



UN HABITAT



MAURITIUS NATIONAL URBAN PROFILE



Copyright © United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), 2012

All rights reserved

United Nations Human Settlements Programme publications can be obtained from

UN-Habitat Regional and Information Offices or directly from:

P.O. Box 30030, GPO 00100 Nairobi, Kenya.

Fax: + (254 20) 762 4266/7

E-mail: unhabitat@unhabitat.org

Website: <http://www.unhabitat.org>

This Mauritian report and project was prepared and managed by Sareeta Suntain - Ag. Deputy Chief Town and Country Planning Officer and National Focal Point for Mauritian Urban Profiling, Ministry of Housing and Lands; Yan Hookoomsing- Coordinator Analyst, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator for Mauritius; Vijay P. Bangaroo - PSUP Focal Point for the Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill; K. L. Santokhee and M. Bundhoo- PSUP Focal Points for the Municipal Council of Port Louis; Mrs Ashwini Rughoodass- PSUP Focal Point for Black River District Council; C. Rughoobur, Statistician, Mauritius Statistic; K. Pang Kin Lam- Project Officer, Ministry of Housing; K. Jayeprokash- Police Sergeant Police Headquarters, Police Planning and Reform Unit; Y. Hosenally- Head Planning Department, Black River District Council; Mrs A. Ghoorah- Environment Officer, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development; Mrs Mary Coopan- Local Government Facilitator, Gender Links; Soobhany Sarah B.G.- National AIDS secretariat- PMO; F. Moothia - Project Coordinator, National Empowerment Foundation; K. Moutou- Analyst Ministry of Finance and Economic Development; N. Seenauth- Principal Planner, Ministry of Housing and Lands; Pynee A.Chellapermal- Director General/Consultant, Alternet Research and Consulting; Kirsten Koop- Consultant, University of Grenoble; Dr J. Claude Lau Thi Keng- Associate Director/ Consultant, Alternet Research and Consulting; Lindsay Morvan- Managing Director/Consultant Alternet Research and Consulting; Vahy Ravoajanahary- Consultant Alternet Research and Consulting; K. Valaydon- Programme Manager, National Empowerment Foundation; P. Bojharut- Protection Office Ministry of Gender Equality Child Development and Family Welfare; and M and N. Thannon- Technical Managers National Housing Development Company.

This report was also managed by Kerstin Sommer, Joseph Guiebo and Antoine King in Nairobi.

HS Number: HS/068/12E

ISBN Number(Series): 978-92-1-132023-7

ISBN Number:(Volume) 978-92-1-132483-9

DISCLAIMER

The designation employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, or regarding its economic system or degree of development. The analysis, conclusions and recommendations of the report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Governing Council of UN-Habitat or its Member States. This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union.

Excerpts from this publication may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated.

Editing: Florence Kuria

Photo credits: UN-Habitat



MAURITIUS NATIONAL URBAN PROFILE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORDS	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
BACKGROUND	11
LAND TENURE AND MANAGEMENT	13
GOVERNANCE AND URBAN PLANNING	15
BASIC URBAN SERVICES	19
MUNICIPAL REVENUE COLLECTION	22
LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	24
HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS	26
GENDER	31
SECURITY	34
ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER REDUCTION	36
PROJECT PROPOSAL	
HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS	39

FOREWORDS



According to research published in UN-Habitat's¹ flagship report, *The State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*, all developing regions, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, will have more people living in urban than rural areas by the year 2030. With half the world's

population already living in urban areas, the challenges we face in the battle against urban poverty, our quest for cities without slums, for cities where women feel safer, for inclusive cities with power, water and sanitation, and affordable transport, for better planned cities, and for cleaner, greener cities is daunting.

But as this series shows, there are many interesting solutions and best practices to which we can turn. After all, the figures tell us that during the decade 2000 to 2010, a total of 227 million people in the developing countries moved out of slum conditions. In other words, governments, cities and partner institutions have collectively exceeded the slum target of the Millennium Development Goals twice over and ten years ahead of the agreed 2020 deadline.

Asia and the Pacific stood at the forefront of successful efforts to reach the slum target, with all governments in the region improving the lives of an estimated 172 million slum dwellers between 2000 and 2010.

In sub-Saharan Africa though, the total proportion of the urban population living in slums has decreased by only 5 per cent (or 17 million people). Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda were the most successful countries in the sub-region, reducing the proportions of slum dwellers by over one-fifth in the last decade.

Some 13 per cent of the progress made towards the global slum target occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions since the year 2000.

Yet, UN-Habitat estimates confirm that the progress made on the slum target has not been sufficient to counter the demographic expansion in informal settlements in the developing world. In this sense, efforts to reduce the numbers of slum dwellers are neither satisfactory nor adequate.

As part of our drive to address this crisis, UN-Habitat is working with the European Commission and the Brussels-based Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group to support sustainable urban development. Given the urgent and diverse needs, we found it necessary to develop a tool for rapid assessment and strategic planning to guide immediate, mid and long-term interventions. And here we have it in the form of this series of publications.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is based on the policy dialogue between UN-Habitat, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission which dates back to the year 2002. When the three parties met at UN-Habitat headquarters in June 2009, more than 200 delegates from over 50 countries approved a resounding call on the international community to pay greater attention to these urbanization matters, and to extend the slum upgrading programme to all countries in the ACP Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for ACP countries provided EUR 4 million (USD 5.7 million at June 2011 rates) to enable UN-Habitat to conduct the programme which now serves 59 cities in 23 African countries, and more than 20 cities in six Pacific, and four Caribbean countries.

Indeed, since its inception in 2008, the slum upgrading programme has achieved the confidence of partners at city and country level in Africa, the Caribbean and in the Pacific. It is making a major contribution aimed at helping in urban poverty reduction efforts, as each report in this series shows."

I wish to express my gratitude to the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat for their commitment to this slum upgrading programme. I have every confidence that the results outlined in this profile, and others, will serve to guide the development of responses for capacity building and investments in the urban sector.

Further, I would like to thank each Country Team for their continued support to this process which is essential for the successful implementation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joan Clos'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Joan Clos

Executive Director, UN-Habitat

¹ UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme



The local authorities who are responsible for the management of the urban areas of Mauritius are faced with numerous challenges ranging from urban sprawl, traffic congestion, environmental degradation, shortage of serviced land, poverty, and squatter settlement. These problems are further aggravated

by climate change risks and sustainability issues of a small island and will demand new approaches to solving them if we are to enhance the quality of life of our urban population.

The Participatory Slum Programme (PSUP) and the Urban Profiling is an initiative of UN-Habitat to adopt a different approach towards poverty and ultimately help to enhance the existing housing policy for Mauritius. One of PSUP's main objectives is to obtain consensus among local and national stakeholders through the creation of a common platform for all involved in social housing upgrading projects. This report has appraised existing policies and frameworks on the urban process and has evaluated their application and impact on two towns and one district, namely Port Louis, Beau Bassin and Black River.

Though we do not have slums in the Mauritian context; unfortunately we do have squatter settlements. If the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme can help us understand the social and economic reasons why poor people are compelled to squat, we will have achieved a major breakthrough. We hope that through the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme, we will be able to make a difference and make it possible for those living in squatter settlements to have a safe and healthy living environment.

The Mauritian Government is greatly concerned about the need to improve access to housing for the urban poor and has announced the setting up of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts for housing construction. My Ministry is also committed to improve the lives of the people living in the National Housing Development Corporation (NHDC) estates and is investing in the rehabilitation and setting up of syndics on these estates.

Government has embarked since January 2010 on a major social housing programme to cater for different categories of needy people in the very low and lower middle income groups.

It gives me great pleasure to circulate the Mauritian Urban Profile to all those who are one way or another

involved in the housing sector and who would wish to contribute positively to improving the living conditions of the urban poor, which is a top priority of the Government.

Dr. The Honourable Abu Twalib Kasenally FRCSEd

Minister of Housing and Lands December 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) is an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building gaps at the city level. The programme is supported by funds from the European Commission's European Development Fund and it is currently being implemented in 23 African countries, 59 African cities, 4 Pacific countries, 3 Caribbean countries, and 21 Pacific and Caribbean cities. PSUP uses a structured approach where priority interventions are agreed upon through consultative processes. The PSUP methodology consists of three phases: (1) a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on Governance, Local Economic Development, Land, Gender, Environment, Slums and Shelter, Basic Urban Services, and Waste Management, and proposed interventions; (2) detailed priority proposals; and (3) project implementation. PSUP in Malawi encompasses a national profile, as well as profiles for Blantyre, Lilongwe, Mzuzu and Zomba, each published as a separate report. This is the Mauritius National report and it constitutes a general background, a synthesis of the nine themes; land tenure and management, governance and urban planning, basic urban services, municipal revenue collection, local economic development, housing and deprived and vulnerable areas, gender, security, and environment, climate change and disaster reduction, and priority project proposals.

BACKGROUND

The Republic of Mauritius is an archipelago state with the main island of Mauritius and other smaller islands. It acceded to independence in 1968 and became a republic in 1992. 97 percent of the Mauritian population lives on the main island of Mauritius where the urban population amounts to 42 percent of the total population. The urban population is concentrated in five towns and cities. These urban zones form a continuous strip, a conurbation going from the capital city of Port Louis and stretching inland toward the higher central part of the island.

The political system is a Westminster type parliamentary democracy, with the head of the majority party or coalition of parties as Prime Minister who governs the country with his cabinet of ministers. The members of parliament elect the President of the Republic to act as the head of the state.

Local elections are also organized in villages and towns to return representatives to Municipal Councils in urban areas or District Councils in rural areas. In turn, each council elects a mayor or President of District Council to act as chairperson. Their duties are to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being

of the local community, to ensure that services and facilities are accessible and equitably distributed and provide for prudent use of local community resources.

During the colonization period, Mauritius was a predominantly agricultural country highly dependent on sugar exportation. After independence and particularly since the 1980s, the economy has diversified (tourism, industry and more recently financial and IT services sectors have been extensively developed) resulting in Mauritius being classified as a middle-income developing country. International and internal transport infrastructure facilities have been upgraded (the ancient port of Port Louis and the international airport modernized as well as highways and the road network).

The housing sector has also benefited from this general improvement of the country's situation. After two successive cyclones which left many families homeless, considerable efforts have been made and concrete-walled housing settlements have been built in various areas.

The authorities have also facilitated construction / extension loan facilities for the low income groups. A main constraint however remains that of land availability for additional housing, especially in urban areas.

On the main island of Mauritius, the total number of occupied housing units amount to 313,934¹. There exist no extensive slum settlements as may be the case in other countries and even if some slum conditions of living (mainly insecurity of tenure and high rates of room occupation) do exist, they are not concentrated in large areas, but on specific geographical locations.

LAND TENURE AND MANAGEMENT

The structure of land ownership is deeply determined by the colonial past of the island: land has been the property of rich slave-owners who possessed vast sugar-cane plantations. During the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, changes in the world market sugar prices prompted socio-economic changes of land ownership in the island, known as the Petit and Grand Morcellements. More recently, the dismantlement at the end of the nineties of agreements guarantying sugar exportations to European markets brought important structural changes (reduction of land under sugar cane plantation and number of sugar estates for mechanization of production) and again some land transfer.

¹ Statistics Mauritius, *Housing and Population Census 2011*, vol. 1, p. 99

The Ministry of Housing and Lands is responsible for land and housing planning and management in the country. A Land Administration Valuation and Information Management System (LAVIMS) has been set up to provide a comprehensive national integrated set of spatial data for effective land management and land use planning. A National Development Strategy has been developed for long term planning with a holistic approach to provide a coherent framework and plan for settlement areas as well as tourism areas, preserved cultural and environmental zones and industrial zones.

GOVERNANCE AND URBAN PLANNING

In urban areas, residents elect municipal councils in charge of local government. In rural areas, residents elect village councillors, who in turn nominate district councillors. Local government of rural areas rests primarily with the district councils, and then with the village councils. District councillors elect a chairperson and municipal councillors elect a mayor (or Lord-Mayor in the case of Port-Louis).

