

# UNDP Mauritius Annual Report 2020 Prepare, Respond and Recover





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### **Acknowledgement:**

UNDP Mauritius acknowledges the Government of Mauritius, development partners, civil society, the private sector and implementing partners, that play a critical role in the transformational growth of our communities. The support and partnership received contribute towards the delivery of our programmatic interventions and the results captured in this report.

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Amanda Serumaga,

*Resident Representative  
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**2020** was an exceptional year for the Government and people of Mauritius, and so was it for the **UNDP Country Office**. The year started with an impressive outlook with the economy expected to grow at 4 percent following the equally impressive growth of 3.6 percent in 2019. Following the recent gains, on 1 July 2020 the country had transitioned from high middle-income to a high-income status according to World Bank classification on the basis of 2019 data. However, Mauritius' expectation for 2020 and beyond were immediately shattered when two catastrophes, the COVID-19 Pandemic and Wakashio Oil Spill, hit, prompting the Country Office for Mauritius to reallocate resources and adjust its programming and human resources towards response and recovery to provide support to the people and Government of Mauritius as a responsive development partner.

First, on 18 March 2020, Mauritius registered its first COVID-19 case, immediately prompting

sweeping measures to contain the spread. The pandemic changed the socio-economic landscape that was exacerbated by the immediate complete lockdown until May 30, including the shutdown of international travel and global economic activity, all of which impacted on the functioning of the country.

These events resulted in negative GDP growth of 2.6 percent and 32.9 percent in the first and second quarter, respectively; a rise in unemployment, from 7.2 percent at the end of 2019 to 10.2 percent by May 2020; and, an increase in the inactive population by 64 percent. For an economy highly dependent on the global market, the impact on business was felt even before the first case was reported in Mauritius and only escalated throughout the year. A business survey facilitated by the UNDP indicates that businesses registered a more than 30 percent decline in sales. More than 60 percent of businesses did not operate during lockdown, while only 78 percent operated normally after reopening. According to a Socio-Economic Impact Assessment undertaken by the UNDP, the collapse of tourism, on which the economy depends, would have led to an additional fall in GDP of around 9 percent in 2020 relative to 2019 corresponding to 51,000 jobs at risk, had government not intervened with swift austerity measures. As seen across the world, during the lockdown and exacerbated by economic stress on households, cases of gender-based violence increased in Mauritius, with 33 percent more reported daily.

Second, in August 2020, while the country was considering mechanisms to fast-track socio-economic recovery, a Japanese-owned ship, MV Wakashio, ran aground off the South-East Coast near a UNESCO protected and an environmentally sensitive and popular tourist location. The ship spilled more than 1,000 tonnes of fuel with the potential to severely

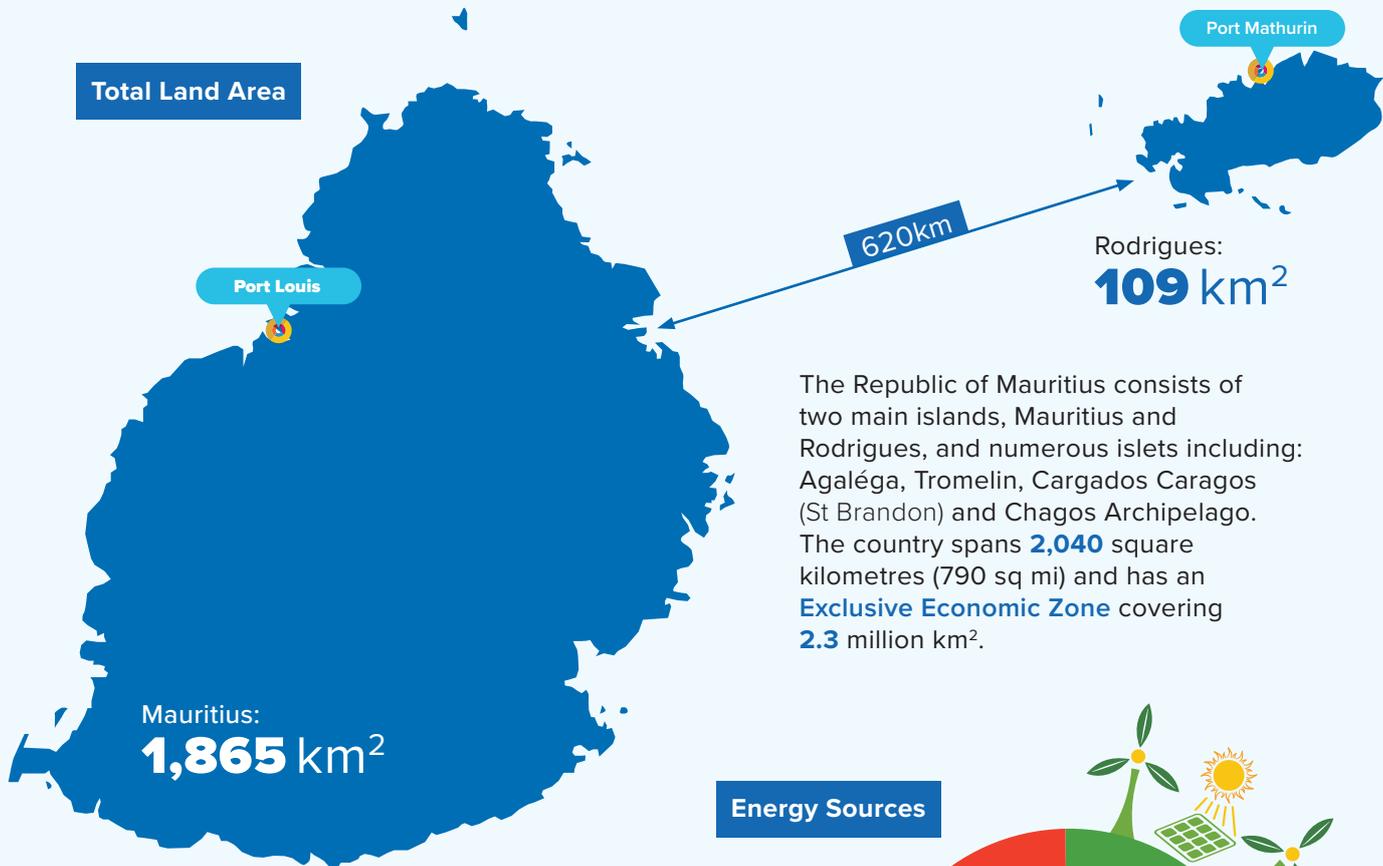
impact the environment including the habitat of rare marine life and corals, threatening the global status of Mauritius as a biodiversity hotspot. The oil spill also disrupted the livelihoods of the local communities with up to 40,000 fisher folk and their families losing their livelihoods during the closure of the lagoon. This disaster prompted the declaration of a national emergency, and an appeal for mitigation and recovery support was made

to the United Nations and international community. Throughout the year, the UNDP Country Office continued to provide support to the people and Government of Mauritius within the context of these two unprecedented crises; and to implement an environment and socio-economic development programme portfolio, exceeding budget delivery target by 140 percent.



# Overview

## Total Land Area

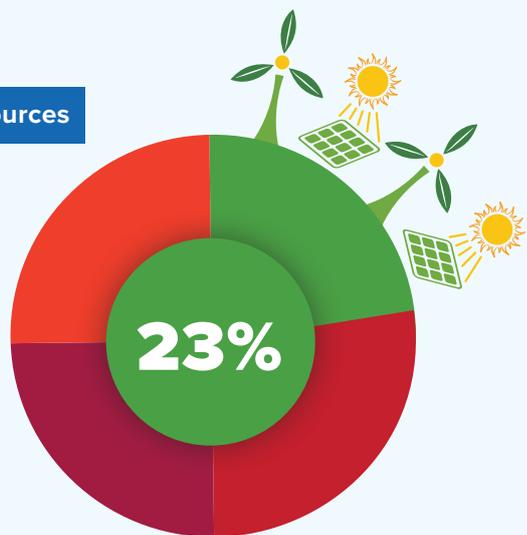


The Republic of Mauritius consists of two main islands, Mauritius and Rodrigues, and numerous islets including: Agaléga, Tromelin, Cargados Caragos (St Brandon) and Chagos Archipelago. The country spans **2,040** square kilometres (790 sq mi) and has an **Exclusive Economic Zone** covering **2.3 million km<sup>2</sup>**.

Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): **2.3M km<sup>2</sup>**

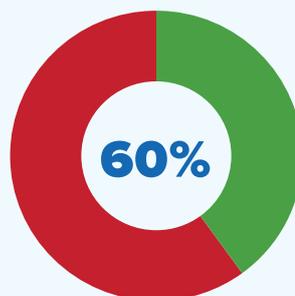


## Energy Sources

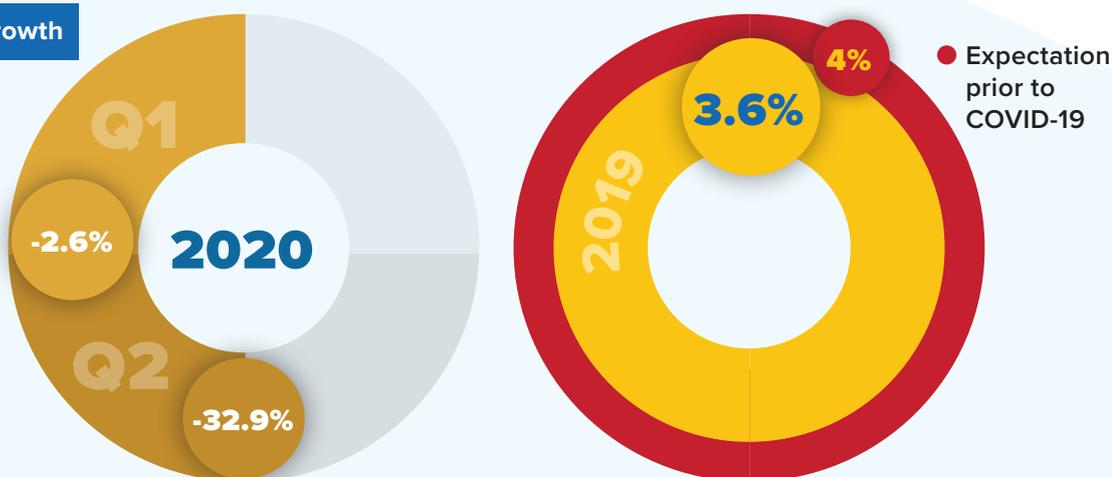


Percentage of renewable energy on the grid in 2020: **23%**, increase of **16%** from 2017

Average Renewable Energy contribution on peak days: **60%**



### GDP Growth



### Business and Regulation\*

#### World Bank Ease of Doing Business Rankings:

Development Bank Score



### Development Indicators

Mauritius' HDI value for 2019 is **0.804** — which puts the country in the very high human development category for the first time — positioning it at 66 out of 189 countries and territories.

