



Republic of Mauritius



Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

National Gender Policy

2022-2030



March 2022

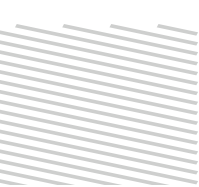


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FOREWORD

BY PRIME MINISTER



This year, we will be marking the celebration of the International Women's day with the launch of our National Gender Policy 2022-2030. The Policy establishes a clear vision and framework for a gender inclusive society.

An unwavering commitment to the principles of social justice and human rights has led us to develop a number of policies to remedy any gender inequality or inequity that still persists in our society.

Mauritius is signatory to multiple international and regional human rights instruments that protect women's rights. They provide that States must guarantee Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities to both men and women.

Whilst in the initial period after independence the authorities had to negotiate, persuade, and advocate for women to be treated at par with men, it has been possible, in later years, to place women at the core of development.



In 1982, former Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth had successfully set up the National Gender Machinery and brought amendments to the Constitution of Mauritius in 1995 to ensure that no discrimination is made on the basis of race, caste, place of origin, political opinion, color, creed and sex.

Today, Mauritius is more than ever determined to make every possible effort to incorporate a gender perspective into all policies and programmes.

I, therefore, reiterate my wish to effectively translate into concrete actions the provisions of all Sustainable Development Goals -particularly Goal 5 which reads thus : Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

This is precisely the main thrust of the National Gender Policy 2022-2030 which provides policy guidelines. We firmly believe that gender equality is vital for our country to achieve its development goals.

The Policy is expected to be an action-oriented agenda to engineer women's empowerment and do away with outstanding gender inequalities in the social, economic and political settings.

I call upon all our development partners, including the public and private sectors, the academia, the media and civil society's organisations, to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all their strategic and operational plans.

I would like to convey my appreciation to the meaningful contribution of all our stakeholders, particularly the United Nations Development Programme, for facilitating the formulation of the National Gender Policy.

It is my pleasure to dedicate the National Gender Policy 2022-2030 to all men and women of our Republic.

Pravind Kumar Jugnauth
Prime Minister

10 February 2022

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



The National Gender Policy for period 2022-2030, adopted by the Government of the Republic of Mauritius, lays emphasis on the bold objective to work continuously and tirelessly towards a gender- inclusive society.

In order to address the gender inequalities, deeply embedded in our society, it is crucial that a clear framework with comprehensive insights for the empowerment of women and girls in the social, economic and political domains be provided.

An “all-inclusive” consultative approach was adopted in formulating this policy which is, a critical tool for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 5: “**Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls**”, as a prerequisite for attaining the set targets of Agenda 2030.



This Policy document is guided by the key thematic of the Beijing Platform for Action 1995. The Policy maps strategies, governance tools, institutional settings and innovative approaches to be used for driving and supporting gender equality goals. The common thread of the Policy relates to gender mainstreaming which implies a shift from the well-anchored practices to challenging the assumption that policies are gender-neutral.

I would therefore urge policy makers and other key stakeholders to adopt a gender mainstreaming approach whilst devising policies to ensure that different needs of men and women are addressed relevantly, in a bid to ensure that the hard-won gains in addressing inequalities over decades are not lost.

Addressing the challenges does require a significant paradigm shift. I am confident that with the collective collaboration of the public and private sectors, the media, the academia and Civil Society Organisations we will be able to deliver more meaningful impact-oriented achievements for boys and girls, as well as for men and women.

All stakeholders are, therefore, called upon to use the National Gender Policy as an effective vehicle to eliminate all outstanding gender gaps.

Together we can usher a new era that is fair, resilient and gender inclusive.

Hon (Mrs) Kalpana Devi Koonjoo-Shah

Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

March 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

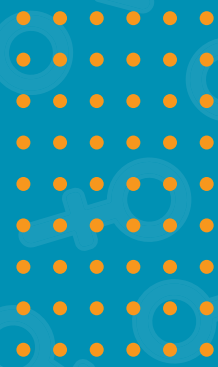
The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare (MGEFW) would like to thank State and Non-State actors who actively participated and engaged in the process by sharing experiences and reflections of the past gender policies. The reflections were invaluable in identifying the key priority areas.

The MGEFW acknowledges the unflinching support of the United Nations Development Programme Country Office (Mauritius and Seychelles) for providing technical assistance for the formulation of the National Gender Policy 2022-2030.

This Policy has been drafted using a participatory approach. We recognise the contribution of the Gender Unit for steering the process and all Ministries represented by Gender Focal Points, representatives of the Private sector, Civil Society Organisations/Non-Governmental Organisations, the Academia and the Media for providing incredible information for consideration in brainstorming, drafting and feedback sessions. We thank them for their openness in discussions and providing views based on a critical situational analysis, without which, the policy would not have been inclusive.

We would also like to appreciate the support of Ms Winfred Lichuma, International Consultant for putting the views received into the Policy document.





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The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare acknowledges the unflinching support of the United Nations Development Programme Country Office (Mauritius and Seychelles) for providing technical assistance for the formulation of the National Gender Policy 2022-2030.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Gender Policy (NGP) underlines the sustained commitment of the Republic of Mauritius to engender an all-inclusive legal, policy and administrative environment that promotes gender equality and equity as the basis for promoting sustainable development. As the third National Gender Policy (NGP), it essentially builds on the 2008 National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF)¹. Specifically, it seeks to align the 2008 framework to the current Vision 2030 development agenda of the Republic of Mauritius based on principles of equity, inclusiveness and has embraced pathways to substantive gender equality.



The NGP draws inspiration from global, regional and continental agendas and processes, focusing on the twin issues of development and poverty reduction. In this regard, it responds to the global agenda as guided by Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 5: “Achieve gender equality: and empower all women and girls”. It draws support from the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which provided new impetus to the State’s commitment to integrate gender into climate change actions. Regionally, the African Union’s Agenda 2063 focuses on the goal of achieving Gender Equality and Empowering all Women and Girls.

The purpose of the NGP is to have guidelines that will underpin Government’s commitment to integrate gender into all development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In this respect, it provides the basis upon which every sector, department and non-state actors will be guided to develop their gender policies for implementation at sectoral and institutional levels.

¹ This was an update of the 2005 National Gender Policy.



The Policy contains six chapters.

The first chapter highlights how the gender equality debate has evolved in Mauritius over the years and the corresponding policy and legislative initiatives that have been undertaken by Government. It also provides an analysis of the concepts of Gender, Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment and how they have been applied in response to the evolving socio-economic and political context in Mauritius.

The second chapter provides a gender analysis of key thematic issues focusing on the critical gender challenges that impact on the realisation of gender equality in Mauritius. Based on these analyses, it goes ahead to contextualise the priority development issues identified that require gender mainstreaming in the following eight thematic/sectoral areas: (i) Legislation and Policy; (ii) Education and Training; (iii) Governance and Decision-Making; (iv) Employment and Economic Empowerment; (v) Gender-Based Violence; (vi) Gender, Health and Well-Being, (vii) Gender and the Media, Information Communication and Technology; and (viii) Environmental Protection and Climate Change.

Chapter three outlines the NGP's framework consisting of the purpose and objectives, scope, vision, goal and anticipated outcomes of the policy.

This leads to the fourth chapter, which provides a detailed description of the policy objectives and the broad strategies around the eight-thematic/sectoral areas outlined in chapter two. The proposed strategies are expected to guide stakeholders, both in the public and private domains, in the design of specific sectoral action plans geared towards the operationalisation of the NGP.

Chapter five puts forward the institutional support required for the implementation of this Policy as well as the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. Whereas, chapter six concludes by briefly outlining the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) approach as well as the anticipated resourcing plans for the implementation of the NGP. A detailed Costed Gender Action Plan and an M&E framework is proposed to provide clarity on the strategic implementation of the NGP.



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AGDI	African Gender and Development Index
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CCIC	Climate Change Information Centre
DOVIS	Domestic Violence Information System
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council (United Nations)
EOC	Equal Opportunities Commission
ESI	Economic and Social Indicators
FWPU	Family Welfare and Protection Unit
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GFP	Gender Focal Point
GDI	Gender Development Index
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HLC	High Level Committee
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
MGEFW	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare



MOESWMCC	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
MOFEPD	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
MOHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
MOYESR	Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions
NGAP	National Gender Action Plan
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases
NGP	National Gender Policy
NGPF	National Gender Policy Framework
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NSCGM	National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NWC	National Women's Council
PGNs	Practical Gender Needs
PLHIV	People Living with HIV
PDVA	Protection from Domestic Violence Act
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGNs	Strategic Gender Needs
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STIs	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WHO	World Health Organisation
WID	Women in Development



1.0 CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The term *gender* refers to the different social roles, responsibilities, identities and attributes to women and men and the power relations between them in a given society. Gender roles and relations differ across countries and cultures and may even differ among different groups within one society. Gender is a social construction that has gained importance lately and has influenced how the world functions today. Gender stereotypes and norms rooted in patriarchy are the main causes of social inequalities. Every country has its own unique gender challenges.

In Mauritius, the discussions on gender and gender mainstreaming have been restricted to the binary definition of roles and responsibilities of male and female. In 2012, the World Bank in its unprecedented report entitled “*Gender Equality and Development*” argued that gender equality is linked with development because equality is a core development objective in its own right. The report further highlights that greater gender equality could enhance productivity, and improve development outcomes for next generation. On the other hand for the past couple of years, McKinsey Global Institute has released “*Women Matter Reports*”, which have demonstrated over a period of time that it makes great economic sense to have inclusivity and women matter in business and at workplace.² Likewise, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) considers gender equality and women’s empowerment as a key indicator in development.³ It is an integral part of the other 16 goals but has a stand-alone goal on “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”.

