeen SDGs. A public entity was designated to lead the work of each of the Working Groups. Lead Ministries were required to set up their own consultative mechanisms to assess the progress made under their respective SDGs and ensure timely action.

Moreover, in line with recommendations made in VNR 2019, Government established a permanent Sustainable Development Unit (SDU) at the MFARIIT in January 2021. The SDU is mandated to coordinate, monitor and evaluate progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs.

Each Line Ministry has a designated SDG Focal Point and Alternative, who are the SDU's primary points of contact so as to disseminate information and collect inputs for the monitoring of the implementation of the SDGs in Mauritius.

The SDG Progress Tracker at Annex I provides a snapshot of the status on each SDG Indicator prepared on the basis of the reports and discussions held at the level of Lead Organisations and their respective Working Groups.

ENSURING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Building on the experience of the VNR 2019, the MFARIIT developed a *Stakeholder Engagement Plan* (SEP), including a *Communication Strategy*, in early December 2023 to ensure concerted action amongst all actors of society. The SEP ensures that

- i. The framework used to review the implementation of the SDGs in Mauritius is people-centered, inclusive, participatory, effective, transparent and integrates all three dimensions of sustainable development, namely, social, economic and environmental, and to *leave no one behind*;
- ii. There is meaningful engagement of stakeholders in the review process, thereby ensuring better assessment of needs and capacities, and improvements in implementation and monitoring;
- iii. Participation will build ownership, trust, and solidarity, thus helping in better social cohesion, and contributing to a more inclusive society; and
- iv. Long-term stakeholder engagement in terms of transparency and responsiveness are strengthened across the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The SEP is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed periodically to align itself with national objectives and adjustments that may be necessary as the international context evolves. Major groups of stakeholders include the public sector, the private sector, NGOs, Civil Society, Academia and Development Partners, including UN agencies. Umbrella institutions are used to reach out to stakeholders at grassroots level. The SEP does not intend to duplicate or replace any national or sectoral or expert-level Committee regrouping respective stakeholders.

Across Mauritius, partners and stakeholders, including Municipalities, District Councils, the private sector, Academia, NGOs, civil society as well as other groupings take ownership of the SDGs by integrating them within their field of work, raising awareness within their networks, fostering innovative partnerships to drive progress as well as sharing knowledge, best practices and addressing challenges to strengthen capacity for data collection, amongst others.

PRIVATE SECTOR-LED INITIATIVES

The private sector in Mauritius has for its part been driving projects at their level, in collaboration with local NGOs, to implement the SDGs. Projects such as the *Prozer Ver Recycling* and *WeCycle Ltd* are using the circular economy concept (SDG 12) to recycle glass and cardboard respectively. Along the same line, women detainees are learning new skills such as rug/mat-making from recycled cloth. Other projects led by the private sector include the *Beautiful localhands* programme that promotes local craftsmen and traditional Mauritian arts in the boutiques and hotels. In view of raising awareness, knowledge and encourage research on conservation of marine life (SDG 14), the private sector invested in the creation of an oceanarium, named *Odyseo*.

Business Mauritius, which is an independent association that represents over 1,200 local businesses, and its sustainability platform *SigneNatir* prioritizes the integration and coordination of the SDGs within its framework.



Source: signenatir.mu

SigneNatir encourages the business community to align their strategies and initiatives to the 2030 Agenda through various communication channels, including social media, workshops, events and publications. It promotes innovation, knowledge-sharing and collective action by facilitating multi-stakeholder partnerships (SDG 17).

Business Mauritius, through *SigneNatir*, and in collaboration with other private sector specialists, have since 2020 launched a flagship course 'Sustainability for Business' that aims at enhancing understanding of participants and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to integrate the SDGs into their policies, projects and operations. *SigneNatir* also assists its members in the collection of data and monitoring progress in key areas to develop a sustainable and inclusive Mauritius.

Local businesses have taken the initiative to create the first regional network in Africa, namely the *United Nations Global Compact Network Mauritius and Indian Ocean*. The regional platform regroups 49 participants in Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles and Comoros. It provides an opportunity for businesses in Africa to share knowledge and create impactful partnerships to progress on the SDGs both locally and regionally.

ACADEMIA AND YOUTH

Public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) align themselves with the national objectives for sustainable development. In this regard, the University of Mauritius (UOM) has adopted an *Eco-Campus Policy* that integrates sustainability principles in terms of renewable energy, energy efficiency, rainwater harvesting, wastewater management as well as the Green Building concept across its activities.

Since 2020, the UOM organises an annual *Research and Innovation Week*, in partnership with the public and private sectors that enhances linkages between stakeholders to foster innovation in the country. Funding schemes are also available for academics and researchers to work in collaboration with local and international partners.

The UOM has set up an Agro-processing Incubator that allows the conduct of multi-disciplinary and translational research in collaboration with the industry and MSMEs for turnkey solutions. In 2021, a team of researchers from the UOM worked on the *Smartbite* project for the formulation of a healthy snack bar as an alternative to currently imported energy-dense snack bars. The *Smartbite* project is in line with SDG 2 and 12. Another project is the *EcoPEC Food Freshness Retainer* that aims at extending the shelf life and retaining freshness of fruits and vegetables. This is in line with SDG 2 to address food loss.

The University of Technology, Mauritius (UTM) runs a *Community Learning and Engagement* programme that promotes civic engagement in community organisations among undergraduate students. This is in line with SDG 1 and 10 to alleviate poverty and reduce inequality.

The Open University of Mauritius (OU) runs courses via distance education and e-learning platforms thereby reducing its overall carbon footprint, in line with SDG 13.

The Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC) plays a crucial role in the collection of Research and Development (R&D) data on a regular basis that allows evidence-based recommendations. National data collection has been strengthened and national surveys encompass Academia, Industry, the Public and Private sectors, and NGOs, thus improving on quality of data produced.

This has allowed the institutionalisation of the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) Initiative within the MRIC. Hence, Mauritius will feature for the first time in the next African Innovation Outlook report to be published by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), thereby contributing to the regional initiatives with regard to Research and Innovation.

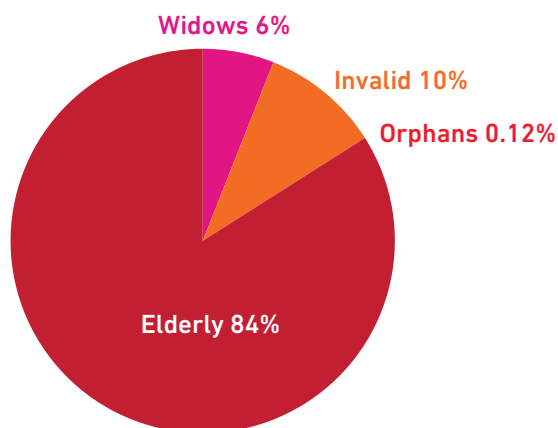


**END POVERTY IN ALL
ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE**



Mauritius is a welfare state. The Government of Mauritius works to secure greater social inclusiveness of the most vulnerable segment of our population. Basic pensions are provided to the elderly, widows, orphans and invalid, irrespective of their economic status. As at June 2023, there were 308,626 beneficiaries of basic pensions, which has been on an increasing trend since 2019.

BENEFICIARIES OF BASIC PENSIONS IN THE REP. OF MAURITIUS AS AT JUNE 2023



Allowances such as social aid, income support for the purchase of rice and flour, unemployment hardship relief and funeral grants are payable to the low-income group of the population. Furthermore, inmates allowance and indoor relief are payable to, or on behalf of, Mauritians residing in government-subsidized institutions such as homes for elderly, infirmaries and orphanages. Statistics Mauritius estimated government expenditure on social security and welfare to be around 9.3% of GDP for the FY 2022/2023.

Extreme poverty, as defined by the *World Bank* has been eradicated in Mauritius. However, a *Relative Poverty Line* (RPL) is derived by *Statistics Mauritius* based on a household survey which is carried out every five years.

BENEFICIARIES UNDER THE SRM (AS AT OCT 2023)



7,044

**FAMILIES BENEFITTED
FROM FINANCIAL SUPPORT**



RS 39 MILLION

**AS A MONETARY
SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE**



RS 3.6 BILLION

**DISBURSED BY NSIF
SINCE 2016.**

The *Social Integration and Empowerment Act 2016* introduced absolute poverty thresholds calculated at 40% above the international poverty line of Rs 1,938 per person per month for developing countries. These thresholds are used to determine the eligibility of beneficiaries registered under the *Social Register of Mauritius* (SRM). In 2017, around 10% of the population lived in relative poverty, defined as half of the median monthly household income per adult equivalent.

The *World Bank* estimated that poverty (upper-middle-income country threshold of USD 6.85 a day, 2017 PPP) increased to 16% in 2020 due to the dramatic contraction of GDP. However, with resumption in growth prospects, these figures retreated to around 9% by 2024².

The continued implementation of the *Marshall Plan Against Poverty* and targeted social protection programs for the low-income category and other vulnerable groups have characterised Government's efforts to ensure social inclusion. In April 2024, 7,044 households under the SRM benefitted from a monthly Subsistence Allowance to the tune of Rs 39 million. Since 2016, some Rs 1.8 billion have been disbursed under the Scheme. Overall, some Rs 2.7 billion have been disbursed as financial support to beneficiaries through the different income support schemes, since the introduction of the Marshall Plan.

Additional income support includes the payment of a monthly Child Allowance, provision of school materials, a monthly Crèche Allowance, a one-off grant for the successful completion of Grade 9 school level exemption from the payment of examination fees for School Certificate

² Source: Macro Poverty Outlook for Mauritius: April 2024, World Bank

(SC), the Higher School Certificate (HSC), and tertiary education. It also covers the Free Examination Fees Scheme for a second attempt at the SC and HSC levels, as well as exemption of payment of administration fees for full-time courses at the *Mauritius Institute of Training and Development* (MITD) and other recognised public tertiary institutions.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the absolute poverty threshold for eligibility under the SRM has been reviewed twice. To further improve the impact of the Marshall Plan and reinforce the case-management approach, the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) was restructured and additional personnel were recruited.

The NEF has set up multi-stakeholders' community platforms, through social mobilisers and public-private representatives, for joint decision-making and joint implementation of community projects. *Community Working Groups* have been set up in each district of the Republic of Mauritius.

Additional support to eligible households under the SRM includes free broadband internet, tablets to students of Grades 10 to 13, monthly cash grants for the purchase of diapers for infants up to one-year-old, sanitary towels for female students in Grades 6 to 13 and free optical glasses to those aged up to 21 years old. Start-up tool kits are also provided to the unemployed who have benefitted from training and placement opportunities to enable them to practice and start a business. Moreover, Government provides an 80% subsidy for acquiring social housing, with only 20% repayment required over 15 to 35 years. The housing scheme includes the construction of fully concrete housing units up to 50 m² for families who own a plot of land, but lack the resources to build, and the allocation of 10% of social housing units constructed by the *National Housing Development Corporation* (NHDC) to landless beneficiaries.

In August 2019, additional reforms were brought with the transformation of the National CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Foundation into the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF) to strengthen its role as the central body to receive public and CSR funds from the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) and allocate same to NGOs to foster social inclusion, equity and sustainable development. As at 30 April 2024, 472 organisations were registered with the Foundation. Since 2016, the NSIF has disbursed more than Rs 3.6 billion to support NGOs working in favour of vulnerable groups and to implement the National Programme. The Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) contributed a total of Rs 6.3 billion to the NSIF as at 30 April 2024.

A *Fortified Learning Environment* (FLE) Unit was established at the level of NSIF to support vulnerable children and improve their learning experience. The programme is delivered with the support of a network of NGOs in collaboration with key public stakeholders such as the *Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare*, the *Mauritius Institute of Education*, alongside the *Private Secondary Education Authority*.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT



FREE INTERNET
TO ELIGIBLE
HOUSEHOLDS
UNDER SRM



MONTHLY CASH GRANTS
FOR PURCHASE OF
DIAPERS TO INFANTS



FREE OPTICAL GLASSES
TO THOSE AGED UP
TO 21 YEARS OLD

In 2020, a *National Database for Vulnerable Groups* was set up to register households earning a monthly income between Rs 10,500 and Rs 14,000. In 2023, the income thresholds were reviewed from Rs 4,000 to Rs 4,600 for an adult and from Rs 2,000 to Rs 3,220 for a child. Therefore, households earning a monthly income above Rs 14,650 and not exceeding Rs 18,860 are now eligible for support under the *National Database for Vulnerable Groups*. These households receive in-kind support from the NSIF through registered NGOs. This aims at enhancing policy effectiveness in our fight against poverty.

Vulnerable households are often disproportionately affected by disasters such as flooding caused during strong cyclones and overflow of rivers which damage individual houses and infrastructure. To assist affected households, an cyclone allowance of Rs 250 per person, per night spent at the evacuee centre is payable. A flood allowance of Rs 250 per person per day, for a maximum of 3 days is also payable, on submission of a police note. In the wake of cyclone *Belal* on 15 January 2024, a total of Rs 93.8 million was disbursed by Government and food packs were distributed to 3,880 families. During the episode of heavy rainfall on 21 April 2024, some Rs 3.6 million were disbursed to affected families.

In the national budget for FY 2023/24, total allocation to poverty alleviation and empowerment stood at Rs 823.2 million, including social benefits which amounted to Rs 594 million (SDG 1.a.2).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Mauritius has an ageing population, mainly due to increased longevity and declining fertility rates. As old age dependency increases, the quantum of pension to be disbursed will rise as well. The escalating trend in the number of old-age pension beneficiaries will impact the long-term sustainability of public finance.

In addition, an ageing population requires adapted healthcare as well as living arrangements, such as housing and transportation facilities, implying additional public expenditure on attuned infrastructure to the needs of the elderly.

The World Bank projects poverty rate, that is proportion of persons living below USD 6.85 (2017 PPP) a day, to decline from 10% in 2023 to 7% by 2026³.

While a Management Information System has been set up, regular upgrading is essential to improve data management and collection. Moreover, to enhance monitoring of the *Marshall Plan*, *Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators* have been developed with the assistance of the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD). This will in the long-run allow better targeting and optimisation of resources.

³ Source: Macro Poverty Outlook for Mauritius: April 2024, World Bank.

2 ZERO
HUNGER



**END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD
SECURITY, AND IMPROVED
NUTRITION AND PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**



The agricultural sector plays a strategic role in improving the availability of food and achieving food security. Mauritius mostly produces fresh vegetables and agro-industrial products such as sugarcane and tea. Staple food requirements, especially rice, wheat flour and cereals, are imported. In 2023, agriculture contributed 4.3% to the GDP.

It is estimated that approximately 22.2% of total land area is under sustainable agriculture which includes both sugarcane and crop cultivation. These include *inter alia* climate-smart agriculture, organic agriculture, permaculture and sugarcane production under *Fairtrade*, *Bonsucro* and *Altromercato*.

AGRICULTURE IN MAURITIUS



4.3%

CONTRIBUTION
TO GDP IN 2023.



22.2%

OF TOTAL LAND AREA
UNDER SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE.



7,865 HECTARES

OF LAND UNDER
FOOD CROP WERE
HARVESTED IN 2022.



9,237 TONNES

WERE PRODUCED
IN 2022 UNDER
PROTECTED CULTURES

As reported in 2019, the non-sugar segment of agricultural sector has taken prominence. A total area of 7,865 hectares under food crop cultivation was harvested in 2022. Support in the form of financial assistance to producers as well as subsidies for inputs and equipment were provided to increase local production of non-sugar crops. Positive outcomes were seen during the period 2019 to 2022 whereby food crop production in the open field increased by 25%, from 93,741 tonnes in 2019 to 117,115 tonnes in 2022. In 2023, the National Wholesale Market was set up to facilitate trading of quality vegetables and fruits produced locally at affordable prices to consumers.

The agricultural sector is currently transitioning from traditional open field cultivation practices to sheltered farming system. Local farmers and producers are being encouraged to adopt sustainable farming practices, such as protected culture, hydroponics, aquaponics and vertical farming. The aim is to strengthen resilience and adaptation capacity to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change. Sheltered farming practices will also allow farmers to leverage on production capacity and of a variety of produce, in line with the national commitment to enhance food security.

Production under protected cultures increased by 51.2%, from 6,111 tonnes in 2021 to 9,237 tonnes in 2022. As at February 2024, some 2,000 units of sheltered farms have been set up over an area of 800 hectares. Crops cultivated in these sheltered farms include sweet pepper, English cucumber, tomato, beans and lettuce. Over the period January to December 2023, some 8,086 tonnes of tomatoes were produced from these greenhouses.

The *Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute* (FAREI) has developed a Mauritian Standard on '*Specification for Good Agricultural Practices for Crop Production*' (MauriGAP) based on Global Gap standards. Training is being provided to planters to achieve sustainable crop production through Green Agricultural Certification of fresh Agricultural Produce and certification is provided by the *Mauritian Standard Bureau* (MSB).

The *Use of Pesticides Act* 2018 regulates, controls and monitors the importation and use of pesticides to minimize risk to human health and the environment.

Mauritius also aims to achieve food security through a shift to eco-friendly methods conducive to safer and nutritious produce with minimum use of chemicals. Farmers are being encouraged to adopt organic agricultural practices as well as use of organic materials, such as seaweed compost.

In 2022, a feasibility study was carried out to explore the economic and technical potential of utilizing seaweed as fertilizers to reduce our dependence on imported chemical fertilizers and the vulnerability of our food systems to external shocks. The project was financed under the Joint SDG Fund Development Emergency Modality of the United Nations⁴.

Along the same lines, the *Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture* initiated the *Smart Agriculture* project with the support of the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD), the *European Union, Région Réunion* and *France Volontaires*, the *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council* (MRIC), the *Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute* (FAREI) and the *Centre de coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement* (CIRAD) in Réunion Island. Over a period of five years (2018 to 2022), 13 growers (8 small planters and 5 corporates) dedicated some 20 hectares of land in implementing agro-ecological principles in their production practices, thus reducing significantly the use of pesticides⁵.

An *Integrated Pest Management Programme* and an *Integrated Soil Fertility Management* are being implemented. As at May 2023, 125 farmers were engaged in producing fruits and vegetables through organic and other sustainable production systems. Organic fertilisers have been developed for various crops.

Farmers are also being sensitised to use leguminous crop cover as green manure to improve soil quality and crop yield. The use of solar-powered pumps and refrigeration units, alongside soil and water conservation techniques, permaculture, agro-forestry and zero budget natural farming are also being implemented.

In 2022, the *Agro-forestry Action Plan* was developed with the support of the Technical Cooperation Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to enhance agricultural productivity, towards achieving food security. A number of projects have been implemented on a pilot basis. Farmers and relevant stakeholders have been trained to adopt agro-forestry systems for agri-food production and sustainable land management. These are also in line with our objectives of adopting sustainable forest management practices (SDG 15.2.1).

A chemical-free bio-foods promotion programme is being implemented among growers, youth, women as well as in the hospitality sector. To preserve the biodiversity and strengthen the ecosystem, beekeeping is being promoted.

Health and economic crises such as the recent COVID-19 pandemic added pressure on governments worldwide to ensure food security and self-sufficiency. To discuss the various enabling factors and constraints in developing sustainable food systems, Mauritius led a regional dialogue in five islands of the Indian Ocean in preparation of the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021. The aim of the initiative was to transform the local food system through sustainable food crop production, safer food and minimising food loss.



A CHEMICAL-FREE BIO-FOODS PROMOTION PROGRAMME IS BEING IMPLEMENTED AMONG GROWERS, YOUTH, WOMEN AS WELL AS IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR.

⁴ Source: UNDP Mauritius: Building the Resilience of Food Systems in Mauritius and Seychelles by leveraging on Sustainable Agricultural Practices, September 2022.

⁵ Source: Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture, *Smart Agriculture: Accompany Transition Mauritian Agro-ecology*



**THE NATIONAL PLANT
GENETIC RESOURCES UNIT
HOLDS A COLLECTION OF
SOME 700 ACCESSIONS
CROPS BEING CONSERVED
IN THE GENE BANKS (SEED
AND FIELD) UNIT.**

In 2023, Mauritius organised a symposium on the agriculture sector *Les Assises de L'Agriculture*, in collaboration with the *Economic Development Board (EDB)*. This symposium brought together experts, academia, researchers and stakeholders from the public and private sectors, including farmers, to identify means to enhance food security and increase the contribution of agriculture to economic growth.

The *National Plant Genetic Resources Unit* holds a collection of some 700 accessions crops being conserved in the genebanks (seed and field) unit. The accessions consist mostly of traditional varieties, landraces and crop wild relatives. Surveys and inventories of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) are carried out to maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild plants.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Mauritius has set up the necessary framework to build a vibrant sugar and non-sugar agricultural sector. Agri-businesses are encouraged to make use of natural resources sustainably that would contribute significantly to national food security and safety. Producers are also being empowered to reach higher productivity gains and enhance the welfare of the farming community.

An *Organic Agriculture Bill* is being prepared to promote the production of quality organic products. The Bill aims amongst others at providing guidelines for permitted inputs used for soil fertilizing and conditioning and pest and disease management, as well as providing for physical protection of producers of organic products⁶.

While various local initiatives are in place to address challenges pertaining to water scarcity, climate change, limited agricultural infrastructure, labour scarcity, limited land and over reliance on imported inputs, international expertise and additional funding should also be mobilised.

To safeguard food security, scaled-up international development cooperation is critical for small island economies. Also, development of agricultural regional value chains and value addition through agribusiness and agro-processing that maximise production landscapes is essential.

Mauritius, in collaboration with CGIAR (Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres) is developing a national policy for PGRFA to achieve local food security. The project will ensure access to a broader pool of plant genetic resources as well as increase the potential for research.

⁶ Source: Cabinet Decision, March 2023.

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



**ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES
AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING
FOR ALL AT ALL AGES**



3rd

**MAURITIUS RANKS IN THE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION
AS PER THE TRACKING
UNIVERSAL HEALTH
COVERAGE 2023 GLOBAL
MONITORING REPORT,**

Mauritius has pursued implementation of relevant health-related strategies in place to sustain progress achieved in 2019. As per the Tracking Universal Health Coverage 2023 *Global Monitoring Report*, jointly published by the WHO and the World Bank, Mauritius was ranked 3rd in the Southern African Region⁷. The public health services, ranging from primary to secondary and tertiary healthcare ensure universal health care (SDG Indicator 3.8.1).

Mauritius has a dual-tiered health care system. The public sector caters to the bulk of the healthcare needs of the population, free of any user cost. The remaining healthcare needs are managed against payment by the private sector, including through out-of-pocket payments or payments effected by private health insurance companies. On the preventive side, actions by both the public and private healthcare providers are complemented by a host of NGOs that work in specific areas of healthcare and contribute to the enhancement of the healthcare services.

Notable achievements, as highlighted in Box 1, have been registered across different indicators of SDG 3 from 2019 to 2022.

Box 1

MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN INDICATOR OF SDG 3: GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- ▶ Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births (SDG Indicator 3.1.1) went down significantly from 62 in 2019 to 41 in 2022 which is also below the global target of 70.
- ▶ Under 5 Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births (SDG Indicator 3.2.1) slightly increased to 16.5 in 2022 from 16.0 in 2019 but is still well below the global target of 25.
- ▶ Neonatal Mortality Rate per one thousand live births (SDG Indicator 3.2.2) was reduced from 10.3 in 2019 to reach 8.9 in 2022, which is below the global target of 12.
- ▶ For every 10,000 population, there were 30 doctors and 35 nurses in 2022 (SDG Indicator 3.c.1).
- ▶ Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is almost 100% (SDG Indicator 3.1.2) and immunization coverage is above 95%.
- ▶ Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population is low (estimated at 0.2).
- ▶ Number of new cases of tuberculosis per 1,000 population is low (0.1).
- ▶ The country is malaria-free – only a few imported cases are reported annually. These are monitored and dealt with promptly.
- ▶ Proportion of the population with access to affordable medicines and vaccines on a sustainable basis is 100%.

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

In addition, improvement has been noted in the status of *Non-Communicable Diseases* (NCDs) in Mauritius, notwithstanding the high prevalence level of NCD risk factors, including being overweight or obese, alcohol consumption. Intervention policies in place have been effectively implemented. These were substantiated by the results in the National NCD survey conducted in 2021 to determine the prevalence and study the trends in Type 2 Diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases and their associated risk factors in the population. In particular, prevalence of diabetes has decreased from 23% to 20%, in adults aged 25 to 74 years. Hypertension cases stabilized to around 27% and the prevalence of smoking was 18% in 2021 compared to 19% previously.

⁷ Tracking universal health coverage: 2023 global monitoring report. Geneva: World Health Organization and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / The World Bank; 2023.

Alongside the promotion of an active lifestyle and environment conducive to improved quality of life and well-being, primary health care services and delivery are being strengthened to prevent NCDs as well as other major illnesses such as diabetes and cancer. A National NCD Action Plan 2023-2028 has been developed and is being implemented. Ongoing NCDs surveillance system, expansion of screening services for early detection of NCDs, as well as mental health and cancer are included. Other action plans and policies implemented include the *National Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2020-2024*, *National Action Plan for Tobacco Control 2022-2026*, *National Sport and Physical Activity Policy 2018-2028* and the *National Cancer Control Programme 2022-2025*.



**CONTINUOUS GLUCOSE
MONITOR FOR TYPE-1
DIABETES PATIENTS**

A number of fiscal measures and regulatory frameworks are also in place. Other budgetary measures including screening for cancer risks assessments and early detection, equipping the New Cancer Centre in 2024 with high-tech equipment, provision of continuous glucose monitor for some 1,000 Type-1 diabetes patients and an insulin pump for some 450 high risk diabetic patients and introduction of the Artificial Intelligence-enhanced Electrocardiography test in public hospitals are being planned and implemented.



**INSULIN PUMP
HIGH RISK DIABETIC
PATIENTS**

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The health system in Mauritius successfully withstood the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Measures adopted during the outbreak of the pandemic were in line with the WHO COVID-19 *Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan*.

Strong political commitment and effective strategies such as sanitary curfews, Work Access Permits, shopping in alphabetical order, isolation of people with COVID-19 in treatment centres, rigorous contact tracing exercises, creation of red zones, prevented an increase in local transmission of the COVID-19.

In addition, the Government together with the support of our bilateral partners and the WHO, made significant investments amounting to approximately Rs 150 million to increase national testing capacities, including the installation of a PCR testing unit at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport. *GeneXpert* platforms were also introduced to ensure rapid COVID-19 PCR tests. Samples positive to the corona virus were sent abroad particularly to South Africa for genetic sequencing. While Mauritius acquired two platforms, the *ION TORRENT S5* and *Minion Nanopore*, for genetic sequencing locally, genomic sequencing was introduced in Mauritius in 2021.

In December 2020, a *National Deployment Vaccination Plan for COVID-19 Vaccines* was introduced. To meet the daily target of 15,000 vaccinated people, 16 fixed vaccination sites, with capacity of 800 vaccinations/day/site, were set up and 10 mobile teams, with capacity of 300-500 vaccinations/day/team, were deployed for maximum community outreach. Friendly countries including China, India, United Arab Emirates and the United States donated COVID-19 vaccines.

NATIONAL DEPLOYMENT VACCINATION PLAN FOR COVID-19 VACCINES



15,000

VACCINATED PEOPLE



16

FIXED VACCINATION
SITES



800

VACCINATIONS/
DAY/SITE



10

MOBILE TEAMS

All these measures were supported by massive awareness and sensitization campaigns with daily press conferences by Government during the COVID-19 outbreak for regular, real time and transparent information sharing. In addition, relevant information and guidelines were being regularly communicated to the public through the *Government Information System* (GIS), national television, radio, Facebook pages and dedicated websites and applications such as *besafeMoris*.

A *National COVID-19 Vaccination Fund* was set up in 2020, whereby funds were mobilised, both from the public and private sectors, to implement the National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. To support the strengthening of Infection, Prevention and Control (IPC) measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 across the community and to strengthen access to COVID-19 testing, funds were mobilised from the *Canada Fund for Local Initiatives* and the *European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations* in 2020. In the same year, Mauritius received EUR 7.9 million in the form of budgetary support from the European Union under the *Reinforcing the Health Systems in Mauritius* (REHSIMUS) Project.

IMPACT OF AN AGEING POPULATION

Prolonged life expectancy at birth (73.4 years), coupled with low fertility rate have progressively resulted in an ageing population. To improve the health and well-being of the elders in Mauritius, the *National Integrated Care for Older People* (ICOPE) Strategic and Action Plan 2022-2026 was launched in March 2023.

In addition, an *Early Dementia Diagnosis Clinic* was set up at *Victoria Hospital*, Quatre Bornes in 2018 and a *Geriatric Healthcare Unit* was set up in June 2023. These have been extended to the remaining four regional hospitals. Health awareness tools in the form of animated clips on topics such as dementia and preventing falls in the elderly, that form part of awareness campaigns are being projected on television, radio and social media.

Pre-conception/Neonatal care is being strengthened and personnel in maternal clinics has been increased to ensure enhanced delivery of pre-natal and maternal services. In 2022, an *Assisted Reproductive Technology Centre* (Fertility Clinic) was established at the *Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam National Hospital*. The services have been extended to *Victoria Hospital*, Quatre Bornes. The Fertility Clinics provide a holistic approach to couples facing difficulties to conceive. Services include out-patient assessments and diagnosis as well as surgical intervention related to infertility management. Some 724 visits were recorded at the Fertility Clinics from July 2022 to June 2023.