The main day-to-day duties of municipal and district council officers are tax collection and revenue collection, issuing of building and trade permits, organization of welfare activities (cultural, religious and sports), and maintenance of infrastructural assets (nurseries, playgrounds, street cleaning, street lighting, and refuse disposal). The municipal and district councils throughout the island do not have any mandate regarding housing, nor do they have a policy aimed specifically at poor urban citizens. These issues are managed at national level by parent ministries (Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment). The main legal framework governing the municipal and district councils' activities was at the time of the writing of this report, under review. In December 2011, new legislation was to be voted to replace the Local Government Acts of 1989 and 2003. This new law aims at consolidating local democracy notably by ensuring greater gender equality and representation of women among councillors.

BASIC URBAN SERVICES

According to the 2011 Census, 96 percent of all housing units have piped water inside their premises and 4 percent outside. 99.6 percent of households have access to electricity. The Central Water Authority, established by the Central Water Authority Act of 1971, is the national body responsible for treatment and distribution of portable water and it operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public

Utilities. A Water Resources Unit, established in May 1993, is responsible for the assessment, development, management, and conservation of water resources in the Republic of Mauritius. Supply of electricity in Mauritius is solely managed by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) which is a parastatal body reporting to the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities.

The Wastewater Management Authority Act of 2000 established the Wastewater Management Authority as a corporate body which operates under two legal instruments, which regulate the relationship between Wastewater Management and the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities: the Convention de Maîtrise d'Ouvrage Déléguée (for the construction of new works) and the Contrat de Délégation (for the Operation and Maintenance of the Public Wastewater Systems). The Wastewater Management Authority is presently responsible to the Government for the Operation and Maintenance of the sewer network, manholes, wastewater pumping stations, and wastewater treatment plants.

Though local authorities carry out solid waste collection in their respective towns and districts, the management of this service is entrusted to the Solid Waste Management Division of the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands. Solid waste collected from different localities transit through transfer stations, operated by private contractors on behalf of the Ministry, where it is compacted and then transported to the Mare Chicose Landfill site for final disposal. The Mare Chicose Landfill site which is currently the only disposal site in the island is also operated by a private contractor. In general, scavenging services are provided by Local Authorities in the areas falling under their respective jurisdictions.

MUNICIPAL REVENUE COLLECTION

The Constitution of Mauritius provides for a local government to manage local matters. However, local governments depend on the central government for more than 70 percent of their funds, and only the municipal councils have the power to levy their own taxes. The main sources of revenue for the municipalities are: municipal taxes, government grants in aid, tenant tax, entertainment tax, public hindrance tax, scavenging fees, permit fees, levies and licenses, and burial fees.

In municipal areas, municipal taxes are collected, but in district council areas no such tax exist as no cadastre is available.

Hotels situated in rural districts pay only for the business licenses but no tax on property. Port Louis, as administrative capital, hosts a large number of workers and suffers from traffic congestion and air pollution.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Local stakeholders are trying to stimulate local economic activities in the agricultural as well as in the industrial and service sector. The National Empowerment Foundation has been set up to give a new boost to local economic development through the promotion of entrepreneurship, capacity development, work placement, and coaching, through initiative such as the Small Enterprises and Handicraft Development Authority (SEHDA) and Eradication of Absolute Poverty Programme (EAP).

HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS

Most of Mauritian households (88.8 percent) are homeowners. This percentage varies from 93 percent in rural areas to 83 percent in urban regions. There is no major rural exodus, the phenomena of migrants lacking access to land and shelter – the main cause of growing slums in developing countries - nearly does not exist. However, squatter settlements, *stricto sensu* (no property rights on land, poor material standard of shelter and lack of basic infrastructure) exist on the Island. They are especially concentrated in the periphery of the capital of Port Louis as well as in some coastal regions, especially in the south-western coastal region.

In 1991, the National Housing Development Corporation brought a new dynamism in the housing sector by embarking in the construction of flats for low and lower middle income households. However, these categories of beneficiaries are required to have a minimum financial contribution in order to acquire these houses. With rising construction costs over time and a higher vulnerability of certain groups, these houses are unaffordable.

The Mauritian Government committed itself at Habitat II to the right to adequate housing. The concept of human right to adequate housing includes: security of tenure, non-discrimination in relation to housing and preferential access to vulnerable groups. The Ministry of Housing and Lands has indicated the following targets for Social Housing in its Programme-Based Budget for 2012-2014:

- Provide 8,700 housing units for the low income groups and 24,000 serviced lots for the lower middle and middle income groups over the next 10 years.
- Provision of serviced plots of land to the lower and middle income families for housing purposes.
- Provision of affordable housing units to low income families.

- Grant for casting of roof slabs to low income families to complete the construction of housing units.

An unprecedented reform of social housing has been initiated in the 2012 National Budget with Government setting up a Social Housing Development Fund to the tune of MUR 1.5 billion (USD 51 million). The fund will encourage the setting up of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts.

GENDER

The Mauritian government has passed legislation to empower women. In parallel, several NGOs have taken initiatives to bring gender equality at various levels, be it in family life or at work. It is to be acknowledged that gender is a cross-cutting issue which has fully been recognized as a key factor to strengthen a country's ability to grow and improve the standard of living. The Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare is the leading actor on gender issues and, under its aegis, various parastatal bodies operate, namely, the National Women's Council (NWC) and the National Women Entrepreneur Council (NVEC), to increase the technical, organizational and management capacity of women in the entrepreneurship sector hence enabling them to improve their economic livelihood. A National AIDS Secretariat (NAS) and its secretarial arm of the National AIDS Committee under the Prime Minister's Office, is the country level HIV/AIDS coordinating authority. Local and national NGOs, such as PILS (Prévention Information et Lutte contre le SIDA) and Gender Links are key players in the national response against HIV/AIDS and against gender discrimination respectively.

However, in politics, the representation of women is very low. In local authorities, women represent only 7 percent of all elected councillors. The Local Government Act (2011) enacted this December aims to address that. It stipulates that "any group presenting more than two candidates at a Village Council election shall ensure that not more than two-thirds of the group's candidates are of the same sex". The same applies to municipal councils.

This is to ensure greater gender equality at local government level.

The National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF) targeting gender equality and women's empowerment is being updated. Sectoral Gender Policies have been formulated in line with the National Gender Policy Framework for eight additional ministries.

SECURITY

In Mauritius, the factors of insecurity most often reported by the public to the police and necessitating police intervention are most of the time: alcohol-abuse and drugs consumption; violence towards vulnerable groups such as women, children and senior citizens; deficient infrastructure and degradation of built-in environments (unlit streets and poorly maintained homes or land); soliciting for prostitution or drug trafficking; and theft and vandalism.

There are 75 police stations in the territory of Mauritius. The Police Force is rapidly moving from an order keeping body to a more community-based service. A National Policing Strategic Framework has been set-up which states that “the role of the police moves from a force to a service”. The approach to policing, a key component of urban security, is based on three principles:

- Reconciliation with the people;
- The approach to problem solving;
- The strengthening of preventive measures.

Being an island, climate change is an important issue with great environmental impacts on the country and the livelihood of people. Increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters like cyclones and flooding and rise in sea level are expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surges and other coastal hazards. Mauritius has already witnessed at national level the impact of climate change through extreme weather conditions such as increase in average temperature, declining rain fall, wave surges, recurrent floods, and severe droughts.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Mauritius has been actively engaged in the UN process for sustainable development since the Rio Summit in 1991 to the Mauritius Strategy in 2005. Since 2008, Mauritius has coined the concept ‘Maurice Ile Durable’ (MID) for the further implementation of sustainable development within its borders (both terrestrial and marine). A National Environment Protection Act (amended in 2008) is the main legislation for the protection and management of the environmental assets of Mauritius. At local level, a series of policies have been elaborated and implemented: the National Environment Strategy (NES) 1999; the national Environment Policy (NEP) 2007; the updating of the National Environmental Strategy (NES) 2008; and the current development strategy for ‘Maurice Ile Durable’ (MID) 2011. The local authorities are empowered to make use of the more stringent enforcement mechanisms provided under the Environment Protection Act in addition to the provision made under the enactment itself. It has not always been possible for local authorities to increase their revenue in order to keep pace with the sustainable development process.

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Urban Profiling

The Mauritian Urban Profiling is an assessment of the urban situation on the main island of the Mauritian Republic and Chagos Archipelago. It is action-oriented in its approach and it focuses on priority needs, capacity gaps and responses to improve urban living conditions at national and local levels. The main objective of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is to develop urban poverty reduction policies, which go in line with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - targets 7.C (to halve by 2015 population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation) and 7.D (achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers).

The methodology used is the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme developed by UN-Habitat in collaboration with various partners and stakeholders. It consists of a three-phase programme using a participatory approach involving all stakeholders, for example the public, the private and the informal sector, the civil society, as well as researchers from the study stage to the final end-action concrete result.

The tasks of coordinating the drafting of four urban profiles for Mauritius and the organization of four workshops within four months seemed daunting at the beginning. But successful completion of the tasks was made possible through sheer dedication and hard work of all members of the Implementation Team.

Members of the Implementation Team constituted of officers from the Ministry of Housing and Lands, UN-Resident Office, the three Local Authorities and the Consultants. A preparatory process was put in place and various steps were undertaken to ensure the success of the Mauritian Urban Profiling.

The Implementation Team decided to set up a technical committee in August 2011 to assist the consultants in the collection of data, to provide a platform for interaction among the various stakeholders and to allow the consultants to present their findings to the committee. Regular meetings were held each two to three weeks to monitor progress on work achieved and help to find solutions to bottlenecks. The technical committee meetings allowed members to remain focused, dedicated to the main objectives of the study and of the need to meet tight deadlines to make certain that the reports would be ready by December 2011.

METHODOLOGY

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme consists of three phases:

Phase one of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme consists of an urban profiling of urban conditions and trends at national and local levels. In consultation with the Ministry of Housing and Lands, three areas have been chosen for the urban profiling: the capital city of Port Louis, the middle-size town of Beau-Bassin and the district of Black River, located in the Western part of the island. Information has been collected through a review of literature, reports and statistical data, interviews (cf. Annex 1 for list of interviewees), group discussions as well as local and national consultations with stakeholders. In order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the local and national set-ups, a SWOT analysis has been undertaken for each case study and findings discussed in consultations at the corresponding levels. Three local consultations in the Black River district, Port Louis and in Beau-Bassin, were held in the respective councils on the 10th, 12th and 17th of October 2011 and a national consultation in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Lands involving all stakeholders, both local and national level, was organised on the 24th of October. Consensus and agreements have been reached and projects identified.

Phase two of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme will build on the identified projects and examine further the practicability aspects in terms of feasibility studies, capacity-building and resource mobilisation needed to implement the projects.

Phase three will be the implementation phase where it will have to be assured that the integration of all the dimensions have been taken on board.

The various themes that have been agreed upon for the Mauritian Urban Profiling are the following: land tenure and management; governance and urban planning; basic urban services; municipal revenue collection; local economic development; housing, deprived and vulnerable areas; gender; security; and environment, climate change and disaster risk reduction.

TABLE 1: HOUSING AND POPULATION CENSUS

Town	1990 Housing Census	2000 Housing Census	% Increase 1990 to 2000	2011 Housing Census	% Increase 1990 to 2011	% of urban population 2011
Port Louis	132460	144303	8,9%	135765	2,5%	27,9%
Beau Bassin/Rose Hill	91518	103872	13,5%	98355	7,5%	20,2%
Quatre Bornes	68398	75884	10,9%	73950	8,1%	15,2%
Vacoas / Phoenix	56452	100066	77,3%	103014	82,5%	21,1%
Curepipe	65414	78920	20,7%	76309	16,7%	15,7%
Total	414 242	503 045	21,4%	487393	17,7%	100,0%

INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Mauritius, which is an archipelago state comprises of the main island, Mauritius, and other smaller islands, including Rodrigues, Agalega, St. Brandon, and Chagos Archipelagos.

The total population of the Republic, according to the 2011 Housing Census totals to 1,215,199¹. The main island of Mauritius has a total population of 1,175,067² (around 97 percent of the total Mauritian population). The surface area of the island of Mauritius is of 1865 km².