The NGP 2022-2030 is the third NGP framework for the Republic of Mauritius. The National Gender Policy Framework (NGPF) of 2008 was an update of the 2005 NGP. It was adopted to respond to the Programme Based Budgeting and Performance Management Initiatives of the Government which provided for the broad operational strategies and institutional arrangements that had been adopted to achieve gender equality.

This NGP is a review of the 2008 framework, to align it to the current Blueprint for Mauritius Vision 2030 that has considered principles of equity, inclusiveness and embraced pathways to substantive gender equality. The NGP also responds to the global agenda as guided by the Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially Goal 5.

² See Women Matter publications by McKinsey available at www.mckinsey.org

³ See Goal 5 of SDGs with its indicators.



1.2. The Concepts of Gender, Gender Mainstreaming and Women's Empowerment

This NGP is grounded on the understanding that gender is not measured in absolute descriptive representation in numbers. Gender perspectives will be visible in the impact of decisions taken, reviewed and how they are implemented. It is therefore, important to have clarity of the three concepts that will form the bedrock of the NGP.

Gender refers to attributes and roles associated with being male or female and the relationships between women and men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. These socially created gendered norms, attributes, and roles determine what is expected, allowed and valued in males and females by a given community in a given context/time-period, including responsibilities in access to and control over resources, in reaping the benefits thereof, and in decision-making opportunities.

In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities to the detriment of the female gender.

Gender is part of the broader social- cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis, include intersection of class, race, poverty level, ethnic group, sex, age and gender identity.

Gender Mainstreaming means the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislations, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels thereby, ensuring that the concerns, perspectives, needs and experiences of women and men, girls and boys are taken into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of any intervention, including in the budgeting process. This is to ensure that women and men benefit equally in political, economic and social undertakings and that drivers of inequality are not perpetuated.

Gender Equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration recognising the diversity of different groups of both sexes. Gender equality is not a “women’s issue” but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a pre-condition for and an indicator of sustainable people centered development.

Women's Empowerment refers to the process of women gaining power and control over their own lives and opportunities. It constitutes an important part of the efforts to bring about equal opportunities for men and women and involves awareness raising, building self-consciousness, expanding choices, increasing access to and control over resources and actions to transform and reinforce the structures and institutions which perpetuate gender discrimination and inequalities.

The NGP provides an important framework for collective action among all key stakeholders, in public and private sectors to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls and ensure their full enjoyment of all human rights. A detailed glossary of terms is annex.

1.3 Gender Equality in Mauritius

The Constitution of Mauritius, as amended in 1995, forbids discrimination based on grounds of race, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex. Other statutes are also geared towards the promotion of equality and non-discrimination. These include the Equal Opportunities Act enacted in 2008 and its amendments of 2011 and 2017; the Workers' Rights Act enacted in 2019 and amended in 2020; the Local Government Act of 2011; the Protection from Domestic Violence Act of 1997 and its subsequent amendments in 2004, 2007, 2011 and 2016; and The Protection of Human Rights Act of 1999 as amended in 2012. Further, the Equal Opportunities Act enacted in 2008, as amended in 2011 and 2017; and the Workers' Rights Act 2019 and its regulations of 2019-2022 reinforce the equal rights and forbid discrimination based on grounds of, namely, age, race, colour, caste, creed, sex, sexual orientation, HIV status, impairment, marital or family status, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, place of origin, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation.

Mauritius is a party to numerous international and regional human rights treaties and signed declarations and commitments that call on the State to respect, promote and fulfil human rights. These include, the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) of 1995, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) of 1994, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1976 and the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1976. At the regional level, Mauritius has ratified the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2017 and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa was adopted in 2004. The Government's commitment to the Agenda on SDGs presents it with an opportunity to achieve equality in all the 17 Goals.



The country has made great strides towards realising gender equality in laws, policies and administrative procedures. This has enabled Statistics Mauritius under the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to publish the Economic and Social Indicators on gender statistics that present the portrait of women and men and their demographic profile, health, family status, education attainment and labour force characteristics. The assessment is based on sex-disaggregated data obtained from administrative sources, household surveys and census.

The Human Development Index (HDI) Report 2019, ranked Mauritius 66 out of 189 countries with a human index value of 0.804 in the category of countries with High Development Index.

Globally, the Report noted that gender inequality remains one of the greatest barriers to human development with the average HDI for women which is 6% lower than that of men. It estimates that given the current progress, it would take over 200 years to close the economic gender gap across the planet.

At the African level, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) tool adopted by Heads of State and dubbed as the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI) has been used to assess gender performance of Mauritius in 2016. The Index is the measure of the status of women as compared to men in economic, social and political spheres and indicates the progress Government has made in implementing international and regional treaties. The 2017 African Gender and Development Index Report -Mauritius mentioned that gender inequalities are more pronounced in the political power block and lesser in the economic power block. Mauritius had excellent score under social power at 1.033, lower in the economic power block at 0.656 and lowest at 0.333 on political participation. Moreover, there is a low representation of women in decision making instances in public and private sectors. In economic power, there are notable wage differentials and under the Time Use, women spent more time on undervalued domestic care work and volunteer activities yet, there are fewer women in management and production. While in the Civil Service, there is equal pay for work undertaken, the private sector still experiences wage differences. However, education parity is achieved during enrolment, completion and literacy levels. The social welfare system has invested in child and maternal health which led to a high score on economic pillar.



2.0 CHAPTER TWO

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Overview

The Mauritius Vision 2030 agenda adopted in 2017 acknowledges the rising inequality in the country. In its performance measures, the Government's approach is to have an inclusive growth model that would ensure that the needs of all people are taken into account, providing everybody with equal opportunities.

Gender mainstreaming is a transformative approach with a great potential strategy to address inequalities, inequities and gender gaps that have persisted for long. The gender injustices embedded in patriarchy, cultural and religious beliefs must be countered by introducing gender considerations at all levels in society.

The NGPF 2008 made significant progress in providing and reinforcing an enabling environment to legislative, policy, administrative and planning in mainstreaming gender in the development agenda across sectors. The gender equality positive measures undertaken by the country, building on the adoption of NGPF and beyond over a period of time, include:

- (i) Institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming through establishment of Gender Focal Points and Gender Cells in all Ministries;
- (ii) (Gender mainstreaming programmes to increase gender awareness;
- (iii) Introduction of gender mainstreaming in the Government's fiscal planning;
- (iv) (Collection of Gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data through economic and social indicators;
- (v) Achieving gender parity in education;
- (vi) Increasing the proportion of women in senior management positions in the civil service; and
- (vii) Paid maternity leave for up to 14 weeks with flexible working hours for breast feeding mothers.

The MGEFW has steered implementation of the Policy with varying success in public bodies. While good progress is recorded, a Gender Audit in the Civil Service in Mauritius commissioned by the Parliamentary Gender Caucus in 2018 found that the gender mainstreaming in the sectoral Ministries was offset by constraints that included human and financial resources as well as lack of systematic approaches and technical capacity to effectively undertake the role of mainstreaming as required. The Ministry is in the process of drafting a Gender Equality Bill which provides for a legal framework to accelerate the achievement of gender equality in social, economic and political spheres in the country.⁴

⁴ Gender Audit in Civil Service in Mauritius April 2018



The implementation of the NGPF 2008 faced some challenges that require a new vision and strategies to bolster gender mainstreaming in both the public and private sectors. The main challenges are as follows:

- (i) Gender mainstreaming has not been properly and fully understood by implementing agencies and thus the Ministerial gender policy statements have not been internalised and institutionalised;
- (ii) the Gender Unit of the MGEFW has limited human resources capacity to undertake the monitoring and oversight role;
- (iii) Gender Focal Points have prioritised their core ministerial work and have not yet devoted adequate time to the gender mainstreaming assignment;
- (iv) the private sector, the academia, civil society organisations (CSOs) and the Media have not been able to engender their policies;
- (v) Lack of monitoring and evaluation framework; and
- (vi) The absence of a National Costed Gender Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming to guide implementation and resource mobilisation.

The gender audit carried out by the Gender Parliamentary Caucus in 2018, recommended that all Ministries should be called upon to formulate their respective Gender Action Plans to redress the weaknesses identified and that in-depth capacity building on gender mainstreaming should be undertaken across all Ministries. Further, the MOFEPD was called upon to implement its gender policy and institute Gender Budget Statements as part of gender responsive budgeting.

Guided by the views received from the participatory process of the review of the NGPF 2008, this new NGP has been developed. The new Policy provides the Government's explicit commitment to gender equality not only as being a human rights issue but also a development issue.

The NGP is based on the gender analysis of existing strategies and institutional frameworks to operationalise the commitment to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. The Policy identifies key stakeholders with their roles towards having a common understanding of the strategies to address gender inequalities. The ultimate goal is to integrate gender into the development agenda and achieve gender equality. The priority areas for the Policy are elaborated below.

2.2 Gender Analysis of key thematic issues

This section presents the critical gender challenges that impact on the realisation of gender equality in Mauritius. It also contextualises the priority development issues identified that require clear gender mainstreaming strategies.

