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I. Introduction

The Government of Mauritius is wholly committed to the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The country was actively involved in the negotiations leading to the adoption of the post-2015 framework. National consultations involving women, youth groups, the elderly, and the private sector allowed voices from different stake-holding groups to be heard in this process. Amongst other things, stakeholders reviewed the progress registered by Mauritius on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The consultations revealed the opportunities and challenges that the 2030 Agenda poses to the country as it sets itself the ambitious objective of reaching high-income status by the same milestone—2030. National ownership and strong leadership and governance capabilities provide solid foundations upon which to build, notwithstanding the challenges that lie ahead.

Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Mauritius has turned its attention towards implementation. The country is developing through a consultative process a policy framework for pursuing the SDGs known as Vision 2030. In tandem, the Government reached out to the United Nations to help develop a Roadmap for implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) fielded a mission in November 2016 to develop the Roadmap, working under the leadership of the Strategic Policy and Planning Department (SPPD) in the Prime Minister’s Office, which facilitated consultations with a range of stakeholders that helped frame the recommendations.

The mission was conducted as part of a global programme of support (known as Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support -MAPS) being provided through the UN Development Group, chaired by UNDP, allowing for the cross fertilisation of experiences between countries.

The Roadmap reviews the likely determinants of success in implementing Agenda 2030 in Mauritius. More concretely, it provides insights into the alignment of national policy frameworks across sectors with the SDGs; reviews institutional frameworks to foster implementation; and makes suggestions regarding catalytic interventions to accelerate progress across SDGs and targets; mobilizing innovative finance for implementation; enhancing data and monitoring capacity for the SDGs; and spearheading actions for advocacy and engagement to ensure that a “whole of society” approach is taken in advancing the agenda.

The Roadmap is intended to inform further consultations within Government and with other stakeholders on how to advance the SDGs at national level as part of the process of finalising Vision 2030 and related decisions.

II. Overview of Mauritius’s Development Context

2.1 Economic overview

Mauritius is an upper-middle income economy with a GDP per capita PPP of USD 19,480 in 2015. Strong institutions in a politically stable and thriving business environment combined with effective use of trade preferences (particularly with Europe and India) have been instrumental in driving growth and facilitating impressive economic diversification. Mauritius has successfully transitioned from an agricultural to a manufacturing and tourism based-economy. It has also developed a very large offshore financial services industry. The nascent Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector is seen as both an

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1 World Development Indicators, World Bank.
important future driver of economic growth, and contributor to employment creation (25,000 jobs in 2014). At independence, this small island economy was completely dependent on sugar. The agriculture sector represents today 3.5 per cent of GDP. Tourism (7.5 per cent of GDP in 2015), manufacturing, especially textile and clothing (14.8 per cent) and financial services (11.8 per cent) have gained in relative importance.

The economy was resilient to the 2008 financial crisis but growth has nevertheless slowed from an average of 4.8 percent between 2003-2007 to 3.9 percent during 2008-2012 and 3.3 over the period 2013-2015. GDP growth is expected to pick up in 2016 to 3.9 percent. Mauritius is keen to avoid the middle-income trap and move to higher-income status. However, competitiveness, productivity and investment rates have been declining in recent years, and the labour force is projected to shrink, potentially retarding growth.

Unemployment is nevertheless a current challenge, especially among less skilled women and youth. It has risen since the financial crisis in 2008, remaining stagnant at around 8 percent over the last five years, though is expected to decline in 2016 to 7.7 per cent. Unemployment is significantly higher among women (11 per cent) and youth (26.3 per cent). Female labour force participation is discouraged, among other things, by a wage gap of 50 per cent vis-à-vis men even after controlling for education, age and other variables.

The biggest challenge for Mauritius is to enhance its competitiveness to sustainably move up the value chain. This is being constrained however by deficiencies in infrastructure and the education system which are impacting on the quality of its human capital, productivity and innovation capacity. Moreover, being small and isolated, Mauritius is vulnerable to economic and social shocks but also to environmental degradation.

Public debt continues to increase in Mauritius. Recent increases reflect, in part, the government’s recent intervention in the financial sector — 1.3 percent of GDP — due to capital injections in two ailing banks and a line of credit to refund holders of financial products issued by a large financial conglomerate that recently collapsed. External debt levels have also been impacted by the depreciation of the rupee. The rupee lost 14 per cent against the USD through end-2015, while remaining broadly stable against the euro.

**Mauritius has a well-developed domestic financial sector.** Financial services have expanded as a result of successful financial liberalization and the establishment of an offshore financial centre in 1989. The country has since sought to modernise its legal and regulatory frameworks to maintain competitiveness (including through the negotiation of double taxation agreements). The financial and insurance sectors make up 9 per cent of GDP and employ over 13,400 people, equivalent to around 2.3 per cent of the labour force in 2013. Established in 1994, the stock exchange is capitalized at Rs. 199.1 billion (mid-2016) or 49 per cent of GDP. On the institutional front, a new Ministry dedicated to Financial Services and Good Governance has been created with the aim of consolidating Mauritius’s position as a Financial Services centre.

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3 Statistics Mauritius.
The domestic banking sector is large in relation to the size of the economy and banks’ total assets as a percentage of GDP have increased from 272 per cent to 280 per cent over the past five years. Assets held by domestic-owned banks represent 42 per cent of total banking sector assets while subsidiaries and branches of foreign-owned banks hold 58 per cent of total assets. The financial sector has recently experienced a credit boom with bank lending increasing significantly over the past decade, from around 70 per cent in 2004-05 to the current level of around 100 per cent of GDP. This credit boom has however led to a rise in non-performing loans (NPLs). NPLs are highest in the construction sector but are also high for trading, manufacturing and individuals. Bank provisioning for NPLs has not kept pace with the credit expansion which may represent one source of financial and economic risk. There is a widespread view among banks that the domestic market is now relatively saturated, with banks increasingly shifting to offshore operations, given the clear tax advantages of offshore business relative to domestic lending.

Global Business Companies (GBC) profit from tax exemptions on foreign-sourced income and have become a key pillar of the economy, managing assets estimated at over USD 630 billion, some 50 times the level of GDP. GBC’s play a vital role in financing the balance of payments, offsetting the large current account deficit run in the rest of the economy. Net capital inflows (15 per cent of GDP) and investment income from GBC investments in the rest of the world (10 per cent of GDP) are used to finance the large current account deficit of the non-GBC economy, allowing for the net accumulation of international reserves.

GBCs also contribute to tax revenues, paying almost 1.3 per cent of GDP in taxes in 2014 (around 6.5 per cent of total tax collection) but their direct contribution to domestic employment remains limited. GBCs’ foreign currency deposits are also a key funding source for banks, which also have other large cross-border exposures.

Mauritius has been heavily reliant on investments made by the GBC sector in India. In 2010, India’s share of investment was as high as 32.27 per cent, before declining to 23.25 per cent in 2011. However India has been cracking down on investments routed through Mauritius by shell companies, and India’s share of the number of investments made by GBCs through Mauritius has dipped to below 15 per cent. Mauritius has since sought to reposition itself as a financial hub for foreign investments in Africa, while encouraging a greater involvement of the GBC sector in the domestic economy. Investments routed through Mauritius to Africa now account for more than a 50 per cent share of this business. Mauritius has signed a number of investment protection and double taxation treaties with countries in Africa to strengthen its position as a platform for international investment to the continent. Mauritius acknowledges the need to upgrade supervision of the offshore financial sector and the country has passed regulations on a range of new financial instruments, pensions and foundations. The need for this was underscored by the circumstances surrounded the collapse in 2015 of the British American Investment Company, a mixed international financial conglomerate and one of the largest conglomerates in Mauritius.

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10 Global Business Companies (GBC) refer to a type of business recognized by the Financial Services Act 2007 which allow companies resident in Mauritius to apply for a license to offer financial services in foreign countries. There are two types of GBC licenses. The Category 1 GBC is a tax-resident company managed and controlled from Mauritius; can conduct business with residents and benefit from double taxation agreements’ benefits. Category 2 GBC is not a tax resident in Mauritius and an only carry out businesses with non-residents and does not benefit from the double taxation treaties’ benefits. The GBC operate under the supervision of the Mauritius Financial Service Commission.
The Information and Communications Technology (ICT) sector, has been growing in importance. Its contribution to GDP currently stands at 6.5 per cent. In 2015, the sector’s value added reached Rs 20.4 billion, with 54% generated by the telecommunications industry, 31% by manufacturing and IT-enabled services/business process outsourcing (ITES/BPO), and 15% by wholesale and retail trade. Mauritius’ ICT Development Index has been rising, from 3.83 in 2009 to 5.99 in 2015. It now ranks at 73 among 167 countries, and the first among African countries. The sector is nascent but is growing rapidly due to successive Government policies and strategies that pursued liberalisation and sector efficiency, established regulatory frameworks, encouraged private ownership and investment, and developed ICT readiness across society. Key in the process had been the 1988 Telecommunications Act that ended the State monopoly and opened up the telecommunications market. The latest plan, the National ICT Strategic Plan 2011-2014 (being updated), is focused on converting Mauritius into a regional ICT hub and securing the technology and know-how required to support the country’s aspirations to attain high-income status.

Foreign investment in the sector amounted to USD 41 million in the 2010-2013 period. According to the Mauritius Investment Board, there are 750 companies in the ICT-BPO sector in the country, accounting for Rs 5.4 billion (2014) of service exports. The BPO sector has been particularly dynamic posting an annual average growth of 14 percent from 2004 to 2012 alone. Assuming favourable trends continue, the sector is projected to contribute up to 10 per cent of GDP annually and create 50,000 jobs by 2030.

Efforts have been made over time to enhance the policy framework supporting ICT. These include the adoption of the Open Access Policy for Undersea Cable Landing Stations in 2010, the National Information and Communication Technology Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and the National Broadband Policy 2012-2020 to set the pathway to enhanced broadband capacities and adoption. Total international bandwidth of 10 Gbps in 2011 is a forty-fold increase from initial level in 2005, which rose further to 23Gbps in 2013.

Affordability and adoption however remain weak compared to other countries in the region (Kenya, Nigeria, Sudan, etc.). Internet access has become more affordable but penetration was only 66.6 per cent in 2015. Cellular subscriptions are however significant at 139.5 per cent of the population the same year. The connection to LION-2 (Lower Indian Ocean Network) undersea cable, in addition to SAFE (South Africa-Far East) and LION-1 networks all connecting and running through Mauritius, with government commitment to strengthen the enabling environment, is expected to hasten development of the sector.

The tourism sector has been severely hit by adverse economic shocks in Europe, only partially offset by arrivals from emerging economies including China, India and South Africa. Even though tourist arrivals increased by 11 per cent in 2015 -in part due to increases in air seat capacity from scheduled and charter flights, and the significant drop in oil prices which benefits long-haul destinations such as Mauritius-

11 The ICT sector includes industries that capture, store, process or transmit data and information electronically, e.g., telecommunications services, wholesale and retail trade in ICT products, manufacturing, IT-enabled services/business and knowledge process outsourcing, software development, website development and hosting, multimedia production, call centres, etc.).
12 Vision 2030. It is important to note that other sources report different figures with respect to the ICT contribution to GDP. Variations may respond to differences in the definition of what constitutes the ICT sector.
13 Statistics Mauritius.
18 Statistics Mauritius.
overall, arrivals are well below the 2 million projected for 2014 in the 2002 Tourism Development Plan. Actual arrivals in 2015 following a year on year increase were just over 1 million, with low return visits (25%). This has resulted in increased competition for tourists and the subsequent stagnation of earnings.

Some of the key challenges faced by the sector include human capital requirements, national air connectivity, marketing and branding of the Mauritius destination, sustainability issues around the product and the tourism sector, as well as overcapacity, loss of competitiveness - with Mauritian tourism becoming increasingly expensive, possibly reducing demand, and over-indebtedness of the sector.

Current challenges in the sector should be confronted and new opportunities unlocked by: i) addressing key issues such as marketing of the destination, quality control and niche product development including the amount and type of growth in accommodations supply; ii) advancing air liberalization to enhance market competition, reduce prices and stimulate growth in the tourism market by reducing airfares and increasing passenger flows by about 25 per cent, and iii) promoting sustainable tourism and focusing on Mauritius’s nature and cultural heritage, as well as diversifying the sector into cruise tourism and sea sports.

The agriculture sector was the backbone of the Mauritian economy for many years but its relative importance has fallen amid increasing economic diversification. The contribution of agriculture to GDP was estimated at above 20 per cent in the 1970s whereas it stood at just 3.5 per cent in 2015. Nevertheless, the sector continues to be important for poverty eradication (particularly in the case Rodrigues), food security and assuring environmental sustainability (agricultural land accounts for 43 per cent of total land area and the sector represents 50 per cent of water consumption in the country). The largest sub-sector is sugarcane, followed by food crops, livestock, flowers, fruits and forestry. Fisheries’ share of GDP stands at 1-2 per cent of GDP but the sector accounts for 20 per cent of total good exports.

Mauritius imports 75 per cent of its food needs which renders it highly exposed to movements in international food prices. The Government of Mauritius’s vision is to increase food production to tackle the vulnerability arising from food import dependence. Part of the land released through sugarcane reform is being devoted to food-crops, including large-scale production of vegetables by clustering production to address current fragmentation of small planters. Emphasis is also being placed on the development of agri-business SMEs; the promotion of organic agriculture; and safety, quality and innovation issues. One of the main challenges for the agriculture sector in Mauritius in the coming years is to increase productivity and diversification of the sector, while taking into account the adverse environmental impacts of agriculture. Environmental externalities span from soil degradation due to sugar mono-cropping and the use of pesticides and other agrochemicals, to water stress and pollution due the intrusion of saltwater in groundwater aquifers which constitute the main source of water to the sector.

The manufacturing sector though in relative decline over the past years, continues to play an important role in terms of its relative contribution to GDP (15 per cent in 2015) and employment (9.2 per cent of labour force). The textile industry is the largest sub-sector but production of other, value-added products such as medical devices, watch parts and diamond polishing is growing. While the manufacturing sector grew at a healthy 4.8 per cent in 2015, the performance of the textile industry remains weak. The World

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21 Statistics Mauritius.
Bank notes that although the textile industry has improved productivity, mainly by shedding jobs, its profitability is below par for companies in other sectors of the economy.\textsuperscript{24}

The dearth of skilled labour and limited investments in research and development constitute important constraints to further development of the manufacturing sector in Mauritius.

Mauritius has weathered recent international economic volatility well and has benefitted from declining commodity prices and lower shipping costs (due to cheaper fuel). But the country’s economic model has shown signs of distress, associated with the loss of preferential trade access, growing international competition in low cost industries, as is the case of the textile sector, and a slowdown in the activity of the offshore financial centre. The country’s GDP growth has slowed, employment creation remains sub-optimal, and growing inequality is slowly eroding the standard of living of the poor and the most vulnerable.

The overall outlook for Mauritius’ economy is favourable but is also subject to a number of downside risks. For example, continued low growth in Europe could adversely affect tourism, trade and FDI. On the domestic side, risks from the public debt profile should be manageable (given the low external debt with long maturities and favourable terms), vulnerabilities could arise if public debt is not reduced from its relatively high level (about 64 percent of GDP at the end of fiscal year 2014/2015). Income and corporate tax are low and set at just 15 per cent, and represent one area that could be considered for reform.

\textbf{Table 1 - Mauritius: Key selected economic indicators}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015 (Est.)</th>
<th>2016 (Proj.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Output (Real GDP Growth %)</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment (%)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.7*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgetary revenue (incl. grants) (% GDP)</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgetary expenditure (% GDP)</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public debt (dom. and ext.) (% GDP)</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>63.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current account (% GDP)</td>
<td>-7.3</td>
<td>-6.3</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
<td>-5.1</td>
<td>-4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IMF (2016)

The government’s economic strategy as outlined in the Government Programme 2015-2019 and the Prime Minister, the honorable Sir Anerood JUGNAUTH’s 2030 vision statement of August 2015 seek to (i) address unemployment; (ii) alleviate, if not eradicate poverty; (iii) open up the country; and (iv) promote sustainable development and innovation. Recognizing that achieving high income country status will depend on Mauritius’ ability to improve the labour force’s skill set, develop infrastructure, and further improve the business environment to attract FDI and generate domestic investment, the economic model focuses on a number of core areas to fundamentally transform the economy. These four core areas are:

First, a revamped and dynamic manufacturing base with a clearly identified focus on promoting high end, precision driven and technology enabled manufacturing in the country. The aim is to increase manufacturing’s share of the economy significantly, to 25% by 2019.

Second, development of the Ocean economy by transforming the country into a major regional fishing centre, setting up fishing and seafood processing facilities locally, offering bunkering and other related services in order to transform Port Louis into a leading regional petroleum hub, improving sea connectivity by forming a regional shipping company, and supporting the development of tourism with more cruise traffic and cruise linked activities.

Third, transforming the services sector to embrace higher value added services and activities and turn Mauritius into a vibrant and sophisticated International Financial Services Centre. Foreseen actions include streamlining tax policy to making the country a hub for investments in Africa; developing capital markets and the National Stock Exchange through selected partnerships; promoting innovation, and the adoption of technology and communication solutions for high end activities like software and animation development, big data analytics, disaster recovery and cloud computing. The strategy also includes support SME development as the backbone of the economy with the creation of high end state of the art incubators, and develop the country as a regional hub and centre of excellence for Africa in education, healthcare and medical services.

Four, position the country as the regional platform for trade, investment and services in Africa. Over the last year, the country has already signed MOUs with several countries for the development of Special Economic Zones, including Ghana, Senegal and Madagascar.

To address infrastructure bottlenecks identified as a key constraint to further development, authorities are planning large public investment programmes with complementary private investment. With this, the authorities are targeting more ambitious growth rates (5-6 per cent annually). Planned investments include the development of ‘smart cities’ to establish Mauritius as a “Smart Island” (or “Intelligent Mauritius”/i-Mauritius as envisaged in the Government Programme 2015-2019 and Vision 2030). The goal requires modernization of ICT-infrastructure, building connectivity to global standards, and developing a professional workforce with competitive ICT know-how. New cyber-cities and a techno-park are part of the strategies to realize this goal. However, constraints to these investments include a statutory requirement for the central government debt to fall below 50 per cent of GDP by 2018, combined with commitments to state spending on social entitlements.