**SOME 724 VISITS WERE
RECORDED AT THE
FERTILITY CLINICS FROM
JULY 2022 TO JUNE 2023**

Moreover, to further reduce perinatal and maternal morbidity and mortality rates, 24/7 services by specialists in Gynaecology, Paediatrics and Anaesthesia were introduced in all regional hospitals during the FY 2022/2023. Obstetric units in hospitals have been provided with new equipment including echography machines, cardiotocography (CTG) machines, cardiac monitors, Doppler and foetal Doppler sets for provision of optimal care to women. The number of maternal deaths in Mauritius decreased from 8 in 2000 to 7 in 2021 and 4 in 2022. All regional hospitals are equipped with 44 neonatal ventilators and have Level 3 Neonatal Intensive Care Units as per standards of the American Academy of Paediatrics.

CONTAINING RISING COSTS OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Mauritius is highly dependent on the importation of pharmaceutical products, vaccines, medical consumables and equipment. Furthermore, the high prevalence of NCDs and long-term treatment for chronic diseases, increasing demand for geriatric services and advances in medical technologies are all factors that contribute to increase health care costs in Mauritius.

IN MARCH 2024, MAURITIUS HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS THE HOST OF THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE SIDS POOLED PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME FOR MEDICAL PRODUCTS.

In March 2024, Mauritius has been designated as the host of the Secretariat for the *SIDS Pooled Procurement Programme for Medical Products*. The pooled procurement allows for cost reductions through economies of scale and collective negotiation for more affordability.

Moreover, various initiatives have been introduced to encourage local production of medical consumables and pharmaceutical products. In 2021, the Mauritius Institute of Biotechnology was set up.

To scale up the provision of advanced healthcare services to the population as well as to reinforce the primary health care service delivery at community level, Government is investing massively in the construction of new public health infrastructure and the upgrading of existing ones. For FY 2022-2023, some Rs 19.2 billion were earmarked.

While free and affordable quality health care services are provided to anyone visiting a public health institution, special measures are in place to ensure no one is left behind. An Overseas Treatment Scheme (OTS) is in place to help ease the financial burden of patients who cannot afford medical treatment abroad. As from 2023/24, children in the Republic of Mauritius diagnosed with cancer, and who are from households earning up to Rs 150,000, are eligible to receive financial assistance that would fully cover the costs of cancer care and treatment in foreign hospitals or local private hospitals with the best expertise.

Provisions also exist on a case-to-case basis whereby patients may obtain expensive drugs free-of-charge that are not listed on the list of essential drugs.

DIGITAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Since the FY 2020/2021, Mauritius, with the support of the UNDP, has embarked on the digitalization of the public health sector. The project aims at introducing a Patient Administration System under e-health to address the lack of availability of *One Patient-One Record*, thereby reducing wastage and duplications.

INTRODUCTION OF A PATIENT ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM UNDER E-HEALTH PROJECT.

The challenges with respect to management of NCDs include upscaling strong inter-sectoral coordination, behavioural change through community empowerment, increasing awareness on dietary habits, healthy lifestyle and enforcement of regulations on tobacco and alcohol.

In 2019, Mauritius acceded to the African Union's African Leadership Meeting on Investing in Health (ALM) Declaration, committing to increasing domestic resources for health and improving the efficiency, equity and governance of the health sector. As part of this commitment, the Government with support from SADC, the Global Fund (GF) and the African Union hosted a *National Health Financing Dialogue* in 2023 to strengthen domestic health financing strategies and interventions. The outcome of the National Health Financing Dialogue included strategies to:

- ▶ accelerate the development of the medical hub in Mauritius;
- ▶ fast-track the development of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, local manufacturing of medical supplies and clinical research;

- ▶ adopt alternative, innovative and sustainable financing models to further enhance Universal Health Coverage; and
- ▶ reinforce surveillance and preparedness of the health sector response to the effects of climate change in an equitable manner.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To promote an active lifestyle and prevent NCDs, a number of actions have been initiated.

The *Carnet de Santé*, a 50-page booklet of A5 size providing healthcare advice for the elderly in user-friendly language and graphics, and acting as an “aide-mémoire” and care-coordination tool, has been designed, and will be provided free of charge to 260,000 Mauritians aged 60 years and above.

Appropriate legislations are being drafted to enable the setting up of the *Central Medical Procurement Authority* for the procurement of medical supplies, including drugs, vaccines, equipment, consumables and medical disposables for public health institutions in Mauritius. This is part of the National ICOPE Strategic and Action Plan 2022-2026.

For more development in the health sector, it is envisaged to scale up further collaborations with Development Partners, NGOs and also strengthen the Public Private Partnerships for increasing health financing.

Major projects in the pipeline include three Projects on a Build Operate Transfer (BOT) scheme through a Public Private Partnership (PPP) mechanism in the Healthcare and Pharmaceutical sector at Côte D'Or, namely a Modern Warehouse for the storage of Pharmaceutical Products and other Medical Consumables, a National Health Laboratory Services Centre and a State-of-the-Art Cardiac Centre.



IN 2019, MAURITIUS ACCEDED TO THE AFRICAN UNION'S AFRICAN LEADERSHIP MEETING ON INVESTING IN HEALTH (ALM) DECLARATION, COMMITTING TO INCREASING DOMESTIC RESOURCES FOR HEALTH AND IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY, EQUITY AND GOVERNANCE OF THE HEALTH SECTOR.

A State-of-the-Art AYUSH Centre of Excellence at Côte D'Or is also envisaged with the collaboration of the Indian Authorities.

A *Food Standards Agency* is being operationalized and it is envisaged to introduce and implement new Food Regulations, specifically for salt, trans-fats and nutrient profile labelling in collaboration with stakeholders.

Mauritius is planning to conduct two surveys in 2024, namely the Household out-of-pocket expenses on health and the contraceptive prevalence surveys. While this will provide appropriate data, other data gaps, for example data related to malnutrition among 0-4 years, such as stunting and wasting are currently unavailable. These can be obtained solely from a national population-based survey for which technical assistance is required. To fill these data gaps, financial and human resources are needed to establish innovative data collection methods.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



**ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND
EQUITABLE QUALITY
EDUCATION AND PROMOTE
LIFELONG LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL**





EDUCATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS, CONSIDERED AS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT, IS FREE AT ALL LEVELS.

Education in the Republic of Mauritius, considered as a basic human right, is free at all levels, from pre-primary through to Higher Education in both public and grant-aided institutions. This is aligned with the objectives of SDG 4.1.2 and 4.2.2.

Higher Education is however free exclusively for first-time undergraduate studies. A number of initiatives guarantee learners' right to access quality education based on the principles of equity and inclusiveness (SDG 4.3). Such measures include free public transport, free textbooks for basic education, payment of external examinations fees at School Certificate (SC) and Higher School Certificate (HSC) Levels. In the name of equity, where learners living in vulnerable environments are concerned, the system makes provision, among others, for cash transfer against a 90% school attendance, the implementation of food supplementary programme and scholarships for higher education studies for meritorious learners with disabilities.

High enrolment ratios at both primary and secondary levels are indicative of the widespread accessibility to education for both genders. In 2023, gross enrolment ratio for primary and secondary sectors stood at 111.0% and 74% respectively.



HIGH ENROLMENT RATIOS AT BOTH PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVELS ARE INDICATIVE OF THE WIDESPREAD ACCESSIBILITY TO EDUCATION FOR BOTH GENDERS.

In 2015 Government embarked on major reforms in the educational sector with the introduction of the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE) which emphasises, *inter alia*, the holistic and integral development of learners. The NYCBE policy aims to achieve a smooth transition to, and completion of secondary education, with learners mastering the necessary competencies and addressing learning gaps. To consolidate foundational learning, three key programmes are being implemented at the primary level, namely the *Early Support Programme*, the *Holistic Education Programme*, and the *Early Digital Learning Programme*.

To implement same, Support Teachers and dedicated Educators were recruited for the delivery of a holistic education. To cater for the social-emotional well-being of learners, emphasis is being placed on areas such as *Values and Citizenship Education*, *Road Safety Education*, *Health and Physical Education as well as Visual and Performing Arts* (SDG Indicator 4.7.1).

Several initiatives are also implemented to promote healthy living and personal development among students. Programmes such as '*Les Amis de Zippy*' and the *Healthier Kids Programme* have been introduced to enhance coping mechanisms and instil concepts of sustainable living, including the principles of *Reduce, Reuse and Recycle*. Furthermore, comprehensive sexuality education, drug use prevention programmes, and student care and counselling desks are well established in all secondary schools to cultivate essential life skills and resilience.

The four-year Extended Programme for learners who do not achieve the required level at the end of the primary cycle is undergoing continual review. The introduction of the Bright Up Programme is a collaborative programme with stakeholders and the community comprising life skills, outdoor education, healthy living and social mentoring to encourage their subsequent uptake of vocational studies.

ENSURING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Mauritian education system rests on equity and inclusion. In line with SDG Target 4.5, students in selected *Zone d'Education Prioritaire* (ZEP) schools benefit from a hot meal. Digital tablets as well as unlimited high-speed internet packages at the rate of 1-day use at Rs 15 (USD 0.33) by MyT, the national internet provider, are provided to learners of Grade 10 to 13 from vulnerable families and registered on the SRM. Aligned to our objectives under SDG 1, a *Fortified Learning Environment* (FLE) Unit was established at the level of NSIF to provide support for the socio-emotional development of pupils as well as assistance to learners with learning difficulties.

In addition, learners with special education needs (SEN) are provided with necessary support, including adapted textbooks and Braille notebook for visually impaired, developed in collaboration with the Government of India. Carers, sign language interpreters and teacher assistants ensure support as required. The school premises are also made barrier free to facilitate access to learners with physical disabilities.

The Special Education Needs Authority (SENA), the regulatory body, is developing a comprehensive Quality Assurance Framework to ensure adherence to established norms.



LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS (SEN) ARE PROVIDED WITH NECESSARY SUPPORT, INCLUDING ADAPTED TEXTBOOKS AND BRAILLE NOTEBOOK FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED, DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

TECHNOLOGY-ENABLED LEARNING

New fields of learning have been introduced to broaden the school curriculum and open up pathways for students completing their secondary education to transition to post-secondary education and training. Technology Education for Grade 10 students was introduced in January 2024 as an alternative educational pathway to the Cambridge 'O' level. This aims at providing a solid foundation for higher level skills development through a mix of academic and technical focus, thereby addressing the demand for skills for the future. Such initiatives are in line with SDG Indicator 4.3.1.

There is an increasing demand for technical and higher end technical skills. *Polytechnics Mauritius* has a large programmatic offer, ranging from short industry-certified upskilling courses to Diplomas in emerging fields such as *Internet of Things*, *Big Data*, *Cyber Security*, *Digital Media* and *Addiction Studies*. This is in line with SDG Target 4.4.

The *Institute of Technical Education and Technology* (ITET) Act was enacted in 2021 to revamp the technical education sector in Mauritius and address the middle to high skills needs of the country by creating additional opportunities and pathways for students to pursue studies in technical and technology education.

The COVID-19 pandemic had the merit of accelerating the embedding of technology and online teaching and learning into the system. This momentum is bolstered by the prevalence of connectivity, the provision of devices, the relevant digital content and an upgraded teacher capacity. This system has the advantage of enabling a pivot towards online teaching during school closures following bad weather conditions.



VIDEO LESSONS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS (GRADES 1 TO 9) ARE BROADCASTED ON NATIONAL TELEVISION



FOR GRADES 9 TO 13, ONLINE CLASSES ARE CONDUCTED BY SCHOOL TEACHERS



A YOUTUBE CHANNEL WAS ALSO OPENED WHERE GOVERNMENT DISSEMINATED TRAINING VIDEOS AND EDUCATIONAL VIDEO LESSONS FOR PRIMARY LEARNERS.

The *Early Digital Learning Programme* (EDLP) in the primary sector is being revitalised. Other intervention areas include the Student Support Portal (SSP) that comprises a repository of educational videos and necessary educational materials for lower secondary learners, a Learning and Teaching Management System in public universities and ongoing work on the *National Open Educational Resources Policy* (OER) which aims at providing free educational materials to all students.

In 2024, a new scholarship has been introduced in the Technology Education stream to consolidate applied learning in the ICT, hospitality/health and engineering clusters. Also, a Masters programme in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics is being jointly run at the Université des Mascareignes with the University of Limoges, France. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed in February 2020 with the Government of France in view of setting up of a *Réseau des études françaises* (REFM) that would comprise public and private educational institutions in Mauritius, providing French degrees.

KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY

Mauritius envisions becoming an Education Hub and a Centre of Excellence for Higher Education for the region and beyond. The necessary legislative framework is in place to ensure the development of a knowledge-based economy. To-date international universities, such as Curtin University from Australia, the Middlesex University from the UK and Sorbonne-Assas International Law School (SAILS) of Université Paris-Panthéon-Assas of France, have set up branch campuses in Mauritius. Furthermore, local universities are encouraged to run joint courses as well as student-and-staff exchange programmes with international universities for enhanced learning experiences.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In Mauritius, consolidation of foundational learning remains a priority. A permanent digital and in-person platform needs to be set up for the continuous professional development (CPD) of all teachers of the pre-primary education sector.

Given the frequency of extreme weather situations leading to extended periods of school closures, Mauritius is incorporating the use of digital media to have blended learning within and outside the classroom. An Open Educational Resources (OER) policy as well as a repository of open educational resources are being developed to enable learning.

There is however, a dearth of data on children's learning. A learning management system for the education sector and a centralised mechanism for the collection of national data will enable realistic interpretation of impending challenges. Appropriate training in data analysis and management is required.

Moreover, effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms would need to be set up.

5 GENDER
EQUALITY



**ACHIEVE GENDER
EQUALITY AND EMPOWER
ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS**



Mauritius continues to make good progress on gender parity. The Global Gender Gap Report 2023⁸ ranked Mauritius 98th out of 146 countries, which is an improved ranking from 2022 and 2021.

The *Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius* and the existing legislative framework and policies uphold the fundamental rights of all citizens, irrespective of gender. The *Equal Opportunities Act* 2012, the *Local Government Act* 2011, the *Criminal Code* 2012, the *Protection from Domestic Violence Act* 2016, and more recently, the *Workers' Rights Act* 2019 incorporate provisions that enhance gender equality.

In March 2022, a *National Gender Policy 2022-2030*, which is an all-inclusive ecosystem that aims at bridging the gender gap, was launched. The strategy is geared towards strengthening national gender mainstreaming and empowering women and girls by embedding a gender perspective at all levels whilst ensuring no one is left behind. In this regard, a national *Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming* and an *Inter-Ministerial Gender Technical Working Committee* with gender focal points of all Ministries have been set up. The aim is to take stock of sectoral gender responsive actions taken by the current 48 *Gender Cells* operational in all Ministries. Each Cell publishes its respective *Gender Statements* within their Annual Reports. Government has attributed an amount of Rs 200,000 yearly to Ministries under its *Gender Responsive Budget Initiative* to undertake gender responsive actions.



To catalyse women and girls' empowerment and safeguard gains made in terms of gender equality since the adoption of the *Beijing Platform for Action*, Government has in line with the EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III, prepared a *Gender Country Profile for the Republic of Mauritius*¹⁰, that includes an updated sector-wise gender gap analysis.

Box 2

ENHANCED CHILD PROTECTION

In 2020, with the adoption of the *Children's Act*, the *Child Sex Offender Register Act* and the *Children's Court Act*, Mauritius introduced major reforms for the protection of children.

Mauritius is the 65th state worldwide and the 12th African state to achieve full prohibition of corporal punishment of children with the enactment of the *Children's Act* 2020⁹.

The Act, which replaces the *Child Protection Act*, aims to address the limitations of the latter by aligning with international standards including the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*.

The *Children's Act* prohibits child marriage under the age of 18 and makes provision to protect children from online violence, exploitation and abuse as well as criminalise bullying in all settings (SDG 16.2).

Appropriate structures and services have also been set up to cater for the well-being of children. Moreover, the *Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020* seeks to reduce the risk of sexual offenses against children by establishing a *Child Sex Offender Register* that will assist in monitoring, tracking, and investigating sexual offenses against children.

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

⁸ Source: Global Gender Gap Report 2023, World Economic Forum, June 2023

⁹ <https://endcorporalpunishment.org/mauritius-prohibits-all-corporal-punishment/>

¹⁰ Gender Country Profile for the Republic of Mauritius, May 2022

According to the *Statistics in Mauritius: A Gender Approach 2021*, a document that summarises gender statistics, disaggregated by sex, across sectors¹¹, elderly women outnumbered elderly men, women's unemployment was higher than men and literacy gap between men and women is narrowing. Moreover, women-headed households were on the rise. Health-wise, though teenage pregnancy cases reported at the Child Development Unit (CDU) are decreasing, challenges exist as diabetes was identified as the leading cause of mortality among women. Also, maternal mortality ratio decreased significantly in 2022 (SDG 3.1.1).

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Mauritius acknowledges that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are key drivers in advancing sustainable development. All citizens of Mauritius have the same opportunities and rights in terms of access to education, and health, including participation in the socio-economic development of the country.

In line with the Constitution of Mauritius, general elections are held every 5 years. The proportion of seats held by women in the National Assembly has increased from 20% in November 2019, when the last general elections were held, to 21.7% in February 2024. Women have been allocated key positions, including one of the Vice-Prime Ministership and 4 Ministers, to date. The proportion of women in the most senior positions in government services, Senior Chief Executive, Permanent Secretary, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Director, Manager, Judge and Magistrate was 38.6% in 2022 and it has been fluctuated around 40% since 2002.

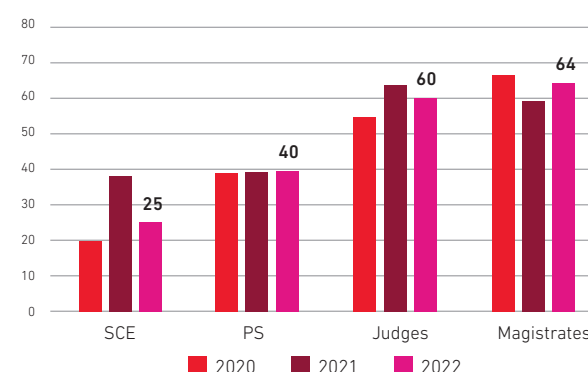
To further promote gender equality at all levels, listed companies are mandated to ensure a 25% women representation on their Boards of Directors¹². As at August 2023, only 20% of the companies listed on the Stock Exchange of Mauritius (SEM) met this criterion¹³.

The Mauritius Institute of Directors (MloD) introduced the Women Directors' Forum in 2015 and launched two flagship initiatives, namely the *Path to Boardroom* programme and the *Women Leadership Academy* to help prepare future women leaders and encourage greater representation of women in the C-suite. In 2023, 35% of the 1,607 members of the MloD were women¹⁴ and 173 women benefited from the initiatives. Also, 280 women are being assisted through the provision of



MAURITIUS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS ARE KEY DRIVERS IN ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN PUBLIC SECTOR (IN %)



¹¹ Source: *Statistics in Mauritius: A Gender Approach Year 2021*

¹² Companies Act 2001, amended in 2019, provides that at least one woman is on the Board of a public company. Also, the Statutory Bodies (Account and Audit) Act 2004 provides that at least one woman is a member of the Board, on every Board. As per the National Code of Corporate Governance 2016, all organisations should have directors from both genders as members of the Board, that is at least one male and one female Director.

¹³ Source: Stock Exchange of Mauritius

¹⁴ Annual Report 2023, Mauritius Institute of Directors



**IN 2023, FEMALE
UNEMPLOYMENT WAS
ESTIMATED AT 8.7%.**

leadership trainings. A workshop entitled '25% Target: Building an Inclusive Board' was hosted by the MloD, in collaboration with the SEM and the Mont Choisy Group, a private company in August 2023, to create more awareness around our objectives under SDG Target 5.5. To encourage corporates to further promote gender equality, a Charter was developed by the Association of Women in Investment and Finance. The Charter is one of the recommendations of the study conducted by the Association with the support of the EU in 2023. Unfortunately, despite all these initiatives, women continue to be under-represented in decision-making positions.

In 2023, female unemployment was estimated at 8.7%, against 4.6% for male. In addition, women were less likely than men to work for themselves. To encourage more women to join the workforce, various measures and training programmes are in place.

The National Women Entrepreneur Council (NWECC) plays a vital role in creating a conducive environment for women entrepreneurs. With the assistance of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the COMESA, the NWECC is also connected to the 50 million African Women Speak Project, which is a digital platform aimed at encouraging a greater regional interconnectedness among women entrepreneurs, both in Mauritius and the Continent. There are six Women Empowerment Centres and one Wellness Centre for Women, which offer trainings and courses that develop women's skills as well as awareness campaigns on gender and other thematic areas.



**A TOTAL OF
100 WOMEN-LED
BUSINESSES ARE
REGISTERED ON THE ITC
SHETRADES MAURITIUS
HUB PLATFORM.**

To further empower women through tailored capacity build, the ITC SheTrades Mauritius Hub hosted by the Economic Development Board (EDB) and funded by the UK Government, was launched in March 2023. The hub aims to remove barriers to women's participation in trade by working with Government, the private sector and entrepreneurs to build the business capacities of women to conduct cross-border business. Women entrepreneurs register on the platform to showcase their products and services, connect with potential buyers and partners, and gain the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the global marketplace. A total of 100 women-led businesses are registered on the platform.

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

During the year 2022, 5,381 cases of domestic violence were reported, out of which 4,420 were perpetrated against women as compared to 2021 when 1,434 cases of violence were reported by female victims.

To address gender based violence (GBV), a *High-Level Committee* was set up in 2020, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister. A *National Strategy and Action Plan (NSAP) on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence 2020-2024*, wherein a multi-sectoral approach has been adopted, is being implemented. It demonstrates the commitment of multiple stakeholders to the strengthening of existing legislative and policy frameworks as well as building capacity on gender-based violence. Out of the 156 Output indicators, 100 have been completed.

A National Steering Committee on GBV, chaired by the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare as well as four Technical Working Groups have been established to monitor progress in the implementation of the NSAP. The GBV mobile application LESPWAR, launched in November 2020, allows victims to alert concerned authorities at the press of a button. The application provides to the Police and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare the exact location of the victim through a geolocalisation feature. The initiative has been acknowledged by the 14th African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) at the Innovative Management Awards Ceremony in December 2023, and ranked 3rd place out of 57 countries under the Gender-Based Violence Protection Tool project.

A *Gender-Based Violence Observatory* is also operational since May 2022. The Observatory is mandated to diagnose and evaluate the extent and evolution of the situation of gender-based violence in the country. It has been set up through a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare and the Mauritius Research Innovation Council (MRIC). The Observatory is expected to improve and harmonise data collection for policy-making and monitoring and evaluation of gender-based violence issues. The platform will also enable the setting up of a holistic and transparent mechanism to strengthen partnerships.

In 2021, Mauritius ratified the *Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019* (No. 190) under the *International Labour Organisation (ILO)*. The provisions of the Convention are enshrined in the national labour legislation of Mauritius, namely the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 2005* and the *Workers' Rights Act 2019*. The framework provides a clear roadmap for preventing and addressing violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment.



**MAURITIUS RANKED 3RD
OUT OF 57 COUNTRIES
UNDER THE GBV
PROTECTION TOOL
PROJECT AT THE
INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT
AWARDS CEREMONY IN
DECEMBER 2023.**

HEFORSHE CLUBS WERE SET UP IN 25 COMMUNITY CENTRES ACROSS THE ISLAND IN 2023, ENABLING MEN TO BECOME ROLE MODELS AND ADDRESS ISSUES HINDERING WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

To further sensitise on the issue of gender equality as well as reduce gender stereotypes and prejudice, some 176 participants have been sensitised through programmes such as *'Men as Caring Partners Programme'* and *Inter-Generational Programme* over the period January to 22 May 2024, by the Family Welfare and Protection Unit. Moreover, *HeForShe Clubs* were set up in 25 Community Centres across the island in 2023, enabling men to become role models and address issues hindering women's rights.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To consolidate our actions and as part of a broader cultural shift towards gender parity and societal justice, Government is planning the enactment of a *Gender Equality Commission Bill*, an *Adoption Bill*, as well as a *Domestic Abuse Bill*.

An independent entity governed by a *Gender Equality Commission Bill* will be introduced to investigate into systemic gender-rights violations, by attending to complaints from the public through investigation, and resolve these related disputes.

The new *Domestic Abuse Bill* will replace the existing *Protection from Domestic Violence Act* to, *inter alia*, protect spouses from acts of domestic violence. It will be a comprehensive and multidisciplinary piece of legislation that criminalises all forms of violence, and encompasses issues of prevention, protection, survivors' empowerment and support. Provision is also being made for support and rehabilitative services to deter perpetrators from committing further acts of domestic violence.

The new *Adoption Bill* will provide a legal framework for both local and foreign adoption of children.

Moreover, in line with one of the recommendations of the *National Strategy and Costed Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurship Development* in Mauritius, launched in 2023, the role of the NWECC will be reviewed such that it becomes the apex institution for women entrepreneurs. In this regard, the assistance of the European Union and the Investment Climate Change facility has been sought.

6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION



**ENSURE AVAILABILITY
AND SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT OF WATER
AND SANITATION FOR ALL**



WATER



**99.8% OF THE
POPULATION HAVE
ACCESS TO SAFE
DRINKING WATER.**



**WATER WAS MOBILISED
FROM SOME ADDITIONAL
40 SOURCES TO
ENSURE AN ADEQUATE
DISTRIBUTION OF WATER
DURING THE DRY SEASON
OF 2022.**



**IN 2022, SOME
127 MILLION CUBIC
METRES (Mm³) OF WATER
WERE SUPPLIED TO THE
POPULATION.**



**RODRIGUES HAS BEEN
FACING PERSISTENT
WATER SCARCITY.**

Water is vital to sustain life and ecosystems. As per the 2022 Housing and Population Census, 99.8% of the population have access to safe drinking water.

During prolonged dry periods, temporary mobile filter plants are installed at natural watercourses to supplement the existing water supply. Water tanker facilities are also deployed to deliver potable water especially to vulnerable and remote areas. Grants are provided, through the Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM), to low income families for the purchase of a water tank and domestic water pump. Moreover, the *Water Resources Monitoring Committee*, that adopts a consultative and participatory approach to decision making, looks into the water allocation to the domestic, irrigation and economic sectors. Water was mobilised from some additional 40 sources to ensure an adequate distribution of water during the dry season of 2022.

The *Central Water Authority* (CWA) is responsible for the treatment and distribution of potable water for domestic, industrial and commercial purposes throughout Mauritius. In 2022, some 127 million cubic metres (Mm³) of water were supplied to the population. The CWA regularly monitors water bodies, including rivers, lakes and to assess ambient water quality, in line with SDG 6.3.2.

The water distribution infrastructure is however ageing and non-automated operations of the CWA are resulting in high non-revenue water. Significant investments are thus being made to improve the supply of potable water, through the construction and upgrading of dams and water treatment plants, and address non-revenue water by replacing defective pipes across the island.

Furthermore, various policies and initiatives such as rainwater harvesting schemes have been introduced to promote sustainable and integrated water resources management as well as increase water use efficiency across different sectors.

A water roadmap 2020-2024 for improving the water supply service in the country, was prepared in May 2021 by the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities, in collaboration with the CWA. It includes *inter alia* projects to reduce the impact of water loss and redesigning of the whole water supply network.

Rodrigues has been facing an acute water shortage for decades. The actual water demand for domestic, agricultural and industrial purposes in Rodrigues is estimated at 18,000 m³ per day, of which the domestic demand is approximately 12,000 m³ per day.

Government is investing massively in the construction of 5 desalination plants at Pointe Cotton, Songes, Caverne Bouteille, Baie Malgache and Pointe Venus in Rodrigues. These aim at relieving the current pressure on existing boreholes, springs and reservoirs. It is mandatory for new constructions to include a rainwater harvesting system. In addition, households continue to be granted facilities for the installation of rainwater harvesting systems. There is no water tariff charged to the population of Rodrigues. Instead, a nominal yearly fee is levied on households.

To address the issue of persistent water scarcity, Rodrigues, with the collaboration of the AFD has set up an *Observatoire de l'eau* in September 2022. It enables the development of an information system to collect and share data as well as information across sectors, facilitating decision-making for sustainable water management.

The hotel industry, both in Mauritius and Rodrigues, has taken the lead by investing in desalination plants to address water shortages. It is mandatory for hotels with more than 50 rooms to be equipped with a desalination plant and a wastewater treatment plant.



THE HOTEL INDUSTRY, BOTH IN MAURITIUS AND RODRIGUES, HAS TAKEN THE LEAD BY INVESTING IN DESALINATION PLANTS TO ADDRESS WATER SHORTAGES.

SANITATION

In Mauritius, 99.7% of the population have access to safely managed sanitation facilities, either through on-site disposal or the national sewerage system. On-site sanitation systems are gradually being replaced by sewerage networks.

To protect both surface and ground water resources, since 2019, some 95,265 houses/premises, that is 27% of the population, have been connected to the public sewer system. Some 52 Mm³ of wastewater are being treated on a yearly basis by the 10 wastewater treatment plants around the island. Over the period 2019 to 2023, an additional flow of 250 Mm³ was treated as per established standards.



