



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS



**MINISTRY OF GENDER EQUALITY
AND FAMILY WELFARE**

ANNUAL REPORT ON PERFORMANCE

Financial Year 2022-2023

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MESSAGE OF THE HON. MINISTER

It is with immense pride and responsibility that I pen down this message for our Annual Report 2022/23. As the Minister at the helm of this vital Ministry, I have witnessed firsthand the passion, dedication, and resilience with which our teams work to champion the rights of women, to promote gender equality across all sectors, the rights and well-being of our children, address gender-based violence, advance family welfare, and foster social welfare and community development.

A momentous occasion that stands out during the past year is our delegation to Geneva that I led where we participated in a constructive dialogue with the Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child. This was for the review of the combined 6th and 7th report of Mauritius on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The commendations we received, particularly on the new legislation, the Children's Act, were a testament to our dedication and hard work. The ban on corporal punishment was celebrated as a monumental achievement, showcasing our nation's commitment to safeguarding the rights of every child. We have also ensured that the minimum age for marriage in Mauritius is now 18 years. Both these moves reinforce our stance on child rights and protection.

Furthermore, the Committee's appreciation for the introduction of the Child Sex Offender Register Act and the Children's Court Act solidifies our position as a nation that is continuously striving for the betterment of our children's lives.

In addition, our achievements in promoting gender equality have been substantial. The improvement in our Global Gender Gap ranking and the increase in women representation in top management in Ministries and Departments are reflections of our ongoing efforts. The strategies and innovative approaches recommended in the National Gender Policy and the recommendations of the National Strategy and Costed Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurship are not just plans on paper but are being actively implemented.

As we also focus on social welfare and community development, our initiatives aim to provide a robust support system, uplifting every segment of our society and ensuring no one is left behind.

However, our journey does not end here. While we celebrate our achievements, we acknowledge the challenges ahead. We remain committed to addressing these challenges head-on and continuing our mission to promote gender equality, protect the rights, and enhance the overall development of children, promote family welfare, addressing gender based violence, promoting social welfare and community development.

Hon. (Mrs) Kalpana Devi KOONJOO-SHAH
Minister of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

Part I- About the Ministry

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE MINISTRY

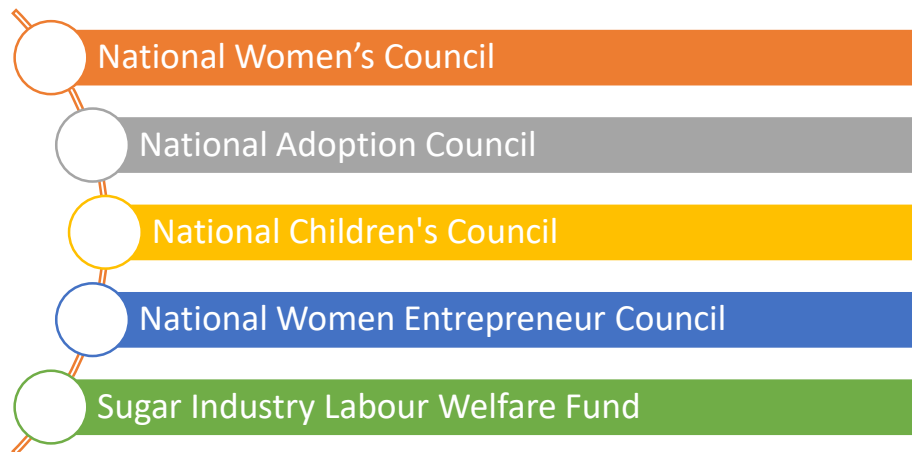
To implement policies, programmes, projects and activities geared towards:

- Social, economic and political empowerment of women for the attainment of gender equality;
- protection of women and children against violence and abuse;
- promotion of the welfare of women, children and families;
- safeguarding the rights of women and children; and
- promoting the welfare of citizens through community-based programmes, activities and services;

This Ministry is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies for the promotion of gender equality as well as promote the rights and welfare of women, children and families including the community. It comprises eight main technical units namely:



There are also 5 parastatal bodies which operate under the aegis of the Ministry namely:



Vision

- To have a society which is free from violence, exploitation and discrimination based on sex, where the fundamental rights of women and children are respected and where human values within the family and the civil society are cherished.

Mission

- To design and implement policies and programmes geared towards promoting gender equality, protecting the rights of children and enhancing their overall development, promoting the well-being of families and fostering community based activities/programmes/ services for the general welfare of the citizens.

Key Legislations and Regulations under the responsibility of the Ministry

The Social Welfare Centres Act 1961

The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Act 1974

The National Adoption Council Act 1988

The Protection from Domestic Violence Act (1997) subsequently amended in 2004, 2007, 2011 and 2016

The National Women Entrepreneur Council Act 1999

The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction Act 2000

The National Children's Council Act 2003

The National Women's Council Act 2016

The Children's Act 2020

The Children's Court Act 2020

The Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020

The Residential Care Institution for Children Regulations 2022

The Child (Foster) Care Regulations 2022

The Child Day Care Centres Regulations 2022

Units of the Ministry

Planning and Research Unit

The Planning and Research Unit (PRU) set up in 1989 acts as a coordination and support unit, to provide technical back up to all the units and parastatal bodies operating under the aegis of the Ministry.