2.2 Social context

Poverty and inequality

Mauritius’ economic and social achievements since independence place it as a High human development (HDI) country, ranking 63 among 188 countries in 2015. This progress may be attributed to a combination of sustained investments in social programmes as well as sound economic policies and governance. Nonetheless, the country faces a number of long standing and emerging social challenges. While absolute poverty is negligible in Mauritius, it has increased in the recent past and exceeded the 1 per cent mark in 2014 (see figure 1 below). Relative poverty is also on the rise increasing from 8.5 per cent in 2006-07 to 9.8 in 2012. Moreover, the depth and intensity of poverty have increased as shown in table 2 for the period 2007-14, signalling a deterioration in the position of those living in relative poverty versus the non-poor.

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25 Statistics Mauritius calculates a Relative Poverty Line (RPL) to assess poverty in the country. The RPL is set at half median monthly household income per adult equivalent. In 2012 the RPL was calculated was defined at Rs 5,652.
Figure 1 – Per capita income <USD1.90/day (PPP 2011)
Mauritius 2007-2014 (population)

Source: Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Volume 2, Background analysis. Elaborated by the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth.

Table 2 – Income poverty depth and gap ratios (percentage) based on relative poverty lines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Household ratio (%)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income gap ratio (%)</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverty gap ratio (%)</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definitions: The income gap ratio shows the percentage by which the mean income of the poor falls below the poverty line. The poverty gap ratio represents the average shortfall of all households from the poverty line.

In spite of a well-developed welfare system, rising inequality in Mauritius has become a policy concern. This is evident by an increase in the Gini coefficient from 0.388 to 0.414 between 2007 and 2012 and the concentration of income: in 2012 the share of income of the 20 per cent highest income households was 47 per cent while the share of the poorest 20 per cent stood at 6.1 per cent. Furthermore, the income of the bottom 40 per cent of the population is growing more slowly than the income of the rest of the population pointing towards broadening inequality in future. Analyses show that increasing poverty and inequality in Mauritius are the consequence of the structural changes in the economy towards the development of services and knowledge-intensive industries, and accompanying widening gaps in salaries and increasing demand for high-skilled labour. The poor and vulnerable find it very difficult to find employment in these sectors, a primary vehicle for poverty reduction. Poverty disproportionately affects children and the young. It is higher among women and households headed by females and by those with education below the secondary level; and it is higher in Rodrigues. The government has established active
labour market programmes aimed at increasing employment opportunities and the employability of poor and vulnerable populations but they have not been effective in reaching unemployed workers.

Health

Mauritius has a well performing health system grounded in the principle of universal access through free health care provision –basic and specialized care services. The Government of Mauritius acknowledges access to health as a human right. In 2015, health expenditures contributed 4.3 per cent of GDP and represented 9.5 per cent of government spending. Life expectancy currently stands at 74.5 years on average.

As stated in Mauritius’ 2015 MDG report, premature morbidity and mortality associated with infectious, parasitic and water-borne diseases have significantly decreased and most vaccine preventable diseases, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases are no longer of concern to the country. Nevertheless, Mauritius did not meet MDGs 4 and 5 regarding child and maternal health with underlying reasons related to genetics, in the case of perinatal conditions and congenital diseases causing child death and non-obstetric conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases explaining maternal death.26 Further efforts in these areas will be necessary in the context of SDG implementation.

The most significant health challenge for Mauritius is the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCD) estimated to account for 80 per cent of the burden of disease in Mauritius and 85 per cent of deaths.27 Lifestyles, lack of physical activity, smoking and alcohol are associated with NCDs in the country. Moreover, research by the World Bank suggests that people with low education face a higher risk of acquiring NCDs. Given the linkages between low education and poverty, NCDs disproportionately affect the poor adding another dimension to growing inequality in the country. The increasing incidence of NCDs combined with the implications of an ageing population –i.e. increasing dependency ratio- as well as increasing costs of health services overall, raises concerns regarding the fiscal sustainability of social programmes.

A number of programmes are available at national level with an emphasis on prevention through awareness raising, as well as the promotion of healthy life styles across the population to tackle NCD’s.

Education

Mauritius has significantly invested in education with expenditure in the sector representing on average 4.7 per cent of GDP between 2011 and 2015, and some 14 per cent of government expenditure in 2015. The Government guarantees free access to pre-primary and primary education and has put in place a number of targeted and non-targeted programmes to support improvement and equity in education outcomes. These include free transport to travel to and from school; free textbooks; full subsidy of school certificates and high school certificates for poor students; a conditional cash transfer to poor households linked to school attendance; school feeding programmes, etc. Education is compulsory until the age of 16.28 Gross enrolment rates in pre-primary and primary education are at 100 per cent; this falls to 75 per cent for children in secondary school. Enrolment in tertiary education has increased from 10 per cent to 39 per cent over the last ten years.29 Mauritius met the education-related targets of the MDGs.

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28 The education system is structured around three levels: primary education (6 years); secondary education (5 years) and higher secondary (2 years).
In spite of these significant investments and achievements, a number of challenges in the sector need to be tackled, not least because they are interwoven with growing inequality and exclusion. The system works in a manner that disadvantages children of poor and vulnerable households — undermining their future prospects for employment. To access the academic secondary school track, children in grade 6 need to pass the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). Using the exam as a selection mechanism for access to secondary school, leads to a selective system which creates significant disparities since students with similar socio-economic backgrounds and educational attainment are grouped together. Schools in pockets of poverty do not attract the best teachers and students from poor households, where parents have low levels of education themselves, end up in the same low performing schools. Dropout rates are high, especially among those that fail the CPE who come largely from poor households. One of the reasons identified by stakeholders as a barrier for children from poor backgrounds, is language. Children from pockets of poverty speak mainly creole morisien while the education system is based in English. According to analyses carried out by UNDP, similar problems are faced at the secondary education level where children from poor households suffer high class repetition rates and drop-out rates at intermediary levels.

These weaknesses in the education system are a critical driver of poverty in Mauritius. Research by the World Bank indicates that in 2008, 60 per cent of poor household’s members did not hold a CPE against 34 per cent among the non-poor. As mentioned above, poverty in Mauritius is highest among people with no secondary education. The alternative education track offered to students who fail the CPE is technical and vocational training (TVET). However, enrolment in TVET remains marginal and there is a stigma attached to the scheme, which is perceived to cater for less academically qualified students.

On the other hand, private enterprises, including SMEs in Mauritius, complain of a dearth of skilled human resources. The country is already actively encouraging the employment of highly-skilled foreigners to meet the needs of the economy which will only increase as the country develops knowledge-intensive industries.

The Government of Mauritius has launched an ambitious and comprehensive reform of the education system which aims at enhancing the quality of basic education whose low standards are acknowledged as the root cause of unskilled labour, unemployment and inequality; and improving access and relevance of TVET and tertiary education aligned to the country’s future economic needs. The reform is built on the following six pillars: i) curricular change; ii) innovative pedagogies; iii) assessment; iv) continuous professional development; v) learning environment; and vi) system governance and accountability.

**Social protection**

Mauritius has a well-established social protection system whose basis was laid out early on following independence but has evolved over time. This includes for instance free primary education, universal free health care services, and other social programmes. Around 53 per cent of government spending in 2015 was dedicated to the social sectors, inclusive of 27.2 per cent for social protection programmes, mainly pensions and social assistance targeted at the poor. Social protection programmes are implemented by government entities and non-state actors.

A key component of social protection programmes in Mauritius is universal pensions which include old-age pensions and categorical transfers such as disability, orphaned children, widowhood, etc. The poverty impact of universal pensions is very high: it has been estimated that poverty would be 19 per cent without

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31 The NYCBE reform refers to innovative pedagogies to the application of different pedagogical approaches centred on the learner needs and be curriculum-based as opposed to assessment-based. It also refers to the application of IT-mediated learning to enhance independent learning. Republic of Mauritius. Inspiring every child. Nine Year Basic Education, p.11.
the scheme.\textsuperscript{33} The pension scheme includes the basic pension and universal old age pensions. Looking into the future in the context of an ageing population, universal age pension poses problems of sustainability. Moreover, analysis show that old-age pensions or Basic Retirement Pension is not pro-poor since the overwhelming majority of the poor are young.

Another key component of social protection is Social aid, whose purpose is to reduce hardship and vulnerabilities among the poor. The programme consists of cash and in-kind transfers. Evidence indicates however, that only 30 per cent of social aid transfers target the poorest households.\textsuperscript{34} The programme consists of more than 20 schemes involving income support to face different life contingencies such as transitional unemployment benefits.\textsuperscript{35} Conceived as a temporary support measure, beneficiaries remain in the programme for a long time.

In addition to universal pensions and social aid programmes, the Government of Mauritius subsidizes a number of food items (rice, flour, cooking gas) and services such as free transport for older persons and students. Finally, a number of programmes aimed at improving the employability of the poor and vulnerable and promoting entrepreneurship are also available in particular through the National Empowerment Foundation and the Ministry of Labour.

Analyses and consultations leading to the formulation of the 2016 Marshall Plan against Poverty\textsuperscript{36} brought to the fore institutional weaknesses in the social protection system in Mauritius. These include the large number and fragmentation of schemes which create coordination challenges. These in turn have led to problems of overlap, inclusion and exclusion errors, and significant leakages to the non-poor, among others. Other weaknesses associated with the system include its emphasis on assistance as opposed to empowerment and the lack of a monitoring and evaluation culture across programmes, government entities and NGOs involved in the implementation of social protection programmes. Gaps and unevenness in quality in public service provision have also been identified as challenges that need to be addressed in future.

Going forward, tackling poverty and growing inequality will require increasing the effectiveness of the social programmes in Mauritius, including in particular, by improving targeting and their reach to those most in need, and empowering the poor to become a more active agent of change – as opposed to passive recipients of assistance. The Marshall Plan goes in this direction by proposing among others, the gradual substitution of social aid by a social contract in the form of conditional cash transfers to empower the poor and enhance human capital while providing income support to destitute households; those unable to work or find a job. The Marshall Plan further emphasizes a community-based model for social services with a view to bringing service delivery closer to the population in need, improving programmes’ reach as well as their effectiveness. It also recommends a number of institutional improvement measures, including for instance, expanding the role of Social Registry Mauritius (SRM) as an effective tool to streamline the provision of social services, their effectiveness and efficiency, and targeting. Suggestions are also made to transform the system of statutory Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) contributions by

\textsuperscript{33} Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Draft March 2016, Volume 2, Background Analysis, p. 30
\textsuperscript{34} Marshall Plan against Poverty, Draft March 2016, Volume 2. Background Analysis, p. 31
\textsuperscript{35} Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Draft March 2016, Volume 2, Background Analysis, p. 31
\textsuperscript{36} The Government Plan 2015-2019 states that a Marshall Plan to combat poverty and exclusion will be elaborated. At the request of the Government of Mauritius, UNDP supported the formulation of a Plan. The document comprises 2 volumes providing a background analysis and an Action Plan. Reference in the Roadmap to the Marshall Plan refers to this document.
private enterprises and associated parrainage initiatives\textsuperscript{37} to bring it up to date with global developments on corporate social responsibility and sustainability initiatives.

2.3 Environmental context

Mauritius is located in the Madagascar and Indian Ocean Islands Region, which has been classified as one of the world’s Global Biodiversity Hotspots.\textsuperscript{38} Its tropical climate, topography and history of isolation, has resulted in the evolution of a diverse terrestrial biota with a high degree of endemism. The islands are surrounded by extensive reef systems and a total of 290 marine families comprising 1,656 species have been recorded within the inshore area. Around 50 of these species are of economic importance as fisheries.

The current protected area estate of the island of Mauritius and Rodrigues, defined as terrestrial and marine State Protected Areas, amount to 12,553 ha and 7,870 ha respectively. Mauritius has three Ramsar sites and has important habitats for more than a dozen regularly visiting migratory bird species. Like many small island developing states (SIDS), Mauritius is dependent on the healthy functioning of both its terrestrial and marine ecosystems for its economic development and social well-being. A significant proportion of the country’s economic sectors depend on ecosystem goods and services and these are affected by a number of interacting anthropogenic and climatic threats.\textsuperscript{39}

The key environmental challenges are climate change; coastal erosion; water management; loss of biodiversity; soil degradation; invasive species; marine pollution; waste management; energy efficiency; and sustainable land use. All of these put social and economic development at risk.

Mauritius is characterised by inherent vulnerabilities of SIDS such as a small land area, limited natural resources, including dependency on fuel imports, and environmental sensitiveness. The island state is exposed to seasonal natural hazards, such as cyclones and tropical storms, which lead to strong winds and flooding and destruction of infrastructure. Climate change intensifies theses natural hazards and presents additional risks.

The coastal zone is critically important to the economy of the country, in terms of fisheries, and domestic and international tourism, and is particularly vulnerable to climate change, with the convergence of accelerating sea level rise and increasing frequency and intensity of tropical cyclones that will result in considerable economic loss, humanitarian stresses, and environmental degradation.

Mauritius has no exploitable natural resources and therefore depends on imported fuel to meet most of its energy requirements. Local and renewable energy sources are biomass, hydro, solar and wind energy. The government supports efforts to seek more efficient and renewable energy sources and reduce dependency on imported fossil fuels.

Mauritius has one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zones in the world, which the country hopes to tap into through the development of the ocean economy.

Small scale fisheries, in addition to small scale agriculture, while not major contributors to GDP, are significant in terms of the impact on natural resources, employment and the local economy. Artisanal fisheries are carried out in coastal waters around Mauritius. Some 3,000 professional fishermen exploit

\textsuperscript{37} 38 ‘pockets of poverty’ have been identified throughout the country. The parrainage system consists of a private company contributing to CRS, taking over a pocket of poverty and addressing its socio-economic development needs. Republic of Mauritius (2015). Millennium Development Goals Report 2015, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{39} PIMS 5503 GEF_6 PIF MAU 8Sept16 Final Resubmission.docx
distinct fishing zones: lagoon and off-lagoon. Banks are fishing areas located along the Mauritius Seychelles Ridge and include the Saya de Malha and Nazareth Banks and the St Brandon group of islands. The banks fishery is the most important source of frozen fish for Mauritius and represents 70 per cent of the total production for direct consumption. Industrial fishing and processing of tuna is a major contributor to the fishing economy, with canned tuna representing more than 90 per cent of the export of Mauritian fish and fish products.

There are 90 public beaches around the island of Mauritius, with a total length of 26.6 km, making up 8 per cent of the coastline (there are also public beaches on Rodrigues). These areas are central to tourism.

Environmental fragility is very much linked to increases in population and economic growth which are major contributors to the loss, degradation and reduction of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, including destruction of coral reefs through bleaching. Economic development has induced forest clearance for settlement, industries and agriculture as well as encroachment on environmentally sensitive areas, such as mountains and forested areas, all of which lead to biodiversity loss. Erratic development of coastal tourism is impacting on the sustainability of beaches which is intensified by lack of climate change adaptation measures of the hotel industry, with risks of impacting negatively on future jobs.

Land degradation and the impacts of excess sedimentation in reservoir and lagoon areas which are visible in both Mauritius and Rodrigues, have already impacted more than 90 per cent of Mauritius’ land surface area. Although 25 per cent of the island is now under forest cover, most of this is dominated by invasive species and less than 2 per cent of substantially native forest remains. Although invaded forest does provide ecosystem services it does so less effectively than the indigenous forest it has largely replaced. Invasive alien species are one of the most serious threats to Mauritian native terrestrial biodiversity.

Reef degradation due to coral bleaching is related to climate change and human induced destruction, such as land based pollution and Submarine Ground water Discharge. Soil pollution, due to unsustainable land use practices, from increased economic activities, has resulted in eutrophication and hypoxia of marine life as has excess sediment, as a result of soil erosion. Eutrophication and hypoxia affect all key functions of marine life, adding a very strong stressor to the lagoon environment, which directly depends on sunlight and oxygen. Excess sediment in lagoons is most severe around river mouths and can be seasonally critical (e.g. during the rainy season). Another form of pollution is excessive use of pesticides. This presents additional stressors on drinking water, which is already a key issue impacting communities.

Degradation of coral reefs will impact the two common socio-economic reef based activities, namely fisheries and tourism, which are at the heart of the economy of Mauritius, in the following manner: (1) artisanal catch rates may decrease and the catch composition may shift towards the herbivorous species (2) the target species of the offshore FADS are the large predatory pelagics that forage near the reefs on reef fish, so these devices may also offer lower catch rates, (3) major shifts in the ecology of these small scale fisheries may occur due to over-exploitation pressure, (4) the fishermen may no longer disperse their effort over larger areas to decrease fishing effort locally, and (5) being a beach, dive and snorkel destination, Mauritius is classed as having a high level of reef-based tourism because over 70 per cent of the total tourists take part in reef-based activities.

III. Mauritius and the SDGs

As the international community anticipated the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, Mauritius released its fourth and final report on MDG implementation that showed it has either achieved or nearly achieved the MDGs on poverty, education, health, gender and global partnership. It noted continuing efforts on goals where it lags behind and is making progress
on: challenges posed by NCDs, reducing child mortality, protecting the environment and conserving biodiversity.

The government expressed full commitment to carry forward efforts under the MDGs to the implementation of the SDGs, mobilizing the country around the new set of development goals, and urging Mauritians to ensure that the second economic miracle the country is working towards will create the prosperity for all envisioned by Agenda 2030.

The government has effectively established the need to address the unfinished business of the MDGs, calling for efforts to tackle specific lagging goals —— MDG 3 (promote gender equality and empower women), 4 (reduce child mortality), 5 (improve maternal health), 7 (ensure environmental sustainability), and 8 (accessing financial resources) —— while laying the ground for the next level of efforts presented by the SDGs.

Lessons learnt helped prepare the necessary steps for SDG implementation. Mauritius explored early on the institutional coordination mechanisms and arrangements that would be crucial in ensuring coherence and making progress on SDG goals and targets that are far more ambitious that the MDGs. It launched deliberations that led to the establishment of the Strategic Policy and Planning Department (SPPD) in May 2016, in the Prime Minister’s Office, tasked with driving the implementation of the SDGs, ensuring policy integration of the SDGs in Vision 2030 and policy coherence across areas and levels.