Human Development Index (HDI)						
Country	HDI Value	HDI Rank	Life Expectancy at Birth	Expected Years of Schooling	Mean Years of Schooling	GNI per Capita (2017 PPP USD)
Mauritius	0.804	66	75.0	15.1	9.5	25,266
Botswana	0.735	100	69.6	12.8	9.6	16,437
Gabon	0.703	119	66.5	13.0	8.7	13,930
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.547	-	61.5	10.1	5.8	3,686
Very High HDI	0.898	-	79.6	16.3	12.2	44,566

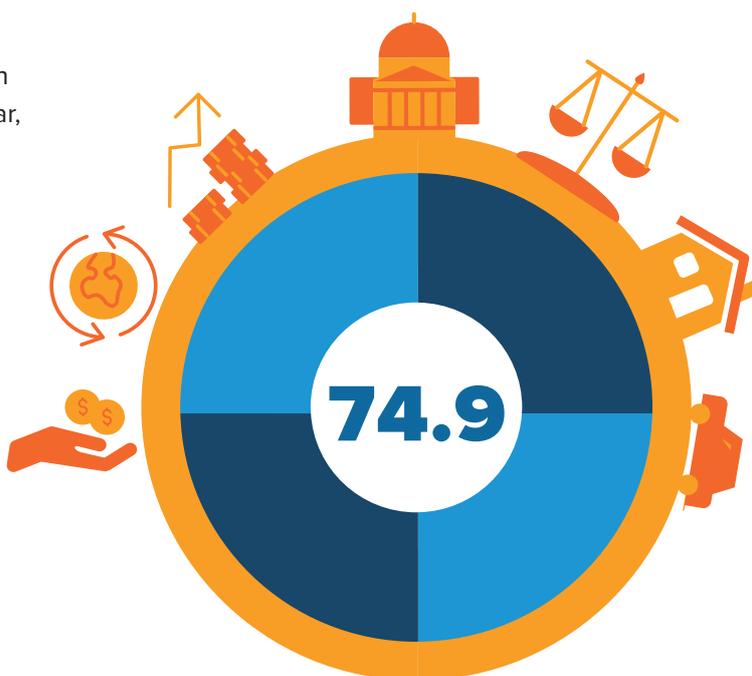
\*Source: <https://www.doingbusiness.org>

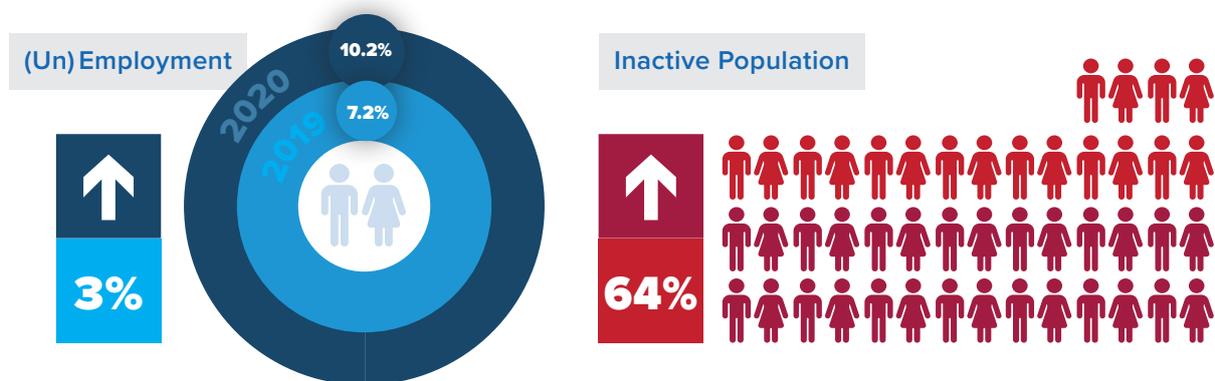
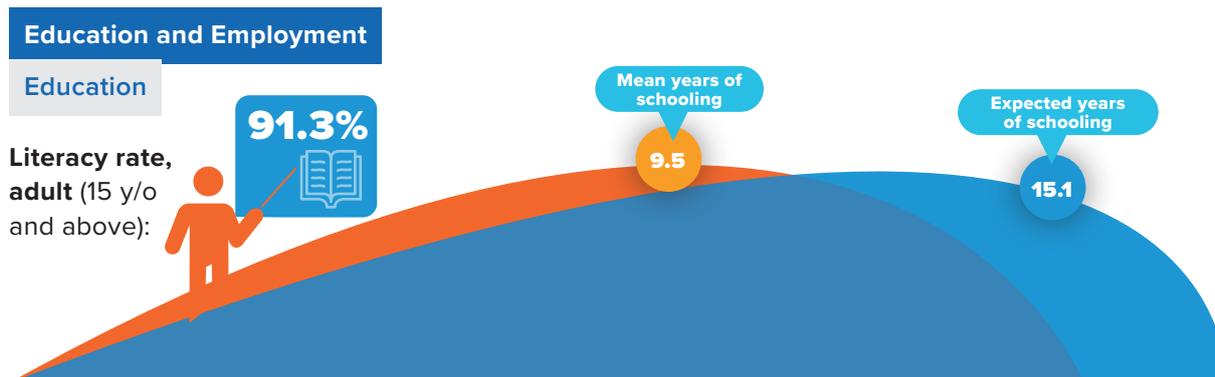
### Rankings on doing business topics - Mauritius



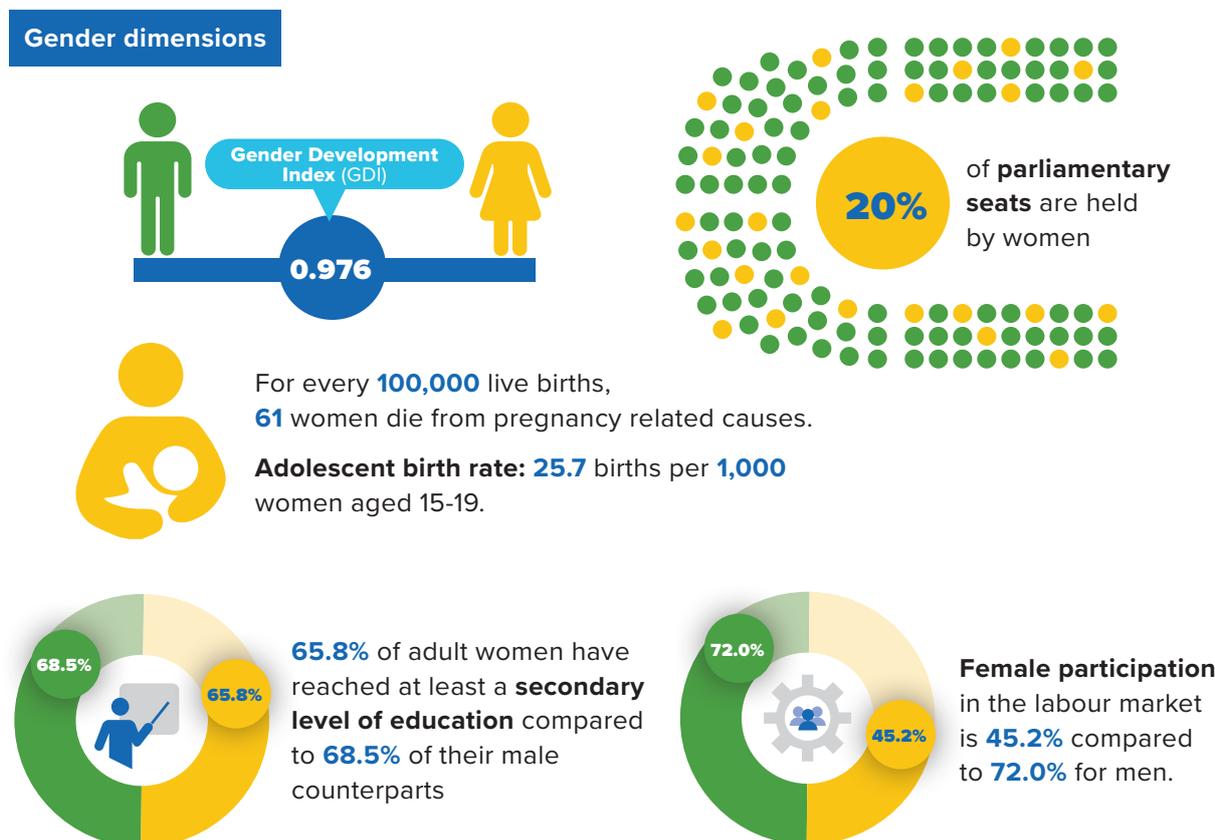
### Economic Freedom Index

With a score of **74.9**, representing an increase of **1.9** from the previous year, Mauritius gained **4** places, ranking **21st** globally.





Due to the **COVID-19 pandemic**, Mauritius observed a rise in **unemployment** from **7.2%** at the end of 2019 to **10.2%** by May 2020, and an increase in the inactive population by **64%**.





UNDP Mauritius launched the **2020 Human Development Report: the Next Frontier** at the kick-off of the Consultative Workshop on National Environmental Policy, an event co-hosted with the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management

and Climate Change of the Republic of Mauritius. Focused on Human Development and the Anthropocene, the report provided understandings on the necessity for countries to expand human development in balance with the planet.





