



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
(HUMAN RIGHTS DIVISION)**

**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTION PLAN PROGRESS
REPORT
2012 – 2020**

Vision

Our vision is to have a country where human rights and human dignity are valued, humanitarian laws are respected and each individual can enjoy his/her fundamental rights freely as per the Constitution and international law.

Mission

- ✚ To promote human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
- ✚ To empower individuals to recognise their fundamental rights and claim any violation of their human rights without fear and prejudice.
- ✚ To ensure appropriate actions are taken and implemented for the State to meet its international reporting obligations regarding human rights and International Humanitarian Law (IHL).
- ✚ To establish a national platform for engagement and active participation of all stakeholders including public organisations, NGOs and Civil Society, to address the challenges in human rights and IHL.



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS



FOREWORD

As Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade under whose portfolio Human Rights rests, I would like to extend my appreciation to the Human Rights Division for preparing the National Human Rights Action Plan Progress Report 2012-2020.

The report gives an overview of the State's achievement in respect of the various recommendations of the United Nations Conventions for the given period and depicts the actions taken by the State of Mauritius to ensure that Human Rights are safeguarded. It is worth noting that the National Human Rights Action Plan 2012-2020 was first mooted by the Prime Minister's Office when Human Rights was under its portfolio with a view to ensuring more synergy among all stakeholders as well as adopting a coherent approach to Human Rights. It has since September 2017 exchanged hands and was entrusted to the newly created Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms and as from November 2019, to the Human Rights Division under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

The successful implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan 2012-2020 can be attributed to the firm determination and commitment of Government and the Ministries/Departments in taking timely policy measures and concrete actions to uphold human rights in various spheres.

The National Human Rights Action Plan Progress Report 2012-2020 is no doubt going to be a valuable reference for all those interested in Human Rights, be it students, members of general public, legal profession, NGOs and the civil society.

*We should all endeavour to continue providing our unflinching support to promoting human rights for the progress of one and all. As the late Nelson Mandela stated "**To deny people their human rights is to deny their very humanity**".*

Hon. Alan GANOO
Minister of Land Transport and
Light Rail, Minister of Foreign
Affairs, Regional Integration and
International Trade

Supervising Officer's Statement

The Human Rights Division would like to present its appreciation to all who have contributed in one way or the other in the preparation of the Progress Report of the National Human Rights Action Plan Progress Report 2012-2020.

The report highlights the main achievements of the State of Mauritius under 10 Human Rights objectives and 100 priority actions.

It also provides an overview of:

- + legislations enacted to domesticate human rights in Mauritius;*
- + measures taken to strengthen the administration of justice, improve rule of law, ensure independence of the judiciary and enhance practices on the part of law enforcement authorities;*
- + general awareness of economic, social and cultural rights, and improvement of quality of life, particularly for vulnerable groups;*
- + the strengthening of the framework for national human rights; and*
- + the greater understanding of human rights standards and their value to individuals and the community.*

The implementation of recommendations of the various Human Rights Council/Committees following the presentation of our Reports and Reviews could not have been achieved without the commitment of Supervising Officers in ensuring that policy decisions are taken and implemented in a timely manner.

The next Action Plan 2021-2029 would comprise the various recommendations from the:-

- + Universal Periodic Review*
- + Fifth periodic report of the International Covenant of the Civil and Political*
- + Fifth periodic report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*
- + Combined twentieth to twenty-third periodic reports of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination*
- + Fourth periodic report of the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*
- + Eight periodic report of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*
- + Combined third to fifth periodic reports of the Convention on the Rights of Child*
- + Initial report of the Covenant on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities*
- + Combined ninth and tenth periodic reports of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*

As we embark on the preparation of the next National Human Rights Action Plan, we will again solicit the support of all Ministries and Departments. We hope we can rely on your collaboration.

Asha Burrenchobay
Senior Chief Executive
(Human Rights Division)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations	vi
------------------------------------	-----------

List of Tables	xiv
-----------------------------	------------

OBJECTIVE I.....	1
-------------------------	----------

Reinforcing International Co-operation on Human Rights Through Greater Commitment to Universal and Regional Human Rights Treaties and Greater International Engagement for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights..... 1

OBJECTIVE II.....	48
--------------------------	-----------

Strengthening the National Human Rights Framework by Better Guaranteeing Constitutional Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, by Providing for More Effective Enforcement of Protection Provisions, and by Enhancing the Effectiveness of National Human Rights Institutions..... 48

OBJECTIVE III.....	56
---------------------------	-----------

Protecting and Safeguarding Civil and Political rights further by Securing Right to Self-Determination, Strengthening Democratic Rights, Protecting the Rights of Victims of Crime, Safeguarding the Rights of Suspects and Detainees, Enhancing the Efficiency of the Administration of Justice and Securing Access to Courts, and Enhancing the System of Freedom of Expression and Protecting Privacy and Human Dignity 56

OBJECTIVE IV.....	114
--------------------------	------------

Securing Greater Realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights so that Basic Necessities of Life are Adequately and Equitably Available to Everyone in Society by: (a) Providing for Decent Work Conditions in a Safe and Healthy Working Environment & (b) Guaranteeing Social Security Entitlements; (c) Ensuring Availability, Accessibility and Adequacy of Food; (d) Ensuring Sufficient, Safe, Acceptable, Physically Accessible and Affordable Water Supply for Personal and Domestic Uses; (e) Securing Adequate Housing; (f) Achieving Highest Attainable Standard of Health (through Availability and Accessibility of Health-Care Facilities, Goods and Services of Quality); (g) Developing Access to Education and Training Facilities; (h) Developing Opportunities for Taking Part in Cultural Life and Affording Better Protection to the Moral and Material Interests resulting from any Scientific, Literary or Artistic production of which a Person is the Author..... 114

OBJECTIVE V	193
Strengthening Women’s Rights in the context of Gender Equal Opportunities.	193
OBJECTIVE VI	209
Strengthening Rights of the Youth	209
OBJECTIVE VII	219
Better Protecting and Safeguarding Rights of Vulnerable Persons [Children, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Poor Persons].....	219
OBJECTIVE VIII	254
Securing Right to Sustainable Development	254
OBJECTIVE IX	281
Enhancing Human Rights Education and Awareness.....	281
OBJECTIVE X	290
Encouraging and Facilitating Greater Involvement of Civil Society and Business in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.....	290
OBJECTIVE XI	293
Follow-Up and Evaluation of National Action Plan.....	293

List of Abbreviations

ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACU	Albion Fisheries Research Centre
AFRC	Alternative Care Unit
AFD	Agence Francaise de Développement
AGO	Attorney General's Office
AHC	Area Health Centre
AKRM	Akademi Kroel Repiblik Moris
AML	Airports of Mauritius
AOMF	Association des Ombudsmans et Médiateurs de la Francophonie
ARV	Antiretroviral treatment
ATM	Automated Teller Machine
AU	African Union
BDM	Brigade Pour la Protection des Mineurs
BRC	Bail and Remand Court
BTW	Back to Work
CAB	Citizen Advice Bureau
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CAT-OP	Optional Protocol to the Convention against Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
CCPROP-1	Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
CDU	Child Development Unit
CEDAW	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDAW-OP	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
CEDEM	Centre d'Education et de Développement pour les Enfants Mauriciens

CERD	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination
CESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CFA	Centre de Formation Artistique
CHA	Central Housing Authority
COMSEC	Commonwealth Secretariat
CONFESJES	Conference of Youth and Sport Ministers
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPE	Certificate of Education
CPED	International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC-OP-AC	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict
CRC-OP-SC	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CRTO	Cumulative Road Traffic Offences
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CUT	Collectif Urgence Toxida
CWA	Central Water Authority
CWG	Coordinating Working Group
DCPC	District Child Protection Committee
DDA	Dangerous Drugs Act
DECC	Department of Energy and Climate Change
DFSC	Disciplined Forces Service Commission
DMS	Document Management System
DOVIS	Domestic Violence Information System

DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DTP	Dual Training Programme
EAS	Electronic Archiving System
ECCEA	Early Childhood Care and Education Authority
EDC	European Development Community
EDCC	Elderly Day Care Centre
EDF	European Development Fund
EEMO	Energy Efficiency Management Office
EFA	Education for All
EHSP	Eastern High Security Prison
EIC	Employment Information Centre
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
EPA	Environment Protection Act
EPI	Expanded Programme of Immunization
EReA	Employment Relations Act
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
EU	European Union
FAREI	Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GOC	Government Online Centre
HEA	Higher Education Act
HPV	Human Papilloma Virus
HRD	Human Rights Division
HRDC	Human Resource Development Council

HRE	Human Rights Education
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICH	Intangible Cultural Heritage
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
ICT	Information Communications Technology
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IDL	International Disaster Law
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
IJLS	Institute of Judicial & Legal Studies
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contributions
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
IPCC	Independent Police Complaints Commission
IRS	Integrated Resort Scheme
ISM	Intercontinental Slavery Museum
IWF	Internet Watch Foundation
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
KAP	Key Affected Population
KM	Kreole Morisien
KRM	Kreol Repiblik Moris
LEOC	Local Emergency Operations Command
LMIS	Labour Management Information Centre
LSVE	Life Skills and Value Education
MACH	Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage
MARENA	Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency

MARS	Mauritius Rodrigues Submarine Cable
MASA	Mauritius Society of Authors
MBEMRFS	Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping
MCH	Maternal Child Health
MEPU	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
MESWMCC	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
MFARIIT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
MFSGG	Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance
MGEFW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare
MGI	Mahatma Gandhi Institute
MHC	Mauritius Housing Company
MHLUP	Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning
MHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
MID	Maurice Ile Durable
MIE	Mauritius Institute of Education
MITD	Mauritius Institute of Training and Development
MJHRIR	Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms
MLGDRM	Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management
MLHRDT	Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training
MNICD	Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development
MOAIFS	Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security
MOETEST	Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology
MOFEPD	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MPF	Mauritius Police Force
MPSC	Marshall Plan Social Contract
MRV	Monitoring Reporting and Verification
MSISSNS	Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity
MSWWF	Manufacturing Sector Workers Welfare Fund

MYESR	Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NCC	National Children’s Council
NCCAPF	National Crime Change Adaptation Policy Framework
NCD	Non- Communicable Disease
NCE	National Certificate of Education
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCSR	National Corporate Social Responsibility
NDC	National Determined Contributions
NDRRMC	National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre
NEF	National Empowerment Foundation
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Command
NEP	National Empowerment Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGPF	National Gender Policy Framework
NHDC Ltd	National Housing Development Corporation Ltd
NHF	National Heritage Fund
NHRAP	National Human Rights Action Plan
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NICE	National Institute for Civic Education
NLE	National Leadership Engine
NMCAC	Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture
NMRF	National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up
NPCC	National Productivity and Competitiveness Council
NPF	National Pension Fund
NPMD	National Preventive Mechanism Division
NRB	National Remuneration Board

NSAPAP	National Sport and Physical Activity Policy
NSCGM	National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming
NSIF	National Social Inclusion Foundation
NTF	National Tripartite Forum
NWC	National Women’s Council
NWEC	National Women Entrepreneur Council
NWP	National Water Policy
NYC	National Youth Council
NYCBE	Nine Year Continuous Basic Education
ODPP	Office of Director of Public Prosecution
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OP-CRPD	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
PCD	Police Complaints Division
PDVA	Protection against Domestic Violence Act
PFPU	Police Family Protection Unit
PGC	Parliamentary Gender Caucus
PIOR	Police Information and Operations Room
PMO	Prime Minister’s Office
PNEE	Programme National d'Efficacité Energetique
POTA	Prevention of Terrorism Act
PSAC	Primary School Achievement Certificate
PSEA	Private School Education Authority
PSSA	Private Secondary Schools Authority
RCI	Residential Care Institution
REOC	Rodrigues Emergency Operations Command
RGSC	Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre
RRA	Rodrigues Regional Assembly
SCP	Sustainable Consumption and Production
SEN	Special Education Needs

SENA	Special Education Needs Authority
SENDRC	Special Education Needs Resource & Development Centre
SIDPR	Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SMT	Social Media Tool
SRM	Social Register of Mauritius
STM	Service to Mauritius
SWC	Social Welfare Centre
SWMD	Solid Waste Management Division
TC	Technical Committee
TEDPB	Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board
TIP	Trafficking in Person
TNC	Third National Communication
TVET	Technical & Vocational Education & Training
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WRA	Workers' Rights Act
WTP	Water Treatment Plant
YEP	Youth Employment Programme
ZEP	Zone d'Education Prioritaire

List of Tables

Table 1: International Human Rights Instruments.....	2
Table 2: Other Multilateral Treaties	4
Table 3: Regional Human Rights Instruments.....	4
Table 4: Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT).....	14
Table 5: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR).....	16
Table 6: International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).....	19
Table 7: International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination	31
Table 8: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR).....	32
Table 9: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).....	34
Table 10: Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.....	37
Table 11: Complaints dealt by IPCC for period April to December 2020	52
Table 12: Number of cases investigated by the IPCC	53
Table 13: Complaints dealt with by the NPMD for period 2016 to 2020.....	55
Table 14: Housing Schemes.....	63
Table 15: Roof Slab Grant and the Purchase of Building materials Grant Scheme	64
Table 16: Women representation in politics	69
Table 17: CCTV Cameras in Police Stations.....	73
Table 18: CCTV Cameras in Detention Centres.....	74
Table 19: CCTV Street Surveillance Systems	74
Table 20: Status of the Safe City Project as at December 2020	75

Table 21: Cases Elucidated with the help of Safe City Cameras.....	76
Table 22: Cases detected from fingerprints	77
Table 23: Drug Cases for period 2018 – 2020.....	77
Table 24: Awareness/Sensitisation Campaigns for the period 2014 - 2020.....	78
Table 25: Sensitisation campaigns carried out for the period 2011 - 2020	79
Table 26: Sensitisation campaigns carried out by CPU at Community level.....	80
Table 27: Sensitisation through Media by CPU for period 2015 – 2020.....	80
Table 28: Drivers convicted for the period 2015 to 2020.....	82
Table 29: Number of Licenses for the period 2015 to 2020.....	83
Table 30: Road Traffic Contraventions for the period 2010 - 2020	83
Table 31: Statistics for crime for the period 2012 - 2020.....	84
Table 32: Courses on Human Rights for the period 2017 – 2019	92
Table 33: Training sessions with Prison Officers for the period 2014 -2020.....	94
Table 34: Training of Medical Personnel for the period 2015 – 2017.....	95
Table 35: Prison Population as at June 2020	99
Table 36: Statistics for CYC and RYC for Mauritius and Rodrigues.....	100
Table 37: Detainees benefitting from the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Programme.....	102
Table 38: Detainees enrolled in the numeracy and literacy programmes.....	107
Table 39: Complaints in respect of Occupational Safety and Health	127
Table 40: Inspections for period January 2010 - December 2020	135
Table 41: Complaints from Migrant Workers January 2010 - December 2020	135
Table 42: Beneficiaries in respect of livestock.....	139
Table 43: Number of beneficiaries and amount disbursed from 2015 to May 2019	139

Table 44: Income eligibility criteria and subsidy level.....	147
Table 45: Household Income and Annual Rental for housing.....	148
Table 46: New income threshold per household.....	149
Table 47: Main Public Health Institutions	156
Table 48: Distribution of Condoms (2016 – 2018).....	162
Table 49: Comparison for Mauritius NCD Survey 2009 and 2015	165
Table 50: List of women’s participation at Senior Level	194
Table 51: Statistics on Domestic Violence	203
Table 52: Statistics on youth participation (2018-2019).....	216
Table 53: Corporal punishment cases for period 2018-2020.....	221
Table 54: Statistics regarding Community Child Watch Protection Programmes	222
Table 55: Statistics for the ‘Atelier Partage Parents’	223
Table 56: Attendance in Children's Clubs for period 2012-2020	223
Table 57: Awareness campaign for period 2014 to 2020	225
Table 58: Work sessions by the Police Crime Prevention Unit for period 2011 to 2020.....	225
Table 59: Work sessions at Community Level for period 2011 to 2020	226
Table 60: Number of persons sensitised by the BDM and PFPU.....	228
Table 61: Radio Programs for the period 2016 to 2020.....	230
Table 62: Number of children with disabilities in mainstream and special schools.....	234
Table 63: Budget for SEN for period 2015-2020	235
Table 64: Basic Retirement Pension	242
Table 65: NGO Projects supported by the National CSR Foundation.....	249
Table 66: Fixing of Led Lanterns by the Local Authorities	262

Table 67: Adaptation measures identified in the NDC	271
Table 68: Persons sensitised by the NHRC for period 2015 to 2020	283
Table 69: Sensitisation by the Ombudsperson for Children’s Office	284
Table 70: Programmes/Projects implemented by NGOs	292

OBJECTIVE I

**Reinforcing International Co-operation on Human Rights
Through Greater Commitment to Universal and Regional
Human Rights Treaties and Greater International
Engagement for Promotion and Protection of Human
Rights**

PRIORITY ACTION 1:

Compilation of human rights treaties to which the Republic of Mauritius is a state party shall be made available on the government website.

1. The State of Mauritius has acceded to almost all the core Conventions both at international and regional levels. Mauritius is party to the 7 out of the 9 core conventions of the UN. The State of Mauritius has also ratified some of the UN Optional Protocols pertaining to the Treaty Bodies.
2. The list of these human rights instruments are as follows:

Table 1: International Human Rights Instruments

Treaty/Convention	Date of signature	Date of ratification(r)/ accession (a)
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)	-	12 December 1973 (a)
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPROP-1)	-	12 December 1973 (a)
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)	-	12 December 1973 (a)
International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)	-	30 May 1972 (a)
International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	-	09 July 1984 (a)

Treaty/Convention	Date of signature	Date of ratification(r)/ accession (a)
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW-OP)	11 November 2001	31 October 2008 (r)
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)	-	09 December 1992 (a)
Optional Protocol to the Convention against Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT- OP)	-	21 June 2005 (a)
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	-	26 July 1990 (a)
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (CRC-OP-SC)	11 November 2001	14 June 2011 (r)
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC-OP-AC)	11 November 2001	12 February 2009 (r)
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	25 September 2007	08 January 2010 (r)

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Table 2: Other Multilateral Treaties

Treaty	Date of signature	Date of ratification (r)/ accession (a)
United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime	12 December 2000	18 April 2003 (r)
Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational	-	24 September 2003 (a)
The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction	-	23 March 1993 (a)
Convention for the protection of individuals with regards to automatic processing of personal data (Convention 108)	-	17 June 2016 (a)
Protocol amending Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to automatic processing of personal data (CETS 223)	04 September 2020	04 September 2020

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Table 3: Regional Human Rights Instruments

Treaty	Date of signature	Date of ratification/ accession
African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights	27 February 1992	19 June 1992 (r)
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child	07 November 1991	14 February 1992 (r)

Treaty	Date of signature	Date of ratification/ accession
<p>Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of an African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights</p>	<p>09 June 1998</p>	<p>03 March 2003 (r)</p>
<p>Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa</p>	<p>29 January 2005</p>	<p>16 June 2017 (r)</p>

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

- The list is available on the website of the Human Rights Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade: <https://humanrights.govmu.org/>.

PRIORITY ACTION 2:

- Studies shall be conducted to determine which Human Rights treaties, not yet adhered to, can be ratified or acceded to. Reasons why a particular instrument is not adhered to, shall be made public.**

&

- Priority would be given to adhering to the major international and regional human rights treaties: the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (OP-CRPD), the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPEd), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.**

- An assessment was done regarding the various treaties not yet adhered to and the reasons for same. The stand of the State of Mauritius is provided in the various reports to the Human Rights Instruments and at

the reviews. These are public and can be accessed on the website of the HRD as well as the OHCHR and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

5. The State of Mauritius is not a party to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. However, it has already abolished the death penalty by way of the enactment of the Abolition of Death Penalty Act in 1995. A three-quarter vote in the National Assembly is required for the proposed amendment to the Constitution of Mauritius to abolish death penalty. This is currently not available.
6. The State of Mauritius is not proposing to accede to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, in view of being already a densely populated island. It does however ascertain the principle of non-refoulement and treat requests for refugee status or political asylum on a humanitarian, case-to-case basis by facilitating their re-settlement in a friendly country willing to grant them refugee status. In this respect, the State works closely with the Office of High Commissioner for Refugees.
7. It is practically for the same above-mentioned reasons that the State of Mauritius does not plan to accede to the **Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness**. It is to be noted Section 11 (4) (b) of the Mauritius Citizenship Act provides that "*The Minister shall not deprive any person of his citizenship of Mauritius where it appears to him that the person would become stateless.*"
8. The accession to the **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** is presently not on the agenda of the State of Mauritius. Adequate avenues of redress already exist in our legal system. A person may have recourse to the provisions of Chapter II of the Constitution, enter civil actions for damages in Courts, or make complaints to the various National Human Rights institutions and the Police as well as address minor petitions to the Attorney General.

Genocide Convention

9. The State of Mauritius acceded to the **Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** (Genocide Convention) on 8 July 2019.

International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICRMW)

10. The State of Mauritius is not a signatory to the **1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families**. Nevertheless, Government as far as possible applies the essence of the Convention in cases of disputes between migrant workers and their employer. Migrant workers coming to Mauritius are allowed to come with their families, except for low skilled workers. The main reason is that Mauritius is geographically small and we are among the most

densely populated island state. In addition, the country has limited resources and would not be able to provide the core basic services that would be required.

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (OP-CRPD)

11. The State of Mauritius has signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 25 September 2007 but has not yet ratified it.

International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (CPED)

12. Mauritius does not envisage acceding to the **International Convention for the protection of all persons from Enforced Disappearance**, as there are no cases of enforced disappearance being perpetrated or tolerated by the State.

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa

13. On 16 Jun 2017, the State of Mauritius acceded to the **Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa** (Maputo Protocol) subject to certain reservation:
- a) the State of Mauritius declared that it shall not take any legislative measures under Article 6(b) and 6(c) of the Protocol where these measures would be incompatible with provisions of the laws in force in Mauritius;
 - b) the State of Mauritius declared in relation to Articles 9 of the Protocol that it shall use its best endeavours to ensure the equal participation of Women in political life, in accordance with its Constitution;
 - c) the State of Mauritius declared that it shall not take any measures under Articles 4(2) (k), 10(2) (d) and 11(3) of the Protocol;
 - d) the State of Mauritius declared that it shall use its best endeavours to achieve the aims in Article 12(2) of the Protocol, in accordance with its Constitution, and the accession to the Protocol should not be regarded as an acceptance of positive discrimination by the Republic of Mauritius; and
 - e) the State of Mauritius declared that it shall not take any measures under Article 14(2)(c) of the Protocol in relation to the authorisation of medical abortion in cases of sexual assault, rape and incest where the matter has not been reported to the police or where the pregnancy as exceeded its fourteenth week.

African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance

14. The Government is presently considering the ratification of the **African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance**.

PRIORITY ACTION 2:

(c) **Mauritius shall consider making a declaration, under Article 34(6) of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, accepting the competence of the African Court to receive cases instituted by individuals and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with observer status before the Commission [under Article 5(3) of the Protocol.**

15. The State of Mauritius has ratified the **Protocol on the Establishment of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights** in the year 2003.
16. However, it has signed neither the **Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights** nor the **Protocol on Amendments to the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights**.
17. The State of Mauritius is, at this point in time, not considering the signature of the **Protocol on Amendments to the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights**.

PRIORITY ACTION 3:

Reservations to human rights treaties shall, as far as practicable, be withdrawn. No reservations shall be made on ratification/ accession of human rights instruments unless there are compelling reasons for doing so.

18. Reservations are the last resorts used by the State of Mauritius when considering the signature/ accession to a particular Convention. It has recourse to it only when there are specific issues related to the implementation of certain provisions of the Convention.

19. The State of Mauritius has made reservations under the following human rights instruments:

(1) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (3 Reservations)

(a) Reservations on Article 9(2) (d), which is as follows:

“2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:

(d) To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms”.

20. It is mandatory, by law, for all new building projects or for major renovation of existing building projects where members of the public will be expected to visit to include, in their scope of works, for the construction of ramps or provision of electrical lifts to facilitate accessibility to such buildings or to any raised level/s or storey/s thereof. In fact, the Building Control Act 2012 (as amended) and the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations 2017 provide for such accessibility facilities.

21. The Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations 2017 provides for universal design requirement in respect of new buildings and buildings, which will undergo renovations requiring a permit. The First Schedule and Subpart G and J of the Second Schedule of the regulations provide for the following:

- a) audible features and visual (including Braille) signage for automated teller machines (ATMs), lifts in buildings where services are provided on upper floors to persons with disabilities including museums, banks, cinema, and police stations;
- b) visual and audible systems shall be provided to lifts, lobbies and fire alarm systems;
- c) assistive listening system for persons who are hard of hearing in places such as conference rooms and assembly areas; and
- d) tactile cues to indicate different in level in buildings.

(b) Reservations on Article 9(2)(e), which is as follows:

“2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:

(e) to provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public”.

22. Concerning the reservation placed on Article 9(2)(e), the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity is preparing an Action plan for the implementation of live assistance to facilitate accessibility to buildings. The Ministry is setting up a pool of guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters who will gradually provide their services in different buildings.

(c) Reservations on Article 24 (2) (b), which is as follows:

“2. In realizing this right, States Parties shall ensure that:

(b) Persons with disabilities can access an inclusive, quality and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities, in which they live”.

23. The State of Mauritius has now engaged in a policy of inclusive education and expects to remove the reservation as soon as this policy is fully implemented. The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity (MSISSNS) has already set up a High Level Committee comprising representatives of the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology (MOETEST), the Mauritius Institute of Education, the Ombudsperson for Children and the Office of Public Sector Governance with a view to achieving parity on government funding between disabled and non-disabled children. The Committee had consultations with all stakeholders concerned including NGOs looking after children with disabilities. Once this parity is achieved, the reservation might be removed.

24. In this context, it is to be noted that since 2006, the State of Mauritius has officially adopted a policy for inclusive education. The MOETEST has since taken a series of measures towards an inclusive schooling system which are as follows:

- a) the provision of adapted textbooks for learners with visual impairments. Activity books are also being adapted for learners with Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Intellectual Impairment and Autism;
- b) the provision of personal computers fitted with Screen Reader and Screen Magnifier Software for visually impaired learners;
- c) the provision of Braille displays for blind learners attending secondary institutions;
- d) the support of assistant teachers as well as carers;
- e) extra assistance from the class educators and support teachers;
- f) assistance for assessments and examinations as well as the provision of extra time for examinations;

- g) assistance of specialist teachers/interpreters for learners with hearing impairment in secondary schools and for examination purposes;
- h) provision of adapted furniture and wheelchairs;
- i) refund of bus and taxi fares for the conveyance of students with disabilities by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity;
- j) specialised rooms such as computer rooms, science laboratories, music rooms and libraries are situated on the ground floor; and
- k) all primary schools having learners with disabilities have been retrofitted with ramps to provide easy access to classrooms and other spaces.

25. The following infrastructural works have also been carried out in various state secondary schools having learners with disabilities to ensure a barrier free environment:

- a) ramps and handrails to facilitate access to the classrooms;
- b) covered links between building blocks to facilitate access to specialised rooms located on the first floor for learners using wheelchairs;
- c) adapted toilets; and
- d) alighting bays for safe access in the school yard.

26. The above initiatives are being further carried out in a phased manner in all remaining secondary schools.

27. It should also be noted that, in 2018, the Special Education Needs Authority (SENA) Act was passed and a Special Education Needs Authority Board was set up in February 2019. This authority is responsible for:

- a) monitoring and facilitating the implementation of special education needs policies of the Government;
- b) advising the Minister on the formulation of policies and on the criteria for the registration of:
 - (i) special education needs institutions;
 - (ii) the teaching and non-teaching staff, and any other resource person, of special education needs institutions;

- c) providing guidelines for the design and development of curriculum for special education needs; and
 - d) the harmonization and promotion of programmes and policies for the education and holistic development of persons with special education needs in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
28. The reservation on Article 24 (2) (b) is being maintained as the Ministry is still working towards a fully inclusive education system whereby learners with and without disabilities learn alongside in a common environment. Infrastructural works to improve accessibility in schools are being carried out in phases. As at December 2020, infrastructural works for accessibility have been completed in 76% of the secondary schools.
29. Persons with disabilities also benefit from the free tertiary education scheme, operational since 2019, for students undertaking undergraduate courses, professional courses or TVET courses, for a first time, in Public Higher Education Institutions.
30. The State of Mauritius is presently in the position of withdrawing 1 out of the 3 reservations on the Convention, namely article 9(2) (d). Actions have already been initiated to do so.

(2) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1 Reservation)

31. Reservation on Article 29, which is as follows:

“Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention, which is not settled by negotiation, shall be submitted, at the request of one of them, to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.

Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of the present Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph I of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party, which has made such a reservation.

Any State Party, which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article, may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations”.

32. The State of Mauritius does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of Article 29 of the Convention in pursuance of paragraph 2 of the said Article - the Convention itself provides for the possibility of making such a reservation at the time of ratification. In addition, there are financial implications to remove such a reservation and this is why, it has not been removed as at date.
33. At the State review of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, during the 66th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the State of Mauritius took the commitment to accede to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa and that on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa.

PRIORITY ACTION 4:

Studies shall be conducted on human rights treaties to which Mauritius is a State party with a view to making proposals on which provisions of those treaties are capable of being domesticated. Legislative measures shall be taken to bring domestic legislation in accord with human rights guaranteed in international instruments to which the Republic of Mauritius is a State party.

34. The legislations which implement the main conventions and their protocol, to which the State of Mauritius is a party, are as per the tables on subsequent pages:

Table 4: Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT)

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
1	The definition of torture	Section 78 of the Criminal Code
2	Prevention of torture	Section 78 of the Criminal Code + Sections 5, 7 of the Constitution of Mauritius + Sections 3, 3A, 4 and 11 of the Protection of Human Rights Act + Sections 3, 5, 6 and 16 of the Independent Police Complaint Commission Act + Criminal Appeal Act + The Criminal Procedure Act + Sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and Schedule to the International Criminal Court Act + the Bail Act + Protection from Domestic Violence Act + the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act + Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the National Preventative Mechanism Division Act+ Juvenile Offenders Act + Juvenile Justice Bill
3	Non-refoulement	Sections 7, 8, 9 and 13, Part II Extradition Act
4	The criminalisation of torture	Sections 37, 38 and 78 of the Criminal Code + Section 45 of the Interpretation and General Clauses Act
5	Universal jurisdiction over torture	Section 78(2) of the Criminal Code + Sections 80B and 112 of the Courts Act + Sections 6 and 3 of the Maritime Zones Act + Section 10 of the Civil Aviation Act + Sections 25 and 26(a) of the Extradition Act +
6-9	The exercise of universal jurisdiction	Section 78(2) of the Criminal Code + The Extradition Act + The Constitution + The Mutual Assistance in Criminal and Related Matters Act
10	Training officials	The Police Complaints Act

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
11	Review of detention procedures	Probation of Offenders Act 58 of 1946 + Probation of Offenders (Amendment) Act 2009 + the Criminal Procedure Act + Prevention of Terrorism Act + Prevention of Terrorism (Denial of Bail) Act
12	Prompt and impartial investigation	Sections 17, 96 of the Constitution + Protection of Human Rights Act + Independent Police Complaint Commission Act
13	Right to complain	Sections 17, 96 of the Constitution + Protection of Human Rights Act + Independent Police Complaint Commission Act
14	Right to redress	The Constitution (sections 5(5), 7, Chapter II) + Section 4(4)(b) of the Protection of the Human Rights Act
15	The exclusionary rule	Section 162 of the Courts Act
16	Ill-treatment	Protection from Domestic Violence Act + Regulation 13(4) of the Education Regulations + 13(1) of the Child Protection Act + Section 230 of the Criminal Code + The Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act + Police Complaints Act + Information Communication Telecommunication Act + Prevention of Terrorism Act + Financial Intelligence & Anti Money Laundering Act + The Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism Act + Data Protection Act + Firearm Act + Prevention of Terrorism (Denial of Bail) Act + Prevention of Terrorism (International Obligations) Act + Asset Recovery Act
17-24	Articles 17-24 deal mainly with the mandate of the Committee against Torture, including article 22, which allows for the Committee to receive and consider individual communications if a declaration by the State Party is made.	
25-33	Articles 25-33 relate to technical matters, including the signature or ratification of the Convention, procedure for amendments, or reservations.	

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 5: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)

Article Number	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)	Relevant Legislation
1	Right to Self-Determination	Constitution, section 1
2	Implementation of the Covenant under Constitutional framework	Constitution, Chapter II
3	Gender Equality	Local Government Act Workers' Rights Act, sections 26, 52, 53
5	Limitation of Covenant Rights	Constitution, Chapter II
6	Right to Life	Geneva Conventions Act International Criminal Court Act <u>Compensation to Victims</u> The District and Intermediate (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act <u>Unwanted Pregnancies</u> Criminal Code, s 235A (2) The Medical Council (Termination of Pregnancy) Regulations 2012
7	Prohibition of Torture	<u>Corporal Punishment</u> Regulation 13 (4) of the Education Regulations 1957 Child Protection Act, s13(1) Criminal Code, s 230
8	Prohibition of Slavery	Constitution section 6 The Employment Rights Act Combating trafficking and all forms of servitude Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act Child protection Act The Courts Act

Article Number	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)	Relevant Legislation
9	Right to Liberty	Arbitrary Detention and police custody Constitution, section 5 Bail Act Judges' Rules Standing Orders of the Mauritius Police Force
10	Treatment of Persons Deprived of Liberty	Reform Institutions Act Transfer of Prisoners Act. Juvenile Offenders Act
11	Non-Punishment on Contractual Obligations	The Imprisonment for Civil Debt (Abolition) Act The Borrower Protection Act
12	Right to Movement	Constitution section 15 Prevention of Corruption Act, s53(1)(a) Requirements for the admission of Non-Citizens The Immigration Act
13	Aliens	The Deportation Act The Extradition Act
14	Fair Administration of Justice	Constitution section 10 Legal Aid Act Legal Assistance Act The Police Complaints Act

Article Number	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)	Relevant Legislation
15	Retroactive application of Laws	Constitution Section 2, 10(4), 45 Interpretation and General Clauses Act, section 17(3)(c)
16	Equality before the Law	Civil Status Act, sections 12, 13 National Identity Card Act
17	Right to Privacy	Data Protection Act
18	Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion	Constitution, section 11
19	Freedom of Expression	Constitution, section 12
21	Right to peaceful assembly	Constitution, section 13 The Public Gatherings Act
22	Freedom of association	Constitution, sections 13(1) & (2) Equal Opportunities Act, section 21
23	Protection of the Family	Protection from Domestic Violence Act
24	Rights of the Child	Ombudsperson for Children Act
25	Voting Rights and Election	Local Government Act 2012 The Municipal City and Municipal Town Council Elections Regulations 2012 Constitution (Declaration of Community) (Temporary Provisions) Act

Article Number	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR)	Relevant Legislation
27	Rights of minorities	Equal Opportunities Act
	The State party should ensure that its legislation adopted in the context of the fight against terrorism is fully consistent with all the provisions of the Covenant, including article 4, taking into account general comment No. 29.	Information Communication Telecommunication Act Prevention of Terrorism Act Financial Intelligence & Anti Money Laundering Act The Convention for the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism Act 2003 Data Protection Act 13/2004 Firearms Act Prevention of Terrorism (International Obligations) Act 11/2008 Asset Forfeiture Act

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 6: International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
1	<p>Definition of Discrimination</p> <p>For the purposes of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.</p>	Constitution, section 16, 17 Equal Opportunities Act, sections 5,6, 7

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
2	<p>Policy Measures</p> <p>States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:</p> <p>(a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;</p> <p>(b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;</p> <p>(c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;</p> <p>(d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;</p> <p>(e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;</p> <p>(f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;</p> <p>(g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.</p>	<p>Equal Opportunities Act</p> <p>Workers' Rights Act</p>

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
3	<p>Guarantee of Basic Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms</p> <p>“States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.”</p>	Constitution, section 3
4	Special Measures	
5	<p>Sex Role Stereotyping and Prejudice</p> <p>“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:</p> <p>(a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;</p> <p>(b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.”</p>	Workers’ Rights Act, sections 52, 53
6	“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.”	The Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act sections, 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14 Criminal Code section 253 Children’s Act Section 19

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
7	<p>Political and Public Life</p> <p>“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:</p> <p>(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;</p> <p>(b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;</p> <p>(c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.”</p>	<p>Local Government Act, section 11(6) Constitution, section 16</p>
8	<p>Representation</p> <p>“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.”</p>	<p>Constitution, section 16(2)</p>
9	<p>Nationality</p> <p>“1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.</p>	<p>Constitution, sections 21,22, 23, 24</p>

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.”	
10	<p>Education</p> <p>“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:</p> <p>(a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;</p> <p>(b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;</p> <p>(c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;</p> <p>(d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;</p> <p>(e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the</p>	<p>Constitution Section 16, Education Act, Sections 33, 33A, 33B</p>

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<p>earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;</p> <p>(f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;</p> <p>(g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;</p> <p>(h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.”</p>	
11	<p><i>Employment</i></p> <p><i>“1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:</i></p> <p><i>(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;</i></p> <p><i>(b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;</i></p> <p><i>(c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;</i></p> <p><i>(d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of</i></p>	<p>Constitution, Section 16</p> <p>Equal Opportunities Act, Sections 5,6, 7.</p> <p>Workers’ Rights Act, Section 52</p> <p>The Small and Medium Enterprises Act, Sections 2 and 8</p>

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<p><i>treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;</i></p> <p><i>(e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;</i></p> <p><i>(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.</i></p> <p><i>2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:</i></p> <p><i>(a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;</i></p> <p><i>(b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;</i></p> <p><i>(c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;</i></p> <p><i>(d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.</i></p> <p><i>3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and</i></p>	

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<i>technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.”</i>	
12	<p>Health</p> <p><i>“1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.</i></p> <p><i>2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.”</i></p>	Workers’ Rights Act, section 52
13	<p>Economic and Social Benefits</p> <p>“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:</p> <p>(a) The right to family benefits;</p> <p>(b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;</p> <p>(c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.</p>	<p>Workers’ Rights Act Section 52, 45, 47, 48</p> <p>Sports Act, Section 28, 29, 30</p>
14	1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and	Social Aid Act Social Aid Regulations

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<p>the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.</p> <p>2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:</p> <p>(a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;</p> <p>(b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;</p> <p>(c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;</p> <p>(d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;</p> <p>(e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment;</p> <p>(f) To participate in all community activities;</p> <p>(g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and</p>	

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<p>agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;</p> <p>(h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.</p>	
15	<p>Equality before the Law</p> <p><i>Article 15</i></p> <p>1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.</p> <p>2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.</p> <p>3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.</p> <p>4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.</p>	<p>Constitution section 3</p> <p>Equal Opportunities Act</p> <p>Code Civil Mauricien, sections 7,11, 12</p>
16	<p>Marriage and Family Life</p> <p>1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and</p>	<p>Code Civil Mauricien, sections 144, 149, 180,182, 229-240, 261</p> <p>Children’s Act</p>

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	<p>family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The same right to enter into marriage; (b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent; (c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution; (d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount; (e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights; (f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, ward ship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount; (g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation; (h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration. <p>2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a</p>	

Article Number	International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Relevant Legislation
	minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.	

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 7: International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
1	Definition of racial discrimination	Section 16 of the Constitution
2 & 3	Legal and administrative framework to prohibit all forms of racial discrimination	Section 3 of the Constitution + Sections 183, 184, 185, 206, 282, 283, 286, 287, 287A, 287B of the Criminal Code + Information and Communication Technologies Act 2001 + Equal Opportunities Act
4	Measures to prohibit incitement to racial discrimination	
5	Non-discriminatory implementation of the rights and freedoms under the Convention	Sections 3, 5, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 90, 91 of the Constitution + Chapter II of the Constitution, Section III of the Constitution + Equal Opportunities Act + The Bail Act + Legal Aid Act and Legal Assistance Act + Protection of Human Rights Act + Police Complaints Act + The Deportation Act + Sections 7 and 8 of The Extradition Act + Mauritius Citizenship Act + Code Civil Mauricien + Sections 26, 52, 64, 69 of the Workers' Rights Act + The Occupational Safety and Health (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011 + Employment Relations Act + State Lands Act + Local Government Act + Mental Health Act + Specialised Medical Care Act + HIV and AIDS Act + Dangerous Chemicals Control Act + Food Act + Section 37 of the Education Act
6	Effective protection and remedies against acts of racial discrimination	Sections 17 and 96 of the Constitution + Legal Aid and Legal Assistance Act
7	Education and information on human rights including on the prohibition of racial discrimination	The Local Government Act + Equal Opportunities Act

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 8: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

Article Number	Article from International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)	Relevant legislation
1	Self-Determination	Constitution, section 1
2	Recognition and Implementation of rights under this Covenant	Constitution, Chapter II Constitution, sections 3, 16, 17, 24 Immigration Act, section 5A, 6A, 8
3	Gender Equality	Local Government Act, section 11(6) Worker's Right Act, section 26
4	Promotion of General Welfare	Mauritius Mental Health Care Act Food Act Education Act The Occupational Safety and Health Act Occupational Safety and Health (Safety of Scaffolds) Regulations 2015 Workers' Rights Act
5	Non restriction of other human rights	Constitution, Chapter II
6 and 7	Right to work	Workers' Right Act 2019 Occupational Safety, Health and Welfare Act Additional Remuneration Act
8	Right to Free Association	Constitution, section 13 The Public Gatherings Act
9	Rights to Social Security	<u>Protection of Persons with Disabilities</u> Child Protection Act The Domestic Violence Act Family Protection Act The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act

Article Number	Article from International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)	Relevant legislation
10	Family Protection	<p>Code Civil Mauricien (Divorce par Consentement mutuel) Workers' Right Act, sections 52, 53 <u>Child Labour</u> Employment Rights Act <u>Protection of Elderly Persons</u> Senior Citizens Council Act The Protection of Elderly Persons Act <u>Protection against Domestic Violence</u> Protection from Domestic Violence Act <u>Trafficking in persons</u> The Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act <u>Protection against Child Trafficking</u> The Child Protection Act, Section 14 <u>Protection against Child violence</u> The Child Protection Act Child Protection (Foster Care) Regulations 2002 Child Protection Act</p>
11	Right to an adequate standard of living	Workers' Rights Act
12	Rights to the highest standard of physical and mental health	<p>Mental Health Act Specialised Medical Care Act Immigration and Civil Status Act Dangerous Chemical Control Act Food Act Criminal Code, section 235 Radiation Protection Act HIV and AIDS Act Mental Health Care Act</p>
13 and 14	Right to Education	<p>Education Act, section 37 Constitution, section 14 The Early Childhood Care and Education Authority Act</p>
15	Right to Cultural Life and to benefit from scientific progress	The Copyright Act

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 9: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
1 - 4	General Principles and Obligations	Special Education Needs Authority Act + Section 5(5)(a) of the Workers' Rights Act 2019 + Equal Opportunities Act + Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act + the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations
5	Equality and non-discrimination	Sections 3, 16 (3) of the Constitution + Section 5(5) of the Workers' Rights Act 2019 + Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations
6	Women with Disabilities	Sections 3, 6, 33, 34, 42, 44 of the Constitution + Protection from Domestic Violence Act + Sections 64, 114 (5), 123(2) Workers' Rights Act 2019 + Regulation 33 of the National Assembly Elections Regulations
7	Children with Disabilities	Child Protection Act + Child Protection (Place of Safety for the Welfare and Protection of Children) Regulations 2019 + the Children's Act 2020
8	Awareness-raising	Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act + Protection of Human Rights Act + Equal Opportunities Act
9	Accessibility	Building Control Act + the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations + Road Traffic (Paid Parking) Regulations 2002 + Road Traffic (Construction and Use of Vehicles) Regulations 2010 + Data Protection Act
10	Right to life	The Constitution of Mauritius + Section 235A of the Criminal Code
11	Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies	The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act
12	Equal recognition before the law	Articles 492 to 510 of the Code Civil + the Equal Opportunities Act 2008 + Section 13 of the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act + Section 26 of the Workers' Rights Act
13	Access to Justice	Legal Aid and Legal Assistance Act + Courts Act 1945 + Section 10 of the Constitution + The Criminal Code
14	Liberty and security of the person	The Mental Health Care Act

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
15	Freedom of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment	Section 7 of the Constitution + Section 235A of the Criminal Code
16	Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse	The Protection from Domestic Violence Act + the Child Protection Act + Protection of Children’s Regulations 2019 + Residential Care Homes Act 2003 + Mental Health Care Act + the Child Protection (Place of Safety for the Welfare and Protection of Children) Regulations 2019 + Equal Opportunities Act
17	Protecting the integrity of the person	Mental Health Care Act
18	Liberty of movement and nationality	The Constitution
19	Living independently and being included in the community	Article 494 of the Code Civil + section 19 of the Equal Opportunities Act
20	Personal mobility	The Constitution
21	Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information	Section 23 of the Copyright Act + Section 14, 31, 32 of Courts Act
22	Respect for privacy	The Constitution
23	Respect for home and the family	The Child Protection Act
24	Education	The Education Act + Special Education Needs Authority Act
25 & 26	Health, habilitation and rehabilitation	The Public Health Act + National Council For The Rehabilitation Of Disabled Persons Act
27	Work and Employment	Workers’ Rights Act 2019 + Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act + Equal Opportunities Act

Article Number	Right	Relevant Legislation (Act and Regulations)
28	Adequate standard of living and social protection	National Pensions Act + Society for the Welfare of the Deaf Act
29	Participation in political and public life	The Constitution + Regulation 5 and the Schedule of the Tourism Authority (Hotel Classification) Regulations 2015 + Local Government Act + the Representation of People Act + the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act
30	Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport	The Constitution
31	Statistics and data collection	Statistics Act + Data Protection Act
32	International cooperation	
33	National implementation and monitoring	Protection of Human Rights Act + Equal Opportunities Act + Ombudsman Act + the Ombudsperson for Children's Act + Independent Police Complaints Commission Act + Ombudsperson for Financial Services Act

Source: Attorney General's Office

Table 10: Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

Article Number	Article from Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict	Relevant Legislation
1	States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.	<p>Police Act, section 16(1)</p> <p>16. Assistance to police officers</p> <p>(1) Where a police officer in the exercise of his duty considers it reasonably necessary, he may call upon a male person, apparently over the age of 18, to assist him to apprehend any person or to convey any person in his charge to a police station or to any other place.</p>
2	States Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.	<p>Police Act, section 16(1)</p>
3	<p>1. States Parties shall raise the minimum age for the voluntary recruitment of persons into their national armed forces from that set out in article 38, paragraph 3, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, taking account of the principles contained in that article and recognizing that under the Convention persons under the age of 18 years are entitled to special protection.</p> <p>2. Each State Party shall deposit a binding declaration upon ratification of or accession to the present Protocol that sets forth the minimum age at which it will permit voluntary recruitment into its national armed forces and a description of the safeguards it has adopted to ensure that such recruitment is not forced or coerced.</p> <p>3. States Parties that permit voluntary recruitment into their national armed forces</p>	

	<p>under the age of 18 years shall maintain safeguards to ensure, as a minimum, that:</p> <p>(a) Such recruitment is genuinely voluntary;</p> <p>(b) Such recruitment is carried out with the informed consent of the person's parents or legal guardians;</p> <p>(c) Such persons are fully informed of the duties involved in such military service;</p> <p>(d) Such persons provide reliable proof of age prior to acceptance into national military service.</p> <p>4. Each State Party may strengthen its declaration at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall inform all States Parties. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General.</p> <p>5. The requirement to raise the age in paragraph 1 of the present article does not apply to schools operated by or under the control of the armed forces of the States Parties, in keeping with articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>1. Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.</p> <p>2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use, including the adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.</p> <p>3. The application of the present article shall not affect the legal status of any party to an armed conflict.</p>	

Source: Attorney General's Office

PRIORITY ACTION 5:

With a view to ensuring timely submission of periodic reports to Human Rights Treaty Bodies, the preparation and drafting of periodic reports would be rationalized and systematized by entrusting this task to a Standing Technical Inter-Ministerial Committee under the Prime Minister's Office, who would also have the responsibility for the follow-up of recommendations/observations by those Bodies when they have examined periodic Reports by Mauritius.

35. The Human Rights Division acts as the Secretariat of the NMRF and ensures the coordination and collection of materials for the various State Reports. The elaboration of the reports is done in house.
36. All stakeholders, including Ministries/Departments, NGOs and civil society are consulted. The reports are normally validated during an NMRF meeting before submission to Geneva.

PRIORITY ACTION 6:

The Government of the Republic of Mauritius shall where appropriate invite Special Procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, and the Special Rapporteurs of the African Commission, in order to better contribute to the progressive development of international human rights law by independent experts.

37. The State of Mauritius supports the work of Special Procedures and Rapporteurs. It has, however, not agreed to the recommendation for the standing invitation to special procedures of the Human Rights Council. The Government of Mauritius would rather accept adhoc invitation at mutually agreed dates.
38. The stand of the State of Mauritius was communicated to the Human Rights Council during the adoption of the outcome document for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR).
39. The State of Mauritius also accedes to requests from Special Rapporteurs and Commissioners of the African Commission.
40. In the last recent years, visits were carried by a Special Rapporteur on sale of children from 02 to 10 May 2011 and by an Independent Expert on older persons from 28 April to 08 May 2015.
41. Additionally, a delegation of the ACHPR effected a promotional mission to Mauritius from 13 to 17 August 2019, in conformity with Article 45(1) of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights,

which mandates the Commission with the promotion and protection of human and people's rights on the African continent.

42. The delegation comprised:

- a) the Honourable Commissioner Soyata Maiga, Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, Chairperson of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of People Living with HIV, People at Risk, Vulnerable and Affected by the HIV and Chair of the Working Group on Populations/Indigenous Communities in Africa (Head of Delegation);
- b) the Honourable Commissioner Hatem Essaim, Commissioner for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Republic of Mauritius and Chairman of the Committee for the Prevention of Torture; and
- c) the Honourable Commissioner Rémy Ngoy Lumbu, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and Focal Point on Reprisals in Africa.

PRIORITY ACTION 7:

The Report of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture following its visit in Mauritius in 2007, as well as Government's response will be released at an appropriate time.

43. Due to security reasons, as at now, there is no policy decision to make the Report public.

44. The Prime Minister's Office has nevertheless apprised that action was taken on the findings and recommendations of the report.

PRIORITY ACTION 8:

The Government of the Republic of Mauritius shall explore measures of co-operation which can be taken with international organizations and other countries on human rights matters, such as the holding of regional workshops and joint research programmes. It shall support international and regional initiatives aimed at better promoting, protecting and implementing human rights norms.

45. In order to better promote, protect and implement Human Rights norms and activities, Government has been working in close collaboration with International Organisations, the OHCHR, the Office of High Commissioner for Refugees, NGOs and Civil society. Some of the activities conducted by Ministries/Departments, NHRIs, the NMRF, as from 2015 onwards, is illustrated below:

- a) a one-day Consultative Workshop was held on Thursday 10 December 2015 so as to have an interactive dialogue with Ministries/Departments, private sector, civil society's representatives and the NHRIs, on the following 3 national periodic reports which Mauritius submitted to the respective Treaty Bodies, namely: -
 - (i) the 4th periodic report on the Convention Against Torture (CAT);
 - (ii) the 5th periodic report on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); and
 - (iii) the 6th-8th combined periodic report on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR).
- b) the Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with the OHCHR and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), organised a two-day workshop with national stakeholders on Human Rights Indicators, on 21-22 September 2016 at the Gold Crest Hotel, Quatre Bornes. The objective of the workshop was to enable a better understanding, identification and use of Human Rights Indicators by the focal points in different Ministries/Departments and other stakeholders;
- c) the Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC) provided technical assistance for the inclusion of Human Rights Education (HRE) in the curriculum of secondary schools. The curriculum materials proposed by COMSEC was validated during a workshop was held in April 2015. A Toolkit for Educators was developed by COMSEC. The programme was implemented in 30 state and private schools, including one from Rodrigues since January 2016 in collaboration with PMO and COMSEC;
- d) a one-day Consultative Workshop was held in December 2016 to have an interactive dialogue with Ministries/Departments, private sector, civil society's representatives and the National

Human Rights Institutions, on the following 2 national periodic reports which Mauritius submitted to the respective Treaty Bodies, that year, namely:

- (i) CERD (11 July 2017); and
 - (ii) ICESCR (19 July 2017)
- e) a one-day workshop, a joint initiative of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and the EU Delegation to Mauritius, brought together some 45 law enforcement officers was held on 11 December 2017 and a three-day Peer-to-Peer workshop relative to detention in the Indian Ocean and focusing on the humane treatment and conditions of detention for all prison detainees was held at the Prison Training School in Beau-Bassin from 12 to 14 December 2017. The workshop, an initiative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in collaboration with the Mauritius Prison Service, was attended by representatives from Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and the Comoros.
- f) in April 2018, a workshop was organized by the then MJHRIR in collaboration with the National Human Rights Commission and the European Union. Professor Ludovic Hennebel, from the Law Faculty of Aix-Marseille, France conducted the workshop on International Human Rights Treaties for members of the National Reporting and Follow Up Mechanism;
- g) a Joint Monitoring Framework Agreement was signed on 08 May 2018 between the European Union and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare to track progress on the implementation of the EU-Mauritius Gender Action Plan. This agreement serves as a tool to monitor a number of Key Performance Indicators related to the promotion of gender equality, addressing gender-based violence, and the economic empowerment of women and girls, among others. It comprises a number of set objectives and accompanying indicators attached to them that are closely linked to the SDGs and the EU Result Frameworks (EURF). The three thematic objectives of the of the EU Gender Action Plan 2016-2020 are as follows:
- (i) Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
 - (ii) Physical and Psychological Integrity; and
 - (iii) Strengthening girls' and women's voice and participation.