The experience of MDG implementation has provided Mauritius the conditions, expertise, and tools that put it in good stead for SDG implementation. Mauritius has amassed disaggregated data from MDG monitoring and reporting, and developed a set of 60 national MDG indicators that assist policy analysis and development. Its statistical capacity is already recognized as among the best in the world; at a score of 91.1/100 in the World Bank’s Statistical Capacity Indicator, Mauritius ranks above the average of 59.9 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The MDG experience underlined for Mauritius the importance of robust data and systems for monitoring progress and formulating corrective actions and its statistical system, and has established the important role of strengthening further this capacity and linking efforts across Ministries (placing Statistics Mauritius as part of every Working Group it envisions for SDG implementation; please see sections below).

Mauritius also recognized from the MDG experience the importance of national ownership, political commitment and leadership in ensuring results. Partnerships and stakeholders’ adoption of the goals have been key in its MDG journey. Interagency collaboration, and government advocacy across sectors had been crucial in encouraging those. The government set the National MDG Coordination Committee (NCC) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, composed of Ministries and stakeholders, to support MDG implementation, monitoring and reporting. The private sector and civil society organizations have also been active in various areas and have played a significant role in helping meet targets.

The transition from the MDGs to the SDGs in Mauritius have therefore been seamless. The transition was marked with the formulation of the Government Programme 2015-2019, which establishes the highest level of political commitment and leadership for the next phase of the country’s development journey and Vision 2030, which serves as the frame for all necessary efforts across sectors and all levels as well as for SDG integration in the national priorities and plans.
IV. A Roadmap toward SDG implementation in Mauritius

Success in implementation of the 2030 Agenda will require careful anchoring in national priorities and realities. The Roadmap is clustered around six areas, considered critical success factors in localizing the SDGs.

I. Alignment: The Rapid Integrated Assessment

II. Coordination: Institutional mechanisms

III. From planning to action: Prioritizing SDG accelerators

IV. Financing the SDGs

V. Monitoring and Reporting: Data ecosystem

VI. Advocacy: An SDG Action Campaign

4.1 Alignment: Assessing national priorities and the SDGs

A first consideration in localizing the SDGs in country is understanding the extent to which national policy frameworks integrate SDG targets. This is essential since action by government entities and other stakeholders is guided by national policies which cascade down into operational plans and strategies and determine resource allocations for the implementation of activities over specified periods of time.

To assess the extent of alignment of Mauritius’ policy frameworks with the SDG targets, a Rapid Integrated Assessment was undertaken. A copy of the analysis is enclosed as an annex.

Mauritius lacking a national development plan, the RIA analysis was structured around the Government Programme 2015-2019, supplemented by the following policy documents:

- Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework, 2013; and
- Vision 2030

Results alignment analysis
The assessment reveals a high degree of confluence between SDG targets and national policies: 98 out of 107 SDG targets deemed relevant to Mauritius found references in the national policy documents reviewed for the analysis. Gaps are most important in SDG 14 on oceans, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG

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40 The Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA) tool, developed by UNDP was used for the assessment.
41 The analysis included a draft of Vision 2030 (dated 14 June, version 4) taking into account the policy has been formulated through a consultative process and the advanced stage of the formulation process.
42 The analysis excluded targets related to means of implementation and partnerships; these are 43 targets under various SDGs and all 19 targets under SDG 17.
6 pertaining to water and sanitation, SDG 11 on sustainable cities and SDG 12 related to sustainable production and consumption. Figure 2 below presents a visual representation of SDG targets’ coverage.

Figure 2 – SDG targets covered by policy documents analysed for the RIA

As presented in the resolution adopting the Agenda 2030\(^\text{43}\) the SDGs are grouped into five coherent areas or themes (the “5 Ps”), People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and Partnerships. A review of Mauritius’ SDG alignment around these themes leads to the results shown in Table 3.

Table 3 – SDG targets covered by theme, Mauritius’ RIA analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SDG theme</th>
<th>Total SDG targets (number of targets)</th>
<th>SDG targets covered in Mauritius’ policy documents (number of targets)</th>
<th>SDG targets covered in Mauritius’ policy documents (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>96.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planet</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>84.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosperity</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>93.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:* 8 of the 19 targets of SDG 17 on partnerships are not applicable to Mauritius. Therefore, only one of the 11 relevant targets, found no references in Mauritius development policy frameworks.

The analysis shows that Mauritius’ planning documents have a good coverage of SDG targets across themes. Nevertheless, alignment is relatively less pronounced with respect to Planet which groups goals related to environmental sustainability with coverage below 90 per cent.

The following SDG targets are not covered or partially covered in policy frameworks reviewed for the RIA:

- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

\(^{43}\) UN General Assembly, A/RES/70/1, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, NY, September 2015. The theme People corresponds to SDGs 1 to 5; Planet: 6 and 12 to 15; Prosperity: 7 to 11; and Peace: SDG 16.
• 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes
• 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.
• 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities
• 12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
• 14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.
• 14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.
• 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.
• 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

Inter-sectoral linkages

The assessment facilitates both the identification of SDG targets in national policies as well as missing linkages or targets where relationships between planning domains are not made explicit in national policy frameworks even if conceptually and/or according to evidence, such linkages exist (see Template I of the RIA).

In the case of Mauritius, the RIA revealed for instance, that no reference is made in the civil service and good governance planning domains across policy documents reviewed for the RIA, to SDG targets on poverty (SDG1); hunger and nutrition (SDG2); health (SDG3), education (SDG4), gender equality (SDG5) and water and sanitation (SDG6). And yet, the Marshall Plan Against Poverty identified gaps in access and quality in service delivery as well as issues of accountability which pertain to the civil service performance and good governance parameters. Similarly, the analysis found no linkages made in policy documents between the technology, communication and innovation planning domain and SDG targets related to prosperity –i.e. energy; inclusive growth; infrastructure and industrialization; inequality and cities. This gap is significant given the Government’s initiative related to the development of smart cities and more generally, a knowledge and innovation-based economy.

Review and monitoring

A number of references are found in the national policy frameworks to the importance and need for data and monitoring systems of relevance to SDG 17 (See Template II of the RIA for details). Overall, the policies and strategies reviewed for the formulation of the RIA lack a results framework and indicators to monitor progress on implementation and impact. Some of the policies include work plans with strategies and/or more detailed activities but these do not establish baselines or indicators. The Marshall Plan notes the lack of impact monitoring of social welfare programmes and lack of gender disaggregated data, among other weaknesses which undermine the effectiveness of such programmes. The Plan calls for the development of an adequate M&E framework for the proposed social contract and associated welfare programmes. Based on the RIA analysis, the need to define M&E frameworks and indicators for
monitoring progress the implementation and impact of national development frameworks is applicable at a larger scale and will be extremely important in the review of and follow up to the SDGs.

4.2 Coordination: Institutional Mechanisms

Mauritius recognizes that Agenda 2030 entails a fundamental change in the way global and national development goals are pursued: a whole new way of priority-setting and policymaking, new strategies for coherent development and linked implementation of strategies and efforts, new and stronger partnerships and greater commitment from all stakeholders, stronger capacities for monitoring and reporting on progress, and new investments. Integral in the change is the recognition that plans, cooperation and resources require more than just alignment but integration.

The implementation of the MDGs was coordinated by the Regional Integration and International Trade Department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The government initially placed responsibility for coordinating SDG implementation in the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management (MoEnvironment), which proceeded to establish an Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under its chairmanship and 17 Working Groups (one for each SDG) reporting to the Committee. More recently in May 2016, Cabinet entrusted this responsibility to the Strategic Policy and Planning Department (SPPD) in the Prime Minister’s Office (under the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service). SPPD coordinated and led the preparation of the National Strategic Plan (Vision 2030 Blueprint).

In implementing the SDGs, SPPD’s strategy gives special attention to policy coherence and the engagement of stakeholders, focusing on building synergies and identifying trade-offs across sectors, addressing bottlenecks to sustain and accelerate progress, building partnerships and exploring financing options, and establishing measurement mechanisms. SPPD proposes the following:

- **Establishing the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee**, to serve as the high-level platform ensuring coherent implementation of Vision 2030 and the SDGs. It will be composed of the heads of all ministries, placed under the chairmanship of the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service, with SPPD serving as Secretariat.

- **Setting up a Steering Committee** that will develop and coordinate implementation strategies, monitor implementation (using the “Vulnerability and Resilience Country Profile”, an evaluation and monitoring tool developed by UN-DESA), prepare quarterly and annual reports for the Inter-Ministerial Committee, and prepare regional and international dialogues on SDG implementation. It will operate under the chairmanship of the Director of SPPD but report to the Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee. It will be composed of representatives from all ministries (including Statistics Mauritius) and sectors and will also including development partners such as UNDP.

- **Establishing five Working Groups** (to be set up by the Steering Committee) that will be composed of technical cadres from across Ministries (not lower than “Senior” level), a representative of Statistics Mauritius and at least one representative from academia (other members will be added according to the expertise needed). All Working Groups will take account the particular needs of Rodrigues. They will report to the Steering Committee, facilitated by and provided secretariat support by SPPD. Working Groups are responsible for reflecting the cluster of SDGs under their domain in sectoral policies and plans, updating sectoral plans and strategies to reflect SDG priorities, engaging key stakeholders and keeping track of progress on their set of SDGs, and aligning budget with SDG priorities.
Consultations on the possible institutional mechanism for SDG implementation, which took into consideration the above proposal, resulted in only one major change: establishing four working groups around the SDG themes, in alignment with Vision 2030, as opposed to Working Groups built around a cluster of SDGs. The Working Groups are therefore on: economic prosperity, environmental sustainability, social inclusion, governance and institutional effectiveness. The best-fit mechanism, is depicted below:

Figure 3 – Mauritius’ SDG institutional coordination framework

Consultations underlined the importance of embedding in each Working Group representatives from civil society and the private sector, ensuring public-private collaboration from the beginning and at all stages, as well as a representative from Statistics Mauritius to ensure building in monitoring and reporting also from the start. This was concluded as crucial after a review of the model developed by Colombia, which provides the same arrangements explored by Mauritius and differing mainly on the way it keeps the non-public actors in a separate pool from which Working Groups can tap as needed.

4.3 Prioritizing SDG accelerators

Given the ambition and breadth of Agenda 2030 and national development objectives, and the implementation constraints facing government and other partners — in terms of financial, technical and human resources — prioritization is indispensable. This means that not all objectives and SDGs can be pursued with the same emphasis, in tandem. Priority should be given to a set of catalytic measures with the potential to speed up progress across goals and targets, taking into account the integrated nature of the Agenda and the specific national context and balancing economic, social and environmental measures.

Accelerators refer to policy interventions and programmes which remove bottlenecks and/or systemic or underlying barriers to SDG implementation. It is critical therefore, to identify obstacles which once lifted can have a direct impact on multiple development priorities and across SDGs. Given the strong interconnections between SDGs, acceleration measures will cover several policy domains requiring concerted action by a multitude of stakeholders.

Action towards SDG implementation and thus acceleration measures, should be rooted in national development priorities. Mauritius does not have a national development plan. Strategic policy orientation
is provided by the Government Programme 2015-2019, sectoral policies and the annual budget speech which defines priority programmes and funding allocations on a yearly basis. The Government in consultation with national stakeholders has embarked on the formulation of a Vision 2030 Blueprint outlining long-term development aspirations. Vision 2030 is expected to serve as a policy vehicle for translating Agenda 2030 and the SDGs into action in the country.

Mauritius finds itself at a cross roads in development, facing the challenge of an economic and social model which shows signs of fatigue and embeds significant risks, compounded by an uncertain and volatile international environment. But the country also enjoys significant opportunities, including positive past experience in navigating economic transformation and long standing national consensus and commitment to social development.

In light of the national context, the Roadmap seeks to define accelerators with the objective of tackling poverty and exclusion so as to leave no-one behind as well as addressing environmental concerns. Indeed, ending extreme poverty is within reach of Mauritius if further action on social inclusion is taken to accompany the growth strategy envisioned by the government. Similarly, progress can be made to decouple environmental degradation from economic growth.

The Roadmap proposes accelerators along four dimensions, mainly: the economy, social, environmental and governance and capacity dimensions. Through group consultations and in depth discussions in bilateral meetings with key stakeholders, the Roadmap identifies eleven policy areas where acceleration efforts might be pursued around these four dimensions. The policy areas identified as accelerators are summarized in the figure below.

**ECONOMY**

Mauritius is seeking a second economic miracle as growth has been losing steam. Furthermore, growth has not fully translated into poverty reduction, job creation and improved quality of jobs. Achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth will require bold measures and investments in areas that accelerate progress across sectors while benefiting the poorest and most vulnerable who are still not actively participating in the economy. Pivotal will be the creation of an enabling environment driven by innovation that enhances the productivity, flexibility and competitiveness of the economy, in a manner
that bolsters broad based economic diversification, creates sustainable employment opportunities, and fosters entrepreneurship and innovation.

During consultations with stakeholders in the economic sector, there was a general view that the economy needs to be reinvented to allow growth to pick up in a sustainable and inclusive manner. One such strategy would be to consolidate progress in traditional sectors (sugarcane, tourism and manufacturing) and diversify using SMEs as the backbone of new development poles such as technology and innovation, green and ocean economy, fashion industry, trade in gold, processing of precious stones, etc. However, there were concerns about the mismatch in education/skills, youth unemployment, and the limited support available for SMEs to access finance.

Given the aforementioned challenges, the Roadmap recommends the following interventions be made to accelerate the transition to a high income economy:

**Productivity improvement**

As labour is no longer driving growth and capital formation is limited by low investment rates, future growth should come through productivity improvements. Enhancing productivity would develop a competitive edge, using innovation as a key driver of growth by investing in technology, R&D and improving efficiency. Unlocking the productivity potential however requires enhancing the efficiency and flexibility of the labour market. Firstly, the wage setting mechanism is disconnected from productivity gains, with public sector wages increasing much faster than those of the private sector. This disconnect has implications for competitiveness and fiscal space (discount for productivity) and must be removed to foster flexibility and reward higher productivity, thereby also protecting employment instead of specific jobs.

Secondly, there is a significant gender disparity, with low female participation (47 per cent compared to Asian Tigers at 60 per cent) in a context of scarcity of labour due to low fertility rates. Specific incentives and updated labour policies and legislation for women self-employment and SME would contribute to addressing structural unemployment.

Thirdly, overall competitiveness is adversely hit by hefty oil prices and high cost of fuel imports. To address this challenge, the authorities are implementing a renewable energy programme for electricity supply, based on a transition to renewable, standing now at 20 per cent. The energy mix (green such as solar, windfarms, natural gas, and biomass) vs fossil fuel should progressively have a stronger green component.

Finally, poor M&E adversely affects public sector efficiency and needs to be mainstreamed in program and project design and implementation.

**Human capital enhancement**

Improving the labour skill set will be crucial to achieve the transition to a high income economy. More investment is needed in education and training to offset the skilled labour shortage. Tertiary education attainment is notably low (10 per cent) compared to Asian Tigers (30 per cent) In order to create an enabling environment for job creation, a better understanding of unemployment and what is behind it is needed as the lack of alignment between social contributions and unemployment figures may suggest less unemployed than the figures indicate. Indeed, the accumulated training levy of 1.2 billion MUR raises the question of the appropriateness of the levy: is it too high? Is there no demand for training? Or does it reflect the overall social exclusion issue identified in the Marshall Plan? As the latter explanation seems more plausible, reaching out to the youth and vulnerable population or public works, including for environmental services would generate a huge employment potential in the private sector.
India’s National Rural Employment Guarantee

According to Government of India’s estimates, 239 million people lived below the poverty line between 2004 and 2005. During the same period, 34.74 million people were unemployed. To address the rising challenge of unemployment, most acute in rural areas, the Government of India launched the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) in February 2006, after passing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in September 2005. This landmark legislation provides legal right of at least 100 days of employment in a year to each rural household that demands it. After ten years of implementation, the programme Around 182 million beneficiaries (15 percent of India's population) are provided social security by MGNREGA (under Ministry of Rural Development).

UNDP collaborates with the Government of India in addressing some of the challenges in implementing this programme, such as low levels of awareness among rural poor about entitlements under MGNREGP, weak social audit processes, low capacity among communities for planning projects, and weak monitoring and evaluation systems.

UNDP works alongside the Government of India to improve implementation of MGNREGP through technical expertise, communication strategies, management information systems, training, etc; institute a model for a third-party concurrent monitoring of MGNREGP; demonstrate innovations to enhance human development outcomes aimed at addressing next generation challenges of MGNREGA such as skills, livelihoods, health and literacy of workers; demonstrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) models to improve transparency and accountability in MGNREGP processes; develop models for enhancing capacities of communities to undertake social audit and local planning; developing models of Information and Communication Technology-based management information systems and monitoring and evaluation systems.

Source:
http://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/operations/projects/democratic_governance/support_to_operationalizationofnrega.html and
http://indiatoday.intoday.in/education/story/mgnrega/1/586370.html

Public works for protection and growth

Public Works Programmes (PWPs) have been widely employed in both developed and developing countries to provide social protection to people of working age who are living in poverty. Beyond social protection, adequately designed PWPs can potentially enhance local productivity and contribute to overall economic development through three main channels: i) cash transfers; ii) creation or improvement of assets; and iii) creation or development of skills.

By transferring cash to beneficiaries, PWPs can protect household consumption while promoting savings and investments in productive assets. Through the generation of public goods and the provision of training, public works can also lead to the accumulation of community assets and the development of skills, alleviating local productivity constraints.

Most of the evidence on PWPs focuses on the impact of cash on smoothing consumption and reducing poverty, rather than on the potential of PWPs to promote economic growth. A literature review of existing programmes around the developing world allowed to identify a number of design considerations for PWPs that are relevant to achieve growth-related impacts (McCord 2012; Beazley and Vaidya 2015).
**Targeting:** One of the purported advantages of PWPs is that by attaching a work requirement and setting wages below the market level, they allow for the self-selection of poor people. This means reduced information and administrative efforts compared to alternative targeting methods. However, self-targeting is not always feasible or desirable. In fact, most programmes tend to combine self-targeting with geographic and/or community-based targeting.