# Key Results

**THE ON-SET OF** the COVID-19 Pandemic and the MV Wakashio oil spill, required an immediate shift in resources and programme priorities for the UNDP in Mauritius. The programme focused on supporting the country to prepare, respond to and deliver initiatives to mitigate the public health and socio-economic crisis. Discretionary resources were repurposed for catalytic interventions, while additional financial and human resources were mobilised to increase capacity in line with the UNDP corporate strategy of supporting member states.

The UNDP contributed to thought leadership and policy formulation by investing in high-quality knowledge products, in collaboration with sister UN agencies and IFIs and supported policy dialogue to develop a forward-looking green recovery agenda. This included a hosting a **two-day consultative workshop** with the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change on the National Environmental policy, during which key stakeholders

discussed the drafting of the Master Plan of Environment and the review of the Environmental Protection Act 2002.

The office also supported the oversight function at the regional government level, with technical assistance to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to establish a **SDG Committee**, now embedded in the Standing Orders, with clear Terms of Reference and a Road Map. The Committee comprises 17 members who have been trained on the SDGs. They will work cross-sectorally, including provisions towards achieving SDG 5 – Gender Equality. A baseline study on the status of the SDGs is now under way to influence evidence-based decision making by the Committee.

At an operational level, the country programme expanded staffing capacity by doubling the team size following successful partnership and resource mobilization efforts; and the adoption of collaborative working across programmes and leveraging staff capacities. This included the commencement of key programmes on coral restoration, invasive alien species, economic analysis and research and establishment of a communications function and strengthened operations for effective delivery. The UNDP also increased its accountability to stakeholders through increased visibility across social media platforms and interactive engagements locally and globally.





1.0

2020 In Review:  
Prepare, Respond  
and Recover



# 1.1

## Towards a sustainable development agenda within the COVID-19 context

### Strategic Support to Health Care Preparedness in Mauritius

Through the COVID Prepare, Response and Recover Project (PREP), UNDP has been assisting Mauritius in its fight against COVID-19 and supporting the reopening of the country

borders. The technical leadership and resource mobilisation efforts of UNDP Mauritius resulted in gains including: the strengthening of health care systems in line with **SDG 3** through the establishment of one of five fully-equipped testing and treatment centres (flu clinics), and the introduction of web-based technologies to improve the functionality of laboratory services across the country as part of the UNDP-SIDS strategy on Digital Transformation and **SDG 9**.

In collaboration with the UNDP Global Centre for Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development, the **OpenELIS software**, based on open source software, was made available to the Ministry of Health and Wellness through our repository for digital tools. The adequacy of the System was tested by the Central Health Laboratory (CHL) in collaboration with the



Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation. The UNDP looks forward to the opportunity to contribute to the planned full-fledged National Laboratory Information Management System in 2021.

In addition, with the support of the UNDP, Mauritius will be amongst the first self-financing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to access the COVID-19 vaccine, following a USD 2M contribution towards **purchase of vaccines** to cover 20 percent of the population through the COVAX facility.

### Addressing COVID-19-induced Gender-Based Violence

Largely motivated by the challenges encountered in reporting Gender-Based Violence-related cases on the rise during the lockdown, the UNDP supported the

development of a Mobile Application, “**Lespwar**” (“Hope”), which was launched on 25 November 2020 to mark the International Day for the **Elimination of Violence against Women**. This GBV application was developed in collaboration with the Prime Minister’s Office, Central Informatics Bureau, the Mauritius Police Force and the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, in consultation with NGOs. Equipped with a rapid response Panic Button, the App enables domestic violence survivors to access rapid and specific support through dispatch of a police patrol unit using the GPS location. Survivors are also offered web-based and in-person psychosocial support, legal assistance, and access to shelters.

### Supporting Integrated Socio-Economic Response and Recovery

The UNDP’s integrator mandate within the UN system at the Country level was demonstrated in our technical leadership in the preparation of the UN COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response Plan, in collaboration with the UN Country Team. To operationalize the plan, the governance structures were established with the oversight function anchored at the Office of the Prime Minister. Within the operational framework, the UNDP was mandated to co-chair two structures jointly with the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development. These include the Coordination Committee co-chaired by the Resident Representative, and the sub-committee on macroeconomic response and multilateral collaboration, co-chaired by the Senior Economist.





## Collecting and Generating Evidence through Partnerships to Facilitate Recovery Efforts

The UNDP contribute to thought leadership by supporting the generation of evidence and statistics for the Government and other development actors to inform formulation of recovery initiatives. The key knowledge products resulting from the strategic research and study partnerships include:



### The UN Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA)

The UNDP technical leadership in the preparation of the SEIA was mandated within the UN global framework for COVID-19 response. The report was prepared in collaboration with the Government of Mauritius, UN Agencies active in Mauritius, and the World Bank. The novelty of this report was its combination of several approaches of data collection and analysis. It included the use of existing macro data, the collection of a comprehensive household survey additionally capturing vulnerable households that risk exclusion from standard surveys due to difficulty in reaching them, key informant interviews, and a partnership with the UNDP Crisis Bureau to embed digital tools in collection and analysis of the survey. The assessment captures the short-term, medium-term and long-term impact of the pandemic at macro, sectoral and household levels. This report was made possible by funding from the Government of Japan.



### Study on Strategic Options for the Mauritius Textile and Apparel Industry

Through a partnership established with the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank (AfDB), the UNDP led the publication of a study on the strategic options for the Mauritian Textile and Apparel Industry within the COVID-19 context. The study is instrumental in guiding the discourse on how the Government and the private sector can work collectively to reposition the country's textile and apparel industry to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the pandemic and the recently launched **Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**.





### Policy Paper on Gendered Implications of COVID-19 in Mauritius

The UNDP partnered with UN Women to support the preparation of a policy paper on the gendered implications of COVID-19 during the lockdown period, identifying priority areas for programming. It was disseminated to different stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector, NGOs, the Parliament, and the High-level Committee to inform the national gender action plan rollout.

### Gendered Voices Newsletter

To reflect the practical and strategic needs of women and bring to light inequalities at the community level, especially in a COVID-19 context in Mauritius, a 'Gendered Voices Newsletter' was produced and widely distributed to different target groups, including the Government, NGOs and the private sector. The inaugural issue was launched by the Honorable Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, and the High Commissioner of Australia. The newsletter facilitated a means to open the gendered civic space and highlighted avenues of change for further evidence-based decisions.



**“ Since the onset of the pandemic, several businesses have exhibited creativity in the way they serve their people, including embracing digitalisation and repurposing their operations to respond to the pandemic.”**

**Amanda K. Serumaga,**

*UNDP Mauritius and Seychelles Resident Representative*

### Business Pulse Survey on COVID-19

A strategic partnership was established with Statistics Mauritius and Business Mauritius, the umbrella organisation for the private sector, to carry out a Business Pulse Survey with the support of the Government of Japan. The aim of the survey was to provide the evidence-base for the short/medium term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on business performance in Mauritius, including female-headed businesses, and establish the needs of businesses and impact on employment.

The study represents a seminal initiative to further understand the innovative business models adopted by firms to build resilience. It also provides policy recommendations to address the vulnerabilities identified. This survey provided a basis for a longer-term partnership with Business Mauritius to prepare subsequent regular business surveys to support recovery planning by the government and private sector.





## 1.2

**Building back greener on the south-east coast: Crisis Response and Recovery for the Wakashio oil spill**





On 25 July 2020, the **MV Wakashio** bulk carrier ran aground on a reef just off the southeastern coast of Mauritius. On 6 August oil began to leak from the ship, spreading into the waters of Pointe d'Esny and affecting sites known for their touristic potential and protected ecosystems. Beyond being the worst ecological disaster in Mauritius' history, the MV Wakashio oil spill impacted the livelihoods of the inhabitants of 17 coastal villages. Following the restriction of marine activities on the southeastern coast, many inhabitants of the region were rendered jobless overnight, and were forced to face uncertainties over an extended period.

Following this catastrophic oil spill, the Country Office contributed to the wider **UN system response** with support from the UNDP Crisis Bureau. Working with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), the UNDP provided on-site technical support for (i) rapid response, (ii) assessment of the socio-economic impact of the spill on households and (iii) filling information gaps for response planning. The Country Office also launched a crowdfunding platform in partnership with UNDP Japan to support the establishment of alternative livelihoods for the fishing communities, thus allowing for regeneration of fish stocks.





2.0

The road towards achieving  
the Sustainable  
Development Goals





## 2.1 Mainstreaming Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality

Launch of the National Gender Strategy and Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence

The UNDP continued to facilitate **SDG 5 (Gender equality and women’s empowerment)** through gender-focused programming by supporting the **Parliamentary Gender Caucus**, assisting the development and rollout of the National Gender Strategy and Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence in partnership with the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO).





Through a consultative process with the Government, NGOs, the private sector, religious bodies, and development partners, the **National Strategy Document** identified four sub-strategies to eliminate GBV. These include (i) changing societal norms and beliefs that support gender inequality; (ii) having priority support to Survivors; (iii) Identifying discriminatory practices and (iv) setting up an effective Monitoring and Evaluation system.

The Country Programme, provides **technical assistance** to different stakeholders to

implement the National Strategy and Action Plan, enhance capacity building initiatives for a shared understanding, and contribute towards the achievement of specific outcomes and performance indicators of the Document. The effectiveness of the National Strategy and Action Plan stems from engagement at senior policy level, through the high-level committee. This partnership with representatives at highest levels of decision-making has positioned the UNDP as a development partner of choice. Moreover, actions contained in the Action Plan will contribute to a streamlined service to support survivors and perpetrators, whilst also building the capacity of stakeholders at all levels to address GBV as part of their daily operations.

### Enhancing Parliamentary Oversight on Gender Equality and Legislative Actions

Capacity enhancement for all Members of the **Parliamentary Gender Caucus** was carried out on gender mainstreaming strategies, legislative frameworks, bills and policies; and on the use of gender-sensitive language in parliamentary discourse. To support a gender-responsive legislative framework, Members of the Judiciary, Gender Focal Points and of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus were invited to participate in a capacity building programme on gender-based violence. The programme also provided support for the identification of relevant gaps within the amendments to be made to the **Protection from Domestic Violence Act (1997)** in order to include referral pathways into the rehabilitation programme for the mandatory rehabilitation of perpetrators.