The 6 objectives and 18 corresponding indicators retained constitute the Joint Monitoring Framework for the implementation of the EU – Mauritius Gender Action Plan.

The Technical meeting is co-chaired by the Head of Cooperation of European Union Delegation and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare. The High-Level meeting is co-chaired by the EU Ambassador and the Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare. Representatives who attend the meeting are the gender focal points of line

Ministries who report on progress achieved in respect of the 6 objectives and 18 corresponding indicators falling under their purview.

During the High-Level Policy Dialogue, the actions undertaken by stakeholders in context of the Joint Monitoring Framework Agreement are reviewed and validated. The GAP II ended in 2020.

The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles is proposing to come up with a Gender Action Plan (GAP) III (2021-2025) which calls for a gender-equal world. The aim of the of GAP III is to accelerate progress towards gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, by setting objectives and action in six key thematic policy areas.

A Joint Monitoring Framework agreement in the context of a new Gender Action Plan III has been prepared.

- h) from 14 to 17 May 2018, the Ombudsperson for Children's Office hosted the Annual Training on the Rights of the Child of the "*Association des Ombudsmans et Médiateurs de la Francophonie*" (AOMF) on the theme "*Article 12 de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfants: Le droit d'exprimer librement son opinion*" at the Gold Crest Hotel, Quatre Bornes. Delegates from Belgium, Benin, Canada, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, France, Madagascar, Mauritius, Monaco, Senegal, Seychelles and Tunisia attended the workshop. The Ombudsperson for Children of the Republic of Mauritius is a member of the AOMF since 2014. One of the main objectives of the AOMF is to promote knowledge of the role of ombudsmen and mediators and to develop the concept of the institution in the Francophonie in order to promote democratic practices, social peace and the protection and advancement of human rights;
- i) from 12 to 17 November 2018, Mr Pierre – Yves Rosset, Délégué General aux droits de l'enfant de la Communauté de Belgique was on official visit to Mauritius in the context of the 'Programme d'échanges' de L'Association des Ombudsmans et Médiateur de la Francophone (AOMF). During his visit, he had working sessions with investigators of the Ombudsperson for Children and with around 20 children from Residence Barkly and Young Ambassadors of the OCO on the theme 'Promoting Children's Participation';
- j) a four-day (19-22 November 2018) workshop, focusing on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Disaster Law (IDL), was organized by the then, MJHRIR in collaboration with the Mauritius Red Cross Society and the San Remo University of Italy. A total of around 250 participants benefitted from the workshop;
- k) in June 2018, in the context of the 50th Anniversary of the Independence of Mauritius and the South African Week, the then MJHRIR, in collaboration with the High Commission of South Africa, organised a public lecture on the theme" *50 Years of Independence - Inspiration from*

the making and workings of the South African Constitution by Professor Thuli Madonsela, a South African Advocate and Professor of law holding a chair in Social Justice at Stellenbosch University since January 2018.

- l) on 10 December 2018, the then MJHRIR launched 8 video clips on Human Rights Awareness to mark the Human Rights Day. The video clips are entitled as:
 - (i) What are Human Rights?
 - (ii) Right to Education
 - (iii) No to Sexual Harassment
 - (iv) No to Child Marriage
 - (v) Rights of Persons with disabilities
 - (vi) Yes, to Meritocracy and Equal Opportunity
 - (vii) Rights of Detainees
 - (viii) Rights of the Elderly

- m) a talk focusing on “Disability and Human Rights” was delivered by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services of South Africa, Hon Tshililo Michael Masutha on 18 January 2019 at the Le Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel in Port-Louis.

He was on a two-day visit in Mauritius to share his own experiences being himself visually impaired. Minister Masutha dwelt on the need for social inclusion and equal opportunities for people with disabilities and expressed hope for these people to achieve success in various fields;

- n) a one-day Consultative Workshop for UPR was held on 23 January 2019 to engage consultative discussions with Ministries, Departments and the Civil Society on the recommendations of the UPR Working Group prior to providing feedback to the Human Rights Council of the Plenary Session scheduled in mid-March 2019.

- o) formalisation of an agreement between Equality & Justice Alliance and the then MJHRIR to cooperate under the terms of technical assistance provided through the Equality & Justice Alliance with regard to legislative reform of sexual offences laws in the context of the recommendations made by UN human rights bodies;

- p) from 27 January to 03 February 2019, the Ombudsperson for Children’s Office welcomed Mrs Ingrid Olga Issacks, Children’s Advocate at the Office of the Ombudsman in Namibia for a

familiarization programme. The programme aimed to familiarize Mrs Issacks with the best practices at the OCO which would provide her with new insights in her work;

- q) the then MJHRIR in collaboration with the Equality & Justice Alliance based in UK, organized a talk on the theme “Progressive Realization of Rights through the Courts: the experience of the Supreme Court of India” by Justice Deepak Misra, Former Chief Justice in India, on 22 March 2019 at Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel. The talk was attended by eminent personalities of the Judiciary including the Judges, Magistrates and Bar Council Members. Other sessions were organized with other groups; students, civil society, and NGOs;
- r) the Know Your Rights Pamphlet was launched on 23 March 2019 and it was funded by the UK Government. It aimed to inform prospective and current migrant workers of their rights and the possible remedial actions in case of violations. It also served to make migrant workers aware of the dangers of human trafficking. The pamphlet was produced in 6 different languages, namely English, French, Hindi, Tamil, Bangladesh and Chinese. A short video clip encompassing the main information in the pamphlet was also produced and was occasionally broadcasted on different channels of the national television (Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation);
- s) a three-day workshop was organised from 24 to 26 April 2019 with Ministries, Departments, National Human Rights Institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations who are members of the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) on ‘State Party Reporting to Treaty Bodies’ to strengthen the national capacity of Mauritius on engagement with human rights mechanisms particularly as it relates to reporting and implementing treaty body recommendations;
- t) a two-day workshop was held on 23 and 24 May 2019 on the National Recommendation Tracking Tool to build capacity of participants on the use of the National Recommendation Tracking Database including data entry. This workshop was serviced by OHCHR Officers;
- u) the then MJHRIR, organized a half day awareness session on Human Rights for Senior Chief Executives and Permanent Secretaries of Ministries on 04 May 2019. The aim of the training was to promote awareness of the State obligations under the various international instruments within the Head of Ministries and Departments and ensure that the best conditions are put in place in Ministries and Departments for compliance therewith. The session which was attended by around 35 Senior Officials was facilitated by the Chairperson of the NHRC;
- v) in May 2019, a two-day workshop on Asylum Seekers/ Refugees was held with Ministries, Departments and Civil society’s representatives. It was organized by the then MJHRIR in collaboration with the Prime Minister’s Office along with the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees based in Pretoria to work out a Protocol on the roles and responsibilities of relevant

stakeholders in the event that Mauritius is faced with foreigners seeking International Protection as asylum seekers or refugees;

- w) the African Union (AU) Special Rapporteur on Ending Child Marriage and other representatives from the AU carried out a country visit in Mauritius from 6 to 8 August 2019.

The purpose of the country visit was to see what measures were taken by Mauritius particularly to end child marriage and promote welfare of children in general. Moreover, the visit was an opportunity for the delegation to learn from the good practices in Mauritius in that area which could be shared with other African countries.

On 08 August 2019, the Ministry organized a working session with different Ministries, Departments and the NGOs/Civil Societies/Development Partners on ‘Ending Early Child Marriage’.

- x) a workshop on Human Rights was organised at the Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebène, on 29 October 2020. The workshop was attended by around 115 participants from different Ministries/Departments, parastatals, Civil Societies, Non-Governmental Organisations and National Human Rights Institutions. The main objectives of the workshop were to:

- (i) apprise the participants of the legislative framework and the institutional set up for human rights in Mauritius;
- (ii) identify any proposals for legislative or structural amendments to improve the human rights landscape in Mauritius;
- (iii) exchange information on the human rights actions effected by the NGOs and Civil Society; and
- (iv) propose ways to improve the synergies and strengthen the cooperation between all stakeholders with a view to addressing more effectively the human rights issues in Mauritius.

- y) the HRD in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office in Mauritius organised a half day symposium on 10 December 2020 at the Hennessy Park Hotel, Ebène on the theme “Build back better by putting Human Rights at the core of the recovery”;

A song/video clip entitled ‘*Drwa de Lom Divan*’ was produced in in collaboration with the NGO Dis-Moi and financed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office in Mauritius. The clip explains the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the national language (Kreol). The opening ceremony was followed by the panel discussion.

Some 190 participants attended the event.

- z) the HRD has developed two social media tools, namely; a Facebook Page and a YouTube Channel which are live since October 2020 and have been officially presented to the public on the Human Rights Day on 10 December 2020. A maximum of 8 posts are uploaded on a monthly basis for better communication and knowledge of the public at large on Human Rights including forthcoming and ongoing activities/events, trending human rights issues worldwide and other human rights instruments and mechanisms.

OBJECTIVE II

Strengthening the National Human Rights Framework by Better Guaranteeing Constitutional Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms, by Providing for More Effective Enforcement of Protection Provisions, and by Enhancing the Effectiveness of National Human Rights Institutions

PRIORITY ACTION 9:

Fundamental rights and freedoms shall be further entrenched in the Constitution and the mechanisms for ensuring enforcement of these standards shall be made more effective.

46. Fundamental rights and freedoms are already entrenched in Chapter II of the Constitution of Mauritius. Civil and Political rights are also embedded in the Constitution.
47. However, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are recognized in various legislations but not in the Constitution specifically.

PRIORITY ACTION 10:

Provision shall be made in the Constitution that slavery and other similar practices constitute a crime against humanity, and that victims of slavery and other similar practices are entitled to reparation for the harm suffered.

48. Slavery and forced labour are prohibited under Section 6 of the Constitution. The Workers' Rights Act 2019 also provides that a child below the age of 16 cannot enter into an employment contract, and that an employer shall not keep in employment a young person where the work is of such a nature, or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardise the health, safety or physical, mental, moral or social development of the young person, which is unsuitable or is likely to interfere with the young person's education. The Non-Citizens (Employment Restriction) Act has been amended by the Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2021 to inter alia increase the maximum fine and imprisonment term for illegal employment from Rs 50,000 to Rs 500,000, and imprisonment from 2 years to 5 years. Under the International Criminal Court Act, enslavement as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack is a crime against humanity and is a criminal offence.
49. Section 7 of the Constitution prohibits the torture or inhuman or degrading punishment or other such treatment to any person. Moreover, the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act was enacted in 2009 and it caters for offences of human trafficking and contain provisions for compensation.
50. An Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up for a concerted response to ensure a proper coordination in respect of trafficking in persons including child trafficking and forced labour. A draft National Action Plan to combat Trafficking in Persons is currently under preparation.
51. In the US Trafficking in Persons Report ranking, Mauritius has maintained the Tier 2 since 2016.

Truth and Justice Commission

52. The Truth and Justice Commission Act which set up the Truth and Justice Commission whose object shall be, inter alia, to make an assessment of the consequences of slavery and indentured labour during the colonial period up to the present.
53. The Courts Act was amended in 2020, following the recommendations of the Truth and Justice Commission's Report. Section 41B provides for the setting up of a Land Division within the Supreme Court to ensure the just, expeditious and accessible resolution of land disputes. This Division has the jurisdiction to hear and determine –

“(a) any matter regarding ownership of land and property rights, other than any matter connected therewith which falls under the jurisdiction of the Intermediate Court or District Court under any enactment; and

(b) any other matter connected therewith as the Chief Justice may direct.”

Intercontinental Slavery Museum (ISM)

54. The Intercontinental Slavery Museum (Phase 1) was officially launched in October 2020 together with an inaugural exhibition entitled “Breaking the Silence”. The setting up of the museum was one of the various recommendations made by the Truth and Justice Commission. The project is geared towards remembering the sufferings, resilience and struggle for freedom of our forefathers. The ISM is also a ‘Site of Conscience’ to honour our interculturality and promote remembrance and reconciliation.

PRIORITY ACTION 11:

The powers of the National Human Rights Commission shall be strengthened and the scope of its activities broadened. Its operational capability shall be enhanced by amending the legislation to allow the Commission to recruit its own staff.

55. The Chairpersons and Commissioners of all NHRIs are appointed by the President on advice of the Prime Minister in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.
56. The NHRC is guided by the Paris Principles and does not receive any directive(s) from any public or private authority, which would compromise its independence.
57. The NHRC has a quasi-judicial competence to receive complaints regarding violations of human rights, to summon witnesses, to call for the production of documents and to hold hearings.

58. The term “Human Rights” under the Protection of Human Rights Act is defined as the rights protected under Chapter II of the Constitution of Mauritius. These rights are mainly civil and political rights. The NHRC is nevertheless widening its mandate by giving a generous interpretation to the right to life and deals with economic and social rights, where applicable.
59. With regard to financial resources, the NHRC has its own budget, which is approved by the National Assembly, as is the case for all budgetary units performing specialised functions.
60. The NHRC also has the important mandate to promote human rights in Mauritius mainly through education and information by raising awareness amongst various sections of the population. As such, the NHRC conducts several workshops and delivers talks to inter alia students, elderly people, persons with disabilities, women and LGBTQ persons to sensitise them about their human rights and their rights to be protected against all forms of abuse.

PRIORITY ACTION 12:

The procedure for complaints and investigation against Police shall be simplified and enhanced, and an Independent Police Complaints Commission has been set up for the purpose of investigating such complaints.

61. The Independent Police Complaints Commission Act was passed in the National Assembly on 19 July 2016 and thereafter proclaimed on 23 July 2016.
62. The IPCC became operational as from 09 April 2018.
63. The mandate of the IPCC is to investigate into complaints made against police officers in the discharge of their functions, other than complaints of acts of corruption or money laundering offences.
64. The Commission is a body corporate, which in the discharge of its functions and exercise of its powers, is not subject to the direction or control of any person or authority.
65. The Commission is composed of a Chairperson who is a former Judge of the Supreme Court and two Members. They are all employed on a contract basis. The present composition of the Commission is as follows:
 - a) Chairperson: Mrs Deviyanee Beesoondoyal, GCSK
 - b) Full-time Member: Mr Phalraj Servansingh

c) Part-time Member: Mr Viranand Ramchurn

66. The IPCC has received 1038 complaints from 09 April 2018 to 30 December 2020 as indicated in the table below:

Table 11: Complaints dealt by IPCC for period April to December 2020

	No. of Complaints	Disposed of after investigation	No. of complaints still under investigation
Assault	544	127	417
Verbal Abuse	188	108	80
Other complaints*	929	388	541
Total	1661	623	1038

Source: Independent Police Complaints Commission

***Other complaints include:**

- a) refusal to record declaration;
- b) delay in enquiry by police;
- c) failing to attend request made by public;
- d) search warrant not shown before carrying out a search;
- e) damaging private property during police operation;
- f) threat by police;
- g) harassment by police;
- h) abuse of Authority; and
- i) alleged larceny by police during search carried out by them.

67. The IPCC has investigated into a total of 1938 cases from 09 April 2018 to 31 December 2020 (including 277 former files from the NHRC) and the breakdown is as follows:

Table 12: Number of cases investigated by the IPCC

	No. of complaints Received	No. of complaints disposed under investigation	No. of complaints still under investigation	No. of complaints withdrawn	No. of complaints referred to the DPP**	No. of complaints referred to the DFSC***	No. of complaints settled by conciliation
PCD* (old files)	277	212	65	37	4	0	6
2018	456	306	150	51	6	3	12
2019	644	244	400	58	1	0	24
2020	561	73	488	18	0	0	10
TOTAL	1938	835	1103	164	11	3	52

Source: Independent Police Complaints Commission

*PCD: Police Complaints Division

**DPP: Director of Public Prosecutions

***DFSC: Disciplined Forces Services Commission

IPCC's Achievements (April 2018 to December 2020)

- a) Total number of visit to Police Stations/Detention Centres/ other police units: 10
- b) Total number of workshop/seminars attended: 4
- c) Total number of talks organized: 4
- d) Total number of working visits to Rodrigues: 4

PRIORITY ACTION 13:

A National Preventive Mechanism which will ensure that the conditions prevailing in our prisons, police cells and other places of detention comply with human rights obligations and the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the UN Conventions against Torture will be set up.

68. Mauritius is party to Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) and has fulfilled its obligation to establish a National Preventive Mechanism, which is an independent national body for the prevention of torture and ill-treatment at domestic level.
69. The National Preventive Mechanism Division (NPMD) was set up under the National Human Rights Commission in 2014.
70. Its functions are:
- a) to visit places of detention on a regular basis so as to examine the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty with a view to ensuring their protection against torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
 - b) to investigate any complaint which may be made by a detainee and, where the detainee so requests, investigate the complaint privately;
 - c) to make to the Minister recommendations regarding the improvement of the treatment and conditions of persons deprived of their liberty in places of detention, taking into consideration the relevant norms of the United Nations;
 - d) to submit to the Minister and other relevant authorities, proposals and observations concerning legislation relating to places of detention and the treatment of persons deprived of their liberty; and
 - e) to work, where appropriate, in co-operation or consultation with any person or body, whether public or private, in connection with the discharge of any of its functions under the National Preventive Mechanism Act and the Optional Protocol.
71. The NPMD publishes various recommendations each year in the Annual Report of the NHRC to enable the authorities to improve the conditions of detention centres. Adequate follow-up is effected to ensure that the rights of detainees are protected effectively.
72. Since June 2015, its NPMD investigates complaints from detainees. Number of complaints from detainees received at the NHRC from January to December 2020 is 85.

73. Statistics pertaining to the number of complaints dealt with by the NPMD from January 2017 to December 2020 are as follows:

Table 13: Complaints dealt with by the NPMD for period 2016 to 2020

Year	Number of Visits conducted	Number of Complaints	Number of complaints Disposed of	Ongoing cases
2016	170	576	475	101
2017	150	235	193	42
2018	140	85	76	9
2019	127	75	65	10
2020	116	94	65	29

Source: National Human Rights Commission

OBJECTIVE III

Protecting and Safeguarding Civil and Political rights further by Securing Right to Self-Determination, Strengthening Democratic Rights, Protecting the Rights of Victims of Crime, Safeguarding the Rights of Suspects and Detainees, Enhancing the Efficiency of the Administration of Justice and Securing Access to Courts, and Enhancing the System of Freedom of Expression and Protecting Privacy and Human Dignity

PRIORITY ACTION 14:

Strategies shall be evolved to further ensure that the inhabitants of the islands forming part of the Republic of Mauritius are effectively afforded facilities and opportunities, in the pursuit of their economic, social and cultural development, that are, as far as practicable, equivalent to what obtains in mainland Mauritius.

74. The Constitution provides that the Republic of Mauritius comprises the Islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agalega, Tromelin, Cargados Carajos and the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia and any other island comprised in the State of Mauritius.
75. The inhabitants of the different islands are full-fledged citizens of Mauritius and enjoy the same rights and opportunities.
76. The Constitution, which is the supreme law of the country, prohibits discrimination and advocates equality for all. It also provides that no law shall be discriminatory either in itself or in its effect. Being a Welfare State, the State of Mauritius provides free education from pre-primary to tertiary levels; free transport to students and the elderly, free access to health services; social aid to vulnerable groups; and non-contributory universal pension benefits to the elderly.
77. The Government of Mauritius is also investing heavily on modern and strategic infrastructure for the transformation of Mauritius, Rodrigues and the outer islands. Examples of such developments and facilities are as follows:

Agalega

- a) For the first time ever, in September 2018, inhabitants of Agalega island were connected to the internet by way of satellite bandwidth. Moreover, the construction of a new airport and a new jetty is under way.
- b) Regarding Agalega and St Brandon, social housing is cared for by the Outer Island Development Corporation, under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office (Rodrigues, Outer Islands and Territorial Integrity Division).
- c) Initially in Agalega, there was no mechanism for social aid. Since November 2018, social aid is being provided for based on the same criteria as Mauritius. However, no payment has been made in respect of social aid in Agalega as at date.

- d) Health services are provided free to the population of Agalega through a network of two health centres located on each of the islands. Cases for surgeries and follow-up for further treatment are referred to Mauritius.
- e) According to the Health Sector Strategic Plan 2020-2024, the strategic actions for Agalega are as follows:
 - (i) provision of appropriate medical technology to improve medical services and provide additional services;
 - (ii) carrying out of a feasibility study for the setting up of a community hospital;
 - (iii) the extension of telemedicine facilities;
 - (iv) the strengthening of health promotion activities to reduce the prevalence of Non-Communicable Diseases;
 - (v) the promotion of school health activities; and
 - (vi) the further strengthening of the surveillance system of communicable diseases, including COVID-19.

Rodrigues

- f) A Declaration of Intent was signed between the Government of the French Republic, the EU, the AFD, the Airports of Mauritius and the RRA for the purpose of financing the airport development project at Plaine Corail Airport in Rodrigues, for an amount of about Rs 4 billion. The Ceremony was held on Tuesday 17 December 2019 in Rodrigues in the presence of the Prime Minister, Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth and other eminent personalities.
- g) The new runway project will consist of the construction of a new runway of 2100m long by 45m wide with an additional ICAO compliant 300m on both ends for the Runway End Safety Area (RESA) as well as the upgrading of the airfield infrastructure at Plaine Corail Airport and the various airport facilities, namely, a new air control tower, a new fire station building and sea rescue facility to support operations of A320/A321Neo type aircrafts. This project will no doubt further improve air connectivity, tourism development and the socio-economic conditions on the island.
- h) In connection with the provision of high speed bandwidth through the installation of the Mauritius and Rodrigues Submarine Cable System (MARS), a Technopark will be constructed to promote IT development; create a platform for developing technology-based businesses and to create

remunerative employment for the younger generation and improve the standard of living of the population of Rodrigues.

i) As per the Concept Plan elaborated by Landscape Mauritius, the building would be a state of the art building of 4 levels (G + 3), of an area of 5,200 m² at Baladirou, with eye catching facades and modern claddings with hi-tech facilities. The Technopark will be equipped with the necessary infrastructure to kick start the audacious program of implementing an IT-led business culture.

j) Different strategies have been devised to tackle the water issue in Rodrigues:

(i) To satisfy the population and to relieve pressure on the existing boreholes, springs and reservoirs which are actually serving the island, the RRA has decided to set up several desalination plants at Pointe Cotton, Songes, Caverne Bouteille, Baie Malgache and Pointe Venus.

In 2018, Rodrigues pioneered the construction of a solar desalination which is in line with the vision of making Rodrigues an ecological Island. The plant is producing 80 m³ of fresh drinking water. At night, it uses a hybrid solar-grid powered source to produce 240 m³ of drinking water.

(ii) Moreover, it is to be highlighted that a grant of EUR 3 million (approximately Rs 120 million) was approved by the European Union under the 10th EDF Programme entitled: ‘Support to Water Development in Rodrigues’, under two separate Calls for Proposals, over a period of two years each (1st Call for Proposal: 2015- 2017 & 2nd Call for Proposal: 2016-2018).

(iii) Different schemes have been made available to the public to encourage Rodriguans to invest in rainwater harvesting structures at household levels.

(iv) In view of improving the water sector, the RRA is actually working in collaboration with the Agence Française de Développement on two major strategic projects as follows:

- (a) Setting up of ‘Observatoire de L’Eau’ in Rodrigues
- (b) Consultancy Services for the Development of Rodrigues Water Resources Strategy and the Definition of Priority Action Plan

k) The new Social Housing Scheme had been extended to Rodrigues Island and is being implemented since 2016. These schemes had been introduced so as to provide more support to low/middle income families earning below Rs 20, 000 who are investing in their own dwellings.

- l) Furthermore, these schemes aim at providing a safer and more decent housing unit including basic amenities, for instance toilet, bathroom, kitchen, septic tank and absorption pit to vulnerable families.
- m) The RRA has decided to revamp the Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues (SIDPR) which dates back to 2009, thus several strategies have been outdated and need to be revamped. The SIDPR is an integrated plan which aimed at contributing to employment creation, poverty reduction, improved standard of living while making sustainable use and conservation of the environmental and natural resources of Rodrigues. It comprised of policies, strategies, programmes and projects to be implemented over a ten-year period, to promote an integrated and sustainable development on island. It also contained a five-year action plan. The updated and revised SIDPR is expected to provide the RRA with an integrated, holistic and realistic development plan that will satisfy the three main preoccupations of sustainable development plan, namely; social, economic and environmental sustainability. The assignment would also comprise of the following:
 - (i) Updating the 2001 Tourism Development plan for Rodrigues; and
 - (ii) Updating the 2010 Rodrigues Development Strategy and Land Use Plan.
- n) The RRA envisages to proceed with the Port Development Project as per the Port Masterplan for Rodrigues 2016 involving the implementation of the Port Development in phases as follows:
 - (i) **Phase I** - Dredging and Reclamation Works at Pointe L'herbe & Allied Works in Port Mathurin Harbour; and
 - (ii) **Phase II** – Capital Dredging, Realignment of the Navigational Channel, Development of an entirely new port on reclaimed land to the west of the creek and Construction of a new quay of about 300m long.
- o) A Technical School will be set up at Citron Donis in connection with the introduction of the NYCBE and same institution will be managed by Polytechnic Mauritius and courses will be delivered in promising sectors including Tourism, Sports Management, Arts, Renewable energy and Others.
- p) The institution will provide quality training and workforce development, through the development and delivery of upskilling and re-skilling programmes thus professionalising labour force in promising sectors in Rodrigues.

q) The RRA aims at providing quality education by devising various combinations of policies amongst which building more community schools. The concept of community schools in fact will play a pivotal role in many ways, including the following:

- (i) to provide quality education with the appropriate infrastructure to all pupils fostering their overall development and to give special care and attention to pupils with learning difficulties;
- (ii) to provide inclusive education through parental involvement;
- (iii) to prevent pupils from spending much time in travelling; and
- (iv) to allow the Community to use the school facilities such as sports facilities.

78. Since 2015, the Government of Mauritius has embarked on a new economic model, which forms the basis of the new development strategy in its endeavour to combat poverty, promote social justice, economic empowerment and national unity, and protect vulnerable citizens of Mauritius. It is grounded on the 6 core guiding principles:

- a) an inclusive economic growth model;
- b) massive investment in education and training for all;
- c) a strong social security system;
- d) empowering and supporting poor families;
- e) putting a halt to transfer of poverty from one generation to the other; and
- f) combatting social ills such as drug addiction and drug dealing, prostitution, in particular child prostitution and alcoholism, amongst others.

Social Register of Mauritius

79. The Social Register of Mauritius (SRM) has been developed since June 2015 and constitutes a national database of vulnerable households in Mauritius. The MSISSNS is the legal custodian of the SRM database and is responsible as from 15 November 2018 for the registration of potential households. As at December 2020, there are around 7,664 and 2,309 SRM eligible households in Mauritius and Rodrigues respectively.

Zone d'Education Prioritaires (ZEP) Project in the Republic of Mauritius

80. The ZEP project, which already came into operation in 2003, is still ongoing and is quite successful in its mission to combat poverty through education. Its philosophy is based on positive reinforcement reducing school and social inequalities. It aims at providing equal opportunities to all primary school children through the mobilization of all the resources that contribute in raising achievement standards of ZEP schools. There are currently 30 ZEP schools out of which 27 in Mauritius, 1 in Rodrigues and 2 in Agalega.

Housing

81. The vision of the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning is to offer a decent house with adequate facilities in a suitable living environment to every Mauritian family. In line with this vision, the implementation arm of the Ministry, the National Housing Development Company (NHDC) Ltd, offers, under its existing schemes, housing units and grants for casting of roof slabs and purchase of building materials to the most vulnerable groups of society and to hardship cases on a case to case basis as per the defined eligibility criteria.

82. As from the financial year 2015-2016, provisions were made to increase the size of housing units to be constructed to 50 m² to accommodate at least two bedrooms compared to previous schemes wherein the size of the housing unit varied from 36m² to 39m². In order to make NHDC houses more affordable to a larger number of families, new measures were announced in Budget for the financial year 2020-2021. The housing units are sold to beneficiaries of different income thresholds by the NHDC with varying subsidy from the Government as elaborated below:

- a) The revised Income Threshold and Subsidy Level for ongoing social housing units to be delivered as from 1st July 2020 are as follows:
 - i) Existing NHDC clients with a monthly household income of up to Rs 30,000 would be eligible for a subsidy rate of 67%.
 - ii) NEF clients registered under SRM with a monthly household income of up to Rs 10,000 would be eligible for a subsidy rate of 80%.
- b) As from July 2020, there is a new scheme for 12,000 Housing Units. The income threshold for a housing eligibility for a family has increased up to Rs 60,000.

Table 14: Housing Schemes

Household Income	Payment by Beneficiaries	Government Subsidy
< Rs 10,000	20%	80%
Rs 10,001 – Rs 30,000	33%	67%
Rs 30,001 – Rs 45,000	60%	40%
Rs 45,001 – Rs 60,000	70%	30%

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning

For an applicant to be eligible for a housing unit, he/she should:-

- (i) not be owner of a house (including NHDC or CHA house);
- (ii) not own a residential plot of land;
- (iii) not hold a residential plot of State land by lease;
- (iv) not have been granted any Government Sponsored Loan by the Mauritius Housing Company Ltd (MHC Ltd);
- (v) not have benefited from any Government grant for the casting of a roof slabs; and
- (vi) not have received any financial assistance from Government for the purchase of construction materials.

83. Government also reviewed the roof slabs grant and the purchase of building materials grant scheme as budget measures for the financial year 2019-2020 and both schemes are now aligned as follows:

Table 15: Roof Slab Grant and the Purchase of Building materials Grant Scheme

Existing Housing Schemes	Household Income Eligibility	Amount	Remarks	
Roof Slab Grant / Purchase of Building Materials	≤Rs10,000	Maximum one-off cash grant of Rs 100,000	Loan already taken must be less than Rs 500,000	(i) Households who own a plot of land but cannot afford to complete construction of their house, which has reached up to the beam level. The grant is for the casting of roof slab for an area up to 100m ²
	>Rs 10,000- ≤Rs 15,000	Maximum one-off cash grant of Rs 70,000	Loan already taken must be less than Rs 750,000	Allowable building plan area may reach up to 150 m ²
	>Rs 15,000- ≤Rs 20,000	Maximum one-off cash grant of Rs 50,000	Loan already taken must be less than Rs 900,000	(ii) Households who own a plot of land but cannot afford to start construction of a housing unit of up to 100m ² . The grant is for purchase of building materials to start construction.

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning

84. Loan thresholds for the different income groups: In October 2012, the allowable loan threshold was reviewed from Rs 400,000 to Rs 500,000. In July 2018, the loan threshold was increased from Rs 500,000 to Rs 750,000 for families earning between Rs 10,001 and Rs 15,000 monthly and in January 2019, the maximum loan amount was increased from Rs 750,000 to Rs 900,000 for families earning between Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000 monthly.

85. The Roof Slabs and Purchase of Building Materials Grant Schemes were extended in Budget for the financial year 2019-2020 to households who have already benefitted from Corrugated Iron Sheet and Concrete cum Corrugated Iron Sheet housing units and to families living in EDC houses which contain asbestos.

Employment

86. The portal of Mauritius jobs - www.mauritiusjobs.mu was launched in Mauritius in June 2014 and was extended to Rodrigues in February 2015 and is still in operation. The website was used by Rodriguans for applications regarding a Training Project in Italy in Agro Industry and Fishing Sectors in April 2015. As from the beginning of year 2020, the new link to the website is <https://mauritiusjobs.govmu.org>.

87. The RRA through the Commission for Labour and Industrial Relations is responsible for the formulation and implementation of labour legislations in Rodrigues.

88. There is one Labour Office in Rodrigues and it is situated at 1st Floor, MHC Building, Camp du Roi, Rodrigues.

89. Regular inspections at workplace are carried out to ensure that workers enjoy minimum wages and conditions prescribed in law.

Employment and Information Centres

90. The procedures for registration of jobseekers and processing of vacancies are the same both in Mauritius and in Rodrigues.

91. There is one Employment Information Centre (EIC) in Rodrigues and it operates under the aegis of the Commission for Social Security, Employment and Others, and is manned by a Senior Employment Officer. For its daily operations, the Rodrigues EIC uses the same web-enabled operating system as used by the Employment Service in Mauritius, namely the Labour Market Information System (LMIS), which is connected to the main server at the Government Online Centre (GOC) in Ebène.

92. As regard labour migration, the Employment Service in Mauritius invites the Rodrigues EIC to submit applications from Rodriguan candidates for consideration particularly for jobs in Canada and Italy. There are Rodriguan candidates who have taken up employment in Canada and who have benefitted from training in Italy under the labour migration with these countries.

Chagos Archipelago

93. The Government of Mauritius is strongly committed to implementing a resettlement plan in the Chagos Archipelago. In this regard, the special provision of Rs 50 million made in the Budget for the financial year 2019-2020 was maintained in the Budget for the financial year 2020-2021 for meeting, inter alia, expenses relating to preparations for eventual resettlement in the Chagos Archipelago.
94. As full-fledged citizens of Mauritius, Chagossians enjoy the same rights as other Mauritian citizens, including access to free health services, free education, and free public transport for students, elderly persons and disabled persons. They are also free to participate fully in all walks of life, including in the economic, social and political fields. In fact, one lady of Chagossian origin is a Member of Parliament; she was in the past a government Minister.
95. In order to further improve the living conditions of the Chagossians, the Government of Mauritius continues to take special measures in their favour through the Chagossian Welfare Fund. The Board of which comprises representatives of the Chagossian community who are elected by members of that community and is chaired by a member of the Chagossian community. The objects of the Fund are to, inter alia, advance and promote the welfare of the members of the Chagossian community and their descendants, develop programmes and projects for their total integration into Mauritius, and maintain community centres and other community facilities vested in it for the benefit of members of the Chagossian community and their descendants.
96. Over the past two years, the following measures were taken by the Chagossian Welfare Fund:
- a) scholarships to eligible students of the Chagossian community;
 - b) offer of motivational prizes to young graduates of the Chagossian community;
 - c) grants/financial assistance to students of the Chagossian community attending universities and vocational institutions;
 - d) talks for young Chagossians on nutrition and drug abuse;
 - e) provision of sports facilities and equipment for recreational purposes and wellness of the Chagossian community;
 - f) residential camp for senior citizens of the Chagossian community;
 - g) distribution of provisions to senior citizens and bedridden persons of the Chagossian community;

- h) recreational activities for primary and secondary school students of the Chagossian community;
- i) donation of building materials for repairs to be made to the roof of houses of Chagossians which leaked during heavy rainfalls;
- j) provision of food items, furniture and other necessities to Chagossians who are victims of fire and donation of building materials for repairs of houses of Chagossians destroyed by fire;
- k) assistance to needy Chagossians for repairs to their houses;
- l) visits to Chagossians in homes every three months, during which clothes and fruits are given to them;
- m) funeral grants to families of deceased Chagossians;
- n) free yearly medical check-up for Chagossians;
- o) financial assistance to Chagossians going for treatment abroad over and above that provided by the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MHW);
- p) financial assistance to a person accompanying a Chagossian going for treatment abroad;
- q) provision of transport facilities to Chagossians who have appointments at hospitals; and
- r) upgrading of Chagossian community centres for the conduct of activities, prayers and other events for the Chagossian community.

97. These measures have contributed to improve the well-being of members of the Chagossian community, whether they are children, adults or elderly persons. The measures taken in favour of students have helped them in their academic path and there was an increase over the years in the number of university graduates of Chagossian origin. The Chagossian Welfare Fund has also assisted in alleviating the plight of needy Chagossians.

PRIORITY ACTION 15:

Government will bring about reforms of our electoral system and the financing of political parties. Government will ensure that the country has an electoral system which is more equitable and which promotes nation building and provides for better representation of women.

98. The State of Mauritius introduced the Constitution (Amendment) Bill into the National Assembly on 04 December 2018 after wide consultations. The objects of the Bill were, inter-alia, to:
- a) introduce a dose of Proportional Representation;
 - b) do away with the requirement for the mandatory declaration as to the community to which a constituency candidate belongs to;
 - c) seek better gender representation in the National Assembly; and
 - d) provide for anti-defection measures to enhance stability.
99. The Government electoral reform proposals that were embedded in the Bill, aimed at consolidating and advancing constitutional democracy and republican values in Mauritius. The proposed measures were expected to address, to a significant extent, the major imperfections and deficiencies of our current electoral system. They aimed at preserving and promoting inclusiveness and fostering nationhood while at the same time maintaining social and political stability and governability, which have been the bedrock of our socio-economic developments since independence.
100. However, the Constitution (Amendment) Bill was debated in the National Assembly but was not put to vote on 11 December 2018, as there was no consensus across the political spectrum with respect to the proposed reforms.
101. Subsequently, following the General elections in November 2019, a new Government with the same Prime Minister was elected and in its Government Programme 2020-2024, mention is made that Government intends to pursue its initiative to bring an electoral reform that will ensure political and social stability in the country and higher women participation.
102. The gender-neutral quota of two-thirds is already applicable in the case of Municipal Council Elections, Village Council Elections and the RRA Elections.

103. Women representation in politics following General Elections 2019 are as hereunder:

Table 16: Women representation in politics

Category		Total Number of Seats/ Positions	Number of Positions held by Women	Percentage of women (%)
Representation in Cabinet	Prime Ministers	1	0	0
	Deputy Prime Minister	1	0	0
	Vice-Prime Ministers	2	1	50
	Ministers	21	3	14
Representation in Parliament		70	14	20

Source: Prime Minister's Office

104. Members of the political party 'Rezistans ek Alternativ' submitted an individual communication to the Human Rights Committee in November 2019 alleging that the State of Mauritius failed to comply with the views of the Committee in as much as the State, by way of a constitutional amendment in 2014, rendered "legal" the qualification of a candidate at the general elections. It was reported that the candidates had failed to classify themselves under one of the required "ethnicity – or religion-based" categories in view of the fact that to qualify as a candidate for the general elections, one had to declare his/her belonging to one of the four communities prescribed under the Constitution of Mauritius. The authors of the Communication observed that the amendment was of a temporary application and consequently would not apply after the 2014 general election, and as such, the State had therefore failed to provide an effective and enforceable remedy for the "declared breach" of article 25(b) of the Covenant.
105. The State of Mauritius did not extend these provisions to the 2019 General Elections as these contained anomalies which were highlighted during the debates in relation to the Constitution (Declaration of Community) (Temporary Provisions) Bill 2014. More specifically, during the debates of the 04 July 2014, it was highlighted that such piecemeal amendments could have very far-reaching and adverse consequences on inter-communal harmony and could even threaten the social fabric of the Mauritian multicultural society.
106. One major anomaly identified during the debates was that if several candidates belonging to a particular community do not declare their community during elections and are thereby returned as members of the National Assembly, there would be an "artificial" under representation of that community in the National Assembly, whereby with a view to ensuring a fair representation, the Electoral Supervisory Commission

would have been under a mandatory legal obligation to allocate additional seats under the BLS to unreturned candidates of that particular community.

107. Consequently, this would, in lieu of ensuring fair representation of every community in the National Assembly, create a situation whereby that particular community, because of it being “artificially” under represented, would, after allocation of additional seats, be over represented, and, at the same time, resulting in another community to be under represented. In such a situation, the whole exercise of designating additional seats will thus be falsified, thereby defeating the whole purpose of having a fair representation of all communities in the National Assembly.
108. The State of Mauritius is of the view that piecemeal amendments to the Constitution in order to remove the reference to the 1972 census in the First Schedule to the Constitution are not considered appropriate as neither would this achieve broad consensus nor would this contribute to meeting the objective of building a truly Mauritian Nation, an aim to which the Government of Mauritius stands fully and unreservedly committed to.
109. As regards the holistic reform of the electoral system to reconsider the necessity of the community-based electoral system, the Republic of Mauritius has attempted to introduce the Constitution Amendment Bill No. XXII of 2018, which includes amendments to do away with the requirement for the mandatory declaration of community to which a candidate belongs.
110. However, again, the debates on the Bill before the National Assembly only confirmed the deep sensitivity related to the abolishing of the BLS within the Mauritian society. The tenor and nature of the debates in the National Assembly made it evident that the required majority to effect any constitutional amendment would not be obtained.

Financing of Political Party –Presented in 2019

111. The Ministerial Committee on Electoral Reforms submitted its proposal on the Financing of Political Parties. The Government’s proposals thereon were released in November 2018 as part of a consultation process and all political parties and public at large were invited to submit their views and suggestions. The recommendations aim at greater transparency and accountability in the Financing of Political Parties.
112. The Financing of Political Parties Bill was introduced in the National Assembly for debates on 12 July 2019 and did not receive $\frac{3}{4}$ of the majority votes in the National Assembly.

PRIORITY ACTION 16:

Government will introduce new enabling legislation providing for the people to be consulted by way of referendum on major constitutional and other issues.

113. Section 47(3) of the Constitution provides for it. However, no referendum has ever been resorted to.

PRIORITY ACTION 17:

As part of the enlargement of our “*espace démocratique*” and revitalisation of the role of Parliament, Government will invite the National Assembly to engage in thematic debates. This will enable the National Assembly to have, in addition to its legislative function, a major role as a deliberative organ on policy issues. Government will propose the appointment of an all-party committee to discuss the modalities of such debates. These debates should be nonpartisan and focus on policy issues in the national interest.

Parliamentary Committee

114. Though there is no Parliamentary Committee yet, Parliamentarians can avail of parliamentary questions to seek clarifications on various issues of national interest including human rights.

Gender Caucus

115. A Parliamentary Gender Caucus (PGC) was set up in December 2016 and officially launched by the Honourable Prime Minister in March 2017 at the level of the National Assembly, and is chaired by the Honourable Speaker. The objective of the cross-party PGC is to work for the promotion and attainment of gender equality, in line with Standing Order 69(6) of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly. It is the duty of the Caucus to:

- a) recommend the carrying out of periodical gender assessments of Government policies and research on salient gender issues; and
- b) facilitate networking with organisations and institutions in Mauritius and abroad in all such activities, with a view to promoting gender equality and participation.

116. The PGC commissioned in the financial year 2017-2018 two studies to provide baseline data on the status of gender mainstreaming and gender equity in the public and private sectors; entitled “Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius” and “Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector in Mauritius”.

117. It has also commissioned a study on “The Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence” to look at the root cause, and triggers to domestic violence, as well as propose recommendations to address it. In order to ensure gender sensitive policy processes, it has also carried out a number of capacity building programmes for Gender Focal Points and Members of the Caucus consultants (liaison Officers at the level of Ministries) dispensed by international on gender mainstreaming, gender indications and developed a checklist on gender mainstreaming in the policy/programming cycle.
118. In light of the legislative oversight role and advocacy by the Caucus, all Ministries are required to fill in gender budget statements. Additionally, the Caucus notes with satisfaction that one of the key recommendations of the “Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector” Study has been taken on board by Government in the Budget Speech of 2019 - 2020. In line with Budget Speech of 2019-2020, public companies and Statutory Bodies are required to have at least one woman on their board of directors to eventually have a fair gender balance. The Finance and Audit Act, which was enacted, made legal provision to that effect. The Caucus will now sustain its capacity building initiatives for Gender Focal Points and its Members.

PRIORITY ACTION 18:

- a) Measures shall be taken to further combat crime so that everyone can be safe and secure [such as CCTV Street Surveillance Systems in more regions, computer-assisted identification of suspects, new fingerprint and body-fluid search tools, increased patrols and police presence in crime prone areas, and a Crime Occurrence Tracking System]. The overall objective shall be to reduce crime rate yearly by at least 10 % [in particular larceny in dwelling houses and on public roads, drug offences, juvenile delinquency and truancy] and to improve crime detection rate.**

National Policing Strategic Framework

119. In accordance with the National Policing Strategic Framework, published in February 2010, Force Annual and Divisional/Branches Policing Plans are issued yearly with set target to reduce crime and fear of crime and improve community well-being and quality of life, thereby increasing public trust and confidence in the Police Department. It is aimed at:
- a) reducing larceny in dwelling houses or on public roads through closer monitoring of habitual offenders, installation of Closed-Circuit Television Surveillance System, increased police patrols in vulnerable and crime prone areas, setting up of neighbourhood watch schemes, public awareness campaign and enhanced criminal intelligence gathering;

- b) reducing road accidents through intelligence-led crack down operations against speeding and drunken driving, road safety campaign and the introduction of penalty point system and installation of speed cameras;
- c) reducing demand and curbing supply of drugs through intelligence-led anti-crack down operations, awareness campaign with collaboration of NGOs and enhanced regional and international co-operation;
- d) reducing anti-social behaviour and domestic violence through increase in number of operations against licensed premises (liquor shops) operating in breach of the law;
- e) reducing juvenile delinquency and truancy through more frequent checks on licensed premises, places of amusement and entertainment, gaming houses, greater Police presence near traffic centres and public places;
- f) increasing victim support and advice; and
- g) attending to increasing number of problems identified during the conduct of Community.

CCTV Camera

120. Cameras have been installed in different locations, including public places, police stations and prisons. Details are as follows:

Table 17: CCTV Cameras in Police Stations

SN	Divisions	Number of Police Stations	Number of Police Posts	Number of Cameras
1	Northern	13	1	152
2	Metropolitan North	6	0	52
3	Metropolitan South	6	0	52
4	Eastern	12	0	112
5	Central	6	1	100
6	Southern	14	2	140
7	Western	14	1	158
8	CCID	1	0	18
9	Port	1	0	5
10	Airport	1	0	14
Total		74	5	803

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Table 18: CCTV Cameras in Detention Centres

SN	Locations	Number of Cameras
1	Moka Detention (Male)	63
2	Moka Detention (Female)	19
3	Port Louis South Detention	49
4	Vacoas Detention Centre (Male)	67
5	Vacoas Detention Centre (Female)	30

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Table 19: CCTV Street Surveillance Systems

SN	Location	Number of cameras initially installed	Number of cameras available
1	Port Louis	273	214
2	Grand Bay	68	46
3	Flic en Flac	84	38
4	Quatre Bornes	39	23
Total		464	321

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Safe City project

121. This project was initiated in 2017. It comprises the following deliverables:

- a) 4000 Intelligent Video Surveillance (IVS) Cameras over 2000 Sites (major public areas, main roads and motorways, pedestrian walkways);
- b) 300 Intelligent Traffic Surveillance (ITS) Cameras over 75 Sites;

- c) 45 Enterprise/Enhanced Long Term Evolution (eLTE) Sites, including 4,500 Multimedia Radio Trunking and 500 Vehicular mounted terminals;
- d) Centralized Command and Control Centre, including -
 - (i) Main Command and Control Centre;
 - (ii) Modern Integrated Emergency Response Management System (999);
 - (iii) Seven (7) Sub-Command Centres;
 - (iv) Traffic Management and Control Centre; and
 - (v) Monitoring Bay at seventy-one (71) Police Stations and one (1) Police Post (Grand Bassin),

122. CCTV Street Surveillance System was decommissioned in all regions in July-August 2020 except for Port Louis.

Table 20: Status of the Safe City Project as at December 2020

Sn	Components	Operational
1	2000 Intelligent Video Surveillance Sites	1587 Sites
2	75 Intelligent Traffic Surveillance Sites	69 Sites
3	45 enhanced Long Term Evolution sites	✓
4	4500 multimedia radio	✓
5	350 vehicular mounted radios	346
6	150 static radios	149
7	Main command centre + 6 sub-command centres + Traffic Management and Control Centre	Main Command Centre and one sub-command centre are operational.
8	Monitoring Bays at 71 Police Stations + 1 Police post	✓

Source: Prime Minister's Office (Rodrigues, Outer Islands and Territorial Integrity)

Table 21: Cases Elucidated with the help of Safe City Cameras

Sn	Breakdown	2019	2020	Total
1	Larceny	26	37	63
2	Road Accident	10	23	33
3	Attempt at larceny	0	1	1
4	Drunken driving	0	1	1
5	Assault	3	2	5
6	Murder	0	1	1
7	Drowning	0	1	1
8	Drug Related Cases	4	3	7
9	Exposing child to harm	0	1	1
10	Breach of Curfew Order	0	1	1
11	Attempt at murder	0	1	1
12	Stolen Vehicle	3	1	4
13	Road Traffic Offences	0	4	4
14	Fatal Road Accident	2	-	2
15	Others	8	-	8
Total		56	77	133

Source: Prime Minister's Office (Rodrigues, Outer Islands and Territorial Integrity)

DNA Evidence and Fingerprints

123. The examination of scene of crime for the collection of scientific evidence and DNA Evidence is of a great importance for efficient and effective investigation. In a bid to reducing over reliance on confession, the MPF is harnessing on scientific evidence for the detection of crimes.

124. The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) who is the custodian of the Mauritian DNA Database currently holds DNA profiles of 7, 000 convicted persons and 11, 000 DNA profiles from arrestees as at June 2019. The total number of DNA profiles in the Mauritian Database amounts to 40,653.

125. From January 2015 to December 2020, 833 cases were detected from prints collected at scene of crime as show in the table below:

Table 22: Cases detected from fingerprints

Year	Cases detected from fingerprints
2015	194
2016	139
2017	163
2018	135
2019	99
2020	103
Total	833

Source: Mauritius Police Force

126. The number of drug cases detected at the Anti-Drugs and Smuggling Unit and the number of samples sent to the FSL for DNA analysis for the period 2018 to 2020, on a yearly basis, are tabled below:

Table 23: Drug Cases for period 2018 – 2020

	Year 2018	Year 2019	Year 2020
Number of Drug Cases	3 065	3 307	3 737
Number of samples sent for DNA Analysis	401	293	126

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Awareness/Sensitisation Campaigns by ADSU

127. The ADSU carried out several sessions of awareness/sensitisation campaigns across the Island of Mauritius, thus covering a wide number of people. A breakdown pertaining thereto is shown below:

Table 24: Awareness/Sensitisation Campaigns for the period 2014 - 2020

Year	Sessions Carried out	Attendees
2014	69	26 620
2015	106	24 649
2016	142	29 630
2017	80	10 577
2018	141	44 195
2019	136	14 875
2020	106	11 317

Source: Mauritius Police Force

128. Return of cases detected from fingerprint by SOCO for the period September 2018 to March 2019 is 91.

PRIORITY ACTION 18:

b) Local Community Policing Committees shall be set up for the elaboration of local crime reduction strategies. The purpose of each Committee will be to work towards a healthy and safe community environment for all who live and work within a given area.

Community Policing Forum

129. The MPF is making optimum use of Community Policing Forum to support the systematic use of partnership and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address immediate condition that gives rise to public safety issues such as crime and social disorder.

Table 25: Sensitisation campaigns carried out for the period 2011 - 2020

Year	Number of Sessions held in Primary & Secondary Schools	Number of Students
2011	108	21 840
2012	121	17 790
2013	75	14 192
2014	114	19 471
2015	110	17 686
2016	101	18 028
2017	111	16 899
2018	109	17 716
2019	163	22 394
2020	200	25 687
Total	1212	191 703

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Table 26: Sensitisation campaigns carried out by CPU at Community level

Year	Number of Sessions	Number of Persons
2011	253	17 819
2012	318	21 072
2013	327	18 838
2014	360	18 966
2015	481	24 486
2016	434	23 650
2017	495	40 647
2018	564	41 677
2019	519	30 063
2020	540	18 524
Total	4291	255 742

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Table 27: Sensitisation through Media by CPU for period 2015 – 2020

Year	Media
2015	22
2016	22
2017	20
2018	32
2019	48
2020	22
Total	166

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Strategic Policing Plan 2015 – 2018

130. The MPF formulated its Strategic Policing Plan for 2015-2018 focusing on five main objectives with a view to improving quality of life, enhancing service delivery, increasing speed of intervention, honing investigation techniques and detection skills and combating trafficking and use of illegal drugs. The Plan also aimed at taking advantage of innovation and technology in policing in order to improve the level of public confidence.

