



Mauritius National Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY GENDER CAUCUS

BIENNIAL REPORT
2017-2019

13 August 2019





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Foreword by the Chairperson of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus

I am pleased to submit the first Biennial Report 2017-2019 of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus established at the level of the Mauritius National Assembly.

Since its launching in March 2017, the Caucus has generated the necessary momentum to push forward the gender equality and equity agenda within the Republic with the collaboration of the public and private sectors. In an effort to establish the baseline situation to achieve its duties as per Standing Order 69(6), the Caucus has commissioned three Studies, namely, the “Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius”, “The Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius”, and a “Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector in Mauritius”. Concurrently, the Caucus has proceeded in a systematic manner to build the capacity of its Gender Focal Points from Ministries so as to equip them with the practical skills on gender mainstreaming.

In addition to presenting the different activities carried out by the Caucus, the Report offers an insight on the current status of implementation of the recommendations of the two Studies commissioned by the Caucus, namely, the “Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius” and “The Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence”. A monitoring and evaluation exercise was conducted from November 2018-April 2019, following which it was observed that there were gaps in the implementation of the recommendations of the two Studies.

The Caucus will continue its oversight and advocacy role to ensure full implementation of its recommendations. It will continue to build the capacity of its Gender Focal Points (GFPs) to enhance their gender mainstreaming skills. Through the use of technology, GFPs will be able to access an online educational tool to build their skills and knowledge. This tool will also be used as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism on progress made towards addressing gender sensitive indicators as set by the Caucus.

I wish to thank the Members of the Caucus for their ongoing commitment and participation in the formulation of key recommendations to address sectoral gender gaps.

I also wish to thank the Clerk and Officers of the National Assembly, the IT Unit, as well as the UNDP who provided technical assistance to the Caucus in its important role. I would like to extend my thanks to the GFPs, stakeholders in the Civil Service, private sector, civil society organisations and academia as well as development partners who collaborated with the Caucus in an effective manner during the different stages of its valuable work.

Honourable Mrs. S. Hanoomanjee, GCSK

Chairperson of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus

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1.0 BACKGROUND - SETTING UP OF THE PARLIAMENTARY GENDER CAUCUS

1.1 The process for the setting up of a Caucus was initiated in November 2015, and involved consultation across party lines in a bid to securing the buy-in of all Members of Parliament. It further involved capacity building of Parliamentarians on the importance of gender mainstreaming as well as on the *modus operandi* of similar institutional frameworks in place at the level of other Parliaments.

1.2 On 06 December 2016, the Caucus was officially established following a motion by the then Rt. Honourable Prime Minister to resolve to amend the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly (1995) [as amended], to make provision for a mechanism for the promotion of gender equality, by inserting a new paragraph 69(6) providing for the setting up of the Committee to be known as the Parliamentary Gender Caucus.

1.3 The Caucus was officially launched on 20 March 2017 in the presence of the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and a Member of Parliament of Rwanda, Deputy Chairperson on the Standing Committee on National Unity, Human Rights and Fight Against Genocide, as well as Member of the Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum, Members of Parliament, representatives of Ministries/ Departments and civil society organisations.

1.4 On 01 September 2017, under its Country Programme (Mauritius) 2017-2020, Component 2 “Dealing with Gender Equality Challenges”, the UNDP deployed a National Gender Expert attached to the Caucus to extend technical assistance towards the implementation of the activities of the Caucus.

2.0 COMPOSITION OF THE CAUCUS

2.1 For recall, the Caucus derives its powers from Standing Order 69 (6) of the Standing Orders and Rules of the National Assembly (1995), as amended on 06 December 2016, an extract of which is set out in Appendix I to this Report.

2.2 Standing Order 69 (6) (b) (i) provides that the Caucus shall comprise the Speaker as Chairperson, the Deputy Speaker as Deputy Chairperson and not more than 15 Members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection. Moreover, Standing Order 69 (6) (b) (ii) stipulates that the composition of the Caucus shall, as far as possible, reflect party representation and such other political representation and be gender balanced.

2.3 The Caucus was originally constituted as follows:

- (i) Honourable Mrs Santi Bai Hanoomanjee, GCSK, Madam Speaker - Chairperson
- (ii) Honourable K. Teeluckdharry, MP - Deputy Speaker
- (iii) Honourable Mrs Roubina Jadoo-Jaunbocus, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (iv) Honourable Mrs Deveena Boygah, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (v) Honourable T. Benydin, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (vi) Honourable Mrs Marie Claire Jeanne Monty, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (vii) Dr The Honourable Mohamud Raffick Sorefan, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (viii) Honourable Satyaprakashsing Rutnah, MP, Deputy Chief Government Whip
- (ix) Honourable Vedasingam V. Baloomoody, MP
- (x) Honourable Joseph Buisson Leopold, MP
- (xi) Honourable Georges Pierre Lesjongard, MP
- (xii) Honourable Mrs Marie-Aurore Marie-Joyce Perraud, MP

- (xiii) Hon. Ms Malini Sewocksingh, MP
- (xiv) Honourable Mahomed Osman Mahomed, MP
- (xv) Honourable Mrs Marie Danielle Selvon, MP
- (xvi) Honourable Sayed Muhammad Aadil Ameer Meea, MP
- (xvii) Honourable Jean-Claude Barbier, MP

2.4 During the course of the session, the following Hon. Members resigned, namely, Honourable Mrs R. Jadoo-Jaunbocus, Honourable S. Rutnah, Honourable A. Ameer Meea, Honourable K. Teeluckdharry and Honourable M. O.Mahomed.

2.5 The Caucus is presently constituted as follows:

- (i) Honourable Mrs Santi Bai Hanoomanjee, GCSK, Madam Speaker - Chairperson
- (ii) Honourable Georges Pierre Lesjongard, MP, Deputy Speaker - Deputy Chairperson
- (iii) Honourable Mahendranuth Sharma Hurreeram, MP, Chief Government Whip
- (iv) Honourable Mrs Deveena Boygah, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (v) Honourable Toolsyraj Benydin, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (vi) Honourable Mrs Marie Claire Jeanne Monty, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (vii) Honourable Jean-Nel Alain Aliphon, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (viii) Dr The Honourable Mohamud Raffick Sorefan, MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary
- (ix) Honourable Vedasingam V. Baloomoody, MP
- (x) Honourable Jean Claude Barbier, MP
- (xi) Honourable Joseph Buisson Leopold, MP
- (xii) Honourable Mrs Marie-Aurore Marie-Joyce Perraud, MP
- (xiii) Honourable Mrs Marie Danielle Selvon, MP
- (xiv) Honourable Ms Malini Sewocksingh, MP

3.0 SECRETARIAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

3.1 The Caucus is serviced by the Officers of the Office of the Clerk, with the Deputy Clerk, Ms. Urmeelah D. Ramchurn as Secretary to the Committee. It received administrative assistance from the Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mrs Anandee Pawan, and the Committees Section of the National Assembly. Technical assistance was provided by the UNDP National Gender Expert, Dr. Anjalee Dabee.