## Rehabilitation of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

Following the recommendations of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus, the UNDP extended technical assistance to the Government to develop a Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme in line with international best practice. Accordingly, 20 facilitators, including psychologists, police officers, social workers and probation officers, were trained to work with perpetrators of domestic violence in a group-based setting. The programme comprises modules on gender equality; safety plans; unsafe thinking and anger management; offence mapping; identifying risk factors and triggers, and sustaining healthy non-violent habits. It is envisaged that the programme will be mandatory as per the amendment to be made in the Protection from Domestic Violence Act. Support was also extended by the Australian Government to conduct a refresher course of the programme to train facilitators.

## Sustained Community Campaigns on GBV

In partnership with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), the UNDP supported the police mobile response team to undertake a community engagement campaign targeting approximately 3,000 individuals throughout the island. The campaign sensitized communities on GBV, early reporting and holistic management of GBV cases. Furthermore, community engagement, through the targeted sensitisation campaign helped to educate and build consensus around specific behavioural change around GBV (including GBV on the girl and boy child). A conceptual framework for the setting up of a Model Shelter is also being drafted under this partnership.



## Accelerating Implementation of SDG 5 Projects through UNFPA and Australian High Commission's Direct Aid Program

The UNDP also mobilized funding through UNFPA and the [Australian Government Direct Aid Program \(DAP\)](#) to accelerate the implementation of projects on women's empowerment and gender equality. Under the agreement, the Australian High Commission through its Direct Aid Program provided funding towards the implementation of Pillar 1 (Component 2) of the UNDP Country Programme 2017-2020 on "Addressing Challenges to Gender Equality", with programmes aligned in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.







## 2.2

### Energy: Towards a Low Carbon Economy

#### Integrating Clean and Affordable Energy on the Grid

With the support of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), through [the Accelerating the Transformational Shift to a Low Carbon Economy project](#), renewable technologies are being deployed to help Mauritius attain its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) target of reducing Greenhouse Gas emissions by 30% by 2030. In 2020, the percentage of renewable energy on the grid reached 23%, up from 16% in 2017.

While the new intermittent renewable energy capacity installation target by 2020 was set at 100 MW, the [GCF project](#) facilitated Mauritius to exceed this target through the installation of 110 MW Solar PV. This accelerated increase in the renewable energy contribution exceeded the outcome target of the UNDP Country Programme by 10%. This was achieved through the installation of 4 MW of [Battery Energy Storage System \(BESS\)](#), and the enhancement of the Automatic Generation Control (AGC) software which has been installed at two generating power stations. Once fully commissioned, the BESS will enable the Central Electricity Board (CEB) to accommodate 185 MW of intermittent renewable energy on the grid.

Furthermore, consultative platforms were supported for the preparation of critical plans, strategies, and policies to help achieve low carbon emission objectives. Most notably, the project supported the Utility Regulatory Authority in the development of a national grid code for the electricity sector to harmonize and enable the regulation of the implementation of future RE projects.



In addition, the Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA) benefitted from the development of standards to regulate the importation and manufacture of Renewable Energy Technologies (RET) in Mauritius. Such regulations underpin the safety and quality of any new equipment necessary for Renewable Energies and Related Technologies (RERT) in view of the deployment of 25 MW of solar PV to be supported under Phase 2 of the GCF project.

The UNDP also provided co-financing to the GCF project for the installation of the Battery Energy Storage System in Rodrigues; and for the upgrading of the Ferney Hydroelectric Substation for an amount of USD 685,000. Furthermore, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) loan co-financing disbursed a first tranche of USD 140,000 to the CEB, who also invested in grid strengthening for the amount of USD 1.6M. The partnership on renewable energy with the CEB is based on the high technical capacity to implement projects at scale and with the collaboration of donors. The level of resources provided under the GCF project is a key conditionality of the first **NDC** of Mauritius to enable the country to achieve the level of ambition earmarked by the country under the Paris Agreement. The overall attainment of renewable energy targets is also dependent on the participation of the private sector to invest in photovoltaic (PV) or other renewable energy projects.

Finally, the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) also co-financed the policy development activities of the MARENA. This assistance will help to equip the MARENA with the necessary technical tools and frameworks for the implementation of renewable energy projects in Mauritius.



### Streamlining the Gender Dimension in activities related to Renewable Energy

The UNDP partnered with the MARENA, the National Women's Council and CEB Green, to carry out awareness programmes on Renewable Energy (with focus on Solar Energy) for women at grassroots level in different regions of Mauritius since 2019. The awareness raising sessions, held in 2019 and





2020, reached a total of 1503 women, thus meeting the objectives set in the project Gender Action Plan. Women who attended the awareness raising sessions were especially interested in Phase 2 of the GCF project, whereby partial grants are proposed for low and middle-income households for the installation of rooftop PV systems.

Through the co-financing of the Clinton Climate Initiative and the UNDP, MARENA was

able to facilitate specifically designed **technical training to women entrepreneurs** on the installation, operation and maintenance of solar PV systems, with the aim of enhancing women empowerment in the energy sector. The Training sessions were held at the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) Knowledge Centre in Port Louis over a period of 5 months beginning in October 2020. A total of 7 groups comprising 89 women entrepreneurs were trained on the basics of solar PV.



## 2.3

### Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation

#### Coral Reef Restoration and Beach Recovery

Following the implementation of remedial works at Mon Choisy beach in 2019, the extent of coastal erosion has been attenuated despite heavy swells. Due to the installation of artificial reefs and a reprofiling of the beach which included the planting of endemic species, Mon Choisy has become more climate resilient.

The UNDP also started the implementation of the [Regional Coral Reef Restoration project](#), with funding from the Adaptation Fund worth USD 10M. The project will be implemented over the next 6 years, with coral restoration being implemented at specific sites in Mauritius and Seychelles, and training provided for stakeholders at national level for both countries. The project builds on the strong organisational networks in coral restoration in the two countries and addresses the concomitant issues of food security and disaster risk reduction.







## GCF Concept Note on Coastal Resilience: Preparing for Future Climate

The Environment Unit provided assistance, at the request of the Government of Mauritius, for the development of a Concept Note to seek funding from the Green Climate Fund, for the **'Enhancing the resilience of the Coastal Zone of the Republic of Mauritius to Climate Change Using a Ridge to Reef Approach'** project. Studies carried out to-date include a pre-feasibility study; Social and Economic Analysis; and Social and Environmental Screening

Procedure. Consideration is being given to integrate this project within a multi-country/ programmatic approach that the UNDP is currently developing. The proposed project aims to prevent further degradation along the coastline and inland as a result of climate change, using a ridge to reef approach on the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues. This approach will better address hydrological damage, risks to infrastructure, reduce flood impacts, and enable the rehabilitation of coastal ecosystems to safeguard vulnerable communities along the coastline as well as inland.





## Facilitating Policy Discourse

At policy level, the UNDP supported the review of the Environment Protection Act 2002, the formulation of the National Environment Policy, and the preparation of the Masterplan for the Environment for the next 10 years for the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change. The policy work being undertaken includes a sustainable development framework; a climate risk analysis; disaster risk management, and the key sectors identified by the 'Assises de L'Environnement'. These include Control

of Plastic Pollution; Coastal Zone and Marine Environment; Environment Culture; Pollution Control; Waste Management; Circular Economy, and Biodiversity and Natural Resources.

Another milestone for Mauritius was the passing of the **Climate Change Bill** in Parliament in 2020. The first drafts of the Climate Change Bill were prepared with support from UNDP Mauritius under the Africa Adaptation Programme in 2012. The setting up of the climate change department, as foreseen under the Climate Change Act, represents a major policy advance in the mitigation of climate risk.

The UNDP also contributed to the **Wetland Bill**, which has been finalized under a GEF-funded project: '**Mainstreaming Biodiversity into the Management of the Coastal Zone of the Republic of Mauritius**'. This project also brought about a review of the management and operational plans of the Rivulet Terre Rouge Estuary Bird Sanctuary. Under the project, the management and operational plan for Pointe D'Esny has also been submitted to the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security.



### Supporting the economic empowerment of the artisanal fishing community in the Republic of Mauritius under the ECOFISH programme

With support from EU funding, the UNDP initiated the project **“Supporting the economic empowerment of the artisanal fishing community in the Republic of Mauritius”** to improve livelihood opportunities of the fishers in collaboration with the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping. The project aims at empowering the fishers to use sustainable best fishing practices such as using modern Fishing Aggregating Devices to fish outside the overexploited lagoon; upgrade the post-harvest infrastructure and process; and through training, increase the participation of women and youth. This is a 4-year project under the **ECOFISH programme** aiming at supporting concrete fisheries management and governance initiatives in small-scale inland and marine fisheries in the Indian Ocean region.

### National Implementation Plan (NIP) Update

The **‘Review and update of the National Implementation Plan (NIP) for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)’** project was developed and is currently under review by the UNDP Regional Office. Having ratified the Stockholm Convention in July 2004, Mauritius needs to review and update its NIP submitted in 2006 to the Conference of Parties (COP). This project will assist the Government of Mauritius in meeting its obligations under the Convention, and contribute to the protection of human health and the environment from the risks posed by the unsound use, management, and release of Persistent Organic Pollutants.



## Sustainable Land Management in Rodrigues

### Sustainable Land Management (SLM)

techniques are being applied to control erosion and water course sedimentation in Rodrigues' **South-East Marine Protected Area (SEMPA)** watershed, with a focus on Rivière Cocos and the Agro-Forestry Scheme initiated by the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA) which share the implementation cost. In this scheme, plots of land in the watershed will be leased to the community for the creation of agroforestry related businesses. The result of the SECU compliance review for the same project is that there has been wide consultation particularly at design stage and recommends that the UNDP should continue to appropriately disseminate and apply the Social and Environmental Safeguards policy (SES).