It is also responsible for the preparation of policies, programmes, projects, action plans and reports on issues relating to women, child development, family welfare and community development. It establishes base line data on women, family and children in the fields of health, education and employment amongst others and produces an annual report “Statistics in Mauritius-A Gender Approach” for dissemination. Furthermore, the Planning and Research Unit acts as a liaison with government institutions and non-state actors on pertinent issues relating to this Ministry.

Licensing and Enforcement Section

The Licensing and Enforcement Section ensures that:

- (i) the norms and standards of the Residential Care Institutions, whereby children victims of violence are placed, are met to provide a continuum of care; and
- (ii) Child Day Care Centres are fully compliant with the prescribed norms and standards laid down in the Child Day Care Centres Regulations 2022 under the Children’s Act 2020.

Gender Unit

The Gender Unit, as the National Gender Machinery, is responsible to work towards the attainment of gender equality. This process entails a dual approach namely:

- i. Oversee and coordinate the implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies in all Ministries’ policies and programmes.
- ii. Implement policies/programmes to empower women socially, economically and political, thereby addressing “de facto” inequality and bridging all outstanding gender gaps.

It operates through a network of five (5) Women Empowerment Centres and one (1) Wellness Centre for Women strategically located across the island. These Centres implement women’s empowerment programmes through innovative activities geared towards social, economic and political empowerment of women. Women from all walks of life attend the Women Empowerment Centres for networking and also to benefit from the different empowerment programmes. These Centres provide an appropriate and exclusive environment, relevant to the needs of our women folk, where they come together to acquire more confidence, develop skills, participate in training,

get support, organize group meetings, activities and access other services. The ultimate goal is to offer services that empower women to be “at par” with men.

Moreover, the Gender Unit has extended its programmes and activities to other target groups including women and girls in deprived regions, students in secondary schools and the elderly. Activities at the level of Women Empowerment Centres (WECs) comprise *inter alia*: implementation of projects/courses facilitated and dispensed by the National Women's Council along with Courses offered by Home Economics Unit.



Child Development Unit

The Child Development Unit (CDU) is mandated to ensure that the survival, protection, development and participation rights of the child are upheld in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The best interests of the child shall be of primary concern in all policies, programmes and actions pertaining to the child's welfare.

The State has the obligation to ensure parental role wherever parents fail to do so and this role is ensured by the CDU. Any child may be a potential victim of violence, and the CDU has to intervene promptly and is expected to provide comprehensive service delivery with a view to providing immediate assistance and follow up to the child.

Services offered by the CDU



Child Protection Services:

To ensure accessibility and proximity service delivery in respect of child protection, the CDU operates through a network of nine (9) Outstations and provides immediate assistance, protection and follow up, as appropriate to children victims of violence, and abuse, especially sexual abuse.

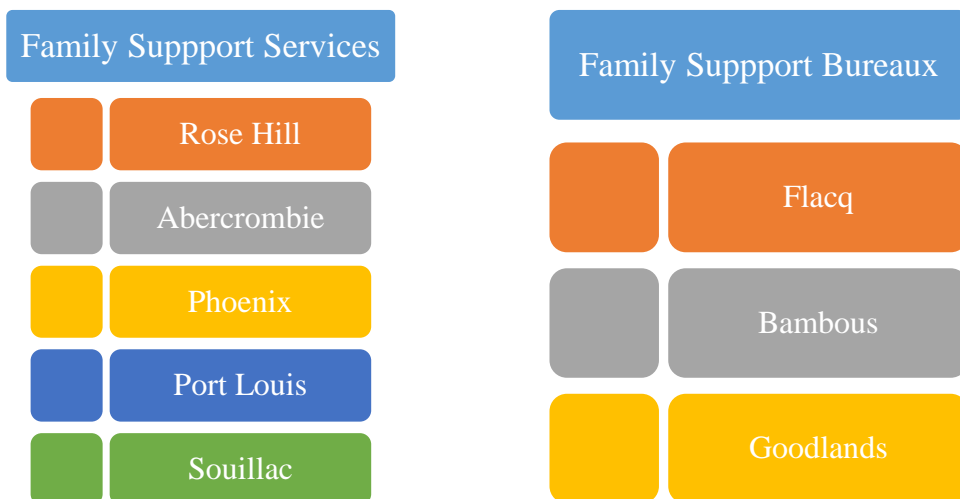
The Child Protection Services provide for dedicated multi-disciplinary support in a one stop shop child friendly system through a team of professionals attending to the immediate and multi-disciplinary needs of children victims of abuse.

| CPS | |
|-----|----------------|
| | Port Louis |
| | Goodlands |
| | Flacq |
| | Moka |
| | Plaine Magnien |
| | Bambous |
| | Vacoas |
| | Souillac |
| | Rose-Hill |

Family Welfare and Protection Unit

The Family Welfare and Protection Unit (FWPU) provides a range of services including counselling, legal advice and support for victims of gender-based violence. It also manages a hotline for prompt assistance.