IN MAURITIUS, 99.7% OF THE POPULATION HAVE ACCESS TO SAFELY MANAGED SANITATION FACILITIES.

Government aims to increase the coverage of the sewerage network to at least 50% by 2030, in line with SDG 6.3.1. However, since wastewater projects are invariably capital intensive, there is the need to mobilise additional funding. The national sewerage network will also be extended to environmentally sensitive regions and areas near high water table that are frequently prone to wastewater overflows.

Numerous projects have been implemented in housing estates facing severe sanitation problems due to deplorable on-site facilities and poverty. The Wastewater Management Authority (WMA) implements sewerage projects in such areas, connecting the residents to the public sewer, thereby enhancing the quality of life of the inhabitants.



GOVERNMENT AIMS TO INCREASE THE COVERAGE OF THE SEWERAGE NETWORK TO AT LEAST 50% BY 2030, IN LINE WITH SDG 6.3.1.

In line with our conservation objectives under SDG 6.6.1 and the Ramsar Convention, protecting and conserving water-related ecosystems is of utmost priority. There are specific statutory frameworks which, *inter alia*, seek to protect areas such as wetlands, rivers, lakes and coastal areas. Some sites are to be restored in view of their ecological significance and biodiversity.

All water courses are protected under the Rivers and Canal Act 1863. All reserves of water courses (rivers, rivulets, feeders and natural drainage path) are protected by the Forest and Reserves Act 1983.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Access to safe water and sanitation is a basic human need and is a key condition for health and development.

Mauritius continues to invest massively in the upgrading of ageing infrastructure and the gradual introduction of modern management techniques in water management and sanitation.

The water situation of Mauritius, as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), is constrained by population growth, increasing irrigation requirements, growing industrial, commercial, and touristic activities, changes in land use practices and the impact of climate change.

Considering these challenges, Mauritius is formulating a new water policy and Master Plan. The project is being funded through a loan of Euro 200 million from the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD). A *Water Resources Bill* is also under preparation to enhance the climate resilience, improve water management and food security, thereby contributing to the overall quality of life of the population.



MASSIVE INVESTMENTS TO THE UPGRADING OF AGEING INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE GRADUAL INTRODUCTION OF MODERN MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES IN WATER MANAGEMENT AND SANITATION.

However, additional support and cooperation are needed, particularly to set up a mobile desalination plant to cater for the demand of water during the dry season in regions where mobilisation of additional ground or surface water is relatively limited. To meet the growing water demand, assistance would also be required in other areas relating to re-use of treated water and application of technology in water operations.

To address challenges of water scarcity in Rodrigues, a *Water Resources Strategy* and a *Priority Action Plan* are being elaborated with the assistance of AFD which is providing a technical assistance to the tune of EUR 100,000.

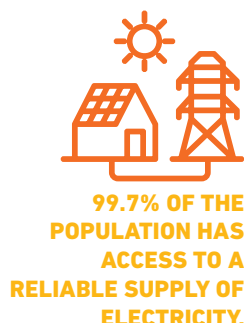
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



**ENSURE ACCESS TO
AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE,
SUSTAINABLE AND
MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL**



Disruption in the global supply chain due to COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical tensions have accentuated the need to shift to other sources of energy, including available green sources for the production of electricity. In this regard, the targets in the *Renewable Energy Roadmap 2030* were reviewed in 2021 and announced during COP26 in Glasgow in our revised NDCs to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).



Mauritius is set to accelerate actions to increase the share of renewable energy in the electricity mix from green sources from 40% to 60% by 2030, and a total phasing out of coal in electricity generation by 2030.

Currently, 99.7% of the population has access to a reliable supply of electricity. In 2022, of the 3,119 GWh electricity generated, 19.2%, that is 598.4 GWh, were from renewable sources.

The Central Electricity Board (CEB) plays a vital role in facilitating the integration of renewable energy into the local grid. Due to the compounding consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions and significant hikes in heavy fuel oil and coal prices, exacerbated by a depreciation of the Mauritian Rupee, the CEB reported a loss of Rs 4.1 billion at the end of FY 2021/22.

SHARE OF RENEWABLES IN 2022

3%



WIND

3%



LANDFILL GAS

21%



HYDRO

26%



PHOTOVOLTAIC

47%



BAGASSE

To counter the consequences of such macroeconomic events, major reforms were undertaken in the sector. The CEB transferred its power to license and fix electricity prices to the newly established *Utility Regulatory Authority* (URA) in June 2022. CEB now functions as an electricity operator and will review its structure and operations to align with the requirements of the URA. Since February 2023, the URA has approved a new tariff which will allow the CEB to face the future with greater confidence.

The CEB produces electricity using heavy fuel oil, solar PV as well as from hydro facilities, which are seasonal. Electricity generation is open to the private sector through *Independent Power Producers* (IPPs). IPPs on the other hand produce electricity as co-generation facilities, with bagasse during the crop season and coal during the inter-crop season. A small proportion of electricity is also generated by private producers from sun, wind and waste. Overall, large scale IPPs accounted around 40.6% of the total energy sent out to the grid in 2022.

Mauritius has invested in grid reinforcement, energy storage systems and advanced grid management technologies at the CEB. While mitigating the challenges caused by the intermittency and variability of renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind, these strategic investments will bolster the resilience of the grid infrastructure, while ensuring its stability and reliability as Mauritius moves to a sustainable energy future.

To attain our objective of 60% Renewable Energy by 2030, the CEB has launched several projects, targeting multiple customer segments. These include the development of hybrid installations comprising solar PV and Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), in line with SDG 7.2.1, for a total cumulative capacity of 100 MWac for large producers and 40 MWac for Small Scale Distributed Generation (SSDGs). The BESS was financed by the Global Climate Fund (GCF) and 18 MW installed across six substations in Mauritius and 1.5 MW in Rodrigues. It will address the problem of intermittent renewable energy electricity production. Furthermore, major maintenance and refurbishment works were undertaken in the 66 KV transmission network across the island. For increased reliability and security of supply, new double-circuited tower lines are being erected from Henrietta to Combo, the Wooton-Champagne line and FUEL-Anahita line.

As land is scarce, rooftop solar PV installations by commercial, residential and educational institutions, as well as the conversion of greenfield land into solar PV farms are being promoted. Additionally, in line with the 10-year roadmap for electric vehicle integration in Mauritius, the CEB has launched various targeted schemes to promote the adoption of electric vehicles.

The option of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as a transitional and eco-friendlier alternative is also being explored. A new LNG power plant will be constructed in the port area. Phase 1 will entail the installation of two gas turbines with a capacity of 35-40 MW each for peaking purposes. The additional generation capacity will enable the CEB to meet its short to medium-term electricity demands and contribute to a reduction of carbon emissions.

In line with Mauritius' target of producing 60% of the country's energy needs from green sources by 2030, a *National Biomass Framework* (NBF) was approved in 2023. The NBF is a key recommendation from the World Bank to ensure the sustainability of the Cane industry. It aims at revamping the sugarcane sector through more efficient use of bagasse, more trash collection, introduction of higher fibre cane varieties, cultivation of other energy crops and biomass import. It is projected that some 538 GWh will be produced from bagasse and cane trash, the by-products of sugarcane.

Efforts are also being pursued to rehabilitate abandoned lands. As at June 2023, some 93.1 hectares of abandoned lands were replanted. With the support provided to some 654 planters under the *Cane Replantation Scheme*, 441 hectares of fields have been replanted¹⁵.



OVERALL, LARGE SCALE IPPS ACCOUNTED FOR AROUND 40.6% OF THE TOTAL ENERGY SENT OUT TO THE GRID IN 2022.



AS LAND IS SCARCE, ROOFTOP SOLAR PV INSTALLATIONS BY COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ARE BEING PROMOTED.



IT IS PROJECTED THAT SOME 538 GWH WILL BE PRODUCED FROM BAGASSE AND CANE TRASH, THE BY-PRODUCTS OF SUGARCANE.



**IN RODRIGUES,
ALONGSIDE
CONVENTIONAL THERMAL
POWER STATIONS, A
FAIR PROPORTION OF
ELECTRICITY COMES FROM
RENEWABLE SOURCES,
PRIMARILY WIND POWER.**

In Rodrigues, alongside conventional thermal power stations, a fair proportion of electricity comes from renewable sources, primarily wind power. The total energy generated from July 2021 to June 2022, was 45.23 GWh. The wind turbines at Grenade and Trèfles contributed around 5.16 % of the total energy production, while the generation of the PV Plants at Port Mathurin Power Station, Pointe Monnier Power Station and Rivière Coco accounted for around 0.57 % of the total energy produced. A new 1 MW Solar PV Farm, constructed at Grenade is operational since February 2024.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As we move forward, Mauritius continues to partner with friendly countries, as well as regional and international organisations to address challenges in respect of access to funds, emerging technologies and capacity building and research and development on climate change.

Offshore wind farms and marine renewable energy are also being contemplated but these technologies remain expensive. A pre-feasibility study for a 100 MW offshore windfarm has been initiated under the Joint SDG Fund project that Mauritius benefitted alongside the Seychelles. Simultaneously, Mauritius continues to explore the potential of ocean energy, including ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC), tidal energy, wave energy, current energy, floating photovoltaics, and production of green hydrogen.

An Energy Efficiency Department has been established since September 2021. To expand the pool of energy auditors in Mauritius, the Energy Efficiency Department is looking forward to developing appropriate MQA-approved training programmes, in collaboration with the Energy Efficiency Management Office (EEMO) and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD). Furthermore, the “*Centre de Formation et de Perfectionnement Professionnel*”, will become an accredited centre to provide training in the fields of renewable energy.

However, data inconsistencies and gaps should be improved to enable policy-makers and the private sector to step up actions in the implementation of new projects and adoption of innovative technologies.

Mauritius is exploring the option of engaging in a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for the development of a renewable energy project using biomass, which will encourage planting of trees on degraded land and be used as a renewable energy source for co-generation of electricity to phase out use of coal by 2030. The NBF will thus help achieve SDG 7 and SDG 15.

In Rodrigues, a new Transmission & Distribution building will be constructed at Port Mathurin to ensure reliable energy distribution on the island.

**8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

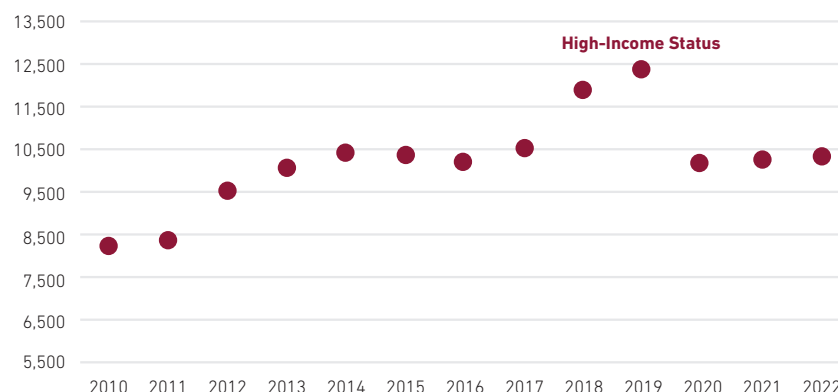


**PROMOTE SUSTAINED,
INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMIC GROWTH,
FULL AND PRODUCTIVE
EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT
WORK FOR ALL.**



Mauritius has undergone remarkable transformation since its independence in March 1968. The economy has evolved from a low-income agriculture intensive country, to a diversified, upper middle income economy, with manufacturing and services sectors such as tourism, financial services and ICT.

GNI PER CAPITA, ATLAS METHOD (CURRENT US\$)



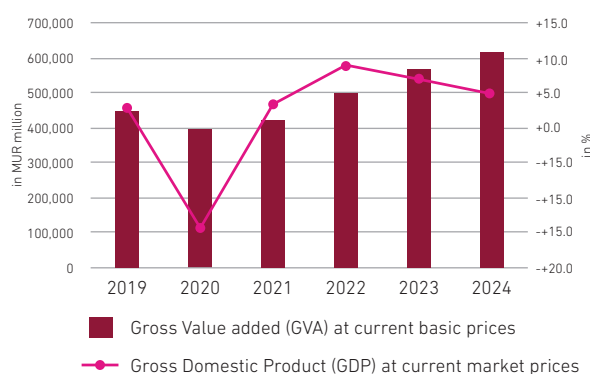
Source: World Bank, 2024

The World Bank graduated Mauritius to a high-income economy in 2020. However, GDP contracted by 14.9% as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic causing Mauritius to slide back to an upper middle income status again.

Unemployment rate increased to 10.3% in July 2020. The informal sector was severely affected during the lockdown, with some 89,200 people losing their jobs as compared to 40,200 in the formal sector¹⁶. The tourism sector was at a standstill. Other sectors were also seriously hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the negative outlook, Mauritius rose to the challenge of building back better to ensure the resilience of the economy. The Government of Mauritius took bold fiscal measures, such as wage assistance to employees and the self-employed grants and low-cost loans to enable business continuity and safeguard jobs. The financial support provided via the Mauritius Revenue Authority during the pandemic, encouraged workers operating in the informal economy to make themselves known (SDG Indicator 8.3.1).

EVOLUTION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH



Source: Statistics Mauritius

As the Mauritian economy set itself on the path to recovery, transitioning out of the pandemic-induced losses, geopolitical tensions across the world and ensuing disruptions in global value chains, surge in oil prices and substantial increase in freight costs further jeopardised progress achieved, impacting Small Island Developing States (SIDS), like Mauritius. In the face of inflationary pressures and to *leave no one behind*, Government provided additional income support, amounting to a total of Rs 4.3 billion in FY 2022/23, to sustain the purchasing power of more than 350,000 individuals also in vulnerable situations, in line with SDG 10.

¹⁶ Source: The Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Mauritius, UNDP Mauritius 2020

Despite these setbacks, Mauritius demonstrated strong resilience. In 2023, the Mauritian economy sustained the post-pandemic growth momentum and grew by 7%. This upturn was driven mainly by tourism, manufacturing, financial services and wholesale and retail trade sectors. The ratio of public debt to GDP decreased to 78.3% in March 2024, after a peak of 92% in June 2021. According to the World Bank, per capita GDP surged from USD 260 in 1968 to USD 10,360 in 2022, which is well on track to return to high-income status¹⁷.

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) BY INDUSTRY GROUP AT CURRENT BASIC PRICES

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	3.1	3.6	3.7	4.1	4.4
Manufacturing	12.1	12.3	13.2	13.5	12.9
Construction	5.1	4.3	5.3	5.2	6.5
Tourism	8.0	2.3	2.0	7.5	9.0
Wholesale and Retail Trade	11.8	11.9	11.5	10.9	10.7
Financial and Insurance Activities	12.4	14.1	13.9	13.5	14.0
ICT	5.7	6.7	6.7	5.9	5.6

Renewed dynamism in the economy is reflected by an improvement in the macroeconomic indicators. Aligned to our objectives under SDG 17, total investment has risen by almost 57% over the period 2019 to 2023, exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Investment rate was estimated to have increased from 19.1% in 2019 to 23.5% in 2023. FDI inflows stood at Rs 37 billion in 2023, a Rs 3.5 billion increase from last year inflows.

Mauritius achieved its post-pandemic target of around 1 million tourist arrivals in 2022 as a result of stringent policies adopted to make the country a safe-haven, free from the pandemic. For the year 2022, tourist arrivals in Mauritius reached 997, 290 compared to 1, 383, 488 in 2019, representing a recovery rate of 72.1%¹⁸. A total of 1,295,410 tourists arrived in Mauritius in 2023, of whom 98% by air. 27 cruise ships also called at Port Louis. The average length of stay was 11.3 nights and average expenditure per tourist increased from Rs 45,614 in 2019 to Rs 66,383 in 2023, that is an increase of 46%¹⁹. In 2023, Mauritius won the award for 'Star Luxury Destination'.



**1 MILLION TOURIST
ARRIVALS TARGET
ACHIEVED IN 2022.**

The resilience of the economy is also reflected in the improvement of labour market conditions. Though the labour force contracted heavily in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, it increased to 596,100 in the fourth quarter of 2023. Unemployment rate decreased from 9.2% in 2020 to 6.3% in 2023. In 2023, more women were unemployed as compared to men (21,600 women compared to 16,000 men). Unemployed youth aged 16 to 24 years was estimated at 12,800, that is 18.2%, a drop from the 27.7% recorded in 2021.



**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
DECREASED FROM 9.2%
IN 2020 TO 6.3% IN 2023**

Mauritius is fully committed to ensuring enhanced conditions of work and protection for all workers, including migrant workers. In this respect, the introduction of the *Workers' Rights Act* (WRA) 2019 has been an important milestone. In line with SDG Indicator 8.5.1, the legislative framework has been

¹⁷ Source: World Bank, 2024

¹⁸ Source: Budget 2023/24

¹⁹ Source: Bank of Mauritius, March 2024

broadened whereby the Act recognises flexible working hours and atypical work, including home workers, online platform workers as well as those who work for more than one employer concurrently. The WRA also makes stringent provisions to protect workers from discrimination and workplace violence as well as provisions regarding equal remuneration for work of equal value. A Redundancy Board has also been set up to deal with disputes regarding cases of reduction of workforce and closure of enterprises for economic, financial, structural, technological or any other similar reasons.

A *Portable Retirement Gratuity Fund* (PRGF) has also been established under the WRA to encourage labour mobility across and within sectors. It ensures that retirement benefits of a worker will accrue for the length of his service with the current employer as at the date of coming into operation of the Fund as well as for his length of service with any other future employers. Previously, gratuity was paid to a worker on retirement by his last employer only and employment with former employers were not considered. A Wage Guarantee Fund has also been set up to guarantee workers' remuneration up to an aggregate of Rs 50,000 in case of insolvencies.

As per the findings of the *National Wage Consultative Council* (NWCC), the National Minimum Wage in 2018 and its review in 2020 coupled with the government wage compensation policy for the period 2017 to 2023 have narrowed wage differentials²⁰. This is also in line with our objectives under SDG 10, whereby wage differentials have narrowed, there is an improvement in gender pay gap and the number of employees in the lower pay brackets have graduated to higher levels.

Furthermore, a special income allowance and additional income support is being provided to individuals earning up to Rs 50,000 monthly in view of enhancing their purchasing power, especially with rising global energy and commodity prices, directly impacting households.

To address skills mismatch of the labour market and develop a capable workforce through different training enhancement programmes, a *National Employment Department* was set up under the *National Employment Act 2017*. In 2022, a National Skills Development Strategy 2022 – 2026 was also developed with the assistance of the AFD, that seeks to address the skills mismatch by cultivating creative and cognitive capabilities required of the future workforce.

While ongoing sensitization campaigns are conducted through the national television and radio to disseminate information through its *Employment Information Centres*, the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training has upgraded its *Labour Market Information System* (LMIS) via an e-platform that enables online registration of jobseekers and employers. This interface with <https://mauritiusjobs.govmu.org/> provides a useful tool to monitor and address the skills mismatch of the labour market. In addition, a Workfare Programme that facilitates the redeployment of laid-off workers is also available. Redeployed workers also benefit from a financial assistance namely the *Transitional Unemployment Benefit* (TUB), for a maximum period of 12 months.

²⁰ Source: Report on the National Minimum Wage Review 2024, National Wage Consultative Council (NWCC), 2024.

Box 3

WORKERS' RIGHTS ACT 2019 ENHANCED LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR DECENT WORK

- ▶ To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the concepts of Working-from-Home, flexi-time, shift work and compressed working hours were encouraged.
- ▶ The definition of 'worker' under the Act was broadened to include persons earning a salary up to, but not exceeding Rs 600,000 annually, as compared to Rs 360,000 previously. It also includes persons performing atypical work, home workers, online platform workers and those who work for more than one employer concurrently.
- ▶ The Act provides that a female worker is entitled to 14 weeks of paid maternity leave irrespective of her length of service or number of previous confinements.
- ▶ The mother is also eligible for a one-off payment of Rs 3,000 as maternity allowance, if she reckons at least 12 months of continuous service with the same employer. Part-time workers are also eligible to the same benefit at a pro-rated basis.
- ▶ In cases of miscarriage and stillborn child, the female worker is entitled to leave with pay for 3 weeks and 5 additional days, and 14 weeks respectively.
- ▶ A female worker is also eligible for 2 breaks of half-hour or one-hour break daily for nursing her unweaned child.
- ▶ A female worker shall not be required to work between 6.00 pm to 6.00 am during the 12 months following her confinement.
- ▶ Concurrently, paternity leave is granted to the father to enable him to provide adequate psychological support or otherwise to his wife after her confinement and provide comfort as well to the newborn baby.
- ▶ Since July 2023, it is mandatory for employers having more than 250 employees to provide childcare facilities at the workplace or within 1 km of the workplace for children of workers who are aged up to 3 years.

Source: Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training



A MONTHLY PRIME À L'EMPLOI WAS ALSO INTRODUCED IN BUDGET 2022/23, TARGETING 10,000 YOUTHS AGED BETWEEN 18 AND 35 YEARS AND WOMEN UP TO 50 YEARS FOR THE FIRST YEAR OF EMPLOYMENT.

for the first year of employment. This is in line with our commitment to *leaving no one behind*. In Budget 2023/24, the facility has been extended for a period of two years.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Mauritius is poised to reach high income status in the coming years. Government envisions an *Inclusive, High Income and Green Economy*. In this regard, to further diversify its economy and enhance its resilience to external shocks, Mauritius has embarked on the development of new industries such as the green energy industry, the blue economy, the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry as well as the digital economy.

On top of existing programmes such as the *Back-to-Work* programme, the *Youth Employment Programme* (YEP), *Dual Training Programme* and the *Graduate Training for Employment Scheme* (GTES), the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) have introduced various skills development and enhancement programmes to boost productivity and promote the integration of youth, women and vulnerable groups into the labour market. These include the *National Apprenticeship Programme* for youth, *National Training and Reskilling Scheme* introduced in 2021, *National Skills Development Programme* as well as other Apprenticeship Training programmes.

With the support of the HRDC, under the *Sectoral Skills Development Support Programme* (SDSP), industry associations have the opportunity to develop and implement skill-specific development programmes to meet the skill development needs of its members. In addition, in view of developing a pool of in-country talent, the HRDC has launched since 2019 the *Skills Development Support Programme for Artificial Intelligence* (SDSP for AI). As at 22 May 2024, 19,649 trainees and 221 trainees have participated in projects under the Sectoral SDSP and SDSP for AI programmes respectively. Moreover, specific programmes such as the *Trainee Engineer Scheme* and *Trainee Land Surveyor Scheme* have been introduced to address the shortage of qualified engineers and land surveyors in the country.

A monthly *Prime à l'Emploi* was also introduced in Budget 2022/23, targeting 10,000 youths aged between 18 and 35 years and women up to 50 years

In parallel, Mauritius is harnessing opportunities for trade and investment under the different trade agreements and consolidating tourism and financial services sectors.

Post-COVID-19, the tourism industry is experiencing recruitment challenges as young Mauritian workers are opting for other alternatives. As per an analysis conducted by the Economic Development Board (EDB) in 2021, hospitality wages for all grades were low, except for hotel managers. Moreover, despite increase in wage rates and employment of short-term agency and foreign workers, most hotels have staff shortages ranging between 15 and 25% of their budgeted payrolls. These staff shortages challenge the high service standards of the industry.

In response to these challenges, Mauritius has adopted a multi-pronged approach. Government, in collaboration of the World Bank is preparing the '*Mauritius Ten-Year Tourism Blueprint*' for the period 2024 to 2033, that will provide the framework and strategic direction for tourism stakeholders to ensure sustainable growth of the industry.

In 2023, a Public-Private Joint Working Group was established, whereby a sub-committee was set up to recommend measures to improve attractiveness, recruitment, training, retention and career development within the tourism and hospitality sector. A *Policy Paper on Applications for Work Permit and Occupation Permit for the Tourism Sector* was also developed that, *inter alia*, caters for labour shortages in the local market and set parameters for the recruitment of foreign workers, while protecting local job opportunities.

Addressing the skills mismatch as well as sustaining subsequent increases of income assistance such as the National Minimum Wage, are challenges that may affect the overall buoyancy of the Mauritian economy in the long run.

Mauritius is finalising its National Employment Policy (NEP) that envisions to achieve decent, productive and freely chosen employment for all in the Republic of Mauritius. It is aligned with the objectives of Convention No. 122 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The NEP includes an action plan that will address labour market challenges and foster decent work opportunities for all. A monitoring and evaluation framework is also envisaged to track progress and assess efficiency and effectiveness of implementation.

In line with our obligations under the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, Mauritius plans to implement a programme for the training and placement of 50 persons with disabilities for a period of six months.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**BUILD RESILIENT
INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE
INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
INDUSTRIALIZATION AND
FOSTER INNOVATION**



TECHNOLOGY-LED INDUSTRIES



**ABOUT 82,900 PEOPLE
ARE EMPLOYED IN THE
MANUFACTURING SECTOR.**

Mauritius is poised to foster a globally competitive, technology-led and sustainable industrial sector which has managed to sustain its growth momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic. The sharp business acumen and proactiveness of the Mauritian industry leaders as well as the plethora of support provided by Government have significantly contributed to build back the resilience of the economy. About 82,900 people were employed in the manufacturing sector in 2022. In 2023, it contributed to 12.9% to Gross Value Added.



**IN ADDITION, A BUY
MAURITIAN PROGRAMME
WAS LAUNCHED TO
PROMOTE LOCALLY
MANUFACTURED GOODS.**

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the industrial sector, including SMEs, a 'Plan de Soutien' and wage assistance schemes were introduced by Government. Existing support to the manufacturing sector such as the *Freight Rebate Scheme*, *Speed-to-Market Scheme* and the *Export Credit Insurance Scheme*, were extended. A *Special Relief Programme* was also established to mitigate any liquidity crunch of enterprises. To alleviate the cost burden of operators and facilitate trade, port dues and terminal handling charges were waived and payments of rent and interest rates were deferred. In addition, a *Buy Mauritian Programme* was launched to promote locally manufactured goods.

In 2019, Mauritius reported challenges on the lack of competitive advantage vis-à-vis of other low-cost producing countries, threatening growth trends of the sector locally.

To boost the manufacturing sector for higher economic growth, an *Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan for Mauritius 2020 – 2025* was developed, with the support of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The Plan includes a series of recommendations to graduate the performance of the sector to the next level of development and improve its competitiveness to enhance exports of Mauritian manufacturers. As at date, 81% of the recommendations have been implemented. An export market strategy was also undertaken to strengthen export performance of manufacturing enterprises and diversify from traditional export markets. Some Rs 320 million were disbursed to 287 beneficiaries under the *Trade Promotion and Marketing Scheme* over the one-year period July 2022 to July 2023, which aims to support manufacturing enterprises to improve their exports. Over the same period, Government provided around Rs 12.3 million to 24 beneficiaries under the Freight Rebate Scheme.



**EXPORTS HAVE
INCREASED TO
RS 52.2 BILLION IN 2022.**

Leveraging on the various Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Preferential Trade Agreements such as the CECPA with India, the FTA with China, the UK-Eastern Southern Africa (ESA) Agreement and the *African Continental Free Trade Agreement* (AfCFTA), in line with SDG 17, exports have increased to Rs 52.2 billion in 2022.

Mauritius has implemented the Registered Exporter System (Rex System) which is a system of certification of origin of goods that applies in the General System of Preference (GSP) of Norway and Switzerland. In 2023, 1,588 African Growth and opportunity Act (AGOA) Certificates, 992 Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Certificates and 528 Generalised system of Preferences (GSP) Certificates were issued. These certificates

of origin testify that exports have progressed in the aftermath of the COVID-19 period with new market access for Mauritian products abroad. In 2023, overall exports were estimated to be Rs 83,936 million.

Mauritius relies heavily on imported materials and fossil fuels for production. However, the industrial sector is being encouraged to transition to a clean and green industrial base. In January 2023, a *Carbon Neutral Industrial Sector Renewable Energy Scheme* was introduced by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) to support the decarbonisation of the industry. Moreover, the *Industrial Waste Assessment – Cost Structure Review* (IWM-CSR) was implemented with the support of the United Nations for Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) under the UN Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) initiative, in collaboration with Business Mauritius,. The project aimed to investigate the share of cost of managing industrial waste in the total cost of production at enterprise level with a view to enhance their competitiveness and encourage them to shift towards circular economy (SDG 12), as well as analyse cost of managing industrial solid waste at national level.

Mauritius has also embarked on the '*Accelerating the Transition to a Net-Zero Nature-Positive Economy*' (NZNPA) project under the Net-Zero Nature-Positive Accelerator Integrated Program with the assistance of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and technical support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The NZNPA project aims to accelerate the decarbonisation of the manufacturing sector for higher productivity and enhanced competitiveness as well as establish the enabling environment to support the integration of nature-based solutions at national level. The project is aligned to a *whole-of-government approach* to develop and implement Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) with actions that fully integrate biodiversity and land degradation neutrality in climate mitigation policies and investments through investment in projects focusing on innovative climate technologies and nature-based solutions²¹, thus equipping the industry to better cope with emerging shocks and externalities, while greening the sector.

Since 2023, Mauritius, with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat, is implementing a 'Manufacturing 4.0' project to support manufacturing enterprises to enhance their productivity and competitiveness through the adoption of digitally advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Industrial Internet of Things, Robotics, Cloud Computing and 3D Printing.