The thematic areas will be largely presented as sectoral challenges but reflecting on the critical areas of concern from the BPfA 1995 and the new issues emerging in the SDGs. These are gathered from desk reviews of the Government Development Policy papers; consultations with key stakeholders from public and private sector; budget prioritisation in development areas and international and regional commitments. For example, the CEDAW Concluding Observations and the Recommendations from the Universal Period Review (UPR) will be considered and included for effective implementation of the international commitments arising from treaties and conventions.

2.2.1 Priority 1 - Gender inequality in legislations and policies

The Constitution of Mauritius forbids discrimination based on several grounds, including sex. The Equal Opportunities Act provides for equal access to opportunities in the area of employment and subject to exceptions, forbids discrimination on grounds provided in the Constitution but including non-discrimination based on sexual orientation in areas of employment and education, qualifications for a profession, trade or occupation, the provision of goods, services, facilities or accommodation, the disposal of property, companies, partnerships, societies, registered associations, sports, clubs and access to premises which the public may enter to use⁵. Further, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Act 2016 introduced provision for minimum number of candidates for election to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to be of a particular sex, with a view to ensuring adequate representation of each sex in the Assembly. The Workers Rights Act 2019 makes provisions to increase maternity leave from 12 weeks to 14 weeks. In addition, every employer shall comply with the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value. It also introduced 5 days' continuous paternity leave but the right is only available to those under marriage by law and not common law. The Government of Mauritius has enacted a Local Government Act 2011 which stipulates that at least one third of the candidates to be fielded for elections at Local/Municipal level should be of the opposite sex. In November 2019, the Government introduced the National Minimum Wage at Rs 10, 200; and as from January 2022, it stands at Rs 11, 075.

⁵ See Section 5(1) a & b of the Equal Opportunities Act 2008



At the institutional level, the Gender Unit of the MGEFW has taken the lead in the implementation of the NGPF 2008 in the public sector. Gender mainstreaming is anchored in the work of the Gender Cells that are established in every Ministry. The Protection of Human Rights Act as amended in 2012, has strengthened the mandate of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). The National Human Rights Action Plan 2012-2020 includes measures to strengthen women's rights in the context of equal opportunities. Members of the public can make complaints to several institutions and seek redress offered by the NHRC, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) and the Equal Opportunities Tribunal, amongst others.

The National Women's Council Act of 1985 was repealed and replaced by a new Act in 2016 and proclaimed in March 2018. The objective, thereof, was to revamp and strengthen its role for the implementation of gender equality policies and decisions; and the empowerment of women. The MGEFW has facilitated the drafting of a Gender Equality Bill that seeks to go beyond protection limited to sex by providing for gender equality principles aimed at reducing socio- economic and political inequalities and promoting gender mainstreaming and integration in national development.

A Parliamentary Gender Caucus has been established through amendment made to the Standing Orders and Rules and Regulations of the National Assembly in 2017⁶. The duties entailed recommend the carrying out of periodical gender assessment of government policies and research on salient gender issues and facilitate networking with organisations and institutions in Mauritius and abroad in all such activities, with a view to promoting gender equality and participation. It further provides a cross-party platform for male and female members of parliament to deliberate on and advocate for gender equality at the highest level of decision-making.

⁶ See Order 69(6) of the Parliament Standing Orders as amended in 2017

2.2.2 Priority 2 - Gender; Education and Training

Mauritius is a welfare State and has made tremendous progress in education. Every child has a right to education with compulsory basic education up to 16 years. Various opportunities are available for enhancement of education at tertiary and university levels. Policy on access to education also includes free transport and textbooks to primary and secondary levels, free tertiary education in public institutions, social security grants for students from poor families, a student tracking system to reinforce compulsory attendance and gender sensitive learning environment, curriculum and learning materials, among others.

Mauritius scores highly on education benchmarks on accessibility, availability and affordability. The 2017 AGDI report highlights the achievements to include; achieving the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, universal primary education and more girls enrolled at primary, secondary and tertiary levels than boys. Education policies give equal opportunities and access to education to boys and girls at all levels of the education system. Literacy rate for the year 2018 is at 91.3 % for the population aged 15-24 years.

Despite achieving gender parity in education, there are notable gender related challenges such as the gender gaps between qualitative and quantitative achievements in the education sector. While considerable progress has been made in ensuring universal enrolment in primary and secondary education, gender gaps are still pronounced. Women are still underrepresented in the science-based careers for example engineering and technology because girls are still less motivated to take up science subjects (STEM).

Some notable gender barriers include; high rates of drop out at end of primary schooling for boys, significant failures of both boys and girls at the end of primary level and high repetition at secondary level. Additionally, teenage pregnancy is still prevalent despite the Ministry of Education's return to school policy for girls who get pregnant during schooling. Therefore, there is a need to improve girls' access to vocational training, science, technology and continuing education. The Maritime Industry is another sector that is male dominated. To this end, the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and that of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation (MYESR) have launched sensitisation campaigns in secondary schools to inform and attract youngsters towards available career opportunities. However, girls are still inclined to enrol in social sciences and humanities, despite employment opportunities being more limited in these sectors as compared to the sciences, engineering and technological fields. The MYESR has also promoted programs of informal education. In 2019, 50.1% of boys were able to access informal education opportunities as compared to 49.9% of girls.

The Government seeks to address the challenges to keep track with gender parity in education at both lower and higher levels of learning for boys and girls.



2.2.3 Priority 3 - Gender; Responsive Governance and Decision-Making

Achieving gender equality requires women's active participation and involvement in decision-making at all levels starting at family level and extending to other social, economic, political and religious spheres. Various studies show that women bring different approaches and perspectives to decision making.

Women's equal access and participation in political decision-making is a pre-requisite for gender responsive governance. Gender equality is central to representation, participation, accountability, responsiveness, shared responsibility and transparency. Elections provide an opportunity to increase women's representation, address gender inequality and women's human rights and press for greater accountability on gender responsiveness. In political representation, amendment to the Local Government Act has enabled one third of female representation in electoral positions in Municipalities and District Councils. The gist of the legislation is that not more than two thirds of persons shall be of the same sex. The promotion of women representation has remained challenging because the electoral system; the-First-Past-The Post has made it difficult for women to present their candidature and be elected. Such barriers to women candidature in elective seats have resulted in the current percentage of women in the National Assembly, which stands at 20.0%⁷.

The number of women in senior leadership position has steadily increased though still low compared to men. As at December 2021, in the Public Sector, Senior Chief Executives formed 37.5% of the total, 39.5% Permanent Secretaries, 67.5% Deputy Permanent Secretaries, 57.9% Assistant Permanent Secretaries, 63.6% women judges and 59.2% female magistrates.

If the country is to achieve the desired 50/50 representation in decision-making positions on elective and appointive bodies, in public and private sectors, electoral reforms are inevitable. Other reforms will require provision of special measures to promote women's leadership in political parties and to engage in boards' management for better governance. Investment have to be made in capacity building and training to shift the mindset to accord women leadership opportunities.

⁷ Gender Statistics, 2020

2.2.4 Priority 4 - Gender; Employment and Economic Empowerment

The law prohibits discrimination in employment based on several grounds including sex. Many women have joined the Civil Service, but few are employed in the private sector where data available indicates that at the level of Chief Executive Officer, women representation is at 7%⁸. The Workers' Rights Act provides for the payment of 14 weeks paid maternity leave irrespective of the number of confinements. Men are entitled to 5 days of paid paternity leave from their annual leave.

Different rates in remuneration still exist in the agricultural sector specifically in the sugar and tea industries. It is noted that the labour legislation apart from the provision on maternity leave is gender neutral in application for both local and migrant workers.

Some of the barriers in the Employment sector include⁹ persistence of gender inequalities across sectors, inequalities of wages and income between men and women in certain sectors, non-availability of paid paternity leave, discriminatory wages in sugar and tea industries with female workers being engaged in lower skilled jobs and earning the lowest, difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities by married women and (high unemployment rates among the young women and men.) In addition, there are few women entrepreneurs as compared to men and an even smaller percentage of women-owned private enterprises.

2.2.5 Priority 5 – Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Domestic and intimate partner violence has been on the increase in the recent past years. The Protection from Domestic Violence Act (PDVA) and its subsequent amendments provide for protection to the spouses as well as persons living under their roof including children.¹⁰ It also enhances protection measures by widening its definition of domestic violence to include physical, emotional, sexual and threatened violence¹¹. Further, it increases the powers of enforcement officers thus enabling a magistrate to grant protection orders, occupational orders and tenancy orders. Heavy sanctions are also imposed for failure to comply with the orders¹².

In order to address existing gaps at the legislative, institutional and operational levels, a High-Level Committee (HLC) on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence, under the chair of the Prime Minister was established in January 2020.

⁸ ibid

⁹ Mauritius African Gender Development Index Report

¹⁰ See Amendment to Section 2 of the Principal Act

¹¹ See Section 11 repealed from the Principal Act and See Inserted Section 11A of the amended Act

¹² See Section 11 repealed from the Principal Act and See Inserted Section 11A of the amended Act



On 25 November 2020, the National Strategy and Action Plan of the High-Level Committee on the Elimination of GBV in the Republic of Mauritius 2020-2024 was launched in the context of the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The key elements of the strategy revolve around having a shared understanding of the nature and extent of gender-based violence in Mauritius, the commitment of multiple stakeholders, strengthening of the existing legislative and policy framework, capacity building of stakeholders; and a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The action plan proposed serves as a road map to achieve the National Strategy.