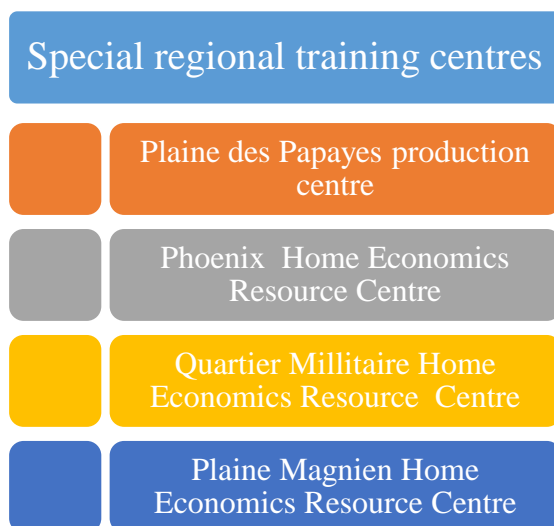
The FWPU operates through a network of Family Support Services (FSS) and Family Support Bureaux (FSBx) around the island.



Home Economics Unit

The Home Economics Unit (HEU) aims at promoting social and economic empowerment through capacity-building programs, with a focus on healthy lifestyles, family relations, entrepreneurship, and food security.

The Unit also promotes food security as well as sustainable consumption and production by households through its Agricultural Women's Clubs. It is also responsible for the management of four (4) specialised regional training centres.



Psychological Services Unit

The Psychological Services Unit offers quality psychological services to victims of violence and also works with perpetrators of domestic violence to foster behaviour change.

The unit is also operating a Victim/Witness Support Service at the level of the Children's Court, to provide pre-trial and post-trial support to children involved in the criminal justice in order to diminish the level of anxiety and ensure psychological and emotional stability so as to improve their competency as witness during trial.

In line with section 66 of the Children's Act 2020, the unit has started implementing the Guardian Ad Litem Programme. The aim of this service is to ensure that the child's voice is heard in all decisions concerning court proceedings in which the child is involved and that the child's best interest is advocated for throughout the judicial proceedings.

Social Welfare Division

The Social Welfare Division manages social welfare centres across the island, focusing on health, education and overall development of various age groups and communities. It manages a network of 56 Social Welfare Centres strategically located throughout the island. The centres are mostly located in rural areas and serve all age-groups in local communities including children, youth, women, men, senior citizens and persons with disabilities, amongst others.

Social Welfare Centres were set up under the Social Welfare Centres Act 1961 and their objectives are *"to further health, advance education, provide facilities for mental and physical training and generally for recreation and for social, moral and intellectual development."*



Adoption Unit

The Adoption Unit handles cases of domestic and intercountry adoptions, ensuring compliance with relevant legal frameworks.

Parastatal Bodies

The Parastatal Bodies includes the National Women's Council, National Women Entrepreneur Council, National Children's Council and the National Adoption Council, each with its specific focus and objectives related to women's empowerment, children's welfare and adoption processes. The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF) engages in community-based programs and manages amenities for pilgrims and emergency shelters.

Gender Statement

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare firmly believes that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls are key drivers in advancing sustainable development. Gender Equality is a multi- pronged issue which has to be addressed from multiple perspectives, such as the:

- (i) human rights-based perspective associated with inclusion, where men, women, girls and boys have the same opportunities and rights to access and participate in the socio-economic development processes;
- (ii) political perspective embodied in the various international and regional commitments to women's empowerment and gender equality to which Mauritius is party to, namely Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on the Elimination on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Beijing Platform for Action; and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; and
- (iii) financial perspective as an engine of economic and social development necessary to financing policies aimed at breaking down the structural barriers that are still impeding women from being on an equal footing with men.

The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, as the National Gender Machinery, pursues its efforts geared towards mainstreaming gender and empowering women and girls whilst ensuring that no-one is left behind.