SMES

The SME sector plays a crucial role in the Mauritian economy, with a contribution of 34.4% of Gross Value Addition (GVA), 47.1% of total employment and 5.7% of total domestic exports in 2022.

Various support measures were provided to SMEs in collaboration with the Development Bank of Mauritius, State Investment Corporation Limited, Investment Support Programme Limited, SME Equity Fund Ltd, Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd and SME Mauritius Ltd

CATEGORY	ANNUAL TURNOVER
Micro enterprise	< RS 10 M
Small enterprise	RS 10 M ≤ X < RS 30 M
Medium enterprise	RS 30 M ≤ X < RS 100 M
Mid-Market enterprise	RS 100 M ≤ X < RS 250 M

²¹ Source: GEF, 2023.



**AS AT DECEMBER
2023, AROUND 22,996
ENTERPRISES, INCLUDING
7 MID-MARKET
ENTERPRISES WERE
REGISTERED AS SMES.**

to counter the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. These include wage assistance to employees and self-employed, interest-free loans, working capital loans at reduced interest rates, including the Enterprise Modernisation Scheme.

In 2022, the SME Act was amended to provide for an *enlarged* definition of SMEs and the introduction of the '*mid-market enterprise*' category, thus allowing more enterprises to have access to Government support and financing opportunities. As at December 2023, around 22,996 enterprises, including 7 mid-market enterprises were registered as SMEs.

CATEGORY	2019	2020	2021	2022
Share of MSMEs in total employment (%)	46.8	40.9	46.4	47.1
Employment in MSMEs	272,291	223,068	238,760	257,787
Contribution of MSMEs to GVA (%)	37.0	35.8	36.2	34.4
Value added of MSMEs (Rs million)	165,073	141,015	153,465	171,896
Contribution of MSMEs in total domestic exports (%)	6.6	6.3	6.6	5.7
Domestic exports by MSMEs (Rs million)	3,438	3,006	3,434	3,500

To further strengthen the resilience of SMEs to exogenous shocks, a mid-term review of the existing 10-year SME Masterplan has been conducted. The aim is to bring in necessary adjustments in order to achieve realistic targets over the next five upcoming years.

In March 2023, *Les Assises de L'Entrepreneuriat* was organised in collaboration with UNDP Mauritius, to take cognizance of the expectations of the stakeholders as we consolidate our efforts to spur entrepreneurship. Mauritius also conducted a diagnostic study of the informal sector to facilitate post-COVID recovery in 2021 and launched the report on SMEs' access to green finance in view of scaling up green financing opportunities to SMEs.

Moreover, to improve market penetration of SMEs, Mauritius developed a *Women in Trade Protocol* under the *African Continental Free Trade Agreement* (AfCFTA), with the assistance of the UNDP. An SME e-Directory has also been set up to increase the visibility of SMEs. An integrated IT system is also being set up to harmonise data availability on SMEs that would enhance service delivery and enable formulation of effective policies.

Box 3

SCHEMES RUN BY SME MAURITIUS LTD

Business Transformation Scheme	Access to a pool of consultants to review business models, business processes and organisational structures of SMEs
Market Readiness Scheme	Marketing design, packaging, branding, international listing of barcodes, amongst others
Technology and Innovation Scheme	Website development, digital solutions, cloud solutions, etc
Greening Support Scheme	Renewables, recycling, water treatments, energy conservation, EMS standards
Agri-Business Scheme	Food processing, aquaponics, utility connections, hydroponics, etc

INFRASTRUCTURE

Road network and Light Rail Transit System

The total road network of Mauritius was estimated at 2,847 km in March 2023. To ensure safe and effective mobility of the people and goods across the islands, upgrading and resurfacing works are regularly undertaken by the relevant authorities.

Box 5

SIR ANEROOD JUGNAUTH (SAJ) BRIDGE OR (A1-M1 LINK ROAD)

The A1-M1 link road, also known as *Sir Anerood Jugnauth (SAJ) Bridge*, is a dual carriageway of 330 m, linking Chebel to Soreze via the Grand River North West (GRNW) valley, was inaugurated on 10 March 2024. The iconic bridge is of 120 m tall, which is the height of the GRNW valley and comprises 7 cable stays per pylon supporting the deck.

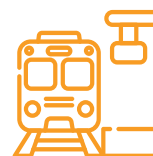
Source: Road Development Authority, 2024.

The bridge is a national landmark in the infrastructural development of the country. The architectural structure was realised with the support and collaboration of various international countries, including Republic of Korea, France, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Singapore, China, Türkiye and South Africa.

Also, to address the daily heavy traffic converging to Port Louis and Ebene during peak and off-peak hours, Mauritius is implementing the Road Decongestion Programme. A number of projects are currently underway, including construction of the La Vigie-La Brasserie link road, the fly-over at Terre Rouge roundabout and the Ebene flyover. On 10 March 2024, the *Sir Anerood Jugnauth (SAJ) Bridge*, that significantly improved distribution of traffic within the network of A1 Road and M1 motorway, was inaugurated.

In addition, to mitigate recurrent flooding and build resilience to climate-related disasters such as flash floods and cyclones, a Land Drainage Masterplan (SDG 11) was developed in 2021. Some Rs 90 million were earmarked for the cleaning, desilting, rehabilitation and upgrading of drains, bridges and rivers in major flood prone regions. Flood mitigation works were also conducted along the road at Anse Jonchée in the South-East region of the island.

Launched in 2019, the Light Rail Transit System, locally referred to as Metro Express, has on average a daily ridership of 45,000. The Metro Express is in line with the commitments of Mauritius under the NDCs. It currently extends to around 30 km and will progressively reach other parts of the island.



**METRO EXPRESS,
HAS ON AVERAGE
A DAILY RIDERSHIP
OF 45,000.**

Fiscal incentives are being provided to bus operators and individuals alike to transition to greener vehicles. Financial support such as green leases are also available for the purchase of electric vehicles and installation of solar-powered charging stations. The public transport system is being decarbonised slowly. To date, public transportation comprises around 500 semi low-floor buses out of a fleet of 2,000 buses in Mauritius, owned by both public and private bus operators.

Port Infrastructure

Improving overall connectivity is vital for Mauritius. Port Louis Harbour is the principal gateway of the country. It handles 99% of the total volume of the Mauritius' external trade and contributes around 2% to GDP. In 2023, total cargo traffic reached 7,933,513 tonnes, 2,961 vessels called at Port Louis harbour and transshipment activities witnessed a growth of 28.6%.

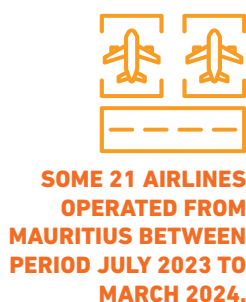


The Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) is investing massively to position Port Louis harbour as a leading maritime hub in the region and promote operational excellence. The quay at the Mauritius Container Terminal was extended by 240 m, the existing berth structure was strengthened and the navigational channel was dredged to allow larger vessels to come into the port area. The cruise terminal building became operational in 2023 and some 27 cruise vessels visited Mauritius during the year 2023. In view of speeding up the clearance of vessels, the MPA has, since January 2024, adopted a centralised online vessel clearance system. This is in line with the *International Maritime Organisation's Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic* that makes it compulsory for all ports to use a single window for data exchange.

In 2021 and 2022, the Mauritius Container Terminal stopped its operations for a total of 20.9 days and 22.4 days respectively. Such interruptions of business operations, especially due to adverse weather conditions, huge swells and recurrent cyclones, result in significant economic loss and create breaks in supply chains. To address these issues, an Island Container incorporating a breakwater has been proposed as part of our strategy to build a climate resilient port infrastructure. However, as per the preliminary techno-economic feasibility study, construction of breakwater project would necessitate massive investments whose financing is being envisaged under a Build Operate Transfer (BOT) formula.

Since March 2024, a new cargo vessel Peros Banhos, built with the support of China and acquired by the Mauritius Shipping Corporation, is being utilised for logistics and coastal shipping between Mauritius and Rodrigues, as well as Mauritius and Agaléga.

Airport



The Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (SSR) International Airport has a strategic role in the economic development of Mauritius. During the period July 2023 to March 2024, some 21 airlines operated at SSR International Airport and 30 destination airports were served from Mauritius. The volume of air cargo handled was 49,412 MT in 2023. In March 2024, the national airport was awarded the *Best Airport – Africa Region* for the year 2023 in the category of airports handling 2 to 5 million passengers.

As the aviation sector recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius has adopted measures to improve the quality of services and facilities at the SSR International Airport. The aim is to boost the confidence of international travellers and enhance passenger experience.

Since October 2022, processing time of granting clearances to private flights was reduced from 48 hours to 10 hours.

As from 2024, Mauritius is voluntarily participating in the *Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation* (CORSIA). Airlines are compensating their international flight carbon emissions on CORSIA routes, (that is route between two participating States) by purchasing carbon units²². Furthermore, in line with our commitment to reduce GHG emissions (SDG 13), Mauritius has submitted an updated *State Action Plan for Carbon Dioxide Emissions Reduction* for the aviation sector for international aviation operations to the ICAO. The Airports of Mauritius Ltd will invest in a 14 MW solar photovoltaic system²³ as part of the greening of the SSR international airport and its surrounding area. In June 2023, SSR International Airport's continuous efforts towards enhanced sustainability were acknowledged and rewarded at national level with the Environment Award in the Public Sector category.

Mauritius is part of the *Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation* (CAPSCA) since March 2023, whereby support is being obtained to improve preparedness planning and rapid response to public health emergencies that might affect the aviation sector.

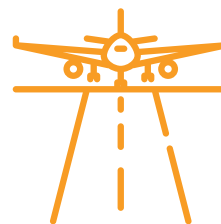
The legislative framework is currently being reviewed. A *National Aviation Safety Plan* in line with the *Global Aviation Safety Plan* and *Regional Aviation Safety Plan* of the ICAO will be developed. It demonstrates our commitment to implement activities for the improvement of safety.

Furthermore, to ensure inter-island air and marine connectivity between Mauritius and Agaléga, a new airstrip and a jetty facility were constructed with the support of the Government of India. The project was inaugurated on 29 February 2024 and is in line with Government's vision to promote inter-island connectivity and sustainable development within and among all islands forming part of the territory of the Republic of Mauritius.

In view of the importance of the aviation sector and tourism to Rodrigues, a new runway and other infrastructure and buildings will be constructed to expand the capacity of the Plaine Corail airport. The project is being financed by the World Bank (a loan of USD 184 million) and the European Union (USD 17.47 million as a grant). The new infrastructure will attract additional airlines and new opportunities to Rodrigues. Currently, Air Mauritius operates 5 daily flights from SSR International Airport, reaching 9 during peak period, while Air Austral operates one weekly flight from Reunion Island.



SINCE OCTOBER 2022, PROCESSING TIME OF GRANTING CLEARANCES TO PRIVATE FLIGHTS WAS REDUCED FROM 48 HOURS TO 10 HOURS.

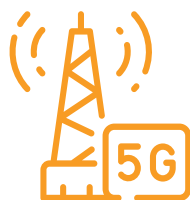


IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE AVIATION SECTOR AND TOURISM TO THE RODRIGUAN ECONOMY, A NEW RUNWAY WILL BE CONSTRUCTED TO EXPAND THE CAPACITY OF THE PLAINE CORAIL AIRPORT.

²² A carbon unit is a credit, equivalent to one tonne of carbon dioxide emission generated by its fleet of aircraft.

²³ Source: Budget Speech 2022/23.

ICT AND INNOVATION



ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN ADOPTED FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF 5G ACROSS THE ISLAND THEREBY FURTHER IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY OF INTERNET SERVICES.

ICT contributes approximately 5.6% to GDP. To further strengthen the ecosystem, a *Cybersecurity and Cybercrime Act* was introduced in 2021 and a *National Cybersecurity Strategy* was developed in 2023. The *Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council* (METC) was set up in 2021 to foster an environment that nurtures innovation and a robust digital ecosystem.

Mauritius is already connected to submarine cables *South Africa Far East* (SAFE) and *Lower Indian Ocean Network* (LION) and *Meltingpot Indianoceanic Submarine System* (METISS). Also, Rodrigues island is connected through the *Mauritius and Rodrigues Submarine Cable System* (MARS) since February 2019. To ensure a more reliable, robust and redundant network, Mauritius Telecom has commissioned the T3 cable, linking Mauritius to South Africa initially. The new cable, funded under the *Public-Private Partnership* (PPP) model, has been developed to diversify access to information highways and bolster digital transformation of the country. Similar arrangements have been adopted for the deployment of 5G across the island thereby further improving accessibility of internet services.



IN ADDITION, R&D EXPENSES INCURRED BY A COMPANY ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE SINCE 2017.

Since 2014, a number of funding schemes were introduced to encourage research and development (R&D) across sectors. In addition, R&D expenses incurred by a company are tax deductible since 2017. To consolidate actions and encourage R&D, the *Intellectual Property Act* and *Mauritius Research and Innovation Council* (MRIC) Act were strengthened. A *Regulatory Sandbox License* (RSL) was also introduced to help encourage businesses to invest in R&D.

The *National Roadmap for Research and Innovation* for the period 2023 to 2027 of the MRIC aims to increase R&D participation from the public and private sectors as well as academia. However, to ensure coherence across sectors, it is important to develop a *National Innovation Policy* and increase capacity of academic researchers to work with industry, and *vice-versa*.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ New growth poles such as high-tech pharmaceutical and biotechnology sectors are being developed to further diversify the industrial base.
- ▶ An integrated Land Transport Masterplan will be prepared so as to promote public transport and reduce road congestion and GHG emissions.
- ▶ Mauritius as a centre of excellence to improve collaboration with other Centres of Excellence to foster the right ecosystem and attract business.
- ▶ Additional submarine cables will be deployed to enhance the resilience of international connectivity



**REDUCE INEQUALITY
WITHIN AND AMONG
COUNTRIES**



MAURITIUS IS COMMITTED TO REDUCING INEQUALITIES AMONG ITS CITIZENS BY CLOSING ECONOMIC DISPARITIES AND ENHANCING ECONOMIC MOBILITY.



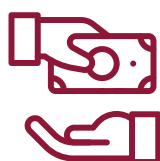
THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE SECTOR WORKERS IN THE LOWEST SALARY BAND UP TO RS 10,000 DECREASED FROM 34.0% IN 2017 TO 7.1% IN 2023.

Mauritius is committed to reducing inequalities among its citizens by closing economic disparities and enhancing economic mobility. Significant efforts have been made over the last five years to strengthen existing policies that aim at decreasing inequality. Overall, inequality gap decreased from 39.2% in 2017 to 30.4% in 2022²⁴.

In 2019, Mauritius reported the introduction of measures such as the *National Minimum Wage* (NMW), the *Negative Income Tax* (NIT) and implementation of a subsistence allowance to eligible beneficiaries under the *Social Register of Mauritius* (SRM) of the *Marshall Plan Against Poverty*, as a means to improve the purchasing power of those in the lower 40% income bracket.

As per the review of the *National Wage Consultative Council* (NWCC), while total wage in the private sector has increased by 77%, the wage of female workers has increased by 91%, thus narrowing the gender pay gap. The *Palma Ratio*, which measures the share of monthly earnings of the top 10% wage earners divided by that of the bottom 40%, shows a decline from 2.19 in 2019 to 1.80 in 2023. This has led to a number of individuals moving to higher wage brackets, with improved standard of living. Indeed, the number of private sector workers in the lowest salary band up to Rs 10,000 decreased from 34.0% in 2017 to 7.1% in 2023²⁵.

As reported in 2019, employees earning a basic salary not exceeding Rs 9,900 per month, are eligible to receive monthly support in the form of a NIT allowance. In FY 2021/22, the MRA reported having disbursed a total of Rs 51 million to 23,299 eligible beneficiaries.



AS AT APRIL 2024, SOME 7,044 HOUSEHOLDS, BOTH FROM MAURITIUS AND RODRIGUES, HAVE BENEFITTED FROM THE SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCE TO SECURE A MINIMUM BASIC INCOME.

Empowerment support is provided to households living in absolute poverty and registered on the SRM (SDG 1). As of April 2024, some 7,044 households, both from Mauritius and Rodrigues, have benefitted from the subsistence allowance to secure a minimum monthly basic income. Other support includes a monthly child allowance, school materials are provided to encourage children to attend schools as well as school premium to students who have successfully completed nine-year schooling, secondary and tertiary education. Students from SRM family beneficiaries are also exempted from paying the examination fees at School Certificate or Higher School Certificate or their equivalent, for a second attempt. In addition, administrative fees for full-time courses at the Mauritius Institute Training and Development (MITD) and other recognised public tertiary institutions are waived for children from families registered under the SRM.

²⁴ Source: <https://govmu.org/EN/newsgov/SitePages/PM-re-affirms-his-engagement-to-fight-poverty-and-exclusion-for-a-more-inclusive-society.aspx>

²⁵ Source: Report on the National Minimum Wage Review 2024, National Wage Consultative Council (NWCC), 2024.

A monthly *crèche allowance* is paid to registered child-day care centres to enable mothers of children aged between 3 months and 3 years to place their infants there and hence allow the mothers to take up employment or follow a training course for the purpose of empowerment.

An 80% subsidy was provided to eligible SRM households for acquiring a social housing unit. The housing scheme includes the construction of fully concrete housing units up to 50 m² for families who own land but lack the resources to build, and the allocation of 10% of social housing units constructed by the NHDC to landless beneficiaries.



AN 80% SUBSIDY WAS PROVIDED TO ELIGIBLE SRM HOUSEHOLDS FOR ACQUIRING A SOCIAL HOUSING UNIT.

DISCRIMINATION

Any person alleging that her/his rights have been infringed under the *Equal Opportunities Act 2008*, can lodge a complaint with the *Equal Opportunities Commission* (EOC). Over the period January 2016 to December 2023, some 1,265 complaints have been lodged in Mauritius and Rodrigues. 95% of complaints lodged are either investigated or examined by the Commission. It is highlighted that only 5% of complaints lodged are referred to the *Equal Opportunities Tribunal* and 21% are resolved via conciliation.



21% OF COMPLAINTS MADE AT THE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TRIBUNAL ARE RESOLVED VIA CONCILIATION.

Cases of alleged sexual harassment would be investigated by the Police and may be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

PROGRESSIVE TAX REGIME

As termed by the IMF, Mauritius is implementing in a medium-term growth-friendly fiscal consolidation plan that aims at protecting the most vulnerable²⁶. In Budget 2023/24, additional reforms were introduced for a more progressive taxation regime (starting at 0% and capped at a maximum of 20%), to ensure more equity and fairness in the system. The tax reform is expected to generate an additional GDP growth of 0.6 percentage points to the Mauritian economy²⁷.



AS FROM JANUARY 2024, A SALARY COMPENSATION, RANGING FROM RS 1,500 TO RS 2,000, IS PAYABLE TO ALL WORKERS.

As from January 2024, a salary compensation, ranging from Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000, is payable to all workers. This represents a 10% increase in base salaries and aims to improve the financial conditions for employees. In addition, financial assistance is being provided to maintain the productive capacity of full-time employees in some categories, namely Export Oriented Enterprises (EOEs), Manufacturing enterprises, SMEs, registered charitable institutions and religious bodies²⁸.

Furthermore, as at June 2023, some Rs 4.3 billion were disbursed in the form of additional income allowance to more than 350,000 individuals earning below Rs 50,000 monthly. This aims at sustaining their purchasing power.

²⁶ Source: IMF 2024 Article IV.

²⁷ Source: Budget Speech 2023/24, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development.

²⁸ Source: Mauritius Revenue Authority, 2024.

POLICIES FOR AN INTEGRATED SOCIETY

Mauritius is already compliant with SDG Target 10.c that is remittance costs are relatively low. Over the past four years, the export sector has been embracing the '*Employer Pays Principle*'²⁹. This principle ensures that migrant workers are not burdened with any fees for employment opportunities. As part of the ongoing due diligence process, regular audits are conducted by both local and foreign auditors to ensure compliance with international requirements.

Furthermore, the *Private Recruitment Agencies Act* prohibits private recruitment agencies and employers from charging any fees to workers in relation to their recruitment. All costs associated with the recruitment process, including travel expenses to and from Mauritius, are borne solely by the employer.

THE CODE OF CONDUCT PROMOTES FAIR AND ETHICAL RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES, FOSTER SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

With the support of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Mauritius Export Association (MEXA), in collaboration with public stakeholders, manufacturers, buyers, trade union representatives and NGOs, published a *Code of Conduct* for the recruitment and employment of migrant workers in the export sector. The Code promotes fair and ethical recruitment and employment practices, fosters sustainable business development, and assists export-oriented companies in aligning their policies and operations with internationally recognized standards of responsible business conduct. The MEXA is developing standards and a certification process for the Code of Conduct. Some businesses have already committed to adopting the Code and are undergoing the certification process.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In spite of limited resources, Mauritius continues to invest in enhancing its social protection system, the public healthcare system as well as in education to reduce inequality. However, rising cost of living continues to affect households.

In December 2022, Government approved the implementation of the National Action Plan against Trafficking in Persons. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is providing training on the implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures for the identification and protection of victims³⁰.

²⁹ Source: Mauritius Exports Association (MEXA),

³⁰ Source: Budget Estimates 2023/24

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



**MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE,
SAFE, RESILIENT AND
SUSTAINABLE**



DECENT HOUSING



FROM DECEMBER 2019 TO APRIL 2024, THE NATIONAL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CO. LTD (NHDC) DELIVERED 2,470 SOCIAL HOUSING UNITS.



Mauritius is committed to empowering all its citizens with decent housing. The most vulnerable communities are being prioritised. Demand for social housing increased by 36% over the financial periods from 2020/21 to 2022/23³¹. From December 2019 to April 2024, the NHDC delivered 2,470 social housing units. 10% of the total number of housing units are allocated to beneficiaries under the Social Register of Mauritius (SDG 1). Families from low-income groups are also supported through grants for the casting of roof slabs and purchase of building materials. The eligibility thresholds have been increased in Budget 2023/24.

The Social Housing Units are being considered within the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) to achieve the objective of 60% of renewable energy from green sources and *leave no one behind*. 10,000 solar panels are being installed on housing units being built for low-income families. These families will benefit from a free monthly consumption of 50KwH of electricity over a period of 20 years.

To cater for the increasing demand and facilitate access to decent, safe, affordable and ecological housing units within green conscious communities, the New Social Living Development Ltd (NSLD) is engaged in the construction of 12,000 residential units in two phases across the island. During Phase I, the construction of 8,000 social housing units over 38 sites is under implementation out of which the construction of 3,627 social housing units over 22 sites is expected to be completed by end of December 2024 while the construction of the remaining 4,373 social housing units over 16 sites is expected to be completed by end of June 2025. Phase II of the project will consist of the construction of a further 4,000 social housing units.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT NEIGHBOURHOODS



≈ RS 11.7 BILLION HAVE ALSO BEEN BUDGETED FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME OVER A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

Being a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Mauritius is increasingly exposed to extreme weather hazards. After the March 2013 deadly flash floods, Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius was hit on two occasions, namely on 15 January and 21 April 2024 by heavy rainfall and consequent floods that led to casualties and infrastructural damage. Such recurrent episodes of disasters affect not only the capital city, but the whole island and population, putting economic activities at a halt and causing closure of schools over several days. According to statistics on direct economic loss due to damages to critical infrastructure and disruptions to basic services due to disasters (SDG 11.5.2) is on an increasing trend.

Accordingly, Mauritius has introduced a number of initiatives to ensure effective disaster risk management. A *Land Drainage Master Plan* was completed in May 2022. The project, to the tune of Rs 70 million, was co-funded by the Government of Mauritius with the technical assistance from the AFD. It aims at ensuring the protection of life and property of the citizens as well as endeavour to minimize infrastructure loss and resuming economic activities. The Plan also includes a topographic map of flood-prone areas. As at May 2024, the Land Drainage Authority (LDA) has identified 306 flood-prone areas and 58 high risk flood prone areas in Mauritius.

³¹ Source: National Audit Office, 2024

Some Rs 11.7 billion have also been budgeted for the implementation of the National Flood Management Programme over a period of three years.

In 2021, the *Forests and Reserves Act* was amended to protect natural water and drainage paths. Hereafter, backfilling or obstruction of a natural water path or natural drainage path without necessary clearances is prohibited.

Since climate change is affecting sustainable development, a representative of the LDA forms part of the *Morcellement Board*, the *Environment Impact Assessment Committee*, the *Land Conversion Committee* and the *Road Development Authority Board* to better advise and mitigate negative impacts within catchment areas.

Mauritius has also adopted *Community Disaster Response Programmes*, that provides disaster preparedness training and response skills to sensitise vulnerable communities explicitly to enable them gain first-hand knowledge to effectively respond to crisis/emergency situations. During the financial years 2020 to 2023, 18 simulation exercises were organised by the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Centre (NDRRMC). A major *Flood Response Evacuation Plan* for the city centre of Port Louis has also been prepared.



18 SIMULATION EXERCISES WERE ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL DISASTER RISK REDUCTION MANAGEMENT CENTRE (NDRRMC) DURING THE FY 2020 TO 2023.

LAND USE PLANNING INSTRUMENTS

Similarly, the Planning Policy Guidance needs to be updated to meet the challenges of climate change and the circular economy.

REGENERATION AND REVITALISATION PLANS

The *National Regeneration Programme* (NRP), which is being managed under the Smart City Scheme, is a commitment of Mauritius to progressive and holistic urban development. The NRP aims to reshape urban landscape by rejuvenating key areas and fostering a new era of community engagement, economic growth and environmental responsibility.

The Economic Development Board (EDB) has approved the NRPs which blends practicality with innovation for Port Louis and Mahebourg.

DATA

In 2021, online capacity building was provided by the UN Habitat to Mauritius to address data gaps. The capacity building programme benefited local staff, allowing them to collect the appropriate GIS data and design a proper methodology to capture and monitor the data for the three indicators SDG 11.2.1, 11.3.1 and 11.7.1.

Box 4

BUFFER ZONE OF THE AAPRAVASI GHAT WORLD HERITAGE PROPERTY

In December 2019, Mauritius prepared an Action Area Plan (AAP) for the urban heritage area also known as the buffer zone of the *Apravasi Ghat World Heritage Property*. The overarching vision is as follows:

'The Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Property will be preserved and maintained to support the development of Port Louis into a vibrant and sustainable precinct where cultural heritage is rehabilitated to add value to the city for the benefits of property owners, business sector as well as other stakeholders in the area, and the nation at large'.

The AAP includes actions that seek to develop the area into an attractive place for cultural events, small businesses and tourists whilst preserving the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Property.

The Plan was prepared through an extensive consultative process with all relevant stakeholders.

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning, December 2019

CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE

Mauritius is pursuing national policies to develop the creative arts and cultural heritage as a strong pillar of the economy.



**PORT LOUIS IS SINCE 2021,
PART OF THE CREATIVE CITY
ON THE UNESCO CREATIVE
CITIES NETWORK (UNCCN).**

The Status of the Artist Act was introduced in 2023. The Act makes provision for the establishment of a Professional in the Arts Council that would, *amongst others*, promote the status of professionals in the Arts and implement the State Recognition Allowance scheme and pension scheme for professionals in the Arts. Also, the legislation provides for capacity building development, promotion of cultural industries and encourages the international circulation of cultural goods and services.

In line with SDG 11.4, Mauritius has invested in the regeneration of the city of Port Louis. Since 2021, Port Louis is received as a Creative City on the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UNCCN).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Mauritius faces challenges due to insufficient financial resources to improve disaster risk reduction (DRR) management capabilities and ensure operational effectiveness. There is need to foster partnerships, collaboration and capacity building across sectors. Several legislation need to be harmonised to allow incorporation and consideration of different hazards identified. Additional regional and international support and technical assistance are required to reinforce local institutions. Furthermore, DRR statistical capacity should be strengthened to improve reporting to international mechanisms, including the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework.

Capacity development in areas relating to data collection and analysis, sustainable urban planning, environmental conservation and inclusive development practices are required for more effective implementation of the SDGs.

To continue building a safe, adaptive and resilient nation, Mauritius is updating its *National Development Strategy* (NDS). The new strategy includes proposals for development planning till 2040 consistent with the principles of sustainable development. The preparation of the NDS has included an important multi-stakeholder consultation process. The final draft NDS will be submitted for Government's approval, shortly.

The existing twelve *Outline Planning Schemes* (OPSs), which are the main tools used by Local Authorities to assess building and land use permit applications and translate broad goals and policies of the NDLS into detailed local plans, will be reviewed.

An updated Land Use Map of Mauritius is urgently required, so as to review the relevant Planning documents which date back two decades. There is also a necessity to set up a GIS platform for effective and smart spatial decision making in town planning.

12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



**ENSURE SUSTAINABLE
CONSUMPTION AND
PRODUCTION PATTERNS**



THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS IS HIGHLY COMMITTED TO ADOPTING A RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

The Government of Mauritius is highly committed to adopting a responsible and sustainable development strategy. An Environment Masterplan which laid out the strategic orientation for the 10-year period 2020 to 2030, was adopted in May 2022 to ensure environmental sustainability for a cleaner, greener, low carbon and resilient economy.