## ISLANDS project: Implementing new Sustainable Healthcare Waste Treatment

Under the GEF-7 funding umbrella, the **'Indian Ocean Regional Project Mauritius - Implementing Sustainable Low and non-Chemical Development in SIDS (ISLANDS)'** submission package was prepared and transmitted to the GEF in October 2020, and is currently under review. Among the several outputs of this project, the UNDP with financial support from the GEF, will assist the Ministry of Health and Wellness in the setting up of a central treatment facility for healthcare waste. This is in line with the Government Programme 2020-2024, which states: *"A centralised medical and clinical waste incineration project will also be implemented to ensure better management of toxic and hazardous products"*.





## 2.4 Innovation and Initiatives

Through partnerships, the Country Office has registered several milestones in supporting the development and adoption of online and digital solutions for development, in the public and the private sector.

### Establishing a Gender Information System

In the area of gender equality, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNDP supported the Mauritius National Assembly to establish a **Gender Information System** through the Parliamentary Gender Caucus (PGC). The Country Office also supported the Caucus to establish an online self-paced e-learning gender mainstreaming course with practical case studies, to assist members of Parliament and Gender Focal Points at sectoral Ministries to build their capacity to address gender equality and equity. The platform is relevant and responsive to the COVID-19 context as it leverages innovative techniques for e-learning.



Furthermore, the e-learning platform is complementary to the existing work of the UNDP towards business continuity. The engagement has thus far been successful because it builds on successive and incremental interventions by the UNDP including (i) the initial support to establish the Parliamentary Gender Caucus,

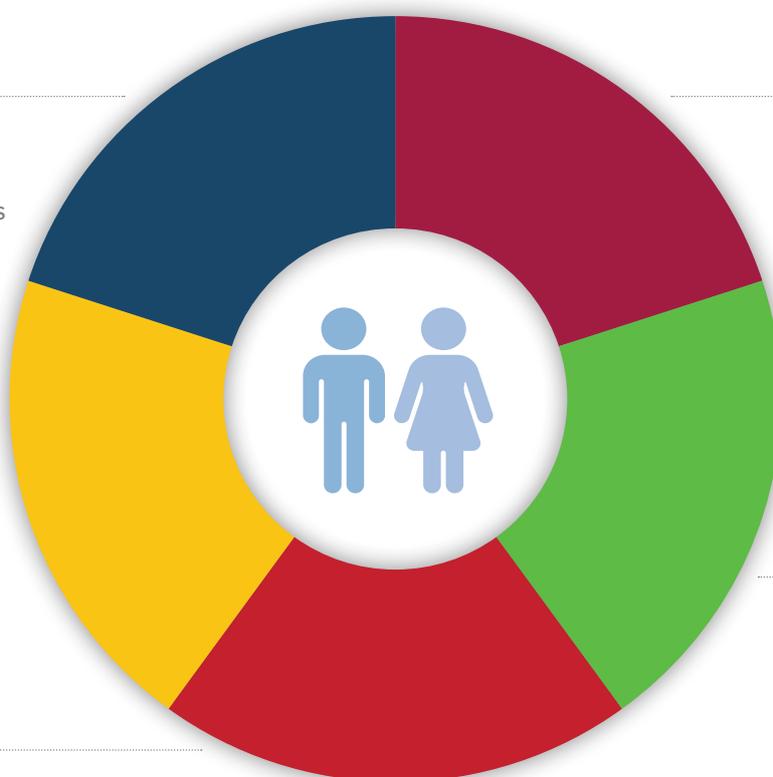
(ii) the establishment of the Gender Information System and (iii) the development of an e-learning gender module. To date, the e-learning module has been uploaded on the Gender Information System and 17 members of the Gender Caucus were expected to access and complete the course by the end of the first quarter of 2021.

**Gender Information System**

**Module 1:**  
Understanding Gender Concepts and Terminologies

**Module 2:**  
Key international and regional instruments on women's empowerment and gender equality

**Module 3:**  
Gender Mainstreaming Strategies and Gender Responsive Budgeting



**Module 5:**  
Practical Application – Quiz

**Module 4:**  
Quick Gender Mainstreaming Checklist in the policy cycle and in projects

**Economic Empowerment of Vulnerable Women in Shelters**

With the support of the Government of Japan under the Japan Supplementary Budget (JSB) project, an economic empowerment programme for women living in shelters and those impacted by domestic violence is being implemented with the support of the Mauritius

Institute for Training and Development (MITD) and the Ministry of Gender Equality. Once trained in different sectors in demand, such as Nail Technology and Professional Cleaning Services, women survivors will receive a nationally recognized Course Certificate.





## Supporting Resilience through Digital Transformation and Capacity Development

Through support from the Government of Japan, the UNDP initiated a project which aims to assist Mauritius to better prepare for environmental and other shocks by (i) strengthening government effectiveness and efficiency of business processes through digital transformation; and (ii) increasing disaster response capacity through business process reengineering. The expected outcome is that Mauritius will be better positioned to maintain its human development trajectory, remain on course to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and mitigate the medium to long term impacts of the current crises. At least 500 government officials within the ministries of Health, Environment,

Blue Economy and the National Assembly, will benefit through capacity development. In addition, Statistics Mauritius is being supported to develop the infrastructure for an integrated data management and analytics system. To date, the Country Office has supported a Business Continuity Plan assessment for the Government of Mauritius and the aim will be to assess the electronic document management system, the HR management system and the financial management system. A key success factor has been the buy in from the ministries which noted deficiencies during the COVID-19 lockdown. What has also worked well is (i) the achievement of a consensus on the development challenges and needs through an in-depth consultative process, and (ii) supporting a platform of engagement by multiple stakeholders.



## Development of a Business Intelligence Dashboard

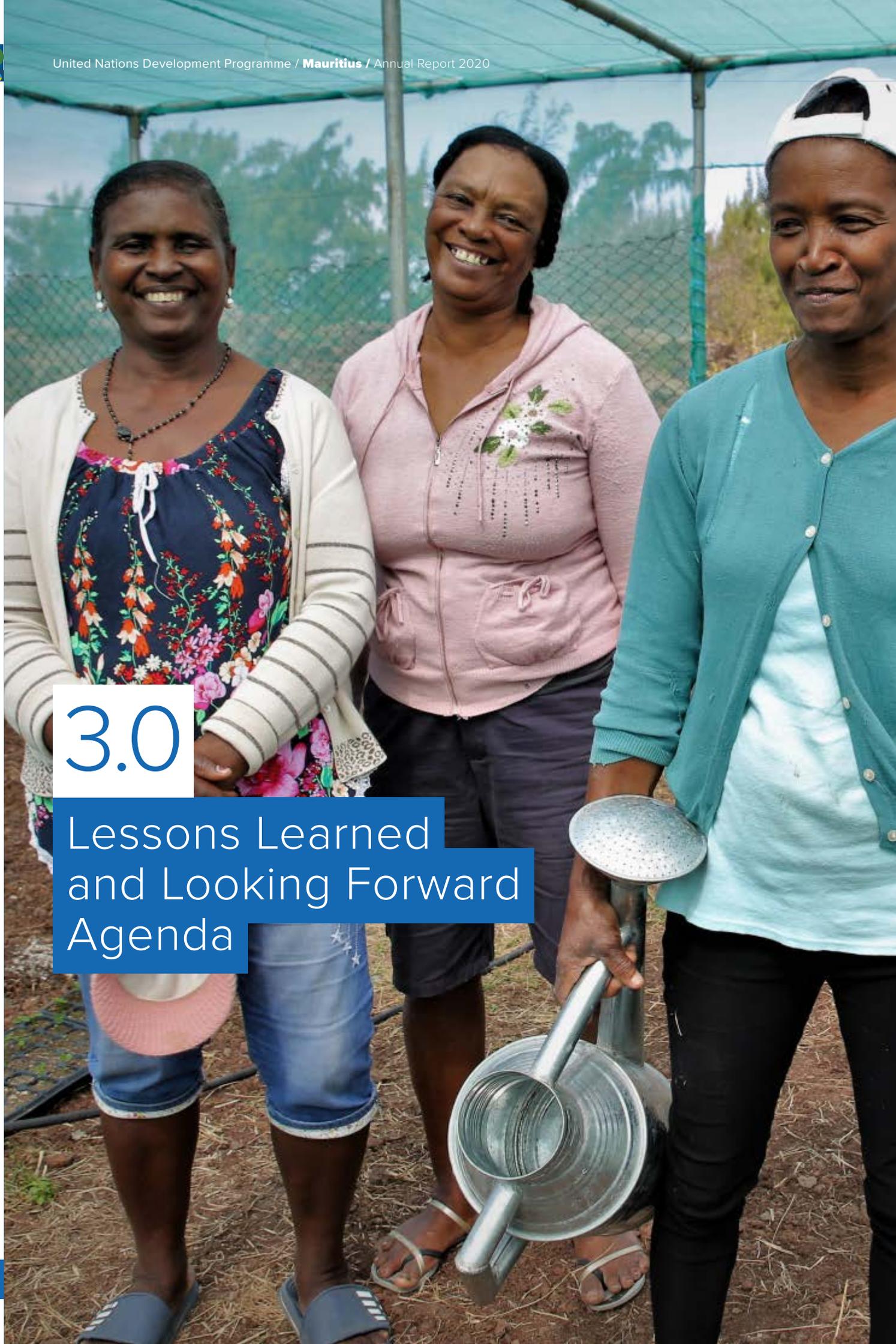
The UNDP is collaborating with the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) on the development of a **Business Intelligence Dashboard** to provide integrated data on the business opportunities and value chains within the **Southern African Development Community (SADC)** region. This pilot project, which will eventually be scaled up across Africa, has for specific objectives to:

- i. provide a tool set for businesses in the SADC region to absorb, organize, discover and analyse data, to reveal actionable insights that can help improve decision-making.
- ii. reformulate business strategies to adapt to the new business ecosystem in the SADC region.
- iii. develop a synergy among all economies of the SADC in terms of economic indicators, sectoral analysis, and to compare the competitiveness of sectors across various economies of the region.
- iv. develop and create complementary synergy, investment & business opportunities between countries through G2G and B2B partnerships
- v. develop a coherent regional cooperation and integration of the SADC region in terms of availability of concurrent business and economic statistics, trade, import and export statistics and data analytics to help countries to reposition themselves as centres of excellence in key sectors.