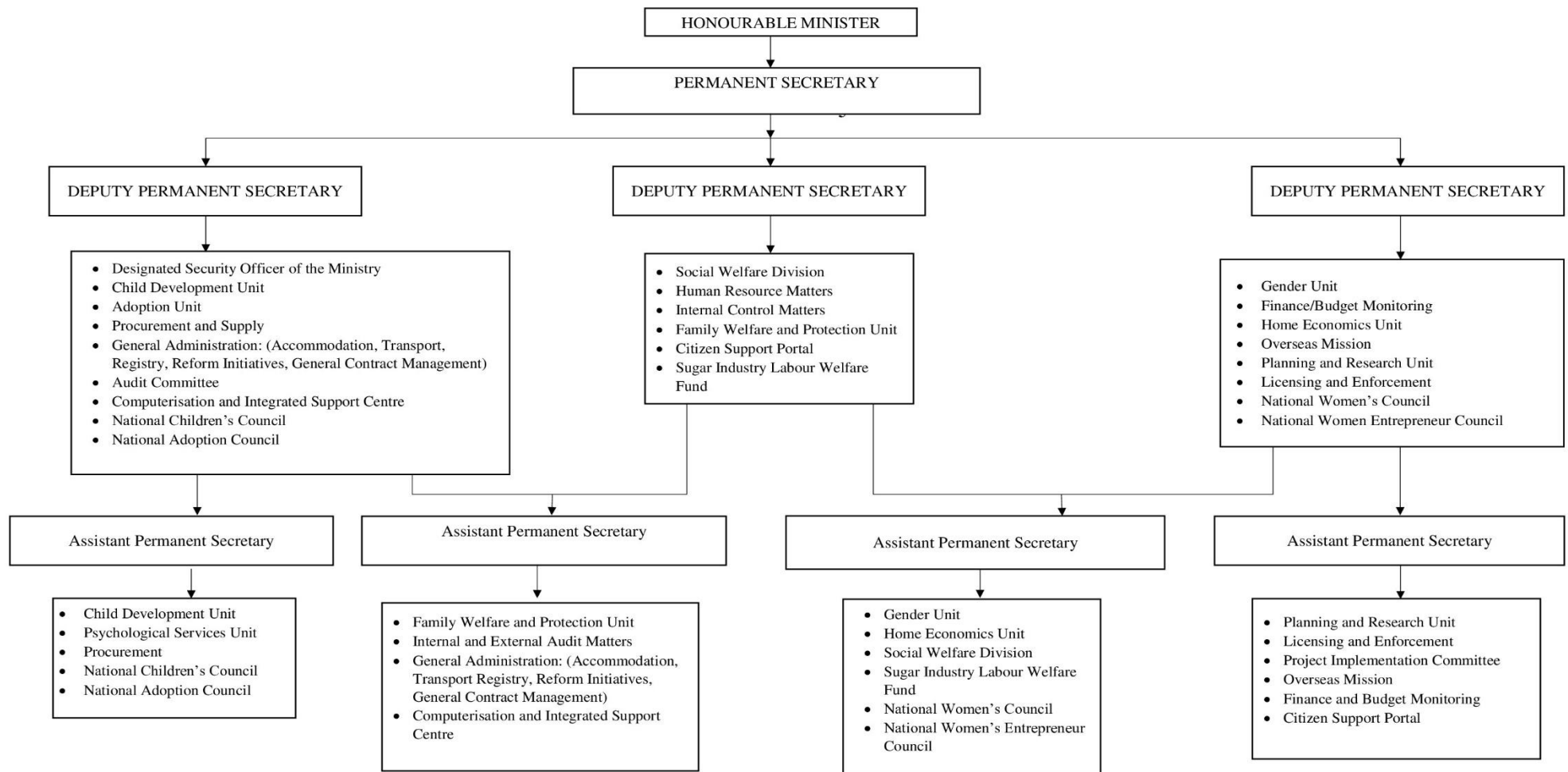
- (i) The Gender Cells set up in all Ministries have been reinforced and continuous support and guidance are provided to them. Each cell is working towards development of their sectoral Policy Document and Gender Action Plan.
- (ii) These sectors have their respective Gender Statements within their Annual Report and they are provided with a Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative, that is, an allocation of Rs. 200, 000 per year to undertake gender responsive actions.

To that end, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare has taken bold initiatives, namely through:

- (i) the launching of National Gender Policy 2022-2030 by the Hon Prime Minister on the 8 March 2022, in the context of the International Women's Day;
- (ii) the presentation of a Gender Country Profile (GCP) for the period 2021-2027 on 12 May 2022;

- (iii) The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between this Ministry and the Mauritius Research Innovation Council to set up Gender-Based Violence Observatory (GBVO). The GBVO is operational since 23 December 2021 and the main objectives of the Observatory are to:
 - (a) understand the reality and the evolution of the situations of Gender Based Violence in the Republic of Mauritius;
 - (b) make recommendations and proposals to improve the services and facilities offered by the public institutions and civil society in the field of Gender Based Violence; and
 - (c) carry out studies and technical reports for the diagnosis and evaluation of the extent and evolution of the situations of gender-based violence.
- (iv) The proclamation on 24 January 2022 of three legislations namely the Children's Act 2020; the Children's Court Act 2020; and the Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020, in favour of child protection;
- (v) The National Strategy and Action Plan of the High-Level Committee on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence in the Republic of Mauritius was launched in November 2020. The key elements of the National Strategy revolve around having a shared understanding of the nature and extent of GBV in Mauritius, the commitment of multiple stakeholders, strengthening of the existing legislative and policy frameworks, capacity building of stakeholders; and a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism. As at June 2023, 32.1% (50 output indicators) of the recommendations of the Strategy has been set as in progress, 64.7% (101 output indicators) has been set as completed, 1.9% (3 output indicators) has been set as no action and 1.3% (2 output indicators) has been set as in mitigation;
- (vi) Continuous support and technical assistance provided to Ministries to identify gender gaps within their respective sectors and how to address these effectively; and
- (vii) On-going capacity building and awareness raising on the gender concept and gender –related issues, including gender-based violence to ensure that the discourse is well understood at all levels.

About Our People



Part II- Achievements

Planning and Research Unit

- 5th High Level Policy Dialogue on Gender held.
- Examined and issued Combined 6th and 7th Periodic Report on the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Withdrawal from Article 6(b) of the Maputo Protocol.
- Published "Statistics in Mauritius – a Gender Approach Report 2021/22".

• Licensing and Enforcement Section

- Professional Development Training for 60 Caregivers.
- Food Preparation training for 49 staff in Residential Care Institutions.
- Issued licenses to 3 Residential Care Institutions.
- Conducted training on Children's Act 2020 for about 100 Managers and Caregivers

• Early Childhood and Development

- Issued 122 Certificates of Registration for Child Day Care Centres.
- Registered 407 caregivers and 147 managers.

Gender Unit

- Improved Global Gender Gap Report ranking from 110th to 105th. - Increase in women representation in top management (38.6% to 39.1%).
- Implementation of National Gender Policy (2022-2030) strategies.

Home Economics Unit

- 17,900 participants in 16 MQA courses and empowerment programmes
- Launched a model organic container & vertical garden.
- Trained 86 potential women entrepreneurs.