131. The MPF aimed to achieving these objectives by strictly enforcing the law in a firm, fair and impartial manner and by promoting law-abiding conditions in our society. The objectives are that citizens of the mainland and outer islands live, work and play in a safe environment in the knowledge that the guardian of peace are around performing their duties in a passionate and professional manner and committed with an incurable need to produce results without making an abuse of their powers.
132. The MPF has directed the arrow of its efforts towards creating safer communities. It has increased its crime preventing initiatives by gradually refocusing its paradigm of crime control from one that is centred on offenders to one that is centred on places. Emphasis is laid on reducing opportunities for crime at places and not on waiting for crimes to occur and then arresting offenders. It has adopted a new concept such as place-based/hot spot policing to increase police visibility and enhance public safety, hence reducing fear of crime.
133. A toll-free hotline service was also put in place for the public on a 24/7 basis so that they can solicit police assistance or to tip-off the police of any irregular or suspicious activities that need immediate police intervention.
134. The above Strategic Policing Plan for 2015-2018 was extended for the period from 2019 to 2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 18:

c) A National Crime Control Commission shall be established, with the special mandate of reviewing measures for the protection of vulnerable persons, including elderly persons, women, children and persons with disabilities.

135. It is not proposed to set up a new Commission. The work is being done through Committee Policing. This is being taken care of under the National Policing Strategic Framework and subsequently in the Community Policing Forum sessions.
136. The Community Policing Pillar under the National Policing Strategic Framework catered for Community Policing sessions with vulnerable groups for the period 2011 to 2014. Subsequently, the Strategic Policing Plan was formulated whereby this issue was addressed through the holding of forums at community level for the period 2015 to 2018 and extended to the period, from 2019 to 2020, with the support of the Police Family Protection Unit and in collaboration with the MGEFW.

PRIORITY ACTION 18:

d) With a view to significantly reduce road accidents casualties and fatalities, the effectiveness of the traffic monitoring system shall be enhanced and the “penalty point system” for driving licenses shall be made operational.

Penalty Points System

137. The penalty points system was implemented in May 2013 with a view to reducing the fatality rate, encouraging safe driving, re-educating drivers, stimulating the driver’s self-responsibility, changing attitude regarding road traffic offences and to be complementary with regular sanction scheme.

Cumulative Road Traffic Offences (CRTO)

138. By virtue of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act 2015 - Act No.7 of 2015, the ‘Penalty Points System’ was replaced by the Cumulative Road Traffic Offences, a new sanctioning mechanism, which is applicable for certain specified serious driving offences.

139. In light of the above, Courts may suspend the driving licence of any person convicted on a sixth occasion, within a period of 24 months, of one or more of the serious driving offences and to disqualify that person from holding and obtaining a driving licence for a period of 6 to 12 months. Following amendments to the RTA from the 1st October 2018, the “a sixth occasion” has been revised to “a fifth occasion”.

140. Number of drivers convicted under the CRTO from 27 July 2015 to 2020, 129 557 drivers were convicted under the CRTO. Details are as follows:

Table 28: Drivers convicted for the period 2015 to 2020

Year	Number of drivers convicted
2015 (27 July to Dec)	5 364
2016	27 277
2017	32 530
2018	23 350
2019	23 648
2020	17 388
Total	129 557

Source: Mauritius Police Force

141. According to the database of the Traffic Branch, 864,903 licenses were issued. A breakdown thereof for the period 01 January 2015 to 2020, on a yearly basis, are as follows:

Table 29: Number of Licenses for the period 2015 to 2020

Year	Number of Licenses
2015	769 170
2016	789 160
2017	812 584
2018	829 742
2019	847 649
2020	864 903

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Road Traffic Contraventions

142. Road Traffic Contraventions established for the period January 2010 to December 2020 are indicated in the table below:

Table 30: Road Traffic Contraventions for the period 2010 - 2020

Year	Number of contraventions
2010	161 217
2011	193 577
2012	210 424
2013	206 390
2014	220 719
2015	202 170
2016	228 189
2017	235 994
2018	239 495
2019	173 589
2020	121 044
Total	2 192 808

Source: Mauritius Police Force

143. The statistics for Crime, Misdemeanour and Drugs Related Offences for period January 2012 to 31 December 2020 are tabled below:

Table 31: Statistics for crime for the period 2012 - 2020

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Crime	3601	4034	4006	5115	5361	5622	5256	4717	4471
Misdemeanours	32 742	33 348	33 369	34 912	36 126	37 568	35 063	34 465	44 700
Drug Related Offences	3362	3152	3474	3331	3291	3604	4096	4717	5023

Source: Mauritius Police Force

PRIORITY ACTION 19:

A Victims Rights Act and a Victims Charter shall be adopted so as to better safeguard the rights of victims of crime and set out the standards of service to which a victim of crime is entitled. Judicial and administrative processes shall be made responsive to the needs and expectations of victims: informing victims of their role in proceedings, of the scope, timing and progress of the proceedings, and of the disposition of their cases; allowing the views and concerns of victims to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of the proceedings where their personal interests are affected, without prejudice to the accused; providing proper assistance to victims throughout the legal process; minimizing inconvenience to victims, protecting their privacy, and ensuring their safety as well as that of their families; avoiding unnecessary delay in the disposition of cases and the execution of orders.

144. The Judicial Legal Services Provisions Act came into force in 2018 and caters, inter alia, for the setting up of the Court of Appeal and High Court.

145. The domestic legal remedies and avenues for any of its aggrieved citizens are as follows:

- a) any person where rights under Chapter II of the Constitution has been, or is being or is likely to be contravened, may apply to the Supreme Court for redress;
- b) acts of public bodies may be challenged in Court by way of applications for judicial review on grounds of illegality, irrationality, abuse of power and procedural impropriety;
- c) actions for damages may be equally entered before the Courts of Law;

- d) complaints may be made to the NHRC, which is, by virtue of the Protection of Human Rights Act, empowered to ensure that effective remedies are available to victims of human rights breaches as contained under Chapter II of the Constitution. The Commission may also inform the Minister, to whom the subject of human rights is assigned, of situations of violation of human rights and advise on ways in which such situations can be ended;
- e) complaints may also be made to the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) which may refer a case to the Equal Opportunities Tribunal;
- f) complaints may also be made to IPCC where the complaint is against police officers in the discharge of their functions, except for complaints of acts of corruption or money laundering offences which is dealt with by the ICAC;
- g) complaints may be made to other human rights institutions such as the Ombudsman, the Ombudsperson for Children, or the Ombudsperson for Financial Services:
 - (i) under Chapter IX of the Constitution, the Ombudsman is empowered to investigate “any action taken by any officer or authority to which this section applies in the exercise of administrative functions of that officer or authority, in any case in which a member of the public claims, or appears to the Ombudsperson, to have sustained injustice in consequence of maladministration in connection with the action so taken”;
 - (ii) under section 5 of the Ombudsperson for Children Act, the Ombudsperson for children is empowered to “(a) ensure that the rights, needs and interests of children are given full consideration by public bodies, private authorities, individuals and associations of individuals. (b) promote the rights and interests of children; (c) promote compliance with the Convention”;
 - (iii) under section 5(3)(a) of the Ombudsperson for Financial Services Act, the Ombudsperson for Financial Services may (a) request any financial institution to furnish, within such time and in such form and manner as he may determine, such information and data as he may require; (b) by notice in writing to financial institutions, issue instructions and guidelines or impose such requirements as he may determine; (c) share information and, where appropriate, enter into a memorandum of understanding, with any relevant supervisory or regulatory authority or law enforcement agency; and
 - (iv) minor petitions may equally be addressed to the Hon Attorney-General.

146. On 15 December 2020, three (3) legislations for Children were passed at the National Assembly:

- a) the Children’s Act 2020;
- b) the Children’s Court Act 2020; and
- c) the Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020

147. The Children's Court Act 2020 provides for the establishment of the Children's Court, which will have jurisdiction to hear and determine cases involving children. The establishment of this dedicated and specialised Court has been rendered necessary with a view to ensuring, in a child-friendly environment, the best interests of children during Court proceedings.

148. The Children's Court consists of:

- a) a Protection Division which shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine, inter alia, any application in respect of child protection matters under the Children's Act 2020 relating to Assessment Order, Contact Order, Long Term Care Orders, amongst others.
- b) a Criminal Division which shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine, inter alia, sexual offences against children and offences where children are witnesses thereto. The Criminal Division will also hear and determine criminal offences in regard to child victim, child witness, juvenile offender and any other prescribed matter.

149. Technical assistance of the European Union has been sought for the setting up of the Children's Court.

150. The Children's Act 2020 safeguards the privacy of the child through the provision of strict guidelines concerning publication in the media of photographs, pictures, video or audio recordings of children as witnesses, victims or offenders.

Victims of Trafficking

151. There is in force a Combatting of Trafficking in Persons Act, the objectives of which are to give effect to the United Nations Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish TIP, in order to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and protect and assist victims of trafficking to and from Mauritius, as well as compensation to victims of trafficking, and penalties to offenders.

152. In order to provide better protection to victims of human trafficking, the MPF has identified a shelter for TIP victims. An Expression of Interest for an NGO to manage the shelter has been launched.

Victims of Domestic Violence

153. The MGEFW has adopted a concerted, coordinated and integrated approach with the relevant stakeholders to ensure that expeditious support is provided to victims of domestic violence.

Victims & Witnesses Support Unit

154. A Victims and Witnesses Support Unit is set up under the Office of the DPP to provide post investigation assistance and support to victims/witnesses of crime.

155. The Victims and Witnesses Support Unit is mainly responsible to:

- a) improve Court practice in child abuse cases and deals with cases involving sexual violence, domestic violence, elderly rights and disability; and
- b) work in close collaboration with the Police Family Protection Unit, the Child Development Unit and the Brigade pour la protection des mineurs.

156. Victims and witnesses play a vital role in reporting crime and giving evidence at Court in order to restore justice.

157. In 2020, the Office of the DPP prepared a paper for the National Strategy and Action Plan of the High Level Committee on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence in Mauritius.

PRIORITY ACTION 20:

In order to ensure that victims of crime obtain prompt redress for the harm they have suffered, a study shall be conducted as to the desirability of incorporating in our law a variant of the French system of ‘*constitution de partie civile*’, which would enable victims of crimes to obtain compensation for loss or injury suffered as a result of the crime when the accused is found guilty.

158. No study was conducted. However, the Judicial and Legal Provisions Act was passed in 2018 with a view to improving the administration of justice in Mauritius.

159. Moreover, there is the possibility for victims to enter civil proceedings against the tortfeasor to seek redress.

PRIORITY ACTION 21:

In order to prevent intimidation of witnesses in drug-related cases and other serious cases, special measures shall be taken for the protection of witnesses and vulnerable persons, including the elaboration of a Witness Protection Program and circumstances where the out-of-court statements of such witnesses, video-recorded under oath, would be admissible as evidence in Court.

160. The Victims and Witness Support Unit set up under the Office of the DPP acts as a liaison between the investigation phase of the enquiry made by the police, the advice stage and the lodging of cases in Court.
161. Members of the Unit have carried out several workshops with the MPF to discuss on the vulnerability of witnesses and victims in sexual abuse cases as well as domestic violence cases.
162. A fast track procedure was set up for all Court cases involving children, victims and juveniles, whereby the Magistrates ensure that the cases are in shape, that Counsel disclose all requested documents well before the date the child is due to appear before Court.
163. In some sensitive cases of sexual nature, recourse was made to have the witness depose through video-link in Court.
164. The Office of the DPP is making effective use of the fast-track procedure to ensure that victims appear in Court only when they have to depose, after formal witnesses were called, so that victims do not attend Court unnecessarily.
165. A booklet entitled '*Tanya so Zistwar*' was also published by the Office of the DPP to sensitise victims on the steps to be taken to report sexual offences. It explains in caricature the different stages involved in relation to assistance given by the police and the Court to victims of sexual assault.

PRIORITY ACTION 22:

With a view to ensuring greater professionalism and transparency in the conduct of criminal investigations and safeguarding the rights of suspects and detainees, Government will adopt a Police and Criminal Evidence Act, with Codes of Practice designed to regulate the conduct of persons entrusted with the duty of investigating offences.

Police and Criminal Justice Bill

166. In view of the unforeseen circumstances and especially the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Legislative Calendar of the State of Mauritius was seriously disrupted and given that it was faced with a number of competing priorities with regard to other legislations. The introduction of the Bill in the Assembly had to be postponed.
167. The Bill, once enacted, would no doubt overhaul the whole Criminal Justice System in Mauritius. Training has already been provided to all relevant institutions engaged in Criminal Investigation and Prosecution, including the police.

PRIORITY ACTION 23:

The provisions of section 5 of the Constitution shall be made compatible with Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Dangerous Drugs Act 2000 and the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2002 shall be reviewed.

168. The Prevention of Terrorism Act was reviewed in 2016 and the Dangerous Drugs Act was further amended on 01 June 2019 to include other types of synthetic cannabinoid, synthetic cathinones and synthetic opioids, amongst others.
169. No amendment was brought to Section 5 of the Constitution given that any amendment to the Constitution requires $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.

PRIORITY ACTION 24:

Measures shall be taken to ensure that: (a) persons arrested and detained in police stations have access at the outset of their detention, to a doctor, if possible, of their choice; (b) Visits by a doctor are conducted in a confidential manner; (c) They can inform their family or a person of their choice about their detention; and (d) Arrested persons will be entitled to legal aid at enquiry stage.

170. According to the Police Act (section 13F (2)) a person who is arrested should be brought to Court within 48 hours of the arrest. However, since the Bail and Remand Court (BRC), is operational during weekends and public holidays, a detainee does not have to wait until Monday morning to be taken to Court to be placed under judicial supervision.

171. Furthermore, any person who is detained in a Police cell or detention centre is allowed to contact any of his family members or his lawyer or friend and to inform him/her of the place detention to receive visits. For such purpose, the detainee is given the necessary facilities to communicate with his/her family member or friend, except:

- a) where they have been detained incommunicado in virtue of the provisions of Dangerous Drugs Act or Prevention of Terrorism Act; or
- b) where unreasonable delay or hindrance is caused to the processes of investigation or administration of justice.

172. Where a detainee complains that he/she is suffering/ill or has been victim of an accident, he/she is immediately conveyed to hospital by the Police for medical examination/treatment before any interrogation starts or he/she is detained. Such medical examination also helps against allegation of Police abuse.

173. Rights and welfare of detainees were included in the Police Standing Orders (SO 137).

174. The Commissioner of Police issued an order in March 2015 to be complied with by all Police Officers to the effect that as soon as a person is arrested and/or detained, the Station Manager or Officer-in-Charge should as soon as practicable forward a message/report with the following details:

- a) name and address of person/s arrested and/or detained;
- b) place of detention;
- c) name and contact details of relatives informed; and
- d) name of counsel;

to the Police Information and Operations Room (PIOR) and Divisional/Branch Operations Room to be communicated to any counsel or relatives of the arrested/detained person by the OIC PIOR and Divisional/Branch OPS Room.

175. Questioning of detainees has to be in line with Judges' Rules and the Standing Orders of the Mauritius Police Force. In addition, the "Rights of Detainees in Police Custody" are posted in all Police Stations for the information of detainees and their families in three languages (English, French and Creole). The Mauritius Police Force has also issued its Code of Ethics / Practice in 2018.
176. Under Section 4 of the Legal Aid and Legal Assistance Act, any person who wishes to be a party to civil or criminal proceedings may make an application in writing for Legal Aid. He has, however, to make a sworn statement that a) excluding his wearing apparel and tools of trade and the subject matter of the procedures, he is not worth Rs 500,000; and b) his total monthly earnings are less than Rs15,000.
177. Any detainee or accused party who wishes to obtain legal assistance must make an application in writing to the Magistrate and make a declaration that a) excluding his wearing apparel and tools of trade, he is not worth Rs 500,000; and b) his total monthly earnings do not exceed Rs 10,000.
178. Section 5 of the Constitution states that no person shall be deprived of his personal liberty save as may be authorised by law in a number of circumstances including where there is the need to ensure his appearance in Court. Moreover, if a person is not tried within a reasonable time, he should be released with or without conditions without prejudice to the appropriate authority's power to bring fresh proceedings subsequently, including his right to be released on bail. Section 10 of the Constitution lays down provisions to secure the protection of the law. Every person charged with a criminal offence shall be presumed to be innocent until he is proved guilty. He shall be informed as soon as reasonably practicable of the nature of the offence in a language that he understands. He shall be given adequate time and facilities for the preparation of his defence. He shall be permitted to defend himself in person or by a legal representative of one's own choice or by a legal representative provided at the public expense (under the Legal Aid Act and Legal Assistance Act, subject to eligibility conditions being satisfied). Where he cannot understand the language used at the trial, he shall be permitted, without payment, the assistance of an interpreter.

PRIORITY ACTION 25:**Training programmes to law enforcement officers and medical personnel on human rights principles shall be reinforced.**

179. Members of the judiciary, officers of the Attorney General’s Office and the Office of the DPP have the opportunity to attend conferences, workshops and seminars on human rights. The Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies (IJLS) also regularly conducts courses on human rights issues. Table below highlights the various courses carried out:

Table 32: Courses on Human Rights for the period 2017 – 2019

SN	Date	Course	Judges	Magistrates	Law Practitioners
2017					
1	8 th March	Human Trafficking & Gender-Based Violence			√
2	26 th May	Strengthening Judicial Response to Domestic Violence		√	
3	31 st July	Judicial Training – Interaction with Supreme Court Judges	√		
4	1 st August	Bail Law – Art.5 of the ECHR – The Right To Personal Liberty			√
5	2 nd August	Judicial Training Interaction with Magistrates – Functioning of European Court of Human Rights & Art.6 – Right To A Fair Trial		√	
6	9 th August	International Humanitarian Law		√	√
7	28 th Nov	Panel Discussion on Child Sexual Abuse seen from a psycho-socio-legal perspective		√	√
8	7 th Dec	Victim centric approach to Human Trafficking- an analysis of international & national laws relating to TIP			√
2018					
9	30 th Jan	State reporting to UN Treaty Bodies			√
10	7 th Feb	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women			√
11	15 th Feb	The Human Rights Situation in Eritrea- rule law & crimes against Humanity			√

SN	Date	Course	Judges	Magistrates	Law Practitioners
12	20 th March	Human Rights, HIV & the Law: a decade later, where do we stand.			√
13	13 th April	Bail through constitutional Provisions: Principles and Challenges			√
14	3 rd May	<i>La reparation des violations de droits de l'homme</i>		√	√
15	10 th May	The Origins of Criminality – Evil Mind			√
16	16 th October	An Overview of the CERD- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination			√
2019					
17	24 th Jan	<i>Vulnérabilité et accès à la justice</i>			√
18	13 th Feb	International Good Practices in Combatting Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Violence		√	√
19	13 th Mar	Mandate of the UK National Preventive Mechanism- An Overview of the UK PACE 1984			√
20	19 th Mar	An Overview of the Convention on the Rights of the Child			√
21	26 th Mar	Public Interest Litigation in India			√
22	28 th Mar	Interpretation of Fundamental Human Rights in the Indian Constitution			√
23	29 th Mar	Judicial Activism of Supreme court in respect to the interpretation of basic Human rights & the Challenges faced by the Indian Judiciary		√	

Source: Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies

180. Training on Human Rights is also an ongoing activity at the Mauritius Prison Training School and the Police Training School. These include lectures by the National Human Rights Commission, namely:

- a) delivered lectures on Human Rights to new recruits of the Mauritius Police Force at the Police Training Schools in Beau Bassin and Curepipe, the SSU, by the NHRC in February 2019; and
- b) training at the Training School at Line Barracks and the Coast Guard Police Training School at Le Chaland where 408 new recruits availed of the session.

Table 33: Training sessions with Prison Officers for the period 2014 -2020

SN	Date	Number of Participants
1	04 July 2014	06
2	05 December 2014	36
3	09 February 2015	69
4	27 February 2015	10
5	19 May 2015	75
6	20 May 2016	72
7	30 September 2016	109
8	Year 2017	Nil
9	24 October 2018	06
10	11 March 2019	37
11	31 July 2020	61

Source: Mauritius Police Force

181. The NPMD trained in October 2018 Prisons staff from Mauritius and Overseas as follows:

- a) East African Community – 3
- b) The United Republic of Tanzania – 2
- c) The Republic of Kenya – 2
- d) Mauritius Senior Prison Officers Cadet – 6

182. In 2020, the NHRC of Mauritius received visits from the NHRC of Togo and Rwanda, more specially on the functioning of the NPMD. It has interacted with the NHRC of Seychelles on methods of work.

183. Training of Medical Personnel were also carried out regularly as indicated in the table below:

Table 34: Training of Medical Personnel for the period 2015 – 2017

	2015	2016	2017
Law enforcement officers	399	587	151
Medical personnel	395	51	-

Source: National Human Rights Commission

184. A slot on racial discrimination and racial profiling was included in the Police Training offered to Police Prosecutors by ODPP in November 2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 26:

Police Standing Orders shall be revisited to make them more human rights oriented.

185. A revised edition of the Police Standing Orders (SO) was published on 15 May 2015 and a copy was issued to all ranks.

186. The Standing Orders of the Mauritius Police Force cover issues for Prisoners and Accused parties (SO 120):

- a) safe custody of prisoners;
- b) care and Treatment of Prisoners;
- c) prisoners Property and Lock up register;
- d) interviews;
- e) escape from Custody;
- f) interviews of and warrants against prisoners; and
- g) prisoner’s in dock.

187. Juvenile Offenders (SO 121) and Female Prisoners and Wardresses (SO 122).
188. To ensure compliance regular visits are being held by the Police Inspectorate Team at Detention Centres and Station Cells.
189. As per the revised edition of the SO, prisoners and accused parties, juvenile detainees and female detainees are now regulated by SO 133, 135 and 136 respectively.
190. Questioning of detainees has to be in line with Judges' Rules and the Standing Orders of the Mauritius Police Force. In addition, the "Rights of Detainees in Police Custody" are posted in all Police Stations for the information of detainees and their families in three languages (English, French and Creole). The Mauritius Police Force has also issued its Code of Ethics / Practice in 2018.
191. The Standing Orders are regularly updated by the Commissioner of Police as and when the need arises.

PRIORITY ACTION 27:

The law shall be amended setting out reasonable time limits for entering a prosecution after a person has been arrested so that pre-trial detention is not unduly prolonged and the accused is tried within a reasonable time (similarly that the appeal of a convicted person be heard within a reasonable time and the hearing of his appeal not be unduly prolonged when he is remanded to jail).

Pre-Trial Detention Period

192. Trial within a reasonable time is already guaranteed under section 10(1) of the Constitution. A policy is required from government as to whether it would impose time limits for the hearing of cases at the trial and appeal stage.
193. The Bail and Remand Court (BRC) is operational since February 2012 even during weekends and public holidays. Therefore, in practice, any person who is arrested is now brought before Court within 24 hours.
- Police Standing Order No. 137 provides for the "Rights and Welfare of Detainees" which stipulates that detainees are allowed to contact their legal representative for bail formalities and communicate with family members or friends to inform of their place of detention. Moreover, they are allowed interviews with their legal representative.
194. In order to reduce the pre-trial detention period, a template was designed in December 2016, enabling remand detainees who wish voluntarily to plead guilty, to directly inform the concerned authorities by

filling the form. Some 695 applications from detainees were processed up to October 2018, out of which 406 were disposed.

195. It has, however, been observed that “Pleading Guilty by Letter” applies only for minor cases while remands detained for more serious cases still have to undergo the normal Court Procedures whereby their physical presence in Court is warranted and for which an early trial is not always foreseeable. Hence, the remand population trend remains the same. Consequently, the “Plead Guilty by Letter” is not serving its purpose. The Commissioner of Police, Master and Registrar and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions had been requested to expedite matters. The Prisons Department is following up on this issue.

196. The creation of 4 additional posts of Judges was made in the Budget for the financial year 2019-2020 to ensure a timelier resolution of court cases.

197. With the forthcoming Police and Criminal Justice Bill, these issues will hopefully be catered for. The draft bill is likely to be accompanied by many codes of practice and DPP’s guidelines on specific provisions of this Bill.

The Judicial and Legal Provisions Act 2018

198. Since the coming into force of the Judicial and Legal Provisions Act of 2018, “**Time spent on remand**” is being deducted from the sentence to be served. Prior to sentencing, Police Prosecutor requests information from the Prison Authority on the number of days spent on remand by an accused person to which is added the number of days in Police detention. The total number of days spent in custody is indicated in the Warrant of Commitment and the Prison Authority is directed by the Sentencing Magistrate to deduct it from the sentence.

199. The Act provides inter alia:

- a) for the review of the offence of outrage against the public and religious morality and the offence of stirring up contempt or racial hatred so as to criminalize such offences committed through electronic means, and to provide for stiffer penalties;
- b) for an increase in the time limit for payment of a fine from 12 months to 2 years;
- c) that a person sentenced to a term of imprisonment or penal servitude shall, subject to certain conditions, be given full credit for the time he has spent in custody by deducting that time from the term of imprisonment or penal servitude imposed;

- d) that a convicted person who has, so far, not benefitted from full credit for the time he has spent in custody, may petition the President under section 75 of the Constitution with a view to obtaining full credit for the time he has spent in custody.

PRIORITY ACTION 28:

The Criminal Code shall be revised to make acts of torture offences punishable by appropriate penalties that consider their grave nature. Provision shall also be made for the absolute prohibition of torture, and that no justification may be invoked in any circumstances to align this with concluding observations.

200. It is to be noted that Section 7 of the Constitution has already clearly specified there is no justification for torture.
201. No amendment to the Constitution has been made in respect of the absolute prohibition of torture and declaring that no justification may be invoked for this crime under any circumstances, in accordance with article 2 (2) of the Convention.

PRIORITY ACTION 29:

Further measures shall be taken to reduce overcrowding and improve conditions in all prisons, including measures to ensure the separation of remand detainees from those who are convicted. A plan to reduce inter-prisoner violence shall be adopted. Social rehabilitation of prisoners shall be made more effective by increased efforts, with the assistance of NGOS, for the educational and vocational training to detainees and the detoxification drug-addicts.

202. A Ten-year Strategic Plan was developed in September 2014 with the assistance of a UNODC Consultant to address the problem of overcrowding, use of alternative and non-custodial measures, reducing pre-trial detention methods and reducing the rate of recidivism. As at date, there is no overcrowding in Prisons.

Table 35: Prison Population as at June 2020

Institutions	Maximum Capacity	Total Convict	Total Remand	Grand Total
---------------------	-------------------------	----------------------	---------------------	--------------------

Male Adults

Central Prison	1295	26	707	733
Phoenix Prison	26	3	5	8
Eastern High Security Prison	922	462	235	697
New Wing Prison	357	175	180	355
Grand River North West Remand Prison	384	20	263	283
Richelieu Open Prison	198	66	0	66
Petit Verger Prison	308	221	0	221
Total Males	3 490	973	1 390	2 363

*Source: Mauritius Prison Service***Female Adults**

Women Prison	146	22	116	138
Open Prison for Women	18	8	0	8
Special Prison for Women	12	0	0	0
Total Females	176	30	116	146
Grand Total	3 666	1 003	1 506	2 509

*Source: Mauritius Prison Service***Number of detainees in Rodrigues Prison:**

	Convicted	Remand	Total
Male	14	20	34
Female	0	3	3
Total	14	23	37

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

Table 36: Statistics for CYC and RYC for Mauritius and Rodrigues

	Convicted	Remand	Total
CYC Boys	2	20	22
CYC Girls	0	0	0
Total	2	20	22

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

Detainees in Rehabilitation Youth Centres (Mauritius)

Mauritius	Convicted	Remand	Total
RYC Boys	6	1	7
RYC Girls	4	1	5
Total	2	20	22

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

Detainees in Rehabilitation Youth Centre (Rodrigues)

	Convicted	Remand	Total
RYC Boys	0	4	4

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

203. With the coming into operation of the Eastern High Security Prison (EHSP) in March 2014, majority of the convicted inmates were being detained thereat. Phoenix Prison was temporarily closed during the same period and all detainees located thereat were transferred to EHSP.

204. To address new challenges, which emerged as an increase in the number of drug cases in Mauritius and the perceived threats to national security, approval was obtained in August 2017 for the re-opening of the Phoenix Prison, which can accommodate a maximum of 26 detainees.

After major renovation works and maintenance, and after ensuring its compliance to Human Rights Standards, the Phoenix High Security Prison was re-opened in March 2018.

Remand Detainees

205. Remand detainees and convicted detainees are kept separately. In the Year 2018 as at October 2018, the Mauritius Prison Service received 6,043 detainees on admission consisting of 2,913 convicted detainees and 3,130 remand detainees. As at 14 June 20, the Prison Department was currently housing 2,529 detainees including 1,524 remand detainees, which represent 60%.

Open Prison for Women

206. An open prison for women, with a capacity to hold 18, is operational since December 2015.

Drug Rehabilitation Centres

207. A Residential Rehabilitation Lotus Centre was set up at the Eastern High Security Prisons in August 2017 to cater for detainees who have a history of Substance Abuse. It was launched in October 2017. Initially, the programme started with 20 detainees and in January 2018, 39 detainees were following the programme. 32 Detainees are currently enrolled on the program. The Residential Program was developed from Therapeutic Community perspective, which is a participative multi-disciplinary approach.

208. Moreover, there is a Lotus Day Care Centre at the Central Prison, Beau Bassin that provides information and sensitization program on drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. It also provides daily therapeutic activities and counselling to detainees. Convicted as well as Remand Detainees are eligible to participate in the training programme for a duration of three months.

209. The Central Prison, Beau Bassin is currently in the process of being converted into a Remand Prison as most of the convicted detainees are being transferred to EHSP/Pettit Verger Prison (PVP) or Richelieu Open Prison (ROP).

210. The Day Care Centre also provides effective programmes to help inmates to reform and abide to Prison regulations while living a healthy life. The Day Care Centre can accommodate a maximum of 40 detainees and as at 11 January 2017, 30 detainees including 10 Peer Supports were following the programme. Priority is given to the first-time offenders to be enrolled in the programme but for Methadone Induction Programme, repeated offenders are also considered.

Table 37: Detainees benefitting from the Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Programme

Year	Total
2017	50
2018	75
2019	75
2020	62

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

211. Since 2020, with the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic in Mauritius, some activities inside Prisons had to be temporarily suspended to better observe sanitary protocols. However, with the gradual improvement in conditions at national levels, activities are being normalised.

Detoxification of drug addicts

212. Detainees embarking on the programme are selected by the assessment team comprising of medical staff and welfare officers of the Prison Services. The programme implemented at the lotus centre is a rehabilitation-oriented program led by the welfare officer of the Prison Services.

213. There are no major challenges faced by the MHW in delivering health services at the Prisons.

214. Health services provided to detainees are the same for all. Irrespective of whether they use drugs or not. Besides, all detainees have access to all health services as per their needs just like any member of the population in the community.

215. Mauritius Prison Service is collaborating with NGOs to come up with a Prisoners Health Programme.

Tobacco Cessation Unit

216. To address the health hazards of cigarettes, a tobacco cessation unit was inaugurated in June 2019 by the Hon Minister of Health and Wellness at Eastern High Security Prison (EHSP).

217. Moreover, the Prison Department has already recruited its own Psychologist and one Psychologist is appointed under the Service to Mauritius Program of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD). Both psychologists are assisting the Prison Department in the implementation of rehabilitation programmes.

Assistance of NGOs

Residential Rehabilitation Lotus Centre, EHSP

218. NGOs involved in Awareness Campaign and Therapeutic at EHSP are Association Kinouete and Centre Mieux Vivre.

Lotus Day Care Centre, Central Prison, Beau Bassin

219. NGOs assisting in the programmes are Centre Mieux Vivre, Prevention Information et Lutte contre le Sida (PILS), Association Kinouete, Association Tai Chi Chuan and Action Familiale.

220. Hope Foundation also carry out counselling sessions with Foreigners.

Awareness to Detainees on treatment and other activities at Residential Rehabilitation Lotus Centre, EHSP

221. The treatment programme at the Residential Rehabilitation Lotus Centre at EHSP can be run with a batch of 50 detainees for a duration of 6 months in 3 phases. After completion of the programme with one batch, another batch is selected.

222. Themes/topics of the campaign and activities held during the 3 phases.

Phase 1 – Initial Treatment Phase (1 month)

223. This phase is of one-month duration. Detainees are expected to get adapted to their new environment and to participate in activities to bring balance in their well-being and doing a stabilising phase, where the detainees would have to sign Treatment Contracts to move to the next phase – the Intermediate Treatment Phase.

224. Detainees participate in the following activities:

- (a) treatment Contract;
- (b) seminar: “ecoute, obeisance, responsibilities, take, boite de sentiment”;
- (c) household task;
- (d) personal hygiene;
- (e) indoor remedial exercise and outdoor games;
- (f) spirituality;

- (g) counselling; and
- (h) outdoor activity (gardening).

Phase 2 – Intermediate Treatment Phase (4 Months)

225. This phase is of four months duration. It is considered as the core part of the programme to help detainees bring meaning to their life through changes in their attitude and behaviour.

226. Detainees participate in the following therapeutic activities:

- a) Art Therapy;
- b) Mirror Therapy;
- c) Seminar: self-esteem, decision making on their choices, freedom and responsibilities, family values and life skills;
- d) Spirituality;
- e) Remedial exercise;
- f) Therapeutic games;
- g) Counselling;
- h) Groupe Dynamic;
- i) Groupe Statique; and
- j) Groupe Sondage.

Phase 3 – Pre-Release Treatment Phase (1 Month)

227. This phase is of one-month duration. Detainees are assessed of their participation in this programme and their readiness to live a drug free life upon release.

228. The collaboration of resource persons from NGOs and other institutions are solicited when the need arises to support released detainees in the community.

229. Detainees participate in the following activities:

- a) Relapse prevention;
- b) Spirituality;
- c) Remedial exercise;
- d) Seminar: family values, friendship, support, employability;
- e) Counselling; and
- f) Re- settlement plan with emphasis on family support.

Lotus Day Care Centre, Central Prison, Beau Bassin

230. Major Activities held are as follows:

- a) Yoga by Peer Support
- b) Tai Chi by Association Tai Chi Chuan
- c) Drug Prevention Program in collaboration with Association Kinouete
- d) Spiritual Support by Centre Mieux Vivre
- e) Methadone Induction Program
- f) Sexuality by Action Familliale
- g) Counselling by Association Kinouete
- h) Keep fit program by Prison Officers
- i) Life –Skills by Association Kinouete , Centre Mieux Vivre, Prison Welfare Officers and trained Officers
- j) Talks and Film projections on Substance abuse and illicit trafficking by Officer and Association Kinouete

231. For the year 2017, 725 detainees in all prisons, including 378 detainees at EHSP, followed awareness campaigns on Substance Abuse and HIV/AIDS by NGOs.

232. Only detox programmes are currently available; there are no long-term treatment for drug-users.

Training programmes for detainees

233. A prison is a place of work and industry, which instil in offenders the disciplines of working life; order, timekeeping, working to deadlines, being managed and overseen. These are skills that employers want for they comprise the elements of responsibility, which make lives normal. When allied to vocational skills, ex-offenders who have gained these 'life-skills' – the fabric of responsibility – become more attractive potential employees and better husbands, parents, neighbours and friends.

Various trainings are provided to prisoners to enhance their skills so that they can earn a living on release. Numeracy and literacy are also provided to those who are in need and where an in-prison business partner is involved in providing work, he helps in designing the vocational skills required. Moreover, these partners employ some of the prisoners on their release.

234. Facilities are provided to prisoners who wish to study further. The MPS provides prisoners who are studying advanced courses with electronic tablets and internet facilities. Furthermore, please find hereunder a list of activities carried out in prisons geared towards rehabilitation:

- a) Numeracy & Literacy
- b) Primary School Achievement Certificate
- c) Form III National Exams
- d) Computer literacy course
- e) Business Management Course sponsored by Open University of Mauritius
- f) Associate Board Royal School of Music
- g) MITD/MQA approved courses in: Welding, Pastry, Garment Making, Wood Trade
- h) Sensitisation programme on the scourge of drugs
- i) Reduce the occurrence of recidivism among first time offenders
- j) Methadone Substitution Therapy (MST)
- k) Residential Rehabilitation of detainees on MST at EHSP
- l) Day care centre at BBP

- m) Suicide prevention
- n) Training of detainees in various trades like: Housekeeping, Painting & redecoration, Bakery, Food production, Vegetable production, Egg production, Compost production, Basketry and Fibrecraft, Shoemaking, Tailoring, Carpentry and Masonry.
- o) Pastoral care & Moral instruction
- p) Course in Entrepreneurship
- q) Medical care & Psychological support to enable detainees cope with their sentence
- r) Art therapy
- s) Tai-chi
- t) Positive thinking sessions

235. During the period June 2019 to July 2020, 207 detainees have enrolled in different programmes and 204 detainees have completed these courses as given below:

Table 38: Detainees enrolled in the numeracy and literacy programmes

SN	Programmes	Number of detainees enrolled	Completed
1	Numeracy Literacy	125 (including 12 females)	All completed
2	Primary School Achievement Certificate	10 (aged between 25 to 44 years old)	9
3	BSc course in Business Management with specialisation in Marketing	2	2
4	MITD Welding	5	5
5	MITD Wood Trade	4	4
6	MITD Garment Making	4 (Women)	4 (Women)
7	MITD Pastry	2 (Men & Women)	Not Completed
8	My Business Programme (SME Mauritius)	19	19
9	Alpha in Prisons (Spiritual Program by Prison Fellowship International)	36	36

Source: Mauritius Prison Service

236. Detainees are constantly encouraged to make constructive use of the time they spend in prison. There is a variety of trades like carpentry, shoemaking, food production, vegetable production, egg production, welding, basketry and fibre craft, tailoring, pastry, bakery, housekeeping and masonry, amongst others. After a selection exercise, detainee has the opportunity to get involved in one of the series of constructive activities. There is a review exercise where detainees' requests to acquire other skills are being considered.
237. Detainees who have studied up to Form III are eligible to follow MITD/MQA approved courses in garment making and pastry in adult female prisons and in welding, wood trade and pastry in adult male prisons. Another vocational training, namely, in masonry is in the pipeline.

PRIORITY ACTION 30:

The Reform Institutions Act will be revised to meet new priorities and challenges. The system of remission and release on parole would be reviewed to ensure that it serves as an incentive for good conduct in prison and meets the goal of rehabilitation. The concept of spent convictions shall be incorporated in the law.

Reform Institutions (Amendment) Act 2018

238. Amendments were brought to the Reform Institutions Act on 15 May 2018 to criminalise the possession of prohibited articles inside the prisons and for such contraveners to serve sentence consecutively when found guilty by a Court of Law of an offence under the Reforms Institutions Act.
239. The objectives of the amendments were to:
- a) do away with the system of automatic remission, whereby convicted persons were eligible to be discharged after having served two thirds of the period of sentence, and to replace it with a new system of earned remission with a view to encouraging convicted persons to earn maximum remission not exceeding one third of the period of sentence where, during their term of imprisonment, they are of good conduct by not committing any prison default;
 - b) toughen the law against officers of the Mauritius Prison Service, detainees and persons working in reform institutions who are convicted under the Act; and
 - c) provide for consecutive sentencing that is, where a detainee commits an offence under this Act, he shall on re-conviction, be ordered to serve, immediately after expiry of any other sentence for which he was detained, any new sentence imposed upon him by the Court for the offence committed under this Act.

PRIORITY ACTION 31:

Human Rights training for prison officials shall be reinforced and the Standing Orders of the Prisons Service revisited to make them more human rights compliant. A Detainee's Booklet and a Prison Officer's Handbook shall be elaborated.

240. Human Rights courses are being dispensed to all recruits and refresher courses are being given to all officers. Human Rights is a module, which is incorporated in the curriculum of the Training School, and Human Rights courses are ongoing.

In November 2018, 60 senior officers of the prison, welfare officers and other technical staff attended a two-day workshop on 'Consequences of Drugs and HIV/AIDs in Prison and Human Rights in Prison'. The Workshop was an initiative of Kinouete NGO under a Commonwealth Funded Programme.

In March 2019, 37 Officers attended a workshop on Human Rights in places of detention and in July 2020, 61 Officers attended a lecture on "Improving relations between Prison Officers and Detainees – A Psychological Approach".

241. The Mauritius Prison Service produced in 2008 a detainee's booklet in Creole where the rights and privileges of detainees are clearly stated. It is updated as and when required.

242. As regards, the Prison Officer's Handbook, the Prison Standing Orders are continuously being reviewed.

243. As and when new decisions or new policies are to be implemented, notices are affixed in all association yards for the information of detainees. At the Induction Unit, the rights and privileges of detainees are affixed in the Admission Block.

PRIORITY ACTION 32:

Legislation shall be introduced to set up the Court of Appeal and the High Court. New legislation will provide the High Court with a Family Division, which would be conferred exclusive original civil and criminal jurisdiction in respect of family matters and would have all the required support services.

244. A Family Division already operates within the Supreme Court with dedicated Judges hearing family-related cases on a daily basis since 2008.

245. There is a right of appeal from the Supreme Court of Mauritius to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in prescribed circumstances in both criminal and civil matters.

PRIORITY ACTION 33:

With a view to facilitating access to justice, the decentralization of the Supreme Court and the Intermediate Court, with Judges and Magistrates of these Courts, sitting elsewhere than in Port Louis, shall be given due consideration.

246. Due to infrastructural problem, the Judiciary could not envisage the decentralization of the Supreme Court and the Intermediate Court to sit elsewhere than Port Louis.

247. A New Supreme Court Building was inaugurated in July 2020 and it is found in Port Louis. The building covers a surface area of around 4770 m². Its 12 floors house under one roof the civil, criminal, commercial, family and mediation courts, the Chief Justice's chambers, Judges' chambers and the administration staff. The building is equipped with all modern amenities required for a smooth and effective delivery of justice in the country.

248. The Judiciary is contemplating to increase the civil jurisdiction of District Courts.

There are presently ten District Courts in Mauritius and one in Rodrigues. District Courts have jurisdiction to try and determine both civil and criminal cases as provided for by law. Each District Court is presided by a District Magistrate and any such number of District Magistrates as may be decided by the Chief Justice.

PRIORITY ACTION 34:

Procedural and evidential rules shall be simplified in conformity with human rights norms

249. The Supreme Court Rules introduced through the Judicial and Legal Provisions Act 2000, already makes provisions for simplified procedural rules for actions lodged before the Supreme Court. These rules are under regular review by the Rules Committee.

PRIORITY ACTION 35:

A framework shall be set up which would enable a panel of Judges to review convictions which may constitute miscarriages of justice.

250. The current criminal appeal process already provides safeguards against miscarriages of justice.
251. The Criminal Appeal Act was amended in August 2013 (a) to allow a person convicted by the Criminal Division of the Supreme Court or following appellate proceedings, to apply to the Court for a review of the proceedings relating to the conviction, and (b) to allow a person convicted following a trial before the Supreme Court to apply to the Human Rights Division of the National Human Rights Commission which may refer the conviction to the Court for a review of the proceedings if there is fresh and compelling evidence.
252. Pardon or respite also remains an option under section 75 of our Constitution.

PRIORITY ACTION 36:

The right to privacy and respect for human dignity shall be afforded better protection in our law.

253. Chapter II of the Constitution guarantees the enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms in Mauritius which are the right to life, the right to personal liberty, protection from slavery and forced labour, protection from inhuman treatment, protection from deprivation of property, protection for privacy of home and other property, protection of the law, freedom of conscience, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of movement and protection from discrimination.
254. The new Data Protection Act came into force in January 2018. It provides for the protection of the privacy rights of individuals as regards their personal data and this is of particular importance in view of the developments in the techniques used to capture, transmit, manipulate, record or store data relating to individuals. The new Act aligns the law of Mauritius with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Mauritius is the first country in Africa to have aligned itself with the EU GDPR.
255. Legislations to offer more protection to the citizens, from the dangers of new means of communications through the internet, electronic devices and on social media have also been strengthened lately.
256. Section 106 (outrage against public and religious morality) and 282 (Stirring up racial discrimination) of the Criminal Code have been amended in 2018 and broadened to capture radio communication, and

technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical and electromagnetic capabilities, and also to include writings in different forms which includes writing by electronic means, communication in the form of speed or other sound.

257. Since February 2011, the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Authority has set up an online content filtering service that enables Internet Service Providers in Mauritius to effectively filter child sexual abuse or child pornographic sites, which are considered as illegal in Mauritius. This implies that no Internet user from Mauritius can access these child sexual abuse websites and if they try to do so, a block page will appear instead.

This filtering solution uses a blacklist provided and managed regularly by the Internet Watch Foundation, a non-profit organisation that is widely recognised as one of the best in the world at managing a URL list of child sexual abuse sites coupled with the Interpol blacklist.

258. The Children's Act 2020 safeguards the privacy of the child through the provision of strict guidelines concerning publication in the media of photographs, pictures, video or audio recordings of children as witnesses, victims or offenders. The Children's Act 2020 provides for offences against children whereby they are exposed to violence, exploitation and harm, including internet and web related offences such as child pornography and child grooming.

PRIORITY ACTION 37:

Media laws shall be brought in line with the norms of a democratic society. A mechanism shall be provided for the handling of complaints about factual inaccuracy or unethical behaviour by the media, and the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act shall be amended to provide for ethical conduct and safeguard of the fundamental rights of persons.

259. The local media has always enjoyed a tradition of freedom and pluralism. There is at present more than 60 dailies/weeklies/fortnightlies/monthlies, whilst the audio-visual landscape consists of the national radio and television (the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation) as well as private radio stations and web TV run by media houses. It is also important to point out that the press generally operates in a conducive environment free from violence or coercion, with Journalists free to exercise their profession. However, as the rule of law prevails, the press is subject to the general laws on publications. People have access to the media to express their views and have unrestricted exposure to different viewpoints. There is no official or unofficial censorship of the press. There is also unrestricted access to the internet, which is widely used.

260. In 2013, a Report on Media Law & Ethics Reform was prepared by Mr Geoffrey Robertson QC, a trial and appellate counsel who has argued many landmark cases in media, constitutional and criminal law

before the European Court of Justice; the European Court of Human Rights; the House of Lords and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, among others, and also, before the highest jurisdictions of certain commonwealth countries.

261. A Standards Committee set up under the IBA is responsible for the drawing up of a code of ethics for licensees and a code of advertising practice.

The Code of Conduct for broadcasting services, in its preamble, stresses on the upholding of the fundamental principle “that the freedom of all broadcasting licensees is indivisible from, and subject to, the same restraints as those relevant to the individual person, and is founded on the individual’s right to be informed and to freely receive and disseminate opinions.”

262. Broadcasting licensees may not broadcast “any material which is indecent, obscene or offensive to public morals or offensive to the religious convictions or feelings of any section of the population or likely to prejudice the safety of the State or the public order or relations between sections of the population”.

263. The Authority has set up a Complaints Committee, which considers and adjudicates, inter alia, on any complaint of breaches or anticipated breaches of the codes and unjust or unfair treatment or the likelihood of such treatment in a broadcast programme. Upon complaints made to the police, an investigation is carried out and if charges are found to be substantiated, the office of the DPP advises prosecution.

PRIORITY ACTION 38:

In order to promote pluralism in the media, Government will encourage the licensing of Free to Air Private TV channels.

264. Almost all the local radio stations use the social media platform and Web TV to reach out the population.

265. The Government Programme 2015-2019 already stated that private television broadcast would be permitted. Provisions already exist in the IBA Act for the Authority to issue licences to private television operators. One factor that so far inhibited the advent of private television is the provisions of the latter Act, which restricted the limit of foreign shareholding in a company applying for a licence to 20%. Nevertheless, the IBA Act was amended through the Finance Act 2019 to cater for the new foreign shareholding ceiling of 49.9% instead of 20%.

266. No applications have been received so far for TV licences.

OBJECTIVE IV

Securing Greater Realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights so that Basic Necessities of Life are Adequately and Equitably Available to Everyone in Society by: (a) Providing for Decent Work Conditions in a Safe and Healthy Working Environment & (b) Guaranteeing Social Security Entitlements; (c) Ensuring Availability, Accessibility and Adequacy of Food; (d) Ensuring Sufficient, Safe, Acceptable, Physically Accessible and Affordable Water Supply for Personal and Domestic Uses; (e) Securing Adequate Housing; (f) Achieving Highest Attainable Standard of Health (through Availability and Accessibility of Health-Care Facilities, Goods and Services of Quality); (g) Developing Access to Education and Training Facilities; (h) Developing Opportunities for Taking Part in Cultural Life and Affording Better Protection to the Moral and Material Interests resulting from any Scientific, Literary or Artistic production of which a Person is the Author

PRIORITY ACTION 39:

Government is fully committed to the effective protection of the workforce. In this respect, necessary amendments will be brought to the existing labour legislation to ensure better protection of workers' rights and to provide safer and more conducive working conditions.

267. The Workers' Rights Act was enacted in August 2019 and proclaimed in October 2019. The new labour legislation repealed and replaced the Employment Rights Act.

Salient features of Workers' Rights Act 2019:-

a) Conditions of employment

(i) Harmonisation of conditions of employment

- (a) Core conditions of employment prescribed in various Remuneration Regulations were harmonized in the Workers' Rights Act.
- (b) Remuneration Regulations now provide for conditions of employment, which are specific to an economic sector of activity and continue to prescribe wages in different economic sectors of activity.
- (c) Nevertheless, no worker should earn wages below the national minimum guaranteed monthly income of Rs10,575 inclusive of the additional remuneration 2021 and the special allowance from the Government.

(ii) Improvement of conditions of employment

- (a) vacation leave with pay for every period of 5 years instead of 10 years;
- (b) special leave for wedding to a worker, of his son or daughter and in case death of a close relative;
- (c) leave with pay to attend a service as a Juror under the Juror's Act;
- (d) leave with pay to represent the country in international sport events;
- (e) leave without pay to attend Court;
- (f) adoption leave on production of Court order to a worker who has adopted a child of less than 12 months;
- (g) protection against termination of employment extended to a female worker nursing an unweaned child; and
- (h) protection against discrimination extended to a worker with disabilities and on grounds of marital or family status.

b) Definition of Worker

Worker is being defined as a person whose basic wage or salary is up to Rs. 600,000 per annum. The provisions of the Act shall not apply to the workers drawing more than Rs 600,000 per annum except for fundamental rights such as protection against discrimination, equal remuneration for work of equal value, termination of employment, workfare programme and violence at work.

c) Safeguard against Precarious employment

(i) Fixed term contract

(a) Limited to –

- a worker performing mainly a specific piece of work or a work which relates to the temporary business needs of an employer;
- a migrant worker.

(b) The employment of a worker shall fall within the definition of continuous employment where the interval between two contracts does not exceed 28 days.

(c) Shall not apply to a worker employed in a position of permanent nature in relation to fixed, recurring and permanent needs that forms part of the continuous normal business activity of an employer.

(d) The terms and conditions of employment of a worker on a fixed term contract shall not be less favorable than that of a permanent worker employed by the same employer, where the workers perform same or similar duties.

(ii) Discrimination

The definition of discrimination has been broadened to protect workers performing same or similar work where workers are employed in a subsidiary company or a parent company engaged in the same line of business activities.

(iii) Compromise Agreement

The concept of compromise agreement in a resolution of labour disputes between a worker and his employer is being introduced whereby an amicable settlement shall be valid only where the worker has been authorized to seek the advice of a lawyer or a member of a registered trade union or an officer of this Ministry before signing the agreement.

(iv) Hours of work

The normal working week shall consist of 45 hours, except for –

- (a) sectors of employment where the prescribed normal working hours per week is less than 45 hours, such as Attorneys' and Notaries' Workers, Pre-Primary School Employees, Private Secondary School Employees, Public Transport (Buses) Workers and Sugar Industry Workers;
- (b) occupations such as *garde-malade* where the prescribed normal working hours in a week is 72 hours.
 - Overtime to be computed on a daily basis, except where expressly provided otherwise in other enactments, such as hospitality and ICT/BPO sectors.
 - Introduction of the following flexible working time arrangements –

(v) Compressed hours

A worker on piece work or task work shall be deemed to have performed a normal day's or week's work, if he completes the task assigned to him within a shorter period of time and he shall be guaranteed wages due for the whole day or week, as the case may be.

(vi) Flexi time

The introduction of flexible time arrangements, with a view to better respond to the operational requirement of enterprises and to reconcile work and family responsibilities.