**Wage rate:** The programme’s wage rate has implications for a number of aspects, such as targeting, productive investments, local multiplier effects, inflation, labour market distortions, local wages, and forgone income. Each of these aspects should be carefully weighted. Wage rates should be high enough to allow households to meet their consumption needs and leave a margin for investments; higher wages can lead to larger multiplier effects but need to be traded off against the risk of inflation and labour market distortions.

**Payment process:** The timely and regular delivery of transfers is a key determinant of a programme’s impact on consumption smoothing and household investments.

**Transfer modality:** Complementing regular transfers with lump-sum payments might have a positive effect on the productive potential of PWPs if the transfer of large amounts of cash is able to reduce beneficiaries’ financial constraints for investments (Beazley and Farhat 2016).

**Project selection:**

Community involvement in the selection of assets, as well as the integration of projects within local and regional economic development strategies, is important to address productivity constraints. However, the productive potential of projects often needs to be traded off against the ability of public works to create employment, as more labour-intensive works might have a lower impact on local productivity. Local capacity to guarantee the convergence of technical, managerial and non-labour inputs at the work site should also be taken into account in the selection process, to guarantee the technical quality and the sustainability of the assets created.

**Training:** Outsourcing training to specialised training institutions is likely to significantly improve the quality of the service. Involving local entrepreneurs through consultations or internship programmes can facilitate the identification of skill shortages and improve the employability of individuals by connecting employers and employees.

Most PWPs in developing countries offer single short-term episodes of employment to prevent sudden reductions in consumption. It is rare to find PWPs that have been explicitly designed for the promotion of growth, even though conventional discourse emphasises the productive role of these programmes. The design elements discussed above emerge from the limited evidence base for programmes with both protective and productive goals. Combined with a clear vision for programme objectives and context-specific analysis, they should help improve programme design.


To promote a new breed of young entrepreneurs and use the SME sector as the backbone of the economy, private sector led skill development including through technical and vocational training is a must.
Private sector-led skill development

Reports suggest 600 million new jobs are needed in the next 15 years to be able to integrate youth into the workforce. At the same time, businesses report that they do not have adequate access to skilled human resources, especially for technical and vocational jobs. Forty per cent of employers can't fill entry-level jobs, while 45 per cent of youth are in jobs that don't use their skills.

Despite its vital role in development to increase access to sustainable income, skills training has been experiencing severe problems worldwide, such as lack of physical, legal and educational infrastructure, absence of a win-win based cooperation between the private sector and vocational education and training agencies as well as matters of financing. The state and development agencies on their own are limited in their capacity to tackle these problems. It is difficult to close the gap between the supply of labour and the demands of the market, which exacerbates the exclusion of the base of the pyramid from the economy, especially in a globalizing world where the technological requirements are changing rapidly.

Private sector, on the other hand, has significant potential to address the deficiencies in skills development and bridge the gap between what the labour force has to offer and what the industry demands. The companies can contribute to the skills training process, which in turn can provide the required skilled employees for the market and offer employment opportunities, particularly to the disadvantaged. Private sector will not only help to improve national competitiveness and realize an increase in its profitability due to the availability of a better trained staff, but also improve the inclusiveness of the market.

UNDP through the Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development and the support of the Turkish government, is working with stakeholders globally to create and improve skills development partnerships, and thus help close the gap between the skills youth gain through training and those employers need.

The private sector is an especially important partner: their expertise and experience ensures that skills taught in training centres meet industry standards. Their innovation and technology helps to create more effective training methods.

One example of how skills development succeeds in helping trainees become more competitive in the labour market is BUTGEM, a vocational training centre in Turkey.

Created and financed by a local business support organization, Bursa Chamber of Commerce and Industry, BUTGEM leads vocational skills courses in various sectors like textile, mechatronics, and computer software and hardware.

Though the support of Turkey’s BUTGEM and facilitation by UNDP, training programmes in Kosovo were establish to help train future trainees and trainers in sectors that need employees in cooperation with the Kosovo Chamber of Commerce (KCC).

The main goal of the cooperation between KCC and BUTGEM is to transfer the operational expertise of BUTGEM to Kosovo and bring a new model to the sphere of vocational training in Kosovo. Its final aim is to facilitate the establishment of a training centre similar to BUTGEM in Kosovo which will be led by the private sector.

To be able to achieve this, capacity building and awareness about the benefits of the school among all stakeholders is needed and as the first step, groups of 20 people (19 students and 1 trainer) from Kosovo were trained in BUTGEM for three months, in areas such as light manufacturing, mechatronics and design. In the future, these trained people will lead the establishment of the vocational training school, similar to
the BUTGEM, in Kosovo. Expenses of participants of the programme are covered by several institutions in Bursa under the leadership of BUTGEM. The participants are selected by a committee composed of representatives from TIKA (Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency), UNDP, KCC and Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology.

A similar approach is being undertaken through UNDP offices in other countries such as Macedonia, Kenya, Bosnia, Uzbekistan, and India.

Note: References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
Source: http://www.iicpsd.undp.org/content/istanbul/en/home/presscenter/articles/2015/11/16/skills-training-is-a-pathway-to-economic-growth-for-all/
http://www.iicpsd.undp.org/content/istanbul/en/home/presscenter/articles/2012/08/14/butgem-trained-kosovar-students.html

**Economic diversification**

Value addition and product and services diversification is necessary to fuel growth in the major sectors of the economy and to the value added ladder. An open rules-based international economic system – trade, finance, migration - is key to the Mauritius economic model.

A first step would be to consolidate the traditional sectors by strengthening supply chains in agriculture, manufacturing and tourism, with a focus on MSMEs: (i) Tourism records low spending per tourist. Its portfolio should be broadened to cover nature, medical, wellness, and cultural dimensions; (ii) Sugarcane must become sustainable and financially viable (including through ethanol production); (iii) Manufacturing could leverage agro-industry development, building on value chain analysis to improve the inter-connectedness of industries. During the consultations, it was pointed out that linkages councils exist for the agriculture, tourism and manufacturing industries to strengthen the value-added in these industries and to minimize import leakages. This very positive step should be prioritized, especially in the context of MSME development.

It may also be worth considering the establishment of a mechanism to facilitate access to information and brokering of partnerships among large, medium-sized, small and micro firms in these key sectors, since access to information and knowledge of whom to contact in larger firms is often a significant barrier to small business insertion in supply-chains.

Export diversification should be explored as a possible avenue to strengthen the domestic manufacturing industry. The Mauritius National Export Strategy (NES) formulated in cooperation with the International Trade Centre (ITC), identified a set of priority sectors were selected based on their capacity to contribute to export growth, socio-economic development goals and employment generation through their current and potential trade performance, as well as meeting selected qualitative criteria. These include: Agro-processed foods; fisheries; jewellery; medical devices; cultural tourism; software development; and financial services.

The NES underlines the importance of addressing cross-cutting issues affecting enterprises in general and exporters, to improve performance. These evolve around: SEM internationalization; skills development; institutional alignment of support institutions; branding and innovation.

**Infrastructure modernization**

Improving investment and savings rates (from 15 per cent to 25 per cent of GDP) is a key target of the government. Indeed, higher investment rates are necessary notably to establish modern and eco-friendly
infrastructure to sustain economic growth. Enhancing the business environment will help attract FDI to increase investments.

i) Water and sanitation: modernizing infrastructure, addressing leakages in water pipes (irregular supply during the dry season). 100 per cent access in early 2020’s. New dams being built; waste water: 26 per cent now; target of 70 per cent by 2025; water pricing system; water catchment management: new water act to protect ground water.

ii) Ports/airports, etc.

**SOCIAL DIMENSION**

The Government Programme 2015-2019 states that “sustainable economic growth cannot be achieved without the integration and participation of the entire population [and commits] to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor, promote social justice, economic empowerment and national unity, and protect the elderly and vulnerable ones.”

Mauritius has historically shown strong commitment to social development as illustrated by significant investments in education, health, and social protection. As noted, there has been clear positive results in terms of human development outcomes. Nevertheless, a number of emerging challenges in all these areas require decisive action if the imperative of leaving no-one behind is to be attained.

Consultations sought to identify those being left behind and the underlying causes as perceived by stakeholders. Reference was made to analyses identifying 29 pockets of poverty which has been used to target social services as well as the SRM which identifies approximately 20,000 households in principle eligible for social assistance. Poverty remains an issue however, with some stakeholders arguing that adequate support is available but not been used by vulnerable populations in pockets of poverty, and that dependency on aid is preventing beneficiaries of support to lift out of poverty. It was equally mentioned, that gaps in service delivery indicate that poor and vulnerable populations are not aware of or empowered to use the programmes available to them, and important flaws in the social protection system leading to inclusion and exclusion errors as well as serious institutional weaknesses, undermine its effectiveness.

The recommendations that follow build upon initiatives undertaken by the Government of Mauritius, most notably, the adoption of the Marshall Plan Against Poverty which commenced implementation in 2016.

**A. SOCIAL PROTECTION**

As mentioned, Mauritius has a comprehensive social protection system composed of universal pensions and social aid. There is free and universal health and education and government subsidizes a number of goods and services for general consumption. The system however, has been unable to keep up with changes in the economic and social context. More concretely, it is failing those most in need in a context of rising inequality and relative and absolute poverty though the later remains around 1 per cent.

1) **Establish a Social Contract Scheme to deliver financial assistance to the poor**

The Government Programme 2015-2019 committed to formulate a Marshall Plan “to combat poverty and social exclusion. The National Empowerment Foundation will be restructured to render it more proactive and improve service delivery to the poor.”

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Implementation of the Marshall Plan was incorporated in the 2016/2017 Budget. The Budget speech states there are “6,400 families still living below the absolute poverty threshold of USD 3.10 per day per individual, calculated on the basis of purchasing power parity set out [by the World Bank]”\(^{46}\) and establishes a set of measures to eradicate absolute poverty in the country. These include a monthly subsistence allowance to adults registered in the SRM “based on a minimum threshold of Rs 2,720 with a maximum threshold of Rs 9,520 for a family of two adults and three children. This is higher than [the] current threshold of Rs 6,200.”\(^{47}\) Measures on education are foreseen aimed at empowering families of poor and vulnerable households (see below).

The Marshall Plan constitutes an ambitious agenda to adapt the social protection system to current realities and learning from experience, improving targeting and effectiveness, as well as placing greater emphasis on empowerment to transform those entitled to benefits into active agents of development.

The Roadmap reiterates the importance of implementing the Marshall Plan’s recommendation to establish a Social Contract Scheme to provide financial assistance to the poor conditional on households meeting approved and mutually agreed conditions. In addition, it is proposed to: i) monitor implementation of conditionalities associated with the Social Contract through the National Empowerment Foundation which will be significantly reformed and strengthened; ii) provide unconditional income support to persons outside the Social Contract such as the poor who cannot work due to illness or other circumstances, older persons, etc.; iii) progressively phase out social aid programmes, replaced by the Social Contract; iv) centralize access to social programmes in the SRM; iv) support the empowerment of participants in the Social Contract by making payments contingent on participation in skill enhancement and placement programmes, education performance, etc.; and vii) expand coverage by social security services of least developed areas.

2) Define an official poverty line

There is no official poverty line in Mauritius. A threshold of Rs 6,200 per month is used to allocate resources under poverty programmes. However, this threshold applies to households independent of size which leads to inequity; the threshold is not sufficient to cover basic needs of households of four or more members.\(^{48}\) And yet, analyses indicate the poverty is more prominent among larger households.

To enhance transparency and facilitate operationalization of the Marshal Plan Social Contract, it is proposed to establish an official poverty line using for instance, the General Poverty Line (GPL) calculated by Statistics Mauritius, to define access to social programmes under the SRM.\(^{49}\)

3) Adopt a community-based approach to delivery social services

In line with the Marshall Plan: i) establish a Community Scheme to fund community plans, initiatives and projects through a competitive process. Communities will work with a variety of partners – NGOs, CRS foundations, government entities, development partners, etc.- to formulate and present initiatives for funding from the Scheme; ii) establish an appraisal Committee to evaluate projects and proposals for funding under the Scheme; and iii) restructure the NGO Trust Fund to align with and allow funding of Community Scheme proposals.

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\(^{49}\) The General Poverty Line (GPL) is calculated by Statistics Mauritius on an expenditure basis using a bundle of food and other items considered the minimum requirement to meet basic needs in Mauritius. See the Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Volume 1, Action Plan, p. 90.
B. Education

Analyses by the World Bank and expert consultations leading to the formulation of the Marshall Plan attest to a strong relationship between education outcomes and income levels, employment and social mobility. In Mauritius, inequality impacts education achievements with students from low-income households showing lower completion rates and performance than children from better off households.50 At the same time, poverty analyses indicate that poverty disproportionately affect households whose head has less than secondary education, or is a women or youth.

Acknowledging weaknesses in the education system leading to rising inequality and unemployment, the Government of Mauritius is moving towards the implementation of education reform a key component of which is the adoption of a Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE). The CPE at grade 6 will be substituted by a Primary School Achievement Certificate (PSAC) aimed at evaluating students in a holistic manner. The PSAC will be undertaken in a modular fashion to avoid the pressure of an all-encompassing examination at the end of the year. The division of academic and vocational education tracks would be postponed to grade nine with a view to providing students entering the TVET track a level of literacy and numeracy high enough not to forsake further learning opportunities and access to the job market. Initiatives also involve eliminating stigma of TVET and better articulating TVET with secondary and tertiary education, as well as the creation of polytechnics, to expand the learning pathways opened to students. This seems particularly important not only for addressing equity issues and given a proper alternative to the youth to enter the labour market but also to prepare the human capital required to sustain a new wave of economic transformation. Implementation of the reform is expected to cost Rs 2 billion over the next five years.51 The following recommendations would complement the on-going education reform with particular emphasis in ensuring equity in education outcomes to accelerate progress towards poverty eradication, quality education, gender equality and sustainable and inclusive growth, among other SDGs.

1) Enhance access and completion rate of secondary education by children from poor and vulnerable households

The current secondary school system consists of two tracks: the general education or academic track and the vocational stream. The general education track leads to inequitable outcomes and children and youth from poor backgrounds do not have access to this stream since many of them fail to pass the CPE. Overall, between 20 and 30 per cent of children enrolled in primary education do not pass the CPE. There are also high dropout rates among learners who fail the CPE mostly coming from vulnerable households.52

The vocational stream suffers similar problems with students dropping out in the early years of secondary education. According to data from the Ministry of Education, an estimated 28 per cent of students fail to complete pre-vocational programmes.53

Low performing students mostly from low-income backgrounds are clustered into low performing schools such as the Zones d’Education Prioritaires (ZEP) which combined with failure to pass the CPE exclude these children and youth from the secondary academic track.

In light of the above, it is proposed to: i) reserve a number of seats in the secondary academic track for children and youth registered in the SRM; ii) design a conditional cash transfers programme (CCT) as part of the Marshall Plan’s Social Contract Scheme, with cash transfer per student contingent on enrolment, attendance and completion of secondary school; iii) building on existing programmes and experience,

52 Marshal Plan Against Poverty, Volume 2, Background Analysis, p. 46.
establish a reliable tracking system to monitor school attendance; iv) institute measures to improve the quality of education in low-performing schools, inclusive of ZEPs, attended by low income children and youths as complement to the CCT roll out; and v) establish a baseline and set targets for reducing drop-outs.

With the implementation of the education reform and the introduction of the NYCBE, the above measures will be linked to enrollment, attendance and completion of the nine-year basic education cycle.

2) **Improve access of children from poor and vulnerable households to early child care and education services (ECCE)**

The Government of Mauritius has established a number of programmes to enhance the access of children in pockets of poverty to ECCE and improve the quality of ECCE. These involve expanding infrastructure in underserved areas; changing legislation to extend services by private pre-primary schools (74 per cent of ECCE services nationwide) after school hours to facilitate access by working parents, especially working mothers; providing subsidies to poor families to pay for private pre-primary schools; grants to private schools established in poor areas to bring them up to standard; development of curricula, etc. The on-going education reform establishes one-year compulsory pre-primary education and strives towards the professionalization of ECCE.

These measures have contributed to an increase in the enrollment rate in pre-primary schools which increased from 23 per cent in 2000 to 98 per cent in 2014. Lack of monitoring and evaluation of programmes however, does not allow determining their overall effectiveness and impact.

However, analysis and interviews with stakeholders carried out in the context of formulation of the Marshall Plan indicate that children from poor and vulnerable households continue to face barriers in accessing ECCE services. The reasons provided being that pockets of poverty remain underserved, that pre-schools are not free, and the difficulties in accessing transport.

Expanding access to pre-primary education is extremely important in terms of the foundations it lays for future learning and stimulation of children’s cognitive capacities, but also because of the positive implications for women’s labour force participation. The lack of ECCE services is a major factor preventing women from seeking employment. In Mauritius, women’s labour force participation is particularly low at 46.6 per cent.

The following interventions are proposed: i) establish community-based ECCE services in areas catering for poor and vulnerable households; ii) undertake needs assessments to identify existing ECCE services, gaps and women and community needs to inform community development plans or ECCE stand-alone initiatives to be financed under the Marshall Plan Community Scheme; iii) channel financing from the Marshall Plan Community Scheme Fund to ECCE initiatives that promote parents’ education and awareness raising on children’s development; and iv) enhance teaching capacity through approaches to develop children’s creative and cognitive capacity.

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55 This is the case for instance, of the conditional cash transfer programmes launched in 2013 under the Child and Family Welfare Programme to promote school attendance; or the grant offered to disadvantage private pre-primary schools in pockets of poverty to meet standards and register.
57 Draft Vision 2030, p. 29
3) **Promote creative, emotional and physical learning through community-based schools**

One of the objectives of the NYCBE reform is to provide children and youth with a more holistic learning experience, which in addition to academic disciplines involve skill development, attitudes and values, and core competencies such as “critical thinking skills, adaptability, and creativity, ability to work collaboratively, good communication skills and fluency in ICT.”

As a complement to the education reform and with a particular focus in pockets of poverty, it is proposed to establish community schools to promote initiatives, projects and activities covering all aspects of a person’s development: the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, etc.

The 2016/2017 budget envisages piloting community schools in five ZEP, merging academic teaching and community engagement as a means to improve learning experience. The implementation of the Roadmap’s interventions may build on this piloting exercise to adapt to the holistic approach proposed.