Child Development Unit

- Reported 5,448 cases of child abuse in 2022.
- Trained 1943 professionals on Child Protection Legislations.
- Opened 3 new Child Protection Services.
- Recorded 16,288 calls at the Integrated Support Center.
- Held 45 campaigns and 919 counselling sessions at Drop-in-Centre.

Family Welfare and Protection Unit

- Progress in National Strategy and Action Plan on GBV (64.7% completed)
- Launched several programmes and campaigns on GBV.
- Set up Family Support Services.

Psychological Services Unit

- Attended to 10,557 cases at outstation CDU. - Attended to 3,100 cases at outstation FWPU.
- Provided psychological support for 6 work harassment cases.
- Conducted 22 mass counselling and 3 group therapy programmes

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF BUDGET MEASURES

Reporting Period: July 2022 to June 2023

MONITORING OF BUDGET MEASURES 2022-2023 (Non Infrastructure) -OPERATIONAL

| Budget Para | Budget Measure | Funding (Rs M) | Effective Date | Status Update/Remarks | Impact/Key Performance Indicator |
|-------------|---|----------------|----------------|--|--|
| 490 | An increase in the monthly foster care allowance from Rs 8,000 to Rs 12,000 Introduction of enhanced allowance of Rs. 15,000 for a child with special needs. | 12 | 1-Jul-23 | Sensitisation campaigns and training of foster parents ongoing | 18 children placed in foster care families |
| | | | | | |

MONITORING OF BUDGET MEASURES 2021-2022 (Non Infrastructure) - NOT YET OPERATIONAL

| Budget Para | Budget Measure | Funding (Rs M) | Key Milestones | Target Impl. Date | Status Update/Remarks |
|-------------|--|----------------|---|-------------------|---|
| | | | | | |
| 320e | A Community Child Protection Programme in vulnerable areas to sensitize community members on the detection of child abuses | 0.1 | Community Child Watch is on-going. Capacity building with officers of SILWF was held at Coromandel Community Centre in November 2022 | FY 2022-2023 | On-going Some 40 Community Child Watch are operational as at date. |

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| | | | <p>on the new Children's Act 2020.</p> <p>Around 40 Community Child Watch around the island is on-going.</p> <p>During school holidays, CDU officers are acting as resource person to deliver talks on child protection issues in community centres with parents and children.</p> | | |
| 322 | <p>The Protection from Domestic Violence Act will be amended to include "recordings-sound-video" as a recognised form of testimony</p> | | <p>Amendment of Protection from Domestic Violence Act by June 2022</p> | <p>Aug-22</p> | <p>On 14 July 2023, Cabinet approved the drafting of a new legislation to replace the existing PDVA with a view to, inter alia, protect spouses from acts of domestic violence.</p> <p>The new legislation would be a comprehensive and multidisciplinary one, criminalising all forms of violence, and encompassing issues of prevention, protection, survivors' empowerment and support (health, economic, social, psychological), aiming at reinforcing the legal parameters to protect victims of domestic violence, making the perpetrator of domestic violence accountable for his or her behaviour or acts.</p> <p>The new Bill would also make provisions for support and rehabilitative services to deter perpetrators from committing further acts of domestic violence. The</p> |

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| | | | | | powers of Enforcing Officers, Police Officers, amongst others, would be reinforced. |
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Implementation of Budget Measures – Ministry of Gender Equality & Family Welfare

| Budget Para | Budget Measure | Key Milestone | Status Update/ Remarks |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Non Infrastructure Project | | | |
| 268 | National Adoption Bill will be introduced to provide a legal framework for both local and foreign adoption of children. | Introduction in the National Assembly | The working document is being finalised to seek cabinet approval for introduction in the National Assembly. On 15 August 2023, a meeting was held with the State Law Office to discuss the legal issues of the bill. |
| 60 (a) & (c) | To enhance access to childcare and make our workplace more inclusive, we will : - (a) Set up public childcare centres in main areas under a PPP (c) Make it compulsory for all companies employing more than 250 to provide necessary facilities for workplace-base childcare; | (a) Setting up of Committee (MoG, NSIF, PPP unit, MOFED, CBRD, MRA, Business Mauritius); (b) Propose draft legal amendments, if any, to be included in forthcoming Finance Bill; (c) Undertake a needs assessment and | A committee chaired by the Permanent Secretary has been set up and two meetings were held with representatives of Ministry of Labour Industrial Relations and Employment & Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. |
| 60(b) | To enhance access to childcare and make our workplace more inclusive, we will increase the grant by 30 percent to Rs 650,000 for child day care centres to undertake upgrading works; | (a) Review of Scheme (in consultation with CBRD) (b) Launching of Scheme (c) Impact Assessment | 1. Sub Committee on One Off Cash Grant will examine the proposed criteria and will make recommendation to NCC Board in August 2023 2. Approval from NCC Board will be sought in September 2023 3. The new criteria will be submitted to Parent Ministry for consideration in October 2023 |
| 61 | To promote gender equality at all levels, listed companies | (a) Legal Amendments (finance Bill) | A Committee will be set up, chaired by the |