(vii) Shift work

- (a) Workers should not be required to perform night work on more than 5 consecutive nights.
- (b) Payment of a night shift allowance of 15% of the basic wage in addition to the normal day's wage.
- (c) Provisions shall be made in some Remuneration Orders to provide for different hours where work is performed on night shift such as hospitality, ICT/BPO sectors.

d) Atypical Work

The definition of the Employment Relationship has been broadened to capture new forms of atypical work such as "Platform online worker".

e) Protection of Wages

- (i) The provision regarding garnishment of wages has been replaced by a Protective Order.
- (ii) A Wage Guarantee Fund has been set up under the Workfare Programme Fund to guarantee a worker, remuneration up to an aggregate of Rs 50,000 in the event of **compulsory winding up** of the enterprise where he is employed.
- (iii) The Court may order for the payment of interest on the amount of remuneration due to a worker.

f) Transfer of Undertakings

- (i) The rights and continuity of employment of a worker shall be safeguarded where an offer of employment is made by the employer taking over the enterprise.
- (ii) A worker may construe that he has been unjustifiably dismissed where the transfer involves a substantial change in his terms and conditions of employment.

g) Severance Allowance

To maintain the actual regime of severance allowance at the rate of 3 months' remuneration per year of service for unjustified termination of employment.

h) Workfare Programme

- (i) Any worker whose employment has been terminated shall be entitled to be admitted directly to the Workfare Programme, irrespective of whether he has lodged a case in Court to claim severance allowance.
- (ii) The Workfare Programme Fund shall also provide for –
 - (a) the payment of an amount representing the balance between the industrial injury allowance specified in section 25 (2) of the National Pensions Act 1976 and the maximum basic wage or salary as specified in the Second Schedule to the National Savings Fund (Collection of Contribution) Regulations 1997;
 - (b) the funding of such social plans to the benefits of workers as may be determined by the Minister.

i) Violence at Work

- (i) An employer shall be vicariously liable for an act of violence at work where he knew or should have known of the violence at work and has failed to take any action to prevent or stop the violence. The employer shall take action to protect the worker within a delay of 15 days as from the date the case has been reported to him.

(ii) The fine for the offence has been increased from Rs 75,000 to Rs 100,000 and the term of imprisonment has increased from 2 to 5 years.

(iii) No employer or his *préposé* shall carry out any body search on a worker.

j) Disciplinary Hearing

An employer shall, within 7 days of the receipt of a written request, give a copy of the minutes of proceedings of the Disciplinary hearing to –

- (i) the worker who appeared before the disciplinary hearing; and
- (ii) the person assisting the worker in the disciplinary hearing.

An employer may initiate disciplinary action against the worker where a charge of misconduct is subject to criminal proceedings.

k) Reduction of Workforce

First Phase - Negotiation

- (i) Where an employer intends to reduce its workforce, the employer shall be required to negotiate with the recognised trade union or the trade union having a representational status or workers' representatives where there is no trade union, with a view to agreeing on a compensation as an amicable settlement.
- (ii) The employers or the trade unions or the workers' representatives may make a request to the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training (MLHRDT) to assist them in the negotiation.

Second Phase – Redundancy Board

- (i) The Redundancy Board shall be set up to replace the existing Employment Promotion and Protection Division.
- (ii) Where no settlement has been reached or where an employer has failed to negotiate, an employer having not less than 15 workers or an undertaking having an annual turnover of at least 25 million rupees shall be required to refer the reduction of workforce to the Board prior to termination of employment.
- (iii) The Board shall enquire and determine whether a reduction of workforce constitutes valid reason, prior to the laying off workers.

- (iv) Where the reduction of workforce does not constitute valid reason, the Board shall order the employer -
 - (a) to pay wages in lieu of notice and severance allowance at the rate of 3 months' remuneration per year of service; or
 - (b) to reinstate the worker.
- (v) A reduction of workforce shall also be deemed unjustified where an employer fails to notify the Board or proceed with the reduction of workforce prior to the completion of the proceedings of the Board, unless an amicable agreement has been reached between the parties.
- (vi) Where the reduction of workforce constitutes valid reason, the Board shall order the employer to pay wages in lieu of notice.
- (vii) The Board shall complete its proceedings within 30 days from the date of notification by the employer.

Maternity and Paternity Benefits

268. The Workers' Rights Act (WRA) provides for enhanced protection to female workers as follows:

- (a) female workers are entitled to the following maternity benefits and working conditions under the present legal framework;
 - (i) 14 weeks' maternity leave on full pay, irrespective of the length of service the working mother reckon with her employer;
 - (ii) the maternity leave can be taken at least 7 weeks before confinement (previously 6 weeks);
 - (iii) payment of a maternity allowance of Rs 3,000 (for those who are in continuous employment with the same employer for a period of 12 consecutive months);
 - (iv) 3 weeks' leave on full pay in case of miscarriage;
 - (v) 14 weeks' leave on full pay in case of stillborn child (previously 12);
 - (vi) 14 weeks' leave on full pay when a female worker who has been in continuous employment with the same employer for a period of 12 consecutive months, adopts a child aged less than 12 months;
 - (vii) one hour for breastfeeding on a daily basis for a period of 6 months from the date of confinement or such longer period as recommended by a medical practitioner and the period of break shall not be deducted from the number of hours of work of the worker;

- (viii) an employer shall not require a female worker to perform work in excess of a normal day's work for a period of at least 2 months before her confinement;
- (ix) a female worker who is pregnant shall not, on a medical certificate produced to this effect and unless a medical practitioner certifies otherwise, be required to perform duties requiring continuous standing that may be detrimental to her health or the health of the baby;
- (x) an employer shall not, except with the consent of a female worker, require the female worker to work between 6 pm and 6 am during the 12 months following her confinement; and
- (xi) protection against termination of employment to a female worker who is nursing her unweaned child or who is on maternity leave. Any female worker who has lost her employment on such ground may report a dispute for reinstatement under section 64 of the Employment Relations Act.

269. Section 53 of the Act provides that a male worker is entitled to 5 continuous working days' paternity leave upon the production of a medical certificate certifying that his spouse has given birth to his child and a written statement from him that his spouse and himself are living under a common roof. This benefit is also extended on a pro-rata basis to part-time male employees. The leave is on full pay for a worker reckoning more than 12 months' continuous employment. The application of this provision has been extended to all sectors of employment, including those covered by Remuneration Regulations. It is to be noted that under this section, "spouse" is defined as a person with whom the worker has contracted a civil or religious marriage.

Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) of the International Labour Organisation

270. Mauritius ratified the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) of the International Labour Organisation in June 2019. The Convention applies to all employed women, including those in atypical forms of dependent work, makes provision for the women, including those in atypical forms of dependent work, and makes provision for the following:

- a) extension of protection to all employed women;
- b) at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, including six weeks of compulsory postnatal leave;
- c) additional leave in case of illness, complications or risk of complications arising out of pregnancy or childbirth;

- d) cash benefits during leave of at least two-thirds of previous or insured earnings (or at an equivalent level where benefits are not calculated on the basis of previous earnings);
- e) access to medical care, including prenatal, childbirth and postnatal care, as well as hospitalisation when necessary;
- f) health protection, that is the right of pregnant or nursing women not to perform work prejudicial to their health or that of their child;
- g) minimum of one daily break with pay for breastfeeding; and
- h) employment protection and non-discrimination.

Work from Home

271. In the same amendment of 2018 to the EReA, the notion of “Homeworker” was introduced with a view to bringing this atypical class of workers under the ambit and protection of the labour legislation.

272. The Finance (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, No. 11 of 2018, has amended the EReA and has introduced the notion of “work from home”. A “home worker” is one who carries out work at his residential premises or at such other place, not being business premises, as may be agreed upon with his employer. Section 5 (Agreement) of the Employment Rights Act 2008 was amended with effect as from August 2018.

Section 17A of the Workers’ Rights Act stipulates that “an employer may require any worker to work from home provided a notice of at least 48 hours is given to the worker.” The Workers’ Rights (Working from Home) Regulations 2020 which was enacted on 24 September 2020 and came into effect from 01 September 2020, subsequently provides for more flexibility and also ensures that the terms and conditions of employment of the homeworker are not less favourable than what has been actually prescribed by the law.

Forced Labour and Slavery

273. Section 6 of the Constitution provides protection from slavery and forced labour. It stipulates that no person shall be held in slavery or servitude, and no person shall be required to perform forced labour.

274. Mauritius had ratified the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No 29) of the ILO on 02 December 1969. Its principles and articles have since long been incorporated in our legislation and that of Abolition of Forced Labour Convention (No. 105) also. The relevant provisions of the Forced Labour Convention are enshrined in Section 6 of the Constitution of Mauritius; Section 35 of the Reform Institutions Act 1988;

Section 16 of the Prisons Regulations 1989 (Government Notice No. 19 of 1989) made under the Reform Institutions Act 1988; and Standing Order No. 16 of the Prisons Service.

Wage Differentials

275. The differential rates between male and female workers in the Salt-manufacturing Industry no longer exist. With effect from 01 December 2016, the basic wages of female workers were realigned at par with that of male workers.

National Minimum Wage

276. The National Minimum Wage Regulations passed on 27 December 2017 set the national minimum wage of every full time worker at Rs 8,140 per month as from 01 January 2018. As from 01 January 2020, the quantum was reviewed to Rs 9,700 per month whilst that for a worker in the export enterprise was set to Rs9,000 per month, in view of the vulnerability of the export oriented enterprise. This measure was deemed necessary with a view to preserving the sustainability of the sector in terms of both employment security and fluidity in the finance of the enterprise.

277. It is to be noted that the national minimum wage will be reviewed yearly accordingly.

Recruitment and Promotion

278. The Equal Opportunities Act was amended in 2017 to provide for the prohibition of discrimination in employment on the grounds of a person's criminal record, both at recruitment and promotion level.

PRIORITY ACTION 40:

Appropriate policies and programmes, including the elaboration of a National Employment Policy, shall be put in place for an increase in Decent and Productive Employment. The ILO Employment Policy Convention 1964 (No. 122) shall be ratified.

279. The National Employment Policy (NEP) is a concerted and coherent vision of the medium and long-term employment objectives of Mauritius and it will enable all Mauritian citizens, men and women alike, who are available and willing to work, to attain secured and sustainable livelihood through productive and freely chosen employment.

280. A technical team was set up at the level of the MLHRDT to contextualize the NEP in view of aligning it with the Government Programme 2015 – 2019 and its Vision 2030.

In collaboration with the ILO, the aforesaid Ministry organised a tripartite workshop in May 2018 with a view to conducting consultations for the elaboration of the NEP. The objective was to brief all the constituents on the status of the NEP drafting, to take stock, and most importantly to agree on key priority areas and structure that should be incorporated in the eventual NEP.

281. It was agreed that a tripartite NEP Drafting Oversight Committee be set up in order to ensure that the NEP formulation process is based on wholesome consultations throughout. The ILO has agreed to provide support for the elaboration of the NEP for Mauritius.

282. The MLHRDT set up the Drafting Committee, comprising 3 representatives each of the tripartite constituents with a view to starting the process.

The MLHRDT is already involved in the process for the formulation of the NEP. However, the tripartite NEP Drafting Oversight Committee set up in 2019 at the level of the MLHRDT was temporary suspended.

283. Thereafter, the ILO proposed the MLHRDT to recruit a National Consultant to draft the NEP under its guidance. However, the only applicant who responded to the advertisement did not meet the qualifications required by the ILO.

Due to the unforeseen circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic during the year 2020 leading to a period of lock down, the project was put on halt again.

284. Furthermore, it is to be noted that Mauritius has not yet ratified the ILO Employment Policy Convention 1964 (No. 122).

PRIORITY ACTION 41:

With a view to securing workers just and favourable conditions of work, social dialogue shall be enhanced through the National Tripartite Forum and the functioning of existing Industrial Relations institutions improved.

285. A National Tripartite Forum (NTF) was set up in October 2010 to impart a new boost to social dialogue in Mauritius. It comprises representatives of Government, employers and workers, and operates under the chairpersonship of the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment.

286. Its role was to act as a permanent forum for discussion among social partners, with special focus on work issues such as labour and industrial matters; employment creation, skills and training; occupational safety

and health; productivity and competitiveness; and social and economic policies in the light of changes in the world of work.

287. Five Technical Committees (TCs) were set up under the NTF to examine specific issues and make proposals thereon to the main Committee, namely the:

- a) Labour & Industrial Relations;
- b) Labour Market, Employment Creation, Skills and Training;
- c) Occupational Safety and Health;
- d) Productivity and Competitiveness; and
- e) Economic and Social Development.

288. Furthermore, following amendments brought to the Employment Relations Act (EReA) in August 2019, a National Tripartite Council was established under Section 98A of EReA with a view to promoting social dialogue and consensus building on labour, industrial relations or socio-economic issues of national importance and other related and industrial relations issues.

The Council is also mandated to make recommendations to the Government on labour, industrial relations, health, and safety issues at the national and international level, particularly with the International Labour Organisation, the African Union and the Southern African Development Community.

PRIORITY ACTION 42:

The desirability of introducing a cross-cutting national minimum wage, which would enable workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living, shall be considered.

National Minimum Wage

289. A National Wage Consultative Council Act was passed by the National Assembly on 26 May 2016.

290. The Council came into operation on 01 September 2016 with clearly defined objectives as spelt out under Regulations 5 of the Act to make recommendations for the introduction of a national minimum wage.

291. The Council had, among others, to also consider the following factors:

- a) the need to improve the living conditions of the lowest paid workers and promote decent work and living conditions;
- b) the overall economic situation;
- c) the need to increase the rate of growth and to protect employment; and
- d) the national competitiveness.

292. In December 2017, the National Minimum Wage Regulations 2017 (GN No. 1 of 2018), made under the National Wage Consultative Council Act, provides that the national minimum wage of every full-time worker shall be Rs 8,140 per month with effect from 01 January 2018. Part-time workers were entitled to same on a pro-rata basis. As from 01 January 2020, the quantum was reviewed to Rs 9,700 per month.

PRIORITY ACTION 43:

The Quality of Employment shall be improved with increased Occupational Safety and Health activities and capacity enhancement of all social partners.

Employees' Lodging Accommodation

293. The Occupational Safety and Health (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011 was promulgated on 28 January 2011. These regulations aim at establishing safety and health norms for workers' lodging accommodations which include water supply, amenities (toilets, bathrooms), space, lockers for personal belongings, cooking facilities, furniture, cleaning standard, electricity and fire standard.

294. The regulations are enforced by the MLHRDT, the MHW and the Fire Services. All the authorities concerned carry out inspection of the lodging accommodation prior to issue of health and fire clearances and subsequently the Lodging Accommodation Permit.

Inspections and Follow-up Visits

295. Since the enactment, the Occupational Safety and Health (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011 the OSH officers are visiting the lodging accommodations throughout the island.

Table 39: Complaints in respect of Occupational Safety and Health

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of complaints investigation carried out	38	31	35	38	32	27	50	73	52	51
Number of Visits at lodging accommodations	728	1774	892	894	997	932	1006	1251	1451	1308
Number of lodging Accommodation permits issued	34	896	459	306	412	629	522	845	911	468
Number of cases lodged in court for non-respect of the Occupational Safety and Health (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011	-	24	17	11	6	10	24	48	14	51

Source: Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training

296. All complaints received are investigated into and improvement requests issued to employers. Complaints falling under Regulations 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 of the (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011 are referred to the MHW and the Fire Services accordingly.

Lodging Accommodation Permit

297. Furthermore, any lodging accommodation is required to have a Lodging Accommodation Permit granted by the Lodging Accommodation Committee after necessary clearances have been obtained from the MHW and the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service. The Lodging Accommodation Permit is valid for a period not exceeding 3 years and may be renewed.

Prosecution

298. In cases where the employer fails to comply with the provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health (Employees' Lodging Accommodation) Regulations 2011, legal action is instituted against the employer and the cases are referred to the Industrial Court.

299. The penalty for breach of these regulations is a maximum fine of Rs 75,000 and imprisonment not exceeding one year.

300. Further amendments are being brought to the Regulations in order to enhance the provisions as regards to health, safety and fire standards in the lodging accommodations and to ensure proper enforcement of the Regulations by the enforcing authorities namely the MHW and the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service who will be given power to issue enforcement notice and establish contraventions against defaulting employers.

PRIORITY ACTION 44:

The need to afford to all working mothers, irrespective of their period of continuous employment, paid maternity leave, and to ensuring that all fathers exercising parental responsibilities are granted paid paternity leave, regardless of their marital status, shall be examined.

Maternity Protection

301. The Workers' Rights Act (WRA) provides for enhanced protection to female workers as follows:

- a) female workers are entitled to the following maternity benefits and working conditions under the present legal framework:
 - (i) 14 weeks' maternity leave on full pay, irrespective of the length of service the working mother reckon with her employer;
 - (ii) the maternity leave can be taken at least 7 weeks before confinement (previously 6 weeks);
 - (iii) payment of a maternity allowance of Rs 3,000 (for those who are in continuous employment with the same employer for a period of 12 consecutive months);
 - (iv) 3 weeks' leave on full pay in case of miscarriage;
 - (v) 14 weeks' leave on full pay in case of stillborn child (previously 12);
 - (vi) 14 weeks' leave on full pay when a female worker who has been in continuous employment with the same employer for a period of 12 consecutive months, adopts a child aged less than 12 months;
 - (vii) one hour for breastfeeding on a daily basis for a period of 6 months from the date of confinement or such longer period as recommended by a medical practitioner and the period of break shall not be deducted from the number of hours of work of the worker;

- (viii) an employer shall not require a female worker to perform work in excess of a normal day's work for a period of at least 2 months before her confinement;
- (ix) a female worker who is pregnant shall not, on a medical certificate produced to this effect and unless a medical practitioner certifies otherwise, be required to perform duties requiring continuous standing that may be detrimental to her health or the health of the baby;
- (x) an employer shall not, except with the consent of a female worker, require the female worker to work between 6 pm and 6 am during the 12 months following her confinement; and
- (xi) protection against termination of employment to a female worker who is nursing her unweaned child or who is on maternity leave. Any female worker who has lost her employment on such ground may report a dispute for reinstatement under section 64 of the Employment Relations Act.

b) Compressed hours

According to section 21 of the WRA, a worker on piece work or task work shall be deemed to have performed a normal day's or week's work, if he completes the task assigned to him within a shorter period of time and he shall be guaranteed wages due for the whole day or week, as the case may be. This would enable working women to dedicate more time to their family life.

c) Flexi time

Section 22 of the Workers' Rights Act strives to strike the right balance between family and work responsibilities. In this section, the concept of flexi time gives workers, especially mothers having young children the possibility to adjust and to remain in active life. Hence, a worker is entitled to make a request for flexi time. The request shall be acceded to unless there are reasonable business grounds.

d) Paternity leave

A male worker whose spouse has given birth to a child is entitled to a paternity leave of 5 continuous working days. This provision promotes gender equality as it encourages sharing of responsibility among the partners. The father can make judicious use of this time to assist in taking care of the newborn child and thus strengthening the family bond.

PRIORITY ACTION 45:

An enabling environment for gender equality shall be promoted through the implementation of appropriate capacity building programmes. The gender-neutral wage determining mechanism shall be strengthened, and the implementation of the ILO Conventions relating to equality improved, through the provision of appropriate training so that the concept “equal pay for work of equal value” plays a more effective role in the wage fixing exercise. The effectiveness of the legal framework in place to combat sexual harassment in the workplace shall be re-assessed.

302. Since July 2010, a National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming (NSCGM) was set up to provide a platform for GFPs of all Ministries to dialogue on the gender implications in their respective sectors. This mechanism has enabled the MGEFW to keep track of the challenges being faced by GFPs. The terms of reference of this committee also led to the setting up of the Gender Cells “in lieu” of GFP mechanism. Both the NSCGM and the Gender Cells are concrete measures that the Gender Unit initiated to ensure that gender was being mainstreamed in policies and programmes.
303. High-level capacity building programmes were implemented for the benefit of GFPs aimed at equipping them with knowledge and tools on gender mainstreaming.
304. The Gender Unit published two compendiums that were distributed to all GFPs and were uploaded on the website of the MGEFW.
305. A Gender Equality Bill is under preparation. It will:
- a) promote, protect and regulate gender equality in public and private spheres;
 - b) eliminate gender-based discrimination, ensure that human rights of men and women are guaranteed and acknowledged in existing as well as the proposed legislation in order to achieve gender equality;
 - c) provide for gender equality principles that aim at reducing socio-economic inequalities so as to achieve substantive equality in all spheres, that is socially, economically and politically;
 - d) provide for equal opportunities for both men and women and create responsibilities of all entities, public and private, to eliminate barriers that lead to gender discrimination; and
 - e) promote equality and gender balance between family roles, unpaid care work and employment for men and women.

306. The National Remuneration Board (NRB), set up under section 90 of the Employment Relations Act 2008, is responsible for making recommendations on minimum remuneration and other terms and conditions of employment for workers in the private sector. Under the aegis of the MLHRDT, the NRB acts as a specialized wage committee/advisory body on wages made up of employers' and employees' representatives along with members chosen by the government.
307. The MLHRDT has sought technical assistance from the ILO with a view to harmonizing the wage determination mechanism at the level of the NRB to ensure that wages are determined on an occupational basis instead of the actual sector wise basis while following the principle of "*equal remuneration for work of equal value*" under section 26 of the WRA. The objective is to avoid inequity between two wage employees holding the same job but working in different sectors. Discussion is still ongoing and the matter has not yet been finalized.

Sexual Harassment

308. In order to further combat and eliminate violence at work, the Government has stiffened the provisions of the law under section 114 of the WRA in that an employer shall be vicariously liable for violence at work including sexual harassment, committed by a worker and any third party where the employer knew or should have known the violence at work and failed to take any action to prevent or stop the violence. In addition, in order to curb any unwanted act, no employer or his agent shall carry out a search on a worker.
309. Besides, the penalty, which was previously fixed to a fine of Rs 75,000, was increased to Rs 100,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years instead of 2 years as provided for under the repealed Employment Rights Act.
310. There are some 17 labour offices scattered over the island whereby the workers can register their complaints. For the year 2020, 5 cases of sexual harassment, involving 5 female workers were reported to the MLHRDT. 3 cases were settled, 1 was withdrawn and 1 case was referred to the Industrial Court for prosecution.

PRIORITY ACTION 46:

A more inclusive society shall be created through the promotion of decent employment opportunities for the disabled. The law on the employment and integration of the disabled shall be enforced more effectively.

311. Following the amendments to the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act in 2012, employers who have a workforce of 35 or above are required to employ 3% of persons with disabilities. Failure to

do so may lead to a statutory monthly contribution of Rs 4,000 (USD 100) for each person with disabilities not yet recruited. Furthermore, the amended Act provides for a Hearing Committee to examine cases of non-compliant companies. Furthermore, the Act provides that in case of prosecution before a Court of Law, the non-compliant company is liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 75,000 (USD 1875) or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.

312. The MSISSNS is working with the AGO to ensure that this precedence is respected. Under Part 1 of the Schedule (B) of the TEDPB Act makes provision for any employer having a workforce of 35 or more workers should employ persons with disabilities such that the recruitment amounts to 3%. However, it is noted that employers do not respect this limit and a committee has been set up to look upon the issue.

313. The TEDP Board has as at date a register of 827 employers on its database. Out of 827, some 588 companies are not compliant with the quota system while 187 companies are partly complying and 52 are fully compliant with the quota system by employing persons with disabilities.

314. The Hearing Committee set up for the main purpose to prevent discrimination against disabled persons resulting from or arising out of their disability was reconstituted on 5th November 2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 47:

The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS shall be adapted to reduce discrimination and stigma against workers affected by HIV/AIDS.

315. The ILO Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS has not been adopted in Mauritius.

316. The Constitution legitimises the enactment of laws that discriminate against non-citizens according to their health status (Immigration Act (Act No. 13)) on grounds that migrants living with a disability or disease may present a threat to public safety. We still apply HIV-related restrictions on the entry, stay and residence of non-nationals. Migrant workers must provide evidence of their negative HIV status to qualify for work and residence permits (Section 8 of the Immigration Act (Act No. 13)).

PRIORITY ACTION 48:

A comprehensive legal framework for the protection of the rights of migrant workers, ensuring that the conditions of employment of all migrant workers are not less favourable than those granted to a local worker, shall be put in place.

317. Non-citizens working in Mauritius are covered by the same conditions as local workers under the labour legislation.

Know Your Rights Pamphlet

318. A “Know Your Rights Pamphlet”, was launched in March 2019 by the then Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms. It was funded by the UK Government. It aims to inform prospective and current migrant workers of their rights and the possible remedial actions in case of violations. It also serves to make migrant workers aware of the dangers of human trafficking. The pamphlet was produced in 6 different languages, namely English, French, Hindi, Tamil, Bangladesh and Chinese. A short video clip encompassing the main information in the pamphlet was also made and was occasionally broadcasted on different channels of the national television (Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation).

National Minimum Wage

319. The National Minimum Wage applies to every worker, including migrant workers. A worker under the Workers’ Rights Act, means a person who enters into, or works under an agreement or a contract of apprenticeship, other than a contract of apprenticeship regulated under the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development Act, whether by way of casual work, manual labour, clerical work, or otherwise, and however remunerated; and includes:

- a) a part-time worker;
- b) a former worker, where appropriate; and
- c) a share worker.

320. The National Minimum Wage Regulations which was passed in December 2017 sets the national minimum wage of every full time worker at Rs 8,140 per month as from 01 January 2018. As from 01 January 2020, the quantum was reviewed to Rs 9,700 per month whilst that for a worker in the export enterprise was set to Rs 9,000 per month, in view of the vulnerability of the export-oriented enterprise. This measure was deemed necessary with a view to preserving the sustainability of the sector in terms of both employment security and fluidity in the finance of the enterprise.

Protection under the NPF

321. Migrant workers in export manufacturing enterprises, are not covered during their first two years of employment under the National Pensions legislation. Notwithstanding the above, Migrant workers are provided with an additional facility to obtain their share of NPF contributions along with accrued interest as a lump sum payment at the expiry of their contract of employment.

Contract of Employment

322. The contract of employment of a migrant worker, prior to his arrival in Mauritius, is examined and vetted by the Special Migrant Workers' Unit of the MLHRDT to ensure that it contains no abusive clauses and that it is in full conformity with the prevailing labour law.

Memorandum of Understanding

323. A MoU between the Government of Nepal and the Government of the Republic of Mauritius on the Recruitment and Employment of General Worker from Nepal has been signed in June 2019.

324. The objective of the MoU is to establish a framework relating to the recruitment and employment (including repatriation) of the Worker and to protect the rights and welfare of both the Worker and the Employer.

Inspection by Special Migrant Unit

325. Regular inspection visits are carried out by officers of the Special Migrant Workers' Unit of the MLHRDT at workplaces where migrant workers are employed to, inter- alia, ascertain that the employer is complying with the terms and conditions of employment as provided for in the vetted contract of employment and in the prevailing labour legislation.

326. In the course of such inspections, the officers also check whether every migrant worker has received a copy of his/her vetted contract of employment. Furthermore, on their assumption of duty, migrant workers are informed of their rights and obligations arising out of their vetted contract of employment by the officers of the above Unit.

Statistics

327. Mauritius employs some 35,000 migrant workers in the secondary economic activities including construction and manufacturing of food products, beverages, textile and garments, paper products, chemical products, plastic products, fabricated metal products, furniture, machinery, and equipment. Some 19,000 comes from Bangladesh, 9,000 from India, 4,500 from China, 3500 from Madagascar, and a few from Nepal.

328. Hereunder are statistics for period 2010 – 2020 regarding number of inspections/enquiries carried out to ensure compliance of provisions of the labour legislation in respect of employment of migrant workers.

Table 40: Inspections for period January 2010 - December 2020

Year	No. of Inspections	Enquiry	Amount Recovered (Rs)
2010	235	342	1 088 977
2011	203	286	2 752 527
2012	442	223	863 292
2013	471	254	3 955 014
2014	403	306	3 149 028
2015	72	316	2 800 740
2016	402	399	2 147 252
2017	1 119	66	3 511 658
2018	2 317	200	2 800 740
2019	1 520	581	18 029
2020	580	688	31 590762

Source: Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training

329. The hereunder Table shows the number of complaints reported by migrant workers to the Special Migrant Workers Unit and the amount recovered on their behalf:

Table 41: Complaints from Migrant Workers January 2010 - December 2020

Year	No. of complaints	Amount Recovered (Rs)
2010	311	4 784 878
2011	303	5 129 028
2012	136	6 149 921
2013	247	2 242 824
2014	224	1 458 193
2015	271	4 271 509
2016	339	7 510 850
2017	603	12 094 225
2018	579	3 854 687
2019	666	7 758 208
2020	533	49 922 200

Source: Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training

PRIORITY ACTION 49:

Adequate food shall be made more available by increasing food self-sufficiency through the establishment of a Food Security Stimulus Package to assist planters, breeders and fishermen to maximise local production.

Crop Sector

330. Mauritius is almost self-sufficient in the production of food crops that covers some 30 major crops consumed regularly and some 10 crops that are used as fine herbs and condiments for our local cuisine.
331. The annual crop production varies between 100,000 to 120,000 T. For the year 2019, around 103,000 T was produced over an area of 7,690 ha.
332. A number of schemes including Sheltered Farming have been introduced with a view to increasing our food production and minimizing the effects of adverse climatic conditions on crop production.
333. More than Rs 54,335,715 were disbursed by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security with regard to sheltered farming and a total of 291 planters are producing food crop under that system. More than 450 promoters are engaged in crop production under hydroponic system covering a total area of 285,570m². Production under sheltered structures and hydroponics cultivation is estimated at 12 000 T annually.
334. In 2019, production was 5960 T over a physical area of 47 ha averaging a yield of nearly 200 T per ha compared to cultivation in open field where the average is around 12 T per ha. Production from these techniques is expected to increase further in the coming years.
335. Through the Mini Sheltered Farming Scheme, which was introduced in 2019, backyard gardening is being promoted with a view to encouraging households to produce the vegetables they require hence be self-sufficient. Moreover, organic backyard gardening is being promoted and some 596 households were trained therein.
336. With regard to strategic crops like potato, tomato and onion, these are constantly consumed and require a regular supply. Since potato and onion are seasonal crops, the annual requirements are not fulfilled by local production and hence some 5,000 - 7,000 T of potato and 10,000 – 12,000 T of onion are imported annually to cater for off-season consumption.
337. Small amounts of some exotic vegetables are imported to supplement the requirement of the hospitality sector of which bell pepper has a large share of around 300 T annually.

338. Efforts in terms of introduction of new technology, new varieties, better control and management of pests and diseases, adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change are being pursued to maintain/increase production.
339. Melliferous crops are also being planted to encourage bees and border crops to curb the effects of heavy rains on soil erosion.
340. In line with the Government vision of sustainable agricultural production, several actions have been initiated to encourage the farming community to adopt sustainable farming practices to ensure long term environment stability and health benefits. Use of non-chemical soil enricher is also being encouraged. Biological control of pests and diseases are being promoted.
341. In this respect, several predators and bioagents are being produced and released island wide, bio-insecticides and bio-fungicides are being evaluated and recommended.
342. A small amount of production has started from organic and bio-agriculture. This method of production, which is being promoted since 2017, is expected to take up with the increasing interest of farmers and demand for healthier food.
343. To address the issue of food loss and food waste, postharvest treatment of fresh produce such as carrot, litchi, and butternut, amongst others, is being developed to improve their shelf life, marketability and reduce postharvest losses.
344. Support is also being given to agro-entrepreneurs in the development of value-added products from local fruits and vegetables such as gluten free breadfruit and cassava flour, ginger paste, turmeric paste, lime paste, guava fruit paste, dehydrated papaya and fruit paste sorbet. Necessary training to that effect is being provided.

Livestock Sector

345. Regarding the Livestock sector, Mauritius counts around 120 000 heads comprising of 4 000 cattle, 2 600 goats, 4 600 sheep, 70 000 deer, 20 897 pigs, and 1 400 rabbits owned by around 4 000 farmers.
346. We are self-sufficient in poultry and eggs (almost 100%) and are around 9% of our total requirement in meat and only 2.5% in milk. The country imports meat and milk to meet consumption levels.
347. Schemes being implemented in the Livestock sector are: the Heifer productivity whereby a sum of Rs 4,607,500 has been paid to 1843 breeders and the Milk productivity whereby 160 breeders have benefitted for a total amount of Rs 1,010,000.

348. Measures taken in this regard and incentives provided to achieve same are as follows:

- a) a new wholesale market is under construction at Wooton to ensure availability and accessibility;
- b) construction is in progress for a heifer farm and livestock zone in Melrose;
- c) seed and planting materials produced locally are being promoted. These include production of cucumber, squash, bean and onion seed under the Quality Declared Seed programme;
- d) new varieties of pulses, onion and potato which are more adapted locally were developed and introduced;
- e) 20 'Schemes for Modernisation & Innovation in the Food Crop and Livestock Sectors' were initiated by the Ministry and implemented by the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) to boost up local food production;
- f) processing of primary produce including products with locally produced milk is being promoted for value addition, increasing shelf life and reducing Post-harvest losses; and
- g) training courses in this regard have been conducted for 198 participants.

349. The amount of funds disbursed from 2017 to 2019 are the following:

- a) Sheltered Farming: Rs 41,768,432
- b) Purchase of agricultural equipment (Crop): Rs 9,346,256
- c) Purchase of agricultural equipment (Livestock): Rs 2,157,339
- d) Purchase and installation of CCTV: Rs 559,614
- e) Construction of Rain Water Harvesting: Rs 889,004
- f) Upgrading Livestock Farm: Rs 2,474,275
- g) Pasture Development: Rs 20,000
- h) Fruit Protection and Banana Bagging: Rs 6,387,324
- i) Seed Purchase Scheme (onion, garlic and potato): A sum of Rs 24,742,160 has been advanced to planters.
- j) Agricultural Calamity Solidarity Scheme Rs 11,741,250 paid to 2121 planters.
- k) Crop Loss Compensation Scheme: Rs 717,425 paid to 55 planters.
- l) Bio farming Support Scheme: Rs 455,560 to 35 planters
- m) Heifer productivity Rs 4,607,500 paid to 1843 breeders
- n) Milk productivity Rs 1,010,000 paid to 160 breeders

Table 42: Beneficiaries in respect of livestock

	Number of Beneficiaries	Total Amount disbursed (Rs)
Purchase of Agricultural Equipment (Livestock)	38	3,649,123
Upgrading of Livestock	28	5,182,225
Pasture Development	1	20,000

Source: Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

350. It is to be noted that most of these schemes are being revisited to ensure that they meet the new requirements of the farming community as indicated in the table below.

Table 43: Number of beneficiaries and amount disbursed from 2015 to May 2019

	Number of Beneficiaries	Total Amount paid (Rs) 2015 to May 2019
Sheltered Farming	291	54 335 715
Purchase of Agricultural Equipment (crop)	396	14 309 729
Purchase of Agricultural Equipment (Livestock)	48	3 649 123
CCTV	58	559 614
Rain Water Harvesting	52	1 869 225
Upgrading of Livestock	31	5 182 225
Pasture Development	6	20 000

Source: Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(a) Measures shall be taken to improve significantly delivery of safe drinking water.

351. A National Water Policy (NWP) was prepared by the Government of Mauritius in 2014. The NWP aims at providing a general framework for the water sector to achieve specific objectives such as: water resources development for social and economic benefit of the country on an equitable and sustainable basis; ensure 100% access to safe and reliable water supply; water allocation on the basis of national priorities; improve water supply services by applying modern management practices; protect, conserve and enhance water resources; and develop a legal and regulatory environment. The NWP also adopts an Integrated Water Resources Management approach, in line with national priorities and objectives.
352. The Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Plan, which adopts a holistic approach, was prepared for the period 2017-2022. It was developed in consultation with different stakeholders, whereby a number of priority areas have been identified and are being implemented. This IWRM Plan provides a roadmap for achieving the multi objectives of the water sector aiming towards the sustainable development of Mauritius.
353. 99% of the population already has access to piped potable water, which is treated to meet the norms of the World Health Organisation.
354. A Surveillance Committee at the level of the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities (MEPU) monitors the quality of water in reservoirs and feeder canals.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(b) A Master Plan for a more judicious use of water resources to cater for projected needs up to 2050 shall be finalized. The Plan shall review and update the legal and institutional aspects of the water sector, including water rights.

355. A Master Plan for Water Resources was finalized in October 2012. This document is essentially a road map for an integrated management of water resources in Mauritius up to the time horizons 2025 and 2050, respectively.

356. The main features of the Master Plan are as follows:

- a) Mauritius receives an annual rainfall of about 3,700 Mm³, out of which 1,980 Mm³ including water use for hydropower flows directly to the sea as surface run-off and ground water outflow and about 1,100 Mm³ is lost through evaporation. Only the balance of about 610 Mm³ representing 17% of the total rainfall is currently mobilized for water supply excluding hydropower, that is, 255 Mm³ for potable use and 355 Mm³ for irrigation;
- b) an additional volume of about 224 Mm³ should be mobilized to meet potable and irrigation water demand up to the horizon of 2050;
- c) the water demand on a per capita basis was 227 litres per day in 2010 and is 237 litres per day in 2018 due to higher standard of living; An action plan, based on a package of measures namely direct river water intakes, exploitation of new boreholes, enlargement of existing dams, construction of new dams and re-use of wastewater, was proposed to ensure water security up to the year 2050; the total investment to mobilize the additional raw water resources is estimated around 9, 938 Million MUR;
- d) furthermore, the MEPU is preparing a road map to enunciate the new paradigm, strategy and portfolio of projects in the water sector with a view to improving the provision of water for domestic purposes across the island during the dry season, over the period of 2021 to 2024. Immediate measures were put in place since 2020 to increase water production through tapping of water directly from rivers, exploitation of new boreholes and laying of new stretches of pipes to carry water from alternative sources to supply water to the stressed areas;
- e) containerized water filters were installed at different places across the island, namely at Mont Loisir Rouillard, Plaine Des Papayes, L'Unité, La Marie, Valetta Lake and Salazie to improve water supply in the respective regions;
- f) the MEPU is working with various stakeholders to consider rain water harvesting to be used for irrigation and cleaning purposes;
- g) an Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up under the Chair of the Minister of Land Transport and Light rail to review existing water rights and look into the issue of illegal construction along rivers, cleaning of rivers as well as relevant provision of the Rivers and Canals Act concerning construction works in the course of any river or streams; and
- h) a Technical Committee was also set up under the Chair of the MEPU to work out a Position Paper.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(c) A Water Resources Act shall be adopted.

357. A Water Bill is under preparation for a clearer definition of the roles of institutions and for an integrated water resource management. A Technical Committee at the level of the MEPU is working thereon.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(d) Water storage capacity shall be increased with the construction of two dams at Bagatelle and Rivière des Anguilles.

358. The overall setting of Mauritius water sector within the broader aspect relating to population growth, industrial & agricultural developments and other socio-economic characteristics, including the effect of climate change, were considered in the Master Plan Report to meet the current and future water demand.

Bagatelle dam

359. The construction of the Bagatelle dam was completed in June 2017 and consequently the total water storage capacity was increased by 14 Mm³ to reach approximately 104 Mm³.

360. The construction of Bagatelle Water Treatment Plant (WTP) with a treatment capacity of 60,000m³/day was ongoing. Operation and Maintenance of the Bagatelle WTP was completed in September 2020.

Rivière des Anguilles dam

361. The construction of the Rivière des Anguilles dam with an expected storage capacity of about 14 Mm³ aims at harnessing additional water resources to improve and meet the present and future water demands for both potable and irrigation purposes of the southern and south-western regions of Mauritius is expected to be completed in 2024.

362. A Consultant was appointed to prepare the design of Rivière des Anguilles dam and supervise the works.

Other Reservoirs and Dams

363. The La Ferme Dam, which was constructed in the year 1914 to store water for irrigation in the Western Coast, will be upgraded to increase its storage capacity to 14 Mm³. Consultancy Services for the Rehabilitation of La Ferme Dam will start shortly.

364. Similarly, a study for increasing the capacity of La Nicolière Reservoir is presently ongoing. This would significantly improve yield from the reservoir, from 66,000 m³ to 100,000 m³ daily. These measures would optimise the Midlands Dam/La Nicolière Reservoir System.

365. There is an ongoing annual programme for the drilling of new boreholes in order to harness additional groundwater resources.

Boreholes

366. Three to four boreholes are drilled yearly to identify new sources of water.

Water supply in Rodrigues

367. In 2018, Rodrigues pioneered an innovative project in the Indian Ocean with the construction of a solar desalination. The plant is producing 80 m³ of fresh drinking water for 2,400 inhabitants every day. At night, it uses a hybrid solar-grid powered source to produce 240 m³ of drinking water. This project was a collaboration between the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), the European Union, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and Rodrigues Regional Assembly. To counter water shortages between two periods of supply, the RRA provides grants and facilities to encourage households to have rainwater-harvesting system. It is also a requirement for new constructions to include such rainwater harvesting systems.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(e) The rehabilitation and upgrading of the water supply network (with the replacement of defective pipelines, the upgrading of dams and feeder canals, and the drilling of boreholes) shall be pursued to further reduce water losses and to alleviate hardship caused by water supply disruptions.

368. The CWA is proceeding with the renewal of 168 km of pipelines across the island and is committed to continue the renewal of pipeline process to reduce water losses. Furthermore, the CWA will increase its water storage capacity through the construction of 5 Service Reservoirs while using new technologies available on the market at the same time.

369. A provision of Rs 8.7 Billion was earmarked for CWA investment projects for financial year 2019-2020 including Pipelaying Programme, Upgrading of Water Treatment Plants and Construction of new service reservoirs.

370. The Pailles water treatment plant was also upgraded to operate at 80,000 m³ daily.

371. In addition, new Water Treatment Plants at Pont Lardier (GRSE), Mon Blanc, La Nicolière WTP, Rivière Du Poste WTP and Piton Du Milieu would also be constructed.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(f) Government will legislate to ensure that hotels are equipped with their own water desalination plants.

372. The sustainable management of water by the private sector is of great relief to the national water supply system. The hotel industry, both in Mauritius and Rodrigues, has taken the lead by investing in desalination plants and addressing potential water shortages. Many luxury hotels, have such plants, using the reverse osmosis water purification technology enabling them to be water independent and meet their daily water demands.

373. It is also mandatory for hotels with at least 50 rooms and located on the seaside to provide for a desalination plant. New hotels on beachfront either over an area of 5 arpents or with more than 50 rooms, should include a desalination plant. This is taken into consideration for the grant of the EIA licence by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (MESWMCC).

374. Hotels with more than 50 rooms, including Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS) projects, shall be equipped with a wastewater treatment plant, if public sewer is not available.

375. In accordance with the 5th schedule of the Environment Protection Act (as amended in 2008), the setting up of a desalination plant warrant on EIA licence. Guidelines for desalination have been developed. The Design sheet on Desalination Plant is effective as from 13 August 2012.

PRIORITY ACTION 50:

(g) Incentives for rainwater harvesting facilities shall be devised.

376. The Income Tax Act was amended through the Finance Act 2018 to allow an individual investing in a rainwater harvesting system for his house in an income year, a relief by way of deduction from his net income, of the amount invested in that income year.

377. Since 2016, Government has decided to exempt some 64,061 households, which consume up to 6 m³ of water from payment of water charges. Grants are also provided to low income families for the purchase of water tanks. Some 57,000 families were able to benefit of a water tank grant since this scheme came up. Moreover, grant for purchase of water pumps is also available.
378. 99.4% of the population had access to piped potable water (2011 Housing and Population Census Survey, Statistics Mauritius). Some 440 kms of old and defective pipes were replaced across the island since January 2015. Moreover, some 85,000 water meters have been replaced by the CWA.

PRIORITY ACTION 51:

The Government is committed to protect the right of every family to a house and to creating the necessary conditions for the setting up of decent social housing at a reasonable and affordable cost (which include adequate planning of living space, basic services and amenities, security and access to transport, shopping facilities and education). Government will ensure that Outline Planning Schemes provide for innovative policies to cater for social housing needs and make dedicated provision for land to that effect.

379. The Government provides various fiscal incentives to support families in their efforts to invest in constructing and acquiring their residences in the open market in the following ways:
- a) a Mauritian who acquires a newly built dwelling during the period 1st September 2016 to 30th June 2020 for an amount not exceeding Rs 6 million is eligible to full exemption from registration duty;
 - b) the Scheme would be extended for two years i.e. covering acquisition of a newly built dwelling up to 30th June 2022. Furthermore, the threshold value of a newly built dwelling would be raised from Rs 6 million to Rs 7 million;
 - c) with regard to exemptions from Land Transfer Tax to a promoter undertaking construction of housing projects for Mauritians, the Construction of Housing Estate Scheme would be extended as follows:
 - (i) the Scheme would run, from 1st July 2020 to 31st December 2020, for registration of projects comprising of at least 5 residential units with the MRA;
 - (ii) no registration duty and land transfer tax will be payable on the transfer of freehold bare land for the construction of housing estate project provided the land is transferred by 31st December 2020;

(iii) construction must be completed before 31st December 2021;

(iv) exemption of land transfer tax would be granted on the sale of a residential unit (including by way of 'Vente en Etat Future d'Achèvement - VEFA') provided it is made to a Mauritian before 30th June 2022; and

(v) the maximum price of Rs 6 million of a residential unit under the Scheme would be raised to Rs 7 million.

- d) a first time buyer would be allowed to buy bare residential land free from registration duty, on the first Rs 2.5 Million, provided the acreage does not exceed 20 perches;
- e) VAT reimbursement up to Rs 500,000 on the construction of any house or purchase of an apartment provided the upper limit for the cost is Rs 5.0 million and the household income threshold be Rs 3.5 million;
- f) no registration duty would be payable on a secured housing loan not exceeding Rs 2.5 million;
- g) a first time homeowner is allowed to deduct from his taxable income the interests paid on a secured housing loan that was contracted on or after 1st July 2006. As from the income year 2016-2017, the date restriction is removed.

380. Citizens can also benefit from the VAT Refund Scheme on the construction of their residence or the purchase of an apartment. The upper limit for the cost of construction of a residence or the purchase price of an apartment has been increased from Rs 4 million to Rs 5 million and the eligible household income threshold was increased from Rs 2 million to Rs 3.5 million.

381. The housing units are sold to beneficiaries of different income thresholds by the NHDC Ltd with varying subsidy from the Government as follows:

Table 44: Income eligibility criteria and subsidy level

Social Housing Schemes	Income eligibility criteria	Subsidy level
Scheme I: Implementing Body: NEF For NEF beneficiaries who are owners of land/or lessee of state land	(i) Less than Rs 6,200 per household per month (Eligible under SRM)	(i) Government contribution: 75 % (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 25 %
Scheme II: Implementing Body: NHDC Ltd 10 % of the NHDC integrated houses earmarked for NEF beneficiaries who are not land owners.	(ii) Less than Rs 6,200 per household per month (Eligible under SRM)	(i) Government contribution: 75 % (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 25 %
Scheme III: NHDC housing schemes (Implementing Body: NHDC Ltd) The NHDC housing scheme is for households not falling under Schemes I and II above	(iii) Less than Rs 10,000 per household per month (Not eligible under SRM)	(i) Government contribution: 2/3 (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 1/3
	(iv) Between Rs 10,001 to Rs 15,000 per household per month.	(i) Government contribution: 60% (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 40%
	(v) Between Rs 15,001 to Rs 20,000 per household per month.	(i) Government contribution: 30% (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 70%
	(vi) Between Rs 20,001 to Rs 25,000 per household per month.	(i) Government contribution: 25% (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 75%
	(vi) Between Rs 25,001 to Rs 30,000 per household per month.	(i) Government contribution: 15% (ii) Beneficiary's contribution: 85%

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning

382. The beneficiaries can settle the cost of the houses either by cash or through Government Sponsored Loans from financial institutions such as the Mauritius Housing Company Ltd (MHC Ltd) or from other lending institutions. The building site lease concerned an individual house on a plot of land belonging to the State. All beneficiaries are granted a long-term residential lease expiring on the 30 June 2060 on the plot of State land. Annual rentals for leases regarding sites built up with a housing unit are at a nominal rate based on the beneficiaries' income as shown in below:

Table 45: Household Income and Annual Rental for housing

Household Income	Annual Rental	Remarks
<Rs 7 500	Rs 1	-
Rs7501 – Rs 10 000	Rs 1000	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years
Rs10 001 – Rs 15 000	Rs 2000	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years
Rs15 001 – Rs 20 000	Rs 3000	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years
Rs 20 001 - Rs 25 000	Rs 3000	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years
Above Rs 25 000	Rs 6000	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years
Above Rs 50 000	As assessed by Valuation Department	50% increase for each subsequent period of 10 years

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning

383. For families earning less than Rs 9,520 monthly, rather than providing land, for the MSISSNS or the National Empowerment Foundation to construct houses thereon, the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning (MHLUP) would reserve 10% of the total number of housing units in all its new projects for the beneficiaries of the MSISSNS or the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF).

384. Criteria for the selection of sites for social housing projects consider closeness to existing infrastructure to lower construction costs, more specifically offsite infrastructure costs, and to schools to facilitate access to education for children of eligible vulnerable and low-income beneficiaries.

385. The housing programme also addresses the issue of community outreach and development by planning policies, which help strengthen the social and cultural integration via the provision of adequate space/plots of land for the implementation of appropriate social and recreational facilities within social housing development by relevant stakeholders.

386. Some 622 Arpents of land for social housing are being made under the agreement between Government and the Mauritius Sugar Producers Association. Up to now, some 473 out of the 622 Arpents were already acquired. Some sugar estates did not own land suitable for housing projects and hence, they proposed an extent of 97 Arpents for agricultural purposes. Acquisition of land and negotiations with the sugar estates are ongoing for regular release of the agreed sites.

387. As per the Social Integration and Empowerment Act 2016, Government has, since August 2016, adopted a new income threshold which is of a minimum of Rs 2,720 up to a maximum of Rs 9,520 per household, as follows:

Table 46: New income threshold per household

Household size	Amount
One adult	Rs 2720
One adult and 1 child	Rs 4080
One adult and 2 children	Rs 5440
One adult and 3 children	Rs 6800
Two adults	Rs 5440
Two adults and 1 child	Rs 6800
Two adults and 2 children	Rs 8160
Two adults and 3 children	Rs 9520
Three adults	Rs 8160
Three adults and 1 child	Rs 9520
Three adults and 2 children	Rs 9520
Three adults and 3 children	Rs 9520

Source: Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning

PRIORITY ACTION 52:

(a) In line with the Social Housing Development Program, housing units shall be built for low income families. The size of the existing Housing Units for the poor shall be increased taking into consideration the family size and affordability.

388. The housing units are sold to beneficiaries of different income thresholds by the NHDC with varying subsidy from the Government.

389. The eligibility criteria for the applicants to be allocated a housing unit are as follows: -

- a) not be owner of a house (including NHDC or ex-CHA house);
- b) not own a residential plot of land;
- c) not hold a residential plot of State Land by lease;
- d) not have been granted any Government sponsored loan by MHC Ltd;
- e) not have benefited from any Government grant for the casting of a roof slab; and
- f) not have received any financial assistance from Government for the purchase of construction materials.

390. Since the creation of the NHDC Ltd to end of year 2020, 14,945 families benefited an NHDC housing unit.

391. Since July 2015, the size of the housing unit has increased from the range 36m² - 39m² to 50 m² to accommodate at least two bedrooms.

PRIORITY ACTION 52:

(b) Serviced plots of land shall be made available to lower-middle income group for housing purposes, and grants shall be made to low income families under the Casting of Roof Slab Scheme to low income families to help them complete the construction of their housing unit. The scheme for concrete cum CIS houses, constructed on beneficiaries' own land, shall be expanded.

392. Many families want to build their houses or to improve them as time goes by in accordance with their needs and financial capacities. Many of these families already own a plot of land and are having difficulties to construct a concrete house. However, many among them, due to financial constraints, are unable to complete their construction. Thus, the Government would continue to provide grant schemes to these families for the casting of roof slab to complete their construction or for the purchase of building materials to start their construction thereby promoting self-help construction of their house.

393. As mentioned under Priority Action 14, the Government of Mauritius reviewed the scheme to align both grants (the roof slab grant and the purchase of building materials grant).

394. The Roof Slabs and Purchase of Building Materials Grant Schemes were extended in Budget 2019-2020 to households who have already benefitted from Corrugated Iron Sheet and Concrete cum Corrugated Iron Sheet housing units and to families living in EDC houses, which contain asbestos.

395. From the start of the scheme up to the end year 2020, some 60,026 households have benefitted from the roof slab grant and purchase of building materials scheme and some Rs 2.7 billion have been spent.