C. **HEALTH**

The Roadmap places emphasis on two emerging trends on health in Mauritius with the potential to significantly influence the achievement of national objectives and implementation of the SDGs. These are Non-communicable diseases and rising health costs.

1) **Enhance prevention and treatment of NCD, especially among the poor and vulnerable population**

The latest Non-Communicable Disease Survey held in 2015 concludes that chronic diseases in the country are no longer escalating. The Survey credits the positive trend to the implementation of preventive and screening programmes over the years. Nevertheless, NCDs represent an important public health issue in Mauritius, especially in the context of the ageing population.

The prevalence of diabetes in the population 25-74 was 20.5 per cent in 2015 and the prevalence of pre-diabetes was set at 19.4 per cent with women registering higher rates of prevalence than men. Both indicators show a reduction of values as compared to 2009, the date of the previous Survey. However, the Survey also found that only two thirds of the persons found to have diabetes had been previously diagnosed and treatment was poor among those who knew had the illness. The prevalence of hypertension was 28.4 per cent and only 52.6 per cent of persons with hypertension were on medication. On the other hand, 54 per cent of the population is either overweight or obese, 19 per cent smokes and 52.8 per cent consume alcohol, all important risk factors for NCDs.

The Survey notes that “[t]he double burden of the high rates of diabetes and pre-diabetes, coupled with those of obesity, dyslipidaemia and hypertension, constitute a significant threat in terms of the future social and economic burden of heart disease and diabetes complications for Mauritius. These relate to both the direct medical costs and national productivity due to the impact of these diseases on the workforce.”

World Bank research has exposed linkages in Mauritius between NCDs and education. With low levels of education constituting a significant driver of poverty, the poor are more likely to be affected by these diseases. More concretely, the World Bank found that those with 13 or more years of education had 53 per cent lower probability of having diabetes and 50 per cent odds of being hypertensive than persons

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with up to 3 years of education. Similarly, persons with 10 or more years of education are 25-30 per cent less likely to be overweight or obese than those with less than 3 years of education.\textsuperscript{61}

In light of the above, it is proposed to: i) emphasize prevention and regular screening for NCDs, in particular diabetes which leads to further heart and kidney diseases complications; ii) increase awareness raising and education aimed at behavioral change to tackle sedentary activity, smoking and alcoholism which are risk factors for NCD; and iii) provide prevention, screening and treatment of NCDs at community level to ensure that the population in pockets of poverty have equal access to health care availability as the population at large.

2) \textbf{Protect the poor from financial risk associated with expenditures on health care and treatment}

The Government of Mauritius provides free health services to the entire population through a network of health care and treatment facilities. Mauritius’ 2015 Out-of-Pocket Health Expenditure on Health Survey (OOP Survey) states that public health institutions whether hospitals or primary health centres remain the main providers of health care to the population. More concretely, according to the Survey, “in 2015, 72.8\% of patients sought care in the public sector while 27.2\% of patients resorted to care and treatment in the private sector.”\textsuperscript{62}

In spite of this, private expenditures in health services in Mauritius are significant, estimated at 51 per cent of total expenditures on health, of which 91.4 per cent constitute out-of-pocket expenditures by households as shown in the table below.

\textbf{Table 4 – Expenditures in Health in Mauritius, 2015.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Health Expenditures (THE) as % of GDP</th>
<th>General Government Expenditure on Health as % of GDP</th>
<th>Private Expenditure on Health (PEH) as % of THE</th>
<th>Out of Pocket Payment as % of PEH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>49.1</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>91.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A breakdown of private expenditures on health indicate that pharmaceutical products constitute the largest item with 27 per cent of private expenditures on health by households, followed by medical supplies and disposables at 20.28 per cent.

Analysis by the World Bank indicates that “[b]etween 2006 and 2012, the overall level of out-of-pocket health spending has increased as a share of household income of the bottom 40 percent, and did so at a much higher rate than the population as a whole.”\textsuperscript{63}

The 2015 OOP Survey does not provide a breakdown of OOP expenditures or of the incidence of catastrophic expenditures on health by income level of households which would allow to update the information provided by the World Bank and understand why in spite of free and universal health care provision, the poor may be at financial-risk as a result of expenditures on health.


Interviews with stakeholders leading to the formulation of the Marshall Plan indicate that women and people living with HIV/AIDS faces barriers to access health services due to stigma and discrimination.\textsuperscript{64}

In light of the above, the Roadmap proposes to: i) deepen analysis of the OOP Survey and other sources to better understand the profile of OOP expenditures by the poor and thus gaps in public health service delivery in terms of access and quality; ii) promote schemes to manage the financial-risk associated with health expenditures, such as health insurance, for the population at large.

\subsection*{D. GENDER}

The Human Development Index of Mauritius adjusted by gender equality, leads to a reduction of the index by 14 per cent.\textsuperscript{65} Gender inequality evidence itself on different aspects of women’s life such as health, education, political participation, economic empowerment, etc.

\textbf{1) Increase labour force participation by women}

Poverty in Mauritius is higher among women and female headed households. This is partly because women’s labour force participation is low at 47 per cent and women are disproportionately represented among the unemployed. According to the World Bank, marriage and family size explain low women’s low economic activity though labour force participation increases with education.

A wage gap of 50 per cent as well as the lack of supporting institutions and services to release women from household and care tasks, discourage them from more active economic participation, especially among the poor. According to a survey held in 2003, women spend significantly more time in unpaid work than men: 277 minutes per day in unpaid work by women compared to 73 minutes by men.\textsuperscript{66}

Increasing women’s labour force participation is important for gender equality. It is also critical in the context of the ageing population, shrinking labour force and increasing dependency ratio. The IMF estimates GDP losses associated with the gender gap in economic participation in Mauritius at 22 per cent.\textsuperscript{67} These figures point to a significant drag on Mauritius’ economic development and ambitions.

The Roadmap proposes to: i) review labour market policies and institutions to address the significant gender wage gap; ii) expand access to family and child care services such as ECCE, maternity and paternity leave, and transport, etc. to households in pockets of poverty to encourage women to seek employment; iii) increase awareness and information among the poor and women in particular, about available training and employment programmes; iv) expand the Women Back to Work Programme to improve the access of women from poor backgrounds and to professions beyond typical gendered occupational areas; v) promote flexible work arrangements beyond existing part time work; and vi) enhance financial literacy through training particularly to female micro-entrepreneurs.

\textbf{2) Enhance women’s participation in political life}

As indicated, Mauritius did not meet the MDG target on women’s participation in Parliament. Given the important role that female political leaders may play as role models and active agents of change to address gender gaps in all areas of life, it is critical that specific action is taken to systematically increase women’s participation in roles of leadership at all levels of government.

It is proposed to: i) establish programmes at secondary and tertiary education levels to promote women’s participation in leadership roles; ii) consider the establishment of quotas for women’s participation in

\textsuperscript{64} Marshall Plan Against Poverty (2016). Volume 2, Background Analysis, p. 52.
\textsuperscript{65} Vision 2030, p. 29.
\textsuperscript{66} Vision 2030, p. 29.
political parties and elections, at all levels of government; and iii) establish training and mentor programmes for women in politics.

ENVIRONMENT
A key challenge faced by Mauritius is to achieve rapid economic growth without undermining the natural environmental endowment on which economic development ultimately depends. Mauritius has a small land area and limited natural resources. It is highly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. The World Risk Index 2015 ranks Mauritius 13th in terms of the highest disaster risk and 7th among the countries most exposed to natural hazards with considerable and increasing socio-economic impacts. Economic growth and higher living standards have heightened environmental fragility reflected in biodiversity loss, water stress, increasing problems of waste disposal, coastal erosion, reduced energy efficiency, soil degradation, etc. Mauritius’s ecological footprint at 4.3 ha per person is higher than the world average at 1.8 ha per person.68

There is increasing recognition in Mauritius about the importance of grounding economic development in a broader sustainability framework. Policies, programmes, and investments have been made or are planned in areas such as renewable energy, waste management or organic agriculture. However, analysis shows that current trends or business as usual growth scenarios are not enough to meet Mauritius’ stated policy objectives.69

i) Transitioning to a green economy
Mauritius needs to accelerate the transition to a green economy – defined by UNEP as one that results in improvements in human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities.70

The Government should create the right conditions for facilitating the transition mainly through i) the establishment of a conducive policy and institutional framework; ii) creating the right incentives for individuals and enterprises to internalize sustainability; and iii) increasing awareness and education to promote behavioral change.

With respect to the policy and institutional framework, it is critical to mainstream environmental sustainability across sectors through integrated planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. For instance, integrated water management has become a real priority for Mauritius given the country is water stressed and projections indicate that the country will reach renewable capacity by 204071 with climate change hastening water scarcity. The World Economic forum Global Risk Report identified water crisis as the 3rd most serious risk for the country. To succeed in reducing water use and improving efficiency, all economic sectors and households should be concerned. Agriculture (50 per cent) and tourism (29 per cent), for example, together account for 80 per cent of water use. Sectoral policies and strategies in these sectors should be aligned and informed by national targets in water use. The use of pesticides which has increased over time, and other agro-chemicals have implications for water pollution. It is important that trade-offs arising from policy choices across sectors are made explicit and discussed. For example, there is a trade-off between policies to promote agriculture

68 The ecological footprint refers to the productive land and aquatic ecosystems needed to produce resources and assimilate waste. See http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/ecological_footprint_atlas_2010
69 See PAGE, University of Mauritius (2015). Green Economy Assessment. Mauritius for a discussion on modelling results using business as usual and ‘green’ economic growth paths meant to achieve stated policy objectives such as targets on renewable energy or recycling.
development such as the free water abstraction for the sector or the zero VAT for irrigation and the objective of reducing and increasing the efficiency of water use.

Mainstreaming efforts need to be supported by an appropriate institutional framework. In Mauritius, the responsibility for environmental protection is shared across different governmental departments and agencies (as is the case in many countries given the cross-cutting nature of environment protection). The Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management has overarching responsibility for environmental policy, planning, coordination, awareness raising, monitoring and enforcement. But other ministries and parastatal entities have responsibility over environmentally sensitive portfolios. For instance, waste management is responsibility of the Ministry of Local Government and local authorities; the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities is responsible for defining energy and water policy whereas the Ministry of Housing and Land holds overall responsibility in the definition of policies and strategies for land development across the country, including land for agriculture or tourism development in prime coastal areas. On the other hand, building and development permits are issued by local authorities. The Ministry of Public Infrastructure and land Transport is responsible for the implementation of infrastructure projects and transport services.

A number of committees or other coordination mechanisms have over time been put in place. These include the Maurice Ile Durable Commission, the National Network for Sustainable Development, the Environment Coordination Commission and the National Environment Commission. These various mechanisms have been however, mostly dormant over the past five years.

Given the risk profile and vulnerability to climate change of Mauritius, special emphasis needs to be placed on mainstreaming of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) as part of wider mainstreaming sustainability efforts. A number of recent initiatives with respect to the policy and institutional framework for DRR have been taken in the recent past. Most notably, the establishment of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (DRRMC) in 2013 under the aegis of the Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management. A Disaster and Risk Management Act was enacted in 2016 defining the roles and responsibilities of various national entities in this area. However, DRR in the country remains embryonic. Few development sectors integrate risk considerations into their development and investment plans; the cost-benefit calculus for large-scale projects does not take disaster risk into consideration and critical infrastructure is not sufficiently protected against disaster and climate risk. There is a need for institutional, human and technical capacities on DRR and climate change.

During the consultations to draft the Roadmap, stakeholders underlined weaknesses in environmental protection and coordination failures across ministerial departments with overlapping responsibilities. While laws and regulations were assessed as adequate, not enough is being invested in their enforcement in terms of human resources, technical capacity and funding of enforcement activities. In this context, the contribution that civil society can make to environmental protection was underscored, suggesting that different models of engagement with the private sector and NGOs for co-management of protected areas, for instance, can contribute to enhancing accountability and addressing perceived weaknesses in the institutional framework. The need to enhance capacity of government entities on sustainability and the SDGs more broadly was stressed. Options for addressing this need may include adding relevant content in the existing civil service e-learning system which is accessible to 85,000 civil servants and/or building partnerships to develop content and delivery of programmes through the civil service staff college.

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Another aspect of mainstreaming environmental sustainability is its consideration in the budgeting process. A Public Environment Expenditure Review of Mauritius\textsuperscript{73} covering the period 2011-2014 places environmental expenditures, inclusive of climate change actions, at 2 per cent of GDP and 7 per cent of total government expenditures, on average, over the period. An analysis of Mauritius’ budget from the lens of DRR estimated expenditures on DRR and management between 4.2 and 5.1 per cent of the budget in 2013, most of it for prevention and mitigation actions (74 per cent), followed by preparedness (23.6 per cent) and reconstruction (2 per cent).\textsuperscript{74}

Section 4.4 of the Roadmap discusses issues related to financing of the SDGs. One of the recommendations made relates to the adoption of Programme-Based Budgeting within the context of a Medium Term Expenditure Framework to allow the allocation of resources and tracking of expenditures to priority policy objectives as opposed to administrative units. This is particularly suitable to cross-cutting issues such as environmental protection or DRR which are bound to involve joint action by a broad range of government entities. The use of relevant ‘markers’ for budget allocations and expenditures would facilitate monitoring and tracking of funding against policy objectives.

The Government of Mauritius can accelerate progress towards a green economy by more fully utilizing tax and economic incentives to guide production and consumption decisions by individuals and enterprises. A number of such measures are already in place but there is space for improvements both in terms of the scope and the design of existing measures.

As shown in table 5 below, Mauritius imposes a number of environmental taxes. Motor vehicle and transport taxes represent by far the largest revenue category at 67 per cent. The main weakness of these taxes is related to their design since they fail to promote an internalization of environmental externalities. For example, the motor vehicle tax is imposed on the purchase or ownership of vehicles instead of usage or mileage driven which is more effective in reducing driving. Fuel taxes on coal, LPG and fuel oil are fixed at a flat rate of Rs 0.3/L which fails to take into account the varying environmental impact of different fuels.

The scope of measures can be expanded to pricing of environmental goods and services. For instance, the household water tariffs do not recover production costs which distorts consumers’ valuation of water resources and undermine the ability of the Central Water Authority to undertake critical infrastructure maintenance activities such as meter and pipeline replacements (water losses are estimated at approximately 50 per cent). At the moment, the cost of waste management is entirely absorbed by the general budget at national and local levels while recycling rates are low. Putting a price or fee on waste disposal would help households and enterprises to internalize the cost of such services and thus encourage waste reduction. Other measures such as a deposit for recycled goods to be recovered by users can encourage higher recycling rates.

A green fiscal policy analysis of Mauritius by UNEP discusses reforms in this area and show that these need neither undermine fiscal revenue nor equity of the tax system. The Roadmap suggests that fiscal reform and changes to pricing of environmental goods and services can contribute to accelerate the transition to the green economy.

Table 5 – Structure and scale of environmental fiscal instruments in Mauritius

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Irrigation water is zero rated. Electricity supplied by the Central Authority Board and water supplied by the Water Authority Board are zero rated. These zero rates are not in line with international standards. Normal rates apply to fuels, as in prevailing international practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excises on transport fuels</td>
<td>The level of excises on gasoline is in line with international practice; the excise on diesel is low compared to gasoline and compared to international standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excises on energy fuels</td>
<td>Coal, liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and fuel oil are not subjected to excise duties. A subsidy is in place to sustain the diffusion of LPG for household purposes (Mauritian rupees (MUR) 640 million in 2013, US$17.72 million). The supply of electricity, petroleum products, LPG and other goods is subsidized for Rodrigues Island.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MID levy</td>
<td>The MID levy of MUR 0.3 per litre (US$0.008) on most fossil fuels de facto imposes a burden on CO2 emissions, although it is not related to the carbon content of fuels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO2 levy/rebate</td>
<td>There is a CO2 levy/rebate on the purchase of cars producing more than 150 grams of CO2 per kilometre driven.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emission taxes</td>
<td>There do not appear to be emission taxes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water tariffs</td>
<td>Water tariffs are low. The average water charge per m3 in Mauritius is US$0.23 (the OECD average is US$1.09). The water affordability index (the share of average net disposable income spent on water and sanitation bills) for Mauritius is 0.8 per cent (for developed countries it is approximately 1.1 per cent, for developing countries approximately 2.5 per cent). Water abstraction is free for agriculture. Water capture (dams and reservoirs) is fully financed by the Government through consolidated funds. The cost of providing water is not recovered through prices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection fee</td>
<td>This fee is intended for revenue generation (not to reduce environmental impacts). It amounts to MUR 50 per unit for mobile phones, batteries for motor vehicles and pneumatic tyres. The tariff structure for hotels, guest houses and tourist residences is 0.85 per cent on turnover; for stone-crushing plants and the manufacture or processing of aggregates, concrete blocks and precast units, it is 0.75 per cent on turnover.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity tariffs</td>
<td>Electricity tariffs are set with the aim of cost recovery (which is not fully achieved). Differential rates are charged among user types to create resources for cross-subsidies, which apply to households, sugar factories and irrigation. The commercial sector pays the highest rates, followed by the industrial sector, which pays differential day, peak and night rates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal income tax</td>
<td>No deductions are allowed for expenses of environmental interest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate tax</td>
<td>A Corporate Social Responsibility levy of 2 per cent on corporate profits exists. Currently, all Corporate Social Responsibility projects are targeted at social rather than environmental outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road tax</td>
<td>The annual per-vehicle charge is between MUR 3,500 (US$96.92) and MUR 13,000 (US$360), depending on engine size. A tax is also levied on fuels at the rate of MUR 1.85 (US$0.051) per litre of gasoline and MUR 1.75 (US$0.048) per litre of diesel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Standards and incentives, including fiscal incentives and subsidies, are also important tools to promote sustainability. Mauritius itself has implemented a subsidy programme to promote solar water heating by households which has helped increase renewable energy use (the penetration of solar water heaters increased from 7 per cent to 22 per cent as a result of the programme). Standards help the market reward enterprises that apply sustainability criteria. Only a few enterprises use environmental management systems and standards and more advanced systems such as life cycle assessments and eco-design are not
known in the country. The Government of Mauritius through the Standards Bureau and other entities with responsibility on standard setting, can promote the formulation of environmental standards complemented such as eco-labelling or certification schemes for sustainable agriculture to promote the development of a market for sustainable production. These initiatives may need to be accompanied with

Finally, consultations for the Roadmap underlined the importance of enhancing education and raising awareness about the environment and sustainability to the wider population, especially among the youth. In this context, the NYCEBE reform includes a curriculum reform which aims at among others, reinforcing children’s civic responsibility and environmental awareness which should contribute over time to enhance knowledge and awareness of the population at large. But more is needed including through stronger engagement by the media and communication campaigns. See section 4.6 of the Roadmap for more on civic engagement and advocacy.

   ii)    Land use planning and management

Mauritius’ total land area is 2,045 Km² and is one of the most densely populated countries in the world at 641 persons per Km². Land in Mauritius is mainly privately owned with the exception of State lands and the Pas Géométriques in coastal areas both of which are leased by the Government for various uses.