| | | | |
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| | shall have a minimum of 25 percent of women on their boards. | (b) Workshops/awareness | Permanent Secretary, with SLO, Companies Division and Mauritius Institute Of Directors for implementation of this Budget Measure |
| B.14 | To promote women entrepreneurship, the role of National Women Entrepreneur Council will be reviewed to becoming the apex institution for women Entrepreneurs. | (a) Finalise Policy Paper on review of role of NWEAC (Dec 2023) (b) Introduce new Bill (Feb 2024) | A draft TOR for the recruitment of a consultant to review the structure of the NWEAC was submitted to the Parent Ministry on 03 August 23 for vetting and consideration. A reply is still awaited. |
| 490 | Furthermore, we will increase the monthly allowance granted under the Foster Care Scheme in respect of a child from Rs 8,000 to Rs 12,000, and introducing an enhanced allowance of Rs 15,000 for a child with special needs. | (a) Make relevant Budgetary provision (done) (b) Review of the Scheme with new criteria/guidelines | As from 01st July 2023, payment of monthly allowance of Rs 12,000 was effected. Regarding the enhanced allowance of Rs 15,000 for a child with special needs, Foster care Advisory Committee have worked out criteria and awaiting approval. |
| B.12 (A) | An appropriate regulatory framework will be set up to regulate residential care institutions for victims of domestic violence and the framework on foster care will be reinforced. | (a) Finalise Policy Paper (b) Amendments to Foster Care Regulations , if any (c) drafting of new bill (d) Finalisation and introduction of Bill to the National Assembly | (a) framework to regulate residential care institutions for victims of domestic violence - Consultations - Regulatory framework will be provided under Domestic Abuse Bill. (b) framework on foster care.) - Review of the existing regulations. - Drafting instructions - Finalisation of the Regulation. |

| Infrastructure Project | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|--|
| 443 & 444 (a) | We have been able to make of Mauritius | (a) Consultation with relevant | Confirmation of availability of land is awaited |
| B.12(B) | A Central Data Repository will be developed in respect of victims of different forms of violence, abuse and neglect to better coordinate interventions across different Government Agencies and NGOs for their protection and care. | (a) Consultation with relevant stakeholders (b) Define requirement and scope of project (c) Define approach/model to develop system and seek relevant approval (Innovative model) | On 27 July 2023 letter was sent to Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation to request for collaboration with the Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council. |
| 473 & 474 | The construction of the Community Wellness Centre at Gokhoola announced last year is well underway. Works for the construction of Community Wellness Centres at St Pierre and St Aubin will start soon. | (a) Consultation with relevant stakeholders (b) Project Preparation (c) Design and Scope of works, BoQ (d) Seek relevant clearance (e) Launching of tender (f) Start of works | <p>(a)Construction of Community Wellness Centre at Gokhoola Contract already awarded and works started December 2022. Completion of work is expected by August 2023.</p> <p>(b)Construction of Community Wellness Centre at St. Pierre</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bidding launched 2. Contract was not awarded due to non-compliance of financial procedures 3. Design and Drawings are modified and Bill of Quantities is under preparation 4. PRF already submitted to Parent Ministry to be forwarded to MOFEPD for approval of funds. (St. Pierre and St. Aubin Wellness Centres) 5. Design and Bill of Quantities are under preparation |

| | | | |
|-----|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>6. Bids will be launched after approval of funds.</p> <p>(c)Construction of Community Wellness Centre at St. Aubin</p> <p>1. PRF already submitted to Parent Ministry to be forwarded to MOFEPD for approval of funds.</p> <p>2. Design and Bill of Quantities are under preparation</p> <p>3. Bids will be launched after approval of funds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced copy of PRF sent to MOFEPD on 27.07.2023 • Meeting held with PS on 11.08.23 • Mail sent to SILWF to request 2 bill of quantities (BOQ) on 21.08.2023 • On 22.08.2023 SILWF informed that MNICD working on the bill of quantities for both St Pierre and St Aubin and once received, same will be forwarded to the Parents Ministry. |
| 475 | To promote community-based activities and for the welfare of citizens, we will (b) Upgrade the Creativity Centre at Mahebourg; | <p>(f) Start of works(a) Consultation with relevant stakeholders (b) Project Preparation (c) Design and Scope of works, BoQ (d) Seek relevant clearance (e) Launching of tender (f) Start of works</p> | <p>A survey was carried out by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare i.c.w upgrading works in March 2023.</p> <p>Issues have been identified. MPI has been contacted for major construction works, i.e cleaning of yard, perimeters around the centre, logging of trees, pull down walls and erect of walls amongst others.</p> |

| | | | |
|-----|---|--|--|
| 475 | (c) Construct a Community Centre at Stanley; (d) Implement a Social Welfare Centre in Rose-Hill and upgrade the Montagne Ory Social Welfare Centre; and | Operational (Dec 2023) August 2024 August 2024 50% (a) Consultation with relevant stakeholders (b) Identification of Land (c) Design and Scope of works (d) Seek relevant clearances (e) Detailed Design/Drawings, BoQ | (c) Construct a Community Centre at Stanley: Surveys have been carried out for the preparation of designs and Bill of Quantities. Project Request Forms will be submitted after completion of designs and Bill of Quantities. Design and Bill of Quantities are being worked out. • Advanced copy of PRF sent to MOFEPD on 27.07.2023 • Meeting held with PS on 11.08.23 • Mail sent to SILWF to request 2 bill of quantities (BOQ) on 21.08.2023 • Follow up is being maintained regarding submission of BOQ. |
| 475 | (e) Revamp community centres at Riche Mare, Coromandel and Camp Yolloff into community wellness centres. | (a) Consultation with relevant stakeholders (b) Identification of Land (c) Design and Scope of works (d) Seek relevant clearances (e) Detailed Design/Drawings, BoQ | 1. Centres to be revamped have already been identified and the land has already been vested to the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare. 2. Surveys are being carried out for design and scope of works. Project Request Form will be submitted after the preparation of scope of works and Bill of Quantities. 3.3. Project Request Forms will be submitted after the preparation of scope of works and Bill of Quantities- Sept 2023" |