PRIORITY ACTION 52:

(c) Housing estates shall be rehabilitated with a view to ensuring that there is adequate sanitation, health-care services, schools, childcare centres and other social facilities. Resources shall be mobilized so that all NHDC housing estates have a functional syndic.

396. Rehabilitation projects as to waterproofing, water reticulation, wastewater disposal, repairs to cracks and structural remedial works are ongoing within the existing NHDC housing estates, with a view to improving the living environment of 6,247 families.

Since 2015 to end of year 2020, some Rs 520 million were spent.

Moreover, these families were encouraged to set up syndics for upgrade and maintenance of their common areas, and the Government contributes a monthly amount of Rs 200 per family in respect of 41 syndics.

Since 2014 to end of year 2020, an approximate amount of Rs 105 million has been spent by Government in respect of payment to syndics.

397. During the period of July 2018 - June 2019, the MESWMCC installed solar water heaters at 1143 NHDC houses across the island. Furthermore, as at 31 December 2020, an additional 566 solar water heaters were installed.

PRIORITY ACTION 52:

(d) The setting up of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts, as a new vehicle to mobilize financing for housing development (with one third of the cost met from CSR fund of companies), shall be encouraged. Special consideration will be given to fire victims with a view to providing appropriate accommodation immediately after their dwellings are destroyed.

398. The funding come from either Government Budget / Consolidated Fund or Loans being contracted. No action has been taken on the setting up of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts.

PRIORITY ACTION 52:

(e) Homeless and vulnerable families shall be provided with a decent housing unit, upon agreeing to a comprehensive social contract covering civic responsibilities, employability, education of children and family values. A shelter for the SDF ('Sans Domicile Fixe') shall be established.

399. In line with the Sustainable Development Goals regarding the right to housing for all, the MHLUP has in August 2015 embarked on a project to do away with the problem of residential squatters living on State Land. It was decided to regularize all the residential squatters. However, for an effective control and to avoid abuse of this measure, a cut-off date as at 01 July 2015 was adopted. As such, all squatters living over State land prior to that date were eligible for regularization.

400. Following an assessment of the suitability of the squatted sites for residential purposes, it was found that:

- a) some squatters would have to be relocated due to environmental and sanitary reasons along with all the squatters found over land earmarked for projects; and
- b) some squatters would have to be regularized in situ where the site is found suitable for residential development and the availability of existing infrastructure in the region.

401. The MHLUP proceeded for the regularisation of the squatters by adopting a phasing out approach on a priority-wise basis. Two major sites were earmarked for the relocation of the Squatters as follows:

- a) a site was identified at Pointe aux Sables to accommodate squatters to be relocated from Port Louis. A parceling of 201 lots was implemented. The necessary basic infrastructure such as roads, drains, water and electricity were already provided to 128 lots. 82 residential units were already built up to accommodate the squatters from Tranquebar found over the ring road site. The other squatters to be relocated were/would be granted a lease over a plot of land; and
- b) In view of upgrading the La Ferme Dam, some 160 squatters living near la Ferme Dam/Eau Bonne would be relocated on La Valette, Bambous. 223 housing units would be constructed with all necessary infrastructure.

402. As end of year 2020, a total of 1,152 squatters were detected. Out of the 1152, 823 are pre- July 2015 squatters and 329 post July 2015 squatters. Pre-July 2015 squatters are considered for regularization either through relocation or regularization in situ. The status of the 823 squatters is as follows:

- a) regularization in situ – 309;
- b) relocation – 186;
- c) vacated site – 21; and
- d) cases under consideration – 307.

403. The 493 squatters cannot be regularized in situ for the following reasons:

- a) the squatted land is found over slopes which are above 20;
- b) the squatted land falls on the proposed ring road alignment;
- c) the squatted land is found in vicinity of sewage treatment plant;
- d) the squatted land is within river reserves;
- e) encroachment on private properties; and
- f) dispute between ownership of building.

PRIORITY ACTION 53:

Families in ex-CHA housing estates who have not yet taken advantage of the facility afforded to them to purchase state land, on which their houses stand, shall be granted ownership of the land free of charge (Government waiving payment representing cost of the land).

404. Government's intervention in social housing in Mauritius dates back to 1955, with the construction of the first housing estates comprising 1,000 houses and the creation of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, responsible for matters relating to social housing management. Some years later, the Central Housing Authority (CHA) was set up for the construction of some 19,442 low cost houses. These houses and the land, on which they had been built, were leased to the tenants by the CHA.
405. In order to empower families to take full responsibility of their assets, the Government introduced the "Right to Buy" policy in 1989 for beneficiaries of CHA houses to become owner of their housing unit, against payment of around Rs 500-1000 per unit. As at date, almost all of the 19, 442 CHA beneficiaries have become owners of their housing unit.
406. The "Right to Buy" policy was extended in 2007 to enable the sale of State land on which stood the CHA houses, against payment of a nominal amount of Rs.2000 to the Government. Yet, in year 2012, it was found that a number of vulnerable families could not benefit from this policy due to financial difficulties. Such vulnerable lessees of ex-CHA Housing Estates are granted the land free of charge, through a waiving of the purchase price of Rs 2000, and registration fees. The Government also meet fees for the notary and for the survey of the plot of land.
407. The Government is also committed to accelerating the phasing out of existing EDC houses, which still contain asbestos. As such, the following facilities are offered to owners of EDC Houses by the Government who either wish to upgrade or reconstruct their respective housing units:
- a) assistance from the Solid Waste Management Division (SWMD) of the MESWMCC for the removal and carting away of asbestos wastes free of charge; and
 - b) purchase of Building Materials Grant Scheme or the Roof Slabs Grant Scheme were extended in Budget 2019-2020 to families living in Ex-CHA houses which contain asbestos.
408. Almost all of the 19,442 CHA beneficiaries have become owners of their housing unit, out of which 11,673 families have also acquired the plot of land on which stand their house. Some 1,861 cases were approved for financial assistance regarding the purchase price and registration fees, out of which 1,230 deeds were signed at the Notary level, with disbursement of an amount of Rs 2,976,000. A sum of Rs

200,000 was further earmarked in the Budget 2020/2021 for that specific financial assistance, for period July 2020 to June 2021.

409. Support to Homeless Persons has been provided by the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund and the NSIF for the extension of the services provided to persons with no fixed abode by the Non-Governmental Organisation, “*Association Pour Personnes En Larmes*” (APPEL), at Abattoir Road, Roche Bois.

PRIORITY ACTION 54:

- (a) **The highest attainable standard of health shall be achieved by greater availability and accessibility of health care facilities, goods and services of quality. Primary health care services shall be improved to meet the requirements and expectations of the population. A master plan aiming at upgrading and reinforcing primary health care services shall be implemented.**

410. In the Island of Mauritius, as at the end of 2020, the main public health institutions are as follows:

Table 47: Main Public Health Institutions

Public Health Institutions		Number
Hospitals	Chest Hospital	1
	Community Hospital	2
	District General Hospital	2
	Eye Hospital	1
	Principal Regional General Hospital	5
	Psychiatric Hospital	1
Centres	Area Health Centre	19
	Cardiac Centre	2
	Community Health Centre	114
	Day Care Centres for the Immuno-Suppressed	8
	Detoxication and Rehabilitation Centres for Youngsters	2
	Diabetes and Vascular Health Centre	1
	ENT (ear, nose and throat) Centre	1
	Methadone Substitution Therapy Centre	3
Clinics	Ayurvedic Clinic	6
	Chest Clinic	1
	Dental Mobile Clinic	3
	Dental Static Clinic	59
	Dialysis Clinic	7
	Family Planning Clinic	148
	Maternal and Child Health Clinic	145
	Mediclinic	6
	Smoking Cessation Clinic	17
	Vaccination Clinic (babies)	158
Other	Health Offices	13

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

411. Private health institutions comprise 18 Private Clinics/Hospitals with in-patient service, 354 Pharmaceutical retail outlets, 6 Dialysis Clinics including those in private clinics and 11 Sugar Estate Dispensaries.

412. These health institutions cover the whole island to facilitate access to health services to all patients indiscriminately.

413. In the Island of Rodrigues, at the end of 2020, there were:

- (b) 1 District General Hospital;
- (c) 2 Health Centres with in-patient facilities, 3 Area Health Centres, 14 Community Health Centres;
- (d) 14 Maternal and Child Health Clinics, 15 Vaccination Clinics (babies), 17 Family Planning Clinics, 1 Health Office, 3 Dental Static Clinics, 1 Dialysis Clinic, 1 Day Care Centre for the Immuno-Suppressed and 1 Smoking Cessation Clinic; and
- (e) 1 private pharmaceutical retail outlet.

414. Patients in need of tertiary health care are referred to Mauritius as and when required.

415. The services offered at the primary health care are General consultation, Maternal and Child Health, Immunization, Family Planning Services; Community based rehabilitation services, Non-communicable Disease (NCD) clinics, Nutritionist Clinics and Specialist clinics in psychiatric/ paediatric, gynaecology and obstetrics.

416. Currently, a number of hospital infrastructural works in Primary Health Care are being implemented namely:

- a) the construction of 6 new Area Health Centres at Henrietta, Cap Malheureux, New Grove, Plaine Magnien, Bambous and Curepipe;
- b) the construction of 7 new Community Health Centres at St Francois Xavier, Roche Bois, Grand Bay, Pointe aux Sables, Trou d'Eau Douce, Baie du Cap and Camp de Masque; and
- c) 6 new Mediclinics at Stanley, Coromandel, Bel Air, Quartier Militaire, Chemin Grenier and Grand Bois.

417. Various supervisory levels were appointed to oversee the work at the primary health care level, such as, Senior Community Physicians, NCD Coordinators, Senior Diabetic Specialised Nurse.

418. All Mediclinics and AHCs have extended hours of opening besides their normal working hours. During weekdays, they are open from 16.00 hours to 18.00 hours and on Saturdays and Sundays from 9.00 hours to 12.00 hours.

PRIORITY ACTION 54:

(b) Enhancement of quality health services and customer care in hospitals.

419. Given that, the quality of health services and customer care in hospitals can only be enhanced through investment in high-tech medical equipment and through training and capacity building. Government provided Rs 13.1 billion for the public health sector for the period of 2019-2020.

420. One of the priorities of the Government is to enhance the quality of patient-centred services and upgrade the public health infrastructure. Government is investing massively to expand and modernise public hospitals with the construction of Hospitals including new ENT Hospital, new Flacq Teaching Hospital, new Cancer Centre, new Eye Hospital, new Cardiac Centre, new National Health Laboratory Services Centre, new Renal Transplant Centre, New Sewerage Treat Centre, Day Care Wards for Autistic Children and a Centralised Health Care Waste Treatment Facility. In addition, Government is investing heavily in high-tech medical equipment as well as recruiting and training health personnel.

421. 55 diabetic specialised nurses, 18 Specialised Nurses Diabetic Foot Care and Diabetic Eye Screeners were trained and recruited to provide a more personalised care to diabetic patients.

422. The number of doctors working in the MHW increased from 1,000 at the end of 2012 to 1,568 in 2019. As regards qualified nurses and midwives, 3,958 were in post at the MHW at the end of 2019 compared to 3,051 in 2012. Overall, the Health Sector Personnel increased from 13,080 in 2012 to around 16,000 in 2019.

423. The daily available beds in Government Hospitals increased from 3,512 in 2012 to 3,768 in 2019.

424. For the period 2012 to 2019, 1 additional Cardiac Centre, 2 additional Mediclinics, 1 additional Dialysis Clinic and 4 additional Day Care Centre for the Immuno-suppressed became operational and 1 new Diabetes and Vascular Health Centre and 2 new Detoxication and Rehabilitation Centres for youngsters were set up.

PRIORITY ACTION 55:

Greater access to specialized services shall be made available. An Institute for Women's Health shall be set up to cater for the specific health and medical needs of women with state-of-the art technology and a National Paediatric Hospital established to treat, inter alia, complex congenital and acquired conditions which children suffer from.

Child Health

425. Mauritius has made significant progress in enhancing child health. Since 1990, infant mortality rate per thousand live births and under-five mortality rate declined by almost by 33%. Immunization coverage rate has reached nearly 97% through the Expanded Programme of Immunization.
426. Maternal Child Health (MCH) services, including antenatal care and postnatal care were strengthened through the inclusion of gynaecologist sessions in Area Health Centres for antenatal care with echography facilities.
427. For the Island of Mauritius, the number of live births registered increased from 12,056 in 2019 to 12,664 in 2020, bringing a slight increase in the crude birth rate from 9.9 to 10.3. For the Island of Rodrigues, the number of live births increased from 806 in 2019 to 911 in 2020, resulting in an increase in the crude birth rate from 18.6 to 19.4.
428. The number of infant deaths in the Island of Mauritius increased from 173 in 2019 to 184 in 2020, resulting in a rise in infant mortality rate from 14.3 to 14.7. During the same period, the number of infant deaths in the Island of Rodrigues increased from 14 to 16, with an infant mortality rate of 17.4 in 2019 against 17.7 in 2020.

National Paediatric Hospital

429. The need for a National Paediatric Hospital was no longer a priority as other measures to improve services in relation to paediatric have been implemented, namely:
- (a) setting up Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in all regional hospitals;
 - (b) increase in bed capacity in all hospitals; and
 - (c) setting up of a specialised paediatric cancer ward at Victoria Hospital.

Institute for Women's Health

430. The project to set up an "Institute for Women's Health" was put in abeyance because of other priority projects. A policy decision is yet to be taken on that issue. A Feasibility study for an "Institute for Women's Health" in the Republic of Mauritius is being finalized.

Selection of Consultancy for undertaking a feasibility study on the setting up of a Children's Hospital is in progress.

Geriatrics Hospital

431. The elderly population is growing and it stands at around 17% of the population. Presently, there are no specialized hospitals for Geriatrics. Elderly patients are at present being admitted in general wards. It is expected that by 2058 the percentage will increase up to 35%. Geriatric Services in specialized hospitals as well as the setting up of wards for the elderly in existing hospitals will need to be considered.

PRIORITY ACTION 56:

Measures for the prevention and control of communicable diseases, and for maintaining a healthy living environment, shall be strengthened. The National Day Care Centres for the Immuno-Suppressed will be further decentralized to other regional hospitals so as to make HIV care, testing and anti-retroviral treatment more accessible.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

432. In the National Action Plan (NAP) 2017-2021, the country's vision is to achieve "Zero new HIV infections. Zero AIDS-related deaths. Zero discrimination" while the mission is to provide high-quality HIV prevention, treatment and care services available and accessible to all Mauritians including the Key Populations - sex workers, transgender, men having sex with men, people who inject drugs who are most at risk of HIV infection.

433. The NAP 2017-2021 promotes the following: a comprehensive sexuality and gender transformative intervention to prevent new HIV infections through risky sexual behaviour, support services utilization, enhanced retention in care and adherence to antiretroviral therapy. The NAP makes provision for tailored interventions in hard to reach areas/hot spots for Key Affected Populations through community mobilisation, and collaboration of NGOs.

434. The elaboration and implementation of the various National Strategic Frameworks 2001- 2005, 2006-2011 and 2012 - 2016 were successful in maintaining the HIV prevalence under 1 %. The MHW has already initiated HIV testing through caravans moving across the island to reach a maximum number of persons.
435. Mauritius has adopted new measures in order to reach the UN 90-90-90 targets by 2020:
- a) early initiation of treatment as per a “test and treat” strategy” since August 2017; and
 - b) revision of the antiretroviral treatment protocol in 2018.
436. The eight Day Care Centres for the Immuno-suppressed (N/DCCI) located in regional health hospitals are currently providing services to People Living with HIV. Out of the 4,965 patients Living with HIV (PLHIV) registered in all day care centres, some 3,772 of them are benefiting from antiretroviral treatment (ARV).
437. Access to ARV is also available in prison institutions. All HIV and AIDS infected persons are provided with antiretroviral therapy facilities and have access to treatment, care and support as per guidelines.
438. Mauritius prisons do not have separate cells and dormitories for HIV prisoners. They share the same cell and dormitory and participate equally in any rehabilitation program in any prison. Detainees with HIV are not discriminated in prisons.
439. Moreover, the country is aiming towards elimination of Mother to child transmission of HIV. Consistent and correct condom use as primary and secondary prevention is being promoted among the Mauritian population in addition to targeted preventive measures, namely: HIV testing and counselling, universal access to antiretroviral treatment (Prevention of Mother-to-child Transmission, Post Exposure Prophylaxis, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), harm reduction measures, distribution of Information, Education and Communication materials for adoption of safe behaviours.
440. Male, female condoms and gels are available/accessible to all at the Family Planning Clinics, the eight service points of care for People Living with HIV and at the 46 needle exchange distribution sites for NEP clients and their partners. This service is also being provided during the sensitisation and awareness sessions on HIV and AIDS held by the health care personnel of the AIDS Unit. Therefore, female sex workers, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs and transgender can access condoms free of user costs. The sexually active youth and young people who are considered to be a vulnerable group can freely access condoms.

Table 48: Distribution of Condoms (2016 – 2018)

	Male condoms	Female condoms	Total number of condoms	Grand Total
Year 2016				
MOHW	870 525	10 133	880 658	
NGO	276 576	31 738	308 314	
				1 188 972
Year 2017				
MOHW	888 576	10 112	898 688	
NGO	264 892	8 072	272 964	
				1 171 652
Year 2018				
MOHW	815 382	13 863	829 245	
NGO	253 682	21 642	275 324	
				1 104 569

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

Needle Exchange Programme

441. The Needle Exchange Programme is a Government-led outreach programme, which involves distribution of syringes and needles to people who inject drugs in exchange of used ones. The aim of the programme is to prevent spread of blood borne diseases. These services are provided in mobile caravans and as at date 46 sites are operational throughout the island out of which 35 are covered by caravans of the MHW and 11 by the NGO Collectif Urgence Toxida.
442. Comprehensive package of services includes needles, syringes, alcohol swab, condoms, voluntary testing and referral, counselling and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) /Hepatitis C (HCV) testing.
443. For the year 2020, the total distribution of materials for the MHW and the NGO were as follows:
- a) Syringes: 687,402; and
 - b) Needles: 707,041
444. HCV and HIV incidence and prevalence decreasing constantly based on all published reports of Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance (IBBS) among People Who Inject Drugs (PWIDs).

Drugs

445. Opioid detoxification in residential setting is offered at the detoxification and rehabilitation centre in Mahebourg Hospital and 331 injecting drug users have already undergone detoxification with suboxone followed by naltrexone, which is a relapse prevention medication.
446. Rehabilitation wards for young drug addicts were set up whereby they are admitted as per their needs after having been under treatment in general hospitals. This program is run by a multidisciplinary team that ensures psychosocial services to the patients with the main objective to facilitate the rehabilitation process for the ultimate reintegration in the mainstream society.
447. Since September 2016, a Drug Addiction Unit has been set up in each regional hospital and is operational under the direct supervision of psychiatrists of the regions for treatment counselling and referral services.
448. In order to facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration of methadone beneficiaries in the mainstream society, a project with regard to methadone dispensing at primary health care settings has started since June 2018.
449. Since April 2016, the MHW is conducting extensive national sensitization campaigns on substance abuse. The objective is to create awareness among the population at large, and in particular, the youth, with a view to empower them with the right knowledge about ill effects of drugs.

Methadone Programme

450. Over 6,000 People Who Inject Drugs (PWIDS) were induced on methadone between 2006-2015 and the programme was reviewed and put on hold in July 2015. As at July 2015, some 8,400 injecting drug users were induced on methadone and around 5000 beneficiaries are on the maintenance programme and accessing their daily doses at 42 dispensing points throughout the country including in the Prisons.
451. In 2015, the number of Methadone dispensing sites was increased from 17 sites to 42 sites, bringing this service closer to users and last year, government has embarked on a pilot project to integrate Methadone dispensing within primary Health care settings. A dedicated centre set up in 2018 has greatly facilitated the induction of female injecting drug users onto Methadone.

Methadone in Prisons

452. Methadone treatment is provided to prison inmates particularly injecting drug users who were already induced on methadone in the community. Moreover, initiation on methadone was introduced in the prisons department since the year 2011, a first of its kind in the African region.

Treatment of Hepatitis C

453. Mauritius is at the doorstep of launching a nationwide treatment programme on Hepatitis C (HVC) to eliminate HCV by 2030 in line with the WHO recommendations.
454. Over the past 10 years. The Honourable Minister of Health and Wellness presided over the Conference of Hepatitis C, which provided vital recommendations from key international experts with a view to setting up an elimination programme in Mauritius. The National Committee on Viral Hepatitis was set up and significant progress was made to training of medical and paramedical staff, to the acquisition of required laboratory consumables and required infrastructure to start treating patients with HCV. Gilead Pharmaceuticals has also agreed to the unconditional donation of Sofosbuvir/ Ledipasvir for 4,500 patients to initiate the programme. The current project aims to treat approximately 5,000 patients over a period of 2 years with a view to eventually launching a nationwide screening programme and HCV elimination.

Cancer

455. A new comprehensive cancer centre is operational with state of art radiotherapy and laboratory diagnostic equipment.
456. The expertise of the International Atomic Energy Agency was requested for the new radiotherapy unit.
457. The Government is committed to provide new services to improve palliative care for cancer patients. A new national vaccination programme as a preventive measure against cervical cancer in women was introduced in 2017 across the country.

PRIORITY ACTION 57:

(a) The control of non-communicable diseases shall be enhanced in line with WHO Global Strategy for Prevention and Control of non-communicable diseases.

458. An Action Plan on Tobacco Control for the period 2015-2018 is being implemented. A National Plan of Action for Nutrition for the period 2016 to 2020 was elaborated and presently implementation of the measures is ongoing.
459. An Action Plan for the period of 2020-2024 aims, inter alia, at reducing the harmful use of alcohol by at least 10 percent by year 2025 and to address alcohol related harmful effects through awareness campaigns. One of the recommendations of the National Action Plan is to strengthen and enforce the Public Health (Prohibition on Advertisement, Sponsorship and Restriction on Sale and Consumption in Public Places of Alcoholic Drinks) Regulations 2008.

460. A new national vaccination programme as a preventive measure against cervical cancer in women that, was introduced across the country in August 2016, is ongoing.

461. Public Health Awareness campaigns on various health issues are ongoing throughout the year in collaboration with the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation and private radios.

462. The Last Non-Communication Diseases (NCD) survey was carried out in 2015 and it revealed several positive findings.

Table 49: Comparison for Mauritius NCD Survey 2009 and 2015

	2009	2015	Remarks
	Age (25-74 years)	Age (25-74 years)	
Diabetes	23.6%	22.8%	Stabilized
Pre-diabetes (IGT/IFG)	24.2%	19.4%	Decrease (4.8%)
High Blood Pressure	37.9%	28.0%	Decrease (9.9%)
Overweight	34.9%	35.2%	Stabilized
Smoking	21.7%	19.3%	Decrease (2.4%)
Physical Activity	16.5%	23.7%	More people are doing physical activity (7.2%)

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

463. Mauritius increased its spending on early disease detection programmes from Rs 2.80 million in 2014 to Rs 47.84 million in 2016. In 2016, around Rs 16.5 billion, that is around 66.5 per cent, was spent on NCDs, the largest share of health expenditure on diseases. Taxes on alcohol and tobacco have increased. A sugar tax was introduced since 2013 on the amount of sugar in soft drinks and banned soft drinks from school canteens. In 2017, intensive screening and sensitization programmes have reversed the trend in mortality due to NCDs, which we registered between 2011 and 2016.

464. Blood Glucose Strips was placed on the list of controlled commodities in June 2018 and has resulted in a decrease in price to Rs 114 for a box of 50 strips according to brands.
465. In 2017, 48 595 persons were screened through the NCD programme and persons found with abnormal results were referred to the nearest hospital, Area or Community Health Centre for follow up and further investigations. Additionally, through the School Health Programme for Secondary schools, some 179 schools were visited and 39,936 students were screened.

PRIORITY ACTION 57:

(b) A National Health Literacy Programme shall be devised. A National Food Safety Action Plan, focusing on enhanced food inspection activities, capacity building and review of legislative framework, public awareness campaigns and quality control shall be implemented.

466. The Food Act 1998 regulates, inter alia, the determination of fitness of food, its preparation, packaging, storing, conveyancing, distribution as well as sale. Food safety ranks high on our agenda and as such the need for closer food monitoring is being emphasized. In addition, water quality is monitored regularly to detect contamination. In the Budget Plan 2019-2020, provision was made to establish a Food Standards Agency to set standards on fast food and soft drinks and also for the certification of vegetarian and halal foods, among others, and same is under consideration.
467. Government introduced the Use of Pesticides Act in 2018 with the objective to regulate, control and monitor the importation and use of pesticides in or on certain fresh fruits, plants, seeds or vegetables with a view to, inter alia, minimising risks to human health and the environment. The Act provides for the setting up of a Pesticides Regulatory Office. Island wide sensitisation campaign on the sound and prudent use of pesticides in agriculture was also organised in 2018.
468. Government is working for the branding of Mauritian tea as a pesticide free product with unique health benefits.

PRIORITY ACTION 57:

(c) A National Service Framework for cardiovascular diseases and an Action Plan on harmful use of alcohol shall also be formulated and implemented:

469. In 2017, 647 surgical interventions were effected at the Cardiac Centre. Mauritius increased taxes on alcohol and tobacco in July 2016.

The Action Plan to reduce the harmful use of alcohol approved in July 2020, is being implemented through a Monitoring Committee chaired at the level of the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

PRIORITY ACTION 57:

(d) An Action Plan to mitigate cancer risks in the population shall be prepared and a National Cancer Centre set up.

470. Some 5,529 women were screened for breast and cervical cancer in 2017. The Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccination was introduced to protect girls against the four strands of HPV most associated with cervical cancer. Some 24,804 doses were administered to girls in 2017. Some 6,122 women were screened under the various programmes in 2018.

471. In 2018, 2,861 new cancer cases were registered, representing an increase of approximately 86 per cent from 2009 and cancer has decreased from 547 in 2016 to 534 in 2017.

Since May 2020, a new cancer centre is operational with state of art radiotherapy and laboratory diagnostic equipment.

PRIORITY ACTION 58:

The rights of mental patients shall be better protected. The Mental Health Care Act shall be reviewed. A mid-way home shall be set up for the rehabilitation of patients currently cared for at the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre.

472. The Mental Health Care Act, was amended in 2019 to provide for a new Mental Health Commission, which would be more focused on its investigative functions relating to complaints, breach of discipline and violation of human rights, amongst others. The Mental Health Commission would oversee patients

found to be unfit to stand trial by court and those who have committed a major offence (murder) and are suffering from mental illness at the moment they committed the act. Provision was also made, inter alia, for the setting up of a Managerial Committee to take over the administrative functions, which were effected previously by the Mental Health Commission.

473. The Act also makes provisions criminal offences such as failure to attend the Commission when required to do so or giving false or misleading evidence before the Commission.

474. In this new Act, a medical officer should have post qualification instead of 5 years' experience to be posted at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre. Community psychiatry services that, are carried out at Flacq and SSRN hospitals, would be extended to other hospitals. Psychiatric treatment was decentralised and is at present available in all health regions.

475. To better protect the rights of mental patients, specialised services in the field of Mental Health Care were thus decentralized and there is now a Psychiatric Unit at the Regional Hospital at Flacq to cater for the eastern part of the island. In the other Regional Hospitals, Liaison Psychiatry is being practiced. Mental Health Care is also being provided at Primary Health Care Centres by Psychiatrists and Community Physicians.

476. However, health problems such as Alzheimer disease and Dementia are increasing. A working paper is under preparation at the level of the Ministry of Health and Wellness.

PRIORITY ACTION 59:

(a) Government is committed to further developing access to education and training facilities, and further consolidate equity, quality and relevance at all levels of the education and training system. To align the educational sector with international best practices, Government has introduced the Nine Years Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE).

Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE)

477. The Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education commonly called the nine-year schooling project has been implemented in primary schools since 2017 and at secondary level as from January 2018. This programme is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). As part of the quality and equity drive, it makes provision for all students to successfully complete nine years of basic schooling with a view to achieving universal secondary education for all.

478. The NYCBE emphasizes the holistic development of the child. The aim of holistic education is to focus on the learner's intellectual, socio-economic, physical, creative and aesthetic potential and promote their development through a range of activities.

479. An array of subjects such as Art, Music, Road and Safety, Civics Information Technology, Physical Education and Sports; and Communication Skills are an integral part of the curriculum.

480. A modular approach to assessment along with school-based Assessment have been adopted to alleviate the stress on learners.

481. The main objectives of the NYCBE are to:

- a) equip all learners with knowledge, foundation skills and attitudes leading to their self-empowerment and holistic development;
- b) focus on the learners' intellectual, socio-emotional, physical, creative and aesthetic potentials and promote their development through a range of activities;
- c) provide equitable learning opportunities to all in order to attain high levels of achievement;
- d) inculcate in all learners a sense of moral responsibility, a set of values and a strong identity for the country; and
- e) give greater recognition to the value of TVET in building human capital for sustainable development.

Implementation of the NYCBE

482. With a view to implementing the Nine-Year-Schooling Project, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for basic education was redesigned to ensure continuity in learning over the nine years of basic education.

483. A new curriculum was introduced for Grade 7 to Grade 9, comprising a range of both academic and non-academic subjects that focus on the holistic development of the students.

484. The new curriculum also ensures gender parity by offering the same subjects to both boys and girls.

485. The Mauritius Institute of Education had equally proposed a new set of learning measures for students of the Extended Programme. These are aligned on the new teaching syllabi for the last three years of the basic education cycle. The programme is grounded on the underlying philosophy of an inclusive and

equitable education for all, so that these students pursue the same curriculum as other students for Grades 7 to 9 and take the new National Certificate of Education (NCE) at the end of the basic education cycle.

Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC)

486. The Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) was replaced by the PSAC as from the year 2017.

487. The PSAC assessment (first examination in October 2017) comprised a combination of external assessment conducted by the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and a school-based assessment (except for private candidates).

488. All pupils sitting for the PSAC Assessment are either promoted to Grade 7 or Grade 7 Extended Programme based on their achievement level.

489. After the PSAC results, a PSAC re-assessment is organised for pupils who have not attained the required level in only one subject which gives them the opportunity to improve and meet the required standard.

490. Those students who do not attain the required level at PSAC are admitted to the Extended Stream. They are, therefore, provided with additional support to cover the curriculum that is spread over an extended four-year period instead of three years.

491. At the end of the Grade 9, all students sit for a national assessment namely the National Certificate of Education (NCE). After successful completion of the Grade 9, students have three options:

- a) pursue their schooling in the same Regional Secondary Schools where they are already enrolled as from Grade 7;
- b) pursue their studies in Academies which run classes from Grade 10 to 13, if eligible; or
- c) follow technical and vocational studies in training centres run by the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD). A pathway exists for them to later access to polytechnics.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

492. With a view to making TVET a more attractive pathway to students after NYCBE, the TVET sector was reviewed with the objectives of improving the quality and relevance of technical and technology programmes and providing a more attractive pathway to students.

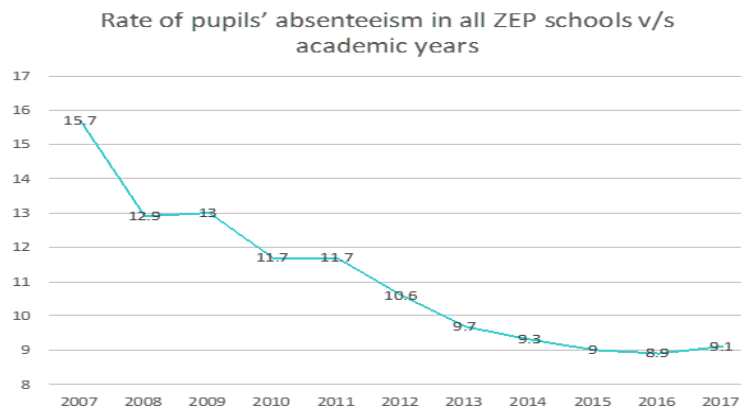
493. The curricula for 17 courses were reviewed, in consultation with experts in the field, in the current year to ensure greater relevance of training; the courses would be pitched at higher level National Certificate Level 4.

Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd

494. In the year 2017, the Polytechnics Mauritius Ltd was established with the objective of running training programmes to cope with the existing needs of Mauritius and the neighbouring region including Rodrigues for a qualified and skilled human capital at mid-professional level. In this respect, infrastructures of modern standards were built-in decentralised regions namely at Montagne Blanche, Pamplemousses and Réduit, to run a variety of technical education in collaboration with well-established and renowned international higher education institutions.

495. The ZEP project has been institutionalised for schools, which have had a pass rate of less than 40 % over the last five years at the CPE and PSAC. The project aims at improving the performance of those pupils who are generally socio-economically disadvantaged. Moreover, hot-free meals and enhanced meals are offered to pupils in ZEP schools.

Rate of absenteeism in regard to ZEP schools



Continuous Professional Development and Training of Teachers

496. The NYCBE Policy Paper “Inspiring Every Child” provides for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as one of the strategic pillars of the reform. Heads of Schools, Inspectors, Trainers, Quality Assurance Officers and Educators are being continuously provided with capacity building programmes. Other capacity building programmes were also organised for Heads of Schools and Educators on Drug Education and Sexual and Reproductive Health. Reinforcement of competencies and skills of teachers have been a priority during the past years. Moreover, newly appointed Educators, Senior Educators and Deputy Rectors were offered Induction Courses.

Academy for Teachers

497. The MOETEST will set up of an Academy that would provide career-long professional development opportunities for teachers and school leaders and instil a culture of lifelong learning and focusing on improving instructional practices to increase the performance level of all students. It will be responsive to the explicit needs of teachers and school leaders. (The Project is still at a conceptual stage).

PRIORITY ACTION 59:

(b) In line with internationally accepted best practices, Government will encourage the use of mother tongues to facilitate teaching and learning.

Use of Mother Tongue

498. With a view to promoting the use of mother tongue, the Kreol Morisien (KM) was introduced in Standard I (Grade 1) in 2012 as an optional subject. Bhojpuri was also integrated in the existing Hindi curriculum.

499. KM has been given due recognition in the education system. It is an examinable subject at all grades at Primary level and is assessed in the PSAC since 2017. KM is also offered as an optional subject at secondary level since 2018 for Grades 7 to 9 and was assessed in the NCE as from 2020.

500. Teachers were trained by the MOE so as to provide a professional pedagogical approach to the teaching/learning of KM.

501. As at January 2019, the KM staff reckons a total of 182 Primary School Educators and Secondary School Educators. As regards the use of KM as a medium of instruction is concerned, it has not been officially proclaimed yet. However, its use is encouraged to facilitate the teaching learning process as a support language.

Akademi Kreol Repiblik Moris (AKRM)

502. In May 2019, the Akademi Kreol Repiblik Moris (AKRM) was set up to look into the development and use of the Kreol language in the Republic of Mauritius. The AKRM have the following key objectives:

- a) develop further the orthography, grammar, lexicon, usage and norms of Kreol Repiblik Moris (KRM) as the national standard language of the Republic of Mauritius;
- b) develop and promote KRM as the key medium, component and expression of Mauritian heritage, culture and traditions in its unity and diversity;

- c) commission and publish linguistic studies and descriptions of KRM and its usage, its varieties and registers, its evolutionary norms and standards, while assuring its development as a living and dynamic medium;
- d) encourage literary, non-fiction and scientific writing and promote creative productions in audio-visual, electronic and other formats;
- e) promote quality and excellence in the study, description and creative use of KRM and reward talent and achievement in KRM; and
- f) advise the MOETEST on matters related to KRM.

PRIORITY ACTION 59:

(c) The Government is committed to sustaining the digital revolution in education. The teaching and learning process as well as school management will be digitally assisted.

503. Digital assistance enhances teaching and learning at the levels of primary schools. In 2014, Grades 1 to 3 were provided with pedagogical content prepared by MIE on DVDs. Grades 4 to 6 were equipped with Sankore interactive projectors and adapted content developed by MIE.

504. Each primary school has internet connectivity and an email address, which enables rapid and accurate exchange of information with schools.

505. In line with the NYCBE Reform, the Early Digital Learning Programme (EDLP) was also introduced in 2018, in the first instance, for Grade 1 and Grade 2 pupils. The main aim of the project is to align integration of ICT into teaching and learning.

506. The components of the reform programme with respect to digital learning are:

- a) improvement of ICT infrastructure;
- b) development of digital content (e-books);
- c) capacity building of the Educators (workshops to empower the Teaching Staff and Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster and Inspectors); and
- d) procurement of ICT devices.

507. Schools were equipped with tablets and projectors. Each Grade 3 pupil was given an e-book incorporated tablet that would be used as a teaching and learning tool. Grade 4 pupils have received their e-book incorporated tablets in year 2020. Moreover, the Classroom Management Software has been included in tablets given to Grade 4 pupils to enable teacher-pupil interaction and as a possibility for distance teaching and learning.

PRIORITY ACTION 59:

(d) The School Psychological Service will be reinforced and community participation encouraged for tackling effectively the issue of indiscipline and misbehaviour in schools.

Community participation and issue of indiscipline in schools

508. The MOETEST including its National Education Counselling Service work in close collaboration with the Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs, the Child Development Unit (CDU) and Probation and After Care Service in addressing problems of indiscipline. Such networking is being reinforced by exchange of information and new approaches for a synergistic *modus operandi*.

509. School Psychological Service was reinforced with the setting up of the National Educational Counselling Service and the recruitment of additional Educational Psychologists and Educational Social Workers. There are in all, 4 Senior Educational Psychologists, 18 Educational Psychologists and 18 Educational Social Workers providing services in the 4 zones.

PRIORITY ACTION 60:

To ensure that no single child is denied his/her opportunity for early self-development, Pre-Primary education will be made compulsory for the age group 3 to 5 as from January 2013. A quality Assurance Mechanism for Early Childhood Care and Education shall be developed. Government will introduce a support scheme to empower private pre-primary schools to improve the quality of care and education.

510. Pre-primary education is not free in Mauritius. To ease the financial burden on parents and ensure equitable access to education, Government provides subsidies to private pre-primary schools in the form of an allowance per capita (Rs 400 monthly per child). All children attending school from low income families are eligible to a monthly cash allowance (Rs 750/-) provided they meet the criterion of 90% school attendance. This allowance is paid to their families.

511. Since 2014-2015 and 2017-2018, the Government has provided a budgetary scheme known as one off Grant to 125 registered private pre- primary schools found or serving children coming from pockets of poverty. A budget of Rs 12,5 million and Rs 6,25 million in the years 2014-2015 and 2017-2018 respectively were allocated to ECCEA to purchase pedagogical materials and equipment to some 250 private pre- schools.
512. According to Statistics Mauritius, as at March 2020, there were 833 schools providing pre-primary education: 799 in the Island of Mauritius and 34 in Rodrigues. Out of these schools, 584 (70.1 %) were privately run institutions, 190 (22.8%) were administered by the ECCEA and the remaining 59 (7.1%) were run by either Roman Catholic or Hindu Education Authorities or Municipal/Village Councils.
513. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (number of students enrolled per 100 population aged 4 and 5 years) was 96.9 % with an average of 12 pupils per teacher at March 2020.
514. With a view to ensuring that quality pre-primary education is provided to all pre-school children in the Republic of Mauritius, the ECCEA in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education, University of Technology and the Open University of Mauritius were delivering courses in the field of Early Childhood Education. Both the Open University of Mauritius and the University of Technology were running such courses as Bachelor of Education and Bachelor of Science courses in Early Childhood for pre-primary teachers as well as Diploma in Educational Supervision and Inspection 2016-2017 (DESI – Pre-primary) for Assistant Coordinators (pre-primary school inspectors). At the end of each school term, in service courses are dispensed to pre-school teachers to ensuring that they are in tune with the latest trend in Early Childhood.
515. Under the current reform in education, the Primary School Readiness has been introduced as a profiling tool to produce detailed profile of each pupil to the primary school and this serves for a more adapted teaching and learning process during the pupils’ transition from the Pre-Primary to Primary Education.

PRIORITY ACTION 61:

- (a) The Special Needs Education Sector will be restructured in order to ensure that no child is deprived of education on account of any form of impairment or disability.**

Restructuring the Special Needs Education Sector

516. The Special Needs Education Sector is being restructured in order to ensure that no child is deprived of education on account of any form of impairment or disability.

517. Inclusion is the leitmotiv that runs across the education system of the Republic of Mauritius. The provision of equality of opportunities to all students explains the diversity of actions projects and programmes mounted to ensure that no child is deprived of Education on account of his/her disability. In fact, the MOETEST being fully conscious of the difficulties of pupils with disabilities usually face, has taken several measures to eliminate situations that may be discriminatory towards them while facilitating their access to education in the mainstream schools.

Measures for the inclusion and integration of children with Special Education Needs

518. As from the financial year 2016/2017, five scholarships are being offered annually to students with SEN to pursue Post-Secondary/Tertiary courses. These students also benefit from a stipend of Rs 5,000 monthly.

519. The MOESTEST has taken several measures for the inclusion and integration of children with SEN to ensuring that no child is deprived of education on account of any form of impairment or disability. The facilities are:

- a) a flexible approach is adopted towards parents who wish to call at school during the day to provide assistance to their physically disabled pupils. Parents are strongly encouraged to register their wards in the nearest primary schools;
- b) schools are being retrofitted with ramps to facilitate access to the classrooms and all new secondary schools constructed were provided with adapted toilets for the disabled. Links between building blocks have been made to facilitate access, using wheelchairs to the first floor where specialist rooms are located;
- c) facilities like music room, library, science laboratory, computer room are available on the ground floor where necessary. In primary schools, Head Masters usually make arrangements to move the whole class to the ground floor wherever necessary;
- d) students with disabilities are released earlier than the other students so that they do not face any movement difficulties;
- e) School Attendants usually help students on wheelchair to move around the school compound;
- f) Educators are encouraged to provide individual extra assistance to children with disabilities so as to allow them to keep pace with their classmates. Children with disabilities benefit from extra time for the CPE examination. Enlarged print school books/manuals and question papers are produced for children suffering from visual impairment;

- g) a Mauritian Sign Language was developed to ease communication for children with deafness. Children with hearing impairment are provided with the service of sign language interpreters for the purpose of examinations;
- h) Government primary schools across the island have integrated units so as to reach out those who have to travel long distance. There are at present 11 such Integrated Units and the majority of them are run in partnership with specialist NGOs;
- i) the MIE is providing courses to build capacity of Teachers/ Educators with the appropriate skills/knowledge to deal with children with disabilities;
- j) provision of a carer is made on a case to case basis to children with special needs requiring extra assistance;
- k) refund of bus fares to accompanying parents of disabled children attending schools / Special Needs Schools; and
- l) refund of taxi fares by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity to students with disabilities to university students with severe disabilities who cannot travel by ordinary means of transport. In 2018-2019, this facility has been extended to those students with special needs confined to wheelchair who are attending secondary schools as well as primary schools.

520. Through the François Sockalingum Award (Sponsorship Scheme), students with disabilities who pass the (PSAC) and pursue their secondary studies are eligible to a monthly stipend of Rs 750.

PRIORITY ACTION 61:

- (b) The SEN strategy document 2006 has been reviewed by International Experts in the field and a validation workshop was held in October 2017. The inputs received from the validation workshop are under study and the strategy document will be updated. Then after an action plan will be devised for implementing the recommendation of the new strategy document.**

521. A number of tasks as listed in the strategy goals of the Policy Framework and Strategy Document were already implemented to various extents, for example:

- a) the establishment of the Special Education Needs Authority (SENA);
- b) the promulgation of the SENA Regulations;
- c) the setting up of Norms and Standards for SEN Institutions;
- d) school infrastructures are being made barrier free in a phase wise manner; and
- e) the assessment and screening of learners with SEN (ongoing).

522. The Special Education Needs Resource and Development Centre (SENDRDC) operates as a One-Stop-Shop to provide specialised services, such as those of psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and parent mediators to learners with special needs. All SENDRDCs have at least two classrooms where the educational needs of learners with heavy impairments are catered for. Specialised equipment for use by Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists and equipment for Multi-Sensory rooms, as well as specialised furniture were procured for these Centres. 6 SENDRDCs are operational around the island and 7 vans are currently servicing the above-mentioned Centres for the conveyance of children attending the Centres.

523. The action plan for the SEN Policy Framework and Strategy Document is being redesigned.

PRIORITY ACTION 62:

Government will consolidate measures and actions to reduce the failure rate at the end of the primary cycle. Special pedagogical programmes will be introduced to enhance performance. To enhance the ability of students to exploit the opportunities of the 21st Century and acquire new global skills, the primary school curriculum will be enhanced by including new topics such as Civic Education, Health Literacy, Information Technology, and Sustainable Living. To promote collaborative learning practices Government will provide to each Standard IV child attending publicly-funded primary schools a rugged, power efficient children's laptop. Government will also introduce a Student Health and Wellness Program to promote Health Literacy, Basic Nutrition, Lifelong Fitness and sound development of learners across the education system.

524. For period July 2016 to January 2020, 222 Support Teachers were recruited, trained and posted in all primary schools to provide extra support to pupils who are slow learners.
525. The Mauritius Institute of Education has already reviewed the National Curriculum Framework for the primary and secondary sectors. New subjects were introduced at secondary level like Social Studies and Kreol Morisien (KM), Home Economics and Design and Technology are being taught to both boys and girls with a view to ensuring gender parity.
526. Ministries, departments, NGOs, NHRIs conduct regularly sensitization campaigns on drug abuse, HIV, Non-Communicable Diseases, Trafficking in Persons, child abuse, International Humanitarian Law and International Disaster Law among others for their holistic development.
527. As regards the measures taken to implement Priority Action 62, same are already mentioned at Priority Actions 59, 60 and 61.

PRIORITY ACTION 63:

- (a) **Government will introduce a quality assurance and inspections framework with a view to improving quality of teaching and student performance in both State and Private Secondary Schools. Government will review the legal and institutional framework for the management and operation of private secondary schools and has revisited the role and function of the Private Secondary Schools Authority (PSSA) which is now known Private School Education Authority (PSEA) and this, with a view to enhance support to private secondary schools.**

528. The Quality Assurance Framework was officially launched in May 2019 and awareness sessions were conducted with all Heads of Schools regarding its implementation. A first phase, the Self School Evaluation Exercise, was conducted. The External Evaluation Exercise is expected to be conducted during the first term of academic year 2021-22 to gauge the Quality of Education dispensed in our State Secondary Schools with respect to the five domains outlined in the framework.

PRIORITY ACTION 63:

- (b) **To inculcate an entrepreneurial culture in our youth, Government will, in consultation with all stakeholders, introduce new Entrepreneurship studies as part of the secondary school curriculum. Government will consider extending the Scholarship Scheme on a regional basis so as to provide more opportunities for students who excel at HSC level.**

529. In 2016, Entrepreneurship education was introduced at Grade 7 on a pilot basis in some 16 State and Private Secondary Schools. It was rolled out at lower secondary level in all secondary schools. As from 2016, the 15-hour course, which was run for Grade 12 students of pilot schools, is now being carried out in 92 schools.

530. The importance of the subject was further underlined at the level of Grade 9 National Assessment. The subject will be maintained at lower secondary level in the new NCF in the context of the NYCBE.

531. The Enterprise syllabus (4054) was also introduced at 'O' Level. It is being offered, as from 2016, at the level of Grade 10. The first cohort of students took part for School Certificate Examinations in 2017.

532. As from January 2013, 24 Additional Scholarships on the basis of Merit and Social Criteria are awarded under the New Government Scholarship Scheme i.e. to meritorious students coming from low income groups.
533. As from the financial year 2016/2017, five scholarships are being offered annually to students with SEN to pursue Post-Secondary/Tertiary courses. These students also benefit from a stipend of Rs 5,000 monthly.
534. A Regional Scholarships Scheme in the context of the NYCBE is also under consideration.

PRIORITY ACTION 64:

In order to improve access to upper secondary education, Government will establish new and innovative pathways for students who have successfully completed the O-level/School Certificate either in the academic or technical/vocational stream.

535. The NYCBE reform provides for two distinct pathways at the end of Grade 9. Students may opt for the traditional academic pathway to pursue their secondary education in Grades 10 and 11 towards SC/GCE O-Level and ultimately in Grade 12 and 13 towards HSC/GCE 'A' Level. Alternately, they may choose the Technical and Vocational Education and Training pathway.
536. A revalorised and attractive technical and technological stream is also being put in place for students opting for a technical and technological path, which also provides for progression to higher level TVET and higher education.
537. Moreover, Polytechnics provides students with an alternative Post Grade 9 of the NYCBE pathway and for an alternative post O-level pathway.
538. The HSC Professional Qualification was introduced in some 11 pilot schools since 2015. Travel and Tourism has gained popularity among our youth given that they envisage pursuing career in the Tourism Industry.

Secondary education

539. According to Statistics Mauritius, in 2020, the Gross Enrolment Ratio (number of students enrolled per 100 population aged 12 to 19 years) was 71.9 %. The pupil to teacher ratio was 12 to 1.

PRIORITY ACTION 65:

Government will introduce a Tertiary Education Bill which will provide a framework for the development and regulation of tertiary education in Mauritius. The Bill will also provide Tertiary Education Commission with enhanced tools to ensure Quality Assurance across the tertiary educational sector. Government will invest further in tertiary education through the physical expansion of existing institutions and the setting up of new university campuses in different parts of the Republic of Mauritius. A new culture of open and distance learning shall be promoted through the setting up of the Open University. Access to tertiary education shall be facilitated through the Framework for Recognition of Prior Learning and the Framework for Foundation Programmes. Government will also set up a comprehensive National Graduate Internship Scheme in order to support the transition of Graduates to the workplace. To further promote lifelong interest and learning in Science and Technology, Government will set up a planetarium at the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre.

Higher Education Act

540. The Higher Education Act was proclaimed in January 2020, following which the Higher Education Commission and the Quality Assurance Authority became operational. The Open University of Mauritius was set up in 2012 and is fully operational. There is no policy on Foundation Courses.

The setting up of the Planetarium project is still under consideration, 5 Arpents of state land at Réduit was acquired by the MHLUP, and vested in the MOETEST. Presently, an evaluation process is ongoing at the level of the RGSC for the appointment of consultants to carry out a soil test at the earmarked site on the advice of the Land Drainage Authority. Draft addendum to the MOU is currently being vetted by the Ministry of External Affairs, India.

Youth Employment Programme

541. The Youth Employment Programme (YEP) was developed to facilitate the transition of youth from education to employment and to provide them with the core skills required by different sectors of the economy. In this respect, the YEP was initiated by the MOFEPD in 2013. This programme was transferred to the MLHRDT in February 2015.

542. The main objectives of the YEP are:

- a) to enable unemployed youth to obtain training/placement for an initial period of one year, with the possibility of permanent employment thereafter on condition of satisfactory performance. If the unemployed youth has not been able to secure a job after one-year training under the YEP, he/she is allowed another year of placement under the same programme with

another employer. Therefore, the youth is eligible for a maximum 2 years' placement under the YEP;

- b) to ensure that appropriate training is provided to youth to promote the development of necessary skills in the labour force; and
- c) to assist employers in obtaining appropriate skilled manpower.

Back to Work Programme

543. In June 2015, the MLHRDT introduced the Back to Work (BTW) Programme for women above 35 years old who wish to join/ re-join the labour force, after having left their jobs for one reason or another.

544. The objectives of the BTW Programme are to:

- a) ensure that Mauritian women above 35 years of age can have employment in private enterprises or with individual employers;
- b) help women gain back their self-confidence and learn to integrate or re-integrate the labour market by undergoing a training programme designed to build or re-build self-awareness, self-esteem, social responsibility and entrepreneurial skills and to strengthen interpersonal and communication skills; and
- c) to arrange for the employment of unemployed Mauritian women in private enterprises or with individual employers.

Dual Training Programme

545. Implemented in 2015, the Dual Training Programme (DTP) is a mix of practical on-the-job training and classroom studies. It provides the opportunity for a direct match between demand and supply of companies' requirements and lessens the consequences of misdirected planning in terms of addressing labour mismatch.

546. DTP courses are selected and designed according to the specific needs of employers. Industry Associations and Training Institutions (Universities or other Tertiary Institutions) would together design and develop Diploma/Degree courses to be offered on a dual basis, which would satisfy the accreditation criteria of the Tertiary Education Commission. DTP is carried out in both industry and training institutions according to the "Alternance" concept, that is, 3 days at the university and 2/3 days at work.

547. The Human Resource Development Council (HRDC) contributes to 50% of the training costs up to maximum of Rs 50,000 per year per trainee during the period of the DTP and the remaining 50% is met

by the employer. In addition, the HRDC also refunds a monthly stipend of Rs 6,000 per trainee to the employer for a maximum period of 3 years.