In line with the UNEA 5.2 Resolution, the Government developed a Roadmap and Action Plan for a Circular Economy which serves as a tool to effectively address the challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss while contributing to facilitate the shift to sustainable consumption and production patterns and creating opportunities for green and circular businesses and jobs. The Masterplan and the Roadmap have been developed with the support of UNEP and the European Union.

The actions identified under the *Roadmap* builds on the outcomes of the SWITCH Africa Green project which was funded by the EU and managed by UNEP and was implemented during the period 2014 to 2023. The project had a key role in the formulation of green economy policies as well as the empowering micro, small and medium enterprises through the adoption of sustainable and resource efficient techniques and fostering innovative business ventures in the Agriculture, Manufacturing and Tourism sectors.

As part of the grant component, funds to the tune of EUR 1.2 million were received to implement the project 'Improving sustainable tourism in Mauritius through Greening the value chain of tour operators'. The support was provided to Tourism Operators for them to adopt actions to improve the sustainability of their businesses. This action is in line with SDG 12.b.1 as it contributed in promoting compliance to the Mauritian Standard on Sustainable Tourism (MS 165:2019), which has recently received the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) certification.



WITH THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT OF GHANA, A BIOGAS PLANT IS BEING SET UP IN AN EXISTING LIVESTOCK FARM FOR THE GENERATION AND SEQUESTERING OF BIOGAS TO PRODUCE ELECTRICITY.

With a view to promoting circularity in the agricultural sector, standards for treated livestock manure were developed under the SWITCH Africa Green project. In 2021, the *Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute* (FAREI) undertook an impact assessment with a view to evaluating the effectiveness of using treated manure on the yield of crops. Moreover, with the technical support of Ghana, a biogas plant is being set up in an existing livestock farm for the generation and sequestering of biogas to produce electricity and establish a mechanism for GHG emissions inventory from livestock waste.

In March 2023, an *Action Plan*, an institutional mechanism, and a *Green Charter* for greening of the public sector were approved by Government. These will encourage public organisations to green their activities through the adoption of sustainable consumption practices, such as conservation of energy and water, going paperless and minimising waste, as well as adopting sustainable procurement to sustain and improve service delivery.

To mainstream Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) practices and encourage the adoption of sustainable lifestyles, in Mauritius and Rodrigues, the use of rainwater harvesting systems, solar water heaters as well as hybrid and electric vehicles are being further promoted.

The production of electricity by photovoltaic panels, the replacement of traditional fluorescent lights by LED fittings, the introduction of variable frequency drives for different types of motors and the adoption of environment-friendly refrigerants in air conditioning systems are some additional energy efficiency and eco-sustainable measures that have contributed towards a cleaner environment of the island. The light rail system, a mass transit mode of transportation, introduced in 2019, is being expanded further on the island of Mauritius.

Mauritius is set to acquire the *Green Destination* status by 2030. In this regard, a series of strategies and policies advocating for a skill-intensive and technology-driven model for the development of the tourism sector are being implemented. Since 2018, the Tourism Authority piloted the Sustainable Island Mauritius (SIM) project, co-financed by the EU under the SWITCH Africa Green project, to promote sustainable tourism along the value chain, improve awareness as well as the marketing of sustainable tourism products and services.



**MAURITIUS IS SET TO
ACQUIRE THE GREEN
DESTINATION STATUS
BY 2030.**

Mauritius is a Destination Member of the GSTC since 2022. In June 2023, the Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB) obtained the GSTC accreditation as a Certification Body to audit operators on the MS:164 eco-label, Blue Oasis. In 2023, there were 43 Certified Operators with a GSTC recognised Eco-Label. In 2024, 5 additional operations are expected to be certified.

The Tourism Authority has been recognised on both the local and international scenes for its continuous improvements to foster responsible tourism among the value chain and the population at large. It has been bestowed several awards, the most recent being two Gold Distinctions in two categories: 'Local Sourcing, Craft and Food' and 'Addressing Climate Change' by the World Travel Market (WTM) Africa Responsible Tourism Awards in 2023.

The tourism industry has adopted SCP practices that revolve around the Reduce-Reuse-Recycle concept in combating food wastage. NGOs like *FoodWise*, *Les Cuisines Solidaires* (Solidarity Kitchen) and *Manzer Partazer* (Eat and Share) are collaborating with the hotel industry to eliminate food wastage by distributing the surplus to needy families (SDG 1 and 2). Some of the surplus is also recycled into energy by producing biogas (SDG 2 and 7).

Furthermore, despite the introduction of three important statutes pertaining to the banning of plastic bags and control of single-use plastic products, as well as the management of PET bottles, in 2020 and 2021 respectively, the elimination of plastic remains a complex task. In this regard, Mauritius is embarking on the development of a roadmap for a plastic-free country especially to promote the use of plastic alternatives among the population.

In this regard, the University of Mauritius is supporting research and development on plastics by implementing four research projects.

The new Environment Bill makes provision for the introduction of a framework for plastic management and the setting up of a multi-stakeholder Plastic Management Committee for the development of strategies and action plans for plastic management as well as to advise on research and development and ensure public awareness.

Box 5

PLASTIC-FREE MAURITIUS

Mauritius envisions becoming a plastic-free country at the earliest. In 2020, appropriate amendments were brought to existing legislation to ban plastic bags and control single-use plastic products in Mauritius. Currently, a moratorium period has been exercised up to 14 January 2025 for three non-biodegradable single-use plastic products (plastic cups, plastic bowls and plastic trays). The *Police de l'Environnement* and other authorised officers conducts verifications at trade premises and points of sale, locally and at the Port. Moreover, several sensitisation workshops and talks are organised on a regular basis to disseminate information pertaining to the two Plastic Regulations. Other means of dissemination include communiqués, electronic billboards and quarterly communiqué on the website of the Ministry of Environment.

To further consolidate actions, a Roadmap for a plastic-free Mauritius will be developed and operationalised by 2030. It aims at, *inter alia*, reviewing the legislative framework and policy instruments to allow formulation of future policies and action plans for the safeguard of the environment and public health. An

amount of Rs 3.42 million was earmarked in Budget 2022/2023 for the development of the Roadmap.

Another Rs 3 million was received to support research and development projects on plastics. The University of Mauritius is conducting four research projects to test biodegradability of compostable plastic materials; assess the biodegradability and composting of Polylactic acid (PLA) bottles and cups; modify and identify micro-plastics along selected beaches; and SWOT analysis for the use of local biomass and agro-wastes as alternative materials for the replacement of petroleum-based plastics.

On 2 March 2022, Mauritius adopted the UNEA Resolution 5/14 towards an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution, which was also adopted by 175 countries. The document is expected to be signed by beginning of 2025.

Mauritius has also joined the High Ambition Coalition, led by the Governments of Norway and Rwanda, along with 58 other Member States, to better position itself in the negotiation of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC).

Source: Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change



**500,000 TONS OF WASTE
ARE SENT TO MARE CHICOSE
LANDFILL, ANNUALLY.**

Currently some 500,000 tons of waste are sent to Mare Chicose landfill annually. The Mare Chicose landfill is situated in the south of Mauritius on an area of 50 hectares. To expand its capacity and increase the lifespan of the landfill by 15 years, the authorities are planning to construct a 15-metre-high perimeter wall over a stretch of 1.3 km. Also, some 660 tons of hazardous wastes have been collected and transited at the Interim Hazardous Waste Facility at La Chaumière, which ensures safe storage of collected hazardous wastes and their exportation since operations began in 2017. Additionally, 2,714 tonnes of Heavy Fuel Oil waste generated from the MV Wakashio shipwreck in 2020 were collected and exported for recycling.

However, in the long run, this interim solution will be inadequate. Over the past decade, solid waste generated in Mauritius has increased at an average of 2% annually³³. In a bid to shift from a linear approach to a circular economy model in the waste sector, a new Solid Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan (2021) was developed. It amongst others recommended prioritising reduce, reuse and recycling over landfilling to thus divert 70% of wastes from landfilling by 2033. The focus in the short-to-medium term is resource recovery and recycling, while in the long term tap into energy recovery potential of solid wastes. In this regard, the Waste Management Resource Recovery Act 2023 was gazetted in April 2023. It provides the regulatory framework for the adoption of a Circular Economy, focusing on waste reduction, reuse, material recovery and recycling.

Other regulations pertaining to segregation at source, management of construction and demolition wastes and licensing of End-of-Life Vehicles recycling facility are also being developed. To date, three Civic Amenity Centres – ‘déchetterie’ are operational at La Chaumière, La Laura and Poudre d’Or and some 1,000 tons of different types of wastes were received since their operation in 2020, 2021 and 2022, respectively. Regional compost plants under a PPP arrangement are also being developed by the BOT Projects Unit. Moreover, 5,000 compost bins have been distributed to individuals and organisations to further promote widespread composting.

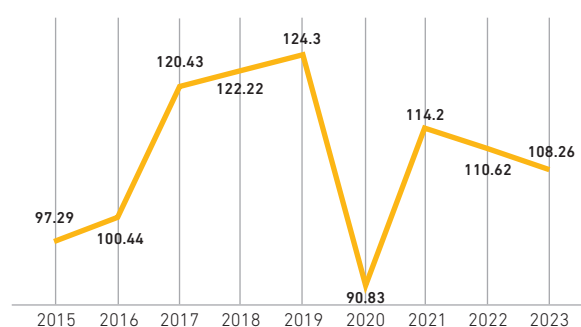


5,000 COMPOST BINS HAVE BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO FURTHER PROMOTE WIDESPREAD COMPOSTING.

In February 2023, Mauritius introduced an ECONO-Biz training programme to improve the capacity and skills of SMEs to green their businesses. To date some 60 SMEs have been empowered in two batches. The first batch focused on interventions in businesses that ensured integration of green and circular production practices. Best practices have been compiled in a handbook for dissemination.

To date, there are 18 listed companies which have voluntarily subscribed to the Sustainability Index of the Stock Exchange of Mauritius (SEMSI). The dip in the index in 2020 was due to the lockdown following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic when all market operations stalled. In line with the ‘General Requirements for Disclosure of Sustainability-related Financial information (General Requirements Exposure Draft)’, under development by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), Mauritius is working on rules and regulations to encourage Public Interest Entities to disclose sustainability related financial initiatives in their annual reports. On the other hand, as Government shifts to sustainable procurement practices, amendments have been brought in the standard bidding documents for vehicles, computers, laptops and printers.

EVOLUTION OF SEM'S SUSTAINABILITY INDEX (SEMSI)



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To broaden the scope of the existing legislative framework to address contemporary and looming environmental challenges, the Environment Protection Act will be replaced by a new Act in May 2024. The latter provides for the formulation of a National Circular Economy Policy, Strategy and Action Plan, which sets out policies and priorities for key sectors of the economy, while taking into consideration the life cycle analysis of products, value-chain and waste management perspectives. It also provides for the strengthening of the Extended Producer Responsibility concept. A multi-stakeholder Plastic Management Committee is also being envisaged under the new legislation.

The standards IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 have already been issued by the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) in June 2023. The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) is planning to have a Round Table for the African continent to assess the readiness of implementing the 2 standards in Mauritius. Consideration will be given to the categories of companies that have to mandatorily or voluntarily report under IFRS S1 and S2, and those that would be encouraged to report in the first phase of the implementation programme. In addition, training sessions for the reviewers of the report on sustainability, and auditors who will eventually give assurance on the sustainability report. The National Committee of Corporate Governance is also reviewing its code to include an Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) component.

Monitoring progress under this specific goal remains very challenging for Mauritius. The absence of appropriate data and capacity to compute indices relating to material footprint, domestic material consumption as well as food loss and food waste (SDG Indicators 12.2.1, 12.2.2 and 12.3.1) limits the ability to track progress on SCP. There is therefore urgent need to build technical capacity to collect data and compute the indices.



**THERE IS ALSO NEED
TO IMPROVE ACCESS
TO AFFORDABLE
GREEN AND CIRCULAR
TECHNOLOGIES FOR SIDS.**

Furthermore, it is important to promote the necessary expertise and know-how to integrate circularity in key sectors. New concepts such as Life Cycle Assessments, Eco-design, as well as focused application of cleaner production, reverse logistics and applied techniques of circularity in sectors such as buildings and construction, as well as agri-food need to be developed.

There is also need to improve access to affordable green and circular technologies for SIDS, as acquisition of appropriate technology, equipment and tools remains a challenge and is expensive.

Mauritius is set to be the first State in the Southern Hemisphere to become a Green Destination by 2030. To achieve this, Mauritius is setting up the *Horizon.eco* digital platform co-financed by the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*. The platform will assist operators in reporting on ESG, SDGs and GSTC criteria in their sustainability journey. Other Certification Bodies such as Green Key, Earthcheck, and others will be added to the platform.

³⁴ Source: Stock Exchange of Mauritius, SEMSI Constituents 2024.

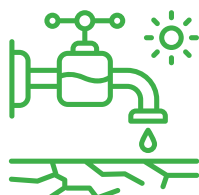
13 CLIMATE
ACTION



TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS



MAURITIUS IS COMMITTED TO ACHIEVING A CLEANER, GREENER, LOW-EMISSION AND CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENT ECONOMY.



IT IS PROJECTED THAT MAURITIUS MAY BECOME A WATER-SCARCE (SDG 6) COUNTRY BY 2030, AFFECTING AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY (SDG 2) ON THE ISLAND.

Mauritius is committed to achieving a cleaner, greener, low-emission and climate change resilient economy. Changing weather patterns, intense cyclones, ensuing flash floods, amongst others have amplified the impact of climate change over the past years. The sea level in Mauritius has risen on average by 4.7 mm per year for the period 1987 to 2022, compared to the global average of 3.3 mm per year. It is projected that Mauritius may become a water-scarce (SDG 6) country by 2030³⁵, affecting agriculture and food security (SDG 2) on the island.

To mitigate these climate-related challenges and disasters, Mauritius has adopted a *whole-of-society* approach. In line with SDG 13, and obligations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and other related instruments on climate change, as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, permanent structures were set up.

THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACT 2020 WAS PROMULGATED TO REINFORCE THE LEGISLATIVE AND INSTITUTIONAL SET UP. IN THE SPIRIT OF LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND, HUMAN RIGHTS, CULTURAL HERITAGE AND GENDER ISSUES FORM PART OF THE ACT.



CLIMATE CHANGE ACT 2020

The Climate Change Act 2020 was promulgated to reinforce the legislative and institutional set up. In the spirit of *leaving no one behind*, human rights, cultural heritage and gender issues form part of the Act. To ensure proper coordination, a dedicated Department of Climate Change was set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste and Climate Change. A high level *Inter-Ministerial Council on Climate Change* and a *Climate Change Committee* were established to support sectors to mainstream climate actions. In this regard, technical assistance to the tune of EUR 104,000 to undertake an *Institutional Gaps and Needs Assessment* (IGNA) of the Department of Climate Change and institutions to implement the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2020 was obtained. A *Human Resource Strategy* and capacity building plans for the Department and other institutions for Mauritius and Rodrigues have been prepared.

³⁵ Source: Budget 2023/24.

NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCs)

Mauritius has updated its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2021 with support from international expertise by AFD as well as under the UNDP Climate Promise Initiative.

The country has set ambitious targets to reduce overall GHG emissions by 40% by 2030, achieve 60% of energy requirements from green sources as well as a total phase out of use of coal from electricity production by 2030, in line with our objectives under SDG 7.

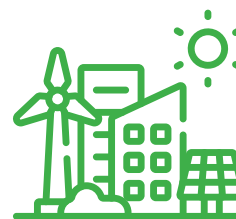
To achieve these ambitions, an NDC Action Plan was finalised in 2022. Strategies have been developed mainstreaming climate actions across key sectors, namely *agriculture, fisheries and blue economy, water, infrastructure, biodiversity, tourism, energy, transport, waste, industrial processes and product use (IPPU)*.

A *National Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan (NMSAP)* for the period 2022 to 2030 has been finalised to facilitate the implementation of the updated NDCs and support the long-term objective to contribute towards achieving a net-zero carbon society by 2070. The implementation of the NMSAP in five sectors³⁶ is estimated to cost around USD 3 billion, with an expected emission reduction of 2.715 ktCO₂e by 2030 with respect to the Business as Usual scenario.

As part of the mitigation measures, the *Roadmap on Renewable Energy* was reviewed in 2022. Also, the operationalisation of the *National Biomass Framework*, formulated in 2023, will be a key turning point for the phasing out of coal in electricity production, in line with our objectives under SDG 7.

A Gender Analysis and Action Plan, aligned with the *National Gender Policy 2022-2030*, was finalised in December 2023, under the *Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA)* project, to mainstream gender in climate change mitigation sectors.

To ensure proper implementation of adaptation measures, the *National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework* has been updated in 2021. Massive investments from the National Environment and Climate Change Fund have been earmarked to address issues of flooding under the *Land Drainage Master Plan* and the coastal protection and rehabilitation works.



THE COUNTRY HAS SET AMBITIOUS TARGETS TO REDUCE OVERALL GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS BY 40% BY 2030, ACHIEVE 60% OF ENERGY REQUIREMENTS FROM GREEN SOURCES AS WELL AS A TOTAL PHASE OUT USE OF COAL FROM ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION BY 2030.

³⁶ The five mitigation sectors identified under the NMSAP are energy, transport, wastes, agriculture and forestry and industrial processes and product use (IPPU).

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre* (NDRRMC) and a three-tier crisis/emergency/disaster management system was introduced for effective coordination and monitoring preparedness as well as provide timely response, relief and recovery activities associated to the event. The three-tier system comprises the National Crisis Committee at ministerial level, the *National Emergency Operations Command* (NEOC) at national level, and the *Local Emergency Operations Command* (LEOC) at municipal/district council levels.



**CONTINGENCY PLANS ARE
IN PLACE FOR SOME
65 VULNERABLE FLOOD
PRONE AREAS.**

In 2023, Mauritius was ranked 106th out of 193 countries most vulnerable to climate disaster risk³⁷. Several sensitisation programmes, trainings, workshops and lectures were run to educate vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, school children and the elderly on disaster risks and measures. Furthermore, many organisations already have contingency/emergency/business continuity plans. Contingency Plans are in place for some 65 vulnerable flood prone areas. In addition, to protect the most vulnerable, an Emergency Plan for Residential Care Homes has been developed.

In 2021, the *National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan* for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared. The plan sets out 189 actions under four strategic objectives, namely *Disaster Risk Governance, Disaster Risk Reduction, Warning and Alert* as well as *Preparedness, Response and Recovery*.

Though some progress has been made in terms of preparedness and planning, events such as the intense cyclone *Belal* in January 2024, is testimony of the fact that impacts of hazards can be systemic and cascade across systems.

Thus, though there is an improvement in the ranking of the country in terms of disaster risk reduction and management (DRRM) in the *World Risk Report*, Mauritius still requires technical and financial support to secure its population. Key stakeholders are therefore required to mobilise necessary financing to implement realistic and pragmatic 5-year DRRM plans.

³⁷ Source: World Risk Report 2023

Disaster statistics are crucial to decision-making. The NDRRMC is collaborating with Statistics Mauritius for the compilation of disaster statistics, in view of establishing a central database. This will also enable open access to information on disaster risk. Moreover, the development of a National Spatial Data Infrastructure and investment in GIS will ensure availability of geospatial and digitalised data.

CLIMATE FINANCE

Mobilising climate finance remains difficult, especially as we move to the league of High Income Economies. The updated NDC is estimated to cost the economy some USD 6.5 billion, of which 35% is being financed by the Government and the local private sector. The remaining 65%, that is USD 4.2 billion, will have to be sourced from the international community. Mauritius has for the period 2016 to 2023, mobilised only around USD 103 million from development partners mainly due to the cumbersome and complex procedures of multilateral funding mechanisms such as the *Green Climate Fund* (GCF), the *Global Environment Facility* (GEF) and *Adaptation Fund*. Subsequent to its collective request from Mauritius and other developing States, multilateral funding agencies are being urged to reform their procedures to simplify access to such funding opportunities.

Locally, the *National Environment and Climate Change Fund* has been revamped to provide around MUR 2 billion every year to support adaptation actions such as drain construction, coastal protection and rehabilitation, as well as disaster risk reduction and management. A resource mobilisation platform has also been set up at the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development for the continuous enlistment of project proposals and hence ease tapping on funding opportunities through bilateral cooperation and multilateral agencies.

The assistance of a National Adviser, under the *Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub* in Mauritius, has allowed the preparation of a pipeline of some 15 project concept notes, which is expected to be a window of opportunity to attract climate finance. Other tools to promote investment in the sector include the database of climate-related risk drivers, published in collaboration with the Bank of Mauritius (BOM).



LOCALLY, THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE FUND HAS BEEN REVAMPED TO PROVIDE AROUND MUR 2 BILLION EVERY YEAR TO SUPPORT ADAPTATION ACTIONS SUCH AS DRAIN CONSTRUCTION, COASTAL PROTECTION AND REHABILITATION, AS WELL AS DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND MANAGEMENT.



A DRAFT LANDSLIDE HAZARD MAP SHOWING THE RISK PRONE AREAS AROUND THE ISLAND HAS BEEN COMPLETED BY THE GEOTECHNICAL UNIT.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

To strengthen the resilience of Mauritius in the face of the effects of climate change, international collaboration is urgently required.

In addition to mobilising adequate resources, both institutional and human capacities should be enhanced. Training in project management methodologies, tools and techniques are necessary for stakeholders to manage projects efficiently. Furthermore, capacity development in partnership building and negotiations are vital. Additional capacity in policy analysis, advocacy strategies and policy implementation are needed.

Building skills in emerging technologies, such as data analytics, artificial intelligence, and blockchain are essential in the new age.

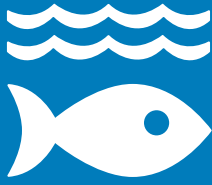
Limited access to data, lack of transparency and limited capacity in data collection and analysis impede informed decision and policy-making processes. To address such gaps and inconsistencies, there is need to strengthen the data infrastructure.

In line with the recommendations made by the Capacity Diagnosis report prepared by the CADRI Partnership, the NDRRMC is looking forward to the setting up of a Geographic Information System (GIS) Unit as an integral and effective tool in the management of disasters. Capacity building is also required to formulate *Mass Evacuation Plans* from vulnerable areas, *Tsunami Community Preparedness* including evacuation zone maps and plans as well as interacting with persons with disabilities when participating in simulation exercises, for example.

On the other hand, while Phase I of the *National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System* has been implemented, additional funding is required to implement Phase II of the project, which involves the setting up of a Cell Broadcast Centre (CBC) that will disseminate alerts to mobile devices in a geographical area to the public or specified groups by using a one-to-many technology where all messages go at a single time using the same carrier infrastructure.

A *draft Landslide Hazard Map* showing the risk prone areas around the Island has been completed by the Geotechnical Unit. Site surveys would be carried out to determine the actual gravity of the risk of each site.

14 LIFE BELOW
WATER



**CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY
USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND
MARINE RESOURCES FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS IS SET TO DOUBLE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BLUE ECONOMY TO GDP BY 2025 AND OPTIMISE THE POTENTIAL OF ITS EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE (EEZ) IN A SUSTAINABLE MANNER.

The Republic of Mauritius is set to double the contribution of the blue economy to GDP by 2025 and optimise the potential of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in a sustainable manner. The objective is to develop the sector as an important pillar of growth that contributes, *inter alia*, to food and nutrition security (SDG 2), job creation (SDG 8) and wealth generation (SDG 10), while at the same time protecting the marine resources (SDG 14).

To this end, a new Fisheries Act was promulgated in December 2023. The legislation, which was drafted following the recommendations made by the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the European Commission (DG MARE), aims at ensuring the long-term conservation, management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in Mauritius, while safeguarding the marine resources, biodiversity, environment and ecosystems for the benefit of the people of Mauritius. It also guarantees effective control and enforcement of fishing or fishing-related activities to tackle Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, while taking into consideration the rapid growth of the fisheries sector.

FISH PRODUCTION IN 2023



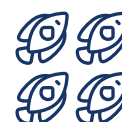
92,974 TONNES
OF FISH AND FISH
PREPARATIONS
WERE EXPORTED



**RS 16.2
BILLION**
OF TOTAL EARNINGS



6.3%
INCREASE IN TOTAL
FISH PRODUCTION
IN 2023.



1.4%
CONTRIBUTION BY
SEAFOOD SECTOR
TO GVA IN 2023.

In 2023, 92,974 tonnes of fish and fish preparations were exported with total earnings of Rs 16.2 billion. Total fish production increased by 6.3%, from 33,226 tonnes in 2022 to 35,313 tonnes in 2023. Moreover, with the renewal of the *Fisheries Partnership Agreement* between Mauritius and the European Union for the period 2022 to 2026, fish production and exports are expected to increase further giving the necessary impetus to boost the fishing industry and further the development of the blue economy.

Government has put in place several measures to boost the fisheries sector, both at artisanal and semi-industrial levels. These include financial assistance for the purchase of cannottes and off-lagoon semi-industrial fishing vessels. Other forms of assistance include the bad weather allowance to fishermen who, for example, are unable to go out fishing at sea during cyclones. Over the period July 2022 to March 2023, an additional 217 fishing cards were issued to artisanal fishers and 107 licences to fishing vessels.

AQUACULTURE

During the COVID-19 pandemic, a compensation was provided to fishers who were unable to fish during the confinement period. Fiscal incentives exempting aquaculture equipment and materials were provided to promote inland aquaculture. Offshore demersal fisheries were encouraged to continue their fishing activities despite the pandemic. The aim was to build the resilience of the fisher community to ensure an adequate supply of fish on the local market.

In 2021, the Aquaculture Policy was reviewed to encourage responsible and sustainable in-lagoon aquaculture in our EEZ. The framework will help expand small-scale in-lagoon aquaculture.

In addition, a revised *Barachois Policy*, in line with the provisions of the new Fisheries Act was adopted in December 2023. It is intended to act as an informative paper guiding potential promoters interested in engaging in aquaculture activities.

In an effort to further diversify and harness the potential of the blue economy, fishermen and SMEs are being encouraged to set up sea-based coral farms to develop ornamental corals for the tourism sector, aquarium market and high-end jewellery manufacturing. Some 270 fishers and 70 trainers across Mauritius were registered on the coral farming and fish breeding assistance programme. An additional 1,000 fishermen will be trained by 2024.



SOME 270 FISHERS AND 70 TRAINERS ACROSS MAURITIUS WERE REGISTERED ON THE CORAL FARMING AND FISH BREEDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME.

TYPE OF FISHERY	QUANTITY (TONNES)
Coastal Fisheries (including artisanal, amateur and sports fisheries)	1,303
FAD Fishery	191
Pelagic Fishery	33,871
Offshore Demersal Fishery	1,234
Aquaculture Production	1,680
TOTAL	38,279

Source: Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping

So far, the Mauritius EEZ remains largely unexplored and untapped. To develop the blue economy, Mauritius has signed several *Memoranda of Understanding* (MoUs) with institutions, including the *Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation* (CSIRO) of Australia in 2019, the *Institut de Recherche pour le Développement* (IRD) of France in 2020, *Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research (Bremen)* of Germany in 2020, *Curtin University* of Australia in 2021 and the *Federal Agency for Fisheries of Russia* in 2021. These, in line with the objectives of SDG 9, aim at promoting and developing cooperation and providing technical assistance to Mauritius in the field of the blue economy, while promoting collaboration in areas of marine science research and assist in the prevention of IUU fishing, that is SDG 16.

Box 6

SUSTAINABLE EXPLORATORY HARVESTING OF SEA CUCUMBER IN THE MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES JOINT MANAGEMENT AREA

Since 2011, Mauritius and Seychelles have joint jurisdiction over the seabed and subsoil of the Joint Management Area (JMA), an extended continental shelf in the Mascarene Plateau Region covering an area of 396,000 km².

In August 2023, both Governments invited eligible and qualified operators registered in Mauritius or Seychelles to express interest to undertake sustainable exploratory harvesting of sea cucumber in the JMA for an initial fishing period of three months, renewable on a quarterly basis up to a maximum of one year. The objective is to evaluate the distribution and stocks of sea cucumber in the JMA³⁸.

The services of a consultant were procured under the Australian Food Aid Programme and a new multi-purpose support vessel, Investigator II, co-funded by the Government of Mauritius and Australia under its Food Aid Programme, supported the training of fishers, survey of marine resources, stock assessment and research programmes.

A new 5-year closure of sea cucumber fishing has been introduced since 2024.



Source: Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

On the other hand, while Government maintained operations of certain units such as the Licensing, Import/Export and Port State Unit and the Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) System/Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) during the lockdown period in 2020, maritime surveillance to combat IUU fishing was reinforced. An Electronic Catch Reporting system (ERS) was introduced. The National Action Plan for IUU fishing will also be reviewed.

IN MAY 2023, MAURITIUS HOSTED THE 27TH SESSION OF THE INDIAN OCEAN TUNA COMMISSION (IOTC).

In May 2023, Mauritius hosted the 27th Session of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) where a total of 8 Conservation and Management Measures, including Resolution 23/03 and 1 recommendation were adopted. Resolution 23/03 on establishing a voluntary fishing closure in the Indian Ocean for the conservation of tropical tunas is effective as from 01 January 2024.

With the grounding of the MV Wakashio in 2020 in the South-Eastern region of Mauritius, an *Integrated Environmental Monitoring Plan* (IEMP), was implemented with 24 new long-term monitoring stations.