POPULATION

The total urban population, according to the Housing and Population Census of 2011, amounts to 487,393 inhabitants (41.48 percent). However, since 2000, the housing stock has been increasing more rapidly in rural areas. The latest Housing and Population Census reveals that the rural district of Black River has had the highest growth rate between 2010 and 2011, and 42.6 percent³ increase in the number of housing units. Two villages in Black River had the highest housing units growth rates: Albion (an increase of 104.1 percent) and Flic en Flac (76.3 percent). In the urban district of Port Louis, a decrease in the number of housing units was noted in two municipal wards: Ward 2 (-13.5 percent) and 5 (-3.4 percent)⁴. The main reasons for the slower urbanization trend than in other countries of the Global South lies in the low rate of rural urban migration as the major towns are easily accessible by public transport.

The urban population of the island of Mauritius is mostly concentrated in a conurbation strip running from Port Louis to Curepipe. The five municipal areas are; the city of Port Louis, the towns of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill, Quatre Bornes, Vacoas/Phoenix, and

Curepipe. Port Louis is the most populated urban area with a population of 135,765 (almost 28 percent of the urban population of Mauritius), followed by Beau Bassin/Rose Hill (20.18 percent). This conurbation strip represents the heart of the Mauritian economy, hosting many firms of the export processing zone, the cyber city, the university, research centres, the free port, and offshore activities.

The National Development Strategy⁵ was prepared in 2003 and has highlighted the Government Land Use and Transport Strategy for up to 2020. A mid-term review of the National Development Strategy is expected to start in 2012. The concept of an enlarged conurbation has emerged for two main reasons:

- The need to reduce infrastructure investments.
- It is expected that 50 percent of jobs to be created up to 2020 will take place in or around the conurbation.

¹ Mauritius Statistics, *Housing and Population Census, 2011*, p. 99 – including 29 Homeless persons

² Mauritius Statistics, *op. cit.*, p. 99

³ Figures furnished by Statistics Mauritius – both occupied and vacant housing units

⁴ Figures provided by Statistics Mauritius – for both occupied and vacant housing units

⁵ Government of Mauritius, *National Development Strategies and policies*: www.gov.mu/portal/goc/housing/file/ndsvoll.pdf

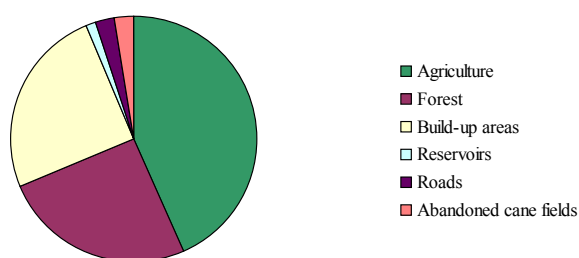
LAND TENURE AND MANAGEMENT



Source : photo Vahy R.

INTRODUCTION

The island of Mauritius has a surface area of 186,500 hectares, of which 43 percent is comprised of agricultural land, 25 percent is covered by forests and 25 percent is built up area. The remaining 7 percent comprises of roads, reservoirs and abandoned sugarcane fields¹.



Almost three-quarters of the area covered by forests and agriculture are privately owned. Built-up areas are also mostly privately owned.

The structure of land ownership is deeply determined by the colonial history of the island. Since French colonial rule, land has been the property of rich slave-owners who owned vast sugar-cane plantations. The British administration took over the island in 1810, and the whole socio-economic set-up as well as basic structure of land property remained untouched. Only on two occasions, known as the *Grand Morcellement* and the *Petit Morcellement*, did labourers get access to land,

¹ Mauritius Statistics / Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, *Mauritius in Figures – 2010*, p. 27

as sugar estates started to sell less fertile land during periods of decline of world market sugar prices².

Nowadays, land mostly belongs to the descendants of ancient slave-owners and to small and medium cane producers having benefited from the *Grand and Petit morcellements*. The Catholic Church owns some land too. The state owns what was originally known as crown land, which is composed of strategically important zones, namely the coastal zones which are leased out to private individuals or hotels, but remain state property.

The *Sugar Industry Efficiency Act* (2001) as subsequently amended made provision for the conversion of agricultural land for low-cost housing projects. These past years, the Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) has permitted ex-labourers to obtain plots of land released by sugar estates for housing purposes.

The task of land planning, distribution and building of houses on large scale falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

² H.C. Brookfield, *Problems of Monoculture and Diversification in a Sugar Island : Mauritius*, in *Economic Geography*; 35, n° 1 (1959), p.25-40;

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

The Ministry of Housing and Lands monitors the whole process of strategy elaboration through various bodies and regulations in order to meet the needs of vulnerable groups. Government can obtain land as part of the social contribution obtained through Integrated Resort Scheme (IRS) Projects for construction of infrastructure facilities, community centres and other social amenities.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Land Acquisition Act of 1982 is the legal framework for compulsory acquisition of land by the state or by other bodies for specific purposes (mainly infrastructural amenities such as roads, motorways and hospitals). The Ministry of Housing and Lands can therefore acquire the required land either on behalf of the state or that of a corporate body (Central Electricity Board, Central Water Authority or other corporate bodies).

Declining sugar prices and the scheduled end of the preferential access, the Cotonou Agreements, to the European Union markets induced government to start a reform of the sugar industry in order to ensure long-term viability of the sector. The Sugar Industry Efficiency Act was enacted in 1988 and amended in 2007 to reduce production costs and clustering of small farms to encourage economies of scale and mechanisation of all practices.

An important clause in this Act is that relating to land conversion from agricultural use to non-agricultural use provided the land is situated in a permitted development zone and not within an irrigation zone. Owners of agricultural land not exceeding one hectare do not have to apply for a land conversion permit provided they owned the land as at 30th September 2005 and meet specific planning criteria for the release of the land.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Land Administration Valuation and Information Management System (LAVIMS) is a system which will provide a comprehensive national integrated set of spatial data for effective land management and land use planning. The Digital Cadastre has been operational since June 2011.

The National Development Strategy developed by the Ministry of Housing and Lands is the main framework for land use planning. The planning is made on a long term basis. The plan has a holistic and centralistic approach: settlement areas and rural and urban regeneration zones have been identified. Tourism zones, preserved cultural and environmental zones as well as industrial zones have also been predetermined.

GOVERNANCE AND URBAN PLANNING



Source : photo Vahy R.

INTRODUCTION

Mauritius is a republic within the Commonwealth. The political system is a parliamentary democracy in line with the Westminsterian tradition. A single chamber of 70 elected members constitutes the national assembly of which 62 are elected by direct vote and 8 members are nominated among the losers in order to balance out the ethnic and political equilibrium in the country. This system of compensatory seats is called the best loser system.

Elections are held every five years and the Leader of the party or of the coalition of parties holding a majority of seats in parliament becomes the Head of Government, that is, the Prime Minister. The Head of State is elected by the Members of Parliament for a similar period.

Mauritius has a long tradition of centralised governance inherited from the colonial era and is still strongly centralised in its administration. The decentralisation process is still in a very embryonic stage. Major issues are still managed by some key central government ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, and the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands. In these ministries, planning and strategies are elaborated at national level and implementation is effected at local level.

LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND URBAN PLANNING

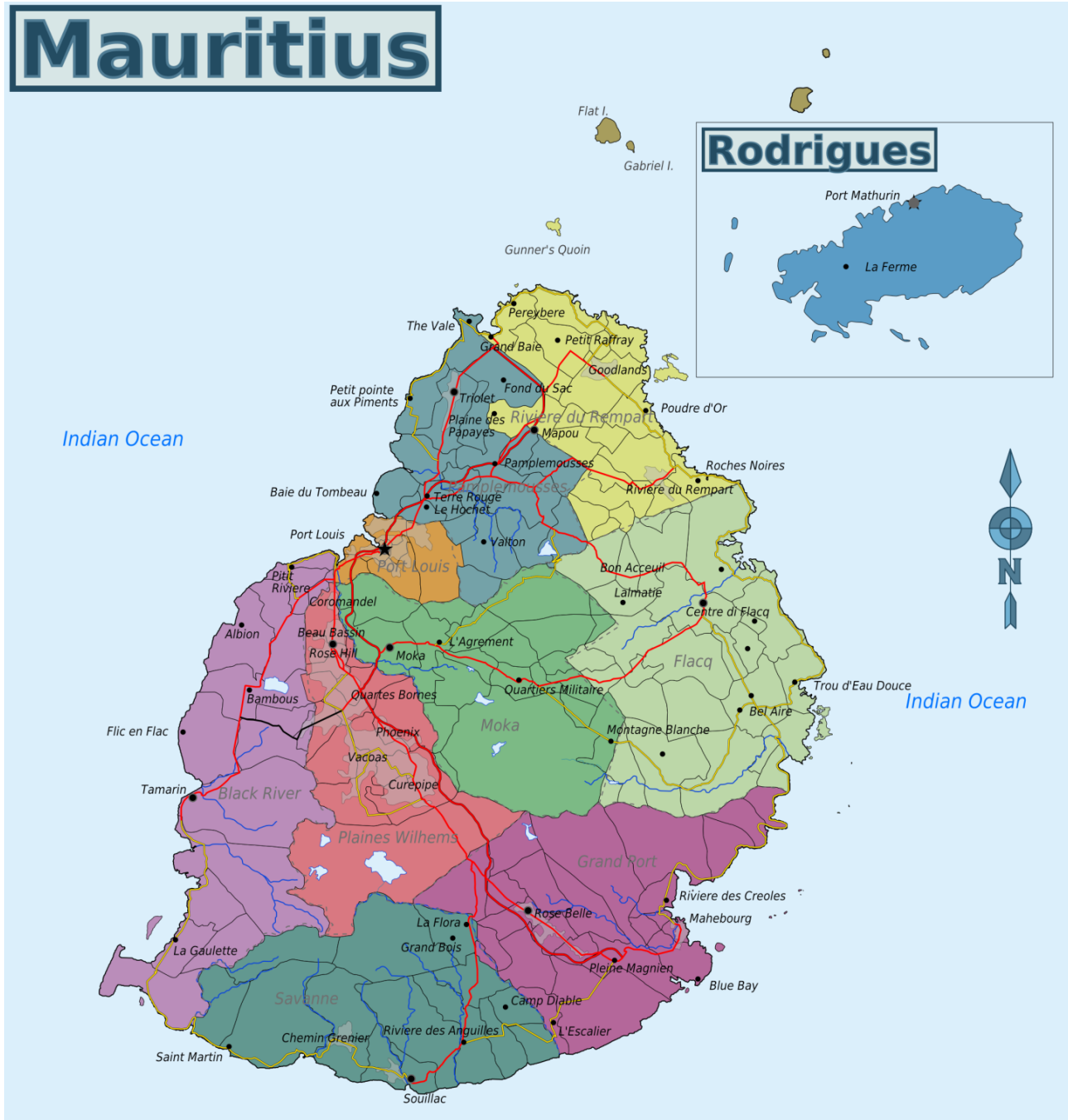
Mauritius is divided into nine districts: Port Louis, Pamplemousses, Rivière du Rempart, Flacq, Grand Port, Savanne, Black River, Plaines Wilhems, and Moka. The five towns of the country are situated mainly in two districts: Port-Louis (City of Port Louis) and Plaines-Wilhems (Beau-Bassin/Rose Hill, Quatre Bornes, Vacoas/Phoenix, and Curepipe).

At local level, elections are regularly held according to the Representation of the People Act and the Local Government Act. The five towns are divided into municipal wards and electors return the prescribed number of councillors for each municipal ward under the system of First-Past-The Post for a term of five years.

In rural areas, local elections are also held regularly under the same legislation and each village elects a given number of village councillors.

The elected municipal/district councillors vote for a mayor in towns or for a chairperson and President of District Council in the rural districts. Town councils are headed by mayors supported by councillors and district councils are headed by the President of the District Council, also supported by councillors.

Councils appoint specific committees of councillors necessary to carry out their relevant duties.



Source : http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Mauritius.png

Proposals and recommendations approved by these committees become municipal/district resolutions after adoption by the municipal/district councils.

The execution of municipal duties is carried out under the supervision of a Chief Executive who is responsible for the management and administration of the day to day affairs of the Council. The Chief Executive Officer heads the council secretariat and other heads of departments. The Chief Executive Officers as well as all employees of the local authorities (Municipal

or District Councils) are appointed by the Local Government Service Commission which is constituted of a Chairman and four other members appointed by the President of the Republic.