548. As at 29 February 2020, 46 companies have participated in this programme and 264 trainees have been placed including 114 males and 150 females.

Service to Mauritius Programme

549. The Government has also put in place the Service to Mauritius (STM) Programme. Applications are invited from University graduates, postgraduates and PhD holders from outside of the public service and below the age of 45 years, (including candidates with disabilities) who wish to be enlisted as Intern under this programme for a period of one year, which may be renewed for two additional years, subject to satisfactory performance. The objective of the programme is to – a) attract the best and brightest young minds to spend some time in the Public Service; b) enable young people to contribute their knowledge; c) attract resources for a well- defined task to deal with shortage of skills; d) provide an opportunity to graduates to get work experience.

PRIORITY ACTION 66:

The National Institute for Civic Education (NICE) shall run programmes to inculcate in young people a sense of common purpose, patriotism, civic responsibility and common national identity.

550. The programme is no longer sustained. Nevertheless, Values and Citizenship Education are carried out in Grades 1 to 6 in primary schools to empower the pupils with attitudes and skills. Moreover, in Lower Secondary classes (Grades 7-9), aspects of Values and Citizenship Education are covered in the Life Skills as well as Social and Modern Studies classes.

PRIORITY ACTION 67:

(a) Government will provide a wider and enhanced spectrum of cultural products and services to the public, including the holding of an international film festival.

551. The first edition of the Mauritius Cinema Week was held from 05 to 08 October 2017. The objectives of the Mauritius Cinema Week were, inter alia, to promote the film industry and the Film Rebate Scheme

to International film producers and celebrities from the global cinema industry. The Cinema Week also positioned Mauritius as an attractive film production location to boost the tourism industry.

552. A second edition was held from 18 – 20 October 2018, in the context of the celebration of the 50 years of Independence of Mauritius. The event was graced by the presence of 20 high-profile guests from Bollywood, Hollywood, Tollywood, France, the United Kingdom and South Africa. It received wide coverage from the international press and was a unique opportunity to further develop the film industry as a pillar of the Mauritian economy.

553. International exposure is given to Mauritian artists through financing their participation in events of worldwide repute under the ‘International Development Grant Scheme’. Cultural entrepreneurs and artists have been empowered through the different forms of assistance and incentives, thereby promoting the cultural industry to ensure sustainable development. The Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage (MACH) ensures respect for cultural diversity by promoting cultural pluralism through cultural exchanges with foreign countries.

554. Mauritius has established Cultural Exchange Programmes with friendly countries, such as India, Egypt, Seychelles and China whereby it provides for exchanges of artists, groups of artists, exchange of documentation as well as exchange of professionals in various artistic and cultural fields.

International Film Festivals have taken place with the collaboration of various Embassies and High Commissions based in Mauritius, namely, Egyptian, European, Indian, Australian and Chinese ones.

PRIORITY ACTION 67:

(b) A White Paper on Arts and Culture shall be prepared.

555. A White Paper on Creative Mauritius – Vision 2025 was published in September 2014.

PRIORITY ACTION 67:

(c) A ‘Conseil National de la Culture’ will be established for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.

556. No ‘Conseil National de la Culture’ has been established.

557. However, different Cultural Centres were created by way of legislation, namely the Mauritius Marathi Cultural Centre, Mauritius Telugu Cultural Centre, Mauritius Tamil Cultural Centre, Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture and the Islamic Cultural Centre, amongst others, to carry out activities, which promote intercultural dialogue.

558. The MACH, through its cultural centres and speaking unions, was promoting, protecting and preserving the diversity of languages and cultures as well as enhancing unity in diversity and international understanding, and recognising the importance for the peoples of the world to communicate in their own language.

559. It continuously promotes national cultures, artistic creation in all its forms and international and regional cultural cooperation, and acknowledges the importance of strengthening national efforts and regional and international cooperation mechanisms for cultural action and artistic creation. The MACH in all its actions recognizes respect for cultural pluralism, policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens that guarantee social cohesion and the vitality of civil society and peace, enhance cultural development and contribute to sustainable development.

PRIORITY ACTION 68:

(a) The right of access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage shall be strengthened.

560. Access to many cultural heritage sites is free to the public such as Aapravasi Ghat, Le Morne Cultural Landscape and National Museums, among others.

561. Each year in the context of International Day for Monuments and Sites, open days are organised to give the public the opportunity to discover and enjoy our cultural heritage sites that are not usually accessible such as Government House, State House, Chateau Riche en Eau among others.

562. In the Budget for the year 2018-2019, the Government of Mauritius allocated a budget of Rs5,3 million for the rehabilitation and restoration of national heritage namely for Indentured Labourers Barracks at Trianon and Batterie de L'Harmonie at Black River. Measures are also being taken to provide facilities to the disabled to enjoy our national heritage.

563. An Intercontinental Slavery Museum was set up in Port Louis. The Museum gives visibility to slavery and the slave trade in the Indian Ocean, promote slave history, and emphasise the contribution of the African Diaspora in the world development.

564. 'Sega Tipik' was inscribed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2014.
565. Bhojpuri Folk Songs of Mauritius – 'Geet Gawai' was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2016.
566. 'Sega Tambour' of Rodrigues was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 07 December 2017.
567. The Sega Tambour Chagos was inscribed in 2019 on the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

PRIORITY ACTION 68:

(b) A Genealogy Institute shall be set up.

568. No Genealogy Institute has been set up. However, issues on genealogy are being catered for as follows:
- a) data on genealogy is made available free of charge to Mauritians to enable them to reconstruct their family tree. The Research Unit of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture (NMCAC) is providing a Genealogy Service free of charge. The staff of the Centre assists Mauritians of African origin to trace out their genealogy. Moreover, the information is available online on the website of the Centre to facilitate researchers and the general public. This service is continually being provided by the NMCAC.
 - b) the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) Indian Immigration Archives contain information for around 454,000 Indian Indentured Immigrants who came to Mauritius, from 1842 to 1910 and include registers of arrival, emigration, and marriage certificates as well as a collection of immigrants' photographs. The MGI caters for requests from public members in search of their roots by issuing information sheet containing late Indian Immigrant bio-data free of charge to them. The MGI Indian Immigration Archives receives an average of 30 requests on a daily basis. More than 90% of the 454,000 Indian Immigration records have been already computerised.
 - c) the National Archives Department also makes available information on genealogy to members of public and researchers. Officers of the National Archives Department advise and orient researchers in their research undertakings and assist them in creating their genealogical tree. Records pertaining to French period and early British period are accessible to the public for

genealogical research. It is to be noted that for any service rendered to the public, prescribed fees are applicable in accordance with the National Archives Regulations. Members of the public are required to pay a nominal fee of Rs 30 for inspection and consultation of documents.

PRIORITY ACTION 68:

- (c) A Virtual Museum on Arts and Culture shall also be set up to highlight our rich cultural diversity, including a component on Heritage as well as another on the peopling of Mauritius.**

569. A concept paper on the Virtual Museum Project was prepared by the Mauritius Museums Council and the assistance of experts from India sought for the finalization thereof.

PRIORITY ACTION 68:

- (d) The aims and objectives of the National Heritage Fund shall be reviewed and enlarged for better management, preservation and protection of our National Heritage.**

570. The draft National Heritage Fund Bill is under consideration at the level of the MACH.

PRIORITY ACTION 68:

(e) Records of the National Archives will be restored and digitalised to make them accessible online to the public.

571. The Electronic Archiving System (EAS) is one of the web-based portals, which was developed in June 2013 to manage and preserve archival records of the National Archives Department. The portal and server are hosted at the Government Online Centre in Ebène and is accessible to users, both local and international via internet. Users have to register and once their account was activated, they can have access to the database of online records. Around 530,000 images were digitized and uploaded on the EAS. The EAS provides the following:

- a) provision of online access to an ever-increasing number of the holdings of the National Archives to a national and international audience through access via internet;
- b) the preservation of the original records by reducing wear and tear on the originals;
- c) provision of access to those materials that can no longer be accessed in their original format;
- d) improvement of services to customers by responding to their evolving expectations; and
- e) promotion of online access to Government information to the public.

572. The Electronic Archiving System started since July 2009. It comprises the digitisation of some 530,000 pages of records from the National Archives Department holdings. The records were scanned, indexed and uploaded. The project was completed in March 2013 and the system went live in June 2013.

573. Phases Two and Three of the project concern the digitisation of records (1.5 million pages) of Indentured Immigration, covering the period 1834 to 1930, housed at the National Archives Department. It would be implemented in the financial year 2021-2022 and funds to the tune of Rs 9,7 million have been made available under Item E-Government Projects-digitisation of archives.

574. The project would be completed over a period of two years. It would include the following:

- a) migration of data from old to new Document Management System (DMS); and
- b) scanning of records following specifications made in tender document, including any alterations to a digital copy to overcome problems in the original document (e.g. colour fading or water damage). The existing software and database would be migrated on a new one (DMS)

with new functionalities and features, with a higher capacity for the storage of the scanned images would be completed by September 2019.

PRIORITY ACTION 69:

- (a) Government shall further promote the effective development of Mauritian creators and performers and shall better protect their moral and material interests. A new Copyright Act shall be adopted, in line with International Conventions such as the WIPO Copyright Treaty and the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty.**

575. The Copyright Act of 1997 was reviewed and replaced by the Copyright Act 2014. This Act is presently being reviewed to, inter alia:

- a) make provisions regarding phonograms;
- b) increase the length of the duration of copyright;
- c) make better provisions in relation to the payment of equitable remuneration;
- d) replace the Mauritius Rights Management Society by the Mauritius Society of Authors and provide for the composition of its Board and for its functions; and
- e) provide for the procedure regarding membership of the Mauritius Society of Authors.

Management of Related Rights

576. The Introduction of Management of Related Rights is also under consideration. The prodigious development of modern means of communication has made it practically impossible for an author to exercise his rights individually.

577. It is therefore indisputable that an efficient organisation of authors - a Collective Copyright Administration Society - is the most appropriate means of protection of the rights of authors.

578. The Collective Copyright Administration Society is also the link between the authors and the users of intellectual reactions. This collective administration of copyright not only serves the interests of the authors but also accommodates the users' concern to avoid in a simple and practical manner any possible infringement of copyright in their activities.

PRIORITY ACTION 69:

(b) A National Art Gallery shall be set up.

579. A National Art Gallery, founded in 2001, was set up under the aegis of the MACH.

PRIORITY ACTION 69:

(c) To provide school children with the opportunity to develop their musical talents, Government will provide all schools with a range of musical instruments. A National Symphonic Orchestra shall be set up.

580. A National Symphonic Orchestra has not yet been set up.

581. However, the MACH, through the Centres de Formation Artistique (CFA), provides short term training courses to children and adults, amongst others, in the following disciplines: Guitar, Violin, Tabla, Sculpture, Painting, Glass painting, Pyrography, Indian Classical Dance, Modern Dance, Yoga.

582. The objectives of the training courses, which are provided free of charge, are as follows:

- a) identification of new artistic talents;
- b) provision of appropriate “*encadrement*” to artists; and
- c) capacity building in the artistic field.

PRIORITY ACTION 69:

(d) An Artist Welfare Fund shall be established to encourage artists in their quest to live by their talents. An “Agora des Artistes” shall be set up comprising space for the practice of all artistic expressions, including a recording studio and exhibition facilities.

583. The Artist Welfare Fund and the ‘Agora des Artistes’ have been set up.

584. The MACH also has two theatre halls (Serge Constantin and Pointe Canon) which are put at the disposal of the artist community at a reduced rate with a view to promoting arts and culture and encouraging the Mauritian public to attend cultural events.

585. The MACH is working on the drafting of the Artist Bill. In this respect, UNESCO is providing technical assistance to Mauritius for the preparation of the Bill. The draft Bill aims to cater for their professional status, improving their economic and social working conditions - including through preferential treatment measures - and recognizing their role in the sustainable development of the island.

PRIORITY ACTION 69:

(e) Additional Centres de Formation Artistique shall be created.

586. There are currently 5 Centres de Formation Artistique, namely:

- a) CFA Paillotte;
- b) CFA Plaine des Papayes;
- c) CFA Pointe Canon, Mahebourg;
- d) CFA Goodlands; and
- e) CFA Bel Air.

587. The MACH, through the CFA, provides short term training courses to children and adults, amongst others, in the following disciplines: Guitar, Violin, Tabla, Sculpture, Painting, Glass painting, Pyrography, Indian Classical Dance, Modern Dance, Yoga.

OBJECTIVE V

Strengthening Women's Rights in the context of Gender Equal Opportunities

PRIORITY ACTION 70:

Policies aimed at the promotion of the full and equal participation of women in decision-making in all areas of public, political and professional life shall be pursued. Government shall take the necessary measures to ensure the effective implementation of the Gender National Policy Framework. The policy aimed at boosting women entrepreneurship through innovative SME schemes shall be sustained. Women and girls shall be encouraged to enrol in technical and vocational training courses. A Research and Documentation Centre on Women Affairs shall be set up.

588. The enactment and reviews of legislations have been pivotal in the promotion of gender equality.

589. The Local Government Act 2011, stipulates that at least 1 out of 3 candidates to be fielded for elections at local/Municipal level should be of the opposite sex. With this gender-neutral legislation, there was a significant leap in the number of women participating in Municipal and Village Council elections.

590. The country has its first ever female President who held office from June 2015 to March 2018.

Updated women participation (Senior Chief Executives, Judges, Ambassadors and Permanent Secretary) as at 27 July 2020

Table 50: List of women's participation at Senior Level

Position	Quantity	Percentage (%)
Members of the National Assembly	14 out of 70	20
Puisne Judge	16 out of 23	70
Judge in Bankruptcy	1 out of 2	50
Ambassador	5 out of 21*	24
Clerk of National Assembly	1	100
Clerk Rodrigues Regional Assembly	1	100
Senior Chief Executive	2 out of 5	40
Permanent Secretary	16 out of 35	46

*career/contract

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

591. The provision of gender-neutral approach under the Local Government Act 2011 led to quadrupling of women's representation in local government elections but they are still under represented.

592. The following observations were made in respect of women representation:

- a) the gender-neutral quota, to be applied across the board should be raised from 30% to 50%;
- b) barriers for women in business in Mauritius include: low level of education; lack of information; lack of gender capacity building in the private sector; and
- c) too few women on Board both in private and public sector.

593. The Equal Opportunities Act 2008 had been proclaimed with effect from 01 January 2012. The EOC and the Equal Opportunities Tribunal were set up to address cases of discrimination made on the basis of race, religion, status and sex amongst others so as to ensuring greater equality in term of access to opportunities and life chances to all citizens. This Act coupled with the setting up of the Commission and the Tribunal contributes to address the issues of Gender Equality and discrimination against women.

594. The Employment Rights (Amendment) Act 2015 makes provisions for the following:

- a) the duration of maternity leave has been increased from 12 to 14 weeks with a view to better support working mothers to fulfil their family obligations;
- b) the number of weeks of maternity leave to be taken immediately following the confinement has been increased from at least 6 weeks to at least 7 weeks; and
- c) the maternity leave in case of still birth has been increased from 12 weeks to 14 weeks.

Implementation of the National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF)

595. During the period 2016/2017, an amount of Rs 200,000 was allocated to 5 Ministries on a pilot basis, namely:

- a) Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation;
- b) Ministry of Health and Quality of Life;
- c) Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research;
- d) Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management;
and
- e) Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

to implement specific programmes and projects geared towards gender equality and women's empowerment.

596. The National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming is composed of representatives of Ministries/Departments and was set up to closely monitor the Gender Cells and evaluate the overall implementation of the National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF) with regard to progress made towards the formulation of their sector-specific gender policies.

National Gender Policy (2019-2029)

597. In light of the Government's Vision 2030, the MGEFW spearheaded the process for the preparation of a new National Gender Policy (2019-2029) aimed at integrating to the greatest extent possible, principles of participation, accountability and transparency in the development of a national policy framework.

598. The UNDP provided financial assistance to the tune of USD 10, 000 for this exercise. The services of an International Consultant and Gender Expert was retained for the assignment. A draft policy is ready and is in the phase of finalization.

599. In addition, the European Union provided technical support for the formulation of a National Costed Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming for the Public Sector and setting up of four (4) Gender Technical Working Groups for the Private Sector, Media, Academia and Civil Society's Organisation. Consultations have been held regarding the formulation of the National Costed Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming as well as the setting up of four (4) Gender Technical Working Groups. The National Costed Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming and the setting up of the four technical working groups are in the process of finalisation.

600. Furthermore, technical guidance/ assistance to the tune of Rs 200, 000 is being provided to Ministries to enable them to identify gender gaps; propose short/medium/long term remedial actions; and implement concrete actions within their respective sectors.

Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative

601. Measures taken during the period of July 2018 to June 2019 are:

- a) training of 250 government officials to deal with gender issues:
- b) 56 Officers of the Human Resource Cadre were trained by the Civil Service College with the technical assistance of the UNDP Office;
- c) a training programme on "Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Responsive Budgeting" for Officers from the Finance Cadre of all Ministries in April 2019; and
- d) additional 135 officers, namely, Permanent Secretaries, Gender Focal Points (firm and alternate) and officers of the Ministries were also trained.

Gender Equality Bill

602. The drafting of the Gender Equality Bill is in process.

Awareness Campaigns

603. From September 2012 to December 2016, the MGEFW in collaboration with the National Women Council carried out sensitisation campaigns targeting 1,186 women regarding the Equal Opportunities Act 2008 and Local Government Act 2011.

604. The MGEFW has sustained its capacity building programme and awareness campaigns on the pertinence of having more women at different levels of decision-making instances. For instance, a Dialogue on “Promoting Women’s Participation in Politics” was held in June 2018 as a joint venture with the US Embassy. The objectives were mainly geared towards a) encouraging collective intelligence and participatory democracy, b) including effective ways to promote greater democratic participation of civil society through greater inclusion of women; and c) promote fruitful dialogue between elected officials and other political figures and female constituents, and how to extend that dialogue into areas such as leveraging increased female constituent feedback on legislative proposals and implementation of policies.

605. Moreover, the National Women’s Council conducted awareness sessions from October 2012 to December 2018 whereby 5,756 women/girls were politically empowered.

High Level Capacity Building Programmes for Gender Focal Points

606. A High Standard Capacity Building for Members of Gender Cells (Organised in response to one of the priorities of the Decent Work Country Programme 2012-2014 was held in July 2015. The objective, thereof, was to provide participants with knowledge and skills to plan, develop, mainstream and implement gender responsive policies and programmes within their sectors. It also provided them with knowledge to move from policy to strategy and action from a gender perspective. The capacity building programme was facilitated by Mrs Chigaga, ILO Gender Specialist.

607. Capacity Building Programme on Gender Mainstreaming was held during the month of April 2018. The capacity building programme comprised two components namely:

- a) an awareness raising session for Gender Focal Points to empower them on the basic gender concepts as well as identifying possible entry points in mainstreaming gender within their respective gender policies; and
- b) a Training of Trainers programme for Senior Officials of all Ministries. The objective of which was to build the capacity of one Senior Officer of each Ministry, including one from

the address the issue of providing Resource Person from the MGEFW to attend the several requests made to intervene at the level of their Ministries.

Empowerment Programmes - Women

608. In line with the set targets of SDG 5 that speaks of “Achieving Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls”, the Gender Unit implemented two specific projects for girls’ empowerment. The first one is about the “Goal Programme” which is a joint venture with the Standard Chartered Bank. The second one is entitled the “3E’s project: Empowerment through Education and Entertainment”. These projects are reaching out to girls from deprived regions aimed at ensuring that the latter are not left out of mainstream development. Officers of the MGEFW act as facilitators to empower girls on thematic ranging from Sexual and Reproductive Health, Values, Leadership to Substance Abuse and Money Savvy. These two projects have so far empowered about 600 girls.
609. With a view to promoting the economic as well as social empowerment of women and to achieving gender equality, the Home Economics Unit organised a wide range of capacity building programmes in a network of more than 125 venues spread over the whole island.
610. Range of courses were increased from 9 courses in the year 2012 to 23 courses in the year 2019. Training Programmes are of 3 to 8 months’ duration.
611. These programmes were extended to working persons (both men & women) in order to enable men also to participate actively in the various activities at household level. Around 450 persons were reached in the last 4 years out of which 20% were males.
612. Additionally, 4582 women have benefited from agricultural training activities.
613. Enterprise Development Programmes were organised over the island in order to encourage development of income generating activities among women as well as to alleviate poverty. This was coupled with the organisation of mini fairs where our trainees (female entrepreneurs) could market their products and earn income. 8,202 women benefited from Enterprise Development Programmes and around 100 mini fairs were organised.
614. The Plaine des Papayes Production Centre was awarded a ‘Special Mention’ for its creativity and innovation in connection with the Public Service Excellence Award 2013. Each year more than 100 women are trained at this centre and around 40% start an income generating activity.
615. In a bid to sensitise the young children and youth on healthy lifestyle, care of the environment, budgeting, basic housekeeping skills, ‘Creativity & Leisure activities’ as well as ‘Life skills Development Programmes for Youth’ were organised over the island. 5,303 and 3,157 persons respectively were reached out of which 53% were female.

616. Additionally, various workshops were held on issues dealing with the role of women in achieving Food Security & Sustainable Development. A recipe booklet on local foods was produced and widely disseminated as well as posted on the website of the MGEFW.

Gender Empowerment Programme

617. In December 2018 and January 2019, 44 Technical Officers (37 female and 07 male) of the MGEFW were trained to:

- a) uplift the counselling skills of officers vis-à-vis the victims/clients reporting at the level of Head Office;
- b) promote the ‘sharing of knowledge’ among officers; and
- c) create a pool of trainers/resource persons in the subject matter and Revamp the agenda of those activities falling under the aegis of the National Children’s Council (NCC).

618. In addition, Information, Education and Communication Campaign on issues related to women’s empowerment and gender equality were organised for the youth, students, men and women, including elderly. During the period January 2015 till December 2020, some 75,000 persons were sensitised.

619. As regards awareness campaigns on Child Abuse and Child Protection Services, 20 and 19 persons were sensitised in 2018 and 2019, respectively.

Road Safety

620. For the period March 2018 to June 2018, some 1,763 women/girls/students were reached through sensitization campaigns carried out in Schools. Colleges, Women’s Associations amongst others.

Micro-Egg Production Project

621. The beneficiaries were also enrolled for a training programme on “start your own enterprise” to inculcate a culture of entrepreneurship and how to become successful entrepreneurs. The training programme, which was carried out in November 2018.

National Women Entrepreneur Council (NWECC)

622. From July 2017 to June 2018, Business Development Officers have conducted 31 sensitization campaigns across the island to enable 2,133 women get access to information regarding facilities offered to start and develop their enterprises.

623. Moreover, during the same period, 16 training courses in the fields of Leadership, Go-Export, Customer Care, E-Marketing, Adult Literacy for Entrepreneurship Development, Branding, Packaging and Creativity and Innovation have been carried out and 372 women entrepreneurs have benefited from the training courses.

624. Additionally, the NWEC in collaboration with various stakeholders organized 3 “*Atelier de l’Entrepreneuriat Féminin*”, targeting 353 women, with a view to maximizing awareness campaigns for potential entrepreneurs and eventually increase the number of women owned businesses.

625. As at June 2018, the NWEC has 5,687 members.

National Code of Corporate Governance

626. The National Code of Corporate Governance for Mauritius was launched in 2017. The Code lays down the main principles of governance, which encompasses the concept of gender balance and equality under ‘Director Appointment Procedure’, Board structure, Board Diversity whereby it calls for all organisations to ensure appointment of directors from both genders as members of the Board, that is, at least one male and one female director.

627. The Code also provides for Reporting Responsibilities, disclosure and the importance of gender balance on Boards.

Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act

628. The Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act has also been amended to ensure gender representation on Board, i.e. on every Board, there should be at least one woman as member of the Board.

Women’s empowerment

629. The following programmes in respect of women’s empowerment were carried out:

- a) two Awareness Programmes on the theme “Women Economic Empowerment through financial inclusion” were held on 24 April 2019 in Melrose and on 12 June 2019 in Bambous respectively. Some 1,000 women participated in both events. The participants were also sensitised on the different financial products and services available with a view to encouraging them to save and invest in financial products as well as to secure financing for entrepreneurship initiatives under the different grant schemes available for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) at the Development Bank of Mauritius;
- b) a two-day Capacity Building Programme on Gender Mainstreaming for 30 Senior Officers of the MGEFW was held on 17 and 24 May 2019 respectively; and

- c) three half-day Awareness Raising sessions on the Gender concept for the benefit of 150 staff members in different grades of the MGEFW and institutions falling under its purview were held on 29 and 30 May 2019.

630. The Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance (MFSGG) in collaboration with the Financial Services Institute has set up a training programme for Board Readiness. The programme caters for the training of existing and potential directors for the state owned entities and the private sector, including start-ups and, it also acts as a pool of new directors to connect board-ready candidates with Board-service roles.

PRIORITY ACTION 71:

A National Action Plan to End Gender-based violence shall be formulated. Sensitization campaigns on gender-based violence shall be scaled up. A Victim Empowerment and Abuser Rehabilitation Policy shall be formulated. A Domestic Violence Information System (DOVIS) shall be set up. Women victims of domestic violence shall be provided with alternative safe-living-settings. Greater support shall be afforded to local NGOs who offer legal aid and shelter to women and girls who are victims of domestic violence.

Victim Empowerment and Abuser Rehabilitation Policy

631. The Victim Empowerment and Abuser Rehabilitation Policy (VEARP) was set up in 2013 as a workplace initiative in both public and private sectors to address the scourge of gender-based violence (GBV), particularly domestic violence. The initial purpose was to enhance the knowledge of the Human Resource cadre of both sectors on GBV so that basic assistance could be provided to victims working thereat whenever required.
632. Through the awareness sessions, employers and employees are made aware of the basic assistance offered to victims of domestic violence so that they are empowered to report cases of domestic violence. Employers and employees are also informed on services available for the rehabilitation of perpetrators such as counselling sessions with Psychologist amongst others.
633. In the past years, several awareness sessions on VEARP have been conducted in both the private and public sectors. In 2019, the collaboration of all Ministries were sought to conduct onsite awareness raising sessions on VEARP. Thus, from 2019-2020, some 830 employees of the public sector were reached.
634. In line with the actions required under the Costed National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence 2012-2015, from January to November 2015:

- a) 177 participants comprising of representatives of different Ministries / Departments were reached out during Capacity Building Programmes organised to address the problem of Gender- Based Violence; and
- b) 87 members of the religious organisations and Officers were reached during Capacity Building Programmes organised under the Shared Faith Belief Programme.

A National Strategy and Action Plan on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence (GBV) was launched on 25 November 2020 on the occasion of the International Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women.

635. The Government Programme 2015-2019 provided for the setting up of a National Coalition against Domestic Violence Committee under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office. The Committee in collaboration with the MGEFW and the MSISSNS has to ensure that victims of domestic violence are given immediate shelter in a Government institution and provided with a job and a house within a reasonable time frame to lead a normal life anew.
636. The Prime Minister's Office launched the Report of the National Coalition against Domestic Violence Committee on 06 April 2016. The Report provides for a series of recommendations to enable Government to re-enforce its measures to effectively address the issue of domestic violence in Mauritius. These comprise amongst others, the setting up of a Command Centre, the review of relevant legislation and training of officers involved in the fight against domestic violence.
637. Actions have already been initiated by all stakeholders to implement the recommendations.
638. The Protection of Domestic Violence Act was enhanced in 2016 by widening the definition of the term 'domestic violence'. Domestic Violence include inter-alia, the wilful infliction or attempted infliction of injury, intimidation, forcible engagement in an act from which the spouse had a right to refrain. Moreover, withholding of resources has also been captured in the definition.
639. The Domestic Violence Perpetrators' Rehabilitation Programme was launched in 2018 as it is crucial to work with perpetrators in specific programmes to enable them to end the cycle of violence. From 03 to 04 December 2020, a refresher course on the Perpetrator's Rehabilitation Programme was conducted with the assistance of UNDP. It is proposed to implement the programme after amendment of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act.

Domestic Violence Information System (DOVIS)

640. Domestic Violence Information System (DOVIS), a computerized system for the registration of reported cases of domestic violence is used as a case management tool since November 2016 to monitor, record and generate specific reports on such cases dealt at the Family Support Bureaux.

Statistics on cases of domestic violence for the year 2020:

- a) number of cases reported at Family Support Bureaux: **2,425 (309 males and 2116 females)**
- b) number of applications of Protection Orders: **494 (spouse: 364; other than spouse: 130)**
- c) number of Protection Orders issued: **299 (spouse: 184; other than spouse: 45)**

641. Statistics on Domestic Violence reported at the Head Office of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare are as follows:

Table 51: Statistics on Domestic Violence

Year	Male	Female	Total
2015	242	2039	2281
2016	275	2434	2709
2017	297	1972	2269
2018	288	1778	2066
2019	289	1933	2222
2020	309	2116	2425

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

642. An Integrated Support Centre was launched on 08 March 2019 by the Hon. Prime Minister to ensure prompt intervention in cases of domestic violence. Through the, hotline 139 for domestic violence is now being attended to through four parallel digital phone lines. Moreover, the system is connected to the DOVIS, which is an informative platform for monitoring cases of domestic violence as well as a repository for all data pertaining to cases of domestic violence.

643. Information, Education and Communication Campaigns are conducted on a monthly basis by officers of the 6 Family Support Bureaux to sensitise the public at large on issues pertaining to gender-based violence and the welfare of families. For the year 2018, 189 sensitisation campaigns were conducted and some 9403 people were sensitised on issues pertaining to “Gender Based Violence” and “Family Welfare”.

644. For the period January 2019 to February 2019, 15 sensitisation campaigns were conducted and some 592 people were reached.
645. An Economic Empowerment Programme for survivors of domestic violence is being implemented since February 2018 to help survivors establish the financial stability and independence they need to move forward.
646. Training was conducted for 12 survivors of domestic violence in pastry from April 2018 to June 2018.
647. Moreover, 6 survivors of domestic violence followed a leadership course conducted by the National Women Entrepreneur Council.
648. Furthermore, to assist survivors of domestic violence for them to establish financial autonomy, 25 companies, including private firms under the aegis of Manufacturing Sector Workers Welfare Fund (MSWWF), Hotels, Recruiting Agencies and other stakeholders, were contacted. Out of which, 12 companies informed that they would consider employing survivors subject to them fulfilling their criteria. Moreover, in January 2019, a list of 32 victims was sent to Natec Company for possible consideration for recruitment.
649. A Training Programme for 70 victims was conducted during the period of May – July 2019 in collaboration with MITD.
650. On 08 December 2020, the “*Accompagnement des Familles*” programme was launched at Panchavati, Rivière du Rempart with the aim of enhancing family values, improve ethics and equipping individuals with the appropriate tools to improve communication and human relationships.

Inter Faith Forum

651. Victims and survivors of domestic violence very often turn to religious leaders for spiritual guidance and support. Religious Leaders play an essential role in the response to and elimination of domestic violence, as they carry the responsibility to protect and nurture the spiritual wellbeing of the community as a whole and its individual members.
652. In this respect, this Ministry is collaborating with Religious Bodies for positive social change through the Interfaith Forum.

Economic Empowerment Programme

653. The objective of the Programme is to help survivors of domestic violence to establish the financial stability and independence they need for their empowerment. In November 2020, Rs 1 million has been obtained from UNDP for the implementation of the said programme.

Sensitisation Campaigns on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)

654. The National Children's Council conducts IEC campaigns in Primary and Secondary Schools island wide. Campaigns are centred on the following topics amongst others:

- (a) Gender Based Violence;
- (b) Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC);
- (c) Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); and
- (d) Teenage Pregnancy.

655. The Council also carries out the National Parental Empowerment Programme also known as '*Atelier Partage Parents*' (APP). The above-mentioned themes also form part of the APP Programme.

656. For the period January to August 2018, 1,811 persons were sensitised on child trafficking in primary and secondary schools, social welfare and community centres.

657. 18 other related additional campaigns targeting 705 persons were conducted.

Girl victims of violence

658. An Alternative Care Unit (ACU) was set up to provide sustained continuum of care, service provision and avoiding the issue of overcrowding of Centres catering for children victims of abuse/violence. The Unit's aims at designing and implementing policies and programmes that gear towards rehabilitating children in places of safety and providing them with a substitute family, through the Foster Care Programme and assisting those with mild behavioural problems through Child Mentoring Programme.

Shelters

659. Children's victims of violence are accommodated in 3 Government-owned shelters and 14 Residential Care Institutions (RCI's) managed by NGO's. Some 515 children were placed thereat as at end March 2019.

660. L'Oasis Residential Care at Grand River North West is operational since May 2016 and caters for victims of sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children including Child Trafficking. The setting up of the above Centre is in line with the recommendations made by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child with a view to strengthening policies and programmes for the prevention, recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration of children victims of CSEC. As at February 2019, 30 children victims of sexual abuse were rehabilitated at the centre, which is managed by the National Children Council.

661. Additionally, various services are provided at the centre which comprise the following:

- a) first hand counselling;
- b) psychological counselling by the MGEFW's psychologist;
- c) indoor and outdoor sports, leisure and recreational activities;
- d) follow-up by Brigade pour La Protection des Mineurs ;
- e) information Education Communication Campaigns on issues related to children; and
- f) creativity Classes; Embroidery, painting and flower-making;

662. In order to ensure the successful implementation of the National Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan, Government has set up the following Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms:

- a) the High Level Committee under the chair of the Hon. Prime Minister to monitor and evaluate the progress made on the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan on a half yearly basis;
- b) a National Steering Committee on GBV chaired by the Hon Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare meet on a quarterly basis.
- c) four Technical Working Groups to ensure the implementation of the activities falling under each of the following sub strategies:
 - (i) change societal norms and beliefs that are against principles of gender equality and equity;
 - (ii) priority support services for survivors while holding perpetrators accountable;
 - (iii) identify and redress discriminatory practices that perpetuate gender based violence; and
 - (iv) coordinated Monitoring and Evaluation.

663. Each Technical Working Group meets on a monthly basis and reports to the National Steering Committee.

PRIORITY ACTION 72:

The law shall be amended so that it is expressly stated that rape includes marital rape.

664. There is no specific law on marital rape. However, the Protection against Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) was amended in June 2016 to with a view to widening the definition of domestic violence so that it includes sexual violence. The definition of domestic violence reads as "...compelling the other person, by force or threat, to engage in any conduct or act, sexual or otherwise, from which the spouse or the other person has the right to abstain" of the PDVA.
665. Rape as an offence is criminalised and prosecuted under section 249 of the Mauritian Penal Code. Sodomy is an offence under section 250(1) of the Criminal Code.
666. Article 242 of the Criminal Code has not been amended yet to remove from the Code that "Manslaughter committed by any person on his spouse, as well as on his accomplice, at the very moment he finds them in the act of adultery is excusable". No cases have been registered where Article 242 has been applied.

PRIORITY ACTION 73:

Government shall prepare a White Paper on Reproductive Health to facilitate the formulation of modern policies that provide women with better information and services in this area.

667. The Sexual and Reproductive Action Plan 2009-2015 has been implemented. Subsequently, the Sexual and Reproductive Health Action Plan 2018-2021 was developed and is also being implemented.
668. New concepts have been identified namely:
- a) preconception care: optimising the woman's health and preparing her for a forthcoming pregnancy;
 - b) coordination and continuity of care: improving safety, clinical outcomes and as well as a better experience for the pregnant woman;
 - c) Maternal Child Health Hand book: promoting communication between health providers about patients is fundamental to continuity of care;
 - d) Maternal Services Data: collecting data related to the activity of the maternity services; and

- e) creation of a SRH/MNCH unit: ensuring development and updating of guidelines, monitoring of quality of care according to set standards and evaluating of the different programmes.

669. There is no White Paper on Reproductive Health. However, a National Roadmap Framework to improve maternal, neonatal and child health 2020-2025 has been formulated and is being implemented.

OBJECTIVE VI

Strengthening Rights of the Youth

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

- (a) Government will pursue policies aimed at youth empowerment with a view to enhancing their effective participation in the development process as agents for innovation and change in society.**

670. In 2016, Government reviewed the National Youth Policy, which aims at strengthening effective youth participation in the developmental process. It focusses on the following Five Strategic Policy areas:

671. The programmes implemented in 2018-2019 include Youth leadership training courses, Life Skills Education programme, Mini-sheltered Farming, Adolescent Reproductive Health Programme, Volunteering and civic service, Youth Parliament and Sensitisation programme on substance abuse, suicide, Human Rights, gender-based violence, HIV& AIDS and other youth-related issues. The actions targeted 20,000 youth from all walks of life- including students and out of school youth. The collaboration of Youth clubs, Colleges and Non-Governmental Organisations was also solicited.

672. Job Fairs and Salon des Jeunes entrepreneurs were held in 2018-2019 targeting around 2,000 youth to give young entrepreneurs a platform.

673. Three months intensive training has been organized in 2018-2019 targeting 300 youth aged 18-35 years to develop their entrepreneurial skills. This culminated with the preparation of business plans and setting up of enterprises.

674. 3 editions of the Carrefour des Jeunes have organized for some 150 young people to improve the overall wellbeing of young people. This residential program includes interactive activities like Theatre, arts, music and sports lead by a team of dedicated resources persons. The aim is to enable young people to share their feelings on issue affecting them and be equipped to address contemporary life challenges.

675. In 2018-2019 ‘Animations sportive’ were organized in 28 youth centres targeting around 20,000 youth from all walks of life. The activities included sports activities, literary competitions, music and dance, camping, chasse au tresors, hiking, mountaineering, cycling, play station competition, beach games and others. In addition, activities like Inter-Quartier, Pedaler en Securite, Street Dance Battle and Zenes Montrer to Talents targeted around 5,400 youth.

676. A National Sport and Physical Activity Policy was formulated and launched in October 2018 with a view to addressing the challenges of the sport and physical activity landscape of the Republic of Mauritius over the next ten years (2018–2028). 20 transformative actions were identified for all citizens of Mauritius under the following three themes:

- a) foster a culture of community sports and physical activity;

- b) create an amateur to elite sport environment; and
- c) develop a vibrant and growing economy.

677. 'Active Mauritius' strategy has been launched since 2019 and is being implemented by the Mauritius Sports Council.

678. The Liverpool Football Academy Mauritius was launched on 23 August 2019 and is actually operating at the Côte D'Or National Sports Complex.

679. The Economic Development Board Sports Commission was set up in 2019 to enable Mauritius to position itself as a regional sports hub.

680. The High Performance Centre was inaugurated in May 2019 and is located at the Côte D'Or National Sports Complex.

681. The existing legal framework is being reviewed in line with the recommendations of the NSAPAP.

682. The implementation of Coaching Mauritius and Facilities Mauritius are in progress.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(b) Youth Centres operate with the support and input from civil society, faith-based organisations, the private sector and other stakeholders.

683. 26 Youth Centres are operational around Mauritius. They are open 6 days per week from 9.00 am to 8.00 pm. They are fully staffed and equipped with facilities, including free Wi-Fi access, to enable youth to practice sports, literary and recreational activities.

684. 4 Residential Youth Training centres are also operational at Pointe Jerome, Anse la Raie, Flic en Flac and Belle Mare.

685. Youth centres work in close collaboration with various stakeholders namely among others, NGOs, Private Firms and organisations, Sports Federations and Clubs, Regional Youth Councils.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(c) The services provided by Youth Centres shall encompass: (i) Information and training on youth entrepreneurship and employment.

686. Training on Youth Entrepreneurship for young people aged 18 to 35 is continuously implemented under the aegis of Conference of Youth and Sport Ministers (CONFEJES). It comprises 3 months of intensive training course on various components of entrepreneurship whereby participants are exposed and enlightened on all aspects and stages in the process of setting up and sustaining a business enterprise. The course culminates with the participants writing up a Business Plan of their project. The best projects receive financial support from both CONFEJES and the MYESR;

687. Young Entrepreneurs Fairs are organised to give a boost to youth led enterprises.

688. Job Fairs are also organised. 3 Job Fairs were held in 2017 with the participation of 2,700 youth.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(c) The services provided by Youth Centres shall encompass: (ii) Training in functional literacy and self- development.

689. Inter-college literary activities comprising Elocution Contests, Quiz competitions, Des Chiffres et des Lettres, Power point competitions and Hand Writing Competitions are provided at Youth Centres.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(c) The services provided by Youth Centres shall encompass: (iii) Youth-friendly health services and more holistic health strategies; and

690. The following services are currently provided by Youth Centres:

- a) youth sexual and reproductive health promotion programmes;

- b) sensitisation campaigns on current health issues such as HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections, Non-Communicable Diseases (like Diabetes, Hypertension and Cardio-vascular diseases); and
- c) emphasis on healthy life style and access to health services as a basic human right.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(c) The services provided by Youth Centres shall encompass: (iv) Recreational programmes, including dance, music and sports activities.

691. The recreational programmes being offered in Youth Centres are as follows:

- a) Animations sportives in Youth Centres (Yoga, Zumba, Taichi, Karate, Judo and fitness classes);
- b) National and International Youth Day celebrations;
- c) Special Vacances;
- d) Music Day Celebration;
- e) Youth and talent shows;
- f) Artistic pursuit (*Zenes Montre To Talan*); and
- g) Training camps in Citizenship education.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

- (d) The Youth Centres would also: (i) Ensure democratic participation of young men and women in their own organisations and society as a whole; (ii) encourage the participation of young people in the development process of the country; (iii) assert the views and needs of young people; (iv) ensure that youth rights and responsibilities are fulfilled; (v) provide young people with a platform for practice in democratic governance**

692. A National Youth Council (NYC) has been set up since 1998 to provide the youth with a platform to participate actively in actions and decisions affecting them.

693. The objectives of the NYC are:

- a) to establish and maintain effective communication between government and youth organisations;
- b) to ensure coordination of activities of youth organisations;
- c) to assist in the implementation and evaluation of government policies relating to the needs of youth; and
- d) to initiate youth development projects with the aim of encouraging active participation of youth in the process of their own empowerment.

694. The NYC also provides opportunities to young people to have local, regional, national and international exposure in view of enabling them to acquire knowledge, best practices and experiences to be better equipped to cope with emerging challenges. 9 Regional Youth Councils have been set at district level to ensure a better coordinating mechanism with the NYC.

Youth Advisory Committee

695. Functions of the Youth Advisory Committee are:

- a) strengthening of Youth Advisory Committees in Youth Centres to further develop the synergy between young people and the MYESR;
- b) involving Forces Vives and the Private Sector for partnering and sponsorship for civic actions/projects;

- c) gender based activities and setting up of girls' clubs;
- d) support youth initiatives;
- e) involvement of young people in policy decisions;
- f) operation of 28 Youth Centres across the country which serve as a platform for exchange of best practices, views, needs and ideas;
- g) training of young people in Human Rights;
- h) Youth Parliament, MUN, IYF, Online Youth Forum;
- i) the launching of WIFI Mauritius to encourage young people to have more access to services provided by youth centres; and
- j) National Youth Celebrations.

PRIORITY ACTION 74:

(e) Government shall recognize youth service contributions to society by accrediting volunteering by youth in the educational system and by providing service-learning courses in schools and universities as well as in vocational training centres.

696. A National Young Volunteer Scheme (under the appellation Volunteer Mauritius) has been launched since 2015. As at July 2018, 2400 youth were enrolled in this programme which consists of providing training and involving the participants in volunteering actions.

697. The training includes among others, Leadership and Communication Skills, Fire Fighting and Emergency Rescue and First Aid and Life Saving.

698. Participants also have the opportunity to volunteer in projects such as cleaning campaigns, tree planting and forests restoration project, visits to Homes, Mother's Day celebration in Hospitals, assistance to flood victims.

National Youth Civic Service

699. With a view to empowering the youth to play more meaningful roles as responsible citizens and develop life skills that will enhance their employability, the National Youth Civic Service was implemented in 2020. The programme is of a duration of 18 weeks and targets 1,000 youth aged 17-25 years. The curriculum covers the following areas: (a) Physical Development; (b) Character Building; (c) Teaming up for progress; (d) Nation Building; (e) Civic Education; (f) Peace Education; (g) Entrepreneurial Culture; (h) Community Work; and (i) Volunteering and civic engagement. The sessions were highly interactive and consisted of both in-class and outdoor sessions/visits.

Table 52: Statistics on youth participation (2018-2019)

SN	Policy strategic area	Activities	Participation/remarks
1	Informal Education	Life Skills Education	575
		National Slam Competition	117
		Sketch Based Animation	852
		Workshop Teenage Pregnancy	456
		Inter College Literary Competitions	3,000
		The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Mauritius	11,520
		Sensitisation on Human Rights	500
2	Employment and Employability	Job Fairs (Moka, Curepipe, Barkly and Souillac)	3000 Youth and 50 Firms/Companies
3	Entrepreneurship	Training in Youth Entrepreneurship	100
		Best Business Plan Competition	35 projects (7 projects awarded prizes by CONFEJES)
		Salon des Jeunes Entrepreneurs	100 youth and 50 exhibitors

SN	Policy strategic area	Activities	Participation/remarks
4	Recreational Activities	PS4 PlayStation Competition	1,000
		Carrefour des Jeunes	45
		Conver Rally – Dubreuil	510
		Volunteer Mauritius Academy	102
		Chasse aux Tresors	173
		Animation Vacances	250
		Hiking/Mountaineering	548
		Music Training (La Flute)	200
		National Youth Day Celebration	5,000
		Community based Activities	2,000
		Youth Concert on Peace	2,700
		Zenes Montre To Talan	5,000
5	Wellness and Attitudes	Animation Sportive in youth centre: (Judo, Karate, Yoga, Zumba/Aerobics, Boxe Educative, Badminton, Volleyball, Basketball, Petanque)	10,000
		Youth Sexual Reproductive Health Programmes	5,000

Source: Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation

700. From January to December 2020, 506 young people participated in the National Youth Civic Service Programme online.

National Leadership Engine project

701. In January 2019, the National Leadership Engine project was launched by the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council targeting some 600 graduates with a view to developing a leadership culture in Mauritius. The training programme started simultaneously in 10 other Youth Centres across Mauritius. The training programme would help to build self-confidence in youths and empower them with leadership and problem-solving skills.

OBJECTIVE VII

Better Protecting and Safeguarding Rights of Vulnerable Persons [Children, Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and Poor Persons]

PRIORITY ACTION 75:

A Children Act shall be adopted, which shall incorporate the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Government will formulate and implement a rights-based and comprehensive National Child Protection Strategy.

702. The Children's Act 2020, the Children's Court Act 2020 and the Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020 were passed in the National Assembly in December 2020 with a view to harmonizing all laws relating to children. These Acts, however, are yet to be proclaimed.

703. The main object of the Children's Act is to repeal the Child Protection Act and replace it with a more comprehensive and modern legislative framework with a view to addressing the shortcomings of the Child Protection Act and giving better effect to the UNCRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

704. The Act accordingly makes provisions:

- a) for the better care, protection and assistance to children;
- b) for the respect and promotion of the rights of children and for the protection of the best interests of children;
- c) for the setting up of structures, services and means for promoting and monitoring the sound, physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional and social development of children;
- d) for the setting up of a Child Services Coordinating Panel which shall be responsible for the coordination of all activities relating to the implementation of the present legislation, the UNCRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
- e) to prohibit marriage of children under the age of 18;
- f) for a child under the age of 14 not to be held criminally responsible for any act or omission; and
- g) for child witnesses and child victims under the age of 14 to be, subject to certain conditions, competent as witnesses without the need for them to take the oath or making a solemn affirmation.

PRIORITY ACTION 76:

Corporal punishment of children shall be prohibited in all settings. Awareness-raising campaigns shall be conducted among adults and children on the promotion of non-violent, positive, participatory methods of child-rearing and education. Activities under the National Parental Empowerment Program and the Community Child Development Program shall be scaled up. Preventive measures to combat child abuse shall be strengthened.

Corporal punishment in schools and violence against teachers

705. Corporal punishment is prohibited in schools in article 13(4) of the Education Regulations 1957. Every year the MOETEST issues a circular to all schools to raise awareness about positive, non-violent forms of child discipline and guard against corporal punishment and that perpetrators of corporal punishment are liable to legal action under the Child Protection Act.
706. Corporal punishment in all settings is addressed in Children`s Act 2020. The penalties were also increased in order to prohibit such offences. The Children`s Act is yet to be proclaimed however.
707. The mechanism for reporting cases already exists. However, the onus rests with the Heads of Schools to report any cases of Corporal Punishment to the zonal Director and the respective Primary or Secondary Directorate through the Incident Reporting Form.
708. Any case of corporal punishment reported is subject to an enquiry and dealt with under the relevant sections of the legislations.
709. Some of the cases, upon receiving parental consent are seen by the Educational Psychologists and the Educational Social Workers.
710. The following cases of corporal punishment were referred to the Educational Psychologists to provide psychological support:

Table 53: Corporal punishment cases for period 2018-2020

Year	Number of Cases
2018	7 cases (6 in Primary Schools and 1 in Secondary School)
2019	3 cases (Primary Schools)
2020	6 cases (Primary Schools)

Source: Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

711. Schools have the duty to ensure early detection of children at risk and child abuse cases and report suspected cases of child abuse to the MGEFW to ensure prompt and remedial actions. Community Child Watch Committee is a surveillance mechanism for children who are exposed to all forms of violence at community level.

District Child Protection Committee (DCPC)

712. DCPCs act as a mediator between the community and the main institutions providing services for children, through meetings. Meetings are held every 2 months at the level of each district.

713. DCPCs were set up to take cognizance, review and monitor Child Protection issues at District level.

Community Child Watch Protection Programmes

714. The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund officially launched the Community Child Watch Protection Programme on 17 April 2018, covering some 50 regions across the island.

715. There are currently 44 active Community Child Watch Committees.

716. 78 activities were undertaken reaching 2,464 children.

Table 54: Statistics regarding Community Child Watch Protection Programmes

Year	Number of CCWCs	Number of meeting held	Number of cases referred
2018	47	147	127
2019 (as at Feb 2019)	47	36	38

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

Table 55: Statistics for the ‘Atelier Partage Parents’

Year	Number of Parents Reached
2016	25
2017	30
2018	110
2019	95
2020	72

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

717. Sensitisation campaigns on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) were also held as follows:

- a) 64 students were sensitised in July 2018;
- b) for the period January to August 2018, 1,811 persons were sensitised on child trafficking in primary and secondary schools, social welfare and community centres; and
- c) 18 additional related campaigns were conducted targeting 705 persons.

718. The Mahebourg Creativity Centre organised crafts and Art Activities during weekdays and some 64 schools benefited from the Programme reaching 8,607 students. During this period, 1,714 children benefited from residential camps.

Table 56: Attendance in Children's Clubs for period 2012-2020

Year	Number of Children
2012	3 260
2013	11 093
2014	19 791
2015	17 241
2016	19 952
2017	15 419
2018	21 508
2019	21 652
2020	6148

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

PRIORITY ACTION 77:

- (a) Government shall strengthen its efforts to combat drug abuse by children, and in particular the awareness campaigns, prevention measures and programmes for recovery and social reintegration.**

719. A High-Level Drugs and HIV Council was set up in 2019, under the chair of the Prime Minister. The Council has a key role to, inter alia, oversee the implementation of the National Drug Control Master Plan 2019-2023 commissioned by the Defence and Home Affairs Division and the National Action Plan for HIV and AIDS 2017-2021 of the MHW. The main objectives of the Council are as follows:

- a) foster a multi-sectoral approach with a view to providing a stronger response to Drugs and HIV;
- b) organise concrete measures to minimize the personal, social and economic impact of Drugs and HIV; and
- c) a National Drug Secretariat, operating under the PMO will follow up on proposals made by the Council.

720. Fear-based approach and prevention led by police officers (ADSU) or former drug user were preferred over evidence-based drug prevention strategies.

721. The Probation and Aftercare Service organizes programmes at its Attendance Centres for offenders released on probation by the Court. The Programme comprises eleven modules including one on Substance Abuse, delivered by the then NaTRESA.

722. The public awareness/sensitization campaign is maintained with a view to better sensitizing the community on the dangers of drugs and commercial sexual exploitation of children.