3.2 The Caucus is further assisted in its proceedings by the Adviser to the Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly, Mr. Ram R. Dowlutta.

3.3 On 17 April 2017, the Caucus requested for all Ministries to designate Gender Focal Points not below the rank of Deputy Permanent Secretary. The Caucus was thus assisted in its duty by 48 Gender Focal Points in all Ministries. 27 Firm and 21 Alternate Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have been nominated by respective Ministries to act as Liaison Officers between the Caucus and respective sectoral Ministries. GFPs comprise 34 females and 14 males, not below the rank of Deputy Permanent Secretary. The Caucus was apprised of the nomination of GFPs at its second meeting of 30 June 2017.

3.4 The proceedings of the Caucus were recorded *verbatim* by Officers of the Official Report (Hansard) Office of the National Assembly.

4.0 MEETINGS

- 4.1 During the period 20 March 2017 to date, the Caucus held 14 meetings. The present Report is based on the work effected in the course of those meetings.

5.0 AREAS OF WORK

- 5.1 In the discharge of its duties, the Caucus is governed by Standing Order 69(6)(e) which provides as follows:

“It shall be the duty of the Caucus to -

(i) recommend the carrying out of -

(A) periodical gender assessment of government policies;

(B) research on salient gender issues; and

(ii) facilitate networking with organisations and institutions in Mauritius and abroad in all such activities,

with a view to promoting gender equality and participation.”

- 5.2 The Caucus proceeded on the following four important axes, namely:
- (i) Building capacity of Members on the *modus operandi* of fully functional gender caucuses in the region, promoting south-south cooperation on gender issues, and advancing lobbying and advocacy skills of Members;
 - (ii) Enhancing capacity for improved technical skills of GFPs towards sectoral gender mainstreaming in order to ensure that GFPs are able to carry out and report on their gender mainstreaming activities *vis-à-vis* the Caucus;
 - (iii) Carrying out baseline surveys to have strong evidence-based data against which to assess progress towards gender equality and equity. Such baseline data would further provide a solid base for the Caucus to

monitor and evaluate progress towards the implementation of its key recommendations at the level of the Executive, as part of its legislative oversight role; and

(iv) Pursuing out its legislative oversight role through monitoring and evaluation of the implementation by the Executive of the key recommendations of studies commissioned by the Caucus.

6.0 CAPACITY BUILDING ON GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE CAUCUS

6.1 Members of the Caucus are key players in discharging their primary duty of overseeing the work of the Executive, and in particular regarding gender mainstreaming. In order to equip Members with added proficiency on advocacy processes and procedures, thematic working groups and international best practices on gender caucuses, it was deemed essential that capacity of Members be built to enhance their lobbying skills and understanding of strategic entry points as Parliamentarians for legislative oversight.

6.2 The following activity was carried out for this purpose:

6.2.1 11-17 February 2018: Capacity Enhancement Tour for Members of the Caucus

- ⊕ A capacity enhancement tour was funded by the UNDP for Members of the Caucus from 11-17 February 2018 to Rwanda and Uganda. The *Forum des Femmes Parlementaires du Rwanda* and Uganda Women Parliamentary Association remain one of the best examples in the region in terms of parliamentary mechanisms for the protection of women's rights and promotion of gender equality.

- ⊕ The overall objective of the mission was to apprise Members of the Caucus of the *modus operandi* of existing Caucuses in the region. Honourable Mrs. M.C.J. Monty and Honourable V.V. Baloomoody, along with the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the National Assembly, the Head of the UNDP Socio Economic Development Unit, Ms R. Beejan, and the UNDP Gender Expert participated in the mission.

- ⊕ The recommendations of the mission Report included, *inter alia*:
 - (i) Conducting in-depth capacity building of Hon. Members of the Parliamentary Gender Caucus on human rights instruments and gender equality issues as well as gender mainstreaming to enable Members to identify gender gaps in existing and upcoming Bills as well as to lobby and advocate to redress existing gender gaps;
 - (ii) Instituting a gender sensitive code of conduct for Members of Parliament in a bid to use and advocate for gender sensitive language in Parliamentary proceedings;
 - (iii) Lobbying with media houses on the use of gender sensitive reporting;
 - (iv) Formulating a Gender Statistical Framework of gender sensitive indicators for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Vision 2030 and the three-year Strategic Plan 2018-2021 of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development; and
 - (v) Institutionalising Gender Responsive Budgeting at the national level.

- ⊕ These recommendations are being implemented on a priority basis.

7.0 CAPACITY BUILDING ON GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY FOR GENDER FOCAL POINTS

7.1 Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have to report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Caucus. In order to build the technical capacity of GFPs on gender mainstreaming strategies to discharge their duties, the Caucus organised the following Seminars:

(i) 07 December 2017 - Induction Course on Gender Mainstreaming

- ⊕ As part of her first assignment towards capacity building, the UNDP Gender Expert conducted an induction course on gender mainstreaming to provide GFPs with the theoretical base and practical skills on gender mainstreaming.

- ⊕ GFPs were also provided with evidence-based analysis on the status of gender equality in Mauritius, and the status of progress of Mauritius towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- Goal 5 on Gender Equality.

- ⊕ The Seminar was attended by 35 GFPs.

(ii) 26 January 2018 - Capacity Building- Seminar on the Experience of Regional Parliamentary Gender Caucuses

- ⊕ Upon the invitation of the Caucus, Dr. Jessie Kabwilla, Member of the Parliament of Malawi and Chairperson of the SADC Women's Forum conducted a Seminar on Gender Mainstreaming and shared her expertise on the *modus operandi* of similar regional Caucuses. The Seminar was attended by 38 GFPs.

- ⊕ Members of the Caucus also had the opportunity to interact with the Honourable Member of the Parliament of Malawi after the Seminar.