The Local Government Service Commission is vested with the exclusive rights of appointment, promotion, disciplinary control, removal from office, and approval of retirement in respect of all Local Government Officers. The salaries of municipal employees are aligned on those of other civil servants.

The Council holds meetings under the chairmanship of the Mayor on a quarterly basis. The Council meetings take place after a series of meetings of the various committees. The committees ensure that key issues are considered in sufficient depth before decisions are taken. The deliberations of the Committee meetings are governed by standing orders and are presided over by a Chairperson duly appointed by the Council.

The main duties of town and district councils are to *“promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of the local community, improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community, ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitably distributed, ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively to best meet the needs of the local community, ensure transparency and accountability in decision-making, and provide for the prudent use and stewardship of local community resources”*¹. The main day-to-day duties of municipal and district councils officers are tax collection and revenue collection, issuing of building and trade permits, organisation of welfare activities (cultural, religious and sports), and maintenance of social infrastructure.

Urban planning policies and strategies are prepared by the Ministry of Housing and Lands, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands. The municipal and district councils throughout the island do not have any policy for housing construction in general and not even to target the poor urban citizens specifically. This issue is managed by parent ministries (Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment) at the national level.

In order to ensure activities falling under the responsibility of Municipal and district councils, draft budgets are prepared by the Mayors or Presidents of districts (with or without a vote in the council) and submitted to the Ministry of Local Government who in turn submits these budgets to the Ministry of Finance for approval by National Assembly.

Revenue of municipal and district councils are collected mainly from levies and taxes on immovable properties, permits and licenses and grants allocated for recurrent budgets.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- Ministry of Local Government.
- Local Government Service Commission.
- Ministry of Housing and Lands.

- The National Housing Development Company Limited.
- The Ministry of Social Integration.
- The National Empowerment Foundation.
- The Ministry of Public Utilities.
- Municipal and District Councils.
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Local Government Act of 2003

The Local Government Act 1989 provides a wide spectrum for the Municipal Council to engage in local development and provision of services to its citizens. Under this Act, the Minister may intervene, in case the Municipal Council fails to carry out any of its duties, by entrusting the responsibility to another party. However, the Municipal Council has to bear the costs. As indicated above, under this Act, some of the key decisions of the Municipal Council are subject to the approval of the Ministry of Local Government.

- The Building Act of 1981 (amended in 2001)

The Building Act is the main legislation governing the conditions on which permits for building are granted by municipal authorities and which regulate various aspects such as dangerous buildings or forges and furnaces.

- The Town and Country Planning Act of 1954

Under this Act, the Municipal Council is the Planning Authority for the Municipal Council Area as covered by the Outline Planning Scheme prepared under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1954. The execution of the responsibility is done by the Planning Department. Under these legislations, no person within the township can carry out development on land without prior approval of the Municipal Council.

- Environment Protection Act of 2008

This Act is the main legislation for the protection and management of the environmental assets of Mauritius.

- State Land Act

This act defines the conditions of sale, transfer or exchange of state land and it is also under this act that squatters on state land are evicted.

¹ The Local Government Act of 2003

- Planning Development Act (2004)

This Act regulates land use at the national level and provides for the setting up of a National Development Strategy and the issue of Planning Policy Guidance.

- Morcellement Act (1991)

This legislation defines the procedures and authority according to which a Morcellement permit is issued. It also establishes the Morcellement Board.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

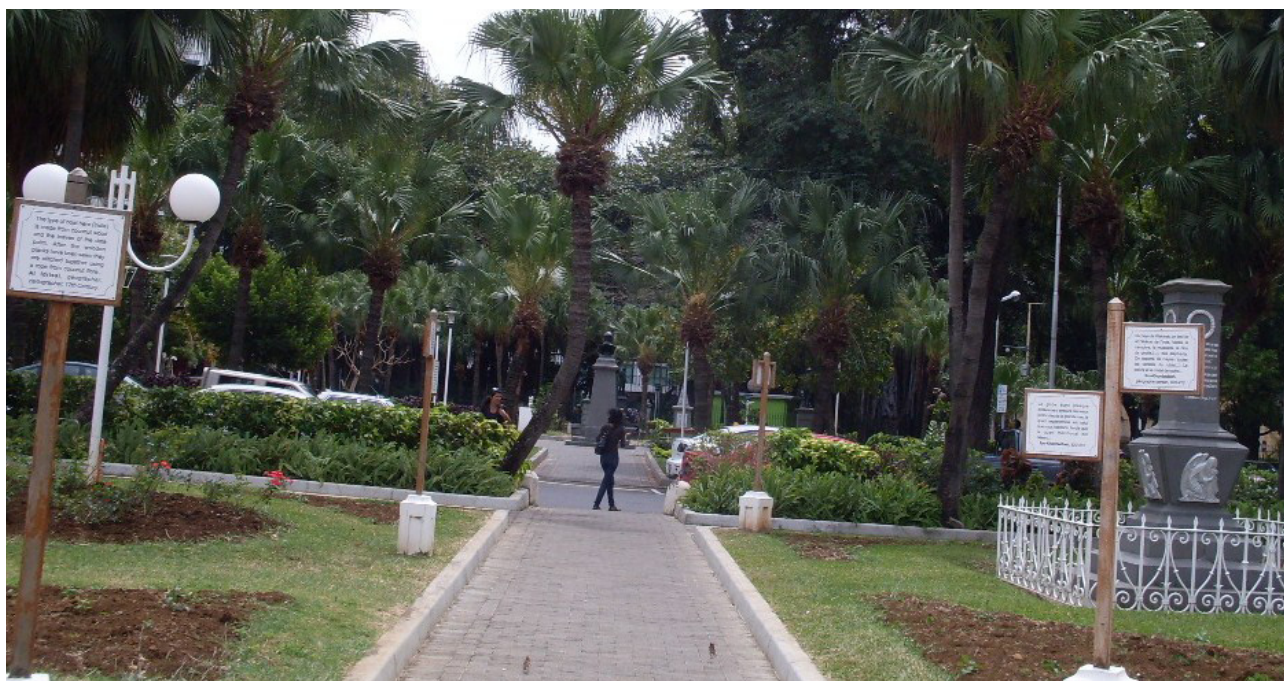
- Lack of autonomy of local authorities strongly controlled by central government.
- Absence of pro-poor policies at municipal and district level.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The councils have no way of controlling council staff who are recruited, paid and promoted/demoted by the Local Government Service Commission.
- In the 1950s, Municipal councils had their own police, fire services and controlled water distribution in the city, today this is not the case anymore.
- Councils do not benefit from some main economic activities carried out in their jurisdictions (port for Port Louis) and other sources of revenue (parking, fines, etc.)

The central government provides an annual grant to the municipal councils in order to complement their revenue and stand by their financial commitments making them highly dependent financially.

BASIC URBAN SERVICES



Source : photo Vahy R.

The ever increasing number of squatters during the past twenty years has caused tremendous pressure on the basic urban services and infrastructure in Mauritius. This situation makes it imperative to initiate a coherent urbanization policy and a specific strategy in order to cope with the massive problems that are prevailing in these particular squatting regions. Moreover, the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) reported 225 pockets of extreme poverty affecting 6,983 families in Mauritius on 31 August 2010.

The local authorities in Mauritius have limited powers regarding basic urban services provision. The Local Government Act of 2003 which regulates the duties of the municipal and district councils do not refer to these basic services (water and sanitation) which fall under the jurisdiction of the central government through the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. It is thus, imperative to develop a multi-structural approach to address these challenges with an effective and sustainable perspective.

On the island of Mauritius, out of a total of 313,934 occupied housing units, 96 percent have piped water inside their premises¹ and 4 percent outside. Availability of electricity² amounts to 99.6 percent of these occupied housing units.

WATER SUPPLY

The Central Water Authority, established by the Central Water Authority Act of 1971, is mainly responsible for the treatment and distribution of potable water for domestic, commercial and industrial use. It operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. According to the Digest of Energy and Water Statistics of 2010, the services of the Central Water Authority covered an area of 1,242 km² out of the 1,870 km² of Mauritius, with a total population of 299,300. The total average production of potable water amounts to 100,321 m³/day. The water sources are 49 percent³ surface water and 55 percent⁴ ground water.

The Water Resources Unit, established in May 1993, is responsible for the assessment, development, management, and conservation of water resources in the Republic of Mauritius. One of its main objectives is to study and formulate policy in relation to the control and use of water resources for the provision of water for domestic, agricultural, industrial, and commercial supply and for hydro-electric power generation, irrigation, land drainage and land reclamation, flood control, the development of fisheries, the protection of wild life, afforestation, and the control of soil erosion. It has also has the responsibility to prepare and follow up plans for the conservation, utilization, control, and development of water resources.

1 Statistics Mauritius, *Housing and Population Census 2011*, vol. 1 p. 99
2 Statistics Mauritius, *Housing and Population Census 2011*, vol. 1 p. 149

3 Statistics Mauritius, *Digest of Energy & Water Statistics 2010*, Vol.13, table 5.9,p.74
4 Statistics Mauritius, *op. cit.*

SANITATION

The operation of the first sewerage pipes laid in Port Louis during the early 19th century was regulated by the Port Louis Sewerage Act of 1904 and entrusted to the Ministry of Works until its transfer to the Ministry of Energy in 1991. The responsibility for the wastewater sector has been under the jurisdiction of several ministries: Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Postal Services (Up to 1995), Ministry of Public Infrastructure (1995 – 1996), Ministry of Public Utilities (1996 – 1997), Ministry of Environment (1997 – 1998), Ministry of Public Utilities (1998 to 2008), and the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities (2008 to date).

The Wastewater Management Authority Act 2000 established the Wastewater Management Authority as a corporate body and was proclaimed on 30 August 2001.

The Authority operates under two legal instruments, signed on August 31, 2001, which regulates the relationship between the Wastewater Management Authority and the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities. These instruments are:

- *Convention de Maîtrise d'Ouvrage Déléguée* (for the construction of new works)
- *Contrat de Délégation* (for the operation and maintenance of the public wastewater systems)

Under the *Convention de Maîtrise d'Ouvrage Déléguée*, the Government of Mauritius entrusted to Wastewater Management Authority the overall responsibility for the implementation of all projects under the National Sewerage Program (NSP). This program objective is to connect 50 percent of the population to the public sewer system by 2011/2012 (revised forecast).

Under the *Contrat de Délégation*, the Wastewater Management Authority is responsible to the Government for the operation and maintenance of all Government's wastewater assets in use in the Public Sewerage Systems.

The Wastewater Management Authority is presently responsible to the Government for the operation and maintenance of 515 kilometres of sewer network, 11,755 manholes, 50 wastewater pumping stations, and 19 wastewater treatment plants. At present, approximately 278,000 or 25 percent of the country's population is served by public wastewater collection, treatment and disposal systems through 61,750 connections (domestic and non-domestic). This figure is expected to rise to 50 percent by June 2012.

The operation and maintenance data as at 30 June 2006 are as follows:

TABLE 2:

Total domestic and non-domestic house connections	61,750
Average daily volume of wastewater collected and treated, including industrial wastewater	92,376 m ³ /day
Number of wastewater treatment plants (conventional plants, onsite septic tank + leaching field)	19
Number of wastewater pumping stations	50

ELECTRICITY

Supply of electricity in Mauritius is solely managed by the Central Electricity Board (CEB) which is a parastatal body reporting to the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. Established in 1952 and empowered by the Central Electricity Board Act of 25 January 1964, the Central Electricity Board's business is to prepare and carry out development schemes with the general objective of promoting, coordinating and improving the generation, transmission, distribution and sale of electricity in Mauritius. The Central Electricity Board produces around 40 percent of the country's total power requirements from its four thermal power stations and eight hydroelectric plants. The remaining 60 percent is purchased from Independent Power Producers. Currently, the Central Electricity Board is the sole organisation responsible for the transmission, distribution and supply of electricity to the population.