The initiative will cover the 16 member states of the SADC in 4 phases starting with Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and South Africa.







3.0

## Lessons Learned and Looking Forward Agenda



**IN 2020**, the country programme was based on three main aspects: the COVID- related response, the socio-economic development activities including gender, and the Environment portfolio. The COVID-related activities provided a platform for the UNDP to invest in digital innovation. The implementation of the Laboratory Information Management System and the Gender-Based Violence prevention Mobile App were key achievements. The COVID-19 lockdown in Mauritius was also an opportunity for the Country Office to work entirely digitally. The installation of the Battery Energy Storage System by the CEB, accompanied by the legislative developments on the CEB act and the Climate Change Bill means that more work lies ahead for the energy transition of Mauritius. With the level of delivery achieved, the UNDP showed that the programme and operations could seamlessly perform digitally and on work-from-home basis, when required.

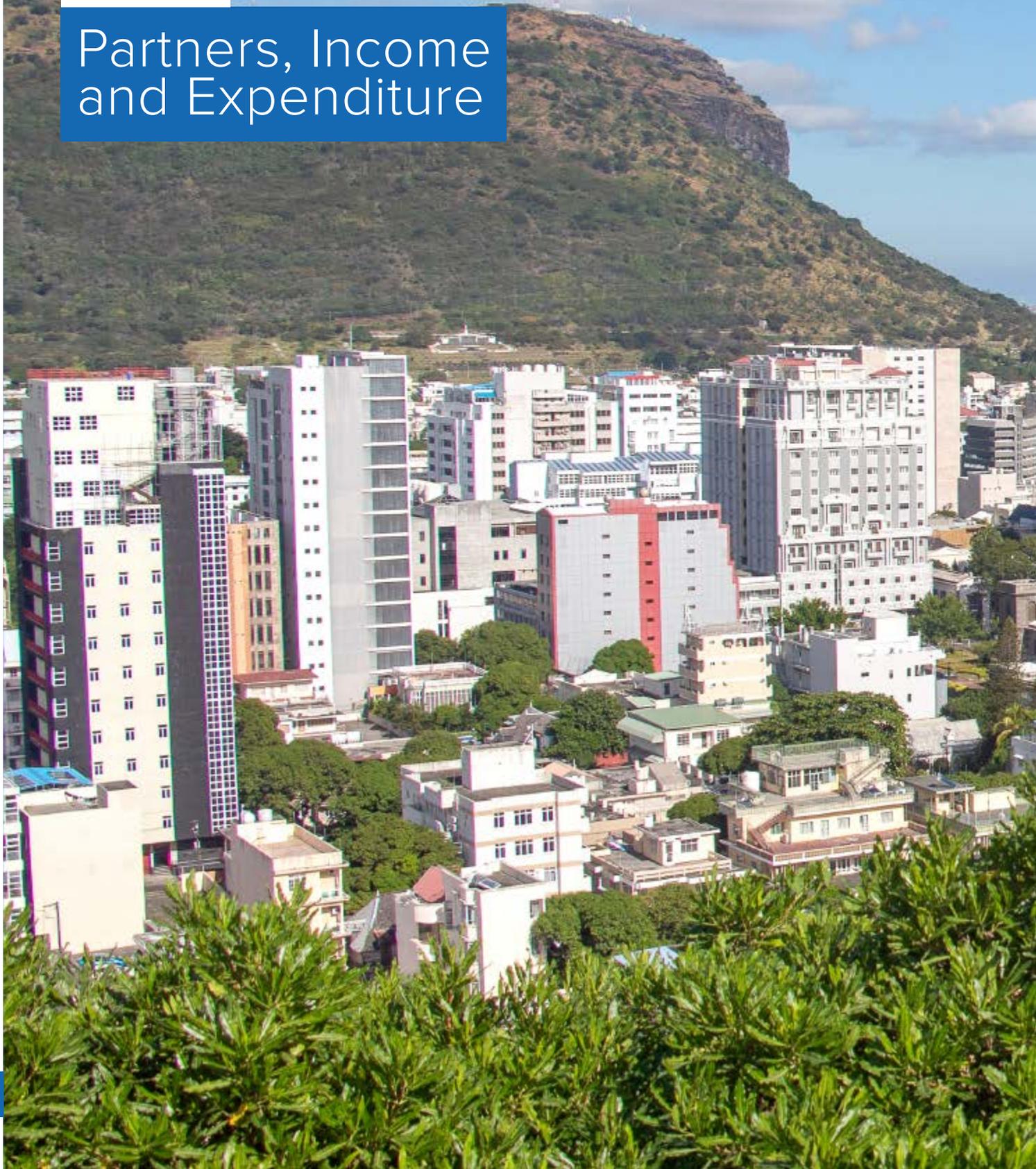
The lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic also enabled the UNDP to use technology more effectively, by carrying out virtual consultative meetings and using survey questionnaires to gather inputs from various stakeholders. Furthermore in 2020, the Country Programme Document (CPD) 2017-2020 was extended to 2023 with adjustments in the indicators, bringing it into alignment with the overarching UN Country Strategic Partnership Framework with the Government of Mauritius.

In 2021, the Country Office will continue to pursue COVID, gender and environment programming. Regarding COVID-19, the Business Continuity Planning tools implementation in Government as a means of disaster risk reduction will be pursued, along with the e-Health project. The work initiated on the Gender Mobile App will be continued with expected software upgrades to provide for data collection. In parallel, training of the new Parliamentary Gender Caucus will also take place. In the environment sector, the GCF project will move into Phase 2 for the deployment of PV system with focus on low- and middle-income groups, NGOs and public buildings following a mid-term evaluation; while coral restoration project activities will continue implementation. Importantly, the manner in which programme conceptualization, implementation and resource mobilization take place will be streamlined with digital innovation becoming a key aspect of the UNDP portfolio.



4.0

## Partners, Income and Expenditure







# 4.1

## Partnerships

### Civil society

The GEF Mainstreaming Biodiversity alternative livelihood projects are being implemented by four NGOs - Eco-Sud and Oceanyka for Mauritius, and Shoals and Ter Mer Rodrigues in Rodrigues - to reduce pressure on lagoon resources and strengthen Marine Protected Areas.

### Private sector

The UNDP and the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) collaborated to set up a Business Intelligence Platform for the SADC Region. The aim is to gather economic indicators and sectoral analysis and to provide a tool set for businesses in the SADC region to collect and analyse data to reveal actionable insights. Following the Business Pulse survey for which the UNDP partnered with Business Mauritius, a dialogue session with public, private, and international institutions was held. The survey resulted in the identification of practical recommendations to reduce the vulnerability of enterprises and households to the crisis.

### Development Partners Group

The Country Office worked with the United Kingdom to launch the national COP 26 conversation, the Government of Australia on Gender-Based Violence, the European Union for the €coFISH project and the Government of Japan on COVID response.





### UN Agencies

The UNDP and the WHO are partnering in strengthening health care service delivery interventions targeting communities affected by the Wakashio oil spill.

### International Financial Institutions

Under the GCF project, the Development Bank of South Africa co-financed the policy development activities of the Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency. The MARENA will have the necessary tools and frameworks to promote implementation of Renewable Energy projects. The first tranche of the co-financing for installation of Gas Insulated Switchgear in 2 substations was disbursed in March 2020.



## List of Partners

### Local Government

1. Prime Minister's Office (PMO)
2. Ministry of Gender Equality and Welfare
3. Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
4. Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
5. Ministry of Health and Wellness
6. Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping
7. Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation
8. Ministry of Agro Industry and Food Security
9. Parliamentary Gender Caucus
10. Rodrigues Regional Assembly
11. Mauritius Police Force

### Foreign Government

12. Government of Japan
13. Government of Australia
14. Government of the United Kingdom

### UN entities

15. Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
16. United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
17. World Health Organisation (WHO)
18. UN-Women
19. UNDP Japan
20. UNDP Global Centre for Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development
21. International Organization for Migration (IOM)
22. World Bank Group

### Development Partners Group and International Financial Institutions

23. European Union (EU)
24. Adaptation Fund (AF)
25. Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
26. Agence Française de Développement (AFD)
27. Global Environment Facility (GEF)
28. Green Climate Fund (GCF)
29. Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA)
30. African Development Bank (AfDB)

### Private Sector and Civil Society

31. Statistics Mauritius
32. Business Mauritius
33. Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI)
34. South-East Marine Protected Area (SEMPA)
35. Eco-Sud
36. Oceanyka
37. Ter Mer
38. SHOALS

### Others

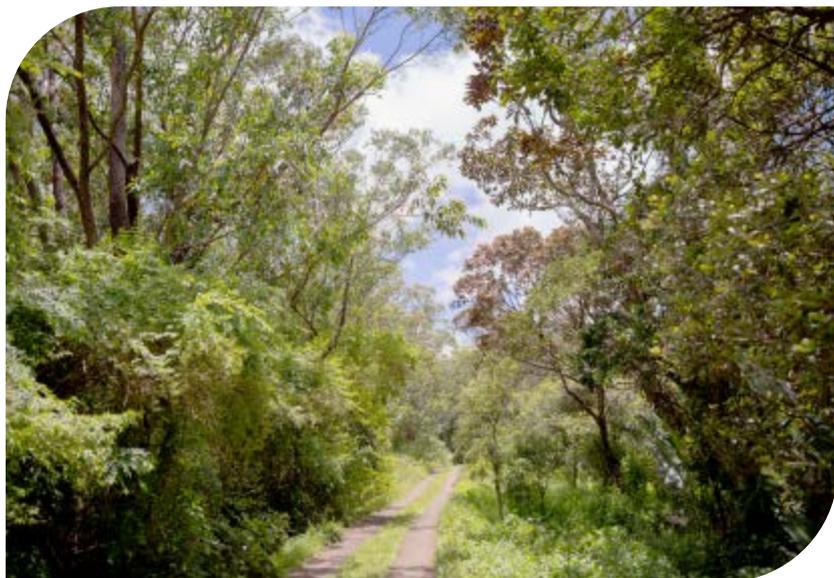
39. National Women's Council
40. Central Electricity Board (+CEB Green)
41. Central Informatics Bureau
42. Mauritius Institute for Training and Development (MITD)