STATUS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS FY 2022/2023

| Outcome | | Outcome Indicator | Target 2022/2023 | Achievement | Remarks |
|---|---|--|------------------|--|---|
| A more gender equal society | | Percentage of recommended actions in the new National Gender Policy Action Plan implemented | 5% | - | Cabinet took note of measures being taken for the implementation of the recommendations of the National Gender Policy on 5 Aug 2022 |
| Better care, protection and assistance to children | | Number of child victims rehabilitated | 250 | 3,000 | Figure reported includes all assistance provided to child victims |
| Socially cohesive society through family focused policies | | Percentage of actions of the National Strategy and Action Plan on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence implemented | 50% | 65% | |
| Delivery Unit | Main Service | Key Performance Indicator | Target 2021/2022 | Achievement | Remarks |
| Gender Unit | Empowerment of women in the social and economic spheres | Number of women reached through social and economic empowerment activities | 10,000 | <u>703</u> persons trained on Gender Mainstreaming in Colleges, NGOs, MITD, Community Centres, Polytechnics, Super U and Hotels <u>535</u> persons trained on | Capacity Building of Officers: <u>23</u> Officers trained virtually <u>16</u> Officers trained by Civil Service College 30 Animated Cartoons on gender concept have been developed for the |

| | | | | | |
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| | | | | <p>Gender Concept/Mains treaming in Public Sector</p> <p><u>1680</u> persons trained in activities conducted in Women Empowerment Centres/Wellness Centre for Women</p> <p><u>270</u> persons trained in the Joint SDG Fund Project being implemented by Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security (MAIFS)</p> <p><u>312</u> persons trained through Training of Trainers Programme related to Output 12 of the Sub-Strategy Component 1: Awareness Raising on Stigmatisation based on marginalized groups and Dialogue Forums on the Sub-Strategy Component 1- Output 13</p> | <p>conduct of IEC programme related to gender mainstreaming in gender cells</p> |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|

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|-------------------------|--|--|------|---|--|
| | | | | <p>which calls for : “Change Societal Norms and Beliefs”</p> <p>1 women empowerment centre revamped into wellness centre i.e Floreal Women Empowerment Centre</p> | |
| Family Protection Unit | Assistance to GBV victims | Percentage of reported GBV victims provided with required assistance | 100% | 100% | |
| Child Development Unit | Implementation of Back to Home Programme | Number of children re-integrated into their biological families or next to kin | 200 | 175 | 222 children have been re-integrated into their biological families or next to kin from Jul 2021 to Jun 2022 |
| | Extension of the Foster Care Programme | Number of children placed into Foster Families | 40 | 18 | For the period July2022 to Jun 2023, 18 children have been placed in Foster Care Families. |
| Social Welfare Division | Community development programmes at Social Welfare Centres | Number of beneficiaries of welfare and empowerment programmes | | 192,941 | |
| Home Economics Unit | Empowerment of the community with emphasis on women in the social and economic spheres | -No. of empowerment programmes run. | | 1492 | |
| | | -No. of participants | | 17900 | |

MANAGEMENT, CITIZEN ORIENTED INITIATIVES & GOOD GOVERNANCE

The system of internal control is designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of operations at the Ministry; safeguard of assets and data of the Ministry.

There is also an Audit Committee appointed to support the Accounting Officer to monitor corporate governance and control system in the Ministry.

Composition of the Audit Committee for year 2022-2023:

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| Chairperson | DPS, Mrs N. Goolooa |
| Members | APS, Miss D. Jugroop |
| | Coordinator, Mr. N. Taukoordass (CDU) |
| Secretary | Mrs D. Kripa (OMA) |

Meetings were held on 07 September 2022, 03 November 2022 and 19 January 2023.

The duly signed Performance Contract has already been forwarded on 19 September 2022 to the Office of the Public Sector Governance for financial year 2022/2023. The Status Report of the Audit Committee for the quarterly ended 30 September 2022 has already been submitted to the Office of the Public Sector Governance.

The ICAC initiated the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Framework in 2009 to enable public bodies to take up the challenge to build corruption resistance and enhance public trust in their respective organization. The Anti-Corruption Committee set up in Ministries are expected to drive the project. This Ministry has developed an Anti-Corruption Policy which sets out the full commitment of this Ministry for the deterrence and detection of corruption and for adherence to a culture of integrity.

Application – “Lespwar”

One of the outcomes of the High-Level Committee on the Elimination of Gender-based Violence (GBV), chaired by the Hon. Prime Minister, was the development of a mobile application “Lespwar”, a panic button, for victims of gender-based violence. On 25 November 2020, the mobile application (app) “Lespwar” was launched as a rapid response system to victims of gender-based violence.

This mobile App enables a victim of GBV to rapidly connect with the Main Police Command and Control Centre. This application can be downloaded on a smart phone and clear instructions are provided for registration and use of the panic button.