With a view to promoting clean energy, and in line with the vision to democratize the electricity grid, the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities, in collaboration with the Central Electricity Board, has launched the Small Scale Distributed Generation (SSDG) Project. Through this initiative, Small Scale Independent Power Producers (SIPPs) will be given the opportunity to produce their own electricity from renewable energy sources, and export any excess to the Central Electricity Board grid (referred to as Net Metering). For the Small Scale Distributed Generation project to be feasible, a Grid Code has been established to permit the integration of photovoltaic, wind turbine and mini-hydro technologies within the Central Electricity Board grid. The maximum permissible installed capacity of the above-mentioned technologies has been set to 50 Kilowatts per customer.

The maximum projected capacity (2 Megawatts) has been attained and the Central Electricity Board will no longer accept any new applications from potential producers.

SOLID WASTE

Though the local authorities carry out solid waste collection in their respective towns and districts, the management of this service is entrusted to the Solid Waste Management Division of the Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands. Among the different responsibilities of this unit are:

- Develop/review solid waste management programmes and policies.
- Identify new disposal sites and manage, supervise and control existing dumping sites, transfer stations and landfills.
- Coordinate waste collection operations carried out by Local Authorities and other organisations.
- Enforcement of the Local Government Dumping and Waste Carrier's Regulations.

Different regulations have been established in order to tighten control on solid waste management during the past years namely:

- Standards for Hazardous Waste Regulations 2001.
- Dumping and Waste Regulations 2003.
- Local Government (Registration of Scavenging Contractors) 2004.
- Industrial Waste Audit Regulation 2008.

Solid waste collected from different localities transit through transfer stations operated by private contractors on behalf of the Ministry, where they are compacted and transported to the Mare Chicose Landfill site for final disposal. The Mare Chicose Landfill which is currently the only disposal site in the island is also operated by a private contractor.

Scavenging services are generally provided by Local Authorities in the areas falling under their respective jurisdictions. However, the ministry has up to now been providing such services in certain areas such as; public beaches, housing estates, traffic centres, and motorways through private contractors.

MUNICIPAL REVENUE COLLECTION



Source : photo Vahy R.

INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of Mauritius provides for a local authority to manage local matters. For this purpose, Mauritius is divided into towns, districts and villages. There are five municipal councils in the urban areas and in the rural areas there are four district councils under which fall 124 village councils. The district councils consist of representatives of village councils. The village council is the smallest unit of local government and has its own constitution and powers to carry out certain functions. The representatives of local authorities are democratically elected during elections which are held every five years. The five municipal councils are: Port Louis, Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, Quatre Bornes, Vacoas-Phoenix, and Curepipe.

The four district councils are: Pamplemousses-Rivière du Rempart, Moka-Flacq, Grand Port-Savanne, and Black River. Port Louis has a city council, whereas the four townships; Beau Bassin-Rose Hill, Curepipe, Quatre Bornes, and Vacoas-Phoenix each have a municipal council. Local authorities depend on the central government for more than 70 percent of their revenue and only the municipal councils have the power to levy their own taxes.

The main sources of revenue for the municipalities are as follows:

1. *Municipal Taxes*
This does not apply to district councils.
2. *Government Grant in Aid*
This grant is based on the population size of the relevant districts and municipal areas.

3. *Entertainment tax*
This tax is paid to the municipality as a percentage of entrance fees for any cultural or leisure activities organised in the municipal and district areas.
4. *Public hindrance tax*
This tax is applied to any individual or corporate body causing any disruption to the normal traffic flow due to any construction works initiated. The rate is calculated on a daily basis.
5. *Scavenging fees*
Any private firm operating in the relevant district and municipal areas is bound to pay this tax for the collection of all its refuse and solid waste.
6. *Permits fees*
This refers to any construction of buildings and businesses that are starting up in the relevant districts and municipal areas.
7. *Levies and licenses*
All businesses operating in the relevant municipal and district areas have to pay these fees on a yearly basis according to their field of activities.
8. *Burial fees*
All cemeteries are under the responsibility of district and municipal councils. A burial fee is applied in the case that a citizen is dead and buried.
9. *Others*
These comprise revenues from other sources such as sale of tender documents, advertisement and publicity fees, interest receivables, rent of district or municipal buildings, and so on.

Direct Grant in Aid to specific projects may be allocated on an ad hoc basis.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- District Councils
- Municipal Councils
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
- Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands
- Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
- National Development Units
- Local Government Service Commission

The Local Government Service Commission was established under Act Number 37 of 1975 and came in force in August 1983. It is vested with the exclusive rights of nomination, promotion, disciplinary control, removal from office, and approval of retirement of all local government officers.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- Local Government Act of 1989 (Amended 2003)

The Local Government Act 1989 provides a wide spectrum for the Municipal Council to engage in local development and provision of services to its citizens. Under this Act, some of the key decisions of the Municipal Council are subjected to the approval of the Ministry of Local Government.

- Town and Country Planning Act of 1954 and the Planning Development Act of 2004

Under this Act, the Municipalities are the Planning Authority for the Municipal Council areas as covered by the Outline Scheme of 1985 prepared under the Town and Country Planning Act of 1954. Under these legislations, no person within the township can carry out development on land without prior approval of the Municipal Council.

- Business Facilitation (Miscellaneous provisions) Act 2006

The main impact of this Act has been the restyling of the Development Permit and Building Permit into the Building and Land Use Permit, the introduction of clusters of development (residential, commercial, industrial, services, installation of motors, excision / subdivision of land), drastic reduction of delays in the approval of Building and Land Use Permits, and the abolition of Trade Licences.

- Finance Act
- Central Water Authority Act of 1971
- The Environment Protection Act of 2007

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Municipal and district councils lack financial autonomy and are highly dependent on Government Grants. In municipalities, municipal taxes are collected, but in district councils, no such taxes exist as cadastres are unavailable or outdated. Cadastres are not updated because it is expensive to update cadastral maps and when there is transfer of ownership of land it is not compulsory to register with municipal authorities. Hotels situated in rural districts pay only for business licenses but no tax on property. This results in a major loss of revenue for district councils, namely the coastal districts like Black River, which are the preferred locations for hotels and tourist resorts in Mauritius.

Port Louis, as a port and administrative capital, also does not benefit from the revenue generated by these utilities. The port is managed by the Mauritius Ports Authority, controlled by central government, and all fines administered by municipal officers are paid directly to central government.

Being an administrative capital, many employees work in Port Louis causing traffic congestions and contributing to air pollution in the city but the municipal authorities do not perceive any financial counterpart.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Horse races organized in the Champ de Mars are an important source of revenue for the municipality of Port Louis.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Source : photo Vahy R.

INTRODUCTION

Local economic development is seen as one of the most important ways of decreasing poverty. In fact, the stimulation of the local economy helps to create jobs. Enhancing the local economy is a global trend. In practice, local stakeholders are supposed to stimulate local economic activities in the agricultural as well as the industrial and service sector. This approach involves the public and private sector and civil society organizations. It is based on the willingness and capacity of each to promote the region's future.

Many academics have pointed out that the key local resources are the inhabitants and their activities. The consciousness of the benefits of local development in itself is a resource for economic development.

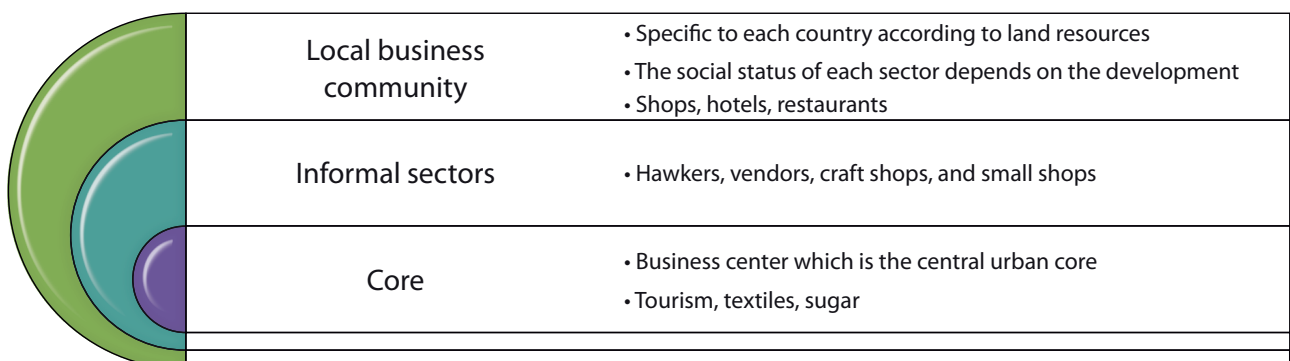
It creates specific structural relationships between political, social and economic actors.

THE ECONOMIC FABRIC

Up to the end of the 1970s, the Mauritian economy was nearly entirely dominated by sugar production. Since the 1980s, the boom of its Export Processing Zone, the growing tourism sector and increasing activities in the service sector have led to a diversified economy with an average annual growth rate of 4.7 percent.

The tourism industry is presently perceived as a growth sector. The government is aiming to double the number of tourists and attract two million tourists per year by 2015.

The development of services with the creation of the cyber-city and the growth of financial services has made Mauritius a reference for services in the region. Information and communication technology is quickly expanding. The country is a well known supplier of



offshore banking, business process outsourcing and freeport services.

LOCAL DYNAMISM - A NETWORK APPROACH

The National Empowerment Foundation has been set up to give a new boost to local economic development through the promotion of entrepreneurship, capacity development, work placement, and coaching.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- The Minister of Finance and Economic Development promotes local economic development at the national level.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Leisure defines, adjusts and implements sustainable tourism strategies which are environmentally sound, socially acceptable and economically viable.
- National Empowerment Foundation.
- Small Enterprises and Handicraft Development Authority.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The Public Private Partnership (PPP) Committee was set up under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) to deal with all matters pertaining to Public Private Partnerships in Mauritius. Its national goals are to balance growth, improve productivity and to consolidate social justice.

- In 2006, Mauritius undertook a reform agenda which included the development of Program-Based Budgeting (PBB) in the context of a framework for Medium Term Expenditure (MTEF).
- The main purpose of Program Based Budgeting is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure in order to obtain better results and social development.
- Setting up of the Eradication of Absolute Poverty Programme (EAP).

SOME DATA

- Statistics Mauritius: The annual real growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (basic prices) worked out to 3.1 percent and 4.2 percent in 2009 and 2010 respectively, and is forecasted at 4.1 percent in 2011.
- Statistics Mauritius is predicting a stagnation of unemployment rate for this year to 7.8 percent, same as for 2010.

(Statistics Mauritius, National Accounts Estimates (2008-2011), September 2011 issue, p.1)

HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS



Source : photo Vahy R.

While urban growth in developing countries generally goes in line with slum growth, the Mauritian case is different. Most of Mauritian households, 88.8 percent, are house-owners. This percentage varies from 93 percent in rural areas to 83 percent in urban regions.

As there is no major rural exodus, the phenomena of migrants lacking access to land and shelter – the main cause of growth of slums in developing countries - nearly does not exist. However, squatter settlements *stricto sensu* (no property rights on land, poor material standard of the shelters and lack of basic infrastructure) do exist on the Island. They are mostly concentrated in the periphery of the capital of Port Louis as well as in some coastal regions, especially in the south-western coastal region.

Some of the urban squatter's settlements have been established by migrants from the island of Rodrigues. Others are Mauritians who are unemployed or have unstable jobs. Unemployment and the growing phenomena of weakly paid jobs which are unstable, joined with lack of support from the extended family, has led to the rise of squatters. This is a new phenomenon on the island, linked to the social polarization of the Mauritian population, individualization and the destruction of solidarity networks in the extended families ¹(Koop, 2004).

MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND LANDS - SQUATTER POLICY

According to existing policies, actions are being taken to regularize pre-July 2001 squatters while the cases for those who have squatted after July 2001 are being looked into on a case-to-case basis taking into consideration different criteria such as income/hardship situations. However, a policy of zero tolerance is being adopted by the Ministry regarding new cases of squatting, that is, legal action is being taken to have those squatters being evicted from the site they have illegally occupied.