³⁸ Source: Department for Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration and Exploration

Box 7**SEAGRASS CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT IN MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES JOINT MANAGEMENT AREA**

To ensure conservation and proper management of marine sources, the Government of Mauritius has embarked on a seagrass mapping and blue carbon evaluation project in 2020. The project entitled 'Assessment of Blue Carbon Ecosystem (Seagrass) around the island of Mauritius: Relevance for Marine Spatial Planning', under the Western Indian Ocean from land-based sources and activities – WIOSAP by the Nairobi Convention, funded by UNEP, lasted over a period of two years.

In November 2022, Mauritius signed a letter of Agreement for Small Scale Funding Agreement (SSFA) with the Nairobi Convention. Around USD 100,000 were received to fund four major components of the project. These are:

1. Seagrass mapping and ground-truthing around the island
2. Seagrass Monitoring Program

3. Blue Carbon Storage Capacity in Seagrass
4. Sensitisation and Educational programme from Coastal Community and Sea Users

To date, island-wide seagrass surveys, comprising ground-truthing, species composition and distribution have been completed at 21 sites around Mauritius. Five permanent long-term monitoring sites have been established at Le Morne, Albion, Banc d'Olive (Mahebourg), Poste La Fayette and Mon Choisy.

A total of 141 sediment samples were obtained via carbon sequestration to determine the carbon sink potential in seagrass meadows around Mauritius. These were pre-treated in the Marine Ecological Laboratory at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre (AFRC), and sent to CSIRO and the University of Western Australia for elemental analysis and determination of blue carbon content.

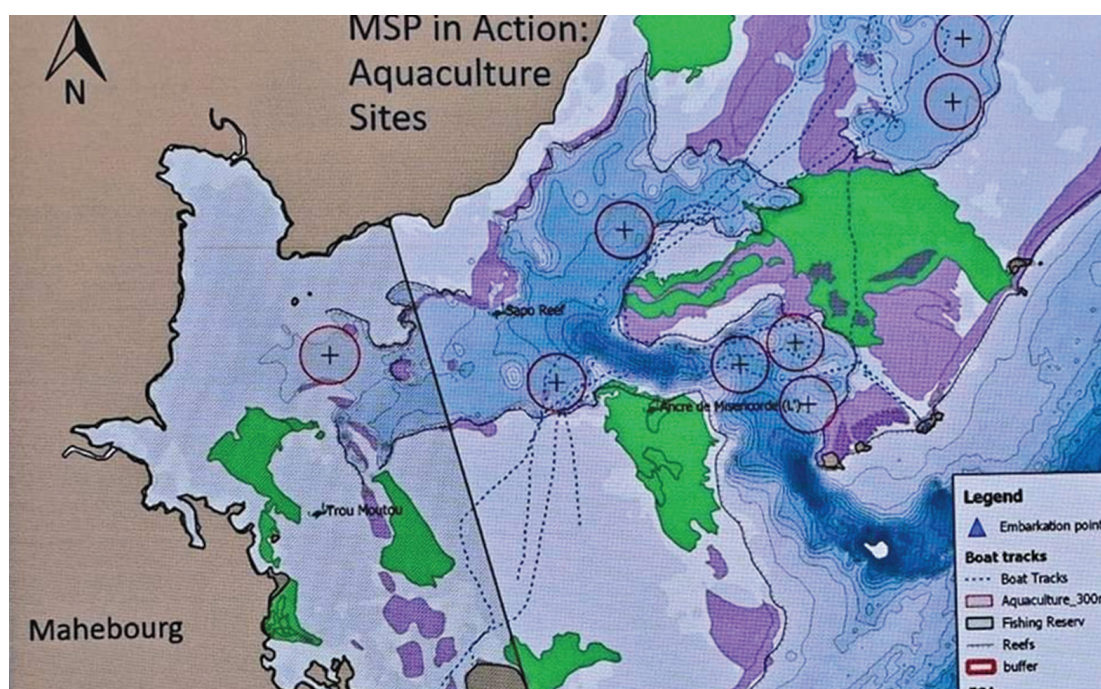
Source: Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Government strives for the conservation and restoration of the marine environment through ongoing projects on fish stock enhancements in the lagoon, coral restoration and mangrove propagation, which all increase the resilience of the marine ecosystem.

Marine Spatial Planning

Mauritius has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to develop a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) which is in the process of elaboration, in line with SDG Target 14.2. This aims at catering for the increasing demand for marine space in our EEZ for activities, such as fisheries and aquaculture, marine renewable energy, as well as tourism and leisure. A multi-stakeholder baseline survey was carried out to identify priorities and gaps in the implementation of a MSP. Based on the findings of the survey, three priority areas were identified.



A National Coordinating Committee on *Marine Spatial Planning* (MSP) and a *Stakeholder Technical Committee*, comprising various Ministries, Departments and NGOs, have been set up at the level of the Department for Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration and Exploration. Dedicated working groups have been established on the following strategic drivers:

- ▶ Conservation of the marine environment, to address SDG Target 14.5;
- ▶ Identification, zoning and regulation for new economic activities (eg Marine renewable energy, aquaculture); and
- ▶ Establishment of the appropriate framework to implement MSP (eg Regulations, Mauritius Ocean Observatory e-Platform).

To enhance informed decision-making and understanding of the marine environment, the Mauritius Ocean Observatory E-Platform (E-platform)³⁹, a national Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI), was developed. The E-platform aims to centralize geospatial data pertaining to the maritime zones of the Republic of Mauritius to facilitate data discovery and sharing among Government agencies, parastatal bodies, scientists, and public users and identify potential gaps in information.

To ensure implementation of the MSP, technical capacities and appropriate legal framework are required. Moreover, conducting surveys to collect data is costly as appropriate expertise and specialised logistics would be required. Though some of these data gaps may be addressed through the use of remote sensing technologies, it is essential to conduct ground-truthing validation of the datasets.

³⁹ Source: Department for Continental Shelf, Maritime Zones Administration and Exploration

15 LIFE
ON LAND



**PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE
SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL
ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY
MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND
REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND
HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS**



Mauritius is listed among the 35 biodiversity hotspots and has been recognised as a 'Centre of Plant Diversity' by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The island is home to a remarkable number of endemic species with amongst others, 691 species of indigenous flowering plants, 52 native species of vertebrates and 30 species of land birds.

MAURITIUS ENDEMIC SPECIES



691

**SPECIES OF INDIGENOUS
FLOWERING PLANTS**



52

NATIVE SPECIES OF VERTEBRATES



30

**SPECIES OF
LAND BIRDS**

As per new data obtained through remote sensing for Global Forest Resource Assessment, the total forest cover in Mauritius in 2023 was estimated at 42,002 hectares, representing 22.5% of total land area (SDG 15.1.1). In Mauritius, forests are state-owned and privately-owned. Private forests are estimated to be around 20,000 hectares, while state-owned forests are at 22,002 hectares. Unlike state-owned forests which have remained more or less the same over the years, private forests have decreased by some 3,000 hectares, mainly due to conversion to other land use, such as agriculture and built-up areas. Moreover, private forests are not regularly surveyed.

Box 8

MANGROVE FORESTS

In Mauritius, mangroves are an important ecosystem for marine life. To conserve the declining forests, Mauritius launched the Mangrove Propagation Programme in 1995.

To date, Mauritius is covered by some 243 hectares of these mangrove seedlings.

In 2022/23, around Rs 2 million were mobilised for mangrove propagation and sensitization.

More than 4,000 seedlings of mangroves were planted at Cotteau Raffin in Le Morne in June 2022, by the *Association pour le Développement Durable* (ADD), an NGO in the west. Another 1,000 mangroves were planted at Le Morne public beach, Pointe Cassis.

A *Mangrove Sensitisation Campaign* was also undertaken along the West Coast of Mauritius. Sensitization materials, including education packs, posters, pamphlets, bookmarks, stickers, t-shirts and eco-craft bags were financed by the NECCF. Various projects related to forest restoration of mangroves and coastal ecosystem are being financed by the GCF.

Furthermore, following the Wakashio oil spill in 2020, an Integrated Environment Monitoring Programme (IEMP) is being implemented biannually. The authorities are carrying out regular monitoring exercises at seven sites in mangrove areas around the coast of Mauritius. 38 sediment cores were analysed for residual content of petroleum hydrocarbon at an accredited laboratory.

Source: Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping

Forests in Mauritius provide a range of wood (for example Timber, poles, firewood), and non-wood forest products, such as honey, deer, grass, fibres, fruits and medicinal plants. However, wood production is gradually being phased out and firewood is exploited in the exotic forest plantations for the local population. Furthermore, upland forests are essential for soil and water conservation and the protection of agricultural crops cultivated mainly at mid and lower elevations.

To preserve the country's forests and its unique biodiversity, Mauritius is promoting sustainable forest management practices under the GEF-funded UNDP project of Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Mauritius (2021-2024), in line with SDG 15.2.1, to scale up the adoption of SLM in production landscapes across Mauritius and Rodrigues. Tree planting campaigns to restore degraded forests are also being undertaken.



**MORE THAN
300 HECTARES OF
LAND WERE RESTORED
UNDER THE MAURITIUS
RIDGE-TO-REEF WITH THE
FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU),**

MOREOVER, AGRO-FORESTRY SYSTEMS ARE BEING PROMOTED TO COMPLEMENT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND ENSURE FOOD SECURITY, IN LINE WITH SDG 2.

Moreover, agro-forestry systems are being promoted to complement agricultural productivity and ensure food security, in line with SDG 2. Strong community and private sector engagement has been beneficial in this direction and is being pursued. In February 2021, in collaboration with the Compagnie Sucrière de St Antoine Ltd (CSSA), an extent of 2.1 hectares of unproductive sugarcane land was cultivated with 5,000 native plants, including the *Calophyllum eputamen* (Takamaka), *Elaeodendron orientale* (Bois d'Olive) and *Cyphostemma mappia* (Bois Mapou), to create an endemic forest plantation under an agro-forestry project. The project helped mitigate land degradation and climate change, as well as restore balance in the ecosystem.

Other public-private partnership (PPP) projects were undertaken to rehabilitate some 3 hectares of coastal land at PG Virginia (Pont Naturel) in the south, creation of a mini-forest of 0.1 hectare at Malenga in the eastern part of the island, as well as restoration and creation of endemic forest at Nouvelle France in the southern part of the island. In 2024, the Beemanique Remembrance Forest project was launched whereby members of the public could engage in tree planting activities.

To encourage private entities to undertake forest compatible activities on State Forest Lands, the *Shooting and Fishing Leases Act* was amended to make provision for a Special Purpose Lease for activities related to biodiversity enhancement, ecosystem restoration, eco-tourism, forest management or agro-forestry. Biomass production within forest areas (Eucalyptus trees) is also being explored.

However, habitat loss due to urbanisation over the years, proliferation of invasive species and negative impact of climate change pose significant challenges to conservation efforts.

Some MUR 6 million were received via the *National Environment and Climate Change Fund* (NECCF) for the construction of a modern nursery to propagate native plants for planting activities, in line with our national objective of increasing tree cover. The Fund, which forms part of the domestic resource mobilisation framework, is partially financed through a levy on carbon emissions.

In May 2024, an endemic plant nursery was also inaugurated at the Open Prison for Women. The project, funded under the GEF Small Grants Programme, is an initiative of the Mauritius Prison Service, in collaboration with the Australian High Commission, *Fondation Resources et Nature* (FORENA), and the SICOM Group. Women Prison Officers and inmates were trained to manage the nursery and plants.



**IN OCTOBER 2020, THE
BLACK RIVER GORGES
BEL OMBRE BIOSPHERE
RESERVE (BRGBOBR) WAS
RENOMINATED AS THE
NEW BIOSPHERE RESERVE
BY UNESCO.**

In October 2020, the *Black River Gorges Bel Ombre Biosphere Reserve* (BRGBOBR) was renominated as the new biosphere reserve by UNESCO. The Reserve covers an area of 8,582.21 hectares and includes a core area of 6,574 hectares, a buffer zone of 497.21 hectares and a transition zone of 1,511 hectares. With the renomination, the terrestrial protected area in Mauritius increased by 0.3%, from an initial 3,594 hectares to 8,582.21 (SDG 15.1.2), in line with *Mauritius Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy* (2017-26). For the first time, private stakeholders engaged in designating part of its land as buffer zone, reinforcing local partnerships in furthering SDG 17.

In addition, native plants are provided free of charge to private land owners to grow in their mountain and river reserves. Some 10 hectares of mountain reserves were restored by *Ebony Forest*, an NGO, and another 5 hectares on Le Morne Brabant mountain.

Invasive species pose a major threat to Mauritius' unique biodiversity. Some 100 native species have become extinct due to invasive alien species. To preserve the terrestrial and marine ecosystem, Mauritius adopted a sustainable and holistic approach to conservation. The National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017/25 is being implemented to control invasive alien species. Since 2013, as part of the conservation efforts, over 700 hectares of Goyave de Chine (*Psidium cattleianum*), a species of invasive alien plants has been cleared.

In 2023, the *National Invasive Alien Species Policy and Action Plan Strategy* was updated and organic scanning equipment purchased for control of invasive organic products at airport entry (SDG 15.8.1). To reinforce the local institutional set up and address gaps, a new *Forest Bill* is under preparation. Furthermore, a training needs assessment was conducted recommending increased capacity building to officers to efficiently deliver on their mandate.

Preservation efforts were consolidated with an amendment in the Forests and Reserves Act in 2021 by including *Santalum album* (sandal wood) as a protected plant, due to its medicinal benefits. Moreover, in partnership with local and international partners, Mauritius has been implementing bird recovery programmes that have registered positive trends. Over the last decade, 5 species (4 birds and 1 bat) have been down listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Two species the Mauritius kestrel (*Falco punctatus*) and the Mauritius cuckoo-shrike (*Coracina typica*) have registered population decline from 2002 to 2013.

The population of *Pink Pigeon* has increased over the last decade with the species being categorised under the new IUCN Green Status, a standard showing the species has recovered from a very low population and is positively expected to be stable if all measures are continuously provided for the population to thrive.

Mauritius has sought cooperation with international organisations such as *Conservatoire Botanique de Brest* to save endangered plant species through technology transfer for propagation of rare plant species.

Forests in Rodrigues which cover an area of 3,048 hectares, are protected by the RRA. A reforestation programme is being undertaken by the authorities for the propagation of unique endemic plants. Around 1,000 plants of Café Marron and 10 *Gouania leguatii* are being produced in forestry nurseries. Since 2014, more than 300,000 seedlings have been reintroduced within the forest areas. Invasive plants are being removed to safeguard seedlings and promote forest restoration.

Box 9

STATUS AS PER IUCN RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES IN MAURITIUS

CRITICALLY ENDANGERED TO ENDANGERED

- ▶ Echo parakeet (*Psittacula eques*)
- ▶ Rodrigues fodies (*Foudia rubra*)

ENDANGERED TO VULNERABLE

- ▶ *Pteropus niger*

VULNERABLE TO NEAR THREATENED

- ▶ Mauritius fody (*Foudia flavicans*)
- ▶ *Acrocephalus Rodericanus*

Source: Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security



SINCE 2014, MORE THAN 300,000 SEEDLINGS HAVE BEEN REINTRODUCED WITHIN THE FOREST AREAS.

Box 10**ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL PUSH-PULL****Fruit Bats (*Pteropus niger*)**

The Greater Mascarene flying fox or Mauritius fruit bat is classified as Endangered on the Red List of the ICUN. It is an endemic species to Mauritius and has been a symbol of human wildlife conflict with damages caused to fruits in orchards and backyard gardens. Government is promoting non-lethal methods such as the subsidizing of fruit nets for control of damage caused by fruit bats. These efforts have been successfully adopted by orchard growers and individuals to prevent damage to fruit especially litchi fruits.

Long-tailed Macaque

The long-tailed macaque is an exotic species introduced in Mauritius. Around 10,000 captive-bred primates are exported annually by local companies for biomedical purposes.

In 2023, the CITES Prescribed Wildlife and Species Regulations was promulgated under the Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act to enhance control of the trade of captive-bred primates. Regular audits and enforcement are also undertaken by the authorities, including the Veterinary Services to ensure the legal provenance of the monkeys including those from the wild and that animal welfare and treatment are in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

Source: Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Capacity building requirements of stakeholders and tools include advanced training opportunities in the use of GIS technologies; eco-tourism and use of ecosystem services, statistical analysis; nursery management and planting methodologies; as well as capacity development in urban forestry programs. Moreover, limited access to private forest lands is an obstacle in obtaining information on the exact tree species composition on these lands. The number of trees along roads, rivers and household premises is not well documented.

Furthermore, Mauritius needs to consolidate actions in partnership with international community to halt the loss of biodiversity overall. In this regard, appropriate expertise and funding are crucial.

16

PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



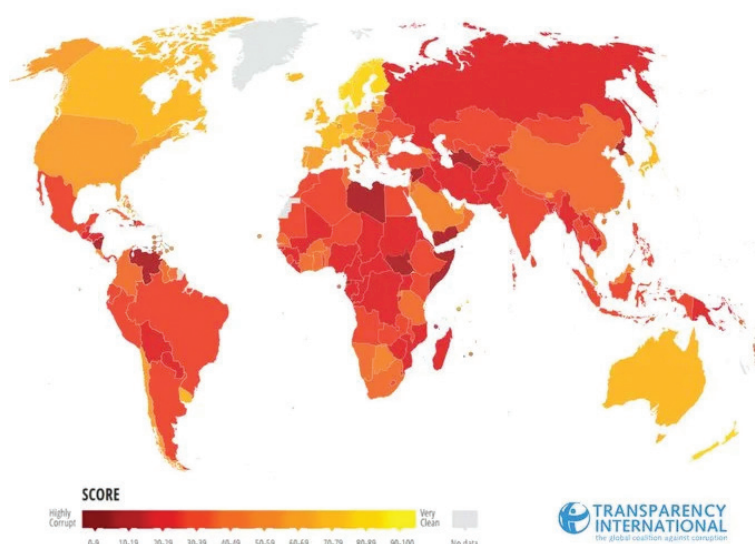
**PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND
INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT,
PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE
FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE,
ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE
INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS**



According to the Global Peace Index 2023, Mauritius is the most peaceful country in Africa and is ranked 23rd worldwide⁴⁰. The Constitution of Mauritius, a strong and independent judiciary, as well as the legislative system based on the Westminster model and institutions help to uphold the rule of law, and to protect human rights.

CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX 2023

The perceived levels of public sector corruption in 180 countries and territories around the world.



Source: <https://www.transparency.org/>

The Mauritian legal system is a hybrid framework sourced from the French *Code Napoleon* and the British criminal law, and reflect our colonial history. Statutes complement this legislative framework. The judicial system comprises the Supreme Court and other subordinate Courts. The Constitution provides for, amongst others, a right of appeal against decisions of courts of law in Mauritius, to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the UK subject to specific parameters. For increased awareness and understanding of citizens' rights, the *Constitution* has been translated in French. A translation in Mauritian *Creole* is also envisaged.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), an independent institution established under the *Protection of Human Rights Act*, is an accredited 'A' status institution, that is, fully compliant with the Paris Principles⁴¹ (SDG 16.a.1). The NHRC consists of two divisions, namely the Human Rights Division (HRD) and the National Preventive Mechanism Division (NPM). The HRD deals with violations of human rights listed in Chapter II of the *Constitution of Mauritius*, while the NPM organises regular sensitisation programmes and undertakes preventive visits to detainees to ensure that they are treated in compliance with the 'Mandela Rules'. Moreover, in line with the *Resolution on Torture and other Cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment* of the Human Rights Council in March 2021, law enforcement officers who are suspected of being involved in alleged police brutality are thoroughly investigated and, if found by a court of law to be guilty, are subject to penal sentencing.

All prisons are equipped with an in-house dispensary providing basic medical care to detainees, including dental care. Detainees in the Women Prison receive monthly visits by gynaecologists and paediatricians. All prisons, except for the High-Security Prison in Phoenix, are equipped with an educational centre and a library.

The Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) offers Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) approved courses in three prisons (Petit Verger Prison, EHSP, Melrose and Women Prison) to assist in their rehabilitation in society. Moreover, detainees in Mauritius prisons pay for phone calls to their families and friends with the money from their earning

⁴⁰ Source: Global Peace Index 2023.

⁴¹ Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), Chart of the Status of National Institutions, 2024.

Box 11**SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY FOR THE REMOVAL OF 'TARDY' FROM BIRTH CERTIFICATES – SDG 16.9.1****ISSUE**

Delayed birth registration of new-borns beyond the mandated 60-day period resulted in annotations and inclusion of the term 'Tardy' in birth certificates. In 2022, there were 280 such cases of delayed birth registrations.

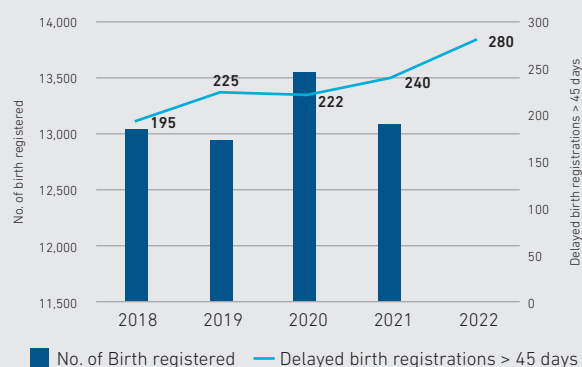
SOLUTION

Following extensive collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the term 'Tardy' will be eliminated from birth certificates, reserving it exclusively for record-keeping purposes. To ensure that birth registration is completed in a timely manner the following measures were adopted:

- ▶ As per the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2023, the time period of 45 days to declare a birth has been extended to 2 months;
- ▶ The earlier 17-step process for dealing with cases of tardy declaration has been simplified;
- ▶ Improved direct communication between the Civil Status Office and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare;
- ▶ A dedicated Red Cell has been set up to enhance information sharing amongst stakeholders for faster birth registrations;
- ▶ In Budget 2022/23, a baby allowance of Rs 1,000 is being provided to new parents upon registration of their new-born child; and,
- ▶ In addition, the authorities are engaged in advocacy and information sharing via the Government Info Highway as well as the E-health system.

Birth registration is a fundamental human right. It falls under the purview of Right to life under Article 4 of the Constitution of Mauritius. Mauritius has also ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, whereby the right of a child to an identity should be respected. The birth certificate allows an individual to make claims of nationality, benefit from Government schemes, open a bank account, work, travel, obtain a driving licence or a marriage certificate and vote. Birth registration also enables a child to receive medical treatment such as vaccination, education and social aid. It also protects children from abuse and exploitation, reduces issues of child marriage, and allows the individual to make inheritance claims. This is in line with SDG 16.9.1, whereby a legal identity is provided to all, including birth registration.

Source: National Human Rights Commission, 2024

BIRTH REGISTRATIONS

scheme. Also, detainees in Phoenix Prison are allowed to spend more time out of their cells where they either work, watch TV or play indoor games.

Mauritius is classified as the African country with the best quality of life in 2023⁴². For Government, the safety of the population is of prime importance. The *Mauritius Police Force* (MPF) has a Policing Plan 2024 that focuses on eight priorities. These are designed to *inter alia*, combat drug trafficking; reduce road fatalities; curb property crimes; tackle cyber criminality; combat risks of *Trafficking in Persons*; as well as ensure maritime safety and security.

In 2022, the Dangerous Drugs Act was amended to implement the recommendations of the 2018 Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking. Thus, at the recommendation of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), a person suspected of having committed a drug offence for his personal use is to be referred to the *Drugs Users Administrative Panel* to undergo a rehabilitation programme instead of being prosecuted. The Act also provides for the use of Cannabis for medicinal purposes only. Medical cannabis is being made available through the public health system under specific conditions.



FINANCIAL SERVICES

The financial services sector which contributed around 14% to the economy in 2023, was one of the two sectors that sustained growth during the pandemic. During the same period, major reforms were implemented to strengthen the position of Mauritius as a competitive and reputable *International Financial Centre* (IFC).

SINCE 2022, MAURITIUS IS 'COMPLIANT' OR 'LARGELY COMPLIANT' WITH ALL THE 40 FINANCIAL ACTION TASK FORCE (FATF) RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the *National Anti-Money Laundering and Counter Terrorism Financing Risk Assessment* (NRA) and feedback from the AML/CFT Mutual Evaluation Report, published in 2018, Mauritius developed a National AML/CFT Strategy 2019-2022 and an action plan. The AML/CFT legal and regulatory framework was strengthened, and procedures for the detection and prosecution of illicit financial flows were enhanced further. Moreover, capacity building, training and awareness raising programmes, as well as regional and international cooperation were consolidated. These reforms have effectively contributed to reinforce the integrity, sustainability, and transparency of the financial system. Since 2022, Mauritius is '*compliant*' or '*largely compliant*' with all the 40 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.

⁴² Source: Mercer's Quality of Life, 2023.

Box 12

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION IN MAURITIUS

Mediation and Arbitration have evolved over the years in Mauritius. The Mediation and Arbitration Center (MARC) was initially established in 1996 as an initiative of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), an umbrella organisation of private businesses in Mauritius. It aims at providing the business community with a quick, efficient, flexible and confidential means of resolving disputes, through mediation

or arbitration, as alternatives to litigation before state courts.

Since 2020, the centre has evolved to become an independent entity registered as a company limited by shares. Over the period 2014 to 2022, the MARC has administered 36 arbitration cases and 2 mediation disputes, for a total sum of approximately MUR 2.65 billion.

Source: Mauritius Mediation and Arbitration Center (MARC), 2024

Regular dialogues within existing multi-stakeholder platforms, support the financial services industry to sustain the AML/CFT/CPF reforms to deal with evolving and emerging risks.

In 2018, a Blueprint, a 10-year roadmap that aims at doubling the contribution of the financial services sector by 2030, was developed. The Financial Services Consultative Council (FSCC), comprising representatives of the public and private sectors, supports the implementation of the recommendations of the Blueprint, which, *inter alia*, aims at increasing the visibility of the Mauritius International Financial Centre (IFC) and addressing skills gap in the financial services sector.

Furthermore, a *Regional Centre of Excellence*, established in 2019, trained over 4,500 participants from 120 countries on issues such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, financial inclusion, sovereign debt management and sustainable finance.

To remain competitive, the Mauritius IFC has implemented some innovative financial services products such as the Variable Capital Company and the Structured Investment Linked Insurance Business (SILIB).

Moreover, to position Mauritius as a FinTech Hub for the region, Mauritius has introduced several FinTech-oriented licences and products such as the Digital Custodian license, the Security Token Offering, Artificial Intelligence and Robotics. More recently, the *Virtual Asset and Initial Token Offering Services Act* (VAITOS Act) was introduced in 2021. The Act aims at managing, mitigating and preventing money laundering and the financing of terrorism risks associated with virtual assets. An Observatory of Virtual Assets Activities has also been set up to track trends and patterns of transactions, and detect and prevent any illegal activities.



**OVER 4,500 PARTICIPANTS
FROM 120 COUNTRIES ON
ISSUES SUCH AS ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE, BLOCKCHAIN,
FINANCIAL INCLUSION,
SOVEREIGN DEBT MANAGEMENT
AND SUSTAINABLE FINANCE.**

These concerted efforts to promote ethical conduct and create an environment that fosters trust and confidence amongst market participants have resulted in improvement on various indices such as World Bank's *Control of Corruption Estimates*⁴³, the *Corruption Perception Index 2023*⁴⁴ and the *Index of Economic Freedom* of the Heritage Foundation⁴⁵.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Lack of comprehensive disaggregated data remains a challenge for the monitoring of SDG 16. Mauritius is committed to enhancing reporting capabilities to improve the availability of comprehensive and updated data.

Efforts are ongoing to sustain the competitiveness of the Mauritius IFC and sustain the AML/CFT reforms to deal with evolving risks. To address skills gaps in the financial services sector, regular trainings, workshops and seminars are conducted by the Financial Services Institute (FSI).

Government continues to thrive to foster transparency and accountability and sustain peace.

⁴³ Mauritius has improved its position from a score of 0.21 in 2019 to 0.41 in 2022. Source: World Bank, 2024.

⁴⁴ Mauritius' score improved from 50 in 2022 to 51 in 2023. Source: Corruption Perceptions Index, 2023.

⁴⁵ Mauritius' score improved from 70.6 in 2023 to 71.5 in 2024. Source: Heritage Foundation, 2024.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



**STRENGTHEN THE MEANS
OF IMPLEMENTATION
AND REVITALIZE THE
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



Bilateral and international partnerships are key to the progressive development of Mauritius. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the excellent partnership with friendly countries and multilateral organisations was key in overcoming global challenges. Countries such as India, the United States, China and Russia, stood by the side of Mauritius with the donation of COVID-19 vaccines as well as other medical equipment in a timely manner, which saved many lives and assisted Mauritius to bounce back from the pandemic.

The UN System assisted Mauritius with the preparation of the COVID-19 Socio-economic Response Plan (SERP) to effectively respond to and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds mobilised under the *Strategic Partnership Framework* (SPF) agreement, signed in August 2019, were redirected towards more pressing issues, such as procurement of medical and pharmaceutical products.

MAURITIUS IS CONSTANTLY PUTTING EFFORTS TOWARDS BROADENING AND DEEPENING PARTNERSHIPS.

Mauritius is constantly putting efforts towards broadening and deepening the areas of cooperation with its bilateral partners and multilateral organisations.