(iii) 07 June 2018 - Capacity Building Seminar - Gender Sensitive Indicators

- ⊕ In line with the findings of the Study on the Gender Audit in the Civil Service, it was felt necessary that the capacity of GFPs needed to be enhanced to carry out gender sensitive analysis, gender impact assessment and formulate gender sensitive indicators.
- ⊕ In that context, the Caucus organised a capacity building seminar for GFPs to enhance their technical skills to carry out gender mainstreaming and monitoring towards the achievement of gender equality and equity through the use of gender sensitive indicators.
- ⊕ The seminar was facilitated by Ms. Jessica Gardner, International Consultant on Statistics from Australia. GFPs were given practical skills on the concepts related to gender sensitive monitoring and evaluation. They were also trained to formulate indicators to monitor and evaluate sectoral policies/programmes from a gender perspective. The seminar was attended by 35 GFPs.

(iv) 09 May 2019 - Seminar on the Presentation of Gender Sensitive Indicators to Monitor the three-year strategic plan of Government.

- ⊕ With a view to responding to the need for monitoring and evaluating Government's Plan from a gender perspective, the Caucus once more retained the services of Ms. Jessica Gardner, International Consultant on Statistics, to formulate gender sensitive indicators in line with

international standards to ensure that high level policy makers and technical officers make use of gender sensitive indicators to monitor and evaluate progress towards gender equality in the sectors covered by the three-year strategic plan of Government (2018-2021) as well as to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Vision 2030. In consultation with the UNDP Gender Expert, SMART gender sensitive indicators based on the priority areas identified in the three-year strategic plan were formulated and presented to GFPs.

- ⊕ The Caucus will use these indicators as a benchmark and statistical monitoring framework to monitor and evaluate progress made towards achieving the goals set out in the three-year strategic plan of Government. The indicators have been submitted to the Ministries and Statistics Mauritius to be used as a complement to the existing statistical framework. 35 GFPs attended the Seminar.

(v) 24 May 2019 - Seminar on Gender Mainstreaming and Change Management

- ⊕ The Caucus organised a Seminar on Gender and Change Management to enable GFPs to better understand how gender mainstreaming would be embedded within the work of the related Ministry through a systematic approach based on principles of change management dealing with the transition or transformation of the goals and processes. The services of Mr. Jason Meyer, International Consultant on Gender and Change Management, were enlisted to conduct the Seminar to assist GFPs in understanding how incorporating change management methodologies could be adopted within a gender mainstreaming policy process. The Seminar enabled GFPs to adopt implementation strategies that could leverage strategic entry points to effectively prepare for change, manage change and help people adapt to change to create a responsive institutional environment for gender mainstreaming. 35 GFPs attended the Seminar.

(vi) Checklist from the UNDP Expert on Gender Mainstreaming

- ⊕ To assist gender mainstreaming to be undertaken in a systematic manner as per existing international standards, the UNDP Gender Expert developed a “Checklist on Gender Mainstreaming” in a bid to guide GFPs to mainstream gender within the whole policy cycle from agenda setting to monitoring and evaluation.
- ⊕ The Checklist is adapted to the Mauritian context and builds upon the different gender analysis theoretical frameworks on gender mainstreaming, namely, the Harvard Analytical Framework and People-Oriented Planning, Moser Framework, Gender Analysis Matrix, Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analysis Framework, Women's Empowerment (Longwe) Framework and the Social Relations Approach. The Checklist was circulated to all GFPs.

8.0 ESTABLISHING THE BASELINE STATUS OF GENDER EQUITY AND EQUALITY

8.1 The Caucus commissioned the following studies to establish the baseline status of equality and equity at the national level to further guide evidence-based policy making:

- Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius - April 2018
- Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius - April 2018
- Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector in Mauritius - May 2019

8.2 The key findings and recommendations of these Studies have been used for the monitoring and evaluation of activities being implemented at the level of Ministries.

8.3 ***“Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius”***

8.3.1 At its meeting on 21 April 2017, Members of the Caucus agreed to commission a Study entitled the “Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius” with a view to establishing the baseline status of gender equality in the programming and operational dimensions of sectoral Ministries in Mauritius. The UNDP Gender Expert was tasked to carry out the gender audit.

8.3.2 The Key Findings and Recommendations of the Study were laid on the Table of the National Assembly on 17 May 2018

8.3.3 The Study revealed that the overall percentage of gender mainstreaming in the civil service was only fifty-six percent, categorised as follows:

- (i) sixty-nine percent gender responsiveness within the organisational culture;

- (ii) fifty-two percent accountability towards gender mainstreaming;
- (iii) fifty-three percent of political will to carry out gender mainstreaming;
and;
- (iv) a technical capacity of fifty-four percent to do sectoral gender mainstreaming and forty-nine percent of gender responsive budgeting processes being implemented within the policy cycle of Ministries.

8.3.4 The key recommendations and findings of the Study were presented to GFPs during a Seminar on 25 May 2018 and same were subsequently forwarded to the Ministries for respective action at their end.

8.3.5 The main recommendations of the Study approved by the Caucus include, *inter alia*:

- (i) Formulation of respective gender action plans by sectoral Ministries to redress gender gaps;
- (ii) Sustaining sectoral capacity building programmes on gender mainstreaming for the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, GFPs and Members of Gender Cells; and
- (iii) Institutionalisation of Gender Responsive Budgeting and Gender Budget Statements.

8.4 “Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius”

8.4.1 At its meeting dated 24 November 2017, the Caucus agreed that a Study be commissioned on the “Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius”. The aim of the study was to examine the risk factors and triggers of domestic violence and identify the sociological characteristics of perpetrators.

- 8.4.2 On 25 November 2017, the Caucus issued a Press Communiqué to inform the public at large on the holding of the Study. The Study was carried out by a team of researchers from the University of Mauritius with the technical support of the UNDP Gender Expert, and with the collaboration of the Police Family Protection Unit.
- 8.4.3 Amongst the key findings of the Study, the Caucus noted that the factors contributing to shaping the sociological profile of a perpetrator of domestic violence were multifarious, and included (i) the marital status; (ii) the level of education; (iii) employment status; (iv) work-family balance; (v) unequal gendered power dynamics within the household; (vi) the excessive use of social media; (vii) personality traits and mental health issues; and (viii) substance misuse.
- 8.4.4 The Key Findings and Recommendations of the Study were laid on the Table of the National Assembly on 17 April 2018.
- 8.4.5 The Caucus organised a Seminar with civil society organisations on 11 May 2018 to disseminate the contents of the Study and invite participants to take into account the findings and recommendations of the Study to guide future interventions at the grassroots level.
- 8.4.6 The Caucus also organised a Seminar with GFPs on 18 May 2018 to present the contents of the Study and to urge GFPs to incorporate the findings and recommendations of the Study in their future policy formulation and implementation.
- 8.4.7 A delegation headed by the Chairperson of the Caucus, and comprising Honourable Ms M. Sewocksingh, the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the National Assembly and the UNDP Gender Expert proceeded to Rodrigues from 24 to 25 May 2018, to disseminate the contents of the Study amongst stakeholders.