PRESENT SITUATION OF SQUATTING

As at today, around 2987 cases of squatting throughout the island have already been regularized. Most of these cases are found within Port Louis area, Bambous Village, Belle Mare Village, Cap Malheureux Village, Riviere La Chaux Village, Le Morne Village, and La Gaulette Village among others. There are still approximately 1000 cases which are being looked into. These are scattered around the island. Squatter settlements in rural and coastal areas do have another origin: the first settlements were established by ex-slaves and their descendants following the abolition of slavery in 1835 and, until today, land rights of the descendants are not clear are non-existent.

In the Mauritian context, the issue of housing should be placed in a broader perspective than the one of poor

¹ Koop Kirsten, *Globisierung und Armutsentwicklung auf Mauritius*, Selbsterverlag ZELF/FU Berlin, 2004

housing conditions: the one of sustainable human settlement that is the '*physical articulation of the social, economic and political interactions of people living in communities*'. In the UN-Habitat II International Conference in Turkey, the issue of housing as a human right came into the limelight.

The concept of Human Rights to adequate housing includes security of tenure and non-discrimination in relation to housing and preferential access to vulnerable groups. The Mauritian Government committed itself at Habitat II to the right to adequate housing. The line ministry for housing is the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

The issue of housing has always been a major concern of governments. The first institution to be set up was the Mauritius Housing Corporation (MHC) in 1963 as a building society in order to provide loans to middle income families who own a plot of land. Between 1960 and 1991, the Central Housing Authority (CHA), created in 1960, has concentrated most of its activities towards the provision of building houses for low income groups and cyclone victims.

The Mauritius Housing Corporation (MHC) was initially established in 1963. In order to allow more flexibility to the corporation, a Mauritius Housing Corporation Act was enacted in 1974. From 1989, its legal status changed from that of a parastatal to that of a private company. Its main objective is to provide loan facilities to owners of a plot of land, whether private or State Land, for the construction, repair or improvement of residential buildings. With the increasing cost of freehold land, the Mauritius Housing Corporation also extends loan facilities for the purchase of land.

The National Housing Development Corporation (NHDC) was set up in 1991 to plan and implement the construction of social housing units, and specially targeting the most vulnerable groups of the Mauritian society. It has generated the construction of some 12,000 housing units to date and the government has in some cases provided for the acquisition of land and the implementation of infrastructural amenities such as nurseries, community centres and schools. The aim of this body is to attain one of the government objectives of allowing every family to access decent housing.

In 1991, the National Housing Development Corporation brought a new dynamism in the housing sector by embarking in the construction of flats for low and lower middle income households. However, beneficiaries are required to have a minimum financial contribution in order to access these houses. With rising construction costs over time and a higher vulnerability

of certain groups, these houses are unaffordable.

In the context of government policy to address the issue of poverty, especially among those living in the vulnerable areas, the Empowerment Foundation, founded in 2006 to address the issue of poverty in all its dimensions, was entrusted with the responsibility of catering for the housing needs of vulnerable groups under its Empowerment Community Programme.

The Empowerment Foundation works under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment with the collaboration of the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

Furthermore various government schemes for needy families exist such as:

- Grant for casting of roof slabs to needy families.
- Serviced plots of land to lower middle income groups.
- Affordable housing to low income families.
- Building site leases.
- Sale of former Central Housing Authority (CHA) sites to beneficiaries.
- Emergency housing.
- Integrated social housing projects.

There is therefore high commitment and energy from Government, civil society and private sector to address social housing gaps and ensure that basic housing is provided to all poor families in Mauritius:

- Government has negotiated 1,000 acres of land for social housing from the major sugar estates (Mauritius Sugar Producers Association – MSPA). The land however needs to be suitable for the construction of housing which is posing some challenges.
- The Government has provided through the Finance Act of 2009 that companies, as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR), need to pay two percent of their book profit after tax into a Corporate Social Responsibility Fund. This Fund is to be used on approved programmes that contribute to the social and environmental development of the country. Social housing is among the top priorities assigned to the funds. The official Corporate Social Responsibility guidelines on social housing have recently been revised to allow for better units.
- Various promising local initiatives have been implemented or are being developed by non-governmental organizations and the private sector for the urban poor.

The Ministry of Housing and Lands has also indicated the following targets for Social Housing in its Programme-Based Budget for 2012-2014:

- Provide 8,700 housing units for the low income groups and 24,000 serviced lots for the lower middle and middle income groups over the next 10 years.
- Provide affordable housing units to low income families.
- Provide serviced plots of land to the lower and middle income families for housing purposes.
- Provide grant for casting of roof slabs to low income housing to complete the construction of housing units.
- Rehabilitation of National Housing Development Corporation estates.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The immediate constraints are:

- Poor response from contractors to bid for social housing projects delays project implementation.
- Lengthy process for securing land under the Government/Mauritius Sugar Producers Association deal.
- Mismatch between supply of land and demand for housing.
- Lack of complete and up to date housing data base on the demand for housing in Mauritius.

Other constraints include;

- Illegal occupation of State Land which has given rise to substandard housing conditions.
- The problem of concealed households which needs to be investigated.
- Conventional solutions to date have concentrated on the physical aspect of housing without due attention to a comprehensive and integrative approach. The overall objective should have been the provision of a home rather than one of a basic house or shelter and set within an adequate human settlements environment. Such an approach encompasses the whole sphere of human welfare, quality of life, better sanitation and infrastructures, and an environment conducive to security in all its forms and happiness. The Ministry of Social Integration and the National Empowerment Foundation have been set up to address these issues.
- Human settlement requires a participatory process for the beneficiaries. Recently, the beneficiaries of

social housing programmes are being consulted on their aspirations and needs. The social housing project developed by the Empowerment Foundation for the very poor families at La Valette illustrate the new approach adopted by Government to accompany the beneficiaries while insisting on the need for the families concerned to find employment and to send their children to school.

- It is suggested that existing practices in the provision of housing be reviewed to adapt to the evolving context.
- Government should provide the town and village councils with sufficient financial capacity to sustain local community projects, for example infrastructure, health, education, and improved living conditions, in order to accommodate new comers.
- It would be good to have a focus on the extension of urban 'cités ouvrières' which are now over crowded after their construction some fifty years ago.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- The Government will continue to provide 'a decent home' for vulnerable groups. For instance, the Mauritius Housing Company provides financial assistance to needy families for the construction of housing, under the Mauritius Housing Corporation Act. It is also necessary also to engage the beneficiaries in the building process, for example through some form of voluntary work.
- Building cooperatives through self-help in order to bring together craftsmen and masons in order to reduce cost and create jobs.
- The use of credit union funds could encourage saving from the beneficiaries in order to improve their living conditions.
- A major issue is the availability of suitable land for social housing development. The land being negotiated currently with the Mauritius Sugar Producers Association has to be suitable for construction, hence the difficulty in finalising the site for social housing construction.
- The responsible institutions at national level are doing their level best to develop a partnership with local authorities, the private sector and civil society groups to address housing in a human settlement perspective. A new spirit of partnership, participation and cooperation is required to define a new and more sustainable housing policy and strategy.
- Corporate Social Responsibility foundations set up by private sector organizations and non-governmental organizations are ready to support

social housing programmes, but these have to be done according to standards set-up by the National Empowerment Foundation which discourages private sector actors.

An unprecedented reform of social housing has been initiated in the 2012 National Budget with Government setting up a Social Housing Development Fund to the tune of MUR 1.5 billion (USD 51 million). The fund will encourage the setting up of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts. The Trusts will mobilize resources from the Corporate Social Responsibility funds to meet one third of the costs. Government will bear another one third of the cost and will provide for the offsite infrastructure, if the project is within an agreed distance from existing infrastructure. Any land may be contributed for construction by these Trusts, as would any land acquired under the Prime Minister's deal with the sugar sector. Preference will be given to smaller sites that promote social inclusion. Families earning less than MUR 10,000 will pay only the final third of the cost. To lower costs to purchasers, the social housing projects of these Trusts will not be subject to value added tax. They will also be exempted from the payment of land conversion tax, registration duty and land transfer tax. The Trusts will be responsible for on-going management of the estates. The Social Housing Development Fund will be managed jointly by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development and the Ministry of Housing and Lands.

However, the reforms will have to address the following bottlenecks and challenges in order to be successful:

- Need for more relevant ministries to support the social housing reform.
- Need for more adequate prior consultation of beneficiaries and local needs assessment at community level.
- Need for an enhanced strategic and holistic approach to devising integrated social housing programmes that will effectively contribute to poverty eradication.
- Greater multi-stakeholder participatory approach in the design and implementation stages to ensure a holistic approach and full ownership, particularly of beneficiaries

The way forward therefore is the development of a human settlement approach which is based on the following components; the physical environment, the social environment, the participation of beneficiaries, the development of a local economy, and the capacity building of state services for social housing.

For more effective social housing programmes there should be:

AGREED PRIORITIES

- Need for integrated, holistic social housing projects as these will effectively improve the living conditions of poor families and address poverty.
- Need to address human resource gaps in local authorities and the ministry for the effective setting up of integrated social housing projects.
- Need to maintain a permanent and regular basis consultation mechanisms set up by Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme's phase 1, as it will ensure a truly participatory multi-stakeholder approach at both the local and national level for social housing programmes to be effective.

- More dialogue and coordination between State institutions, both at central and local level: the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme forums created for Black River, Beau-Bassin-Rose-Hill and Port-Louis can be model demonstration platforms as they will ensure a truly participatory multi-stakeholder approach.
- More consultation with beneficiaries and civil society organisations.
- A more strategic approach to social housing. Currently, there is no common understanding of national needs (situation needs analysis), no stock taking of past State and civil society initiatives (best practices and lessons learnt), and no standard template on how to set up integrated social housing estates for poor families that are aware of their rights.
- The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme can support this process by developing demonstration projects in the selected three areas which will showcase this strategic approach and its benefits.
- More staff in the Local Authorities and Central Government to develop and implement adequate programmes for integrated social housing.
- A full human resource needs analysis in the Local Authorities, Ministry of Housing and Lands and Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment needs to be carried out. Therefore it is necessary to advocate to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development the need to recruit more personnel if the social housing reform is to reach full, effective implementation.

**HOUSING AND
DEPRIVED AND
VULNERABLE
AREAS**
N°1

Project proposal | **Page 39**

Setting up of enabling
institutional environment for
participatory and integrated
social housing programmes

GENDER



Source : photo Koop

Several non-governmental organizations in Mauritius have taken initiatives to bring gender equality at various levels in the family and at workplaces. Several local associations have been set up to address the various problems and challenges faced by women, and to comment on what is happening in their community concerning gender issues. It is to be acknowledged that gender is a cross-cutting issue which has fully been recognised as a key factor in strengthening a country's ability to grow and improve the standards of living of its citizens. Addressing the gender inequalities in Mauritius will help in bringing about active promotion and protection of human rights for all.

THE INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

- The Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare is the leading actor in gender issues.
- National Women's Council

The National Women's Council (NWC) which is a parastatal body operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare was set up by an Act of Parliament in November 1985.

The National Women's Council ensures that Government policy and action meets the needs of women at grass-root level.

- National Women Entrepreneur Council (NWECC)

The National Women Entrepreneur Council, another parastatal body operating under the aegis of the Ministry, was set up in 1999 to promote women entrepreneurship. Its main objective is to increase the technical, organizational and management capacity of women in the entrepreneurship sector hence enabling them to improve their economic livelihood with the collaboration of different stakeholders.

- The National AIDS Secretariat, operating under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office

The National AIDS Secretariat is the country level HIV/AIDS coordinating authority and the secretarial arm of the National AIDS Committee. It was established by a Cabinet decision under the Prime Minister's Office in May 2007.

- The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life carries out HIV/AIDS activities at national and local level.
- Private institutions and non-governmental organizations offer voluntary counselling, testing and sensitization services. Prévention Information Lutte contre le Sida, for example, is a Mauritian non-governmental organization created in July 1996. Prévention Information Lutte contre le Sida is a key player in the national response against HIV / AIDS. Its mission statement is:
 - Reduce the number of HIV cases in Mauritius, Rodrigues and in the Indian Ocean.

- Fight stigma through advocacy, information and communication.
- Improve the quality of life of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) by contributing to the improvement of medical care and psycho-social support vision to reduce the number of new HIV infections.