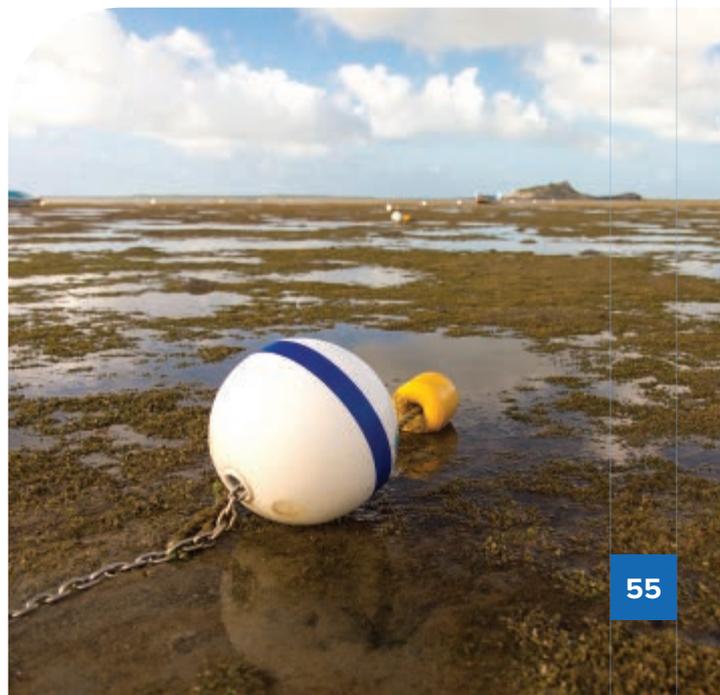
## 4.2

### Resource Mobilization

In 2020, the UNDP sustained progress in resource mobilisation to assist the Government Development agenda. In addition to vertical funding sources including the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)**, **Adaptation Fund Board (AF)** and the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**, the Country Office has also tapped into other thematic and emergency funds such as EU's E€OFISH programme and the Japan Supplementary Budget. This has facilitated synergy between the Environment and Socio-Economic Development Units.

Success stories for the year 2020 include: approval of the EU-funded project on artisanal fishers; mobilizing over USD 1 million for COVID-related projects; starting the implementation of the AF Coral Restoration project and GEF-funded Invasive Alien Species project; and the approval of the GEF-funded project on Sustainable Land Management. Two other GEF-funded projects, namely the regional ISLANDS project and the CBIT project were submitted for endorsement while the consultation meetings were held to develop the GEF-funded project on Electric Public Buses and a GCF concept note on Coastal Resilience.

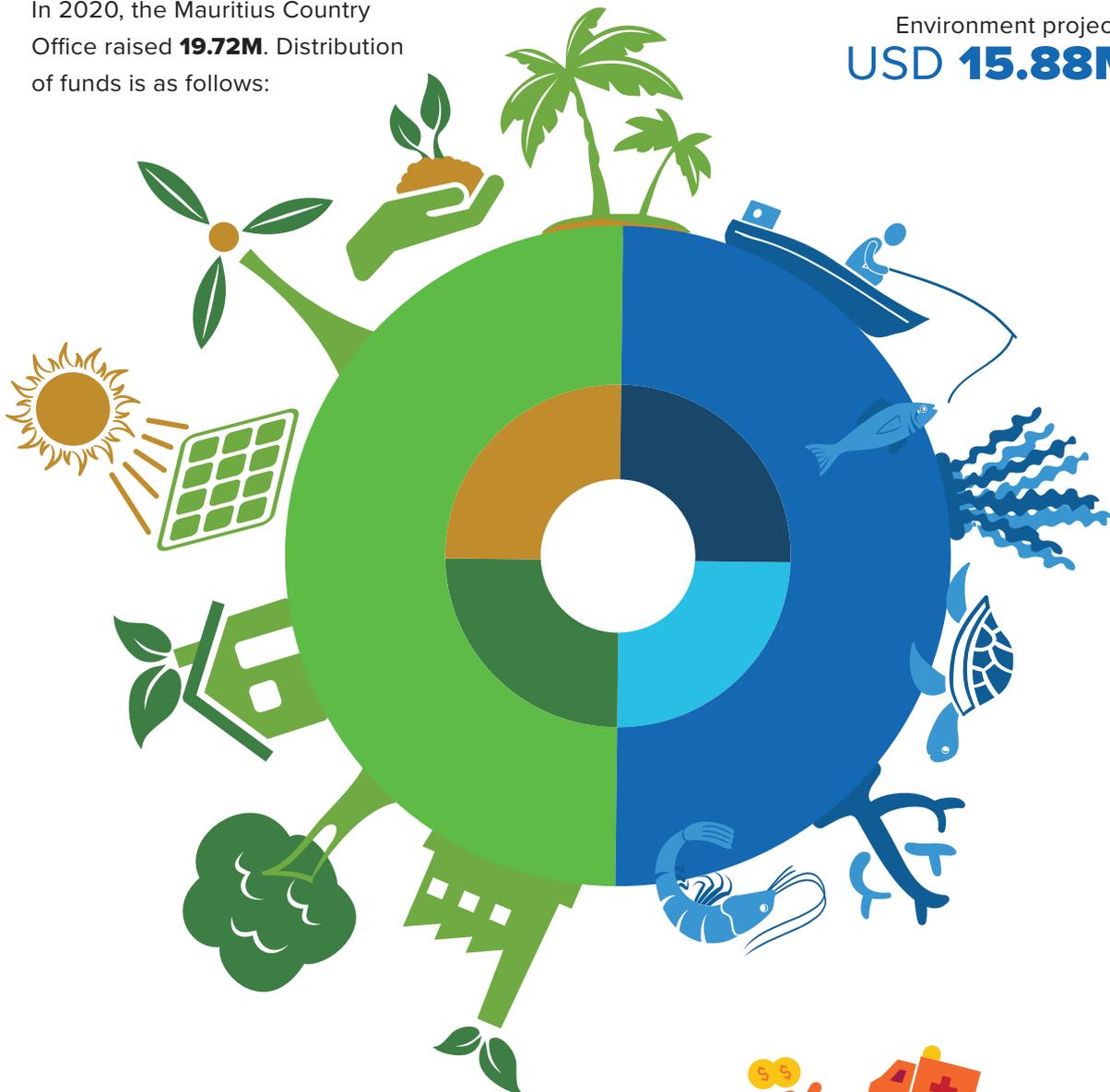




**Programme**

In 2020, the Mauritius Country Office raised **19.72M**. Distribution of funds is as follows:

Environment projects:  
**USD 15.88M**



COVID projects:  
**USD 3.81M**

Socio-Economic Development:  
**USD 30K**  
**+ AUD 35K**

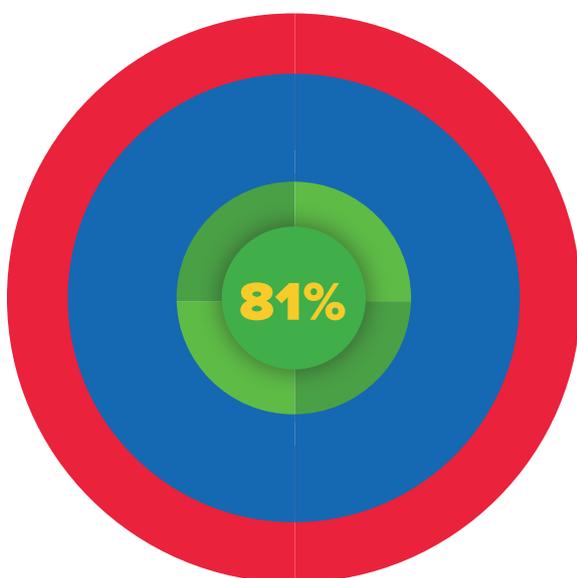


Two new Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects were approved: (i) **Mainstreaming Invasive Alien Species** project received USD 3.88M and (ii) the **Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management** project received USD 1.7M. The Country Office also mobilized USD 300,000 for the **Climate Promise Initiative**. Furthermore, the Adaptation Fund Coral Restoration project was signed for USD 10M. The Environment Unit was able to mobilize such resources by leveraging a mix of TRAC 2 and Project Preparation Grant (PPG) funds and deploying a team of experienced project development staff.

For the COVID project, the Country Office obtained USD 220,000 from the Regional Bureau of Africa (RBA) and USD 267,000 from TRAC 3. USD 500,000 from TRAC 2 was also repurposed and USD 905,000 obtained from the Japanese Supplementary Budget. Finally, for the COVID Laboratory Information Management System, the Country Office obtained USD 900,000 from the Government of Mauritius. Subsequently, the Country Office obtained a further USD 1M for COVID 2.0 response from the Government of Japan. The COVID resource mobilization worked well due to the keen support and leadership of senior management and to the cross functional collaboration and technical expertise deployed to assist project development.