723. ADSU has intensified its awareness campaign in collaboration with the community, schools and other NGOs. Details are as hereunder:

Table 57: Awareness campaign for period 2014 to 2020

Year	Sessions carried out	Attendees
2014	69	26,620
2015	106	24,649
2016	142	29,630
2017	80	10,577
2018	141	44,195
2019	136	14,875
2020	106	11,317

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Police Crime Prevention Unit

724. Awareness campaigns carried out by Police Crime Prevention Unit at School and Community Level are as follows:

Table 58: Work sessions by the Police Crime Prevention Unit for period 2011 to 2020

Year	Number of sessions held in primary & secondary schools	Number of Students
2011	108	21 840
2012	121	17 790
2013	75	14 192
2014	114	19 471
2015	110	17 786
2016	101	18 028
2017	111	16 899
2018	109	17 716
2019	163	22 394
2020	200	25 687
Total	1212	191703

Source: Mauritius Police Force

Table 59: Work sessions at Community Level for period 2011 to 2020

Year	Number of sessions held with Community Level	Number of Persons
2011	253	17 819
2012	318	21 072
2013	327	18 838
2014	360	18 966
2015	481	24 486
2016	434	23 650
2017	495	40 647
2018	564	41 677
2019	519	30 063
2020	540	18 524
Total	4291	255 742

Source: Mauritius Police Force

725. The National Women’s Council has organised sensitization campaign on drug use prevention as follows:

- a) 570 youths (16-35 years old) and 2068 women (36 years and above) were reached in 2019; and
- b) 70 youths and 186 women were sensitized in 2020.

726. The National Children’s Council also organised interactive sessions where around 550 students and 100 adults were sensitised on the ill- effects of drugs and substance abuse in June 2019. A panel of experts responded to queries of participants.

727. Through the ‘Atelier Partage Parents’, 95 parents were also sensitised.

728. In line with the Sustainable Development Goal 5, that relates to “Achieve gender equality: Empower all women and girls”, this Ministry through the Gender Unit has, since November 2017, been implementing one project entitled 3 E’s “Empowerment through Education and Entertainment”. This project is being implemented in deprived regions during school holidays targeting girls and young women aged 13-29 years. The objective is to empower the participants on various pertinent issues related to their well-being and livelihoods. One of the components of the project comprises awareness on substance abuse, which is facilitated by resource persons from the Ministry of Health and Wellness. For the period July 2019 to June 2020, some 200 participants were reached.

PRIORITY ACTION 77:

(b) Measures to combat the commercial sexual exploitation of children shall be intensified.

729. With a view to combating CSEC more effectively, the MGEFW has made it a priority to set up and maintain an ongoing training programme for public and non-public officers working with children in order to empower them to deal with cases of child prostitution in a more professional and child friendly manner.
730. In 2015, 25 persons were trained on “Child Protection and Psycho-Social rehabilitation of Sexually Abused Children” by the Consultant and Director of CEDEM.
731. For period January 2015 to October 2015, the NCC reached 5382 children on commercial sexual education and teenage pregnancy.
732. For period January 2016 to July 2016, 1,188 persons were sensitized on child prostitution in schools and in Social Welfare Centres (SWCs) by officers of the Child Development Unit and Psychologist of the Drop in Centre.

Brigade Pour la Protection des Mineurs (BDM)

733. The Brigade Pour la Protection des Mineurs (BDM) and the Police Family Protection Unit (PFPU) continue to strengthen their action through a series of measures to prevent, identify, investigate and prosecute Trafficking in Persons and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children related offences. In this context, for period 2016 to 2020, widespread awareness/sensitisation campaigns were maintained as follows:

Table 60: Number of persons sensitised by the BDM and PFPU

Unit	Number of people Sensitised
Year 2016	
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs	33 452
Police Family Protection Unit	13 558
Year 2017	
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs	44 327
Police Family Protection Unit	18 834
Year 2018	
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs	63 698
Police Family Protection Unit	23 584
Year 2019	
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs	60 954
Police Family Protection Unit	24 063
Year 2020	
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs	62 409
Police Family Protection Unit	18 580

Source: Mauritius Police Force

734. The following measures have been taken to combat commercial exploitation of children:

- a) a tollfree hotline was set up to enable the public to report any alleged case of child abuse including child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children either anonymously or otherwise;
- b) joint interviews are conducted by officers of the Police and the Child Development Unit to avoid repeated narrations of incident;

- c) close collaboration between the Brigade Pour la Protection des Mineurs and other stakeholders to assist in the identification of victims and providing them support. The Brigade Pour la Protection des Mineurs carries out raids in game houses, hotels, discotheques and investigates in suspected/alleged cases of child trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation of children;
- d) the setting up of L'Oasis Residential Drop-In-Centre at Grand River North West in 2016. It presently houses 25 victims of sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation of children including child trafficking;
- e) the establishment of a Protocol of collaboration by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare with other stakeholders by way of a 'Working Together' Committee to ensuring that a continuum of care is provided to children victims;
- f) the setting up of a Community Child Watch Committee for surveillance of children exposed to any form of violence inclusive of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking at local levels. It operates with the collaboration of a pool of volunteers, social workers, NGO's, community leaders and other key stakeholders; and
- g) the setting up of Child Protection Committees at district level for the implementation of Government policies related to the survival, development, protection and welfare of children through the adoption of a participatory approach.

735. Other measures resorted to:

- a) networking and work sessions with other stakeholders and service providers (CDU, NGOs working with children);
- b) proactive identification of potential victims and vulnerable groups;
- c) increased Police patrols and vigilance near vulnerable areas and place of complaints;
- d) checks at places of amusements, complaints, night clubs and boarding houses, amongst others; and
- e) counselling and guidance to parents in cases of child beyond control/behavioural problems/unruly life and those who are exposed to risks.

736. In addition, 3 NGOs namely Chrysalide, Passerelle, and SOS Femmes are currently providing for emergency accommodation to women and children survivors of domestic violence.

Sensitization campaigns

737. The Office of the Ombudsperson for Children also carries out sensitization campaigns such as talks, seminars, workshops, conference and activities to promote the UNCRC and issues related to children concerning child sexual abuse, drug trafficking, child marriage and discrimination against children with disabilities.
738. For the period July 2017 to June 2018, more than 13,000 persons were sensitized. Some 6,000 children and 7,500 adults were attained. 20 workshops were organised by the Ombudsperson for Children's Office. 25 talks were organised at the Citizens Advice Bureaux, some 125 media interviews, 3 visits effected in Rodrigues, 60 visits to Residential Care Institutions, 40 Sensitization Sessions and Talks, and more than 135 field visits were undertaken.
739. Furthermore, the media is also being used to sensitise and create awareness among the community. In this respect, statistics for the period 2016 to 2020 are as follows:

Table 61: Radio Programs for the period 2016 to 2020

Year	BDM	PFPU
2016	8	5
2017	5	7
2018	12	6
2019	10	8
2020	7	6

Source: Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

PRIORITY ACTION 78:

Government will devise policies and a National Action Plan to address the issue of teenage pregnancy.

740. Funds were allocated by United Nations Population Fund to the MGEFW to the tune of Rs 700,000, Rs 287,000 and Rs 209, 160 for the years 2016 to 2018, respectively.
741. A press communiqué was released in July 2018 to gather all views/ suggestions/recommendations from members of the public and NGOs regarding Child Marriage and Teenage Pregnancy.

742. The MGEFW has established a protocol to cater for cases of teenage pregnancy reported to the Ministry.

743. Cases of teenage pregnancy are regularly reported to the Ministry by Medical Social Workers from all the regional hospitals for follow up purposes. Assistance and support given to teenage mothers and teenage pregnant girls are as follows:

- a) home visits to ascertain that pregnant girl/mother are accepted at the level of the family environment;
- b) interviewing of pregnant girl/mother with respect to support envisaged to meet their bio-psycho-socio legal-economic needs;
- c) interviewing and counselling of parents and siblings to ensure that pregnant girl/mother is accommodated in a safe, secured environment;
- d) educational sessions with respect to care and parental skills are provided to create awareness among teenage pregnant mothers on several issues pertaining to their own well-being and that of their children so much so that they make of their pregnancy a wanted one and a feel good factor is instilled during that period;
- e) appropriate referrals are made with respect to social aid, if need be;
- f) if parents fare to be difficult and teenage mothers rejected then they are removed to a place of safety under an Emergency Protection Order;
- g) counselling is also done to the boy (prospective father) if identified and minor mother is above 16. Teenage parents are nevertheless informed of the provisions of the law in case they would entertain abortion or abandonment at a later stage. Full support is given by the Ministry especially if girl is below 16 years of age where emphasis is laid on counselling of parents and psychological support;
- h) if ever teenage pregnant girl/mother wants to disclose a case of sexual intercourse with minor under 16 that has occasioned the pregnancy then the child protection team give full support to report the criminal case to the police for further investigation and prosecution as appropriate and where minor together with parents refuse to report matter to police a criminal case of sexual intercourse with minor under 16 is reported to police on behalf of minor, for criminal investigation at their level;
- i) the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare ensures that provisions of pre-natal and post-natal care for teenage pregnant mothers by the medical personnel are provided as appropriate and that the medical social workers of the Ministry of Health and Wellness

provide regular home visits and support to the families so much so that support is dispensed throughout the whole process to ensure rehabilitation and reinsertion at a later stage; and

- j) group therapy is also provided to ensure that young teenage pregnant girls/mothers are rehabilitated for reinsertion process.

744. Moreover, young girls who have been victim of teenage pregnancy are encouraged to pursue with their studies. Arrangement at the level of the schools are made available to ensure that those who want to pursue their studies can do so.

745. Furthermore, all Shelters of the Ministry welcome, as and when necessary, teenage pregnant/mothers if they are from dysfunctional families. As at date two minors, teenage mothers are benefitting from support at shelter level.

746. All NGOs working with the Ministry provide full support to young girls' victim of teenage pregnancy.

Long-term support to teenagers' victim of sexual abuse resulting in teenage pregnancy

747. As a matter of policy these cases, once scrutinised by the Child Protection team at the Child Development Unit (CDU), are subsequently referred to the Drop-in-Centre for long term support and 'Prise En Charge.' It is to be noted, that the Drop-in-Centre is a project of the Ministry managed by the Mauritius Family Planning Welfare Association. Cases are referred to the Ministry by Hospitals, Health Centres, NGOs, Brigade Pour La Protection des Mineurs, Police, anonymous callers, relatives and victims themselves and by the Child Development Unit.

748. Psycho-social support and therapeutical services are provided free of charge to teenage pregnancy girls who are victims of violence and families facing problems with their teenage children, both at the level of the six CDU outstations as well as those placed at the level of Residential Care Institutions.

749. Various preventive measures are continually being taken by the Ministry through the Drop-In Centre and the MFPWA to combat the issues of early sexual activities among teenagers resulting in teenage pregnancy. The measures are as follows:

- a) IEC programmes in school, colleges and community on the ill effects of child sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy;
- b) training of Educators: 90 Educators/ stakeholders were trained in 2019 on how to identify and report cases of child sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy; and
- c) radio programmes in Hindi & Creole languages at the MBC and other radio channels.

750. During the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, officers of the Drop-in-Centre were available on mobile phone for telephone counselling services.

751. Other rigorous services such as: (a) long term counselling and therapy; (b) monthly medical sessions; (c) parental counselling; (d) couple/contraceptive counselling; (e) monthly home visits to clients to ascertain their recovery and reinsertion; (f) prevention and sensitization of adolescents/public on sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy; (g) referral to other NGOs/social aid and other institutions; (h) echography and clinical services including gynecologist at MFPWA clinic; (i) laboratory tests for HIV and pregnancy; (j) group activity therapy (personality development, art and craft therapy, art competition in school holidays); and (k) referral to vocational courses through MITD/NEF/HRDC are also offered by the Drop-in-Centre.

PRIORITY ACTION 79:

Government shall ensure that children with disabilities shall, as far as practicable, be integrated into the regular educational system.

752. The MOETEST has come up with the formulation of revised Policy Framework and Strategy Document for the SEN Sector. It focuses more on 'Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with SEN in Mauritius. Concept to Reality is also directly in line with the policy direction of the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Curriculum for Nine Years of Continuous Basic Education through the six E's of the philosophy of Inclusive VIZ. Equity, Equal access, Equal opportunity, Equal dignity, Effective Communication and Embrace Culture.

753. In Mauritius, education is compulsory up to the age of 16; as for children with disabilities, education is provided up to the age of 20. SEN is a priority domain of the MOETEST in ensuring quality Education for All (EFA) goals. In this context, the SEN sector has witnessed a lot of positive measures being taken and implemented in the recent years as listed below:

Table 62: Number of children with disabilities in mainstream and special schools

Year	Number of children
2013	1 964
2014	2 252
2015	2 301
2016	2 381
2017	2 466
2018	2 520
2019	2 312
2020	2390

Source: Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

754. 2 212 children benefit from the Grant-in-Aid. The number of children with disabilities in mainstream and special education needs schools in Mauritius in 2018 is 2,520.

755. An outreach exercise for the registration of SEN children was initiated for the first time in 2010. In the first year, only 6 children were registered. Over the years, the number of children has kept on increasing and for 2018, it stood at 54. In the absence of the outreach exercise, these children would have remained out of the education system.

756. For the period July 2018 to June 2019, the budget provision was Rs 203.5 million. Below is the evolution of the SEN Budget from 2015-2020.

Table 63: Budget for SEN for period 2015-2020

Year	Budget (Rs)
2015	112.2 million
2016-2017	143 million
2017-2018	168.7 million
2018-2019	203.5 million
2019-2020	206 million

Source: Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology

757. Moreover, the MOETEST has set up Integrated Units in mainstream primary schools around the island travel with a view to reaching out to children with special education needs who usually have to long distances to go to SEN schools. Presently, there are 11 such Integrated Units, out of which, 6 are run in partnership with NGOs catering for children with special needs. The number of children attending integrated units stand at 107.

758. Furthermore, the Special Education Needs Authority Act (SENA) was proclaimed in December 2018. The SENA was set up to ensure, inter alia, the regulating, monitoring and facilitating and implementing of the new policies and to develop a Quality Assurance Frame work and set norms and standards for the SEN Sector in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities.

759. Pursuant to the enactment of the SENA, in accordance with Section 7 of the Act, a Special Education Needs Board was constituted in February 2019.

760. Specialised equipment for use by Psychologists, Occupational therapists and physiotherapist's equipment for multi-sensory rooms, as well as specialised furniture were procured for these Centres.

761. The SENRDC operates as a One-Stop-Shop to provide specialised services, such as those of psychologists and occupational therapists and parent mediator to students with special needs.

762. There are 6 SENRDCs that are fully operational at Ferney, Beau Bassin, Plaine des Papayes, Central Flacq, Rivière des Anguilles and Moka with the collaboration of four NGOs registered with the MOETEST. All these SENRDCs have at least 2 classrooms where the educational activities of barriers with heavy impairments are catered for.

763. The MOETEST has procured 58 personal computers fitted with screen reader and screen magnifier software, which were distributed, to all students with visual impairment in 2015. Braille note for blind students attending the secondary level are under consideration.

764. As part of the Sankoré project, 6 NGOs were provided with the appropriate equipment (projectors and laptops). Additionally, the 6 SENRDC were provided with appropriate projectors.

Barrier-Free Access and inclusive Education

765. In a bid to provide a barrier-free access to education to students with disabilities, MOETEST has in recent years taken a series of measures, namely:

- a) schools are being retrofitted with ramps to facilitate access to the classrooms in a phased manner;
- b) for the period of 2017/2018, 25% of the schools were made architectural disabled-friendly;
- c) all new secondary schools constructed are provided with adapted toilets for the disabled;
- d) links between building blocks are made to facilitate access, using wheelchairs to the first floor where specialist rooms are located;
- e) facilities like music room, library, science laboratory, computer room are available on the ground floor where necessary. In primary schools, Head Masters usually make arrangements to move the whole class to the ground floor wherever necessary;
- f) students with disabilities are released earlier than the other students so that they do not face any movement difficulties;
- g) carers are provided in mainstream primary and secondary schools to help student with SEN. Those carers usually help students on wheelchairs to move around the school compound;
- h) the same facilities are available in Private Grant-Aided Secondary schools to enable children with disabilities to move around the school compound and participate actively in academic activities; and
- i) as from financial year 2016-2017, 5 students with SEN have been offered a scholarship to pursue post-secondary/tertiary courses. They are also benefitting from a stipend of Rs 5,000 monthly.

766. The MOETEST took additional measures to bring inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education to these students:

- a) educators are encouraged to provide individual extra assistance to children with disabilities so as to allow them to keep pace with their classmates.
- b) children with disabilities are benefiting from extra time for the CPE examination;
- c) children with hearing impairment are provided specialised teacher/interpreters in the mainstream secondary school with the active collaboration of NGOs and for the purpose of examinations;
- d) adoption of a flexible approach to parents to provide any extra assistance to their children with disabilities during schooling hours; and
- e) enlarged print school books / manuals and question papers are provided to children with low vision.

PRIORITY ACTION 80:

The minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law shall be prescribed.

767. The existing statutory framework with regard to juvenile offenders is currently being reviewed. There is no minimum age of criminal responsibility and this is at the discretion of the Director of Public Prosecution to decide as to whether or not to prosecute. However, section 44 of the Criminal Code provides that an accused person under the age of 14 who has acted without discernment should be acquitted but shall, according to the circumstances of his case, be handed over to his relations or placed in a reformatory to be brought up and detained during such number of years as the sentence may determine, which period shall in no case exceed the period at which the accused would have reached the age of 18. The issue concerning minimum age of criminal responsibility has been addressed in the Children's Act, 2020 (not yet proclaimed).

768. Furthermore, under section 45 of the Criminal Code where the accused under the age of 14 has acted with discernment, he shall be condemned to imprisonment in a reformatory for such time as shall be determined in the judgment.

769. The Children's Act addresses the minimum age of criminal responsibility in Part V of the Act, which caters for Child Offenders, Child Victims and Child Witnesses. Section 49 provides that no child under the age of 14 shall be prosecuted for any criminal offence. Moreover, section 50 provides for a procedure regarding a child under 14 suspected of having committed an offence. Children in such cases are to be referred to a probation officer rather than police officers and to a psychologist for an assessment of the state of mind of the child at the time of the alleged commission of the offence.
770. Child under 14 not criminally responsible (No child under the age of 14 shall be prosecuted for any criminal offence).
771. The proclamation of the Children's Act, 2020 is still awaited.

PRIORITY ACTION 81:

A new Juvenile Offenders Act shall be adopted, which shall inter alia provide for mediation between interested parties with a view to exploring diversionary measures as an alternative to prosecution of child offenders and for the filing of a probation report before sentencing of a juvenile offender. Provision shall also be made for uncontrollable juveniles to be dealt with in a manner which is compliant with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

772. The current Juvenile Offender's Act dates back to 1935. The Act is to be repealed by the Children's Act 2020, when the latter is proclaimed.
773. Under the new Children's Act 2020, if the DPP considers that in lieu of prosecution of a juvenile for an offence or criminal proceedings instituted against a juvenile shall be discontinued, he shall request a probation officer to assess whether it shall be in the best interest of the juvenile to be enrolled in a diversion programme rather from being prosecuted or criminal procedures being continued against him.
774. Alternative to prosecution such as Diversion Programme, which is an individualised non-residential supervision and rehabilitation scheme implemented by the MGEFW for the purpose of rehabilitation the juvenile without resorting to formal criminal proceedings.

PRIORITY ACTION 82:

Training programmes shall be regularly conducted for professionals involved with the juvenile justice system concerning relevant international human rights standards.

775. Regular training and sensitization programmes on International Human Rights for Officers of the Social Welfare Division/Committee Members/Social Leaders are organised by the National Human Rights Commission.
776. In May 2018, under its EU-Funded Project, the NHRC enlisted the services of Professor Ludovic Pierre Hennebel, Professor of Law at Aix-en-Provence and Member of the Advisory Committee of the UN Human Rights Council, to deliver a series of lectures to legal practitioners, law enforcement officers, students, media and civil society on international human rights law. Some 405 individuals benefitted from these activities.
777. In June 2018, the National Human Rights Commission in collaboration with the EU Delegation to Mauritius and the MOETEST held a half-day workshop on ‘Human Rights and Children’s Rights at the Renganaden Seeneevassen SSS with 115 students of Grades 12 and 13.
778. The NHRC and the EU Delegation to Mauritius jointly organized a half-day workshop in November 2018 in the context of the International day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The event brought together 99 public officials and representatives of civil society.
779. In November 2018, under its EU-Funded Project, the NHRC invited Ms Karen Grayson and Ms Lynn Welsh from the UK Equality Act and Human Rights Commission to give lectures to different stakeholders on the UK Equality Act and the Commission’s legal levers. These activities reached 228 participants.
780. In December 2018, a Forum Debate on ‘Protecting and Promoting Human Rights of LGBTI’ was held with 94 representatives of relevant Ministries, human rights institutions, NGOs and diplomatic missions.
781. In March 2019, Mr John Wadham, Chair of the UK National Preventive Mechanism, visited Mauritius under the NHRC’s EU-Funded Project to provide training to law practitioners, law enforcement officers, human rights institutions and civil society on human rights in places of detention and the UK Police and Criminal Evidence Act. Some 405 individuals benefitted from these sessions.
782. In April 2019, staff of the NHRC delivered talks to elderly persons residing at the Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Recreation Centre as part of a series of seminars hosted by the Senior Citizens Council. The talks focussed on the rights of elderly persons and the legal and social framework for their protection in Mauritius.

783. In January 2020, the NHRC invited Mrs. Nicole Ameline, CEDAW Committee Member – Expert on Women’s Rights and former Minister on Gender Issues and Equality at Work in France, to deliver informative sessions on the legal and socio-economic aspects of the CEDAW in Mauritius over a period four days. The informative sessions included numerous target groups such as the representatives of various ministries, NGOs, the National Women Council, and the National Entrepreneur Council.
784. In July 2020, the NHRC in collaboration with the EU Delegation to the Republic of Mauritius, held a half-day workshop for senior ranking police officers (Deputy Commissioners of Police, Assistant Commissioners of Police, Superintendents of Police and Assistant Superintendents of Police) to sensitise them, on the mandate of the Commission as well as on the rights of vulnerable groups in Mauritius.
785. The IJLS also organizes training for members of the legal professions. A breakdown of same was provided in Priority Action 25.

PRIORITY ACTION 83:

Government will set up an Observatory on ageing to carry out action-oriented research on the socio-economic aspects of ageing. The legal framework for the prevention of elder abuse shall be strengthened.

786. The Protection of Elderly Persons Act 2005 provides, inter-alia, for the institution of Elderly Watch Committees around the island to identify and report abuse against the elderly.
787. The Protection of Elderly Persons Act was amended in 2016 to enhance the level of protection and security to the elderly.
788. This Act also empowers Officers of the MSISSNS to summon perpetrators of elder abuse and in case of non-attendance, the perpetrator is liable to be Rs 5,000 or imprisoned for a period not exceeding 6 months.
789. Cases of elder abuse are reported to the Welfare and Elderly Persons Protection Unit of the MSISSNS. From January 2018 to August 2018, 717 cases of elder abuse were reported.
790. There are 20 Elderly Watch Committees which would be increased to bring a “*service de proximité*” to:
- a) promote the welfare of elderly persons in the region for where it is responsible; and
 - b) endeavour to prevent acts of abuse on elderly persons.

Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa

791. During the 66th Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, the Republic of Mauritius has initiated the administrative process for signature of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons and the relevant documents would be deposited to the African Commission to the Human and Peoples' Rights, in the coming months. The protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of Older Persons was not signed as at December 2020.

PRIORITY ACTION 84:

(a) Government shall adopt appropriate policies geared towards promoting active and healthy ageing of older persons, which consider their particular needs and care, and the special protection that should be afforded to them. Additional Recreation Centres shall be established. A Carer's Strategy shall be implemented with a view to creating a pool of some 3000 carers for the elders over the next five years; the carers shall be provided with basic training on home-based care.

792. Three recreation centres are currently in operation with an approximate annual intake of 34,000 residents. A fourth recreation centre at Riambel, which would soon be available to increase our annual intake capacity to 46,000 residents.

793. In addition, 2 independent homes would be constructed for the elderly living alone and in rented dwellings.

794. In view of the ageing population, Government is making necessary provision to meet the increasing demand for carers. A training programme in collaboration with MITD regarding Training of Carers is ongoing.

795. Previously, bedridden and severely disabled persons aged 60-90 years and those below 18 years benefitted from medical domiciliary visit.

796. Following a budget measure 2020-2021, the age criteria was removed and all persons who are bedridden or severely disabled in receipt of carers allowance benefit from medical domiciliary visits.

797. Persons aged 90 above benefit from the domiciliary visit of a doctor on a monthly basis. Since 2017, persons aged 75 are entitled to medical domiciliary visit on a monthly basis, if they are bedridden or

severely disabled. As a budget measure 2019-2020, the medical domiciliary visit has been extended to bedridden persons of 60 years and above.

PRIORITY ACTION 84:

(b) An IT Literacy Programme shall be run for the benefit of older persons with a view to promoting lifelong learning and to enable them keep pace with development issues.

798. The MSISSNS has set up Computer Clubs in all of its 20 Elderly Day Care Centres (EDCCs). IT literacy programming in some of these centres being held for the elderly. 24 Health Clubs were set up where educational, adult literacy, IT Literacy, Handicrafts and Embroidery classes, proper cooking methods and health programmes are organized.

PRIORITY ACTION 84:

(c) Government will set up a Legal Counselling Programme on property rights for senior citizens to enhance legal and financial protection to the elderly.

799. The Legal Counselling Programme has been set up and it is being held regionally in Mauritius and Rodrigues since November 2012. Senior Citizen Association use Day Care Centres and Recreation Centres to provide Legal Counselling Programme and to enhance legal and financial protection to the elderly. The Senior Citizen Council is working on this issue.

800. A universal Basic Retirement Pension is provided to all elderly aged 60 years and above, as follows:

Table 64: Basic Retirement Pension

Age Range	Rupees (Year 2017)	Rupees (Year 2018)	Rupees (Year 2019)	Rupees (Year 2020)
60-89 years	5450	5810	9000	9000
90-99 years	15 450	15 810	16 210	16 210
Centenarians	20 450	20 810	21 710	21 710

Source: Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity

801. In addition, grant of up to Rs 5,000 for the purchase of assistive device such as wheelchairs, hearing aid and Rs 2,000 for the purchase of spectacles.
802. Other Financial Assistances provided to needy elderly persons include: a) Incontinence Allowance to elderly aged 70 and above and to those who are bedridden; b) Carer's Allowance c) Rent Allowance to elderly persons living alone; and d) those in receipt of Social Aid, they are also entitled to allowances for dentures, income support, funeral grants in respect of beneficiary or any of his/her dependent, grant for the purchase of medicine to centenarians.

PRIORITY ACTION 85:

Laws shall be reviewed in line with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights with Disabilities and an Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act adopted.

803. Mauritius will accede to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa and all the implications is being looked into. Though, Mauritius has already ratified the UNCRPD since 2010, a reservation was made on Article 9 (2) (d) on the provision of public signage in buildings and other facilities in Braille and easy to read and needful is being done for the withdrawal of the reservation.
804. The Building Control Act 2012 provides for enhanced accessibility to buildings by disabled persons. The Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations 2017 provide for a universal design requirement in respect of new buildings and building under major renovation. For the granting of the Land Use and Building Permit, a technical sheet of the Planning Policy Guidance regarding access for people with disabilities, which gives guidance for the needs / requirements of people with disabilities.
805. In partnership with the private sector, the Government has already embarked upon the design and construction of front access ramps in more than 200 public buildings. In addition, public buildings, such as Police Stations and Health Centres are being provided with a dedicated and appropriately screened place for mother-and-child, that is, for breast-feeding and nappy change purposes, right from the design stage.
806. The Disability Bill is still forthcoming but on the agenda of the Government.

PRIORITY ACTION 86:

Sensitisation campaigns shall be pursued on the need to adopt a Human Rights Approach to disability issues. Greater emphasis will be laid on the training and employment of persons with disabilities.

Training & Employment of Disabled Persons Board

807. The TEDPB is regulated by the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act of 1996 as amended by the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons (Amendment) Act of 2012.
808. The TEDPB has developed collaboration with training institutions such as MITD, Food and Agricultural Research Extension Institute and Accenture. For Outbound Training 212 persons with disabilities, training such as mushroom growing, housekeeping, waitering, and IT, amongst others, is being provided to persons with Disabilities. The TEDPB is continuously improving its services to reach out for more persons with disabilities. The register of persons with disabilities and register of employers at the level of TEDPB were updated in the year 2020.
809. Following the amendments to the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons (TEDP) Act in 2012, employers who have a workforce of 35 or above are required to employ 3% of persons with disabilities. Moreover, under Section 13 of the TEDP Act, the Board has to set up a Hearing Committee to determine whether an employer cannot reasonably be expected, having regard to the nature of the business, to provide suitable employment to or to create suitable employment opportunities for the employment of persons with disabilities.
810. It is only after the findings and the recommendations made by the Hearing Committee that any sanction can be taken against the employer, that is a statutory monthly contribution of Rs 4,000 per person not employed. In case of non-compliance, the employer will be criminally liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 75,000 and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months.
811. The TEDPB is also working in close collaboration with private companies to sensitise them and encourage them to employ persons with disabilities. The TEDPB has placed 300 persons with disabilities in employment in the private and parastatal sectors.
812. The Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulation 2017 which is applicable since November 2017, provides for new buildings and buildings undergoing major alterations, additional repairs or reconstruction. Government buildings are therefore catering for ramps, handrails, special toilets for persons with disabilities and reserved parking facilities to make all the government buildings accessible to persons with disability.

813. In this respect, a memorandum of understanding has been signed with Lafarge Ltd under the CSR Scheme, whereby 181 existing public buildings have been identified for construction of ramps at the main entrance (over a period of three years) so as to make the main services in a building accessible to persons with disability.

814. The MSISSNS is pursuing its effort to encourage employers to register with the TEDPB. As at 31 December 2020, 1,169 persons with disabilities have registered themselves with the Board and around 634 persons with disabilities are willing and able to work.

News Bulletins & Awareness Campaigns – Mauritian Sign Language

815. The MSISSNS in collaboration with the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf, is broadcasting an 8-10 minutes News Bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language. The major coverages of the MBC News Bulletins are also broadcasted with special subtitling to reach the whole audience, including those with hearing impairment.

816. Moreover, the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf, in collaboration with the MOHW also carried out sensitisation campaigns on health issues such as Covid-19, dengue, chikungunya in the Mauritian Sign Language.

817. For period of December 2019 to January 2020, the NDRRMC carried out a series of sensitisation campaigns in the Mauritian Sign Language on the MBC TV to raise awareness among persons suffering from hearing impairment.

PRIORITY ACTION 87:

Government is committed to eradicate poverty. Measures for the empowerment of the poor and disadvantaged persons shall be relentlessly pursued, in partnership with business and NGO organizations. The support provided under the different programmes of the NEF will be harmonised and made more effective in the context of the Social Register of Mauritius. Effective participation of the poor shall be enlisted in the setting of priorities for the eradication of poverty and greater emphasis shall be laid on the need for an attitudinal change to their predicament. Proper education is critical for moving out of the poverty trap. For primary students who are from less privileged background, Government shall put in place a system of one-off cash transfers where attendance rate is over 90% and the student has successfully completed yearly examinations. The one-off cash transfer will be increased for those who succeed in their CPE exams. The National Empowerment Foundation will increase the provision of learning corners with internet facilities in deprived areas to enable children of those regions to access educational sites to improve their knowledge. Counselling will be provided to children from needy families throughout their school life with a view to boosting their interest in education and overall school performance. Parents of such children will also benefit from such counselling sessions.

818. The Social Integration Division of the MSISSNS, through its executive body, the NEF, implements several empowerment programmes/schemes with the aim of eradicating extreme poverty and creating a more inclusive and equitable society. The MSISSNS works towards supporting and empowering the vulnerable group with a view to mainstreaming and improving their quality of life in a sustainable way.
819. In order to ensure effective implementation of its empowerment programmes/schemes, the Social Integration Division has put in place its legal framework through the enactment of the Social Integration and Empowerment Act in 2016.
820. The Act allows the implementation of the Marshall Plan, provides for the setting up of empowerment programmes, and schemes so that persons living in absolute poverty can integrate the mainstream society and improve their quality of life in a sustainable manner.
821. To benefit from the various income and empowerment support, households found eligible under the Social Register are invited to sign a Marshall Plan Social Contract (MPSC). The terms and conditions set out in the MPSC are meant to stimulate investments in social and human capital that is to say investments in education, health and economic empowerment.
822. The MSISSDS (Social Security Division) has developed, since June 2015, the SRM to constitute a national database of vulnerable households in Mauritius and the MSISSDS is the legal custodian of the SRM database. The SRM was designed to become an exhaustive and centralized database of social programme beneficiaries to improve the targeting efficiency of social/empowerment programmes.

Identifying poor households is a complex exercise that requires looking beyond reported incomes. To identify eligible households, an innovative Proxy Means Test was designed, based on criteria emerging from econometric analysis of the national Household Budget Survey, rather than on declaration of income.

823. One of the key measures forming part of the recommendations of the Marshall Plan against Poverty Report is the Income Support Scheme, which caters for the payment of a monthly subsistence allowance to those families who are living in absolute poverty and who are striving for decent living conditions.

824. The monthly subsistence allowance scheme was introduced in the Budget Speech of 2016-2017 and it became effective as from December 2016. The Scheme provides to every adult who is eligible under the SRM a monthly allowance, which is based on a minimum income threshold of Rs 2,720 and a maximum of Rs 9,520 per adult basis. As at December 2020, more than 10,000 households have already benefited from some Rs 915 million.

825. The other Conditional Cash Transfers are effected through various empowerment schemes, which are as follows:

a) School Premium Scheme

The scheme is awarded to students who have successfully completed their SC or HSC level, with a cash award of Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 35,000 respectively. In 2020, the School Premium Scheme has been extended to students who would successfully complete tertiary education, whereby they would be entitled to a cash award of Rs 40,000. The scheme would also reward those who would successfully complete Grade 9 under the nine-year schooling as from 2021 against a cash award Rs. 15,000.

The objective is to encourage students of vulnerable families to pursue their educational achievements and to attain higher level of education. Eventually, successful students can also use the cash reward as a start-up for a new business.

As at December 2020, some 942 students in Mauritius and Rodrigues have benefitted from a total disbursement of some Rs 27 million.

b) School Materials Scheme

School Materials, comprising of school bags, uniforms, shoes, socks, notebooks and stationery, are given to children of pre-primary, primary, secondary schools and pre-voc institutions, as an incentive to motivate them to attend school. As at December 2020, some 17,000 children of SRM beneficiaries have benefited from nearly Rs 125 million. For the academic years 2017 to 2020, some Rs 199 million was spent on some 18,000 beneficiaries annually.

c) Child Allowance Scheme

Under the Child Allowance Scheme, since January 2020, the monthly payment of Rs 929 per child was revised to Rs. 957 and is being effected as an incentive to eligible households to send their children to school. In order to benefit from this Scheme, the child must meet 90% school attendance and 75% school attendance for the disabled child. An average of 12,000 children for both Mauritius and Rodrigues are benefitting from the Scheme and the total disbursement since its implementation up to December 2020, amounts to Rs 350 million.

d) Crèche Scheme

The Crèche Scheme provides for children aged between 03 months to 3 years to be placed in the care of registered child day-care centres and thereby allowing their mothers to take up employment or follow a training course for the purpose of empowering them. Under this Scheme, a maximum monthly payment of Rs 2000 is effected to day-care centres in favour of each child admitted. For the period July 2019 to February 2020, some Rs 2,9 million has already been disbursed to registered child day care centres on behalf of some 174 Beneficiaries.

e) Free Examination Fees Scheme

The Free Examination Fees Scheme provides a second chance to students of SRM beneficiaries who have passed their School Certificate and Higher School Certificate exams but wish to improve their qualifications. The amount of the fees from which eligible students are exempted from payment ranges from Rs 10,478 to Rs 13,028. As at December 2020, some 520 students in Mauritius and Rodrigues have received support under this Scheme up to the academic year 2019. It is noted that for the academic year 2017 to 2019, some Rs 5.6 million, has been disbursed.

National Corporate Social Responsibility (NCSR)

826. The Social Integration Division of the MSISSNS has also set up the NCSR Foundation for the allocation of CSR funds to NGOs to enable them to undertake programmes and projects for the benefit of target groups in ten identified priority areas, most of which are directly related to poverty alleviation.

827. All companies shall set up a CSR Fund equivalent to 2% of their chargeable/book profits of the preceding year and should contribute 75% of this amount to the NCSR Foundation to be used in the implementation of CSR projects in the priority areas.

828. It is in further consolidation of the social institutional framework to drive a national agenda for inclusive human and social development as a means to tackling the deep rooted causes of poverty and vulnerability that the NCSR Foundation has been transformed into a National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF). This is expected to give a new orientation to the Foundation in terms of National Programmes aligned to Government strategies and actions and ensure better social actions.

829. The new entity is called upon to play a key role in the promotion of social inclusion, equity and sustainable development, specifically, by leveraging strategic and sustainable partnerships with NGOs, public institutions and the private sector.

830. The funding of programmes/projects of NGOs is the core function of the Foundation. For the period July 2019-June 2020 as at date, the NSIF has disbursed an amount of Rs 428,154,872 for the funding of programmes and projects of NGOs.

831. The National CSR Foundation supports NGO projects and programmes subject to defined guidelines and criteria, and based on a comprehensive framework that, in addition to funding also comprises key aspects such as monitoring, mentoring and capacity building, evaluation and learning. From its First Call for Projects 2017, the Foundation has already approved 230 projects for a total amount of around Rs 202 million. 172 NGOs have benefited from funding from the Foundation. The details are as follows:

Table 65: NGO Projects supported by the National CSR Foundation

Type of project	Number of projects	Amount (Rs)	% of Total Amount
Socio-economic development as a means for poverty alleviation	43	36.5 M	17.9
Educational support and training	71	58.9 M	28.9
Social housing	8	9.9 M	4.9
Supporting people with disabilities	38	30.9 M	15.2
Dealing with health problems	30	27.7 M	13.6
Family protection including gender-based violence	14	18.1 M	8.9
Leisure and sports	10	6.8 M	3.3
Environment and sustainable development	9	9.2 M	4.6

Type of project	Number of projects	Amount (Rs)	% of Total Amount
Peace and nation-building	8	5.6 M	2.7
Road Safety and Security	-	-	-
Total	231	203.7 M	100

Source: Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity

832. As provided for in the Budget 2019-2020, the NSIF has worked towards the creation of a Fortified Learning Environment Unit and classification of NGOs. Meanwhile, given the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, a COVID-19 Response Strategy has been worked out at the level of the NSIF with a view to adapting its support to NGOs and help them tackle the crisis and to meet emerging funding needs arising from the crisis.

Poverty Observatory

833. The MSISSNS is also in the process of setting up a Poverty Observatory to create a permanent platform for all relevant stakeholders to sustainably address poverty in all its manifestations and create linkages with the SADC Regional Poverty Observatory and other research institutions for the sharing of information and best practices and carry out research on poverty.

Housing Support

834. One of the main objectives of the MSISSNS is to improve the living conditions and environment of vulnerable families and eliminate social exclusion. Government looks forward to those living in absolute poverty to have decent living conditions whereby facilitating the integration and economic empowerment.

Full Concrete Housing Scheme

835. The Full Concrete Housing Scheme is provided to vulnerable families who are land owners/ state land owners and who do not have a concrete house of their own. Under this scheme, housing unit of a minimum size of 50 sq/m is constructed at a maximum cost of Rs 900,000 (80% funded by NEF and 20% by the beneficiary). As at December 2020, 170 fully concrete houses were completed and handed over to SRM beneficiaries, and 73 were under construction.

Upgrading of Housing Scheme

836. Under the ‘Upgrading Housing Scheme, NEF provides support to enable families with limited means to make needed improvements in their houses, for instance, provision of toilet and bathroom, roof repairs (CIS and Concrete), consolidation of housing units and plastering & flooring for incomplete house. The total cost for upgrading works should not exceed Rs 85, 000 and beneficiaries are required to repay 15% on upgrading cost.

Social Housing support to Landless Families

837. The National Housing Development Company (NHDC) also provides 10% of all NHDC housing units constructed across the island, for beneficiaries of the NEF who are landless and eligible in the SRM, allowing them to acquire a decent housing unit with a view to empower the households.

838. Accordingly, the NEF has been requested to come out with a short list of potential beneficiaries for the mentioned scheme. In order to have a fair and authentic list of potential beneficiaries, the NEF has come up with a set of criteria and methodology to shortlist the neediest ones. As at December 2020, 98 NHDC housing units have been purchased by the NEF for the benefit of landless SRM beneficiaries.

Community Development

839. Coordinating Working Group (CWG) was launched per district, regrouping private and public partners, NGOs/ “Force Vives” and Civil Society to work together for a holistic community development approach.

840. Community Working Groups were set up in 9 districts in Mauritius and in Rodrigues. The main philosophy behind the setting up of the CWGs is as follows:

- a) to coordinate participation of different stakeholder involved in alleviating by bringing under one platform all actors involved in alleviating poverty; and
- b) to align efforts of different stakeholders to find possible solutions for social problems in targeted M/VCAs to avoid duplication of services/facilities, to ensure result-based interventions and pool resources for community-based service delivery and community development projects targeted to improve the lives of vulnerable families and upgrade the living environment in M/VCAs.

841. Functions of the Community Working Groups are as follows:

- a) to facilitate collaboration and build synergies among stakeholders dealing with the issues of poverty, individuals and community empowerment;
- b) to increase access to services to beneficiaries and ensure that each institution provides services/facilities/schemes to beneficiaries, not available at the NEF;
- c) to strengthen the commitment of stakeholders to advocate and support in the implementation of the Marshall Plan; and
- d) to ensure sustained funding for projects where the NEF has limited or no resources.

842. Some projects implemented and ongoing through CWGs are as follows:

- a) Medical Screening;
- b) Training for Empowerment and self-entrepreneurship;
- c) Sports & Recreational Activities;
- d) Support to hardship cases; and
- e) Sensitization Campaigns.

843. Life Enhancement Education Programme, commonly known as training in Life Skills, is yet another instrument, which was introduced and is helping towards changing and transforming the mindset of beneficiaries for a better future. A package of programmes was mounted to help address issues such as Self Esteem, Health and Contraceptive measures, importance of education and Family Budgeting, Entrepreneurship skills & preparing for workplace and ensuring good neighbourhood, Substance Abuse and Moral Values. For the period ending December 2020, some 2,000 beneficiaries have benefited from the programme.

Training and Placement

844. Unemployed heads of households and dependents are referred to be registered as being unemployed and are offered the relevant training and placement.

845. Alternatively, training opportunities are also being provided to beneficiaries in the fields such as Electrical Installation, Plumbing & Pipe Fitting and Housekeeping. The purpose is to develop the soft skills of SRM Beneficiaries so that they can better respond to the market needs all while promoting their social inclusion and cohesion.

846. The training package consists of a monthly stipend of Rs 5,000 and a travelling allowance of Rs 1,000 to those who attend the training. Upon successful completion of their training, they are offered a toolkit so that they can start their own practice or business. As at December 2020, some 2,700 beneficiaries have benefited from the training programme.

OBJECTIVE VIII

Securing Right to Sustainable Development

PRIORITY ACTION 88:

Government will, through the Maurice Ile Durable Strategy and Action Plan, secure sustainable development.

848. The MESWMCC has developed a new Solid Waste Management Strategy and Action focussing on resource recovery and recycling with the financial assistance of the Agence Française de Développement. As Phase 2 of the study, a feasibility study is currently being carried out on the setting-up of regional composting plants and sorting units. With the setting-up and operation of these facilities envisaged in the medium term, the current solid waste management system would be called for a major change, with waste segregation at source then becoming a reality in Mauritius. Once these facilities are operational, organic wastes (food wastes and yard wastes) would be separately collected for composting while recyclable materials (paper, plastics, glass, metals) would be sorted for sale to recyclers.

849. In addition to the Solid Waste Management Strategy, the MESWMCC has also embarked on the development of an Integrated Solid Waste Management Act. To that regard, the draft Terms of Reference for the procurement of the Consultancy Services for the drafting of the Integrated Waste Management Bill are being finalised. In the meantime, preliminary discussions are being held with potential funding agencies for the financing of the Consultancy Services.

850. In a document entitled ‘Achieving the Second Economic Miracle and Vision 2030’, published in August 2015, Government has announced that it remains committed to adopting responsible and environmentally sustainable policy regarding energy production, waste management and physical infrastructural development and that Government would invest massively in these sectors during the next five years.

Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency

851. The Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA) Act was enacted in August 2015 and came into force in December of the same year. The main object of the legislation is to promote the development and use of renewable energy in Mauritius and Rodrigues with a view, inter alia, to attaining the sustainable development goals and increasing the use of renewable energy in the energy mix.

852. MARENA has finalized its strategic Plan 2018-2023 in August 2018.

853. The Maurice Ile Durable (MID) Commission falls under the PMO. As from January 2015, further to government decision, the MID Commission under the PMO was dissolved.

Switch Africa Green project

854. Mauritius is implementing the Switch Africa Green project with the financial support of the European Union and the technical support of United Nations Agencies, namely the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Office for Project Services and the UNDP. The objective of the project is to promote a shift to Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns with a view to achieving sustainable development. In this context, the project aims at encouraging green business development.
855. A policy review exercise was carried out in 2016 and a Country Implementation Plan was developed to facilitate action for greening businesses and setting up of new green businesses in the following sectors: Manufacturing, Tourism and Agriculture.
856. Capacity building requirements, legal and policy instruments to promote greening of the economy and sensitisation needs have been formulated.
857. A National Networking exercise was also carried out in 2017 with practitioners of Green Economy, the public sector, the private sector and the civil society for outreach and networking.
858. The Switch Africa Green Programme also has a component known as ‘Green Business Development which is supported by grants to promote the setting up of green enterprises. Under phase 1 of the programme, 6 projects from the Republic of Mauritius obtained grants to promote capacity building and skill development for SMEs. The following activities were carried out:
- a) promoting Sustainable Local Agriculture through Green Retail and Green Hospitality - University of Mauritius;
 - b) programme National d'Efficacité Energétique- PNEE - Business Mauritius ;
 - c) greening the Mauritian Tourism Industry - Association des Hôtels de Charme Mauritius ;
 - d) a Model for Sustainable Production and Consumption Practices and Eco-Entrepreneurship development- Centre de Formation Agricole Frère Remy (Rodrigues);
 - e) increase capacity building of Fisher's community of Rodrigues through training for the bio cultivation of Combava lime plants and the production of chili paste - The Department of Fisheries (Rodrigues); and
 - f) developing capacity amongst Rodriguans to adopt green businesses through training of key stakeholders and the development of a green business guidebook- Commission for Environment (Rodrigues).

859. Under phase 2 of the project, which spans from January 2018 to December 2021, policy recommendations of the Country Implementation Plan are being implemented. In this context, funds have been secured from the European Union (EU) for the project “Development of a standard for manure from animal wastes”. This project seeks to generate a standard that specifies the requirements for treated manure from farm animals and at the same time ensure quality sustainable fertilizer for food crop production. The project would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental pollution from animal husbandry. The MS 196: Specifications for treated farm animal manure was developed, which was followed by the identification of appropriate manure treatment methods. The project is now proceeding with the evaluation phase, which would consist of assessing the potential of the treated manure on growth and the yield of selected vegetable crops as soil conditioner.
860. A framework is also being developed at the National Environmental Laboratory of the MESWMCC, for pesticide residue testing in environmental media. Pesticide residues from agricultural run-off which, might affect the quality of our aquifers and surface water will be monitored.
861. Under phase 2 of the programme, the Mauritius Tourism Authority has also secured a grant of about 1.2 million Euros to implement a project entitled ‘Improving Sustainable Tourism in Mauritius through greening the value chain of tour operators.’ The project which was launched in July 2018 would end in December 2021 and aims at mainstreaming sustainable consumption and production patterns through capacity building.
862. Furthermore, 2 networking forums have been organised with stakeholders, namely, the women sector and the cooperatives sector in February 2019 to raise awareness on opportunities that exist for green business development. The participants were sensitised on the concept of Green Economy and SCP practices. They were also provided information on existing enabling conditions to support transition to a Green Economy.

PRIORITY ACTION 89:

- (a) Government will come up with comprehensive legislative and institutional frameworks to protect and enhance Environmentally Sensitive Areas, such as rivers, wetlands, beaches, lagoons and coral reefs. Legislation shall be strengthened for the better protection of marine resources.**

863. In 2016, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) approved a project for Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Management of the Coastal Zone in the Republic of Mauritius “the Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project”, with the UNDP as the Executing Agency. The project is funded with a grant of USD 4.66

million from GEF, and co-financing contributions (largely in-kind) of USD 15.31 million, for total funding of USD 19.97 million. The UNDP/GEF/GoM project is being implemented over a period of five years, from 2017 to 2021, recently approved for extension until December 2022. The overall purpose of the project is to address the urgent need for more effective management of resources in the coastal zone of Mauritius, with specific emphasis on preservation of biodiversity and reversal of land degradation. This also includes putting in place a Wetlands Act by the end of the project.

864. The overarching objective of this project is geared towards mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services into coastal zone management and into the operations and policies of the tourism and physical development sectors in Mauritius.

865. As the implementing Partner for the Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project, the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping (MBEMRFS) is the Government institution responsible for the overall implementation of the project through a Steering Committee under their chair. Other lead agencies include the MESWMCC, the MOAIFS, Ministry of Tourism and the RRA, with the support of various government and parastatal bodies, as well as representatives from the private sector, academia and NGOs.

Fisheries and Marine Resources

866. To protect the lagoons and coral reefs, the MBEMRFS (Fisheries Division) has completely reviewed the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act 2007, and a new Fisheries Bill is to be tabled, shortly.

867. The bill addresses the management objectives of Fisheries of the Republic of Mauritius and, amongst others, takes into due account the following in accordance with international agreements or conventions or instruments, namely:

- a) ensure long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources;
- b) provide protection of the marine biodiversity, in particular vulnerable marine ecosystems;
- c) provide for the development and management of sustainable fishing and aquaculture activities;
- d) conduct responsible fish farming and aquaculture;
- e) ensure effective monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement of fishing and fishing related activities;
- f) conduct research or cause research to be conducted in areas related to fisheries, fishing and conservation and to operate national research centres for such purpose; and

- g) combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

868. The MBEMRFS (Fisheries Division) has been assigned responsibility for Lot 2 and Lot 4 of Component 2 of the Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project, that is, ‘Strengthening Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Consultancy Services have already been acquired to conduct of the following activities:

- Lot 2: Analysis of the institutional and governance arrangement for MPAs management in the Republic of Mauritius (October 2018) -Consultancy firm: MacAlister Elliott and Partners Ltd
- Lot 4: Development of management plans for six fishing reserves and a Lagoon Rehabilitation Plan in Mauritius (October 2018). -Consultancy firm: MacAlister Elliott and Partners Ltd
- Lot 2: Development of an investment framework and financing strategy to realise the values and benefits of MPAs, and increase the financing flows to MPAs - Consultancy firm: MacAlister Elliott and Partners Ltd
- Lot 1: carry out economic evaluations of coastal and marine ecosystems for Rodrigues and one District (Black River) in Mauritius, two MPAs (SEMPA and Blue Bay) and the northern coastal wetlands (April 2019). -Consultancy firm: Sustain Value Ltd

869. Under Component 2, the main activities with regard to Mauritius island have been completed, including the review of the institutional framework for MPA, development of financial strategy and investment framework for MPA, and management plans for the Fishing Reserves. The development of an operational and business plan for SEMPA has also been completed.

870. The MESWMCC is one of the several local agencies involved in the implementation phase, of the Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project and has been assigned the responsibility for Component 1, i.e. ‘Mainstreaming of biodiversity into local level physical development planning and tourism management’, which is specifically tuned towards the following three project outcomes:

- a) to have an updated Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), study including policies, strategies and action plans and recommendations for ESA management, as well as updated ESA maps which are transcribed into the appropriate instruments so that ESAs are taken into consideration when planning for new developments and are conserved;
- b) to support the development of a holistic approach to Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) planning that fully addresses biodiversity, reflects principles and international best practices being developed for ICZM planning and the “ridge-to-reef” approach for Rodrigues and Black River District (the latter to act as a demonstration for replication in other Districts); and

- c) to develop ICZM plans using a participatory and consultative approach which will ensure that marine and coastal ESAs are fully integrated into the legal and administrative planning framework.

871. Most of the main activities under Component 1 have been completed, including the multi-spectral drone survey, submission and sharing of ESA shape files with relevant stakeholders.

872. The MESWMCC is also in the process of reviewing the Environment Protection Act. One of the themes to be addressed in the exercise is “an ESA Framework” for which the Consultants have submitted the following proposals:

- a) make use of conservation easements to protect ESAs;
- b) amend the Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Act (2015) to incorporate ESAs into the network of protected areas; and
- c) amend section 8(1) of the Constitution to include ‘environment protection’ to allow the Minister of Lands to compulsorily acquire land for the protection of ESAs.