Its objectives

- To mobilize a multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS to support those living with or affected by HIV/AIDS.
- To combat stigma, discrimination and false information.
- To increase access to medical care for those requiring it by providing new funding sources.

Its activities:

- Documentation and information centre.
- Prevention of HIV/AIDS spread in primary and secondary schools.
- School and workplace interventions.
- Local and regional workshops on HIV/AIDS.
- Free and anonymous helpline.
- The expansion of an awareness raising campaign.
- Psychosocial support; advocacy work.
- Prison visits for those living with HIV/AIDS.
- Access to free male and female condoms.

GENDER LINKS MAURITIUS

Gender Links (GL) is a Southern African non-governmental organization founded in 2001 that is committed to a region in which women and men are able to participate equally in all aspects of public and private life in accordance with the provisions of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Gender and Development.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- The main National Gender Policy Frameworks target gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Presently, sectoral gender policies for eight additional ministries have been formulated in line with the National Gender Policy Framework.
- A "National Multi-Sectoral Strategic Plan 2007-

2011" on HIV/AIDS in Mauritius, drafted with the expertise of the World Health Organisation, contains nine strategic objectives addressing the proposed institutional framework to reverse the HIV/AIDS trend in the country. It emphasizes the need for other stakeholders to be fully part of the process, with responsibilities and active involvement to achieve the ultimate goal as the HIV/AIDS epidemic stands as a major national challenge.

The Action Plan of participatory advisory committees is as follows:

- To provide the legislative framework for a democratic, efficient, effective, inclusive, and accountable system of local government permitting local communities to manage autonomously, through elected local authorities, the economic and social well-being of their areas.
- Election of Councillors to Municipal City Council or Municipal Town Council
- Any group presenting more than two candidates in an electoral ward shall ensure that the candidates are not all of the same sex.¹
- Any group presenting more than two candidates at a Village Council election shall ensure that not more than two-thirds of the group's candidates are of the same sex.²

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The 2005 National Gender Policy and Action Plan has been revisited to a National Gender Policy Framework as a response to present challenges. The new framework, built around Performance Based Budgeting with a focus on gender sensitive outcomes, is a generic policy document to be used by all stakeholders for achieving gender equality, as an integral objective in all sectors of national activity in line with international commitments to gender equality. The Women's Unit has been renamed the Gender Unit to further accelerate institutional change. Mauritius has applied for financial assistance in the fight against HIV/AIDS, under the Global Funds "Programme to fight Tuberculosis, Malaria and AIDS".

Four pilot ministries have formulated their sectoral gender policies with the assistance of an international consultant on gender issues, namely the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, and the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare.

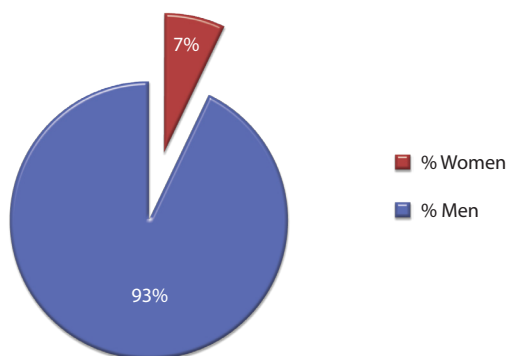
¹ Local Government Bill, part 3, n°11, p.18

² Local Government Bill, op., cit.

THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

Lately, the participation of women in politics is improving. However, in spite of reasonable progress in the South African Development Community, Mauritius is still lagging behind. The graph below shows that only 7 percent of the local government representatives are women. From a general point of view, women representation in politics is still not yet sufficient.

WOMEN AND MEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT



Source: Local Authorities of Mauritius, 2011

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Casting a glance at the activities proposed by the National Empowerment Fund shows that several projects have been established with the aim of ensuring the professional integration of unemployed women. Indeed, professional occupations contribute to the emancipation of women, enhance their independence and forge their social identity.

WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY TO HIV

HIV/AIDS, gender and poverty are very often linked. Women are considered to be more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS than men. The need to survive in the short term can lead to poor women engaging in risky sexual behaviour in desperate efforts to earn a living.

Several factors of socio-economic and cultural influence may have increased HIV/AIDS risks for women. Inequality in gender relations, discrimination, sexual violence, poverty, and substance-abuse are some of the factors that have a high impact on the rates of HIV/AIDS among women.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES

- HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects women living in poverty. The daily struggle for survival may cause them to engage in activities that put them at high risk of contracting HIV.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- 196 women have been able to find employment through the Employment Assistance Project.
- 310 women have been assisted to start their own businesses.

SECURITY



Source: photo Koop

Security has a major impact on the quality of life. In all cities, the priority remains the same: that people can walk on the streets without fear and that children have access to safe recreational facilities. In fact, beyond the security aspect of the neighbourhood, there is also a sense of security felt by the individual and, by extension, the entire population.

In Mauritius, central issues usually originate from peripheral themes that affect a specific group of citizens. For example, through the squatter problems emerge many fundamental questions related to basic human rights (for example right to decent housing, property rights and security) and legal frameworks that protect citizens are rarely evoked.

INSTITUTIONAL SET UP

- Mauritius Police Force maintains security in the island.
- Ministry of Defence and Home Affairs is also concerned with security matters.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

- National policing strategic framework, whose main objective is, 'With you, making Mauritius Safer.' The role of the police moves from a force to a service.
- The Crime Prevention Unit promotes a sense of awareness among the population around the island

and within its territories.

The approach to policing, a key component of urban security, is based on three principles:

- Reconciliation with the people;
- The approach to problem solving;
- The strengthening of preventive measures.

The main causes of insecurity area as follows:

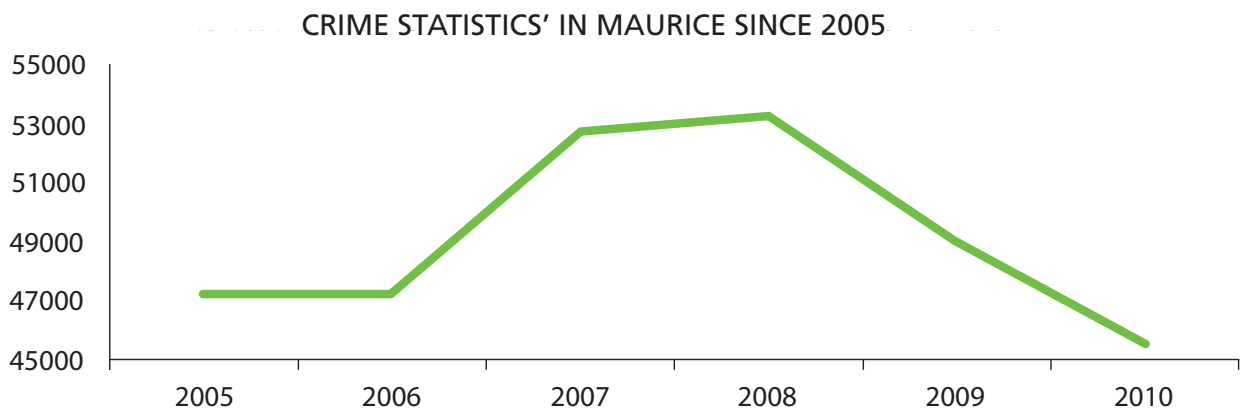
In Mauritius, the main causes of insecurity most often reported by the public to the police and necessitating police intervention are most of the time:

- Alcohol-abuse and drugs consumption.
- Violence towards vulnerable groups such as women children and senior citizens.
- Deficient infrastructure and degradation of the built environment.
- Prostitution and drugs trafficking.
- Theft and vandalism.

Some public areas seem more likely than others to cause a feeling of insecurity.

After a rise in the incidences of crime in Mauritius in 2006, reaching its peak in 2008, we see that it declines thereafter. The restructuring of the police department through the development of a

National Strategic Policing Framework, is a major factor contributing to this decline. Moreover, through the concept of community policing, the responsibility of all citizens in respect for the general well being of the country has been noted.



Source : Mauritius Police Force, Mauritius, 2011

SOME DATA:

- There are 75 police stations in the territory of Mauritius

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER REDUCTION



Source: Photo Vahy R.

INTRODUCTION

In the last two decades, the Republic of Mauritius has been involved in a number of policies, strategies and planning exercises under the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. The vision of the ministry is *'to reach environmental sustainability and to have a clean and healthy environment'*. In this perspective, Mauritius has been actively engaged in the UN process for sustainable development since the Rio Summit in 1991 to the Mauritius Strategy in 2005. As Mauritius is an archipelagic State and a Small Island Developing State, the Government attached great importance to the implementation of the programme of action for sustainable development of the Small Island Development Strategy - SIDS. Consequently, since 2008, Mauritius has coined the concept 'Maurice Ile Durable' (MID) for the further implementation of sustainable development within its borders (both terrestrial and marine). The primary objective is to make Mauritius a world model of sustainable development. The concept includes the pillars of sustainability: economy, society and the environment. Currently, a concrete 'Maurice Ile Durable' policy together with a 10 year 'Maurice Ile Durable' strategy and a detailed 'Maurice Ile Durable' Action Plan are under preparation in order to transform the concept into a reality. These policy initiatives are impacting on the urban environment agenda.

LEGISLATION POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

As a Small Island Developing State, Mauritius has inherited from its initial phase of development a centralised system of government which is translated in policy formulation and implementation. In this context, the National Environment Protection (Amended) Act (EPA) of 2008 is the main legislation for the protection and management of the environmental assets of Mauritius. The Act *'provides for the legal framework and the mechanism to protect the natural environment, to plan for environmental management, to coordinate the inter-relations of environmental issues and to ensure the proper implementation of policies'*. At local level, the Local Government Act of 1989 and 2003, and the Town and Country Planning Act of 1954 (as Amended) are the two main laws that govern local authorities.

As a result, a series of policies have been elaborated and implemented. Among others, the following documents are worth mentioning:

- The National Environment Strategy (NES), 1999
- The National Environment Policy (NEP), 2007
- The updating of the National Environmental Strategy (NES), 2008
- The current development strategy for 'Maurice Ile Durable', 2011

More specifically the *urban environment* is addressed

in the National Environment Policy of 2007 with its objective being *'to achieve a sustainable built environment through smart growth characterized, among others, by quality architectural design and aesthetically pleasant surroundings with green spaces and recreational facilities for all inhabitants'*. Some of the national targets related to the built and urban environment are:

1. Develop and implement a Community Beautification Programme in all districts of the Republic in partnership with the private sector, community organisations and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and local authorities.
2. Local Authorities will provide free advisory services on design and architecture in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance.
3. Abate eyesores such as derelict buildings and illegal poster-sticking through proper regulations.
4. Rationalise urban-related practices to enhance the environment such as refuse collection.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Environment Protection (Declaration of Environmental Laws) Regulations were promulgated in May 2005. The following relevant regulations pertaining to Local Authorities, especially the three selected regions, have been declared as environmental laws:

- Municipality of Port Louis Regulations 1908.
- Port Louis (Collection and Disposal of Refuse) Regulations 1996.
- Beau Bassin/Rose Hill (Disposal of Refuse) Regulations 1996.
- Beau Bassin/Rose Hill Regulations 1996.
- Black River District Council (Collection and Disposal of Refuse) Regulations 1997.

The power of local authorities has been extended to the enforcement of environmental laws by designating them as an enforcing agency, under the Fourth Schedule, for the enforcement of environmental laws falling within their administrative areas. The local authorities are empowered to make use of the more stringent enforcement mechanisms provided under the Environmental Protection Act in addition to the provision made under the enactment itself.