Rapid economic growth, higher living standards and development needs in agriculture, manufacturing, infrastructure, tourism, housing and commercial activities have increased the pressure on land resources and led to different forms of land degradation including deforestation, beach and coastal erosion, degradation of arable land, loss of wetlands, etc. Over the next 10 years, an additional 12,200 ha of land will be needed for urban, business, and infrastructural development further putting pressure on the environment.

Coastal areas are particularly sensitive due to the concentration of 20 per cent of the total population in these areas and its value for a variety of economic activities such as tourism, inclusive of Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS), private housing and fisheries. On the other hand, the urban population in Mauritius Island is concentrated in five urban zones, including the capital Port Louis. 60 per cent of industries are also concentrated in the central urban zones in the island. This leads to problems of pollution and congestion. In Rodrigues, land degradation occurs mainly due to the conversion of grassland to urban land uses.

Mauritius established a Protected Areas Network but the bulk of high value conversion natural habitat lies still outside the PAN. The current PAN in Mauritius Island covers 7,259 ha including forest and nature reserves, national parks and privately owned mountain and river reserves. Expansion of the PAN is seen as a key component of the strategy for biodiversity conservation.

As stated above, the Ministry of Housing and Land defines policies regarding land use. The National Development Strategy formulated in 2003 was given legal force through the enactment of the Planning and Development Act in 2005. National planning principles are adopted at local level through the formulation of Outline Planning Schemes which assists local authorities to control the use of land within their areas. Local authorities are responsible for granting planning and construction permits for building operations, changing land and building use or dividing land.

Responsibility for the control and management of PANs is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agro-industry and Fisheries through two entities: the Forestry Services and the National Parks and Conservation Services (NPCS). Significant investments in human resources and institutional development over the years have enhanced national capacities for the management of PAN. Consultations for the Roadmap

highlighted however, the financial constraints for the implementation of existing strategies for management of protected areas and underlined as a significant problem the lack of control of state entities on private reserves. It is expected however, that the legal framework will improve soon with the enactment of provisions to allow partnerships between the state and private owners of reserve land to promote adequate management of these areas.

While the policy, legal and institutional framework have evolved over time with a view to incorporating sustainable development principles in Mauritius, there are still gaps in term of integration and coherence in policy formulation and implementation, and in particular enforcement. The Mauritius Environment Outlook Report 2011 documents instances of illegal occupation of state lands, encroachment of environmental sensitive areas such as wetlands and deficiencies in planning.

Against this background, it is recommended to improve institutional coordination for the enforcement legislation, policy and guidelines in relation to land use, inclusive of environmental impact assessments. In addition it is recommended to evaluate the establishment of biodiversity offset mechanisms. These mechanisms seek to achieve no net loss or, preferably, net gain in biodiversity with respect to habitat structure, ecosystem functions, people’s use and cultural value associated with biodiversity and species composition. The offset mechanism define actions meant to compensate for significant residual adverse biodiversity impacts resulting from development plans or projects after prevention and mitigation measures have been taken. Biodiversity offset mechanisms, of compulsory nature, would require regulatory provisions adopted by national authorities, defining the principles, limits and rules for compensation and/or for the establishment of an offset credit market. Some of the most critical requirements for the viability of offset mechanisms seem to be present in Mauritius: political will related to biodiversity conservation; clear land tenure rules; and existence of entities able to develop conservation activities that can be awarded offset credits. The design of the offset mechanism needs to take into account some of the risks and challenges associated with their implementation. These involve the complexity of evaluating biodiversity loss in ecosystem services underling the importance of good baseline data and professional services for the estimation of such values; and putting in place a strong monitoring, reporting and verification system to assess over time the impact of the mechanism and decide on modifications or alternative course of action.

GOVERNANCE AND CAPACITY

Mauritius’ aspiration to become a high-income economy requires an effective public sector: a centre of government able to provide strategic direction, implement, monitor and communicate the national vision and ensure demonstrable results to citizens and all sectors of society; and a civil service that is knowledgeable, skilled, and equipped with the right tools to effectively support the government in achieving national development goals.

Mauritius showed progress overall in World Governance Indicators in the last 10 years. While it experienced a decline in its control of corruption since 2010, it continues to be perceived as the least corrupt country in Africa (Table 6). It has been ranked first in overall governance in Africa 10 years in a row by the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG).

Government effectiveness has consistently risen in the last 20 years as well, with public sector efficiency ranking better than some peers but still below global standards (Table 6). Reforms that assisted its rise to middle income country status now need to be accelerated. Considered key in this regard, as laid out in the Government Programme 2015-2019, is the transformation of the civil service with a focus on people

(human capital development), processes (streamlining, strengthening efficiency and effectiveness), and technology (modernization and optimization to meet global standards).

**Table 6 – Mauritius ranking in Governance indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mauritius (Percentile Rank)</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Control of Corruption</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>67.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Effectiveness</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>79.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulatory Quality</td>
<td>63.2</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>82.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice and Accountability</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mauritius (Percentile Rank)</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>85.4</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>82.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauritius</td>
<td>71.2</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbados</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>64.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seychelles</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The government has launched a set of reforms (led by the Ministry for Civil Service and Administrative Reforms, MCSAR), enlisting the Commonwealth’s support to provide strategic guidance to help ensure the achievement of a civil service committed to excellence. Commonwealth support (including funding commitment) was instrumental in launching the “Formulation of a Civil Services Reform Strategy for Mauritius.” The Reform Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2018 is the result of this effort. It aims to establish a roadmap to achieve a world class public sector, entrench quality service delivery that meets or exceeds global standards, securing public recognition and appreciation of civil service delivery, benchmarking of best practices, and monitoring and evaluation.

The civil service comprises around 55,000 public officers serving in 25 Ministries and 50 Departments. Factors impeding effective service delivery, identified by the study commissioned by the Commonwealth at the request of the government, include rigidities in the bureaucracy which is not open to new and young entrants. Work in civil service is considered among the most secure in the country, which people do not leave until or even after retirement. The civil service faces an ageing workforce, and needs to address the challenges posed by lack of succession planning and talent management. It needs a plan to replenish ranks, given the barriers to entry (including retirees continuing to assume certain posts as consultants).

Skills mismatches also pose challenges, within the service as well as among aspiring entrants, which need to be addressed as a priority to ensure achievement of the Government Programme and Vision 2030. As the improvement of the civil service and the delivery of public services involves the large scale deployment of ICTs in offices and the development of e-services, a significant effort is required to equip public officers with appropriate know-how in business process re-engineering and information systems.

The government started computerization efforts in the 1990s, which entailed a focus on improving government functions (revenue collection, management of government accounts, processing of pension and other benefits, etc.), and which later evolved towards the development of citizen-centric services. Part of the current civil service reform is the accelerated modernization of public offices and operations, and the adoption of e-government initiatives that use ICTs in strategic ways to improve governments...

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78 Part of the support provided by the Commonwealth is the hiring of a consultant to take the initiative forward.
functions, enhance citizens’ ease of access to services, as well as improve equitable service delivery. Examples of e-services explored are online processing of driving tests, payment of traffic fines, a one-stop shop for funeral procedures, filing of environmental complaints and requests for environmental education awareness.

e-Governance initiatives are also being explored to enhance citizens’ participation in decision-making processes, and to enhance government transparency and accountability. The government needs to ensure that these “e” strategies and efforts are understood not only as modernization efforts but as crucial conditions for enhancing public service delivery and building confidence in government. The NICTSP noted that the ownership of e-government services has been a major issue across departments, with the whole effort being seen as an ICT issue and not a public service delivery undertaking. Greater collaboration between the ICT experts supporting the e-government thrusts and the public officers in civil service is crucial.

Public officers also need to understand better the drive to build a Smart Civil Service. The aim to “transform the civil service into a forward-looking, environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant and innovative civil service” entails massive ICT-based initiatives that will overhaul the way things are done. The drive to automate human resource management functions through the adoption of the latest technologies, for instance, will have implications on how discipline is exercised across the service. The individual performance appraisal system has been introduced to promote a performance-oriented culture, and there is a need to ensure its effectiveness across departments.

An academy for the civil service has recently been established but has yet to start programmes, while Universities have yet to align programmes with government needs and plans (e.g., there is a plan to develop an ocean economy, but schools have no programmes that will develop the workforce for that).

Improving public service delivery will require the adoption of a modern public sector approach based on improved collaboration at the centre of government, stronger investment in performance-based public sector capacity development, embedded mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation, better information management, and strengthened accountability.

Public administration reforms to improve service delivery at all levels could include improved planning, procurement, and management processes across the system, budget decentralization for the management of funds, a continuous process of monitoring and evaluation to support evidence-based policy making and to raise accountability, as well as adequate information and administrative systems to support both service delivery and public sector management.79

The Roadmap proposes adopting a gradual approach for improving institutional performance under twin goals: i) Improving the direct provision of service delivery: such as health, education, water and sanitation, transportation, electricity, etc., and ii) strengthening public sector institutions via performance enhancement, including key institutional capacity building interventions and investment in public sector infrastructure through public-private partnerships and leveraging private sector expertise.

More concretely and in line with the Reforms Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2018, the Roadmap suggests reform efforts focus on the following areas:

1) Central delivery leadership

Support the centre of government in enhancing cross-sectoral prioritization, coordination and collaboration, identify key priorities for reform and streamlining for planning, procurement and

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management processes across the system, and monitoring roles and responsibilities through performance dashboards.

2) Capacity development as part of human resource management

Build capacity development through training and re-training for the entire civil service and for specific functional groups within individual ministries.

3) Performance management systems

Operationalize the results-based management systems that have been developed to track performance, and establish a single entry point to assess objectives, results and experiences.

4) Information management systems

Accelerate the development of ICT-assisted systems and mechanisms enabling rapid survey and information gathering to ensure that decision-making is informed by empirical evidence, capture grievances regarding service delivery, collect and manage data on existing service delivery imbalances and bottlenecks, and monitor citizens’ trust in state institutions. Develop training programmes to ensure effective use and management within the civil service, and communications strategies and information campaigns to assist adoption among citizens.

5) Support to social inclusion and equity in service delivery access

Develop a unified national vision to strengthen existing social assistance programs and improve the capacity of core government institutions to ensure multi-dimensional support (in addition to more equitable and timely provision of public services) to vulnerable communities. Support to social inclusion must also include improving the representation of women in decision making with continuous monitoring and promotion of their roles in the service.

4.4 Financing for development

Achieving Mauritius’ ambitious national development priorities and realising the SDGs by 2030 will require significant investments in sustainable development. A financing strategy should accompany the identification of acceleration measures to ensure resource constraints do not become an obstacle to the achievement of established policy objectives.

Government budgets in 2015 and 2016 have increased spending on social benefits (e.g. increase in basic pensions), recruitment of government employees and increase in purchase of goods and services, etc., and set out an important Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) on infrastructure. These efforts need to be balanced to ensure macro-economic stability—a sine qua non condition for attracting much needed foreign direct investment—and debt sustainability, taking into account the statutory debt ceiling of 50 per cent by 2018. While the debt to GDP ratio has been falling, the IMF projects that additional efforts on fiscal consolidation to those so far envisaged, will be needed to meet the statutory target on time.

Important reforms have been announced in relation to the public sector with an emphasis placed on the restructuring of loss making State owned enterprises (SOE) and the suggested streamlining and merging of some public sector institutions to enhance coherence, and improving effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery.

The Government of Mauritius has sought to enhance the participation of the private sector in financing development. Recent initiatives involve improving the regulatory framework for Public Private Partnerships through the enactment of a Build Operate Transfer (BOT) Bill to facilitate the participation of the private sector in infrastructure projects. The PSIP envisages 13 mega projects over five years where
participation of the private sector will be actively encouraged. These projects are expected to “mobilise some Rs 120 billion rupees of much needed private and foreign direct investments, create thousands of jobs, and give a tremendous boost to the construction industry which has been contracting since 2011.”

Additional reforms include improvements in the business environment with streamlining of licenses and permits and improving access to finance, incentives and other support services to SMEs to spur renewed economic dynamism and better spread the gains from growth.

Over the last two years, a number of reforms have been introduced to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme with the establishment of a National CSR Foundation for channelling an increasing share of CSR contributions by the private sector and the identification of a number of areas highlighted for funding, mainly: poverty alleviation; education support; social housing; supporting persons with severe disabilities; dealing with health problems resulting from substance abuse and poor sanitation; and family protection. However, a more comprehensive approach to engagement of the private sector has the potential to deliver significant returns.

The Roadmap’s recommendations on financing SDGs seek to build on on-going efforts by the Government of Mauritius suggesting action around three areas: i) maximising available finance by focusing investments on identified SDG accelerators; ii) optimising the impact of investments through the implementation of a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework; and iii) leveraging innovative financing instruments for sustainable development.

**Maximising available finance**

The Government of Mauritius has limited fiscal space due to the small size of its population and a low tax rate compounded by a fall in the economic growth in recent years. The overall tax burden as a share of GDP hovers 19 per cent, lower than other upper middle income countries in Southern Africa such as Namibia (32%) and Botswana (31%) and beyond. Almost 60 per cent of tax revenue is accounted for by VAT taxes. Tax revenue also includes taxes on certain goods for environmental or health reasons (e.g. taxes on energy inefficient goods and on tobacco products, alcoholic drinks and the sugar content of soft drinks). Grants on the other hand, are less than 0.5 per cent of GDP and not expected to increase in future.

The ratio of public debt to GDP increased to 63.7 per cent at the end of 2015 compared to 61.5 in the previous year. The Government of Mauritius have however, managed the risk profile of public debt by privileging medium and long-term maturities over short-term debt (whose share in total public debt fell to 13 per cent in 2015 as compared to 26 per cent in 2014); and domestic debt over external debt with the latter accounting for 23 per cent of total public debt only at the end of 2015. Moreover, external debt comprises mostly debt with multilateral and bilateral donors with favourable maturity terms.

The country depends on imports to cover essential food and energy needs. Fuel (83 per cent of energy use) and food import (22 per cent of total merchandise imports) dependency have increased over time putting strains on the country’s external position especially at periods of high commodity prices as in the recent past. Current account deficits (4.6 per cent in 2015/2016) are financed by inflows of capital to

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81 Total PSIP is estimated at Rs 153 billion over five years through 2021 with the largest outlay on 2016/2017 period of Rs 34.9 million. The main areas of investment include: Water and wastewater sectors (Rs 35 billion); land transport infrastructure (25 billion); energy sector (Rs 25 billion); Social and community development (Rs 19 billion); Port development (Rs 6.6. billion) and Airport development (Rs 1.3 billion). Republic of Mauritius (2016). Public Sector Investment Programme 2016/17 – 2020/21, p. 1.
82 Namibia and Botswana are used as comparator in this case due to their classification as upper middle income countries, their location in Southern Africa, and their population size of 2.2 and 2.1 million respectively, close to Mauritius.’
83 Fuel imports as a share of energy use increased from 73.8 per cent in 2000 to 83.7 per cent in 2015. Food imports on the other hand, represent an increasing share of total merchandise imports increasing from 14 per cent in 2000 to 20 per cent in
the GBC sector the continued growth of which poses its own risks to domestic financial stability due to linkages to the local economy through the exposure of the banking sector.\textsuperscript{84}

Taking into account these constraints, it is indispensable that available funding is targeted to a package of measures which can accelerate progress towards the achievement of national objectives and the SDGs, as those suggested in this Roadmap. That is, ensuring that the integrated approach required by the SDGs at the policy level is followed through a coherent financing approach towards their implementation instead of spreading too thin available resources across too many sectors and policy objectives.

In this context, the need to improve efficiency and effectiveness of spending vis-à-vis sustainable development objectives is as important as mobilizing additional resources. Efforts at public sector reform are very important, as is the emphasis on infrastructure investment to build longer term competitiveness.\textsuperscript{85}

The Roadmap recommendations are as follows:

1) Leverage public procurement and investments, towards advancing sustainable development objectives

According to Mauritius’ Public Procurement Office (PPO), Government procurement of goods and services amounted to Rs 18 billion in 2014 or 5 per cent of GDP. This is a significant volume of economic activity. Current provisions allow for special treatment towards SMEs to encourage their participation in public procurement. A broader approach could be taken towards promoting sustainable development goals through procurement decisions by government. Sustainable procurement is understood as procurement which “integrates requirements, specifications and criteria that are compatible and in favour of the protection of the environment, of social progress and in support of economic development, namely by seeking resource efficiency, improving the quality of products and services and ultimately optimizing costs.”\textsuperscript{86} In this vein, Government may want to define a strategy which gradually phases in sustainable procurement in guidelines and requirements for the procurement of goods and services whereby encouraging the expansion and growth of enterprises which adhere to or meet specific sustainable development principles and/or results.\textsuperscript{87}

It will be particularly important that public investment on infrastructure as foreseen in the Rs 153 billion PSIP over the next five years, incorporates sustainability criteria to build better and more resilient infrastructure in light of climate change and other environmental challenges facing Mauritius. Such an approach would be especially relevant for investments in the following sectors targeted by the PSIP: energy, water and wastewater, port development and land transport infrastructure.

2) Complement the policy on statutory CSR contributions with a more holistic engagement of the private sector in sustainable development

\textsuperscript{84} For additional information on the linkages between the GBC sector and the local economy, particularly the baking sector and risks it entails to Mauritius’ economic outlook see the IMF (2016). Article IV Consultations, IMF Country Report No. 16/89.