MAURITIUS WAS INVITED BY INDIA TO PARTICIPATE AS A GUEST COUNTRY IN THE G20 DELIBERATIONS WHERE ISSUES OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) WERE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE AGENDA.

Mauritius was invited by India⁴⁶ to participate as a guest country in the G20 deliberations where issues of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were at the forefront of the agenda and, for the first time, were reflected in the outcome document of the Summit. These discussions have bolstered the drive of SIDS to campaign for reforms of the international financial architecture. From February to July 2023, Mauritius held the presidency of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS). Mauritius actively led the discussions between OACPS and the EU for a comprehensive Post-Cotonou OACPS-EU partnership agreement.

In the Indian Ocean, Mauritius is reinforcing its partnerships with France through the *Commission Mixte Maurice-Réunion*, as well as with other countries of the region namely Madagascar, Seychelles and Comoros.

On the regional front, our collaboration with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is being enhanced to ensure regional cooperation in maritime security and safety, drug trafficking and drug use, and food security, amongst others. Mauritius has mobilised financial and technical assistance through the regional organisations for the implementation of projects in various sectors of the economy such as agriculture, education, gender, health, leather production, climate change and disaster mitigation. These projects have been implemented in consultation with the private sector and civil society. Mauritius hosted the Second and Third Ministerial Conferences on Maritime Security in June 2019 and November 2023, respectively. It also hosted the First Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking and Substance Abuse in the Western Indian Ocean in April 2024.

⁴⁶ India held the presidency of the G20 from December 2022 to November 2023.

TRADE

Mauritius has an established network of 54 Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs) and 46 Investment Promotion and Protection Agreements (IPPAs). These instruments offer investors a conducive environment for business to flourish.

In addition, 93.5% of tariff lines have already been liberalised on a Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis for all countries, including Least Developing Countries (LDCs). In 2021, the weighted tariff-average was estimated at 0.94 and Mauritius projects to keep it at a low level (SDG 17.10.1).

To expand its trading network, Mauritius is pursuing a market diversification strategy. Since 2019, Mauritius has concluded new trade agreements with India, China, the UK, Africa and United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Mauritius-India Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), the Mauritius-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the UK-Eastern Southern Africa (ESA) Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the UAE-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) all provide additional opportunities and preferential market access opportunities to Mauritian business community.



MAURITIUS HAS AN ESTABLISHED NETWORK OF 54 DOUBLE TAXATION AVOIDANCE AGREEMENTS (DTAAs) AND 46 INVESTMENT PROMOTION AND PROTECTION AGREEMENTS (IPPAS).

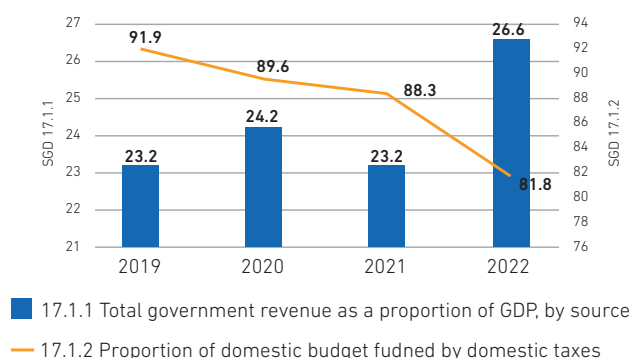
MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION

Financing

The Government of Mauritius maintains a prudent fiscal stance. Resources are directed towards supporting the middle-income and vulnerable groups, as well as the implementation of projects and programmes to consolidate the economic recovery. To enhance overall macroeconomic stability, efforts are directed at maintaining the budget deficit at a sustainable level, minimising fiscal risks, while putting public sector debt as a ratio to GDP on a declining trend. Public sector net debt as a percentage of GDP stood at 71.1% at end March 2024 and is expected to drop to 60.2% by end June 2026. Though debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services (SDG 17.4.1) increased during the pandemic and reached a peak of 8.6% for year ended December 2020, it declined thereafter and fell to 6.1% for year ended March 2024. It may be noted that the debt service includes repayment of a short-term bridging financing. Excluding this exceptional repayment, the debt service ratio stood at 2.8% for year ended March 2024.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented contraction in tax revenue⁴⁷. To sustain Government revenue, in Budget 2020/2021, the solidarity levy imposed on high income earners was reviewed to bring additional tax revenue. In addition, schemes

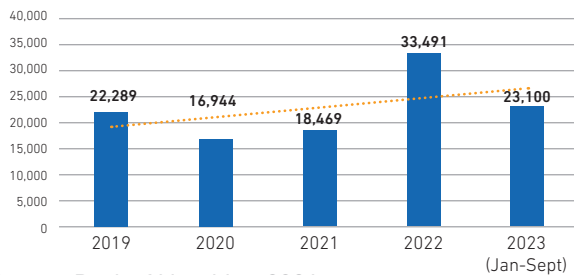
GOVERNMENT REVENUE AS A PROPORTION OF GDP vs PROPORTION OF DOMESTIC BUDGET FUNDED BY DOMESTIC TAXES



47 Source: Budget Estimates 2021/22.

were put in place at the level of the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) and Registrar General Department (RGD) respectively to reduce arrears of tax revenue. (SDG 17.1.2)

FDI INFLOWS (IN RS MILLION)



Source: Bank of Mauritius, 2024

FDI inflows in 2022 surpassed pre-pandemic figures by more than 66%. For the year 2023, the Bank of Mauritius estimated FDI to have reached to Rs 37 billion.

The investment rate went up from 17.1% in 2020 to approximately 23.5% in 2023. Statistics Mauritius forecasts investment rate to reach 25% in 2024. Inwards remittances to Mauritius were estimated at Rs 3 billion for year 2023. Transaction costs related to remittances remain relatively low and is less than 3% (SDG 10.c).

Alternative Sources of Financing

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted that there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to resource mobilisation and financing implementation of the SDGs. To this effect, Mauritius is leveraging on public-private partnerships (PPP) arrangements to complement FDI inflows. Government is therefore actively engaged in developing innovative investment opportunities and blended finance initiatives to attract private capital.

In June 2021, the Bank of Mauritius (BOM) published a guide on the issuance of sustainable bonds to ensure the integrity of the sustainable finance ecosystem in Mauritius and prevent greenwashing. Along the same lines, the Financial Services Commission (FSC) issued the Guidelines on the regulatory requirements to be adopted by issuers in line with international best practices for the issuance of green bonds in 2022.

With the support of the UNDP in Mauritius, the *SDG Investor Map* was launched in December 2022 to accelerate private sector investment for sustainable development.

The Bank of Mauritius set up a *Climate Change Centre* in October 2021, to further enhance the Mauritius IFC as a resilient and credible sustainable financial ecosystem.



THE NUMBER OF LOAN APPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS RECORDED A GROWTH OF 53% OVER THE SAME PERIOD JUNE 2022 TO JUNE 2023.

In September 2023, the *Sustainable Finance Framework* was also launched. The new framework will allow Government to channel funds into ventures such as renewable energy initiatives, social infrastructure development and clean transportation projects (SDG 9).

A survey conducted by the Bank of Mauritius in September 2023 indicated that the total exposures of the banking sector towards sustainable projects rose by 64% between end-June 2022 and end-June 2023. The number of loan applications for sustainable projects recorded a growth of 53% over the same period June 2022 to June 2023.

Box 13**EXAMPLES OF ALTERNATIVE FINANCING INSTRUMENTS USED IN MAURITIUS**

- ▶ Mauritius and Seychelles jointly benefitted from funding under the Joint SDG Fund in 2022 to implement two key projects, namely support to create an adequate enabling environment for the deployment of ocean renewable energy technologies to achieve the renewable energy target of 60% by 2030; and to produce locally low-cost bio-fertilisers from seaweeds to achieve food security, thus reducing Mauritius' dependence on imported chemical fertilisers.
- ▶ In 2022, CIM Financial Services Ltd was the first company to issue a green bond in Mauritius. The bond was first listed and traded, as per FSC guidelines, on the SEM in October 2023 and funds are being used to finance eligible green vehicles.
- ▶ EnVolt, the renewable energy development arm of ENL Group, issued a multi-currency green bond program, totalling Rs 2 billion (USD 45 million) in 2023 for the construction of 13 new solar farms across the island, with a cumulative capacity of 14 MWp. ENL, the parent company, initially invested Rs 175 million as equity.
- ▶ Some local banks have on the other hand availed of external financing in the form of credit lines and guarantees from institutions like the AFD to be subsequently deployed as green or sustainable loans to the general public.

DATA, MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Quality data enables strategic planning and informs decision making.

Mauritius has a relatively well-developed operating system for official statistics. Statistics Mauritius, Ministry of Health and Wellness and Bank of Mauritius are the key partners of the National Statistical System.

Statistics Mauritius operates under the Statistics Act (SDG 17.18.2), last updated in 2017; and it incorporates the main provisions and principles of the African Charter on Statistics and of the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

Statistics are produced across several dimensions, including social, economic, environmental and governance. In line with SDG 17.13.1 (economic dashboard). It is worth noting that in 2012, Mauritius adhered to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) which is a global benchmark for disseminating macroeconomic data to the public, established by the IMF. Mauritius is currently working towards adhering to the SDDS Plus, which is a more stringent and focus on stronger data dissemination.

According to World Bank Statistical Performance Index (SPI - a measurement used to assess the statistics performance of National Statistical Office in terms of data availability, dissemination, infrastructure, amongst others), Mauritius had a score of 77.3 (0 – low performance to 100 – high performance) in 2022 (SDG 17.18.1). SPI scores for past years show an improvement in statistical performance but there are still room for improvement.

All statistics produced are available on the website which serves for a one-stop-shop for data (a centralised data repository) for the country. As at date, for the SDG data framework, data are available for more than 75%



**QUALITY DATA ENABLES
STRATEGIC PLANNING
AND INFORMS DECISION
MAKING.**

of relevant indicators for the country. To the data extent, indicators are compiled according to UN metadata to ensure quality and consistency over time and across countries. In cases where relevant data, as recommended by UN metadata, are not available, proxy indicators have been developed in order not to hamper monitoring and reporting on SDG progress.

With the advent of digital technologies, Mauritius is adopting new business model, among others, to improve its service delivery for example, Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) technology is being used for data collection for surveys and censuses (SDG 17.18.3 & 17.19.2).

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As Mauritius nears the High Income status, it is becoming increasingly difficult to mobilise grant financing from bilateral partners and multilateral agencies. The cost of loan financing is comparatively higher. Some agencies are moving away from grant financing to alternative and innovative financing mechanisms which are mostly difficult to develop in SIDS due to limited economies of scale and private sector participation. It is therefore opportune to review the GDP criteria to allocate grant and concessional financing for SIDS. Additional criteria such as vulnerability of SIDS to climate hazards should also be considered.

Mauritius, in particular, is exploring innovative financing mechanisms such as revolving fund and guarantee fund in view of increasing resource mobilisation.

An Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance is being developed to enable the Mauritius International Financial Centre (IFC) to drive sustainable investment into Africa through an appropriate instrument or vehicle which would be administered by a holder of a global business license under the Financial Services Act. The intention is for the Guidelines to provide the required comfort to private investors and Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) that projects financed through the Mauritius IFC take on board sustainable investment principles and thus position the island economy as Africa's financial hub.



**A NATIONAL GREEN
TAXONOMY WILL ALSO BE
ELABORATED TO PROVIDE
A COMMON FRAMEWORK
FOR INVESTORS
WISHING TO INVEST IN
SUSTAINABLE GOODS
AND SERVICES.**

A *National Green Taxonomy* will also be elaborated to provide a common framework for investors wishing to invest in sustainable goods and services.

With the support of AFD, Business Mauritius is conducting a study to assess the potential for Mauritius to enter international carbon markets under Article 6.2 and/or 6.4 of the Paris Agreement. A feasibility study is also being carried out by the latter to implement market-based approaches under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

Mauritius is looking into finalising a trade agreement with Indonesia to diversify further our market base.

CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

Mauritius, despite its inherent vulnerabilities as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS) and the international context, is making significant progress in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Since the presentation of the first Voluntary National Review (VNR) report in 2019, Mauritius has had to constantly adapt itself to evolving needs to recover development gains which were eroded during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The confluence of global crises, such as geopolitical tensions, disruptions in supply chains, increasing inflationary pressures, and the impact of climate change, intensified national difficulties in mobilizing adequate financing for development.

Mauritius is classified as an Upper Middle-Income country and will be graduating to High-Income status in the coming years. In its assessment, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has commended Mauritius on the prompt deployment of timely measures that have helped the economy to rebound strongly and growth prospects are favourable. Moreover, inflationary pressures have subsided in 2023 and are projected to ease in 2024. In addition, Moody's has maintained the country's Baa3 credit rating, with a stable outlook in its January 2024 Credit Opinion.

However, Mauritius' socio-economic development achieved over decades, is overshadowed by the multi-dimensional vulnerabilities that it increasingly faces. Structural challenges, such as an ageing population, limited land areas, market access, increasing freight costs, are exacerbated by the devastating impacts of climate change, natural disasters and extreme weather events, such as flash floods, droughts, strong cyclones, sea-level rise, coastal degradation, ocean acidification and biodiversity loss.

REINFORCING SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

In spite of major uncertainties and global risks, Mauritius is geared towards sustaining the momentum to greater resilience of its economy. Protecting the purchasing power and living conditions of the population, particularly the middle-income and vulnerable groups, is of prime importance to Government. Policies, programmes and development projects aim to achieve prosperity for the people. Leveraging on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) plays an instrumental role to achieving the transformative agenda of Government across all sectors.

Mauritius is investing massively in mitigation and adaptation measures to fight the effects of climate change.

CONSOLIDATING PARTNERSHIPS

Mauritius has adopted a whole-of-society approach to ensure clear engagement of all partners in the implementation of the SDGs. As Mauritius moves forward its developmental agenda, it is important to consolidate partnerships and engagement as well as continue to raise awareness amongst stakeholders from all government agencies, civil society, the private sector, Academia and the youth.

STRENGTHENING MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Data collection may be strenuous, especially when data is unavailable. This delays evidence-based decision-making processes. Accessibility to quality, reliable and timely data should be improved.

It is therefore essential to further enhance coordination to bolster monitoring of the SDGs. In this regard, MFARIIT looks forward to the establishment of an SDG e-platform that will enable sharing of data cross platforms, assess the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, and suggest remedial actions through local and international partnerships.

Lead Organisations should show greater engagement and commitment to the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, in a timely manner.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building is an indispensable component to accelerate implementation of the SDGs. The capacity of stakeholders need to be enhanced with a view to reducing data gaps in the reporting of the SDGs and ensure better assessment of progress made in the implementation thereof.

Policy-makers and implementation bodies alike need to deepen their understanding of the indicators. Lack of expertise to measure some indicators, especially those relating to System of Economic and Environmental Accounts(SEEA) should be addressed. Also, given the interlinkages of sectors, advanced data analytic skills are required to analyse data on sustainable development.

SUSTAIN INVESTMENTS AND FINANCING

Government has made significant investments for the sustainable development of Mauritius. Leveraging on existing and new partnerships, Mauritius will respond to developmental challenges and build a more sustainable future. However, continued concerted actions are required to meet our ambition for an Inclusive, High Income and Green Economy.

The graduation of Mauritius to High Income status in the coming years will further constrain our ability to access concessional financing. The situation is amplified by limited fiscal space, rising public expenditure and high public debt. Therefore, Mauritius should be provided with alternative financing mechanisms, including innovative solutions to sustain its efforts towards achieving the 2030 Agenda.

ANNEX I

SDG PROGRESS TRACKER 2024

STATUS	
Goal 1 - END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 1.1.1: Extreme poverty, as defined by the World Bank has been eradicated in Mauritius. In 2017, around 10% of the population lived in relative poverty, defined as half of the median monthly household income per adult equivalent.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.2.1: Mauritius does not have a national poverty line. However, on the basis of household survey data, a Relative Poverty Line (RPL) is derived to assess poverty situation in the country.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.2.2: No data available. In April 2024, 7,044 households were registered under the Social Register of Mauritius (SRM).	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.3.1: Basic pensions are provided to the elderly, widows, orphans and invalids, irrespective of their economic status. As at June 2023, there were 308,626 beneficiaries of basic pensions.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.4.1: Almost the whole population have access to basic services, including drinking water, electricity, sanitation facilities, clean fuel for cooking, mobile network coverage, essential healthcare services, amongst others.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.4.2: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In Mauritius, the population adheres to the legal system and are therefore compliant to the land tenure.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.5.1: Vulnerable households are often disproportionately affected by disasters. 205 persons were affected by disasters in 2022. Deaths per 100,000 population is negligible. A National Disaster Risk Reduction Centre (NDRRC) has been set up. [appears three times – 1.5.1, 11.5.1 and 13.1.1]	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.5.2: Direct disaster economic loss in relation to global GDP in 2022 was estimated at 0.000241. Flooding caused during strong cyclones and overflow of rivers damage individual houses and infrastructure. Vulnerable families end up losing their belongings and foodstuffs during such disasters. [appears two times – 1.5.2, 11.5.2]	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.5.3: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - In 2021, the <i>National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan</i> for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared. Phase I of the <i>National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System</i> has been implemented. [appears three times – 1.5.3, 11.b.1 and 13.1.2]	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.5.4: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - Disaster Risk Reduction management in Mauritius consists of a three-tier system that comprises the National Crisis Committee at Minister's level, the <i>National Emergency Operations Command</i> (NEOC) at national level, and the <i>Local Emergency Operations Command</i> (LEOC) at municipal/district council levels. [appears three times – 1.5.4, 11.b.2 and 13.1.3]	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.a.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In FY 2023/24, total allocation to poverty alleviation and empowerment stood at Rs 823.2 million. Expenditure on poverty reduction programme includes Government pensions.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.a.2: In 2020, total Government spending on essential services, namely education, health, social protection, was estimated at 54.9%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 1.b.1: Government spending on social protection includes basic pensions and social security benefits, free education, free health services and free bus transport. In 2017, pro-poor public social spending was estimated at 10.3%.	ON TRACK
GOAL 2 - END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 2.1.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 2.1.2: The policy involves an increase in the food crop production using amongst others, sheltered farming. During the period 2019 to 2022 whereby food crop production in the open field has increased by 25%, from 93,741 tonnes in 2019 to 117,115 tonnes in 2022.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.2.1: No data available. However, with the assistance of the WHO, Mauritius' National Nutrition Surveillance System (NNSS) has been strengthened which will improve on data collection.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.2.2: No data available. However, new anthropometric equipment (infant weighting scale, length board, stadiometer and taring scale) that meet WHO's standards have been procured and distributed in Mauritius and Rodrigues.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.2.3: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In 2022, 12.3% of pregnant women were found to be moderately/severe anaemia (Hb<10mg/dl). The Nutrition Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) to reduce nutritional anemia in female adolescents and in women of reproductive age is being implemented. Also, Mauritian Standards for Wheat Flour fortification was gazette in April 2023 and included in Food Regulations 2024, making fortification mandatory.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.3.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> Annual total food crop production was estimated at 14.9 tonnes per hectare.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.3.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 2.4.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In 2022, 22.2% of agricultural area were estimated to be under productive and sustainable agriculture.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.5.1: Some 700 accessions crops are being conserved in genebanks unit.	ON TRACK

STATUS	
GOAL 2 - END HUNGER, ACHIEVE FOOD SECURITY AND IMPROVED NUTRITION AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 2.5.2: Only the creole cattle breed is at risk (Island of Mauritius). In situ and ex situ conservation of germplasm.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.a.1: In 2021, the Agriculture Orientation Index (AOI) for Government expenditures was 0.6.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.a.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 2.b.1: In 2022, some Rs 0.8 million were disbursed under the Freight Rebate Scheme.	ON TRACK
Indicator 2.c.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
GOAL 3 - ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES	OVERALL ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.1.1: Maternal Mortality Ratio per 100,000 live births was estimated at 41 in 2022, which is below the global target of 70.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.1.2: Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel is almost 100%.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.2.1: Under 5 Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births increased to 16.5 in 2022, but is still well below the global target of 25.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.2.2: Neonatal Mortality Rate per one thousand live births was 8.9 in 2022, which is below the global target of 12.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.3.1: Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population is low (estimated at 0.2).	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.3.2: Number of new cases of tuberculosis per 1,000 population is low (0.1).	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.3.3: Mauritius is malaria-free – only a few imported cases are reported annually	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.3.4: <u>Proxy being used:</u> Laboratory tests with regard to Hepatitis B is negligible in Mauritius.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.3.5: No data available. Free health care is easily accessible to whole population for all types of diseases.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.4.1: A National NCD Action Plan 2023-2028 has been developed and is being implemented.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.4.2: Suicide mortality rate was estimated at 8.6 per 100,000 mid-population in 2022.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.5.1: No data available. Treatment interventions are provided free of user cost according to established protocol.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.5.2: National Action Plan to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol 2020-2024 is being implemented.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.6.1: In 2022, death rate due to road traffic injuries per 100,000 mid-year population was estimated at 9.2.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.7.1: No data available. Family planning services are provided across all primary health centres, more than 150 points in primary health care.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.7.2: In 2022, adolescent birth rate per 1,000 women aged less than 20 years (by age group) was estimated at 21.0.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.8.1: The population has universal access to essential health services, both in Mauritius and Rodrigues.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.8.2: In 2017, 8.2% of the population spent more than 10% of their household expenditure on health.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.9.1: No data available. In 2022, the annual mean for PM10 was below the WHO guidelines for PM10 which is 20ug/m ³ . [appears twice – 3.9.1, 11.6.2]	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.9.2: Not Relevant, as the whole of Mauritius has access to safe water and sanitation.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.9.3: Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning per 100,000 mid-year population was negligible.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.a.1: In 2021, 18.1% of the population aged 25 to 74 years old smoked. National Action Plan for Tobacco Control 2022-2026 is being implemented.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.b.1: The whole population have access to affordable medicines and vaccines on a sustainable basis.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.b.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 3.b.3: 100% of health facilities have relevant essential medicines available free of charge in public hospitals.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.c.1: In 2022, for every 10,000 population, there was 30 doctors and 35 nurses.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 3.d.1: Mauritius' International Health Regulations (IHR) capacity and health emergency preparedness was rated at 66% in 2022.	ON TRACK
Indicator 3.d.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED

STATUS

GOAL 4 - ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 4.1.1: No data available. However, diagnostic assessments are used to assess minimum proficiency in Grade 3. At end of primary level, proficiency levels in reading and mathematics is measured through PSAC. At end of lower secondary level, proficiency level is assessed through performance at NCE.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.1.2: The Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE) is being implemented as part of the educational reforms introduced in 2015. In 2022, pass rate for PSAC, at the end of primary education, was 80.6%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.2.1: No data available. The policy is that children leave pre-primary schooling with an enriched preschool experience and confidence for future learning and meet primary school readiness at start of Grade 1.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.2.2: In 2021, net enrolment rate among pupils aged 4 years was 62.1%. Since January 2024, pre-primary education is free, making it more accessible through both public and grant-aided institutions.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.3.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In 2019, with the introduction of free tertiary education policy, undergraduate courses in public Higher Education Institutions and Technical Education on fulltime or part time mode is free. Vocational qualifications delivered via Polytechnics Mauritius is also free of charge.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.4.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> Mauritius has introduced the Polytechnics stream in 2018 to create new pathways for technical education. A new Technology Education stream has also been set up in 2024 to encourage secondary school students at Grade 10 to engage in applied sectors in technology (ICT, Health and Hospitality and Engineering).	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.5.1: Mauritius ensures a conducive environment and equal access to quality education and training to all learners, including children with disabilities. A common curriculum is taught to all, irrespective of gender, religion or belief. Since 2015, Government meets the full cost of the Cambridge SC/HSC/GCE examination fees for school candidates subject to students satisfying a 90% attendance at school. Scholarships are provided to students from vulnerable families and students with disabilities.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.6.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> Mauritius strives to empower its citizens with literacy and numeracy skills, fostering lifelong learning and active participation in society through Lifelong Learning Approach, Functional Literacy and Numeracy, Youth and Adult Programs, Gender Equality, Assessment and Monitoring, Inclusive Strategies, Global Citizenship Education, Quality Education for All, amongst others.	ON TRACK
Indicator 4.7.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - At primary level, the curriculum includes different disciplines, like History, Geography, Values and citizenship education and multicultural education. At secondary level, Human Rights Education (HRE) and Life Skills and Value Education (LSVE) form part of the curriculum. Modules for Citizenship Education and Values Education also form part of the training curriculum of Educators. [appears three times - 4.7.1, 12.8.1 & 13.3.1]	ACHIEVED
Indicator 4.a.1: All schools in Mauritius are equipped with basic infrastructure, including access to electricity, drinking water, sanitation and internet facilities. The Mauritian education system is inclusive- schools having learners with disability are barrier free, facilitating their access to the school.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 4.b.1: No data available. Mauritius provides the Mauritius to Africa Scholarships scheme since 2016 to African students for studies at Undergraduate /Masters in public Universities	ACHIEVED
Indicator 4.c.1: All Educators (pre-primary, primary and secondary) in Mauritius follow a qualifying certification in teacher training at the Mauritius Institute of Education prior to joining the public service.	ACHIEVED
GOAL 5 - ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 5.1.1: <u>Qualitative indicator</u> - Various Legislations are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex, namely: (i) Article 16 (3) of the Constitution of Mauritius; (ii) Equal Opportunities Act 2012; (iii) Local Government Act 2011; (iv) Criminal Code (Amendment) Act 2012; (v) Protection from Domestic Violence Act 2004; (vi) Workers' Rights Act 2019. A new Gender Equality Commission Bill, and Domestic Abuse Bill.	ON TRACK
Indicator 5.2.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> The Protection from Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) 1997 ensures protection of spouses from acts of domestic violence. The PDVA was amended in 2004, 2007, 2011 and 2016 so as to protect persons living under the same roof, broaden the definition of domestic violence, increase the penalties and increase the powers of Enforcement Officers, amongst others. A new Domestic Abuse Bill, under preparation will repeal the PDVA (2016). It aims to reinforce legal parameters to protect victims of domestic violence, making the perpetrator of domestic violence accountable for his or her behaviour and acts, and reinforcing the duties and powers of Enforcement Officers, Police Officers and District Magistrates.	ON TRACK
Indicator 5.2.2: No disaggregated data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 5.3.1: <u>Proxy being used:</u> In 2022, only 2 women aged 16 – 17 years were reportedly married civilly. With the enactment of the Children's Act, the Children's Court Act and the Child Sex Offender Register Act in 2020, the laws for the development, well-being and protection of children have been reinforced. It is an offence to marry a child (a person under the age of 18 years) civilly and/or religiously; nor can a person live together or force a child to live together, under the same roof, either as spouses or unmarried partners.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.3.2: Not Relevant – No cases of female genital mutilation or cutting was in Mauritius.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 5.4.1: No disaggregated data available.	NOT REPORTED

GOAL 5 - ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS	STATUS OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 5.5.1: As at February 2024, 21.7% of seats in National Assembly are held by women. The Local Government Act 2011 stipulates that at least 1 out of 3 candidates to be fielded for elections at local level should be of the opposite sex. At Municipal level, there has been an increase from 12.5% in 2005 to 28.2% in 2012 and at Village Council level, the increase has been from 5 % in 2005 to 30.3% in 2012.	ON TRACK
Indicator 5.5.2: At the level of decision making in the public sector, 40% of Senior Chief Executives are women; 45.9% are Permanent Secretaries and 62.9 % are Deputy Permanent Secretary. The proportion of women in judiciary stood at 68.2 % for judges and 68.9 % for magistrates.	ON TRACK
Indicator 5.6.1: No data available. Family planning services are provided across all primary health centres, more than 150 points in primary health care. The National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy 2022 is in place to guide implementation of activities to improve the sexual and reproductive health of the population. Awareness campaigns have been conducted through HIEC materials and radio/ tv programs, in collaboration with NGOs. Capacity building were also provided to health professionals.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.6.2: <u>Qualitative indicator</u> - The National Sexual and Reproductive Health policy 2022 ensures that every person has access to sexual and reproductive health information and services. Sexuality education is provided to school children, and is part of the curriculum. Information sessions and workshops are organized to sensitize adolescents on sexual and reproductive health.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.a.1: No disaggregated data available.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.a.2: <u>Qualitative indicator</u> - The legal framework makes no discrimination as to land ownership and/or control.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.b.1: No disaggregated data available. There is no discrimination on who possesses a mobile phone.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 5.c.1: No data available. The Government's policy is to encourage gender mainstreaming across sectors.	ON TRACK
GOAL 6 - ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 6.1.1: 99.8% of the population have access to safe drinking water.	Achieved
Indicator 6.2.1: 99.7% of the population have access to safely managed sanitation facilities.	Achieved
Indicator 6.3.1: Some 52 Mm ³ of wastewater is being treated on a yearly basis by the 10 wastewater treatment plants around the island.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.3.2: The CWA conducts regular monitoring of water bodies, including rivers, lakes, and reservoirs to assess ambient water quality.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.4.1: The government has implemented various policies and initiatives to improve water use efficiency across different sectors of the economy, namely Infrastructure. Upgrades, Water Conservation Programs, Rainwater Harvesting and Reuse, Water-Energy Nexus, among others.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.4.2: Level of water stress has increased from 2019 to 2020. By 2025, Mauritius will be water scarce.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.5.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> – An Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) is being implemented. A Water Observatory has been set up for information dissemination.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.5.2: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 6.6.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> – Several wetlands have been designated as Ramsar sites and regulations and management plans have been established to protect and restore these areas. All water courses are protected under the Rivers and Cannal Act 1863. All reserves of water courses are protected by the Forest and Reserves Act 1983. Integrated coastal zone management plans consider the ecological, economic, and social dimensions of coastal areas, aiming to balance conservation and development objectives. Marine protected areas have been established to conserve marine biodiversity, protect coral reefs, and sustain fisheries resources.	ON TRACK
Indicator 6.a.1: Mauritius doesn't typically receive significant amounts of official development assistance (ODA) for water and sanitation projects due to its status as an upper-middle-income country.	AT RISK
Indicator 6.b.1: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
GOAL 7 - ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 7.1.1: 99.7% of the population has access to a reliable supply of electricity.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 7.1.2: No data available, but Mauritius promotes clean cooking technologies and fuels.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 7.2.1: Proxy being used: Government has set the target of 60% RE in the electricity Mix by 2030 and phasing out of coal by 2030.	ON TRACK
Indicator 7.3.1: Mauritius aims to improve its energy efficiency and reduce its energy intensity as part of its sustainable development goals.	ON TRACK
Indicator 7.a.1: No data available. However, Mauritius actively engages with development partners to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology as well as knowledge sharing, technology transfer and capacity building.	ON TRACK
Indicator 7.b.1: Large scale IPPs accounted for around 40.6% of the total energy sent out to the grid in 2022. Government has set the target of 60% RE in the electricity Mix by 2030 and phasing out of coal by 2030. [appears twice - 7.b.1 & 12.a.1]	ON TRACK