Despite great efforts to eliminate GBV and especially intimate partner violence, the number of cases reported in 2017 was 2,269, 2019 was 2,222 and 2,425 in 2020 on domestic violence remained high. Combating GBV and especially intimate partner violence requires a multi sectoral approach at all levels. While GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, men and boys, are also affected. It emanates from socially constructed roles and is a function of power relation between men and women.

The challenges that exist include; non reporting of offences by women due to the culture of silence, victims do not take advantage of the provisions of the law, more training for Police officers are required and there are few shelters and safe homes for the survivors. In addition, there must be support infrastructures such as housing units at their disposal after the shelter, subsidised nurseries and child day care centres after school for the working mothers to provide victims of domestic violence a means to build a life free from violence if they decide to separate from their violent partner. These facilities are yet to be provided and are inexistent at present due to budgetary constraints.

2.2.6 Priority 6 - Gender; Health and Well Being (MOH)

Being a welfare state, Mauritius has State free medical health care and the right to health. Numerous laws have been enacted to manage and control health and well-being of the citizens. For example, the Mental Health Care Act, Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care Act, Ayurvedic and other Traditional Medicines Act, HIV and AIDS Act and Food Act, amongst others. Considerable progress has been made in child and maternal health which led to low cases of mortality. Sexual and Reproductive health services are also available in all hospitals as well as health care centres.

Mauritius is experiencing low fertility level since fertility has been reduced to averagely two children per family. The country has made great achievements in general health, child health, and maternal health. However, the HIV /AIDS prevalence is still high among the hard-to-reach groups who include those who inject drugs, female sex workers, men who have sex with men and prison inmates.

Mauritius faces challenges in mitigating HIV /AIDS with the rate of new infections still prevailing among the Key Populations. The HIV prevalence is higher in men than women. Since October 1987 when the first case was detected, the number of People Living with HIV and AIDS has increased. With the introduction of the Harm Reduction Programme in 2006, the numbers of new HIV cases have decreased from 542 to reach 318 in 2020 representing 37 % of women. As at December 2020, there were 7,514 People Living with HIV (PLHIV) with 26% being women. While there is an increase in the number of new HIV cases through unprotected sexual intercourse, injecting drug use remains the driver of the HIV epidemic in the country. Universal access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) for the PLHIV has been implemented through WHO “Test and Treat” Strategy since August 2017. Mitigating the epidemic among the youth and young adults presents a challenge. The young people are considered as a vulnerable group for HIV/AIDS. Within 2020, 31.1% of new HIV cases among the age group 25-34 years have been recorded.

Generally, women are less likely to engage in risky health behaviours and therefore, face less illness. Their reproductive role also predisposes them to frequent visits to health care services. Men, on the other hand, tend to pay less attention to their health and that of their spouses. Statistics show that more men than women died in 2020 with the crude rate of 9.9% for men and 7.6% for women. Among the leading causes of death, diabetes Mellitus accounts for 24.9% of deaths among women as compared to 21.4% for men¹³.

¹³ Gender Statistics, Mauritius, 2019



There are emerging issues that are challenging to the health system. Cancer is a major health issue affecting women in the Republic of Mauritius. The most common cancer affecting women in Mauritius are Breast Cancer and Female Reproductive Organ Cancers (Cervix, Endometrium, Ovary, etc). In 2020, the incidence of breast cancer and Female Reproductive Organ Cancers accounted for 33.1% and 21.9% of all cancers in women respectively. For the same year, 23.7% of female cancers were due to breast cancer. (Female Reproductive Organ Cancers were attributed to 13.6% of cancer deaths in women). Moreover, the Ministry of Health and Wellness conducts nationwide screening programs for breast cancer (clinical breast examination) and cervical cancer (pap smear) in the context of the NCDs prevention programme¹⁴. Cancer patients require specialised treatment that may not be readily available. Women who lose their breasts due to cancer require artificial breasts, the cost of which is high. The care for the ailing patients and the elderly ones is time consuming, especially for women who most of the time are caregivers.

Other areas of concern for health include use of dangerous chemicals and excessive use of pesticides in agricultural produce. To respond to this, the Use of Pesticides Act was proclaimed in 2018 which has as main objectives to (a) regulate, control and monitor the use of pesticides in or on any agricultural produce; (b) develop strategies for the sound use and management of pesticides and for risk reduction associated with the use and disposal of empty pesticide containers; (c) keep relevant information on pesticides; (d) devise a Pesticides Code of Practice with a view to, inter alia, minimising risks to human health and the environment.

Feminisation of drug abuse just like teenage pregnancy, is also on the increase thus warranting the corresponding health consequences to be addressed. Sex education is already integrated in school's curriculum but there were concerns raised during consultations on the need to review the curriculum for its age appropriateness.

In 2020, life expectancy at birth increased from 68.2 years for men and 75.3 years for women as compared to the year 2000 which was 71 years for men and 77.8 for women respectively. This means women have a high expectancy than men and live around 6.8 years longer than men. This is an indication that measures must be put in place to deal with ageing population with specific reference to old- aged related diseases affecting women.

¹⁴ Incidence and Mortality Study for 2018 - Report of the National Cancer Registry, December 2019

2.2.7 Priority 7- Gender; the Media, Information, Communication and Technology

The media in Mauritius has increasingly reached wider segments of the population through advertisement, announcements, debates, live discussions and television stations. The media mainly uses print, radio and television as modes of communication. In the recent past, there has been an increase in the use of social media which has become very popular among the younger generation. The media, since 2017, undertakes live broadcast of Parliamentary proceedings giving an opportunity for citizens to engage with their elected representatives on contemporary issues that are debated in the House. Media plays an important role of educating and informing people on topical issues. However, media can also give stereotypical information that portrays women in a derogatory way. Partnerships with media will, therefore, help to engender the media content.

The media is mainly interested in political and social stories without keen focus on the gendered roles of women and men. Globally, all forms of media communicate images of the sexes, many of which perpetuate unrealistic, stereotypical, and limiting perceptions.

Women are under-represented in the media. The stereotypical portrayal of men and women reflects and sustains socially endorsed views of gender.

While significant progress has been made in the realm of media freedom, there are gender related challenges inherent in reporting and employment in the sector. Key ones includes: women's voices are grossly unheard; fewer women in the media industry in decision-making positions leading to perpetuation of gender stereotypes; there are more women in the support units thus pronounced gender division of labour; some contents aired by the media perpetuate gender stereotypes and sometimes encourage GBV; gender is not taken as a core issue in reporting; women technicians are a minority in the media industry; and gender stereotyping is a matter of concern in allocation of media assignments and tasks.

Media is a strategic and important actor in advancing the gender equality and women's empowerment agenda. It has the responsibility to engender its interventions whilst adopting a non-biased approach toward any sex. Government has, however, brought major reforms in the media sector by reviewing the media law so as to incorporate the latest developments and trends in the sector for its own benefit and that of the public at large so as to cause less damage to the privacy of the people.

On Information, Communication and Technology (ICT), Government's vision is to move to a full-fledged digital society. It will make extensive use of information technology to improve service delivery and access to information for the benefit of Mauritian citizens. To this end, Government has set up a portal where necessary information pertaining to education, training, employment and legislation are provided and disseminated. This process will have to be engendered as well.



2.2.8 Priority 8 – Gender; Environmental Protection and Climate Change

The impact of environmental degradation and climate change are not gender neutral. The delivery of environmental services, mitigation and adaptation actions must be gender responsive. Mauritius is increasingly experiencing extreme weather conditions, in particular torrential rains, flash floods and storm surges. These cause damage to agriculture, infrastructure, affect farmers and fishermen among others and cause suffering to families. The impact on women and men is often not similar in nature.

The Government has continued to mobilise resources to address these negative impacts. Some of the activities, include the construction of drains, rehabilitating works and protection of beaches, lagoons and coral reefs, undertaking landslide management initiatives, conducting disaster risk reduction operations, controlling pollution and promoting green industry, amongst others.

Sensitisation forms an integral component in environmental protection. To this end, the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change (MOESWMCC) has an Information and Education Unit which is responsible for awareness-raising and for sensitisation. Its role is to promote informal environmental education to change attitudes and behaviours of people for a greener, cleaner and sustainable Mauritius. Dissemination of environmental information is carried out using a multi-pronged approach.

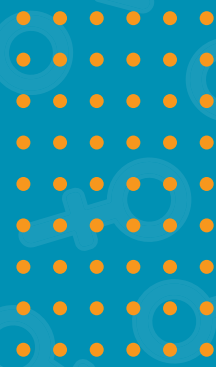
The communication tools used include power-point presentations, exhibitions, film shows, talks as well as distribution of pamphlets, medicinal plants, and posters. Sensitisation is also carried out through the Ministry's website. During the sensitisation campaigns with the women community, much emphasis is laid on women's role in environmental protection, simple actions that can be adopted and women can further contribute towards the realisation of a cleaner, greener and safer Mauritius.

In order to improve education, awareness-raising, human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning:

- (i) A Climate Change Information Centre (CCIC) has been set up since 2013. The CCIC provides consolidated information on climate change including gender mainstreaming that is accessible to the public; and
- (ii) A Climate Change Information, Education and Communication Strategy and Action Plan have been developed.