873. Furthermore, Government is also envisaging to come up with an ESA Bill which will be worked out under a recently-approved GEF grant project namely, “Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and Biodiversity Conservation in the Republic of Mauritius”, being led by the MOAIFS.

PRIORITY ACTION 89:

(b) Awareness and educational programmes shall be pursued to bring about a more responsible behaviour and attitude towards nature.

874. The Information and Education Division of the Department of Environment, MESWMCC, is responsible for awareness-raising and sensitisation of the general public. Its role is to promote informal environmental education to change attitudes and behaviours of people for a greener, cleaner and sustainable Mauritius.

875. The Division has developed a broad-based sensitization programme aimed at different target groups, namely, children, youth, women, senior citizens, trade unions, private sector, NGOs and the public in general, among others. Various communication tools are regularly adopted and information is disseminated through the media, talks, exhibitions and other programmes. Resource materials such as pamphlets, posters, roller banners, short clips/films and TV/radio spots are developed. The Division also provides the services of resource persons to deliver talks on various environmental issues.

876. Each year, the Division coordinates and organises activities including major international environmental events such as Earth Day on 22nd April, World Environment Day on 5th June and Clean up the world during the 3rd weekend of September.
877. Guided visits at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre (AFRC) are on-going for sensitization on activities to manage, protect and conserve marine biodiversity, habitats and ecosystems. The public is also encouraged to visit the Blue Bay Marine Park Centre and the Blue Bay Marine Park, which is also a RAMSAR Site, that is, a Marine Wetland of International Importance for the species and ecological diversity it sustains and, for information on Marine Protected Areas. Every year, the AFRC conducts training session for undergraduate students of the University of Mauritius on marine turtle protection and conservation. The training also comprises case studies on cases of debilitated marine turtle that have been treated and rehabilitated.
878. Moreover, the Mainstreaming Biodiversity Project includes a Communication and Awareness Strategy and Action Plan to meet the project's need to engage in awareness-raising activities with the goal of educating and sensitising the people of Mauritius to conserve and protect biodiversity in general, and marine and coastal biodiversity in particular.

PRIORITY ACTION 90:

Government will take bold and firm actions to take up the challenge of climate change through a vulnerability assessment. National Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies and Action Plans shall be developed and implemented.

Street and Public Area Lighting

879. A study was carried out in 2018 by the Energy Efficiency Management Office (EEMO) of the MEPU with the aim of enhancing energy efficiency in street and public area through the use of LED lights. As part of the study, a local standard and a design guideline for Mauritius for street and public area were developed. Demonstration projects were successfully implemented to provide evidence on the suitability of the specifications and LED lights in street and public lighting applications. Wide implementation is expected to lead to a reduction in energy use for street and public area lighting and hence there would be less electricity demand from the grid. Additionally, the security aspect associated with street lighting may be enhanced as a result of improved lighting levels.

880. Under the Local Development Projects 2020-2021, the progress achieved with regard to the fixing of Led Lanterns by the Local Authorities are as follows:

Table 66: Fixing of Led Lanterns by the Local Authorities

SN	Municipal/District Councils	Lighting
1	Port Louis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 374 LED Lights purchased. • 36 have already been fixed. • Council envisaged fixing around 175 LED lights in the coming 6 weeks.
2	Quatre Bornes	No lighting project.
3	Beau Bassin – Rose Hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 831 led lanterns have already been fixed. • 195 to be fixed shortly
4	Curepipe	Completed
5	Vacoas-Phoenix	Completed.
6	District Council of Black River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixing of Lanterns in progress. • 25% completed.
7	District Council of Moka	Completed.
8	Flacq	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,000 street lanterns have been received. • Fixing of Lanterns in progress. • 70% completed
9	Riviere du Rempart	Completed.
10	Pamplemousses	Completed.
11	Grand Port	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fixing of Lanterns in progress. • 20% completed.
12	Savanne	Fixing of Lanterns in progress.

Source: Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management

Energy Observatory Report

881. The EEMO publishes the Energy Observatory Report on yearly basis. Energy Observatory Reports are annual reports on energy efficiency and energy consumption, which serve as tools for strategic decision making, and are also meant for the general public. The Energy Observatory Report is freely available on the website of the EEMO.
882. Government has placed climate change high on its agenda and is fully committed to put Mauritius on the track of sustainable development by promoting a low carbon economy pathway as well as building resilience against the growing threats of climate change. The Government Programme 2015-2019 as well as the Vision 2030, have left no stone unturned to meet adaptation and mitigation objectives, and to abide the requirements of all international obligations. Furthermore, the Government Programme 2020-2024 clearly provides that to ensure sustainability and responsible investment, Mauritius aims at championing a new development policy based on four pillars, including mitigating risks from climate change, and further provides that a High level Inter-Ministerial Council shall be set up to identify and mitigate risks arising from global warming and climate change.
883. Mauritius is also party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Paris Agreement, the Kyoto protocol, the Sendai Framework as well as the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.M.O.A) Pathway. Mauritius is doing its fair share to implement recommendations of these international agreements, with the development of several national as well as sectoral strategies and action plans.

Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies

884. Government has come up with strategic legislations to deal with the challenges and impacts of climate change. Legislation has been promulgated while others are being finalised to strengthen the environmental management and sustainable development frameworks of the country. Government has also mainstreamed a culture of meaningful and constructive stakeholder participation and involvement in the decision-making process with a strong focus on public-private partnership and close collaboration with civil society to embrace good governance and transparency and “leaving no one behind” along the sustainable development pathway.
885. Among key legislative and policy measures set in place the following are included:
- a) a National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework was developed in 2012 to integrate climate change and disaster risk reduction into core policies, strategies and plans in key sectors such as water, agriculture, fisheries, tourism and coastal zones;
 - b) the Mauritius Renewable energy Agency Act 2015 was promulgated with the setting up of the MARENA in 2016 to oversee the development of renewable energy in Mauritius and to achieve at least 35% of renewable energy production by 2025 in the context of the Renewable

Energy Roadmap 2030 in the Electricity sector; This target has been increased to 60% of Renewable Energy in the energy mix by 2030;

- c) a National Disasters Scheme (NDS) was prepared in 2015, to support agencies and stakeholders in understanding and undertaking their roles, responsibilities and actions in emergencies. The document provides for the following: Cyclone emergency Scheme; Heavy rainfall, Torrential rain and Flooding Emergency Scheme; Tsunami Emergency Scheme; High Waves Emergency Scheme; Water Crisis Emergency Scheme; Earthquake Emergency Scheme Landslide Emergency Scheme and Port Louis Flood Response Plan; and
- d) the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2016 was promulgated with the objective to provide for; prevention and reduction of the risk of disasters; mitigation of the adverse impacts of disasters; disaster preparedness; effective response to disasters; and management of post-disaster activities, including recovery and rehabilitation. This piece of legislation provides for a National Disaster Risk reduction and Management Council, which oversee the implementation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Strategic Framework and National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan. It also lays down national guidelines for disaster risk reduction and management at sectoral levels;
- e) the Land Drainage Authority Act 2017, which provides for the setting up of a Land Drainage Authority whose objects are the development and implementation of a Land Drainage Master Plan. The Act also makes provisions for a complete inventory and mapping of all existing natural and man-made drainage infrastructure with a view to enhance our resilience against flash floods;
- f) the Local Government (Amendment) Act 2018, which establishes penalties of up to Rs 50, 000 for any person who undertakes development works without being the holder of a Building and Land Use Permit and who undertake development works not in accordance with that permit. The Act also provides for the pulling down of illegal constructions on any canal, river or drain;
- g) in addition to the above, the Climate Change Act 2020 was assented and gazetted in November 2020. The main object of the Act is to establish a legal framework towards making Mauritius a climate-change resilient, and low carbon country. The Act is aimed at addressing the adverse effects of climate change and developing Mauritius into a greener economy. It will also assist Mauritius in meeting its obligations under the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and any other related instrument on climate change. It noteworthy that the Climate Change Act was mentioned as one of the deliverables of the country's 2015 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC).

Emergency Alert App

886. The Emergency Alert App allows users, disabled persons included, to receive timely information and updates generated by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre NDRRMC, that will enable the issue of timely, coordinated and efficient distribution of alerts, warnings and advisories to the general public and key stakeholders in times of emergencies/disaster.

MyT Weather App

887. The application was developed by Mauritius Telecom in collaboration with NDRRMC and Mauritius Meteorological Services for dissemination of information to the population, including disabled persons. The MyT Weather is a free Mobile App developed by the Mauritius Telecom. It contains inputs from the MMS, the Police and the NDRRMC/ NEOC before, during and after any emergency. It was launched in January 2018. The MyT Weather App includes Alerts, Communiques, vital information, daily weather forecast, hotline at one click dial for all responders with maps. Same is accessible to the disabled community also.

National Multi Hazard Emergency Alert System

888. The National Multi-Hazard Emergency Alert System (NMH-EAS) is a project undertaken by the NDRRMC in line with Sendai Framework and as per Section 9(2)(f) of the NDRRM Act 2016. The Phase I of the project is expected to go live in year 2021. It will provide for a reliable high performance system to disseminate warnings and alerts to a maximum number of people (including persons with disabilities) and stakeholders in the Republic of Mauritius within an acceptable time frame through a number of communication channels such as television, radio, the Internet, emails, mobile phones applications and social media amongst others.

Development of contingency plans for vulnerable areas, Critical Infrastructure, Residential Care Homes and School Emergency Response Plan (SERP)

889. Contingency plans have been developed for vulnerable areas, critical infrastructure which are located in flood prone and life critical threatening areas. In addition, plans have been developed for schools and residential care homes. These plans elaborate on the roles, responsibilities and actions of stakeholders to save/protect life and as well as reduce the impacts flooding.

Disaster Information Management System (MauDIMS)

890. The MauDIMS is an online database which stores disaster related information, including information on disabled persons, which is located on the Government Cloud located at the Government Online Centre. The MauDIMS will allow for analysing disaster data for Disaster Risk Reduction, development planning, or monitoring global progress in line with Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM), established at the level of the UNDRR. MauDIMS will enable the Mauritian Government to measure progress towards the

achievement of the global targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and to integrate these indicators into the monitoring framework for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Protocol on Heavy Rainfall for the Public and Private Sector

891. A Protocol for Heavy Rainfall for Public and Private sector have been put into place. This Protocol seeks to provide advice and practical guidelines on work arrangements in times of heavy rainfall/localised heavy rainfall and aims at ensuring the safety of employees and service continuity.

CaDRI Report

892. A diagnosis of the disaster risk management system at national and local levels was undertaken in year 2020 covering six sectors, namely, tourism, environment, agriculture, water and sanitization, health and education with infrastructure development as cross cutting. Following Government's approval, a steering committee is presently overseeing the implementation of the recommendation of the CaDRI Report.

893. A number of institutions were also set up to implement measures including strategies and action plan.

894. Following the promulgation of the Climate Change Act 2020, a Department of Climate Change has been created within MESWMCC, having the following functions:

- a) promote adaptation and mitigation measures to address climate change in relevant sectors;
- b) develop and coordinate policies, projects, strategies, programmes and action plans to address the adverse effects of climate change and oversee their implementation by relevant stakeholders, including Government departments, statutory bodies and private institutions;
- c) formulate and update guidelines for the conduct of vulnerability and risk assessments relating to climate change;
- d) establish procedures and issue guidelines to reduce emissions of greenhouse gas;
- e) establish reporting mechanisms for public and private institutions, including statutory bodies, relating to climate change;
- f) establish and maintain a climate change database system to enable the assessment, monitoring, reporting;
- g) compile, analyse and disseminate information on climate change;

- h) provide technical support and facilitate and coordinate research and studies by public and private institutions, including statutory bodies, in relation to adaptation and mitigation measures relating to climate change;
- i) promote the implementation of Article 6 of UNFCCC on education, training and public awareness on climate change and related matters;
- j) prepare, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the National Inventory Report, the report on national communications and such other report as may be required to meet the obligations of Mauritius under UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and any other instrument relating to climate change;
- k) mobilise necessary technical and financial resources for the formulation and implementation of projects on climate change with a view to implementing UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and any other related international instrument;
- l) promote and enhance the participation of stakeholders, including the business community, non-governmental organisations and local communities, in climate change matters;
- m) commission studies on climate change, taking into consideration, inter alia, human rights, cultural heritage and gender issues;
- n) identify the particular and specific vulnerabilities and susceptibilities of Mauritius, as a Small Island Developing State, to climate change, and measures to address them;
- o) establish links, and cooperate, with Small Island Developing States and other regional blocks so as to mobilise resources to implement common mitigation and adaptation measures;
- p) establish a network at national, regional and international levels with institutions and organisations that work on climate change issues;
- q) publish information relating to climate change, including initiatives and activities to address climate change;
- r) monitor the level of greenhouse gas emissions and removal by sink to ascertain and ensure that greenhouse gas emissions are reduced as required under UNFCCC;
- s) monitor the implementation of sectoral climate change adaptation policy and measures to ascertain that the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan is complied with; and

- t) monitor the implementation of sectoral climate change mitigation policy and measures to ascertain that the National Climate Change Mitigation Strategy and Action Plan is complied with.

895. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (NDRRMC) was set up in 2013, following the flash flood of March 2013, which caused the death of 11 people in Port Louis. The NDRRMC acts as the main institution for the planning, organizing, coordinating and monitoring of disaster risk reduction and management activities for the Republic of Mauritius. The NDRRMC coordinates with all stakeholders to ensure that risk reduction and preparedness planning are included at all levels of the country, from individuals and communities, to Government policy and strategy.

896. The National Emergency Operations Command (NEOC) is activated whenever a disaster or any other major crisis becomes imminent. It is a multi-agency coordination body that provides support and coordination to the on-scene responders during an escalating incident. The NEOC is the country's central command and control facility responsible to coordinate and monitor preparedness, response, relief and recovery activities associated to the event.

897. The management of crises/emergencies/disasters operates on a three-tier system involving the National Crisis Committee at the Minister's level, the NEOC at national level and the Local Emergency Operations Command (LEOC) at municipal/district council levels. At Rodrigues, there is the Rodrigues Emergency Operations Command (REOC), which activates during a disaster. However, the NEOC oversees and supports the REOC.

898. A Disaster Response Unit consisting of a specialised unit within the Special Mobile Force, to assist the NEOC, the LEOC and the REOC in disaster response operations.

899. With appropriate training to enable them to gain first-hand knowledge on basic disaster preparedness and response skills, the Community Disaster Response Team under the Community Disaster Programme is designated to promptly assist persons in distress until the arrival of First Responders through training and pre-planning.

900. A Geotechnical Unit has been set up at the Ministry of National Infrastructure and Community Development (MNICD) in 2016 in replacement of the Landslide Management Unit, to carry out investigations and propose countermeasures for landslide prone area, soil erosion and rock fall. The unit also provides clearance for application in respect of new IRS Projects and Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) including development on sloppy and risky land area.

901. The setting up of a Land Drainage Authority in 2017 for the development and implementation of a land Drainage Master Plan to increase our resilience against flash floods through the construction of new drains, upgrading and rehabilitation of existing drain structures, dredging of rivers and construction of retaining walls.

Technical Assistance for an Institutional Gaps and Needs Assessment to implement the provisions of the Climate Change Act 2020 in the Republic of Mauritius

902. Technical assistance has been sought from the European Union (EU) to assist the Government in meeting its obligations under the UNFCCC, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and any other related instrument on climate change. In this respect, the Terms of Reference for the assessment on the institutional gaps and needs of institutions to implement the Climate Change Act 2020, has been prepared. The EU has agreed to fund the technical assistance to the tune of Euro 100,000 under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) Technical Cooperation Facility.

903. The project will be implemented in two phases as follows:

- a) Phase 1: to carry out an Institutional Gaps and Needs Assessment of concerned public and private institutions, including the MOESWMCC to enable the implementation of the Climate Change Act 2020. The Act makes provisions for Ministries and private enterprises to have climate duties in terms of taking into account climate change in their policies, strategies, action plans as well as monitor and review the implementation of the adaptation and mitigation measures; and
- b) Phase 2: implementation of the short-term capacity-building plan for the Climate Change Department, including training of the latter Department staff as well nominated climate focal staff in concerned ministries/departments, in climate change mainstreaming and reporting. It is proposed to hire a high caliber capacity building expert for the training components and the timing would preferably be when the second batch of officers have been recruited which could take place in July/August 2022 or at a date as may be mutually agreed between MOESWMCC and the EU.

First NDC for Mauritius

904. The Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) approved and submitted by the Republic of Mauritius on 28 September 2015 is now considered as the first NDC for Mauritius. The Mauritius NDC pledges for a quantified economy-wide target to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by up to 30% by the year 2030 relative to the business as usual scenario, subject to support from the international communities. The implementation of the NDC for the Republic of Mauritius would require over USD1.5 billion for mitigation measures and about USD 4 billion for adaptation measures across all the sectors. Mauritius has signed and ratified the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016.

Second NDC for Mauritius

905. The timeframe for implementation of the Mauritius NDC is up to 2030 and hence the country is currently undertaking the review of the NDC with the objective of revising and communicating an enhanced NDC

with greater ambition. The NDC revision is an opportunity to incorporate the current realities and progress on the ground made since the last NDC submission in 2015.

906. The review of the Mauritius NDC is being supported by AFD under the Adapt Action Programme and the UNDP under the Climate Promise Initiative. The National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework (NCCAPF 2012) is being reviewed under the Climate Promise Initiative. The updated NDC for Mauritius and the revised NCCAPF, are expected prior to Conference of Parties (COP26), which will be held in Glasgow in November 2021.

Mitigation measures identified in the NDC

907. The following mitigation activities have been identified:

- a) smart use of marine resources;
- b) expansion in solar, wind and biomass energy production and other renewable energy resources;
- c) sustainable consumption and production in all sectors of the economy;
- d) gradual shift towards the use of cleaner energy technologies, such as LNG, among others;
- e) modernisation of the national electricity grid through the use of smart technologies, which is a prerequisite to accelerate the uptake of renewable energy;
- f) efficient use of energy through the deployment of appropriate technologies in all sectors of the economy and awareness raising on energy conservation;
- g) sustainable transportation, including promotion of energy efficient mass transportation systems based on hybrid technologies and cleaner energy sources;
- h) climate smart agriculture including bio-farming;
- i) sustainable and integrated waste management, including waste to energy;
- j) sustained tree planting programme within the context of the cleaner, greener and safer initiative; and
- k) leapfrog to low global warming potential refrigerants.

Table 67: Adaptation measures identified in the NDC

Sector	Priority Adaptation Actions
Infrastructure	Protection of Infrastructure will be enhanced against climate change calamities.
Disaster Risk Reduction	Objective is to understand disaster risk, implement disaster risk strategy, strengthen management of related governance and invest in resilience.
Coastal Zone Management	Improve awareness, enhance rehabilitation and strengthen regulatory framework for protection of beach, dunes and vegetation.
Water Resources Management	Improve forecasting, management, protection and quality of water resources, including upgrading and building of new treatment plants and reservoirs and reducing water losses in the distribution system.
Rainwater Harvesting	Procurement and installation of rainwater harvesting systems and improvement in policy, legal and regulatory water framework in mainland Mauritius, Rodrigues and other outer islands.
Desalination	Small desalination projects, especially for Rodrigues island.
Integrated Pest and Disease Management	Develop an integrated strategy and policy to foster adoption of Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) practices including the review of policy and regulatory framework to facilitate the upscaling of IPDM technology and regulate the use and disposal of pesticides.
Efficient Irrigation Techniques Development	Investment in water infrastructure to support irrigation projects and development of a policy framework to enhance access to, and productive use of, water in the agricultural sector. Promote climate smart agriculture practices.
Climate Smart Fisheries	Development and implementation of sustainable fishing management plans, strengthening of institutional capacity and adaptation of infrastructure (quay) to climate change (sea level rise).

Sector	Priority Adaptation Actions
Improve Marine and Terrestrial Biodiversity Resilience	Improvement of the management of marine and terrestrial protected areas and expansion of protected area network including rehabilitation of wetlands, sea-grass, mangrove plantation, increase in tree coverage areas and coral reef rehabilitation/ farming.
Health Sector	Mainstream climate change adaptation in health sector to respond to population increase and its additional climate- related health burden. Develop and implement a communication, education and awareness strategy with respect to climate change risks and impacts on human health. Improve surveillance of diseases associated with climate change and develop and implement a decentralized alert and rapid response mechanism.

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

Adapt'Action Programme- NDC Implementation

908. The French Government, through the AFD, has set up the Adapt'Action Programme to help 15 vulnerable developing countries from Africa and Small Island Developing States to achieve low-carbon and climate resilient development with a focus on adaptation to climate change. Under this assistance Mauritius would benefit in terms of capacity building, feasibility studies and impact assessment worth EURO 2 million. The assistance will help Mauritius to access funds from the Green Climate Fund and other funding institutions for the implementation of the Mauritius' NDC.

909. The assistance programme has 3 axes namely:

- a) strengthen climate governance to ensure effective implementation of NDC by conducting capacity building activities for all sectors;
- b) translate measures identified under NDCs into sectoral public policies, combined with concrete action plans focusing on key relevant sectors; and
- c) design transformational climate programmes and projects with a priority focus on adaptation based on a robust analysis of issues concerning vulnerability to climate change and the various potential adaptation solutions, and integrating the management of uncertainty.

910. The assistance was formalised through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Mauritius, AFD and Expertise France on 12 December 2017 during the ‘One Planet Summit’ held in France.

Technical Assistance for the review and update of the Mauritius’ NDC

911. Under the Adapt’ Action Programme, a proposal has been made for the recruitment of a Consultant specialised on climate change to support the review and update of the Mauritius’s NDC.

912. The overall objective of this consultancy is to assess, review and update the NDC for submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat ahead of COP26 in 2020. The support that will be provided by the French Government, through the AFD and Expertise France, has the following specific objectives:

- a) diagnosis of mitigation and adaptation measures in key sectors identified in the NDC and its action plan and identify the gaps and needs for the full operationalisation of the NDC;
- b) review and update the initial targets set in the NDC based on measures taken since its submission to the UNFCCC, and provide recommendations for the mainstreaming of climate change in regulatory and legal documents;
- c) capacity building of main stakeholders for NDC implementation and monitoring, notably through the development of a domestic Monitoring, reporting and Verification (MRV) framework;
- d) the setting up of a mechanism for assessing Carbon Footprint of implemented measures; and
- e) elaboration of a Communication Plan for awareness-rising about UNFCCC, Paris Agreement and NDC Process.

913. The Estimated Cost Implication is Euro 164,000.

Other Strategies/ Measures

914. A 2050 Pathways Calculator for Mauritius has been developed with the technical and financial assistance of the UK Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC). The tool allows countries to answer the fundamental questions of how far greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions can be reduced and how energy needs can be met. The 2050 Pathways Calculator is a ground-breaking instrument which can assist to proactively plan for future energy efficient strategy. It is also a decision-making instrument for policy makers as well as technical cadres to develop low emissions strategies while promoting sustainable development over the coming decades.

915. The Third National Communication (TNC) was prepared and submitted to the UNFCCC Secretariat in January 2017. The report comprises of a national inventory of the greenhouse gas emissions for the period 2006-2013.
916. Mauritius is formulating a Low Carbon Development Strategy in order to develop an appropriate national mitigation action plan. A grant funding of USD 1.45 million from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for its implementation. The main objective is to enhance the national capacity for formulating and prioritising Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) projects and further develop the local capability to design and implement NAMA projects in the energy sector.
917. Under the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), project proposal submitted to Green Climate Fund (GCF), vulnerability assessment would be carried out in the following sectors: coastal zone, agriculture and fisheries. The draft NAP proposal is in process of finalisation.
918. Moreover, a toolkit for climate change Vulnerability Assessment and Identification of Adaptation Options for the Municipal Council of Vacoas Phoenix was formulated. It is designed to strengthen the internal capacity of both the council and its staff to manage the local impacts of climate change and engage its communities in risk management processes.
919. A capacity-building workshop on vulnerability assessment and adaptation was conducted in July 2018 targeting youths, women, NGOs and private sector.

Study on the Real Cause of Flooding in Flood-Prone Areas in Mauritius

920. Following announcement made in the Budget Speech 2018-2019 for the conduct of an audit of rivers and watercourses with a view to taking remedial action for better protection of lives and properties, consultancy services were enlisted by the MESWMCC for a “Study on Audit of Rivers and Watercourses” project.
921. The purpose of the study, which is ongoing, is to:
- a) identify the stretches of rivers and watercourses that cause recurrent flooding;
 - b) draw up an inventory and mapping of these rivers and watercourses;
 - c) investigate the causes of flooding of the identified rivers and watercourses and determine their carrying capacity;
 - d) make recommendations for appropriate remedial measures to mitigate flooding at the identified rivers and watercourses; and

- e) prepare a costed Restoration Action Plan, priority wise, for rivers and watercourses requiring urgent remedial actions.

922. Upon completion, the findings and recommendations of the “Study on Audit of Rivers and Watercourses” would be communicated to relevant stakeholders for implementation of the proposed flood mitigation measures.

Coastal Protection Works

923. The coastal zone has been subject to increasing pressure from both land-based and sea-based activities, which are further exacerbated by the impacts of climate change and associated sea level rise. One of the most visible impacts is the accelerated rate and magnitude of beach erosion.

924. Based on the recommendations made under Expert studies, a continuous coastal rehabilitation programme is being implemented at priority eroded sites by the MESWMCC (Environment and Climate Change Division) to increase the resilience of our beaches to climate change and to safeguard our natural assets for the benefit of our citizens and the tourism industry. Coastal protection and rehabilitation works were undertaken at many critical eroded sites, namely Grand Baie, Pointe Aux Sables, Poudre d'Or, Cap Malheureux, Beach adjacent to the cemetery Quatre Soeurs, Grand River South East, Bain Boeuf, Baie du Cap, La Prairie, La Preneuse, Le Morne, St Felix, Grand Sable, Grand Port, Roche Noires, Case Noyale, Residence La Chaux, Grand Baie Sunset Boulevard, Baie du Tombeau and Saint Martin, Bel Ombre.

925. Rehabilitation of other eroded sites is ongoing at Pointe aux Feuilles to Grand Sable, Providence- East coast, Petit Sable to Bambous Virieux, Bambous Virieux to Anse Jonchee, Bois des Amourettes, and Deux Freres.

926. Consultancy services are also being sought for coastal rehabilitation works of Rivière des Creoles and Vieux Grand Port, following the MV Wakashio oil spill.

Climate Change Adaptation Programme in the Coastal Zone of Mauritius

927. The Republic of Mauritius secured a grant of USD 9,119,240 in 2012 from the Adaptation Fund Board for implementation of the project 'Climate Change Adaptation Programme in the Coastal Zone of Mauritius'.

928. The objective of the project was to increase climate resilience of communities and livelihoods in coastal areas of the Republic of Mauritius including coastal adaptation works at 3 pilot sites namely at Quatre Soeurs, Riviere des Galets and Mont Choisy.

929. The following works have been completed:

- a) the Mangroves Plantation Project - 20,000 Mangroves planted in region of Grand Sable;
- b) the implementation of a fully operational Warning System for Storm and Tidal Surge by the Mauritius Meteorological Services which can predict where and when storm surges can occur every six hours giving authorities enough time for evacuation of the area;
- c) a training and capacity building (13 Short Courses completed; 500 Participants trained; 4 Training Manuals Developed; and Collaboration with 6 International Universities);
- d) Knowledge Dissemination and Management (15,000 people sensitized and Mobile Education Unit 'Bis Lamer' introduced);
- e) the construction of a dedicated Refuge Centre at Quatre Soeurs: Coastal Adaptation Works at Riviere des Galets;
- f) Policy Mainstreaming (Development of a National Coastal Zone Adaptation Strategy including coastal vulnerability maps);
- g) Coastal Adaptation Works at Mont Choisy (Installation of Artificial Reefs, Beach Re-profiling, Groyne Removal); and
- h) a community based project in region of Grand Sable and Quatre Soeurs. The project aimed at enhancing the livelihood of women at Grand Sable in response to climate change impacts by promoting alternative income-generating activities such as sewing of cloth bags.

Incentives

930. The Government of Mauritius has put in place several schemes to promote renewable energies, re-use and recycling (composting) and resource efficiency for a low carbon development pathway. Mauritius has pledged in its NDC to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 30% by 2030 and major achievements pertain to the following:

- a) promotion of green design elements in school building - The design includes bioclimatic and site-specific design considerations including ceiling fans, sun breakers and louvered openings, rainwater harvesting, water saving devices, recharge of ground water, renewable energy (PV panels), eco-friendly materials, reuse of demolished materials, segregation of waste and endemic gardens, among others.

- b) promotion of Renewable energy - As per the Renewable Energy Roadmap 2030 in The Electricity sector, Government aims to increase renewable energy share, in the electricity sector, to 40% by 2030. This target has been increased to 60% by 2030. Government has announced the elimination of the use of coal before 2030.
- c) promotion of waste minimization.
- d) household Compost Scheme: compost bins were distributed to at least 6,000 households and 3,000 Small Planters in Mauritius and at least 1,000 households in Rodrigues to promote reuse and recycling and climate change mitigation through reduced greenhouse gas emissions. From 2016 to 31 December 2020, some 13,654 compost bins have been distributed to stakeholders.
- e) setting up of a solid waste recycling programme (compost scheme) - A compost plant with a capacity of 300 tonnes of unsorted municipal waste daily is operational at La Chaumiere since October 2011. As at June 2014, a total of 115,554 tons of waste have been composted.
- f) solar water heater scheme: For the Financial Year 2018-2019, the MESWMCC made arrangements for the installation of 1,143 units of solar water heaters at NHDC houses across the island. Furthermore, as at 31 December 2020, some additional 566 units were installed.

PRIORITY ACTION 91:

The Environment Protection Act and other associated environmental laws will be reviewed. The framework legislation on land use planning shall be strengthened. An integrated waste management strategy and legislation shall be adopted to promote waste reduction, reuse, sorting and recycling. Energy efficiency and conservation programmes shall be further promoted.

Energy Efficiency Awareness Campaign

931. The primary aim is to sensitize people on how to save energy and use energy efficiently.

932. Awareness campaigns are continuously carried out by the EEMO is a continuous activity and talks on energy saving and the efficient use of energy are delivered in primary schools, Community Centres, Social Welfare Centres and Hotels.

933. Since 2014, 450 awareness campaigns were carried out targeting some 15, 000 persons.

934. Awareness campaigns on energy saving and energy efficiency talks were carried out in Rodrigues in 2015, 2017 and in 2020.
935. Energy labels help the public in making informed decisions at the time of purchasing electrical appliances, which will translate in lower electricity consumption during the lifetime of the appliances. With these labels, it is easy for any potential customer to compare similar appliances and choose the most energy efficient one. This makes it easier for consumers to save money on their household energy bills and contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
936. Since the promulgation of the Energy Efficiency (Labelling of Regulated Machineries) Regulations 2017, 27 dealers were registered on the online system at the EEMO with 711 applications received and 696 certificates issued to dealers.
937. Large energy consumers in both the public and private sectors are required to carry out a mandatory energy audit when notified by the EEMO. The energy audits are instrumental in determining and quantifying the energy saving and energy improvements that may be achieved by large energy consumers. Since 2017, 41 notifications for mandatory energy audits were issued by the EEMO.

Environment Protection

938. The Environment Protection (Standards for Air) Regulations promulgated in 1998 under the Environment Protection Act was amended to be in line with the World Health Organisation, World Bank and European Union Guidelines. In the new regulations, maximum allowable limits for mercury emissions and its compounds derived from coal burning activities would be prescribed. Particulate matter of less than 2.5 microns would also be regulated. New provision is being introduced to regulate incinerators burning solid wastes, medical wastes and sludge from petroleum products.
939. One of the recommendations from the national consultations undertaken within the realm of the formulation of the Master Plan was to strengthen the Environment Protection Act so that it improves response to the current and emerging challenges identified in the master plan. In this respect, grant funding from the UNDP Country Office was secured for hiring of the services of experts to undertake an in-depth review of the legal and institutional framework governing environmental management in the Republic of Mauritius.
940. The Environment Protection Act 2002 is being amended with a view to strengthening the existing enforcement and compliance mechanisms, to make provision for the protection and conservation of ESA's and to render the law more effective to cope with emerging challenges; setting up of an Observatoire de L'Environnement, strengthening spill and environmental emergency, integrating Sustainable Development provisions and development of a Strategic Environment Assessment, amongst others. The existing provisions are being consolidated for better environmental protection and management, promotion and mainstreaming of both sustainable development and climate change. Hence, it would contribute towards a cleaner, greener and safer environment.

941. A two-day Consultative Workshop on 'National Environmental Policy' was organised by the MESWMCC in collaboration with the UNDP Country Office, in December 2020. The objective of the Workshop was, inter alia, to initiate public consultations for the in-depth review of the EPA 2002 so as to provide for better environmental management in light of various lessons learnt from existing and emerging environmental challenges as well as proposals received during the preparation of the Master Plan for the Environment sector in the Republic of Mauritius.

942. The EPA Bill is expected to be introduced in the National Assembly around September 2021.

Reuse of Treated Wastewater

943. With a view to reducing the pressure on water resources, by supplementing the freshwater water balance, leading to increase in water availability for potable use, the following are being proposed by the WMA:

- a) treated wastewater at tertiary level, where available, would be used for irrigation of lawns/golf course/Green Space at Hotels, IRS, shopping malls or other property developments not connected to the public sewer. Incentives on purchase of appropriate wastewater systems/equipment through financial assistance (loan at low interest rate or duty remission) could be given to the entities concerned; and
- b) the WMA has also enlisted the services of a Transaction Advisor for the Transaction Advisory Services for the new Roche Bois Wastewater Pumping Station and Baie du Tombeau Wastewater Treatment Plant on a Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) concept. The construction of the Baie du Tombeau Wastewater Treatment Plant would treat the effluent to an acceptable level, which would be safe for reuse/discharge into the environment. Furthermore, the construction of the new Roche Bois Pumping Station would enable abating of pollution caused by wastewater overflows.

Solid Waste Management

944. A new Solid Waste Management Strategy and Action focusing on Resource Recovery and Recycling has been developed with the financial assistance of the Agence Française de Développement. As at Phase 2 of the study, a feasibility study is currently, being carried out on the setting-up of regional composting plants and sorting units. With the setting-up and operation of these facilities envisaged in the medium term, the current solid waste management system would be called for a major change, with waste segregation at source then becoming a reality in Mauritius. Once these facilities are operational, organic wastes (food wastes and yard wastes) would be collected separately for composting while recyclable materials (paper, plastics, glass, metals) would be sorted for sale to recyclers.

945. In addition to the Solid Waste Management Strategy, the MESWMCC has also embarked on the development of an Integrated Solid Waste Management Act. In this regard, the draft Terms of Reference for the procurement of the Consultancy Services for the drafting of the Integrated Waste Management

Bill are being finalised. In the meantime, preliminary discussions are being held with potential funding agencies for the financing of the Consultancy Services.

PRIORITY ACTION 92:

Local Authorities shall be empowered to play a more effective role in environmental management and sustainable development.

946. The Environment Protection Act 2002 was amended in 2008 so as to empower the local authorities as enforcing agencies to enforce an environmental law within its administrative area.
947. Mauritius continues to make significant progress in developing and implementing policies, strategies for the sound management of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development. An Environment Policy, Strategy and Action plan for the coming decade is being formulated. The framework for the Integrated Management, which was previously developed is currently being implemented. A Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues is being implemented. Moreover, through the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Mechanism, Government ensures that development is complying to National Legislation and is mitigating environmental impact optimally.
948. The Master Plan for the Environment, which is nearing finalisation, contains a plethora of recommendations, some of which pertains to the empowerment of the Local Authorities. Furthermore, one of the issues to be addressed in the context of the review of the Environment Protection Act is the strengthening of enforcement and compliance mechanisms.
949. The Local Disaster Management Coordinators were recruited to strengthen the effective implementation of disaster risk reduction and management activities at local levels. In the event of a disaster occurring in particular regions, the LEOC of municipal or district council is activated to lead disaster response operations for that local authority.
950. As there are synergies between Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goals, the local authorities are guided by the NDRRMC to have their objectives focus and align towards the SDGs and as well as to initiate a series of measures in line with the Sendai Framework 2015-2030.
951. As part of the implementation of the new Solid Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan, Local Authorities would be called for some involvement including the collection and transportation of source segregated wastes. In this context, they would be empowered to play a significant role in this new solid waste management system efficiently and effectively.

OBJECTIVE IX

Enhancing Human Rights Education and Awareness

PRIORITY ACTION 93:

A comprehensive human rights education strategy shall be elaborated following assessment of the needs of various groups.

952. The Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with the MYESR and the EOC has implemented a 12-hours Human Rights Education Programme in all youth centres around the island for around 500-750 youths each year during the period. The Human Rights Division has engaged in discussions with the Commonwealth Secretariat for the organisation of human right education for the youth and with OHCHR for various stakeholders of the NMRF.
953. Integration of human rights across the Curriculum would cover training teachers, school textbooks and extracurricular activities at pre-primary, primary and secondary level.
954. At the secondary level, the Commonwealth Secretariat had carried out workshops to train Educators from around twenty-five Secondary Schools in Mauritius on Human Rights in 2015.
955. With a view to promoting human rights through teaching and education, the MOETEST in collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat has gradually been integrating human rights education across the curriculum at pre-primary, primary and secondary levels. The first step has been to introduce human rights in the curricula of lower secondary schools. To this effect, a first validation workshop was successfully carried out in 2015 on the Tool Kit developed for the concerned teachers. A pilot project was conducted in 30 secondary schools, including one in Rodrigues, and a final report was submitted.
956. At tertiary level, Human Rights Education already forms part of the curriculum of LLB courses at the University of Mauritius. An LLM course in International Human Rights Law was also introduced since academic year 2013-2014. PGCE Students are also offered a module on Citizenship education which addresses issues related to human rights.

MIE's contribution in the teaching of human rights education

957. There has been a lot of progress made with the introduction of the Nine Year Continuation Basic Education Reforms brought in since 2018. The curriculum has been reviewed for the teaching of Human Rights Education since it is now taught at both primary and secondary levels as well as in Special Needs Schools.
958. Human Rights Education is included in several subjects, mostly Social Modern Studies and Life Skills. New subjects such as Life Skills and Citizen Education cover a substantial component of the subject matter.

959. Curriculum Materials were written for Values/Civic and Citizenship Education Grade (1- 6) taught at primary level by Holistic Educators and Human Rights Education is taught using the value-based approach. At secondary level, Human Rights Education components are integrated mainly in Social and Modern studies and also in others subject (grade 7-9).

960. The MIE also intends to prepare a standalone online module on Human Rights Education where teachers, administrators and even students can enroll for this module. This module would be ready by end of June 2021.

PRIORITY ACTION 94:

Public awareness campaigns on human rights issues in CAB centres shall be pursued. Educational TV programs on human rights issues shall be organized.

961. As part of its mandate to promote human rights in the country, the NHRC in collaboration with the PMO holds weekly talks in different Citizens Advice Bureau. The sessions which target members of the general public, focus on the work of the Human Rights Division and the National Preventive Mechanism Division, as well as pertinent human rights issues in the country. Through awareness-raising activities, the citizens are sensitised not only on their own inherent human rights but also on the importance of respecting the rights of each and every one in society.

962. The Chairman and members of the NHRC participated in the campaign and acted as Resource Person.

963. Statistics relating to sensitization by the NHRC are:

Table 68: Persons sensitised by the NHRC for period 2015 to 2020

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of persons sensitized	1348	1518	2133	1063	1196	1034

Source: National Human Rights Commission

964. Section 5 (b) of the Ombudsperson for Children’s Act states that the Ombudsperson for Children shall “promote the rights and interests of children”. Every year the Ombudsperson for Children organizes talks, seminars, workshops and other sensitization activities to create awareness on the articles enunciated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the underlying principles. These activities are organized in the Citizen Advice Bureaus across the island, in Schools, Social Centres in

NGOs and in public training institutions like the Police Training school and the Prison Training school. The targeted audiences are parents, NGO social workers, carers, children and public officers working with children. Statistics relating to sensitisation by the Ombudsperson for Children’s Office are:

Table 69: Sensitisation by the Ombudsperson for Children’s Office

Sensitisation	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
No of persons sensitized	13500	13000	2000

Source: Ombudsperson for Children’s Office

965. In 2018, to mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and the Human Rights Day, a number of sensitization campaigns through several modes of communication, including media, meeting, workshops, posters and brochures were carried out by the Prime Minister’s Office to raise public awareness and a way to build the national capacity to counter TIP.

966. The Human Rights Division enlisted the services of Eruption Group, in July 2020, for the development of a Social Media Tool (SMT), namely a Facebook Page and a YouTube Channel.

967. The objectives of the SMT are to:

- a) educate and increase awareness among the public on Human Rights issues;
- b) encourage participation of the public in event/activities organized by the HRD and other stakeholders; and
- c) capture feedback and needs of stakeholders for continuous improvement of digital initiatives.

968. The SMT was developed in July 2020 and was launched on 10 December 2020 and weekly posts regarding Human Rights are posted for awareness.

PRIORITY ACTION 95:

Human Rights Education shall be integrated into all levels of formal education, from pre-primary to university. Essay competitions on human rights issues shall be organized for secondary school students.

969. As regards, the promotion of human rights through teaching and education, please refer to Priority Action 93.

970. At the primary level, issues of Human Rights Education are addressed in History and Geography textbooks through an integrated approach.

971. At the secondary level, Human Rights Education is addressed in an integrated way through Social and Modern Studies (SMS); and as stand-alone activities in the Life Skills and Value Education (LSVE) for Grades 7 and 8. Both SMS and LSVE aim at preparing the learners to better understand and make informed decisions about the social and civic issues that affect them and their families. Human Rights Education (HRE) in the SMS curriculum aims at making learners aware that all human beings have a right to dignity, equality, freedom and peaceful living. Through the SMS curriculum, learners are also made to understand that the actions they take should ensure a sustainable and equitable future, which is an essential pre-condition for safety and good living.

972. The integration of HRE in the LSVE syllabus is a multifaceted process that promotes critical thinking among students in a participatory way and enables them to reflect on their role as actors in society who contribute to increase respect for and understanding of human rights and human dignity. Further, the Social Studies Department of the MIE offers modules for primary and secondary pre-service and in-service Educators that address issues of Human Rights and Citizenship Education. Modules for Citizenship Education and Values Education were offered as compulsory modules for Teacher's Diploma programme since 2005. The modules focus on project-based teaching with the aim to enable primary Educators to integrate aspects of citizenship and values education in the primary curriculum.

973. A new module titled "Human Rights Education" for primary educators are offered by the departments as an elective for Bachelor of Education in Primary Education (Part time) students 'primary Educators' since July 2019. The aim of the module is to empower primary educators with knowledge, skills and attitudes to promote Human Rights Education at schools through an integrated approach.

974. Components of Human Rights are integrated in the Teachers' Diploma Primary Holistic Education Programme in the module 'Citizenship Education'. The module, which is a compulsory one, is being offered since 2017. One of the focus of the module is the learning of the 3 R's (Rights, Respect and Responsibilities). Through this component, the trainees are given the opportunities to acquire the

necessary knowledge, attitude and skills that will prepare them to engage themselves in promoting human rights and also equip them to teach basic components of the 3 R's to their students in primary school.

975. At the PGCE level, aspects of Human Rights Education are dealt through the module 'Citizenship Education', which is offered as an elective for secondary school educators since 2013.

976. Human Rights are also an essential component in the training of Police and Prison Officers. In this respect, a new Prison Bill is under consideration at the level of the Prime Minister's Office. The Prison Bill is also making provisions for the implementation of Human Rights recommendations related to Prison Management.

PRIORITY ACTION 96:

Leadership Seminars on Human Rights for Heads of Ministries and senior officials shall be conducted.

977. The National Human Rights Commission has embarked on a programme for Human Rights Workshops for Senior Officials of Ministries and parastatals. In this respect, it organised a half-day workshop on the occasion of the celebration of the International Human Rights Day in December 2018. 70 representatives from Ministries and Parastatal bodies attended the workshop.

978. The then MJHRIR also organized several workshops in collaboration with the OHCHR to build capacity of stakeholders as follows:

- a) a four-day (19-22 November 2018) workshop, focusing on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Disaster Law (IDL), in collaboration with the Mauritius Red Cross Society and the San Remo University of Italy;
- b) a talk focusing on "Disability and Human Rights" was delivered by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services of South Africa, Hon Tshililo Michael Masutha on 18 January 2019 at the Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel in Port-Louis. The focus was on the need for social inclusion and equal opportunities for people with disabilities and also expressed hope for these people to achieve success in various fields;
- c) a one-day Consultative Workshop for UPR was held on 23 January 2019 to engage consultative discussions with Ministries, Departments and the Civil Society on the

recommendations of the UPR Working Group prior to providing feedback to the Human Rights Council of the Plenary Session scheduled in mid-March 2019;

- d) a Talk on “Progressive Realization of Rights through the Courts- the experience of the Supreme Court of India” in collaboration with the Equality & Justice Alliance based in UK, and Justice Deepak Misra, Former Chief Justice in India, was held on 22 March 2019 at Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel. The talk was attended by eminent personalities of the Judiciary including the Judges, Magistrates and Bar Council Members. Other sessions were organized with other groups; students, civil society, and NGOs;
- e) a “Know Your Rights” Pamphlet was launched on 23 March 2019 which was funded by the UK Government. It aims to sensitise prospective and current migrant workers of their rights and the possible remedial actions in case of violations. It also serves to make migrant workers aware of the dangers of human trafficking. The pamphlet was produced in 6 different languages, namely English, French, Hindi, Tamil, Bangladesh and Chinese. A short video clip encompassing the main information in the pamphlet has also been made and is occasionally being broadcasted and launched on different channels of the national television (Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation);
- f) a three-day workshop was organised from 24 to 26 April 2019 to have an interactive dialogue with Ministries, Departments, National Human Rights Institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations who are members of the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF) on ‘State Party Reporting to Treaty Bodies’ to strengthen the national capacity of Mauritius on engagement with human rights mechanisms particularly as it relates to reporting and implementing treaty body recommendations;
- g) a two-day workshop from 23-24 May 2019 on National Recommendation Tracking Database in collaboration with the OHCHR was organised to build capacity of participants on the use of the National Recommendation Tracking Database including data entry;
- h) a half day awareness session on Human Rights for Senior Chief Executives and Permanent Secretaries of Ministries was organised on 04 May 2019. The aim of the training was to promote awareness of the State obligations under the various international instruments within the Head of Ministries and Departments and ensure that the best conditions are put in place in Ministries and Departments for compliance therewith. The session which was attended by around 35 Senior Officials was facilitated by the Chairperson of the NHRC; and
- i) in May 2019, a two-day workshop on Asylum Seekers/ Refugees with Ministries, Departments and Civil society’s representatives was organized to work out a Protocol on

the roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders when Mauritius would be faced with foreigners seeking International Protection as asylum seekers or refugees.

979. On 10 December 2018, 8 video clips on Human Rights Awareness were launched to mark the Human Rights Day. The video clips are entitled as:

- a) What are Human Rights?
- b) Right to Education
- c) No to Sexual Harassment
- d) No to Child Marriage
- e) Rights of Disabled Persons
- f) Yes to Meritocracy and Equal Opportunity
- g) Rights of Detainees
- h) Rights of the Elderly

980. A half-day awareness session on Human Rights for Senior Chief Executives and Permanent Secretaries of Ministries was held on 4 May 2019 at Hennessy Park Hotel, in collaboration with the NHRC.

981. The aim of the training was to promote awareness of the State obligations under the various international instruments within the Head of Ministries and Departments and ensure that the best conditions are put in place in Ministries and Departments for compliance therewith.

PRIORITY ACTION 97:

Programmes shall be run for NGOs, including workers' and employers' organizations, women associations, youth organizations, and associations of elderly persons and persons with disabilities or suffering from HIV/AIDS.

982. Empowerment of members of NGOS, peer educators and social workers in HIV testing and counselling are on-going. Workshops were carried out on HIV, Hepatitis C treatment, Stigma and Discrimination. Awareness sessions and condom programming targeting the youth and young adults in the community and workplaces, the people living with HIV are on-going. HIV prevention programmes for the people with special needs would also be included in the 2021 operational plan.

PRIORITY ACTION 98:

A Human Rights Documentation Centre shall be established at the National Library.

983. Provision of funds was made in the budget 2019-2020 of the then MJHRIR for a Human Rights Education Documentation (virtual library), however, in view of Covid-19 pandemic lockdown the project was not pursued. A Social Media Tool was set up with a YouTube Channel and Facebook Page.

OBJECTIVE X

Encouraging and Facilitating Greater Involvement of Civil Society and Business in the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights

PRIORITY ACTION 99:

An Institutionalised Platform, regrouping representatives of Government, business sector and NGO sector, would be set up for identifying areas of intervention where they would work together for the improvement of the human rights of vulnerable persons in society.

985. The NGOs are represented in the NMRF.

986. The NGOs can discuss issues pertaining to Human Rights with representative of several Ministries and Departments and the Minister looking at human rights issues.

987. The NMRF Committee holds meetings on a regular basis to discuss matters pertaining to human rights with all the stakeholders. The implementation of HR Plan and recommendations from Treaty Bodies are monitored on periodically. The HRD is implementing the National Recommendations Tracking Database with the collaboration of OHCHR.

988. The HRD has also organized workshops to build capacity of the members of the NMRF, including NGOs.

989. The MSISSNS has been working towards the implementation of the Marshall Plan against Poverty since 2016 with a view to mainstreaming people living in absolute poverty in society and improving their quality of life in a sustainable manner.

990. It was in further consolidation of the social institutional framework to drive a national agenda for inclusive human and social development as a means to tackling the deep rooted causes of poverty and vulnerability that the National CSR Foundation has been transformed into a National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF). This was expected to give a new orientation to the Foundation in terms of National Programmes aligned to Government strategies and actions and ensure better social actions.

991. The NSIF was called upon to play a key role in the promotion of social inclusion, equity and sustainable development, specifically, by leveraging strategic and sustainable partnerships with NGOs, public institutions and the private sector.

992. The NSIF supports the NGOs in the implementation of Programmes and Projects in the field of human rights are as follows:

Table 70: Programmes/Projects implemented by NGOs

Name of Organisation	Area of Intervention	Programme/Project	Programme Grant 2020 Amount Approved (Rs)
Collectif Arc en Ciel (CAEC)	Human Rights	Strengthen the empowerment employability and well-being of the LGBT community of Mauritius	1,309,392
Droits Humains Ocean Indien (DISMOI)	Human Rights	Pro Brono Clinic & Victims Support Unit; Empowering PWDs; Human Rights Center	2,928,000
Inclusion Mauritius	Human Rights	Training and Empowerment of Young Adult	660,000
Council of Religions	Promotion of Interculturality, Peaceful Coexistence & Harmony	Peace and Nation Building	500,000

Source: Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity

OBJECTIVE XI

Follow-Up and Evaluation of National Action Plan

PRIORITY ACTION 100:

A Human Rights Monitoring Committee shall be set up at the Prime Minister’s Office, composed of representatives of Government and other stakeholders, for Follow-Up and Evaluation of measures taken in pursuance of this Action Plan. Human rights indicators and benchmarks shall be developed for assessing progress in the implementation of the Action Plan. A Human Rights Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit shall be set up at the Prime Minister’s Office for the elaboration of human rights indicators/benchmarks and the gathering of data to assess the human rights situation at any given point in time. The Unit would also be responsible for evolving policies/strategies which would help improve the human rights landscape, and it shall over time engage in Human Rights Impact Assessment [HRIA] of any given policy/project.

993. In November 2017, the Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms was created and the portfolio of Human Rights was transferred from the Prime Minister’s Office to the newly created Ministry.

994. Moreover, in December 2017, a Human Rights Secretariat and a National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up (NMRF), were established under the then Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms as per the recommendations of the OHCHR.

995. The NMRF, which took over the functions of the Human Rights Monitoring Committee, has since become the platform for consultations with Ministries, Departments, NGOs and civil society on a regular basis. It is chaired by the Hon Minister under whose portfolio Human Rights lies.

996. This new framework aims to ensure that Human Rights obligations are fully met, periodic reports and mid-term Review /Progress Reports are submitted in a timely manner after thorough consultations with all parties concerned. Furthermore, it ensures a better coordination among Ministries in respect of the implementation of recommendations and decisions and enables a thorough monitoring of Human Rights.

Following the General Elections in 2019, the Ministry no longer existed and the portfolio for Human Rights was entrusted to a full-fledged Division, namely the Human Rights Division, under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

Since then, the NMRF operates currently under the Human Rights Division.



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND
INTERNATIONAL TRADE
(Human Rights Division)**

7th Floor, St James Court, Saint Denis Street, Port Louis

Tel: 2601909

Fax: 2143616