8.4.8 A copy of the Study was subsequently submitted to Ministries for follow-up actions at their end.

8.5 “Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector in Mauritius”

8.5.1 At its meeting dated September 2017, the Caucus approved the commissioning of a “Participatory Gender Audit Exercise in the Private Sector in Mauritius” to establish the baseline data on the status of gender equality therein. The full collaboration of Business Mauritius, the apex body for the private sector, was obtained. The UNDP National Gender Expert undertook a representative sampling audit of companies falling under the umbrella of Business Mauritius. The outcome of the exercise established the baseline on the status of gender equality and equity in the private sector at national level.

8.5.2 The Caucus met on 18 April 2019 to take cognisance of the Study.

8.5.3 Amongst the key findings of the Participatory Gender Audit, the Caucus noted that the representation of women at top-level decision-making positions is still very low in the private sector. Women remain at the level of senior administration and senior management. Moreover, female representation decreases significantly at the managerial and chief executive levels, with the number of men in positions of Chief Executive being five times higher than that of women, despite the recruitment of both women and men holding post-graduate qualifications. The Study further reveals that women are as qualified as men, hold a similar level of aspiration than men to these positions and are granted equal opportunity to follow professional development courses within the organisation, yet they fail to climb to the highest position of decision-making within the company.

8.5.4 The Key Findings and Recommendations of the “Participatory Gender Audit in the Private Sector in Mauritius” were laid on the Table of the National Assembly on 27 May 2019.

8.5.5 The main recommendations of the Study approved by the Caucus include, *inter alia*:

- (i) the setting up of Gender Cells within businesses comprising representatives of the Human Resource (HR) Section, the Finance Unit, and a representative of the administrative and technical side to follow up on internal equality procedures;
- (ii) the nomination of “Gender Champions” to sponsor gender equality initiatives at the highest level of decision-making in each company;
- (iii) The formulation of gender policy statements (also addressing intersecting forms of inequalities) by businesses stating how they commit to promote gender equality in each department;
- (iv) the adoption of the United Nations “Women’s Empowerment Principles for Business” as part of the United Nations Global Compact that sets out guidelines on women’s empowerment within the workplace;
- (v) the adherence to the National Code of Corporate Governance (2016) - Principle 3- which calls on all organisations to appoint Directors of both genders as members of the Board; and
- (vi) the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies as part of an organisational change management strategy, rather than as a stand-alone item on the agenda.

8.5.6 The findings of the Study have been widely disseminated with all stakeholders, namely, Gender Focal Points, civil society organisations, trade unions and representatives of the private sector.

8.5.7 In this context, three seminars were organised from 07 to 09 August 2019 with respective stakeholders in the presence of representatives of the Australia Workforce Gender Equality Agency to:

- (i) take stock of the status of equality and equity in the private sector;
and
- (ii) guide all stakeholders in their future actions to address gender gaps within their sectors.

8.5.8 The Caucus notes with satisfaction that one of the recommendations of the Study has been taken on board by Government in the Budget Speech 2019-2020. Paragraph 300 of the Speech mentions that “Public Companies and Statutory Bodies will therefore be required to have at least one woman on their board of directors” to eventually have a fair gender balance. The Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act has been amended accordingly.

9.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING

9.1 As part of its Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) role, on 08 November 2018, the Caucus invited all GFPs to submit information on the status of implementation of the key findings and recommendations of “The Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius” and “The Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius”. Two M&E templates designed by the UNDP Gender Expert were issued to GFPs in November 2018 as part of the M&E exercise.

9.2 The Report of the Caucus contains a summary of the findings and recommendations based on information submitted by the following Ministries:

- Prime Minister’s Office
- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
- Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
- Ministry of Defence
- Ministry of Rodrigues
- Ministry of Local Government and Outer Islands
- Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare
- Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation
- Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
- Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
- Ministry of Tourism
- Ministry of Health and Quality of Life
- Ministry of Arts and Culture
- Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development
- Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security

- Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection
- Attorney General's Office
- Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms
- Ministry of Youth and Sports
- Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives
- Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
- Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping
- Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training
- Ministry of Housing and Lands
- Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms
- Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance

10.0 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE STUDY AND APPROVED BY THE CAUCUS

STUDY ON THE “GENDER AUDIT IN THE CIVIL SERVICE IN MAURITIUS”

10.1 The Caucus has monitored and evaluated the status of implementation by Ministries of the key recommendations of the Study as per the table below:

Responsible Parties	Recommendation	Action Taken			Status
		Yes	No	In process	
	Recommendation 1				
All Ministries	(i) Dissemination of the content of the Study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			All Ministries have taken stock of the content of the Study.
Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare	(ii) The National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming (NSCGeM) to be apprised of the Study	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The NSCGeM has been apprised of the findings of the Study
	Recommendation 2				
All Ministries	In order to have a costed gender action plan, formulation of a gender policy is a first step (i) Formulation of Gender Policies			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19 out of 27 Ministries have in place a gender policy. The Ministries of Health & Q.o.L., Education & H.R., T.E. & S.R., Social Security, N.S., & E. & S.D., Public Infrastructure & L.T., Arts and Culture, Civil Service & A.R., Agro-Industry and F.S., and Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W. do not yet have a gender policy It is also noted that the Ministry of Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W., is now in process of revising the National Gender Policy Framework.