In view of the gender dimensions of climate change, the MOESWMCC, has, over the last decade been conducting awareness campaigns using innovative tools to sensitise women on mitigation and adaptation measures. To that end, the MOESWMCC has established an effective working mechanism with the MGEFW and the NWC. At policy level, the MOESWMCC has come forward with several initiatives which, include, *inter alia*:

- (i) the formulation of a Green Paper in 2011, entitled “[Towards a National Policy for a Sustainable Development](#)” with one of the core themes “Poverty, Social Cohesion, Gender, the Elderly and Disabled”. The Paper translates Government’s commitment to address gender issues and increase involvement of women on environment development as a pathway for the attainment of sustainable development. Women are a major target of the Climate Change Information, Education and Communication Strategy and Action Plan of the MOESWMCC.
- (ii) the adoption of the National Environment Policy in 2007 which has one among its principal objectives to “ensure equitable access to environmental resources and quality for all sections of society, and in particular for poor communities, whilst taking into consideration gender equity”.
- (iii) With the financial support of the Global Environment Facility, the MOESWMCC is presently implementing a project entitled “*Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) for Low Carbon Island Development Strategy*”. The main objective, thereof, is to ensure a low carbon path for Mauritius, by establishing the national capacity for formulating and prioritising NAMA and further develop the local capability to design and implement NAMA in the key sector. The project is structured into three components with related outputs whereby the gender dimensions are being addressed.



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Ensure equitable access to environmental resources and quality for all sections of society, and in particular for poor communities, whilst taking into consideration gender equity.

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3.0 CHAPTER THREE

THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

The NGP is a broad-based statement of commitment that establishes a clear vision and framework to integrate gender in all the development agenda of the Republic of Mauritius including and not limited to laws, policies, administrative procedures, programs and practices that seek to ensure non-discrimination of men and women, boys and girls. The process of integrating gender is two-fold, Mainstreaming Gender and Empowerment of Women and Girls.

3.2 Purpose and Objectives of the Policy

The purpose of NGP is to have principal guidelines that will underpin Government's commitment to integrate gender into all development processes, namely planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The Policy will be the basis upon which every sector, department and Non- State Actor are required to develop their sectoral gender policies.

The NGP is founded on the human rights-based approaches of equality and non-discrimination, transparency and accountability, respect and dignity, and inclusivity. The Policy will apply in equal measures to State and Non –State Actors.

Objectives of the Policy are:

- (i) to ensure an effective and sustainable implementation of the gender equality principles in the development agenda thereby ensuring gender considerations are promoted and integrated in all decisions and programme interventions;
- (ii) to offer an enabling environment that supports and translates the Government's commitment into concrete gender measures and actions;
- (iii) (to strengthen the implementation of gender equality principles in public and private sectors and enhance a coordinated approach towards gender mainstreaming;
- (iv) to provide and strengthen institutional framework to support gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment;
- (v) to facilitate identification, collection, compilation, analysis, presentation and dissemination of gender statistics and data disaggregated by age, disability, sex, as well as other variables; and
- (vi) to provide a framework for the development of a National Costed Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming for the Public Sector.



3.3 The scope of the National Gender Policy (NGP)

The NGP will apply to:

- (i) The Public Sector;
- (ii) Statutory Bodies including Commissions;
- (iii) Rodrigues Regional Assembly;
- (iv) Local Governments;
- (v) Private Sector;
- (vi) Civil Society Organisations (CSOs/Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);
- (vii) Media; and
- (viii) Academia.

3.4 The Vision, Goal, Approach and Outcome of the Policy

The Vision

An inclusive and just society free from all forms of discrimination where men and women; boys and girls have a choice to effectively participate in the social, economic, political and cultural activities equitably and equally for their growth and development.

The Goal

The overarching goal is to attain gender equality and empower women and girls.

The Policy Approaches

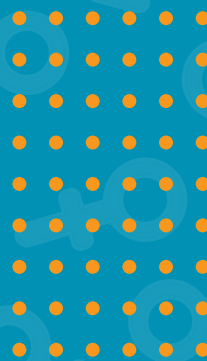
To effectively meet the goal, the following policy approaches will be utilised:

- (i) Gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women and girls through affirmative measures will be promoted and implemented at all levels in the public and private sector;
- (i) every Ministry, department or institution will be required to formulate its sectoral gender policy with key actions relevant to its mandate;
- (i) gender analysis will be carried out prior to adoption and implementation of any law, policy or programme including administrative procedures;
- (i) statistics and data collected by every institution will be disaggregated by sex and intersection parameters such as age and disability and other variables;
- (i) non – State Actors will be required to develop their respective gender policies; and
- (i) active male involvement and participation will be ensured in addressing gender concerns.

3.5 Policy Outcome

The NGP proposes strategies towards realising gender equality in every key area identified. The outcome will be a transformed society that ensures that there is no discrimination between men and women, boys and girls. The anticipated outcomes are:

- (i) all forms of gender-based discrimination will be eliminated;
- (ii) equity and equality in access to employment in public and private sector will be attained;
- (iii) empowerment of women and girls will be undertaken;
- (iv) the Gender Equality Bill will be enacted;
- (v) gender equality obligations from international and regional treaties/conventions will be fulfilled as commitments by the Government through legal reviews and amendments to legislations;
- (vi) unpaid care and domestic work will be recognised through provision of public services that promote shared responsibilities within the household and family, as appropriate;
- (vii) temporary special measures will be used to accelerate achievement of Gender Equality;
- (viii) necessary reforms will be introduced to assist working mothers to cope with the triple roles of women, namely, reproductive, productive and community roles;
- (ix) gender mainstreaming will be acknowledged and implemented in public and private sector as a strategy towards achieving gender equality;
- (x) capacity will be enhanced for all ministries to undertake gender mainstreaming as the strategy to achieve gender equality;
- (xi) capacity building of law enforcement officers, legal practitioners and judicial officers will be strengthened to facilitate realisation of equality and non-discrimination.
- (xii) more targeted reforms will be undertaken to give women equal rights to economic resources;
- (xiii) women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels will be enhanced;
- (xiv) gender Responsive Budgeting will be adopted and implemented across all sectors; and
- (xv) reforms will be undertaken to ensure that the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls are safeguarded.



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The outcome will be a transformed society that ensures that there is no discrimination between men and women, boys and girls.

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4.0 CHAPTER FOUR

POLICY OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

4.1 Broad Strategies

Gender Mainstreaming is a strategy to achieve gender equality. It involves a process of change and transformation and calls on high level of commitment and political goodwill to integrate gender. Gender mainstreaming must be an integral part of the core business and cannot, therefore, be taken as an isolated process. It urges the implementers to apply a gender lens while addressing structural issues that cause gender inequality.

The gender mainstreaming strategy adopted here is twinning gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. In its application, it aims to transform organisational process and practices by eliminating biases either real or perceived.

The process calls for commitment from the highest office of every implementing organisation. The process will alter normal operations and it will not be business as usual.

The broad strategies include:

- (i) provision of adequate access and opportunities to women and men, girls and boys;
- (ii) undertaking of effective measures to ensure full participation of women and men, girls and boys in decision-making;
- (iii) development of sectoral and institutional gender policy statements and gender action plans to guide operations;
- (iv) generation of gender statistics and data disaggregated by variables including age, sex, disability and any other social variables as appropriate;
- (v) development of a clear monitoring and evaluation framework with clear indicators that will continuously monitor implementation and reporting accordingly;
- (vi) development of gender-mainstreaming tools to assist implementing partners and sectors to adopt and adapt. These will include public and private actors;
- (vii) provision of targeted training, capacity building, awareness creation and sensitisation programmes at all levels including rural communities. These should seek to challenge gender inequalities perpetuated by patriarchy;
- (viii) encouraging the public and private sector, the media, academic institutions CSOs and NGOs to participate in the implementation of the NGP. To this end establish Gender Sector Technical Working Groups to facilitate the process; and
- (ix) strengthening of the National Gender Machinery at all levels to provide a coordinated front to facilitate implementation; monitoring and evaluation of the Policy.



4.2 Thematic specific objectives and strategies

Policy Objective

4.2.1 Promote inclusion of gender equality in legislations and policies

Despite progress made through the amendment of the Constitution and enactment of other enabling laws, there are still gaps in the legal and policy frameworks that need to be addressed to propel the realisation of gender equality.

Strategies:

- (i) Advocate and hold consultations with various actors including religious leaders on review and amendment of the Constitution in Sections 3 and 16 to strengthen protection from discrimination based on gender;
- (ii) disseminate the Concluding Observations of CEDAW and other related international and regional treaties;
- (iii) facilitate the enactment of the Gender Equality Bill, implementation of the NGP and development of sectoral and institutional gender policies;
- (iv) conduct gender audits and review of all existing relevant laws to identify gender gaps;
- (v) undertake lobbying and advocacy to promote gender responsive laws and policies, enacting of special measures in political representation in favour of women, gender responsive budgeting, and access to justice for women and girls;
- (vi) mobilise resources from strategic partners including the private sector to support civic education on the women's rights as human rights;
- (vii) acilitate a friendly environment for women to access justice; and
- (viii) develop strategic partnerships with NGOs, private sector, academia and media, amongst others, to promote gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment by enforcing existing laws and promoting the NGP.

Policy Objective

4.2.2 To ensure equal access to education and training opportunities

The education system has made education accessible, available and affordable, with subsidised costs, grants and scholarship schemes. There is need to address identified challenges to eliminate any gender disparity, maintaining parity in education yet appreciating diversity and inter-generational gaps and promoting intersection.