The development challenges are numerous, especially with the rapid urbanization that took place during the last two decades. Some of the emerging issues are:

- Increased demand for land for housing and other

basic urban services;

- Pollution in all its forms (air, water, and noise);
- Management of solid waste and absence of a clear strategy for re-use, reduce and recycle;
- Informal settlement in unsuitable areas (mountain slopes, valleys and near wetlands) in Black River, City of Port-Louis and to a lesser extent in Beau-Bassin;
- Dense and overcrowded housing areas exerting a lot of stress and pressure on existing infrastructure and the inhabitants;
- Problems of enforcement of laws, rules and regulations;
- Lack of capacity and resources;
- Absence of a long term partnership with key urban stakeholders such as local community based organisations, the police force and the private sector;
- Complexity in changing the mind set of citizens.
- Absence of an urban policy as part of a local agenda 21 (a local policy for sustainable development)

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The local authorities have various sources of revenue such as government grants, general rates, trade fees, land and building permit fees, various types of rent, publicity, and posters. However, the geographical extension, the densification of the urban zones and the emergence of new needs and new development challenges require additional resources. It has not always been possible for local authorities to increase their revenue in order to keep pace with the sustainable development process. Consequently, the local authorities have to consolidate their capacity and be more imaginative in order to tap on new financial opportunities such as public-private partnership, use of resources made available through Corporate Social Responsibility (this is a two percent tax that private firms pay on their profits annually and this proceeds are used to support civil society projects related to poverty alleviation issues such as social housing, education and environmental issues).

At central government level, it is necessary to increase funds for local authorities. This will enable the local authorities to have more autonomy and the reallocation of existing resources which are controlled by certain government departments and ministries. Naturally this will require the consolidation of existing capacities and more transparency in financial management and accountability not only to central government but also towards urban stakeholders.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Climate Change is a developmental issue with great environmental impacts on the country and the livelihood of people. Mauritius, like other Small Island Developing States, is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 4th Assessment Report, some of the impacts of climate change for small islands are:

- Increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters like cyclones and floods.
- Sea level rise is expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surges and other coastal hazards.

These climatic conditions represent a threat to vital infrastructure and settlements and facilities that support the livelihood of island communities. Mauritius has already witnessed at national level the impact of climate change through extreme weather conditions such as increase in average temperatures, declining rain fall, wave surges, recurrent floods, and severe droughts.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Mauritius has a long experience of handling cyclones with initially a National Cyclone Committee which has been converted in recent years into a Natural Disaster Committee. In this context, the country is well versed in early warning system for cyclones. Climate change has transformed drastically the country's approach and methodologies. New mechanisms are required to address the complexity of climate change and its impact. A National Climate Change Committee has been set-up at the Prime Minister's Office and a Climate Change Division at the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development.

POLICIES

A series of national and sectoral policies and programmes have been developed. Emphasis is currently being laid on mitigation, building resilience and adaptation. In this context, the following initiatives have been taken:

- Increasing use of renewable energy.
- Promotion of energy efficiency and conservation.
- Reforestation programmes.
- To increase carbon dioxide capture.
- Recycling and waste minimization.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Climate Change remains to be mainstreamed into core development policies, strategies and plans. If a new framework has been put in place at national level, it is necessary to develop the same strategies at municipal and district level in order to integrate best practices at local level.

The following actions could be adopted:

- Need to develop and enforce climate change rules and regulations at the local level.
- Need to assess climate change risks in vulnerable urban areas.
- Build capacity at municipal and district level for assessing present and future impacts of climate change.
- Promote social housing in line with climate change considerations and reduce risks.
- Develop community-based adaptation projects at local level.
- Capacity development programmes for stakeholders concerned with climate change and related issues.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

- Make local authorities eligible to international donor funding.
- Explore corporate funding for major climate change related projects.
- Develop training for volunteers in case of natural disasters.

HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS

HOUSING AND DEPRIVED AND VULNERABLE AREAS N°1	Project proposal Setting up of enabling institutional environment for participatory and integrated social housing programmes
---	--

LOCATION: National and Port Louis City Council, Beau-Bassin / Rose Hill Municipal Council and Black River District Council

DURATION: 24 months.

BENEFICIARIES: Ministry of Housing and Lands, National Empowerment Foundation, Port Louis City Council, Beau-Bassin / Rose Hill City Council, and Black River District Council.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: Ministry of Housing and Lands, Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, National Empowerment Foundation, Ministry of Local Government, Port Louis City Council, Beau-Bassin / Rose Hill City Council, Black River District Council, the Mauritius National Housing Development Corporation, and UN-Habitat.

ESTIMATED COST: USD 800,000

BACKGROUND: Mauritius is about to implement a revolutionary reform of social housing, through innovative Government-Private sector partnerships, centred on efficiency in service delivery and empowerment of beneficiaries. The Government has announced the setting up of a considerable National Social Housing Development Fund that will support the emergence of not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts. However, this reform will have to overcome serious existing bottlenecks, notably the low level of human resources in central government and local authorities to oversee the effective and speedy implementation of these reforms. Also, there is a crucial need for regular multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms for all relevant branches of central government and local authorities to effectively team up with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and community-based organisations in order to develop, implement and maintain integrated social housing projects. Finally, there is need to establish a standard methodology on how to devise and implement integrated social housing projects that will effectively contribute to poverty eradication.

OBJECTIVES: To improve the capacity of central and local authorities to oversee the social housing reform by effectively engaging with private sector, civil society and local communities, according to a standardised methodology on integrated social housing, based on the close involvement of beneficiaries.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Situation analysis of human resource gaps in the Ministry of Housing, National Empowerment Foundation, Port Louis City Council, Beau Bassin / Rose Hill City Council, and Black River District Council, to implement effective participatory social housing programmes in line with Government reforms.
2. Stock taking of past social housing initiatives by Government, private sector and civil society to identify best practices and lessons learnt.
3. Development and implementation of a capacity building programme for relevant central and local authorities based on the findings of activities 1 and 2.
4. Setting up of formal, regular multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms for participatory social housing programmes, at both national and local level, building on the informal forum set up by the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme for Port Louis City Council, Beau- Bassin / Rose Hill Municipal Council and Black River District Council.
5. Capacity building of non-governmental stakeholders on the multi-stakeholder forum to ensure their effective and constructive participation.
6. Development of a standardised methodology on integrated social housing based on the close involvement of beneficiaries. The multi-stakeholder forum will be a key mechanism in this process.

OUTPUTS:

1. Improvement in the capacities of relevant central and local authorities for effective participatory social housing programmes.
2. Establishment of effective and regular multi-stakeholder forums for participatory social housing programmes, both at national level and in the three local areas targeted by the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme;
3. Development of a standardised methodology on integrated social housing, building on past experiences and agreed by all stakeholders.
4. Strategic support to the good implementation of the Government's innovative reform of social housing.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment, Central Statistics Office:

Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment, Poverty Analysis 2001/02, Republic of Mauritius, October 2006

Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment, Poverty Analysis 2006/07, Republic of Mauritius, December 2009

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Digest of crime, justice and security statistics-2009, Republic of Mauritius, September 2010.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Social security statistics 2003/2004-2008/2009, Republic of Mauritius, June 2010.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Digest of labour statistics 2009, Republic of Mauritius, June 2010.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Education statistics 2010, Republic of Mauritius, 01 october 2010

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Digest of demographic statistics 2009 , Republic of Mauritius, Vol 25, August 2010

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Education statistics 2010, Republic of Mauritius, 01 october 2010

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Digest of education statistics 2010, Republic of Mauritius, June 2011

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Economic and social indicators, gender statistics 2010, Republic of Mauritius, 15 July 2011

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Economic and social indicators, population and vital statistics Republic of Mauritius Year 2010, Republic of Mauritius, 10 March 2011

Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, Crime, justice and security statistics,2010, Republic of Mauritius, 17 August 2011.

Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment:

Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare, National Action Plan to combat domestic violence, Republic of Mauritius, 2007.

Ministry of Gender Equality, Child development and Family Welfare, Statistics in Mauritius, a gender approach, Mauritius, October 2010

Ministry of Women's Rights, Child development and Family Welfare, Action plan of participatory advisory committees (2009-2010), Women at the heart of community development, International women's day, 8 March 2009

Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare, The national gender policy framework, Republic of Mauritius, 8 March 2008

All documents:

Ministry Of Housing And Lands, Review of the National Physical Development Plan, Development strategy and policies, Government of Mauritius National Development Strategy, Mauritius, 19 April 2003

Mauritius Police Force, National Policing Strategic Framework

Mauritius Environment Outlook Report, Ministry of Environment & Sustainable Development, 2011, Port-Louis, Mauritius

National Environment Policy (NEP), Ministry of Environment & NDU, 2007, Port-Louis, Mauritius

Magazine:

District council magazine, The Black River District council, 6th edition 2010

Jean Michel Jauze, la pluriethnicité dans les villes mauriciennes, les cahiers d'Outre-Mer, n°225, Janvier-Mars 2004

Jean Michel Jauze, Port Louis de l'Île Maurice : un port, une capitale, Mappemonde 62, 2001

Laurence Buzenot, Zone franche industrielle d'exportation et système urbaine à Maurice, UMR 6012 espace, Université Aix-Marseille I, Mappemonde 88, 2007

Website

Republic of Mauritius, website,

Ministry of Environment & Sustainable Development, Website: <http://environment.gov.mu>

Ministry of Housing and Lands, website,

Municipality of Beau-Bassin-Rose-Hill, Website, <http://bbrh.org>

Municipality of Port-Louis, Website, <http://mpl.intnet.mu>

Municipality of Black River, Website, <http://www.brhc.mu/>

National Empowerment Foundation, Website, <http://www.nef.mu/>

Gender Links, Website, <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/>

Mauritius Police Force, website, <http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/police>

The gateway to land information, website, <http://landportal.info>

Foncier et développement, website, <http://foncier-developpement.fr>

Inter Press Service News Agency, website, http://www.ipsinternational.org/fr/_note.asp?idnews=6639

MAURITIUS NATIONAL CONSULTATION

ATTENDANCE LIST

NAME AND ORGANIZATION

Mrs Sareeta Sintah	Ag Deputy Chief Town and Country Planning Officer, Ministry Of Housing and Lands
Mrs C. Rughoobur	Statistician, Mauritius Statistics
Yan Hookoomsing	Coordination Analyst, UN Resident Coordinator Office for Mauritius
K. Jayeprokash	Police Headquarters Police Planning of Reform Unit
Mrs A. Ghoorah	Environment officer, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable and Development
Mrs Soobhany Sarah B.G.	Programme Officer, National Aids Secretariat - PMO
P. Boojharut	Protection Office, Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare
Inspecteur Domun	Divisional Staff Officer
Ps Govinden	Support Officer, Community Policy
Vijay P. Bangaroo	Head Planning Department, Municipality of Beau Bassin/ Rose Hill
K. L. Santokhee	Head Planning, Municipal Council of Port Louis
M. Bundhoo	Planning Officer, Municipal Council of Port Louis
Ms Ashwini Rughoodass	Welfare Officer, Black River District Council
Mary Jolicoeur	La Maison Coeur Écoute de Barkly
Marinette Sansfacon	La Maison Coeur Écoute de Barkly
Mrs Mary Coopan	Local Government Facilitator, Gender Links
Mr N. Thannon	Technical Manager, National Housing Development Company
K. Valaydon	Programme Manager, National Empowerment Foundation
Mrs F. Moothia	Project Coordinator, National Empowerment Foundation
Jonathan Ravat	Chef duv Département D'études Sociales
Daniel Emilien	Action 1996 De Barkly
Sylvie Gravil	Le Pont du Tamarinier
Eddy Sadien	Association Socio-Culturelle de Tranquebar
Sophie Desvaux De Marigny	Medine Foundation
Antoine Wong	Coordinateur École Complémentaire
François Butte	Association Noyau Social, Cité La Cure
Liseby Louis	Cité La Ferme Mouvement Social
Hatchimeenia	SOS Children Village
Jhuboo Ezra	Tamarin Village Council
Balmooni Soobul	Mouvement pour le Bien Être Mangarde
Chagny Maiti	Native Habitat
Christiane Chowee	CARITAS, Maurice
Marie Laure Ziss Phokeer	Fondation Nouveau Regard

MAURITIUS NATIONAL URBAN PROFILE

The Mauritius National Urban Profiling consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions, focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at local and national levels. The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national, and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders, including local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academics, and others. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction. The urban profiling is being implemented in 30 ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

HS Number: HS/068/12E

ISBN Number(Series): 978-92-1-132023-7

ISBN Number:(Volume) 978-92-1-132483-9



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

P.O Box 30030 - 00100, Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254-20-7623120

Fax: +254-20-7623426/7 (Central Office)

infohabitat@unhabitat.org

www.unhabitat.org/publications