Responsible Parties	Recommendation	Action Taken			Status
		Yes	No	In process	
All Ministries	(ii) Formulation of Costed Gender Action Plans			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>2 out of 27 Ministries have in place a gender action plan. These are the Ministry of Rodrigues and Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (Cooperatives Division)</p> <p>It is noted that the Ministry of Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W. is formulating a National Costed Action Plan to be implemented by each sectoral Ministry</p>
Parliamentary Gender Caucus	Recommendations 3-5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The PGC has conducted 8 capacity building sessions for its GFPs on gender mainstreaming.
Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare	In-depth capacity building on gender mainstreaming (GeM) in specific sectoral issues through a sectoral Training of Trainers (ToT) Programme	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The Ministry of Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W. has organised a ToT on gender mainstreaming for members of the Gender Cell in 2018.
The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)	Recommendation 6 Organisation of a half-day symposium on "Budgeting and Efficiency- GRB as Smart Economics".			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>MoFED has organised a workshop on gender mainstreaming and gender responsive budgeting for all Finance Cadres in the civil service in 2019.</p> <p>MoFED is considering a mission from the Commonwealth Secretariat to advise on the full and effective implementation of GRB processes in Mauritius as announced in the Budget Speech 2019/2020.</p>

Responsible Parties	Recommendation	Action Taken			Status
		Yes	No	In process	
Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED)	Recommendation 7 Institution of Gender Budget Statements (GBS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			MoFED has issued a GBS to all Ministries
All Ministries				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	All Ministries have to fill in a Gender Budget Statement on activities carried out using the allocation of line item on "gender mainstreaming" (Rs. 200,000) as from FY 2019/2020
Parliamentary Gender Caucus	Recommendation 8 Development of a Checklist on Gender Mainstreaming	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			The Parliamentary Gender Caucus has issued a Gender Mainstreaming Checklist to all GFPs to be used as a guide to mainstream gender throughout the policy cycle to ensure that gender is an integral part of the policy planning and implementation process and reflected within institutional processes and procedures.
Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR)	Recommendation 9 Capacity building of the MCSAR on gender mainstreaming	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			A Capacity Building Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming has been organised by the MCSAR for all Officers of the HR Cadre in September 2018.
Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms (MCSAR)	Recommendation 10 Training Module of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms should be engendered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			A training component on gender equality has been included in the training module of the Civil Service College.

11.0 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS MADE BY THE CAUCUS TOWARDS GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- 11.1 Based on the submissions received and the consultative session held with GFPs, the Caucus observed that the importance given to gender mainstreaming at the level of all Ministries has gained momentum. Additionally, Ministries are amenable to change towards institutionalising gender mainstreaming. Progress has been incremental with increased gains to the gender agenda.
- 11.2 The Caucus commends the actions spearheaded by respective GFPs to address the specific recommendations contained in the Report on the “Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius”.
- 11.3 Nevertheless, the Caucus stresses that transformational change towards gender equality/equity through gender mainstreaming into policy will require *sustained efforts, strong leadership and ownership of the process* towards gender mainstreaming and an increased commitment to change the mindset of “business as usual”.

**12.0 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY
THE STUDY AND APPROVED BY THE CAUCUS**

**STUDY ON THE SOCIOLOGICAL PROFILING OF PERPETRATORS
OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

- 12.1 The Caucus acknowledges the actions taken by stakeholders of the National Gender Machinery in addressing the recommendations contained in the Report on the “Sociological Profiling of Perpetrators of Domestic Violence in Mauritius” and notes with appreciation the measures taken following recommendations of the Study.

12.2 The following Ministries have taken action as listed below:

Ministry	Recommendation	Action Taken
Prime Minister's Office (Citizen Support Unit)	Finding 2- Level of Education Recommendation 2 ➤ Sustained and aggressive awareness campaigns targeting women and men at the community levels, in the workforce and all levels of society.	<p>A Capacity Building on Gender Based Violence has been completed for all Citizen Advice Bureaux (CABx) Organisers, in order to enhance their skills and knowledge in the handling of domestic violence cases. A dedicated service for victims of domestic violence in Citizens Advice Bureaux (CABx) has been set up. 35 CAB Officers have followed a training dispensed by the Ministry of Gender Equality on handling of cases of domestic violence. CAB Officers will sit on regional Domestic Violence Review Committees in order to network and discuss about cases. Based on the success of the first initiative, the CSU and Ministry of Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W. will consider sustaining the collaboration.</p> <p>An animated video clip is being conceptualised in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to be broadcast on TV by the end of 2019. The Citizen Support Unit (CSU) has included a time slot on the radio programme "CSU Azir pou Ou" as part of the campaign on domestic violence to educate the population at large on issues of domestic violence.</p>
	Finding 3- Employment Status Recommendation 3: ➤ Mapping of social problems to identify areas which require special support through the Citizens Support Portal.	<p>The Citizens Support Portal (CSP) is used as a platform to map social problems. In addition, it gathers information on reported cases of domestic violence through its online platform. Following receipt of a report on domestic violence, the case is referred to the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare for further actions. As at date, the CSU has received 47 reported cases of domestic violence, out of which 60% has been resolved at the level of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare. The CSP is part of a wider system to develop ways of bringing citizens'</p>

		experience of service delivery into planning and management of Government services. It also enables decision makers to adjust policies and programmes to influence outcomes on the ground.
Ministry of Defence	Finding 7- Triggers and Types of Domestic Violence Recommendation 7: ➤ Targeted rehabilitation programmes for each type of perpetrators of domestic violence	Prison Officers have been trained in the delivery of the “Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme” and a multi-disciplinary approach will be adopted for delivery of the different modules contained in the programme.
Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare	Finding 1- Marital Status Recommendation 1 ➤ Complementarity of NGOs and community based organisations to the Government entities.	<p>The Ministry works in close collaboration with Shelters to place victims of domestic violence who require a place of safety therein.</p> <p>Moreover, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns on gender-based violence, including domestic violence and on services offered by Family Support Bureaux (FSBx) are conducted on a monthly basis in collaboration with the National Women’s Council (NWC).</p>
	Finding 2- Level of Education Recommendation 2 ➤ Organisation of Couple Communication Skills-based Training for Couples by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare.	A Pre-Marital Counselling programme is run in all 6 FSBx to help engaged couples to anticipate challenges and conflicts so as to build up a healthy, strong and stable relationship.

	<p>Finding 4- Number of Hours Worked</p> <p>Recommendation 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revamping of the activities by Social Welfare Centres, Youth Centres and Women Empowerment Centres to maximise on the use of existing infrastructure. 	<p>The Ministry is seeking assistance from development partners to revamp activities of women centres across the island with a view to addressing emerging challenges relating to women’s empowerment.</p>
	<p>Finding 5- Sharing of Household Chores</p> <p>Recommendation 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustaining of the “Men as Partners” Programme 	<p>A “Men as Caring Partners” programme is being carried out at the community level focusing on family harmony and happiness. The programme runs over a period of 5 months in one locality and thereafter shifts to another locality.</p> <p>A reflection workshop on the changing nature of the family in Mauritius was organised in May 2019 with civil society organisations to address emerging challenges facing the family cell.</p>
	<p>Finding 10- Addressing Level of Morality</p> <p>Recommendation 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustaining classes on moral and human values, as well as civic education and human rights education at the school level, as well as youth groups, social workers in social welfare centres and women centres, amongst others. 	<p>Programmes on Strengthening Values for Family Life, Inter-generation Relationship and Marriage Enrichment are being implemented in different regions of the country.</p>

Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation	Finding 1- Marital Status Recommendation 1 <p>➤ Targeting at risk households, victims and perpetrators at the community level.</p>	<p>The Ministry has implemented a smart mobile apps platform with a number of mobile apps to improve the delivery of services to citizens, entitled- The Family Welfare Mobile App. It allows anyone to report cases of child abuse or domestic violence. The app features a prominent "Help Me Now" panic button when someone needs urgent assistance. As soon as this button is pressed, the victim is immediately localised by Geographic Positioning System (GPS) and immediate action is taken by a group of first responders at the Ministry of Gender Equality, C.D. & F.W.</p>
Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research	Finding 2- Level of Education Recommendation 2 <p>➤ Sustained and aggressive awareness campaigns targeting women and men at the community levels, in the workforce and all levels of society.</p>	<p>An Extended programme is being implemented in Grade 7 at Secondary School level to coincide with a specific programme being run at the level of the Police Services on coping strategies for victims of domestic violence. The programme capitalises on the "role-play/reflect/and empowerment" principles with a view to enabling victims to do away with victim-blaming in instances of domestic violence.</p>
	Finding 5- Sharing of Household Chores Recommendation 5: <p>➤ Gender Mainstreaming within the school curriculum by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research.</p>	<p>In line with the Nine Year Continuous Basic Education (NYCBE), a new curriculum framework for the secondary level had been developed by the Mauritius Institute of Education, with subjects such as Physical Education, Travel and Tourism, Entrepreneur Education being introduced in both boys' and girls' schools with a view to aligning the curriculum to get rid of any gender bias. There has also been the introduction, in 2018, of Design and Technology in girls' schools and of Home Economics and Textiles Studies in boys' schools as another major stride in the quest for Gender Parity. The proposed setting up of "Academies" may be considered as a further step to do</p>

		<p>away with any perception of bias as entrance to the Academies shall be open to both boys and girls.</p> <p>Provisions are also being made at the level of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research for home schooling services to children (girls and boys) who are bed ridden or suffering from specific health conditions.</p> <p>Through appropriate career guidance, girls are encouraged to take up engineering and information technology at tertiary level. Similarly, universities provide free access to such fields of study to both young boys and girls.</p>
	<p>Finding 10- Addressing Level of Morality</p> <p>Recommendation 10:</p> <p>➤ Sustaining classes on moral and human values, as well as civic education and human rights education at the school level, as well as youth groups, social workers in social welfare centres and women centres, amongst others.</p>	<p>Social and emotional well-being will be introduced in the Curriculum for students of Grade 7 to Grade 10. The curriculum will further include a topic on values and respect.</p>
<p>Ministry of Health and Quality of Life</p>	<p>Finding 1- Marital Status</p> <p>Recommendation 1</p> <p>➤ Targeting at risk households, victims and perpetrators at the community level.</p>	<p>Victims of domestic violence who attend regional hospitals are closely followed by Medical Social Workers.</p>
	<p>Finding 6- Personality Traits and Mental Health Issues</p> <p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>➤ Posting of psychiatrists and psychologists in each regional hospital.</p>	<p>Psychiatric services have been decentralised to all regional hospitals. Psychologists attend regional hospitals on sessional basis.</p>

<p>Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Finding 7- Triggers and Types of Domestic Violence Recommendation 7:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Capitalising on Social Workers and NGOs to map out a profile of high-risk areas. 	<p>A Database on high risk areas of poverty is kept at the level of the Ministry. Social Security Officers work in collaboration with NGOs and social workers to address challenges faced by vulnerable groups in pockets of poverty and towards protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. Concurrently, through the Elderly Watch Unit, the Ministry is also aware of cases of domestic violence on elderly women.</p>
<p>Ministry of Youth and Sports</p>	<p>Finding 10- Addressing Level of Morality Recommendation 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sustaining classes on moral and human values, as well as civic education and human rights education at the school level, as well as youth groups, social workers in social welfare centres and women centres, amongst others. 	<p>Training courses in Human Rights Education and Life Skills Programme are being implemented by the 28 Youth Centres across the island with around 1000 young people trained on an annual basis through the National Youth Civic Service.</p>
<p>Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives (Business and Enterprise Division)</p>	<p>Finding 4- Number of Hours Worked Recommendation 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotion of a balanced life-style. Both the public sector and the private sector should consider the welfare of families and promote activities to implement family-friendly workplace policies. 	<p>Flexible work arrangements are being implemented for all Officers at the level of the Ministry and a Team Building Exercise has been carried out. Fitness activities are further being organised at the level of the Business and Enterprise Division, including Yoga and Meditation.</p>

Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment	Finding 3- Employment Status Recommendation 3: ➤ Mainstreaming Gender into the Social Integration and Empowerment Act 2016.	It is reported that there is presently no gender-bias in the implementation of empowerment programmes under the Social Integration and Empowerment Act 2016, and that particular attention is provided to the empowerment of vulnerable unemployed persons.
	➤ Implementation of the Marshall Plan Against Poverty in a phase-wise manner with targeting of vulnerable groups through the Social Register Mechanism.	The Life Enhancement Programme for Adults is given to beneficiaries under the Social Register of Mauritius (SRM) by the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) in order to empower recipients to become responsible citizens. It is reported that the concept of gender equality has been included in the Life Enhancement Programme provided to the beneficiaries under the Social Register Mechanism. A Training and Placement Scheme being implemented enables unemployed beneficiaries to increase their employability and supplement household income. Such training programmes are being conducted in collaboration with different stakeholders including civil society. With regard to the implementation of the Marshall Plan, the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment reports that various proposals have already been implemented to provide support to people living in absolute poverty and found eligible under the Social Register of Mauritius.
	11- Addressing Feelings of Victims of Domestic Violence Recommendation 10: ➤ Increasing the number of shelters for additional transitional housing facilities.	Actions will be initiated to review the policy for grant of housing facilities to vulnerable groups.

Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms	Finding 2- Level of Education Recommendation 2 ➤ Work-life Balance policies to be instituted in the workplace to encourage family friendly time.	<p>Consultations have been initiated with relevant stakeholders, including the Pay Research Bureau and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development to consider a review of the grant of paternity leave to make it more gender responsive, as well as reviewing retirement schemes based on marriage grounds for male staff. Further discussions are required with relevant stakeholders in view of far reaching implications.</p> <p>The Civil Service College provides courses on “Increasing Productivity through Stress Management” to all civil servants through its online course module. The course is run for a duration of 2 full days.</p> <p>Various activities are organised all year round for the welfare and well-being of public officers and families by the Public Officers Welfare Council.</p>
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12.3 Action is awaited from the following Ministries:

Ministry	Recommendation	Remarks
Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare	Finding 1- Marital Status Recommendation 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identification of victims living in an Union Libre and imparting victims with “Couple Communication Skills” on a priority basis. 	No reported action taken
	Finding 2- Level of Education Recommendation 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Re-evaluation of the Pre-Marital Counselling and Marriage Enrichment Programme. 	No reported action taken
	Finding 5- Sharing of Household Chores Recommendation 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Launching of the UN Women “He for She campaign”. 	No reported action taken
	Finding 7- Triggers and Types of Domestic Violence Recommendation 7: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeted rehabilitation programmes for each type of perpetrators of domestic violence 	A Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme has been developed and facilitators comprising Family Welfare and Protection Officers, Police Family Protection Officers, Psychologists and Prison Officers have been trained on delivery of the programme in the community. The programme has, however, not yet been implemented.

	<p>Finding 8- Main Causes of Domestic Violence</p> <p>Recommendation 8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training of Officers dealing with cases of domestic violence on the type of questioning of victims and perpetrators depending on individual circumstances. 	<p>Facilitators identified to deliver the training on the “Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme” have been trained on the Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment (ODARA) Scorecard which is a domestic violence risk assessment tool to assess risk of future violence, as well as the frequency and severity of these assaults. The programme has not yet been implemented.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intervention Programmes provided to perpetrators for rehabilitation and behavioural change 	<p>The “Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme” has been developed which will <i>inter alia</i>, create a change of mindset amongst perpetrators once the programme is implemented.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Amendment to Section 3 of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) for mandatory counseling. 	<p>Amendment has not yet been brought to the PDVA.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reviewing of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) to strengthen the protection given to victims of domestic violence to prevent the risk of re-victimisation 	<p>Amendment has not yet been brought to the PDVA.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addressing cultural barriers that prevent victims of domestic violence from leaving abusive relationships. 	<p>No reported action taken</p>
	<p>Finding 9- Type of Violence Perpetrated</p> <p>Recommendation 9:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Capacity building programmes should be provided to Family Welfare and Protection Officers and Prison Welfare Officers to improve the quality of services offered to perpetrators of domestic violence. 	<p>Family Welfare and Protection Officers, Psychologists and Probation Officers have undergone extensive capacity building programmes on social enquiry reports, safety plans and interviewing techniques. The “Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme” formulated also draws influence from</p>

		<p>some principles of moral reconnection therapy and goes a step beyond and incorporates evidence based cognitive behavioural principles.</p> <p>The programme has not yet been implemented.</p>
	<p>Finding 10- Addressing Level of Morality</p> <p>Recommendation 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addressing the level of morality displayed among perpetrators as an entry point in the perpetrator rehabilitation programme. 	<p>The “Domestic Violence Perpetrator Rehabilitation Programme” has been developed based on international standards and will additionally address the level of morality of perpetrators.</p> <p>The programme has not yet been implemented.</p>
	<p>Finding 11- Addressing Feelings of Victims of Domestic Violence</p> <p>Recommendation 10:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Implementing economic empowerment programmes at the level of these shelters for the financial independence of victims. 	<p>An economic empowerment programme is in the pipeline for victims of domestic violence at the level of shelters.</p>
<p>Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Environment and Sustainable Development</p>	<p>Finding 1- Marital Status</p> <p>Recommendation 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Network of Professional Social Workers familiarised with the demographics of the area they are working in. 	<p>Social Security Officers operating under the Ministry work in collaboration with NGOs island wide through 32 sub social security centers in pockets of poverty.</p> <p>However, this will not yield the desired results. All concerned Ministries will have to pool efforts together.</p> <p>A Network of Professional Social Workers has not yet been set up.</p>
<p>Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms</p>	<p>Finding 4- Number of Hours Worked</p> <p>Recommendation 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotion of a balanced life-style. Both the public sector and the private sector should consider the welfare of families and promote activities to implement family-friendly workplace policies. 	<p>There is no full-fledged flexi-time policy in the civil service.</p>

13.0 COLLABORATION WITH DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

13.1 The Caucus recognises the critical role that development partners play in Mauritius in contributing to achieve our developmental agenda towards gender equality and equity. The Caucus is also aware of the obligations of development partners under the Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness (2005) where gender is seen as a cross-cutting strategy in development aids.

13.2 This agenda requires concerted efforts and pooling of resources from all quarters, from the public, private sector, civil society organisations and development partners.

13.3 As a consequence, the Caucus has engaged into strategic partnerships with development partners to identify areas of collaboration.

13.4 Meeting with Development Partners

- ⊕ On 06 December 2018, Members of the Caucus held an interactive dialogue with development partners working to promote gender equality and women's empowerment at the national level. The session was chaired by the Chairperson of the Caucus. The aim of the meeting was to identify avenues of collaboration between the Caucus and development partners, namely, the European Union (EU), the Australian High Commission, the French and American Embassies and the UNDP.
- ⊕ The UNDP Gender Expert made a presentation on the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee and identified areas which required urgent attention for redress.
- ⊕ Development partners also noted the progress made by the Caucus and took cognisance of the key findings and recommendations of the Studies commissioned by the Caucus as at date.

⊕ It was also agreed that the UNDP Gender Expert would sit, with Observer Status, on the EU High Level Policy Dialogue meetings with the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare in a bid to ensure that there were no duplication of work and resource allocation by Development Partners on gender and women's empowerment projects.

13.5 On 06 May 2019, the UNDP Gender Expert was invited to the 2nd High Level Policy Dialogue on Gender in connection with the Joint Monitoring Framework on the Implementation of the EU-Mauritius Gender Action Plan, the outcome of which will guide discussions contained in Article 8 of the Policy Dialogue between the EU and the Government of Mauritius.

14.0 GENDER INFORMATION SYSTEM

14.1 The Caucus noted that there was no online system that acts as a central point for gender related information. The UNDP Gender Expert drafted a conceptual framework for the setting up of an online Gender Information System (GenFo). GenFo will act as a depository of information on sectoral gender issues and will capture progress made by GFPs in sectoral gender mainstreaming initiatives.