Strategies:

- (i) strengthen access to equal opportunities in education for women and men, boys and girls that include study options and personal development;
- (ii) develop gender responsive guidelines to increase the number of women in STEM subjects and introduce mentorship programmes to encourage girls to venture in science subjects;
- (iii) advocate for universities and institutions of higher learning to develop and adopt gender policy statements, promote women and gender studies for men and women, and further integrate gender mainstreaming in general regular courses;
- (iv) review the curriculum materials to facilitate learners change their mindset on gender, and gender relations;
- (v) promote gender related sectoral research and documentation in institutions of learning;
- (vi) enforce collection of gender statistics and data disaggregated by intersection –sex, age, level of education and disability among other variables;
- (vii) educate communities on re- entry policy for girls who become pregnant while in school to enable them to continue with their education after delivery;
- (viii) promote all-inclusive learning for boys and girls with disabilities and sensitise parents and families on the importance for children with special needs to attend school and facilitate their access thereto; and
- (ix) introduce curriculum on sexuality appropriate to age in schools at all levels to facilitate accurate information on matters of sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Policy Objective

4.2.3 To ensure equitable participation and representation of men and women in governance, in both public and private sector.

Mauritian women have participated in decision making at all levels. However, while there is gender parity in the workforce in the Civil Service, there are still few women in decision-making positions and even fewer employed in the private Sector. This, therefore, creates the need to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions, including political leadership in the National Assembly.

Strategies:

- (i) promote and advocate for legal reforms and review of the Electoral law and system to provide for gender equality in Parliament and specifically provide for special measures as appropriate;
- (ii) promote gender mainstreaming in Parliament and Political Party Leadership to increase women's leadership in political parties;
- (iii) encourage and sensitise communities as voters to support more women as candidates in political arena;
- (iv) encourage the private sector to consider employing more women and offer favourable gender responsive working conditions for young mothers;
- (v) provide mentorship programmes including coaching women to engage actively with corporate governance to serve on public and private boards;
- (vi) promote representation of men and women in all areas of decision making including providing special measures where there is need to bring women into the decision-making levels; and
- (vii) facilitate and develop curriculum for targeted short-term training on gender equality and gender mainstreaming at the Civil Service College and any other educational institution for public officers, including policy makers.

Policy Objective

4.2.4 To promote equality and equity of access to economic opportunities

Strategies:

- (i) promote the publication of gender equality statements by ministries, departments and parastatals in the Annual Reports and encourage large corporations in the private sector to also publish such statements;
- (ii) review labour laws and practices to allow introduction of flexible patterns of work and family friendly work practices that will reconcile family responsibilities with paid work;
- (iii) engender employment policies for greater inclusion of women at all levels including in decision- making, promotion of equal opportunities with career prospects for women and elimination of gender pay gap across all cadres and positions;
- (iv) advocate for supportive environments (legislative and policy) that promote equitable income, opportunities and resources to both men and women to accelerate poverty reduction and address feminisation of poverty;
- (v) promote collection of gender responsive disaggregated statistics to measure the value of unpaid care work;
- (vi) promote accessible, affordable and favourable banking services for men and women to develop their entrepreneur skills;
- (vii) promote and review-funding mechanisms provided through Government support to develop skills for women entrepreneurs and women led enterprises;
- (viii) facilitate an enabling environment for SMEs to access markets and form networks for marketing their products locally, regionally and internationally;
- (ix) undertake studies to consider investing in social welfare services that include child-care, care for the elderly and healthcare to reduce the burden of women on care work;
- (x) enforce the National Code and Corporate Governance Mauritius (2016) that requires all organisations to have directors from both genders as members of the board;
- (xi) facilitate training of women to improve their entrepreneurial and labour skills to allow them to effectively compete in business as well as the labour market; and
- (xii) facilitate women access to market and trade with Government by providing preferential treatment in Government procurement to women, youth and persons with disabilities.



Policy Objective

4.2.5 To eliminate and mitigate all forms of gender-based violence

Strategies:

- (i) enhance awareness on the dangers of GBV, including intimate partner violence and sensitise the population to embrace a culture of reporting the offence to the police;
- (ii) organise targeted training for stakeholders (NGOs and other partners) managing survivors and perpetrators on the utilisation of the Domestic Violence Information Systems (DOVIS) as well as on how to effectively manage survivors;
- (iii) enhance investment and programming that seek to rehabilitate perpetrators and consider establishment of rehabilitative institutions as well as support infrastructures to provide victims/survivors of domestic violence a means to reconstruct themselves and get out of violent relationships;
- (iv) strengthen the GBV evidence-based through targeted researches focusing on key topical issues in GBV programming including cost of managing GBV on the GDP as a development barrier and causes of low convictions in cases of GBV, among others;
- (v) enhance implementation of the legislative framework as well as advocacy and education programmes to simplify the law making it accessible in local language; and
- (vi) develop a monitoring and evaluation-tracking tool on reported cases of GBV across the country to establish the drivers and strengthen intervention mechanisms in place to deal with them.

Policy Objective

4.2.6 To promote healthy living and wellness for all

Strategies:

- (i) Promote health awareness programmes for men and women, boys and girls with respect to intersection of gender including age, disability, and sexual orientation, among others;
- (ii) facilitate health care services at the level of local authorities for the terminally ill patients enabling working families to cope with that situation;
- (iii) offer subsidy for plastic reconstructive implants for women who have undergone breast cancer surgery;
- (iv) sensitise communities on preventive measures on food consumption for healthy living (particularly with regard to the use of pesticides in Mauritius);
- (v) undertake research on sexual and reproductive health and its impact on women and girls, disaggregating the data by age, disability and other status, including sexual orientation;
- (vi) increase focus on sexual and reproductive health and rights programmes on adolescents;
- (vii) set up day care centres and provide other support services, which are accessible and affordable to men and women suffering from degenerative diseases to relieve women from caring roles; and
- (viii) research and document the causes of teenage pregnancies and make linkages to gender-based violence, abortion, HIV, and AIDS and STIs.

Policy Objective

4.2.7 To increase gender responsiveness in the management of environment

The impact of climate change is not gender neutral and therefore the mitigating and adoption actions must be gender responsive. The Climate Change Information Centre (CCIC) provides consolidated information on climate change that is accessible to the public at large. The centre gathers information on gender mainstreaming.

Strategies:

- (i) Enhance sensitisation on the gendered approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- (ii) implement the State Parties agreed United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Gender Action Plan as adopted in 2017;
- (iii) integrate gender perspective in the proposed Blue Economy Strategy and Implementation plan.



- (iv) integrate training on gender responsiveness in planned actions, for example Disaster Risk Management, Natural Resource Management and Environment Management;
- (v) design gender mainstreaming programmes for inclusion in the revamped programmes on climate change for example programmes geared towards support of victims of flood or other calamities and elimination of waste through recycling;
- (vi) promote gender responsiveness in renewable energy planning and focus on clean energy for domestic use; and
- (vii) promote programmes, which will enable women engage in green business development for income generation to contribute effectively to a green economy.

Policy Objective

4.2.8 To enhance gender responsive and responsible reporting in the media

Strategies:

- (i) Promote capacity building and training in leadership, management and gender reporting among the media and enforce a gendered approach in the relevant educational curricula;
- (ii) ensure enhanced access to information through local media channels to eliminate stereotyping;
- (iii) work with the media to voice women's views and gender perspectives on matters like economics, health and politics, among others;
- (iv) strengthen adult education programmes to increase literacy levels to varied media contents;
- (v) build capacity of women to work in the technical production aspects of media;
- (vi) simplify laws and gender mainstreaming plans and actions to facilitate clear messaging by the media to the communities;
- (vii) develop a holistic ICT Education Strategy that seeks to introduce ICT education at early stages of school to inspire girls to develop interest in ICT, encourage universities to invest in ICT and increase the yearly intakes for students (both boys and girls) through provision of scholarships and encourage students studying ICT to become Techno- entrepreneurs since Technology is an enabler to transformation that should be used to its fullest; and
- (viii) promote private sector innovative ideas in using technology to facilitate service delivery, for example, in health application.

5.0 CHAPTER FIVE

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Institutional Framework and their Roles

The Institutional support for the implementation of the Policy and the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders to facilitate implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the NGP are provided below:

Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
Ministry for Gender Equality and Family Welfare	(i) Acts as the National Gender Machinery and Lead Agency on gender mainstreaming. (ii) promotes gender equality at Ministerial and Cabinet Level; (iii) Develops the National Gender Policy and coordinate its implementation; (iv) Ensures effective gender mainstreaming in public and private entities; (v) Develops National Gender Action Plan (NGAP) for implementation by Ministries/ Departments; (vi) Ensures integration of gender in social, economic and political development agenda; (vii) Oversees development of sector specific policy statements and Gender Action Plans with gender-sensitive indicators for implementation and monitoring; (viii) Creates and monitors integration processes of Gender Technical Working Groups for the Private Sector, Media, Academia and Civil Society Organisations and use these platforms to advocate and mainstream gender; (ix) Reports to treaty monitoring bodies at the international, regional and continental level; (x) Disseminates international and regional treaties and concluding observation; (xi) Reports to the National Assembly annually on the progress made towards gender mainstreaming; (xii) Set performance indicators for reporting by the Supervising Officers on progress made in gender mainstreaming in their respective Ministries/ Departments; and (xiii) Receive periodic reports on progress made towards Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB).



Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
Gender Cells at Ministerial Level	(i) Every Ministry and public agency or department to establish a gender cell with the mandate to institutionalise gender mainstreaming in all plans, programmes and budgets of the Ministries/ Departments/ Agencies. (ii) The Deputy Permanent Secretary of every Ministry/ or a senior managerial officer appointed by the Supervising Officer to chair the Gender Cell meetings and report to the Supervising Officer. (iii) The composition of the Gender Cell shall include the following: (a) a Deputy Permanent Secretary as chair of Gender Cell with an Alternate Member from the Technical arm of the entity; (b) a Senior Human Resource Officer; (c) a Senior Officer of Finance; (d) a Senior Technical Officer; and (e) a Senior Statistician; (iv) The Supervising Officer will report performance Quarterly to the Minister who will report to cabinet annually.
National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming (NSCGM)	The Minister will chair the meeting attended by Supervising Officers of every Ministry to report progress on gender mainstreaming in their Ministries/ Departments. The NSCGM will: (i) Closely monitor and evaluate overall implementation of the NGP on progress of development of sectoral policies and engendering their programmes (ii) Provide guidance and wherever necessary new strategic orientation for effective implementation of the NGP. (iii) Provide a forum for exchange of views and discussions on current and emerging gender related issues and engendering budgeting processes. (iv) Identify gaps towards successful implementation of NGP and provide solutions for redressing gender gaps. (v) Establish where necessary sectoral working groups at the level of Ministries/ Departments to formulate gender policies. (vi) Ensure that a culture of gender responsiveness prevails at the workplaces of Ministries/ Departments.

Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
Inter-Ministerial Gender Technical Working Committee	(i) Act as a consultative forum for GFP to discuss progress, achievements and challenges of implementing their sectorial gender policies and action plans, chaired by the Head Gender Unit. (ii) Provide guidance on adherence to gender mainstreaming as per this Policy. (iii) Collaborate with all sectors to ensure their policies and actions plans are aligned with the NGP. (iv) Set the agenda for the National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming (NSCGM) chaired by the Minister.
Gender Focal Point	(i) Act as the reference point for gender issues in the Ministry and report progress to the Supervising Officer. (ii) Attend consultative Inter-Ministerial Technical Working Committee meetings to report progress. (iii) Oversee gender mainstreaming in policies and strategies in the Ministry and to ensure that each Department implements the Ministerial gender policy statement derived from the NGP. (iv) Ensure collection, collation and dissemination of gender statistics with data disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other relevant parameters in their work. (v) Establish mechanisms to link and liaise with Non -State Actors relevant to the Ministry's mandate. (vi) Coordinate gender training and education of administrative and technical staff within relevant Ministries. (vii) Assist in monitoring and evaluation of progress made by the Gender Cell regarding projects and programmes as per the Gender Action Plan.



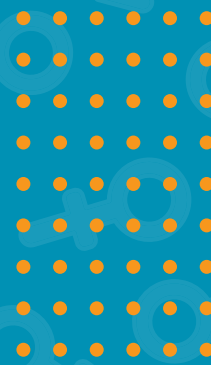
Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
The National Women's Council	(i) Implement women's empowerment programmes for the social and political empowerment of women, which shall be aligned to the policies of the MGEFW. (ii) Promote women's empowerment for the attainment of gender equality. (iii) Ensure accountability to the MGEFW and provide regular feedback to the Gender Unit on the implementation of women's empowerment programmes. (iv) Establish an effective communication with both the Gender Unit of the MGEFW as well as civil society organisations, particularly with contemporary women's associations/ organisations which mandates are aligned to the objects of the NWC Act of 2016. (v) Ensure and promote the active participation of women in the social and political fields in order to further their overall empowerment. (vi) Provide a platform for women to voice their needs, concerns and aspirations.
National Women Entrepreneur Council	(i) Promote and implement women's economic empowerment programmes. (ii) Coordinate activities of women entrepreneur associations. (iii) Identify actions and projects that will promote entrepreneurial activities of women. (iv) Evaluate and assess the needs of women entrepreneurs. (v) Establish training programmes aimed at improving management skills and aptitudes of women entrepreneurs. (vi) Promote cooperation and research with respect to women entrepreneurship development. (vii) Develop networks and affiliations with other bodies in Mauritius. (viii) Examine and evaluate the contribution of women entrepreneurs to various sectors. (ix) Study specific areas where the development of women entrepreneurship needs to be strengthened.

Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
All Ministries, departments, parastatals, constitutional commissions, local authorities and Government agencies	(i) Establish a Gender Cell as provided. (ii) Appoint a Gender Focal Point as per the guidelines. (iii) Develop sector specific gender policy statements. (iv) Develop gender action plans to implement the policy together with a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that is gender responsive. (v) Monitor implementation of the action plans and disaggregated data by sex, age, disability and any other variables.
Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development	(i) Spearhead and coordinate gender responsive budgeting through the gender budget statements. (ii) Undertake research on gender responsive budgeting to facilitate future disbursements. (iii) Develop gender responsive budgeting guidelines for sector specific budgeting. (iv) Set gender indicators and tracking tool for Gender Responsive Budgeting from all Ministries and Government Agencies.
Statistics Mauritius	(i) Develop gender indicators for collecting data disaggregated by sex, age, and other social variables; document and disseminate gender statistics in the Economic and Social Indicators (ESI) publication. (ii) Produce timely reports on gender statistics to facilitate decision-making. (iii) Promote gender mainstreaming into the planning and policy review processes.
Private Sector	(i) Partner with the MGEFW to implement the NGP to promote understanding of the concept of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in private sector. (ii) Support gender mainstreaming activities by engaging in the said activities. (iii) Ensure compliance with the policy at institutional level including decision-making levels. (iv) Implement and monitor institutional performance in gender mainstreaming. (v) Integrate gender mainstreaming perspectives in their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programmes. (vi) Establish the Gender Technical Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming to ensure that gender is mainstreamed.



Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)	(i) Facilitate capacity building and sensitisation programmes on the NGP. (ii) Mobilise resources from development partners and CSR for gender mainstreaming. (iii) Partner with the MGEFW to implement the NGP. (iv) Provide shelters as a measure toward provision of an emergency accommodation to women who are victims of domestic violence and to their children. (v) Lobbying and advocating for the enactment of the Gender Equality Bill and to review other enabling legislations which may not be compliant to realising gender equality. (vi) Support Ministries to carry out sensitisation programmes. (vii) Monitor the implementation of the NGP. (viii) Ensure Government accountability for respecting gender equality principles. (ix) Undertake gender sensitisation on the NGP and the existing laws at community level. (x) Establish the Gender Technical Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming to ensure that gender is mainstreamed by CSOs.
Media	(i) Collaborate with the MGEFW to promote and disseminate information as per NGP. (ii) Publicise gender equality messages to educate the public. (iii) Create awareness about gender equality. (iv) Ensure capacity building of media staff and management in gender responsive reporting. (v) Ensure that GBV cases are reported in a gender-sensitive manner. (vi) Avail platform for experts to discuss the matter in media. (vii) Ensure that reporting in the press is done in a gender sensitive manner to avoid stigmatisation and sensationalism. (viii) Establish the Gender Technical Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming to ensure that gender is mainstreamed by the Media.

Responsible/ Implementing Institution	Roles and Responsibilities
Academia and Research Institutions	(i) Collaborate with the Gender Unit and other Ministries/ Departments to facilitate research and training. (ii) Undertake research on topical issues on gender equality. (iii) Design and facilitate courses – long and short term on gender and women’s issues. (iv) Document and review gender equality and gender mainstreaming in development. (v) Establish the Gender Technical Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming to ensure that gender is mainstreamed by the Academia and Research Institutions.
Parliamentary Gender Caucus	As per its mandate in the Standing Order: (i) Recommend the carrying out of periodical gender assessments of Government’s policies and 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.



The Responsible / Implementing Institutions

- Ministry for Gender Equality and Family Welfare
- Gender Cells at Ministerial Level
- National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming
- Inter-Ministerial Gender Technical Working Committee
- Gender Focal Point
- The National Women's Council
- National Women Entrepreneur Council
- All Ministries, departments, parastatals, constitutional commissions, local authorities and Government agencies
- Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
- Statistics Mauritius
- Private Sector
- Civil Society Organisations
- Media
- Academia and Research Institutions
- Parliamentary Gender Caucus





6.0 CHAPTER SIX

COORDINATION AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the National Gender Policy (NGP) is a multi-sectoral process that will expect all partners to have both implementing and monitoring roles. However, the key coordination and oversight role lies with the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare (MGEFW). Moreover, the Planning and Research Unit of the Ministry will act as the Monitoring and Evaluation organ to ensure that all sectors are guided with key indicators and reporting that is gender responsive.

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy will be developed to provide clarity on the strategic implementation of the NGP. The operational M&E shall guide on format of reporting from the sectors by developing social indicators to measure Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. Statistics Mauritius will partner with the MGEFW to facilitate accurate reporting through the Economic and Social Indicators on Gender Statistics publications.