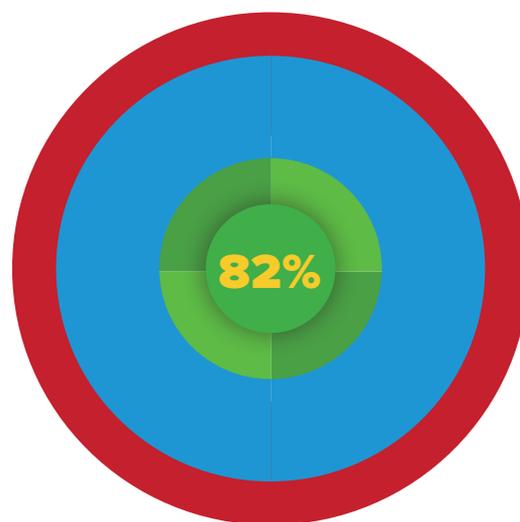
**Budget vs Expenditure (USD)**

**Mauritius and Seychelles**



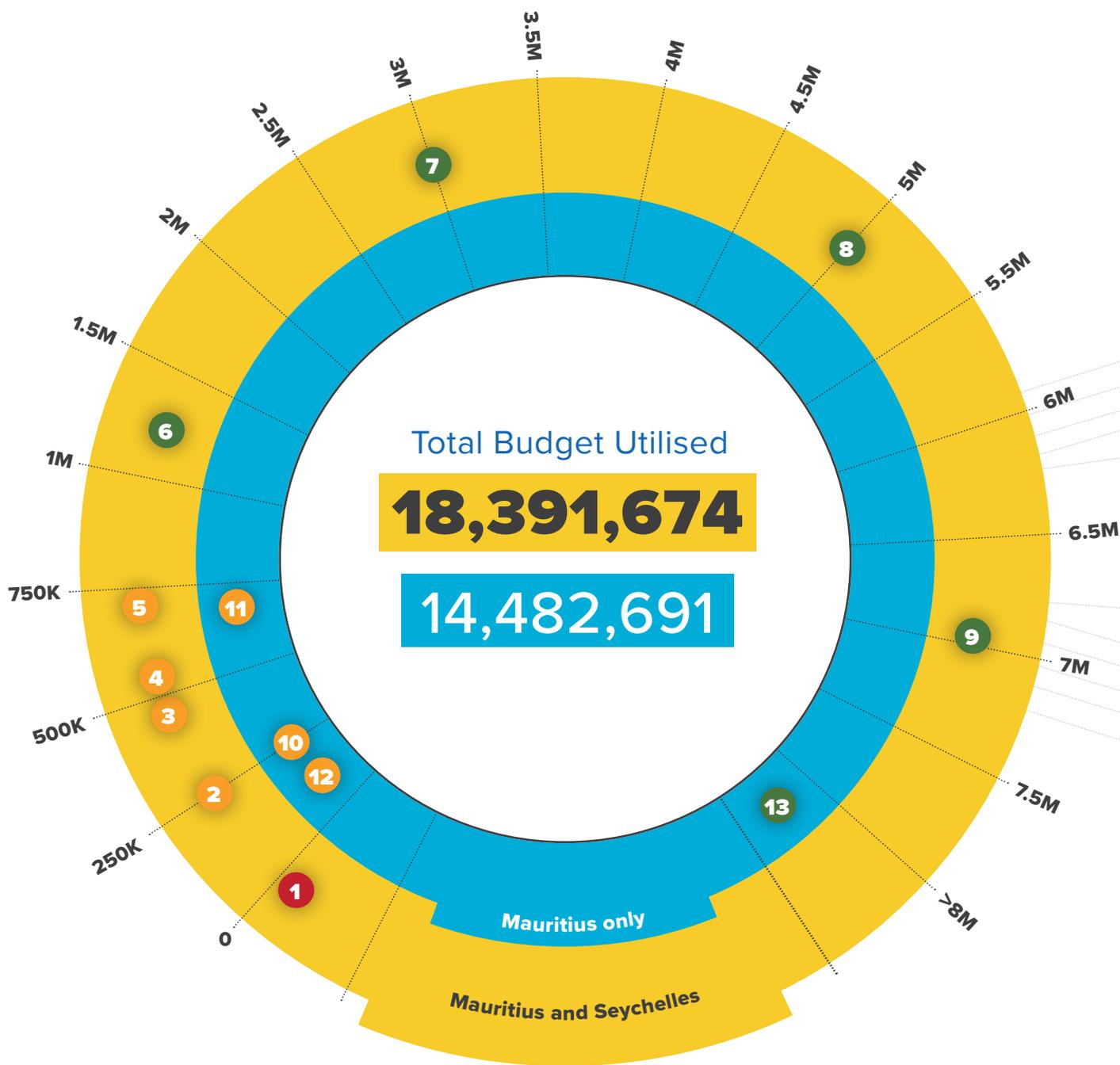
- 2020 Total budget: **22,680,626**
- Budget utilised: **18,391,674**
- Percentage delivered

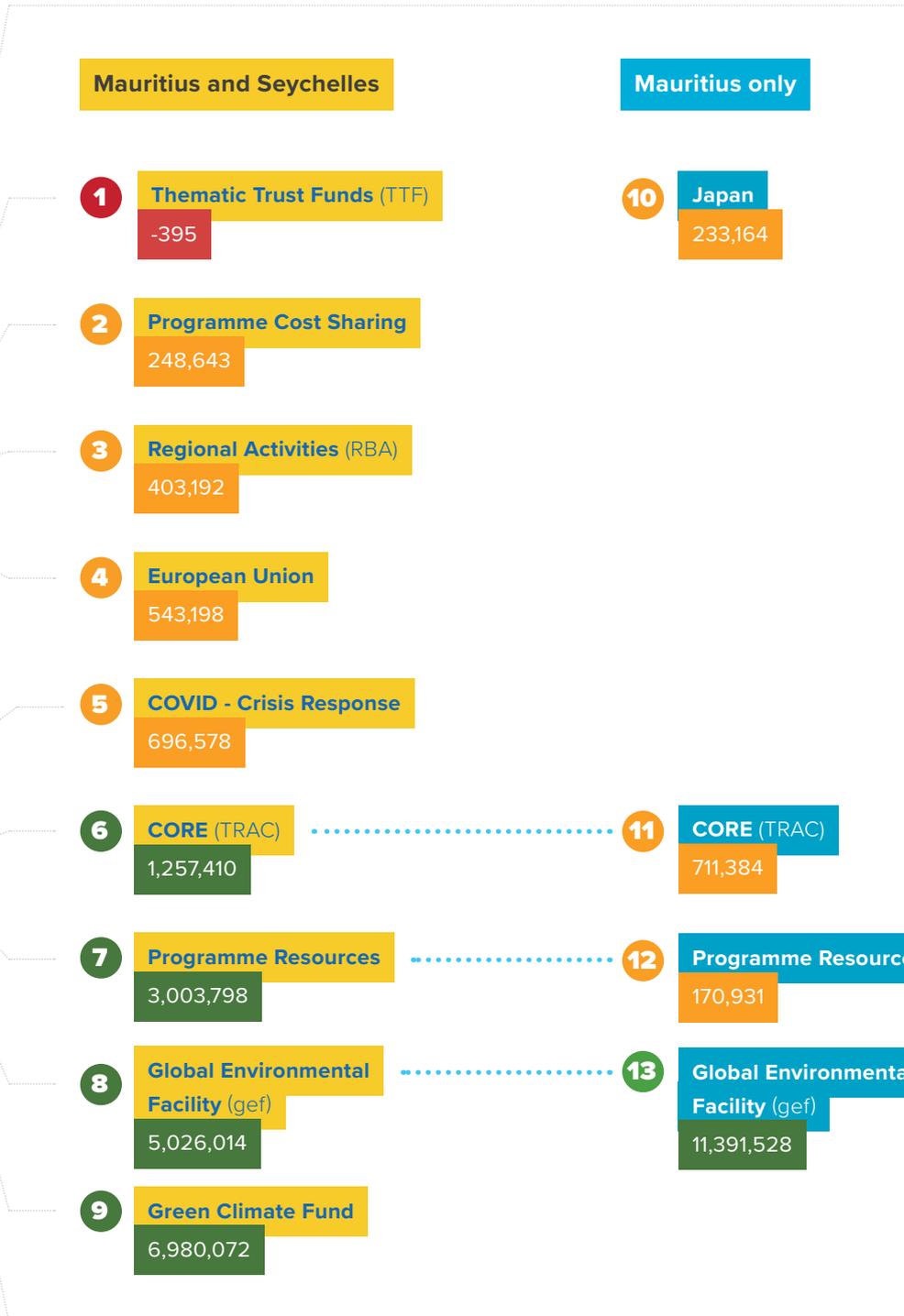
**Mauritius only**



- 2020 Total budget: **17,648,201**
- Budget utilised: **14,482,691**
- Percentage delivered

Distribution of Donors (USD)





**Note:** The sum of USD 2M was reallocated to the COVAX facility for Mauritius

# Operations



**THE COUNTRY OFFICE** continued to pursue efficiency and acceleration of program delivery through the use of global and regional Long-Term Agreements (LTAs) to procure emergency COVID-19 related supplies such as PPE, ventilators, PCR kits and other sensitive services such as Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) financial audits and spot checks. The Country Office also used the UNDP rosters to facilitate fast tracking of procurement which enabled accelerated delivery and project implementation. The use of the local LTAs shortened procurement timelines and enabled the Country Office to meet the various deadlines for projects.

In 2020, the Country Office initiated the use of DocuSign, which ensured business continuity during COVID-19. The application also allowed to significantly shorten business processes and to improve the cost efficiency of operations, thereby reducing the carbon footprint of the Country Office.

Teleworking arrangements were introduced during the lockdown and allowed staff to effectively support the continuous program implementation and successfully deliver the development results while coping with increased health risks themselves.

UNDP Mauritius delivered USD 21.09M against the 2020 Integrated Work Plan (IWP) target of USD 13.82M for Mauritius and Seychelles.



## Country Office Communication Unit

The UNDP Country Office established a communications function that increased the social media and corporate visibility through seven **videos**, 15 **blogs**, and 12 **news releases**. These include videos on UNDP COVID-related responses, World Oceans Day and the elimination of domestic violence, and blogs on renewable energy, agricultural innovation, the economic impact of COVID-19 and green recovery.

## Publications

In 2020, the Country Office produced its **Annual Report** for the first time in over a decade. The UNDP 2019 Annual Reports

for Mauritius and Seychelles showcased the achievements of the Country Office and provided accountability and transparency on development impacts and resources.

Four Issues of **"Gendered Voices Newsletter"** were published, highlighting gendered implications of COVID-19 on Domestic Violence, Economic Resilience, Youth and Elderly. It was widely circulated electronically.





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**Project Key:** IAS = Invasive Alien Species | GCF = Green Climate Fund | PPG = Project Preparation Grant  
JMA = Joint Management Area | SGP = Small Grants Programme



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