14.2 On 04 June 2019, phase 1 of the system was set up with the support of the IT Unit of the National Assembly. Phase I remains static in nature, whilst Phase II of the system will be dynamic with GFPs having access to online learning modules on gender mainstreaming. GFPs will further be able to input information on progress made on the gender sensitive indicators developed by the Caucus.

14.3 In parallel, it was felt that some changes be brought to the Parliamentary Library Service.

14.3.1 The Caucus noted that there was a need to include adequate and updated materials on gender issues within the Parliamentary Library Service to be made available to all Members of Parliament. A dedicated space for a Gender Documentation Corner has thus been identified within the Parliamentary Library Service and is being populated accordingly.

14.3.2 Updated documents and publications on gender and women's empowerment matters are readily available for consultation by Parliamentarians.

15.0 PARLIAMENTARY OVERSIGHT ON THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

15.1 On 30 October 2018, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee) considered the Eighth Periodic Report of Mauritius. On 09 November 2018, the CEDAW Committee submitted its Concluding Observations to Mauritius as a State Party to the Convention as at Appendix II.

15.2 In paragraph 8 of the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee, the Committee stressed *“the crucial role of the legislative power in ensuring the full implementation of the Convention It invites the National Assembly and the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, in line with their mandates, to take the necessary steps regarding the implementation of the present concluding observations between now and the submission of the next periodic Report under the Convention.”*

15.2.1 As a follow-up to Paragraph 8 of the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee, the Chairperson of the Caucus led a delegation to Rodrigues from 29 May to 01 June 2019. The delegation comprised Honourable T. Benydin, PPS, MP, Honourable Mrs. M. A. Perraud, MP, and Honourable M. O. Mahomed, MP, the Deputy Permanent Secretary at the National Assembly and the UNDP Gender Expert.

15.2.2 The objective of the visit was mainly to (i) disseminate the Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee with Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (RRA); and (ii) engage with the Chairperson and Members of the RRA on their critical roles for overseeing the implementation of the Concluding Observations at the level of the Executive.

15.2.3 Members of the RRA were also briefed on the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) recommendations on the role of Parliaments and Parliamentarians in discharging their oversight duty to ensure the implementation of the principles contained in CEDAW.

15.2.4 Concurrently, the Caucus held a technical working session with representatives of the RRA. In the course of the session, Members were briefed on a proposed conceptual framework for the setting up of a dedicated committee at the level of the RRA to follow-up on the implementation of CEDAW and other women's rights/gender issues in Rodrigues. A decision will eventually be taken at the level of the RRA as to the type of mechanism to be set up for that purpose.

16.0 CONCLUSION

This Report is the first being submitted by the Caucus and enumerates the various actions taken in regard to its objective as set out in Standing Order 69 (6).

The Caucus recognises that oversight is a core function of Parliament to ensure effective, accountable and inclusive institutions as spelt out in the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 16-Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

In order to establish the baseline on the status of gender equality in Mauritius, the Caucus has adopted an evidence-based approach to guide the formulation of recommendations to Ministries. It has carried out capacity building of its Gender Focal Points as well as of its Members, and has engaged with development partners at the national level to establish a common platform on gender matters.

The Caucus acknowledges the various actions initiated at the level of Ministries in the light of its recommendations. It welcomes the key initiatives spearheaded by various Ministries, including the institutionalisation of Gender Responsive Budgeting in Mauritius. It further commends the fact that gender equality has been coined as one of the top ten priorities of Government as enunciated in its three-year strategic plan. It also appreciates that gender mainstreaming has been adopted as a cross-cutting issue to achieve Vision 2030 for sustainable development.

As a Parliamentary Committee, the Caucus will continue to embrace a culture of accountability. The Caucus will continue to exercise its oversight role to ensure that Mauritius is meeting its commitments towards the international human rights instruments on women's empowerment and gender equality to which the State is party.

17.0 GLOSSARY

CABx- Citizens Advice Bureaux

CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

CSU- Citizens Support Unit

DOVIS- Domestic Violence Information System

ECOSOC- United Nations Economic and Social Council

FY – Financial Year

GFPs- Gender Focal Points

GRB- Gender Responsive Budgetting

GIA- Gender Impact Assessment

HR – Human Resource

M&E- Monitoring and Evaluation

ODARA- Ontario Domestic Assault Risk Assessment

TOR- Terms of Reference

UNDP- United Nations Development Programme

18.0 APPENDIX

Appendix I

Standing Order 69 (6) [Added 06 December 2016]

(6) Parliamentary Gender Caucus

(a) There shall be a Committee to be known as the Parliamentary Gender Caucus (the Caucus) to be appointed at the beginning of every Session. The objective of the Caucus shall be to work for the promotion and attainment of gender equality.

(b) Membership

(i) Subject to paragraph (ii), the Caucus shall consist of the Speaker as Chairperson, the Deputy Speaker as Deputy Chairperson and not more than 15 members to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

(ii) The composition of the Caucus shall, as far as possible, reflect party representation and such other political representation and be gender balanced.

(c) Meetings

(i) In the absence of both the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson, the Caucus shall elect another Chairperson whose tenure of office shall be for the day of his or her election only.

(ii) The Caucus shall hold its first meeting at such time and place as the Chairperson shall appoint. Subsequent meetings shall be held at such times and places as the Caucus may determine.

(d) Quorum and decisions

A quorum shall consist of 5 members. Decisions shall, as far as possible, be reached by consensus. In case consensus cannot be reached, the decision shall be by majority vote.

(e) Duties

It shall be the duty of the Caucus to –

(i) recommend the carrying out of –

(A) periodical gender assessments of government policies;

(B) research on salient gender issues; and 35

(ii) facilitate networking with organisations and institutions in Mauritius and abroad in all such activities, with a view to promoting gender equality and participation.

(f) Powers

In the discharge of its duties under this Order, the Caucus shall have power to engage into agreements, as required, with such stakeholders, public and private as necessary.

(g) Reporting

The Caucus shall, as and when necessary, lay a report outlining its activities and achievements in the Assembly.

(h) Proceedings

Except as otherwise provided in this Order, the proceedings before the Caucus shall be governed by the other provisions of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Assembly relating to Select Committees.

APPENDIX II

Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The Committee considered the eighth periodic report of Mauritius (CEDAW/C/MUS/8) at its 1641st and 1642nd meetings (see CEDAW/C/SR.1641 and CEDAW/C/SR.1642), held on 30 October 2018.

The full text of the Concluding Observations of the Committee on CEDAW is available online at

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/africaregion/pages/muindex.aspx>

Reference: *CEDAW/C/MUS/CO/8*