\textsuperscript{85} Recent initiatives by the Government of Mauritius go in the direction of connecting financing with SDG priorities as outlined in this Roadmap. For instance, the 2016 Budget increased taxes on tobacco products, alcoholic beverages and sugar products. These taxes would discourage consumption of products which represent risk factors for NCDs identified as a major driver influencing SDG implementation in Mauritius to 2030.

\textsuperscript{86} https://www.ungm.org/Public/KnowledgeCentre/SustainableProcurement

\textsuperscript{87} For more details see Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Volume 1, Action Plan, p. 83.
This would imply creating an enabling environment for the private sector—both corporations and local SMEs—to embed social and environmental considerations at the core of the enterprise’s business model. In this context, the Government of Mauritius could: i) design an enabling environment for sustainable and inclusive business models addressing regulatory gaps or barriers to the expansion of, for instance, impact investment; ii) encourage local business networks to identify joint solutions to sustainability problems, building on existing initiatives by local NGOs and CSR foundations; and iii) implement consumer awareness campaigns, and labels and certifications to promote, encourage and reward business aligning activities to sustainability standards and SDGs; iv) promote the adoption by private sector corporations of sustainability reporting and best practices such as industry-specific sustainability standards. This may include the financial sector following the example of the Mauritius Stock Exchange which joined the sustainable Stock Exchange Initiative in 2015, which among other objectives seeks to improve reporting by corporations and promote long term investments on sustainable development. Sustainability reporting requirements may be made compulsory for enterprises over a certain size.

**Optimising the impact of public investments**

Linked to the above, the Roadmap suggests the establishment of Programme-Based Budgeting (PBB) in the context of a Medium Term-Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Such an approach provides countries facing fiscal space constraints, the tools to improve effectiveness and efficiency of expenditures.

The Mauritian Government adopted this approach in the past but it was abandoned in 2015 in favour of a traditional input-based budget process. The current Budget process presents annual funding allocation by government departments or divisions and provides information on key outputs for the current year instead of the detailed performance information regarding outcomes, efficiency and outcome indicators which would be required under a PBB framework, over a three year framework. These changes make it difficult for government to allocate resources to priority policy objectives and limits information disclosed to the National Assembly and the general public, about performance of spending with a negative impact on accountability.

The implementation of the PBB within a multiannual exercise allowed Mauritius in the past to improve and achieve very positive results vis-à-vis peer countries in public financial management scores. These will be increasingly important as the country have set itself the objective of attaining high-income status by 2030.

Taking into account the perceived complexities and difficulties in the implementation of PBB, support to capacity development on integrated planning and public spending more broadly may be necessary, as well as investments on M&E since spending agencies do not necessarily have the capacity to link expenditures with results. Such efforts should help improving service delivery and accountability.

**Leveraging innovative finance**

Mauritius is a small state, with a small population and tax base. As an upper middle income country it has limited access to concessional finance. In this context, it is important for the country to explore a menu of innovative development finance mechanisms which can enhance the conditions of existing flows to frontload finance as well as adding value by reducing risks.

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88 Impact investment refers to investments in companies, organizations and funds with the intention to generate a measurable social and environmental impact alongside a financial return. See [http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/impact-investment.html](http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/impact-investment.html)

89 For more details on these suggestions, see Marshall Plan Against Poverty, Volume 1, p. 82-83.

90 See the PEFA report 2011 in particular.

91 These were highlighted in the 2015/2016 Budget speech.
UNDP’s Financing Solutions for Sustainable Development toolkit provides further information on a number of innovative financing approaches, including approaches that would not qualify as innovative development finance under a narrower definition. These include: enterprise challenge funds, impact investment, social and development impact bonds, crowdfunding, and alternative financing mechanisms. A selection of examples from UNDP’s portfolio on above mechanisms and solutions is provided here: http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/

The Roadmap’s recommendations in this area are as follows:

1) Promote green/blue bonds

An assessment of green jobs potential in the Mauritian economy covering a number of industrial and service sectors representing more than 50 per cent of the country’s GDP, concluded that shifting to a greener path would lead to higher output and employment than continuing the current growth trajectory, achieving both constituting clear priorities for the Government of Mauritius in the next five years as articulated in the Government Programme 2015-2019.

To support the development of the green economy, the government of Mauritius can promote the roll out of financing instruments such as green or blue bonds (i.e. green bonds that finance projects related to the blue economy such as sustainable fisheries or the conservation of marine zones), to finance projects or initiatives with environmental or climate change benefits.

**Green/blue bonds** are financial instruments similar to conventional bonds but with the characteristic of committing the issuer to invest the proceeds exclusively in green projects. Usually green bonds must follow third party verification to establish that proceeds are indeed being invested in projects with environmental benefits.

The volume of green bonds was estimated in 2015 at USD 65.9 billion. If non-certified green bonds are included, capitalization is estimated at USD 600 billion. In terms of sectoral coverage, clean transport, particularly rail, and renewable energy are the most prominent in the global green bond market. Both the potential investor demand as well as the portfolio of unfunded projects are significant. Green bonds can be issued by both public and private financial institutions in Mauritius and or in foreign capital markets. Mauritius has a well-developed financial market and a strong regulatory system. An in-depth analysis of the financial and other conditions required for the development of the green bond market could inform concrete action in this area, for instance, for the promotion of renewable energy –where Mauritius has established the target of achieving 35 per cent of its energy use to be generated from renewable sources by 2025 – and other sectors with potential economic and employment generation such as the ocean economy.

2) Promote impact investments to finance national development priorities

Impact investments refer to investments that seek a social and/or environmental return alongside financial returns. Impact investments may be made in companies, organizations, and funds and may involve different asset class such as fixed income, venture capital, private equity and social and development impact bonds. Private equity and debt are the most common instruments. In terms of the investees or receivers of capital, these can be for or non-for profit entities as long as a financial return to investment is produced. Intermediaries can help connect impact investors to impact driven enterprises through the provision of a range of services such as research, impact measurement, etc.

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The Government and financial development institutions can play a role by creating an enabling environment for impact investment to flourish and in certain cases, provide incentives and co-financing. The global market for impact investment has been estimated at USD 77.4 billion in assets with expected growth of 17.7 per cent in 2016.\footnote{http://www.undp.org/content/sdfinance/en/home/solutions/impact-investment.html}

Social Impact Bonds (SIB) for instance, is a form of impact investment which makes available private capital to finance social expenditures combined with non-profit implementation. The SIB constitutes a public-private partnership whereby the government engages a service provider (non-government organization) to deliver social services and realize results whereas investors from the private sector or philanthropy provide upfront funding to finance the operation. Investors are repaid by donors or the government only if and when outcomes are achieved and certified by an independent evaluator. Investors’ returns depend on the level of results, up to an agreed maximum. At the same time, if no results are achieved, investors are not paid.

The partnership underlying the SBI between government, non-for profit and the private sector should contribute to closer collaboration across actors involved in social programmes in Mauritius. The emphasis on performance and results would also constitute an important value added given the gaps on impact evaluation identified in social programmes in the country.

Research indicates that SIB has the potential to improve social service delivery though experience so far equally underline their complexity and the need for dedicated expertise and time to structure the market. According to Social Finance, of the 22 SIBs having reported performance: 21 have reported positive outcomes, 12 have made outcome payments, and 4 have fully repaid investors. There are also identified trends related to the sectors for impact investments which have implications for SIB. For instance, expected market returns and volume of investments are smaller in social sectors than environment-focus investments which require at least market return and command larger volumes.

On the other hand, specific sectors under the ocean economy with strong economic transformation potential include biotechnology, renewable energy and deep sea mining which Mauritius has identified as part of a holistic approach to the development of the ocean economy have globally failed to mobilize the required investments. Though funding potential could be significant,\footnote{For instance, the global market for products derived from marine biology has been estimated at USD 4 billion. Rustomjee, Crus. Financing the Blue Economy in Small States, Policy Brief No. 78, CIGI, May 2016, p. 4.} experience in these sectors has been limited due in part to technological and other barriers limiting interest by private investors in these sectors, especially in small states such as Mauritius.

The Mauritian government may undertake feasibility studies to identify the viability of impact investment, especially SIB around sustainable development areas where these instruments may be most conducive to mobilize finance. The study may assess the existence of a financial market for these products; identify of measurable outcomes, etc.

### 4.5 Data, monitoring and reporting

Statistics Mauritius is the central statistical authority and the repository of all the statistics produced in the country. It works under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the day-to-day oversight of the Statistics Board which approves, co-ordinates and monitors the statistical programmes of producers of Official Statistics to improve on the consistency, quality and efficiency of data collection and of its comparability, dissemination and analysis.
In 2012 Mauritius was one of the only two countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to adhere to the IMF’s Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), a global benchmark for disseminating macroeconomic data. Compliance to the SDDS is a testimony to the very high level of statistical capacity that Mauritius has already attained. The latest World Bank Statistical Capacity Indicator readiness give Mauritius a score of 91.1/100, among the best in the world, and well above the average of 59.9 in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In compliance with SDDS requirements, Statistics Mauritius disseminates data through its website and the Statistical Data Portal of Mauritius, which also provides visualization tools. The World Bank is supporting an Open Data programme under the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation. In this context, it undertook in 2015 an Open Data Readiness Assessment in Mauritius, which shows that the country is well positioned to implement open data across Government and publish datasets in a machine-readable format. Statistics from Mauritius are also available through the Open Data for Africa platform supported by the African Development Bank.

Building on the said strong basis for data production, collection and dissemination, the Roadmap makes the following suggestions with respect to data, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs in Mauritius.

**Strengthening institutional framework and mechanisms for SDG monitoring and review**

The government of Mauritius established a Committee on SDGs indicators under the aegis of the Statistics Board, and three working groups on the Economic, Social and Environmental themes to facilitate the monitoring, review and reporting on the SDGs by Mauritius.

The Committee — Chaired by the Director of Statistics Mauritius — has launched an analysis involving various government entities and other stakeholders, to develop relevant indicators at the required disaggregated level, identify and assess data gaps, and advise how to address these gaps. This analysis notably involves a review of alignment of existing data and indicators with the global indicator framework of the UN for the review and monitoring of the SDGs.

Though the alignment analysis is still on-going, progress so far shows that availability of data is not equal across SDGs. Structuring the analysis around the five areas or themes identified in the resolution adopting Agenda 2030 (5Ps), one realizes that the area with least availability of data refers to the Planet or Environment (SDG6 and 12 to 15) with only approximately 29 per cent of relevant indicators available. This is followed by Peace and governance (SDG16) with 34 per cent. Availability for the other areas are: 70 per cent for People (SDGs 1 through 5); 60 per cent for Prosperity (SDGs 7 to 11); and 65 per cent for Partnerships or SDG17.

Consultations with Statistics Mauritius and other stakeholders indicate that current weaknesses with respect to the national statistics system relates to the analytical capacity by users of data, especially with respect to impact evaluation of policies which is acknowledged to be lacking across government entities, projects and programmes.

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96 [http://statsmauritius.govmu.org/English/SDDS/Pages/default.aspx](http://statsmauritius.govmu.org/English/SDDS/Pages/default.aspx)
98 [http://statsmauritius.govmu.org/](http://statsmauritius.govmu.org/)
100 [http://www.govmu.org/English/News/Pages/Open-Data-Readiness-Mauritius-well-positioned-to-start-implementing.aspx](http://www.govmu.org/English/News/Pages/Open-Data-Readiness-Mauritius-well-positioned-to-start-implementing.aspx)
102 The alignment analysis by Statistics Mauritius identified 13 indicators of the UN Global indicators framework that are not of relevance to Mauritius. Availability of indicators includes instances in which proxy indicators have been identified.
Mauritius currently does not have a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS). The last one covered the period 2007-2012. The formulation of a new NSDS would represent a unique opportunity to develop an integrated statistical strategy that responds coherently to the needs of both Vision 2030 and the 2030 Agenda.

Moreover, there is little or no use of mapping and other statistics visualizing tools for policy planning, monitoring and evaluation. That is, neither Statistics Mauritius nor other users of data in government use tools allowing crossing of economic, social and environmental data necessary to assess in a more holistic manner sustainable development trends against desired results, informing necessary policy correction.

In light of the above, the Roadmap specific recommendations are as follows: i) enlarge the menu of analytical tools for statistical analysis by Statistics Mauritius and users of data, especially mapping tools allowing crossing of economic, social and environmental data for the assessment of trends on sustainable development, planning, monitoring and evaluation; ii) enhance capacity of Statistics Mauritius and users of data on tools for statistical analysis, including mapping tools; iii) ensure inter-operability of data management systems across producers of data and with Statistics Mauritius; iv) based on the alignment exercise of data availability vis-à-vis the global SDG indicator framework, prioritize filling gaps in areas lagging most behind –notably, Planet and Peace and governance-related goals and establish a plan to gradually fill gaps over time; iv) formulate a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics which addresses the main gaps and needs on data production, collection, analysis and dissemination in the context of monitoring, evaluation and reporting on Vision 2030 and the SDGs. This includes harmonizing reporting frameworks regarding progress and results of implementation of Vision 2030, the SDGs and other international frameworks such as SAMOA Pathway.

4.6 Advocacy, resources and partnerships

Stakeholder engagement in MDG implementation and awareness around Vision 2030 provide a base on which to galvanize support for SDG implementation in Mauritius. Ministries across government, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia, and the media understand the priorities that the government has set and the conditions form which these priorities are being launched.

However, a lot needs to be done when it comes to engage citizens in general. Achieving Vision 2030 and the SDGs will require significant resources and sweeping policy changes that the country as a whole will need to understand and stand behind.

Within the government, among the civil service in particular, there is a need to ensure that the SDGs also are understood in relation to Vision 2030. It is crucial that the people from whom much will be expected are familiar with the priorities and processes that they will move forward.

The government and partners across sectors have worked together in the past on campaigns with similar goals (e.g., on water and biodiversity conservation), thus have models and experiences to draw from in developing a Vision 2030 Campaign. These efforts have engaged the media successfully (TV, radio and social media), particularly when the campaign involved wide local-level participation (such as children in schools in the water conservation campaign).

103 The NSDS approach, developed by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21), provides a common set of guidelines for developing a national framework for statistics development aimed at mainstreaming statistics into national policy and planning processes. For more information, see http://nsdsguidelines.paris21.org/
Ministries already have champions in place for specific efforts (e.g. ICT champions in Ministries where e-government services are being developed). The model can be explored for other themes and areas. Champions from each stakeholder group engaged in SDG implementation will also play an important role.

The Steering Committee for the SDG implementation could provide leadership on efforts, working closely with each Working Group for the focus specific to their respective area of responsibility. As the Working Groups have representatives from all sectors needed to take forward plans and strategies, thus the mobilization of support from across society, which starts with awareness and understanding of those plans and strategies, will be shaped and taken forward by stakeholders themselves.
References


IOTC-2009-SC-INF17.


Annex: RIA Analysis

Mauritius Rapid Integrated Assessment

UNDP undertook a Rapid Integrated Assessment for Mauritius based on the Government Programme 2015-2019 and other key sectoral policies and strategies. The assessment shows the extent to which Mauritius’ development policy frameworks align with the SDG targets as well as inter-sectoral linkages made explicit across these frameworks.

More concretely, Template I provides a quick visual overview of the SDG targets integrated in the Government Programme and other sectoral policies and strategies reviewed as part of the RIA, and those that are not. It also shows the SDG targets that are covered by multiple sectors throughout the various documents considered under the assessment.

Template II provides further details, including specific reference to goals and targets directly drawn from the Government Programme and other policy frameworks considered under the RIA. Template II is meant to show as well: (i) national indicators for specific targets drawn from the same policy documents; and (ii) responsible or lead institution overseeing implementation of the target.
Other than the Government Programme 2015-2019, the assessment is based on the following documents:

- Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework, 2013; and
- Vision 2030104

The assessment leads to the following observations:

1. Mauritius’ development policy frameworks prioritize 98 SDG targets out of 107 (169 SDG targets minus 43 on means of implementation under each of the goals and 19 targets of Goal 17 on partnerships). The assessment shows therefore, a high degree of mainstreaming of the SDG targets in national development plans. For the targets not currently covered, national stakeholders may confirm their irrelevance to the national context or reflect upon whether they should be taken on board within the timespan of the SDGs.

2. The following SDG targets are not currently covered by national development policy frameworks:


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104 The analysis took into account a draft of Vision 2030 (dated 14 June, version 4) taking into account the policy has been formulated through a consultative process and the advanced stage of the formulation process. Nevertheless, to the extent that the document may still undergo changes through peer review, etc. References from Vision 2030 are highlighted in *italics* in Template II.
• 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
• 6.6 By 2020, protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes
• 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.
• 11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities
• 12.3 By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses
• 14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels.
• 14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation.
• 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development.
• 16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration.

3. Mauritius’ economic and social achievements since independence in 1968 places it as a High human development (HDI) country, ranking 63 among 188 countries in 2015. Such progress is the result of a combination of sustained investments in social welfare as well as sound economic policies and governance. The country has set the objective of becoming a high-income country and defined a long term Vision both to 2030, the same timeframe of the SDGs. To achieve these bold objectives, the country faces a number of challenges which will equally influence SDG implementation.

4. While absolute poverty as measured by the international poverty line of USD 1.90/day PPP is negligible in Mauritius, it has been increasing over the recent past passing the 1 per cent mark in 2014. Relative poverty also increased from 8.5 per cent in 2007 to 9.8 per cent of the population in 2012. Inequality is on the rise whether measured by the Gini coefficient or other measurements of income inequality. Both these issues – poverty and inequality – are at the centre of the Agenda 2030 and the imperative of leaving no-one behind and may therefore require particular attention in the SDG implementation in Mauritius.

5. In this context, the assessment shows that national policy frameworks in Mauritius cover SDG targets under Goal 1 (poverty) and Goal 10 (inequality) through the lens of social inclusion but also of

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other planning sectors such as education, public health, housing, public utilities with specific reference to water, sanitation and electricity; public infrastructure (e.g. transport), etc. The analysis also brings to the fore a preoccupation for attending the needs of the elderly, youth, women, and disabled through a number of different strategies, measures or programmes. For instance, the RIA notes a reference in the Government Programme to amend the constitution and produce a Disability Act to protect persons living with disabilities and Vision 2030 foresees a review of labour market institutions and policies to address the gender gap. Both these measures would contribute to equal opportunities and reduce inequalities of outcomes by eliminating discrimination as called for by SDG 10.3. Reference to the specificities of Rodrigues are also found across the policy frameworks with the concern of addressing poverty and leveling the playing field.