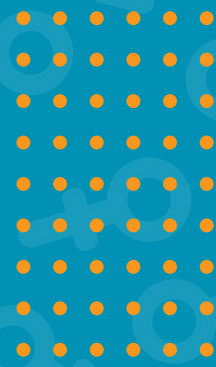
6.2 Resource Mobilisation

The Policy will require adequate human and financial resources for implementation. The MGEFW will undertake an assessment to establish the required human resources optimum to help facilitate gender mainstreaming and capacity building in line Ministries. The Ministry will seek enhanced budget to recruit Gender Experts/Analysts to be based at the Ministry, who would be designated to line Ministries for that purpose.

Financial resource mobilisation for the policy shall be a continuous process. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFEPD) will undertake a study on the feasibility of Gender Responsive Budgeting in Mauritius. The results will facilitate an informed decision on resources allocated to the Ministries for gender mainstreaming. These will be done without necessarily setting aside additional resources for gender programming. Annual budgets will reflect gender perspectives to be undertaken by every Ministry and/or Department.

Resources will be mobilised through:

- (i) Annual Ministerial Budgetary Allocations;
- (ii) International Development Partners;
- (iii) Regional Development Agencies;
- (iv) Private Institution through the Corporate Social Responsibility; and
- (v) Partnerships with financial Institutions and other stakeholders supporting the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Agenda.



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The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategy will be developed to provide clarity on the strategic implementation of the National Gender Policy. It is a multi-sectoral process that will expect all partners to have both implementing and monitoring roles. However, the key coordination and oversight role lies with the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare.

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GLOSSARY

Sex	Sex refers to biological differences between females and males. For the vast majority of people, the biological sex does not change over time. In some cases, however, the biological sex of a born baby is not clearly defined. These cases are called intersex. In some other cases, a person may decide that he or she is born in a wrong body and wants to change his or her biological sex through hormonal treatment and/or a surgical operation. This is called transsexual. In addition, women and men may have different sexual preferences/orientations. While the norm is that people feel sexually attracted to the opposite sex, which is called heterosexual, some may feel sexually attracted to the same sex which is called homosexual (gay for men who have a sexual relationship with a man, lesbian for women who have a sexual relationship with women). Others have sexual relationship with the same or with the opposite sex which is called bisexual.
Gender	<i>Gender</i> refers to the different social roles, responsibilities and identities that a society attributes to women and men and the power relations between women and men in a given society. Gender roles and relations differ across countries and cultures and may even differ among different groups within one society. Gender roles and relations are not static, but subject to change.
Gender mainstreaming	<i>Gender mainstreaming</i> has become the internationally acknowledged strategy to achieve gender equality since the Fourth World Conference on Women that was held in 1995 in Beijing. The Council of Europe describes gender mainstreaming as: “the (re) organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and at all stages by the actors normally involved in policy making” (Council of Europe, 1998). Another widely used definition of gender mainstreaming reads as follows: “Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality” (ECOSOC, 1997).



Triple Roles	The triple roles concept distinguishes between productive, reproductive and community roles . The reproductive role of women includes the care and maintenance of the actual and future workforce of the family (childbearing responsibilities and domestic tasks). The productive role relates to work performed by women and men for pay in cash or kind (market production, informal production, home production, subsistence production). The community-managing role of women includes work mostly related to care and unpaid work, and provision of collective resources as water, healthcare, etc. The community-managing role of men is more often related to local politics. In most societies, women undertake all three roles, while men primarily undertake productive and community politics activities, which usually generate payment, status or power ¹⁵ .
Access and Control	<i>Access to resources</i> implies that women and men are able to use and benefit from specific resources (money, assets such as land, equipment, credit, information, time etc.). <i>Control over resources</i> implies that both men and women can obtain access to a resource and also make decisions about the use of that resource. For example, control over land means that women can access land (use it), own land (can be the legal title-holders) and make decisions about whether to sell or rent the land.
Practical Gender Needs	The <i>practical gender needs</i> (PGNs) of women (or men) are the needs that women (or men) identify in their socially accepted roles in society. Practical gender needs arise out of, the gender division of labour and women's subordinate position in society . These needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity, identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and often stem from inadequacies in living conditions such as energy provision, childcare facilities, healthcare and employment. ¹⁶

¹⁵ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>

¹⁶ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>

Strategic Gender Needs	<i>Strategic gender needs</i> (SGNs) represent what women or men require to improve their position or status in regard to each other. They place people in greater control of themselves instead of limiting them to the restrictions imposed by socially defined roles. They are long-term (i.e. they aim to improve positions); they also intend to remove restrictions and are less visible as they seek to change attitudes. Examples of addressing SGNs include actions such as giving rights to land, inheritance, credit and financial services; increasing participation of women in decision-making; creating equal opportunities to employment (equal pay for equal work); and improving social systems. ¹⁷
Gender Equality	The concept meaning that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by strict gender roles; that the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. (European Commission, 1998).
Gender Equity	<i>Gender equity</i> means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. Gender equity leads to gender equality. For example, an affirmative action policy that supports female-owned businesses may be gender equitable because it leads to equal rights between men and women.
Gender Identity	<i>Gender identity</i> means each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth, including the personal sense of body which may involve, if freely chosen modification of bodily appearance or function by medical, surgical or other means) and other expressions of gender including dress, speech and mannerisms. ¹⁸

¹⁷ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>

¹⁸ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>



Women Empowerment	The <i>women's empowerment</i> approach is grounded in the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995. The empowerment of women is the process by which women gain power and control over their own lives and acquire the ability to make strategic choices. Women's empowerment has five components: women's sense of self-worth; their right to have and to determine choices; their right to have access to opportunities and resources; their right to have power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home; and their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just, social and economic order, nationally and internationally. In this context, education, training, awareness raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources, and actions to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality are important tools for empowering women and girls to claim their rights. ¹⁹
Gender Integration	<i>Gender integration</i> is the strategy used for making women as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral part of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. It is interchangeably used to mean the same as gender mainstreaming.
Gender Analysis	The systematic gathering and examination of information on gender differences and social relations in order to identify, understand and redress inequities based on gender.
Gender Focal Point	A person within an organisation or Ministry or department who is identified as being the reference point for gender issues and is responsible for coordination of integration and mainstreaming gender issues in the organisation or Ministry or Department.
Gender Discrimination	Means any action or inaction resulting in exclusion or restriction or systematic, unfavourable treatment of individuals on the basis of their gender, which denies them rights, opportunities or resources socially, economically, culturally, politically and at family levels.

¹⁹ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>

Gender bias	Refers to the circumstances that permit and support the neutral or nil consideration of effect of men and women relationship on any intervention either at work or family level.
Gender Division of Labour	An overall social pattern where women and men are assigned a set of different duties which division is based on the basis of their sex.
Gender Gap	A difference in any aspect of intervention that looks at socio economic status of men and women looking at the societal role and responsibilities.
Gender Neutral	Having no differential positive or negative impact for gender relations or equality between women and men. (European Commission, 1998).
Gender Perspective	It refers to that approach in which the consideration of the roles and responsibility of men and women is acknowledged with the ultimate goal to get equity and equality.
Gender Stereotype	Means differential concepts of the roles and rights of men and women in political, economic, socially, cultural and family relations based on the generic attitudes, opinions or roles applied to a particular role.
Gender Responsive	Planning process in which the programme or action developed pays attention to the different roles a particular society assigns to men and women.
Gender Sensitive	It is the state of Knowledge of the socially different roles and responsibilities undertaken by men or women in a given context. This includes their differences in needs. It is a mindset that is cautious about gender discrimination.
Gender Policy	Guiding principles upon identifying gender differentials that are used to draw actions or intervention to integrate and mainstream gender issues in the planned programme or action.
Gender balance	Having the same or sufficient number of men and women at all levels within organisations to ensure equal representation and participation in all areas of activities and interest.
Gender-Based Violence	Means any action or inaction promoted by victim's gender that inflicts or has the potential to inflict a physical, sexual, emotional and economic damage to a victim.

Gender Statistics	Statistics that adequately reflect differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life. Gender statistics are defined by the sum of the following characteristics: (i) data are collected and presented disaggregated by sex as a primary and overall classification; (ii) data are reflecting gender issues; (iii) data are based on concepts and definitions that adequately reflect the diversity of women and men and capture all aspects of their lives; and (iv) data collection methods take into account stereotypes and social and cultural factors that may induce gender biases (some examples of sex bias in data collected are: underreporting of women's economic activity, undercounting of girls, their births or their deaths, or underreporting of violence against women). ²⁰
Gender and Development	This is a programming approach developed in the 1980s with the objective of removing disparities in social, economic and political equality between men and women as a pre-condition for achieving people centered development.
Gender Planning	An active approach to planning which takes gender as a key variable or criteria and which seeks to integrate an explicit gender dimension into policies or action. (European Commission, 2001)
Gender Relations	The relations and unequal power distribution between women and men which characterise any specific gender system.
Gender Sensitive	Addressing and taking into account the gender dimension.
Sex disaggregated data	Data that is separated by sex in order to allow the differential impacts to be assessed and measured.
Special Measures	Steps taken which are intended to remedy past consequence of discrimination and to offer special protection or positive discrimination.
Patriarchy	Patriarchy refers to the systemic societal structures that institutionalise male physical, social and economic power over women and usually insubordinates women.
Women in Development (WID)	This is a programming approach that was developed in the 1970s with focus on designing actions geared toward women empowerment. Total focus was on women. Later the Gender and Development approach reviewed the approach to focusing on men and women. However, WID approach is still used in getting women into areas where there have been historical inequalities. Sometimes special measures are adopted to bring up women into decision- making positions.

²⁰ Adopted from <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1442>



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