STATUS

GOAL 8 - PROMOTE SUSTAINED, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, FULL AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 8.1.1: Over the past decade, Mauritius grew on average by 3.5%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.2.1: The Youth Employment Programme (YEP), Dual Training Programme and the Graduate Training for Employment Scheme (GTES), the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) and the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) introduced various skills development and enhancement programmes to boost productivity	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.3.1: <u>Proxy being used</u> - The financial support provided via the Mauritius Revenue Authority during the pandemic, encouraged workers operating in the informal economy to make themselves known.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.4.1: No data available. Not computed due to lack of technical capacity and data. [appears two times - 8.4.1 & 12.2.1]	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 8.4.2: No data available. Not computed due to lack of technical capacity and data. [appears two times - 8.4.2 & 12.2.2]	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 8.5.1: The introduction of the Workers' Rights Act (WRA) 2019 has been an important milestone. In line with SDG Indicator 8.5.1, the legislative framework has been broadened whereby the Act recognises flexible working hours and atypical work, including home workers, online platform workers as well as those who work for more than one employer concurrently.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.5.2: Unemployment rate was 6.3% in 2023.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.6.1: To promote the integration of youth, women and vulnerable groups into the labour market, the MITD have introduced the National Apprenticeship Programme for youth, National Training and Reskilling Scheme, National Skills Development Programme in 2021.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.7.1: Under Section 8 of the Workers' Rights Act 2019 which has repealed and replaced the Employment Rights Act 2008, no person shall employ a child for employment or work in any occupation. A child is defined as a person under the age of 16.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.8.1: The Occupational Safety and Health (Amendment) Act 2022 has been further amended by the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2023. Measures are geared towards reducing accidents at workplaces whereby requiring employers having not less than 5 nor more than 49 employees to set up a safety and health collaboration committee to discuss safety and health issues at the workplace through meetings held once every 2 months.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.8.2: The rights to Freedom of Association, rights to exercise Trade union rights, to negotiation and collective bargaining is advocated in the Employment Relations Act 2008 for every worker, including migrant workers.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 8.9.1: Growth of Tourism as a percentage distribution to GVA was 9.2%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 8.10.1: In January 2019, the National Payment Systems Act 2018 entered into force to empower the Bank of Mauritius to regulate, oversee and supervise the national payment system and other payment systems being operated in Mauritius, while enabling non-bank payment service providers to operate in a regulated environment conducive to their line of business.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 8.10.2: In August 2019, the Bank launched the Mauritius Central Automated Switch for routing payments amongst operators on a 24x7 basis. This innovative digital platform makes banking, e-commerce and mobile payments interoperable and encourages cashless means of payment.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 8.a.1: Mauritius, being an upper middle country has never benefitted from Aid to Trade.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 8.b.1: Training programmes are being implemented, namely Training and Placement of Persons with disabilities, Trainee and Surveyor Scheme, Graduate Training For Employment Scheme (GTES), National Skills Development Programme (NSDP), National Training and Reskilling Scheme (NTRS), Skills Development Support Programme on Artificial Intelligence, Sectoral Skills Development Scheme (SSDS) and the National Apprenticeship Scheme (NAP) to increase the employability of youth in the labour market.	ON TRACK
GOAL 9 - BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 9.1.1: No data available. However, Mauritius has a comprehensive road infrastructure, including in the rural and coastal areas ensuring access to all.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.1.2: Port - In 2023, total cargo traffic reached 7,933,513 tonnes, 2,961 vessels called at Port Louis harbour. Airport - The volume of air cargo handled was 49,412 MT in 2023. Tourist arrivals stood at 1,295,410 in 2023.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.2.1: In 2023, Manufacturing contributed 12.9% to Gross Value Added (GVA). An Industrial Policy and Strategic Plan for Mauritius 2020 – 2025 was developed to boost the sector.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.2.2: About 82,900 people were employed in the manufacturing sector in 2022.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.3.1: SMEs contributed 34.4% to GVA in 2022. To further strengthen the resilience of SMEs to exogenous shocks, a mid-term review of the existing 10-year SME Masterplan.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.3.2: No data available. Various support schemes are available to SMEs via the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd, the State Investment Corporation Limited, the Investment Support Programme Limited, SME Equity Fund Ltd and SME Mauritius Ltd.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.4.1: In 2022, CO2 emissions per unit value added was 1.17. Under its updated NDCs, Mauritius is committed to achieve a 40% reduction in GHG emissions.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.5.1: In 2021, Research and development as a percentage of GDP was estimated at 0.30%.	ON TRACK

STATUS	
GOAL 9 - BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 9.5.2: In 2021, there were some 1,547 researchers per million inhabitants.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.a.1: No data available. However, ODAs remain limited.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 9.b.1: Since January 2023, the Ministry is in the process of implementing a "Manufacturing 4.0" Project with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat to support manufacturing enterprises enhance their productivity and competitiveness through the adoption of digitally advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Industrial Internet of Things, Robotics, Cloud Computing and 3D Printing.	ON TRACK
Indicator 9.c.1: 99% of population are covered by a mobile network.	ACHIEVED
GOAL 10 - REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 10.1.1: Various income support is being provided to those earning upto Rs 50,000. These include the National Minimum Wage (NMW), Negative Income Tax (NIT) and subsistence allowance to eligible beneficiaries under the Social Register of Mauritius (SRM) of the Marshall Plan Against Poverty.	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.2.1: The Marshall Plan Against Poverty and additional measures were introduced to promote socio-economic empowerment of those living below the 50% median income as well as other income allowances.	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.3.1: No data available. [appears twice - 10.3.1 & 16.b.1]	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 10.4.1: Compensation to employees including all payments of wages and salaries, payment in kind and employers' contribution to social security funds evolve as per economic situation. In 2022, labour share of GDP was 36.6%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.4.2: In Budget 2023/24, additional reforms were introduced for a more progressive taxation regime (starting at 0% and capped at a maximum of 20%), to ensure more equity and fairness in the system. The tax reform is expected to generate an additional GDP growth of 0.6 percentage points to the Mauritian economy	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.5.1: Moody's has maintained the country's Baa3 credit rating, with a stable outlook in its January 2024 Credit Opinion.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 10.6.1: No data available. [appears twice - 10.6.1 & 16.8.1]	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 10.7.1: All costs associated with the recruitment process, including travel expenses to and from Mauritius, are borne solely by the employer.	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.7.2: A Migration and Development Policy is being implemented.	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.7.3: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 10.7.4: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 10.a.1: 93.5% of tariff lines have already been liberalised on a Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis for all countries, including Least Developing Countries (LDCs).	ON TRACK
Indicator 10.b.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 10.c.1: A minimal transaction cost is charged by banks for remittances. In 2022, it was estimated at 0.8%.	ACHIEVED
GOAL 11 - MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 11.1.1: 12000 social housing units planned among which construction of 8000 have already started.	ON TRACK
Indicator 11.2.1: In 2023, 97% of the Urban population had convenient access to public transport (within 500m to low capacity systems and/or 1000m to high capacity systems).	ACHIEVED
Indicator 11.3.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 11.3.2: Qualitative Indicator - Mauritius is updating its National Land Development Strategy (NLDS). The preparation of the NLDS has included an important multi- stakeholder consultation process.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 11.4.1: Mauritius has invested in the regeneration of the City Port Louis. Port Louis is since 2021, received as a Creative City on the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UNCCN).	ON TRACK
Indicator 11.5.1: Vulnerable households are often disproportionately affected by disasters. 205 persons were affected by disasters in 2022. Deaths per 100,000 population is negligible. A National Disaster Risk Reduction Centre (NDRRC) has been set up. [appears three times - 1.5.1, 11.5.1 and 13.1.1]	ON TRACK
Indicator 11.5.2: Direct disaster economic loss in relation to global GDP in 2022 was estimated at 0.000241. Flooding caused during strong cyclones and overflow of rivers damage individual houses and infrastructure. Vulnerable families end up losing their belongings and foodstuffs during such disasters. [appears two times - 1.5.2, 11.5.2]	ON TRACK
Indicator 11.6.1: Proxy being used: In 2022, 99% of households reported that their refuse disposals are regularly collected.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 11.6.2: No data available. In 2022, the annual mean for PM10 was below the WHO guidelines for PM10 which is 20ug/m3. [appears twice - 3.9.1, 11.6.2]	ON TRACK
Indicator 11.7.1: No data available. Data on 'open green space' is being fined-tuned.	ON TRACK

		STATUS
GOAL 11 - MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE		OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 11.7.2: No data available.		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 11.a.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - Plans for all cities are based on participatory and consultation approach by Municipal Councils and Central Government (planning agency).		ON TRACK
Indicator 11.b.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - In 2021, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared. Phase I of the National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System has been implemented. [appears three times – 1.5.3, 11.b.1 and 13.1.2]		ON TRACK
Indicator 11.b.2: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - Disaster Risk Reduction management in Mauritius consists of a three-tier system that comprises the National Crisis Committee at Minister's level, the National Emergency Operations Command (NEOC) at national level, and the Local Emergency Operations Command (LEOC) at municipal/district council levels. [appears three times – 1.5.4, 11.b.2 and 13.1.3]		ON TRACK
Indicator 11.c.1: Not Relevant.		NOT REPORTED
GOAL 12 - ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS		OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 12.1.1: An Environment Masterplan, a Roadmap and Action Plan for a Circular Economy and an Action Plan, an institutional mechanism, and a Green Charter for greening of the public sector were adopted.		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.2.1: No data available. Not computed due to lack of technical capacity and data. [appears two times - 8.4.1 & 12.2.1]		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 12.2.2: No data available. Not computed due to lack of technical capacity and data. [appears two times - 8.4.2 & 12.2.2]		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 12.3.1: No data available. Not computed due to lack of technical capacity and data.		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 12.4.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - 12 MEAs that are related to waste (chemicals and other waste) that have been signed/ ratified by Mauritius - (1)Vienna Convention, (2) Montreal Protocol, (3) Stockholm Convention, (4) Rotterdam Convention, (5) SAICM, (6) Basel Convention, (7) Bamako Convention, (8) Chemical Weapon Convention, (9) Minamata Convention, (10) MARPOL 73/78, (11) Nairobi Convention,(12) OPRC-HNS Protocol		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.4.2: Some 660 tons of hazardous wastes have been collected and transited at the Interim Hazardous Waste Facility at La Chaumière since 2017. Additionally, 2,714 tonnes of Heavy Fuel Oil waste generated from the MV Wakashio shipwreck in 2020 were collected and exported for recycling.		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.5.1: No data available.		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 12.6.1: As at April 2024, there are 18 listed companies which have voluntarily subscribed to the Sustainability Index of the Stock Exchange of Mauritius (SEMSI).		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.7.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - As Government shifts to sustainable procurement practices, amendments have been brought in the standard bidding documents for vehicles, computers, laptops and printers in 2022.		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.8.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - At primary level, the curriculum includes different disciplines, like History, Geography, Values and citizenship education and multicultural education. At secondary level, Human Rights Education (HRE) and Life Skills and Value Education (LSVE) form part of the curriculum. Modules for Citizenship Education and Values Education also form part of the training curriculum of Educators. [appears three times - 4.7.1, 12.8.1 & 13.3.1]		ACHIEVED
Indicator 12.a.1: Large scale IPPs accounted for around 40.6% of the total energy sent out to the grid in 2022. Government has set the target of 60% RE in the electricity Mix by 2030 and phasing out of coal by 2030. [appears twice - 7.b.1 & 12.a.1]		ON TRACK
Indicator 12.b.1: No data available.		NOT REPORTED
Indicator 12.c.1: A subsidy of 56% is currently being provided on domestic LPG Cylinder (12 kg) to ensure access to domestic LPG by all consumers. The annual consumption of domestic LPG is currently 78,200 MT.		ON TRACK
GOAL 13 - TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS		OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 13.1.1: Vulnerable households are often disproportionately affected by disasters. 205 persons were affected by disasters in 2022. Deaths per 100,000 population is negligible. A National Disaster Risk Reduction Centre (NDRRC) has been set up. [appears three times – 1.5.1, 11.5.1 and 13.1.1]		ON TRACK
Indicator 13.1.2: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - In 2021, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared. Phase I of the National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System has been implemented. [appears three times – 1.5.3, 11.b.1 and 13.1.2]		ON TRACK
Indicator 13.1.3: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - Disaster Risk Reduction management in Mauritius consists of a three-tier system that comprises the National Crisis Committee at Minister's level, the National Emergency Operations Command (NEOC) at national level, and the Local Emergency Operations Command (LEOC) at municipal/district council levels. [appears three times – 1.5.4, 11.b.2 and 13.1.3]		ON TRACK

GOAL 13 - TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS	STATUS
<p>Indicator 13.2.1: Mauritius has updated its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in 2021, with ambitious target to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% by 2030, achieve 60% of energy requirements from green sources as well as a total phase out use of coal from electricity production by 2030. An NDC Action Plan was finalised also in 2022. A National Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan (NMSAP) for the period 2022 to 2030 has been finalised. The Roadmap on Renewable Energy was reviewed in 2022. In 2021, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared and is being implemented. [appears twice - 13.2.1 & 13.b.1]</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 13.2.2: In 2022, the net GHG emissions was higher than in 2021 mainly due to an increase of economic activities following the lifting of all sanitary restrictions imposed due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 13.3.1: Qualitative Indicator - At primary level, the curriculum includes different disciplines, like History, Geography, Values and citizenship education and multicultural education. At secondary level, Human Rights Education (HRE) and Life Skills and Value Education (LSVE) form part of the curriculum. Modules for Citizenship Education and Values Education also form part of the training curriculum of Educators. [appears three times - 4.7.1, 12.8.1 & 13.3.1]</p>	ACHIEVED
<p>Indicator 13.a.1: Different windows/sources of funding are being explored for resource mobilisation. From 2016 to March 2024, resources mobilised from International Funding Agencies amounts to around USD 103.5M. Efforts to secure donor funding are ongoing.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 13.b.1: Mauritius has updated its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) in 2021, with ambitious target to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 40% by 2030, achieve 60% of energy requirements from green sources as well as a total phase out use of coal from electricity production by 2030. An NDC Action Plan was finalised also in 2022. A National Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan (NMSAP) for the period 2022 to 2030 has been finalised. The Roadmap on Renewable Energy was reviewed in 2022. In 2021, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the period 2020 to 2030, was prepared and is being implemented. [appears twice - 13.2.1 & 13.b.1]</p>	ON TRACK
GOAL 14 - CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	OVERALL ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.1.1: No data available.</p>	NOT REPORTED
<p>Indicator 14.2.1: Qualitative Indicator - Mauritius has adopted an ecosystem-based approach to develop a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) is in the process of elaboration.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.3.1: Average marine acidity (pH) was estimated at 8.01 in 2022. The Mauritius Oceanography Institute (MOI) has signed an MOU with the Ocean Foundation to initiate research on ocean acidification. In this context, the MOI is setting up an Oceanic Carbonate Chemistry Observatory.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.4.1: A new Fisheries Act has been promulgated in December 2023 to ensure the long-term conservation, management and development of fisheries and aquaculture in Mauritius. It also guarantees effective control and enforcement of fishing or fishing related activities to tackle Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.5.1: Proxy being used: - The National Coordinating Committee of the MSP aims at ensuring conservation of the marine environment.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.6.1: Maritime surveillance to combat IUU fishing has been reinforced. An Electronic Catch Reporting system (ERS) was introduced. The National Action Plan for IUU fishing will also be reviewed.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.7.1: Proxy being used: - Total fish production increased by 15.5%, from 28,769 tonnes in 2021 to 33,226 tonnes in 2022. In 2021, the Aquaculture Policy was reviewed to encourage responsible and sustainable in-lagoon aquaculture in our EEZ and expand small-scale in-lagoon aquaculture.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.a.1: Mauritius has signed several Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with institutions, including the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) of Australia in 2019, the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD) of France in 2020, Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research (Bremen) of Germany in 2020, Curtin University of Australia in 2021 and the Federal Agency for Fisheries of Russia in 2021.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.b.1: Financial assistance are provided to fishermen for the purchase of cannottes and off-lagoon semi-industrial fishing vessels.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 14.c.1: Qualitative Indicator - Resolution 23/03 on establishing a voluntary fishing closure in the Indian Ocean for the conservation of tropical tunas is effective as from 01 January 2024.</p>	ON TRACK
GOAL 15 - PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS	OVERALL ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 15.1.1: Total forest cover in Mauritius in 2023 was estimated at 42,002 hectares, representing 22.5% of total land area. Mauritius is covered by some 243 hectares of these mangrove seedlings.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 15.1.2: Proxy being used - The terrestrial protected area in Mauritius increased by 0.3%, from an initial 3,594 hectares to 8,582.21. The Mauritius Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy (2017-26) is being implemented.</p>	ON TRACK
<p>Indicator 15.2.1: Mauritius is promoting sustainable forest management practices under the GEF-funded UNDP project of Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Mauritius (2021-2024).</p>	ON TRACK

STATUS

GOAL 15 - PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS, COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 15.3.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 15.4.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 15.4.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 15.5.1: In the Bird Recovery Programme and Conservation Management Areas, around 1000 hectares natural habitats have been restored over the last decade which include islet , wetlands, mangrove, forest (private and public owned) ecosystems and National Parks.	ON TRACK
Indicator 15.6.1: <u>Qualitative Indicator</u> - Mauritius has signed and ratified the Nagoya Protocol to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2012 and the NPCS is the National Focal Point of the Protocol. Legal and policy framework analysis studies have been undertaken in collaboration with the IOC.	ON TRACK
Indicator 15.7.1: No data available. [appears twice - 15.7.1 & 15.c.1]	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 15.8.1: In 2023, the National Invasive Alien Species Policy and Action Plan Strategy was updated and organic scanning equipment purchased for control of invasive organic products at airport entry.	ON TRACK
Indicator 15.9.1: National targets related to the Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 have been established in the new Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2017-25 for Mauritius, which is 'By 2025, practical pathways are identified and various tools help integrate the diverse set of biodiversity values in public and private policy and decision-making, planning, production, accounting and reporting processes'.	ON TRACK
Indicator 15.a.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 15.b.1: No data available.	ON TRACK
Indicator 15.c.1: No data available. [appears twice - 15.7.1 & 15.c.1]	ON TRACK
GOAL 16 - PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 16.1.1: A Policing Plan 2024 that focuses on eight priorities is being implemented, to inter alia, combat drug trafficking; reduce road fatalities; curb property crimes; tackle cyber criminality; combat risks of Trafficking in Persons; as well as ensure maritime safety and security.	ON TRACK
Indicator 16.1.2: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.1.3: <u>Proxy being used</u> – Number of victims reported in 2022 are: 78 cases of homicides, 8,365 cases of assaults and 612 cases of sexual violence.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.1.4: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.2.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.2.2: Figures are negligible.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.2.3: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.3.1: Proportion of victims of violence who reported during the past 12 months, is on a decreasing trend.	ON TRACK
Indicator 16.3.2: In 2023, 48.15% of unsentenced detainees were noted, which is on a decreasing trend.	ON TRACK
Indicator 16.3.3: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.4.1: No data available. However, since 2022, Mauritius is 'compliant' or 'largely compliant' with all the 40 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) recommendations.	ON TRACK
Indicator 16.4.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.5.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.5.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.6.1: In 2021, 99.5% of the primary government expenditures were from budgeted expenditure.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 16.6.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.7.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.7.2: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.8.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.9.1: Parents are encouraged to register their newborns.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 16.10.1: No data available.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 16.10.2: For increased awareness and understanding of citizens' rights, the Constitution has been translated in French. A translation in Mauritian Creole is also envisaged.	ON TRACK

STATUS

GOAL 16 - PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL AND BUILD EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 16.a.1: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), an independent institution established under the Protection of Human Rights Act, is an accredited 'A' status institution, that is, fully compliant with the Paris Principles.	ON TRACK
Indicator 16.b.1: No data available. [appears twice - 10.3.1 & 16.b.1]	NOT REPORTED
GOAL 17 - STRENGTHEN THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND REVITALIZE THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	OVERALL ON TRACK
Indicator 17.1.1: In 2022, total government revenue as a proportion of GDP was 26.6%. Mauritius maintains a prudent fiscal stance and directs resources towards supporting the middle-income and vulnerable groups, and the implementation of projects and programmes to consolidate the economic recovery.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.1.2: In 2022, 81.8% of domestic budget was funded by domestic taxes.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.2.1: Not Relevant.	NOT REPORTED
Indicator 17.3.1: In 2022, total Foreign direct investment (FDI) as a proportion of GNI was 4.8%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.3.2: In 2022, volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP was estimated at 0.5%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.4.1: Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services fell to 6.1% for year ended March 2024.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.5.1: Mauritius has adopted and implemented a panoply of investment promotion regimes with a view to attract both national and regional investment opportunities in the country.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.6.1: Necessary ICT facilities are being implemented for enhanced internet access. Mobile coverage, including 5G is 100% and fibre optic cables are in place. Rodrigues Island is connected to the MARS Submarine Cable since 2019.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.7.1: No data available. However, to enhance cooperation, engagement with partner countries and donor institutions have been reinforced. Country programmes are being developed with partner agencies to emphasize diffusion of environmentally sound technologies, circular economy and sustainable development.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.8.1: 100% coverage for mobile and fibre connectivity across the country achieved. A higher rate of literacy and cheaper access cost to the internet is helping to develop the digital economy.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 17.9.1: The Government of Mauritius had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the establishment of AFRITAC South (AFS) on 18 April 2011 and the Africa Training Institute (ATI) on 19 April 2013 respectively in Mauritius. Both AFS and ATI are collaborative efforts between the IMF and several bilateral and multilateral donors for capacity building. The Regional Multidisciplinary Centre of Excellence (RMCE) is a regional initiative driven by the Government of Mauritius and developed in consultation with the EU and the World Bank as well as regional blocs namely COMESA, SADC and OIC member states. In accordance with the Host Agreement between Government of Mauritius and RMCE, the Government of Mauritius undertook to host and facilitate the establishment and operations of RMCE. The Government of Mauritius has a willingness to engage in cooperation with other countries and shows its commitment by providing scholarships to African students and contributing to RMCE, ATI and AFRITAC South.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.10.1: Mauritius aims to maintain this indicator at low level.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.11.1: The economy and hence exports is firmly embarked on a strong recovery path post COVID-19. This growth was driven mainly by the tourism and manufacturing sectors.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.12.1: Mauritius' tariff lines are duty free irrespective of the level of development of the countries.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.13.1: Statistics Mauritius maintains a Macroeconomic dashboard.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 17.14.1: The Resource Mobilization Unit under the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD) is responsible to do the overall coordination with all bilateral and multi-lateral donors. The Ministry also ensures that donor programmes are aligned with donor and national priorities and incorporates the objectives of SDG goals as far as feasible. Moreover, each year, the MOFEPD conducts pre-budget consultations exercises with all partners, private sectors, NGOs and line Ministries to ensure policy coherence for the budgetary exercise.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.15.1: Donor financing is aligned with national policies. In case of Multi-lateral agencies having their own policies, projects implemented are aligned with both national and donor policies.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.16.1: A number of multi-stakeholder mechanisms are in place for the monitoring and reporting of progress.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.17.1: Government is pursuing PPP arrangements and has successfully partnered with two private organisations namely ENL and Medine for the Construction of a Grade Separated Junction at Verdun and the Flic-en-Flac Bypass, respectively.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.18.1: Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) - overall score in 2022 was 77.3%.	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.18.2: Statistics Mauritius operates under the Statistics Act.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 17.18.3: Mauritius is adopting new business model, among others, to improve its service delivery for example, Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) technology is being used for data collection for surveys and censuses.	ACHIEVED
Indicator 17.19.1: Regular statistical capacity building and training is provided	ON TRACK
Indicator 17.19.2: Housing and Population Census is conducted every ten years in Mauritius. In 2022, Mauritius had its 19 th Census for the Republic of Mauritius. Civil Registration, birth and death registration, is almost 100% in Mauritius.	ACHIEVED

ANNEX II ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The VNR Team is grateful for the support provided by each and every stakeholder during the various consultations, both in Mauritius and Rodrigues, that led to the elaboration of the second report.

We highly appreciate the participation, contribution and engagement of all stakeholders from the public and private sectors, civil society representatives and the Academia. The VNR process was hugely enriched by the structured discussions during the various coordination meetings organised in context of the drafting of the second VNR report.

The VNR Team acknowledges the full support of all SDG Focal Points and/or Alternates/representatives in the different Line Ministries and institutions. The leadership of each Lead Organisation on the SDGs is highly appreciated. This clearly demonstrates how Mauritius institutions have integrated the SDGs within their respective work agenda and taken ownership of sustainability in their respective field.

The VNR Team is also thankful for the support of the Island Chief Executive of the Chief Administration, Rodrigues and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) for facilitating the consultations in Rodrigues island.

We hold in high esteem the support of the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Mauritius and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs who have provided the necessary resources during the VNR process, especially for the design and the publication of the report.

The VNR Team is grateful to the various institutions who have lent their support through the provision of appropriate materials for the VNR report, these include the Government Information Services (GIS), the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation, the Economic Development Board (EDB), Business Mauritius, the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), Middlesex University, Mauritius and the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF).

The second VNR report has been conceptualised, prepared and finalised under the guidance and support of Mr J. Nayeck C.S.K., Secretary for Foreign Affairs, throughout the process, for which the VNR Team is deeply appreciative.

VNR Team

ANNEX III LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS

Note: This is an indicative list of organisations that participated in Voluntary National Review consultations whether by submission of material or engagement at various fora. This is not an exhaustive list of organisations involved in SDGs, nor does it indicate the organisation's endorsement of this Report.

Prime Minister's Office (Defence and Home Affairs Division)
Prime Minister's Office (External Communications Division)
Prime Minister's Office (Rodrigues, Outer Islands and Territorial Integrity Division)
Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology
Ministry of Local Government, Disaster and Risk Management
Ministry of Land Transport and Light Rail
Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity (Social Security Division)
Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity (Social Integration Division)
Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (Industrial Development Division)
Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (SMEs Division)
Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (Cooperatives Division)
Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (Solid Waste Management Division)
Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance
Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation
Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development
Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation
Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training
Ministry of Health and Wellness
Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping
Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare
Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage
Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security
Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection
Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms
Attorney General's Office
Statistics Mauritius
Economic Development Board
Maurice Stratégie
Business Mauritius
Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)
University of Mauritius
Open University of Mauritius
University of Technology, Mauritius
Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (MRIC)
MACOSS

RODRIGUES

Central Administration

Office of the Clerk

Chief Commissioner's Office

Deputy Chief Commissioner's Office

Commission for Agriculture and Ors

Commission for Health and Ors

Commission for Women's Affairs and Ors

Commission for Tourism and Ors

Commission for Youth and Sports and Ors

Central Electricity Board

Rodrigues Public Utilities Company

Office du Tourisme/Discovery Rodrigues

Air Mauritius

Airport of Rodrigues LTD

Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF)

Economic Development Board (Rodrigues Branch)

Rodrigues Government Employees Association (RGEA)

South East Marine Protection Area (SEMPA)

Mauritius Research and Innovation Council (Rodrigues Office)

Centre de Formation Agricole Frere Remi (CFA)

Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD)

AEL DDS

Disaster Risk management and Reduction- REOC

Ter-Mer Rodriguez Association

CRAC Anti-Drug Group

Rodrigues Students Needs Association (RSNA)

EDYSES (Epilepsy Group (Rodrigues)) Education and Health

CARE-CO

Shoals Rodrigues

Rodrigues Council of Social Services

Association des Consommateurs de L'Ile Rodrigues

Diabetic PRO's Association

Rodrigues Association for the Disabled (RAD)

Rodrigues Environment Friendly Group (REFG)

Rodrigues Regional Youth Council

Association Tourisme Reunie (ATR)

National Empowerment Foundation

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