6. The Marshall Plan recently formulated by the Government of Mauritius aims at tackling exclusion by addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable in pockets of poverty. This will be critical to meet SDG targets related to poverty and inequality. The RIA Template II includes relevant references from the Marshall Plan to specific SDG targets. One particular recommendation of the Marshall Plan to be noted, is the need to define an official poverty line for Mauritius to allow monitoring and assessment of poverty in the country.

7. With reference to SDG target 1.2 which seeks to reduce by half by 2030 the proportion of women, men and children living in poverty, we note planned actions under the Marshall Plan seeking to improve public service delivery and reach by establishing community based schemes to finance and deliver initiatives closer to the population in need. These schemes aim at tackling the identified gaps in access to and uneven quality in public service provision affecting poor and vulnerable populations in Mauritius.

8. Equally important are envisaged reforms in Mauritius’ social protection system embedded in the Marshall Plan for meeting SDG target 1.3 on a nationally appropriate social protection system and measures for all, including substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable. Indeed, analysis shows that 60 per cent of the poor in Mauritius do not have access to any form of social protection. Moreover, the anti-poverty record of social protection programmes is mixed pointing towards the need to enhance targeting of the poor; reducing leakage to the non-poor; designing programmes to respond to the specific needs of vulnerable population and bringing services closer to the neediest addressing systemic issues such as stigmatization, uneven quality and accountability.

9. On the same vein, and in light of the national poverty context on Mauritius, particular attention should be placed on SDG targets 10.1 – which calls for progressively achieving and sustaining income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a higher rate than the national average – and, target 10.2 which seeks to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all. Evidence produced by the World Bank indicates that the income of the bottom 40 per cent of the population in Mauritius has been growing much slowly than the income of the rest of the population or 1.8 per cent compared to 3.1 per cent thus the opposite to the orientation provided by the SDGs and pointing towards growing inequality in future. On the other hand, analysis carried out for the formulation of the Marshall Plan exposed systemic problems which lead to exclusion of poor and vulnerable populations in pockets of poverty which would need to be addressed to meet the SDGs, including through a reform of the social welfare system which is currently not fully fit to address these problems, as envisaged in the Marshall Plan.
10. Interesting to note under SDG 10 is the approach to migration reflected in Mauritius’s national development frameworks. It is foreseen: i) to prepare the legal and institutional framework, including border control systems, to address the increase cross-border movement of people and related risks; ii) create mechanisms to attract skilled personnel to train and transfer skills to locals (selective migration); and iii) creating opportunities to nationals in foreign countries especially in Africa, to share their expertise and brand the country internationally. It is worth noting that migrants in Mauritius – approximately 30,000 people\textsuperscript{108} - cater to both the high-skill and the low-skill segments of the labour market in manufacturing and tourism while some of these jobs could be filled by local Mauritians reflecting underlying problems of exclusion and skill mismatch.

11. The assessment with respect to the health targets (SDG 3) reflects the recognition to the increasing challenge represented by non-communicable diseases (estimated to account for 80 per cent of the burden of disease in Mauritius\textsuperscript{109}) and substance abuse. To the extent that there are linkages between NCD and education and income levels, it means the poor in Mauritius is more at risk of suffering NCD, than the non-poor.\textsuperscript{110} Measures foreseen include education campaigns to the population at large and students and youth in particular, and sport promotion as a means to change mindsets and life styles. Improvements in health infrastructure and services to cater for NCD is also envisaged.

12. It is worth recalling that though significant progress was made on health during the MDG era, Mauritius did not meet the target with respect to under-5 mortality rate and maternal mortality rate. These lagging MDG targets may require especial attention going forward while taking into account other emerging health challenges facing the country.

13. A review of the national development frameworks through the perspective of the education-related targets of the SDG (SDG 4) shows that education is seen as a vehicle for social inclusion, including of youth and women, and job creation (see inter-sectoral linkages in Template I of the RIA). Indeed, analysis shows that in Mauritius, poverty is highest among those lacking education and skills. Poverty disproportionately affect unemployed women and youth, and most poor unemployed persons have not achieved the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). Research by the World Bank, shows that 60 per cent of poor households’ members did not hold a CPE against 34 per cent among the non-poor in 2008.

14. The RIA analysis brings to the fore a number of measures foreseen by Mauritian authorities, inclusive of a reform of the education system, to address systemic problems which disadvantage the poor and vulnerable. These relate for instance to measures aimed at taking remedial action in primary and secondary cycles to deal with learning deficits, early drop-outs and failures, as well as the establishment of a nine-year continue schooling system, replacing the CPE in Grade 6 for an assessment at the end of this nine-year cycle, etc. The Marshall Plan underlines the need to increase attendance and completion of secondary level education with emphasis on the academic track among disadvantaged children and youth.

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\textsuperscript{108} Marshall Plan, Volume 2, p.34.
\textsuperscript{110} Marshall Plan, Volume 2, p. 56.
15. Evidence indicates that inequality in Mauritius is the result of widening gaps in salaries and the increase in demand for high-skill labour.\textsuperscript{111} These trends are likely to exacerbate in future as the country further transitions towards a services and knowledge-based economy and call therefore for efforts in ensuring that poor and vulnerable populations do have access to quality education.

16. SDG 5 related to gender equality, is important for Mauritius since evidence shows the existence of gender inequality across all spheres of life - political, social, economic. For instance, women’s labour market participation is 47 per cent as compared to 74 per cent of men; the wage gap is estimated at 50 per cent even after controlling for conditions such as education, age, experience, etc.; women are disproportionately represented among the unemployed and the poor and are responsible for a higher proportion of unpaid work than men. Mauritius did not meet the target on women participation in Parliament during the MDG era. Neither did it meet the target on maternal health.

17. The RIA shows that national development plans foresee improving the legal framework to enhance protection for women and other vulnerable groups, including against domestic violence. Vision 2030 envisages a review of labour market institutions to address the gender wage gap and increase women’s participation in positions of political leadership, etc. In this context, monitoring of policies and programmes, including through gender disaggregated data would be essential.

18. National policy development frameworks include strategies and measures related to water and sanitation targets (SDG 6). The assessment brings to the fore the willingness to use integrated water management systems in the planning and development of water resources. Sectoral linkages are made with the environment, reflecting a concern for improving water efficiency, and agriculture due to the importance of agriculture in the demand for water resources. Such linkages are not made with respect to tourism and manufacturing however, though arguably should also be concerned with water use and efficiency. Access to water is also acknowledged as an important concern for Rodrigues which faces a water stress environment amid a growing population. The World Economic Forum’s Global Risk Report ranks water crisis as the 3rd most serious risk for the country underlying the importance of stewardship of water resources in future.

19. With respect to Energy (SDG 7), there is good coverage in Mauritius national policy frameworks of the three SDG targets. National policies include a Long-term Energy Strategy and Action Plan 2011-2025. Regarding universal access to energy, emphasis is made on building infrastructure and expanding energy generation, using cost-reflecting pricing to ensure sustainability, and institutional improvements so as to improve energy self-sufficiency. At the moment, Mauritius is highly dependent on imported fossil fuels which accounted for 81 per cent of total primary energy requirements in 2008. Only 19 per cent of electricity is produced through renewable sources.

20. In this context, the Long term Energy Strategy defines targets to 2025 for the generation of electricity from renewable (35 per cent) and non-renewable sources (65 per cent). Moreover, linkages are made with various economic sectors such as agriculture, the ocean economy, tourism, manufacturing and housing with a view to promote the use of renewable sources of energy. Targets for energy efficiency as well as a number of institutional developments inclusive of standards are foreseen in the policy frameworks analyzed as part of the RIA.

\textsuperscript{111} Marshall Plan, Volume 2, p. 15.
21. The RIA assessment sheds light on the importance given to skill development and employment creation, especially for youth and women across national policies, and their alignment with related targets under SDG 8. Though Interlinkages are made with education, social inclusion and job creation, as well as with the various economic sectors susceptible of providing opportunities for employment these could be strengthened.

22. This is important in light of the increasing unemployment problem, which most severely affect women whose unemployment rate is double that of men or 11.4 per cent versus 5.5 per cent\(^{112}\) and youth (at 25 per cent in 2014 as compared to 8 per cent for the population at large).\(^{113}\) Low qualifications of job seekers and mismatch between skills and labour market needs have been identified as structural causes of unemployment.

23. Another important feature of the country’s vision coming across the national policy frameworks is the emphasis on economic diversification closely related to SDG targets 8.2 and 8.3 (and also SDG 9.2 on inclusive industrialization). Emphasis is made on innovation and knowledge-based industries such as the ocean economy, ICT-enabled services, financial services, etc. as the backbone of a ‘second economic miracle’, and the promotion of entrepreneurship and SMEs.

24. Disadvantaged persons are unable to take advantage of employment opportunities in Mauritius, however. A number of programmes seek to improve employability, skill development and placement for youth, women and other groups. But available evidence indicates that the effectiveness of these programmes can be improved by among others, better targeting the poor and vulnerable, paying better attention to the needs of these populations, etc.\(^{114}\)

25. No direct reference to target 8.5 related to forced and child labour was found in the documents reviewed for the RIA. National consultations on the prioritization of SDGs may want to consider the merit or not of prioritizing this target based on the national context.\(^{115}\) Moreover, coverage of target 8.8 related to the protection of labour rights and promotion of safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, rest on a general reference in the Government programme about the reform of labour legislation to better protect employees.

26. Vision 2030 introduces the resilience dimension with respect to the development of infrastructure (SDG target 9.1). It aims at physically securing infrastructure to both withstand and quickly recover from, man-made and natural disasters including cyber-attacks.

27. Overall, SDGs targets related to environmental sustainability (SDG 12 to 15) are referred to in various national development frameworks. With respect to climate change (SDG 13), Vision 2030 defines the target of reducing by 30 per cent by 2030 greenhouse gas emissions as compared to


\(^{114}\) For example, the National Empowerment Foundation implements a Placement and training programme which is not targeted on the poor. In fact, on the period 2012-2015, only 10 per cent of beneficiaries were from vulnerable and poor households. The effectiveness of the programme as measured by the placement of trainees is also limited (16 per cent of placement in 2014). Other programmes whose implementation is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour are not designed to respond to the need of vulnerable populations. See Marshall Plan, Volume 2, p. 21 and 37.

\(^{115}\) Information produced by the USA Department of Labour through the annual monitoring (2015) of worst forms of child labour around the world, suggests possible improvements by Mauritius with respect to enforcement mechanisms, coordination across Government agencies; policies and social programmes. [https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labour mauritius](https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labour mauritius)
the scenario of business-as-usual of 7 million metric tons CO2 equivalent. This target has been included in Mauritius’ Intended Nationally Determined Contributions under the UNFCCC climate change negotiations. Also in Vision 2030, a general reference is made to the implementation of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the target to reduce by half the country’s natural disaster risk by 2030 though it is unclear how progress towards such targets could be measured.

28. The World Risk Index 2015 ranks Mauritius as the 13th country with the highest disaster risk and 7th among those most exposed to natural hazards. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Mauritius is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and its adverse socio-economic impacts. The World Economic Forum’s Global Risk Report lists failure of adapting and mitigating climate change by Mauritius as the top risk to the country’s outlook in the coming years. Against this background, and building on the investments made on climate change mitigation and adaptation it would be important to develop a more coherent policy framework on disaster risk reduction (DRR) to facilitate DRR mainstreaming across various domains and DRR investment allocations across sectors.

29. Targets under SDG 14 related to oceans and marine resources are broadly covered in the reviewed policy frameworks with the exception of SDG 14.3 which calls attention to the need to address ocean acidification and 14.6 which seeks to prohibit certain forms of fishery subsidies. Coverage of targets under SDG 14 respond among others to the priority given by the Government to the development of the ocean economy encompassing a variety of activities from seabed exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbon and minerals; to fishing, seafood processing and aquaculture; deep ocean water applications; marine services; marine renewable energy; sea port related activities, etc. While concerns with sustainability – from sustainable management of fishery resources to protection of coastal ecosystems are referred to the assessment shows that the legal and regulatory framework, as well as the institutional framework for steering the development of the sector are incipient. Given the fragility of the marine ecosystems made more acute by the effects of climate change to which Mauritius is particularly vulnerable, as well as the economic and social importance of marine resources for the country, finding an appropriate balance between resource development and sustainability will be critical going forward.

30. The 2015 National Report on the MDGs underlines that Mauritius have made progress on the implementation of a sustainability strategy and mainstreamed sustainability concerns in the development planning process. Nevertheless, the results in terms of biodiversity and environment protection has been mixed. The report notes in particular, that the number of animals threatened by extinction soared from 65 in 2010 to 89 in 2013. The assessment reveals strategies or measures foreseen in national policy development frameworks to avoid the loss of biodiversity and the extinction of threatened species in a very targeted manner. The CBD Strategy prioritizes the establishment of protected area networks as one approach to protect terrestrial and coastal ecosystems. The RIA analysis shows limited sectoral linkages with the conservation of biodiversity seen mostly as an environmental concern.

31. The RIA assessment shows a good coverage of SDG 11' targets on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements across national development frameworks. Vision 2030 for instance, makes reference to the formulation of urban development plans and planning schemes through integrated spatial planning identifying areas for difference human activities –

e.g. agriculture, residential zones, ecological sensitive areas, etc. relevant to target 11.3 on sustainable urbanization. Vision 2030 equally refers to transforming Mauritius into a ‘Smart Island’ which would ensure among others, adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services to the population. “The smart city project is a new initiative to stimulate innovative scientific and technological activities, provide technology-driven facilities to the business community and create a vibrant city lifestyle.”

A Smart City Scheme has been established with a set of fiscal and non-fiscal incentives to attract domestic and foreign investment to develop smart cities across the island. Mauritius can build on its own experience since the Ebène Cybercity for instance, was established 15 years ago; previous mistakes can be avoided and success factors leveraged.

From the point of view of the SDG implementation in Mauritius, one consideration regarding the proliferation of smart cities is their implications for inclusiveness: how would pockets of poverty interact with such developments and the poor and vulnerable participate? It further underlines the critical importance of addressing skill gaps among the young, women and poor to allow them partake in the future country’s development.

The analysis of national policy frameworks from the lens of SDG 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies reveals a focus on SDG 16.6 on effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels. This issue is seen through the lens of a multiplicity of planning sectors from security, law and order to good governance, civil service, democracy, public utilities, job creation, etc.

Accountable and transparent institutions are important in the context of SDG implementation in Mauritius due to the identified gaps in public service provision and unequal quality which have different manifestations. For instance, a review of the complaints lodged with the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children in Mauritius, which receives on average 350 per year, shows that the majority relate to violations of the right of the child in education institutions. These relate to teachers’ absenteeism and stigmatization of children from poor household by the teachers, among others.

There is also a lack of monitoring and evaluation culture, including in the context of social welfare programmes, which undermine their efficiency and effectiveness.

Some of the measures foreseen in the national policy frameworks to enhance accountability include the design of citizens’ reporting mechanisms using mobile technologies, to report on unavailability, delays or quality problems in the delivery of public services; identification and real time monitoring of public service offices, especially those servicing in pockets of poverty; improvements in the legal framework for the public sector with the enactment of a Bill and a code of conduct, etc.

Worth noting as well is the reference in Vision 2030 to the planned enactment of a new Local Government Act ‘bringing forth the decentralization agenda’ in Mauritius. As stated in the Marshall Plan, local government units have very limited financial and administrative autonomy with most issues of interest to the poor managed at the central government level. Against this background community-based schemes for service provision are promoted which could be facilitated in a context of increased autonomy of local –elected- governments.

As indicated above, no relevant reference was found in national policy frameworks to SDG target 16.9 which seeks to provide by 2030 legal identity for all, including birth registration. According to government sources, “there is universal coverage of vital statistics in the country. There are Civil Status Offices located all over the country, thus allowing easy access to the population for

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registration purposes. Also, given that the registration of children at school requires a birth certificate [...] leads towards complete birth registration”. Analysis and consultations leading to the formulation of the Marshall Plan exposed problems of exclusion and gaps in public service delivery. These do not seem to be related to legal identify issues but rather to other systemic problems such as stigmatization of poor and vulnerable populations, language - as a barrier to education, etc.

37. Finally, Mauritius national development frameworks do pay attention to partnerships and means of implementation (SDG 17). Emphasis is placed, for instance, on international trade with special focus on the opportunities provided by the regional market in Africa. Attention is devoted as well to expanding sources of financing for development inclusive of FDI and attracting investments by enterprises targeting the African continent, public-private partnerships, etc.

38. A number of references are found in the national policy frameworks to the importance and need for data and monitoring systems of relevance to SDG 17 (See Template II of the RIA for details). Overall, the policies and strategies reviewed for the formulation of the RIA lack a results framework and indicators to monitor progress on implementation and impact. Some of the policies include work plans with strategies and/or more detailed activities but these do not establish baselines or indicators. The Marshall Plan notes the lack of impact monitoring of social welfare programmes and lack of gender disaggregated data, among other weaknesses which undermine the effectiveness of such programmes. The Plan calls for the development of an adequate M&E framework for the proposed social contract and associated welfare programmes. Based on the RIA analysis, the need to define M&E frameworks and indicators for monitoring progress to national development frameworks is applicable at a larger scale and will be extremely important in the review of and follow up to the SDG implementation.

39. Throughout this note reference is made to inter-sectoral linkages or SDG targets covered by several sectors as seen in Template 1 of the RIA. The same template shows in green –without being exhaustive- missing inter-sectoral linkages or targets which one would expect to be covered by certain sectors but they are not. One example is the lack of linkages between education (SDG 4) and public infrastructure or between water and sanitation (SDG 6) and education. National consultations will allow discussion around these findings and reiterate or refute their validity in the context of Mauritius. For instance, education infrastructure may be adequate in the country for all segments of society, and therefore, there is no need to emphasize this point in national planning processes.

40. Finally, the high level of alignment of national policies with the SDG targets raises considerations about prioritization. Mainly, are all the SDG targets to be pursued with the same emphasis at national level or given the country’s context some may deserve particular consideration. This is critical in light of capacity constraints related to human, technical and financial resources available for implementation.

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