Process when the panic button is pressed:

- 1) Police officers at the Main Police Command and Control Centre (MPCCC) obtain service requestor data and geolocation;
- 2) The information is sent to the nearest police station;
- 3) Police officers nearest to the place of incident initiate the first intervention through response officer and liaise with an officer of the Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille on call;
- 4) After intervention, police station report outcome to MPCCC;

- 5) Second intervention are carried out by officers of the Brigade pour la Protection de la Famille if required; and
- 6) Provision of psycho-social support on a 24-hour basis to all cases referred by the police, including accompanying and admission of victims to shelters if need be.

Note: Once the panic button is pressed, officers of my Ministry concurrently with the MPCCC receive such notifications.

The Community Development Association usually meets once monthly to discuss about the activities that the Community Centre may organise to meet the need and aspiration of the people in the village or the locality. Activities may be summarised ECSEF Programme as follows: E: Educational, C: Cultural, S: Social, E: Economic and R: Recreational.

1. Educational

Educational activities are organised to empower and sensitize the community on various social, issues such as Drugs abuse, Road Safety, Environment Awareness, Healthy Life Style etc.

Some of the activities may be summarized as follows:-Literary, Lectures, Forums, Seminars, Literacy, Home Economics, Sewing, Dressmaking, Arts and Crafts, Scholarships, Technical Training, Ethics, Civics, Health, Audio-Visual and Net PC Programme

2. Cultural

These activities relate to enhance cultural diversity in the community and also promote Cultural and Societal Values among the inhabitants. It also creates a platform for promoting local talents and creativity through songs, dances, theatre, instrumental music, amongst others.

3. Social

Social activities focus on the promotion of Social Cohesion, Unity and Peace, Mutual Understanding, among the community and the activities include the following:

- (a) Welfare of Society;
- (b) Child Development and Protection;
- (d) Care of Senior Citizens;
- (f) Amenities (tarpaulins, chairs etc.);
- (g) Self-Help Project;
- (k) Protection of the Environment; and
- (l) Emergency Shelter for victims of cyclone & other natural disasters; amongst others

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN- DIRECTOR OF AUDIT COMMENTS

Report 2022/2023

| SN | Issues raised | Actions Taken / Proposed Measures |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | <p>Government-Owned Shelters- Lapses in Contract Management</p> <p>(i) Contracts not renewed due to Inadequate Follow up</p> <p>(ii) Non-compliance with Conditions of Contracts</p> | <p>Contracts renewed in September 2022 for a period of one-year renewable.</p> <p>Monitoring and Supervision of conditions of Contracts is being ensured by the Licensing and Monitoring Unit.</p> |
| 2 | <p>Foster Care System – Non-compliance with Regulations</p> <p>It was observed that the visits to the foster homes were not regular. During the period June 2020 to November 2021, 46 foster parents were visited only once.</p> | <p>A Foster Care Advisory Committee has been set up and is effective at the level of the Ministry to ensure proper follow up and that all procedures and guidelines are complied with.</p> <p>Regular reviews in terms of visit, phone calls, follow-up at school, convocation at office are being done.</p> |
| 3 | <p>Child Day Care Centres (CDCCs) – Non-compliance with Regulations</p> <p>As of June 2021, 77 CDCCs were not registered due to non-conformance with required standards in respect of infrastructure.</p> | <p>Shortcomings regarding the process of Registration have been identified and are being addressed.</p> <p>The Ministry has referred the CDCCs which were operating without a Health Clearance, a Building and Land Use Permit and a valid Fire Certificate to the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management and the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Services respectively, for appropriate action at their end. A report is being awaited from the above-mentioned institutions</p> <p>Government will be informed on the number of CDCCs which are operating without Fire Certificate and for a decision as to whether or not the CDCCs should continue to operate.</p> |
| 4 | <p>Monitoring of Shelters and Child Development Care Centers - Delay in Setting up the Information Management System</p> | <p>A Committee will be set up with the Central Informatics Bureau, the Ministry of Public Service, Administrative and Institutional Reforms, the Ministry of Information Technology, communication and Innovation and the Central Information Systems Division to discuss on the details with regard to the requirements of the system.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | <p>As of November 2021, some seven months after the approval for the implementation of the project, the system has not yet been set up. No provision was made in the budget estimates of 2020-21 and 2021-22 of the Ministry for the project.</p> | <p>Funds will have to be sought from the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development in the next financial year for the development of the system.</p> |
| 5 | <p>Governance Issues – Non-compliance with Legislation</p> <p>Non-submission of Financial Statements for Audit</p> <p>As of 12 January 2022, Statutory Bodies falling under the purview of the Ministry, have not submitted their Financial Statements for audit as follows:</p> <p>National Women Entrepreneur Council (F/Y 2020-2022)</p> <p>National Women’s Council (F/Y 2019-2020 & F/Y 2020-2021)</p> | <p>Needful will be done for the Financial Statements of the National Women Entrepreneur Council and National Women’s Council in a month time and 2 to 3 months respectively.</p> |

Part III- Financial Performance

3.1 Financial Highlights

As per the budget Estimates, the Ministry has 5 votes under its control namely:

- 20-101: General
- 20-102: Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming
- 20-103: Child Protection, Welfare and Development
- 20-104: Family Welfare and Protection from Gender-Based Violence
- 20-201: Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities

Figure 1 below shows budget appropriation under vote item 20-101-(General) for the year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

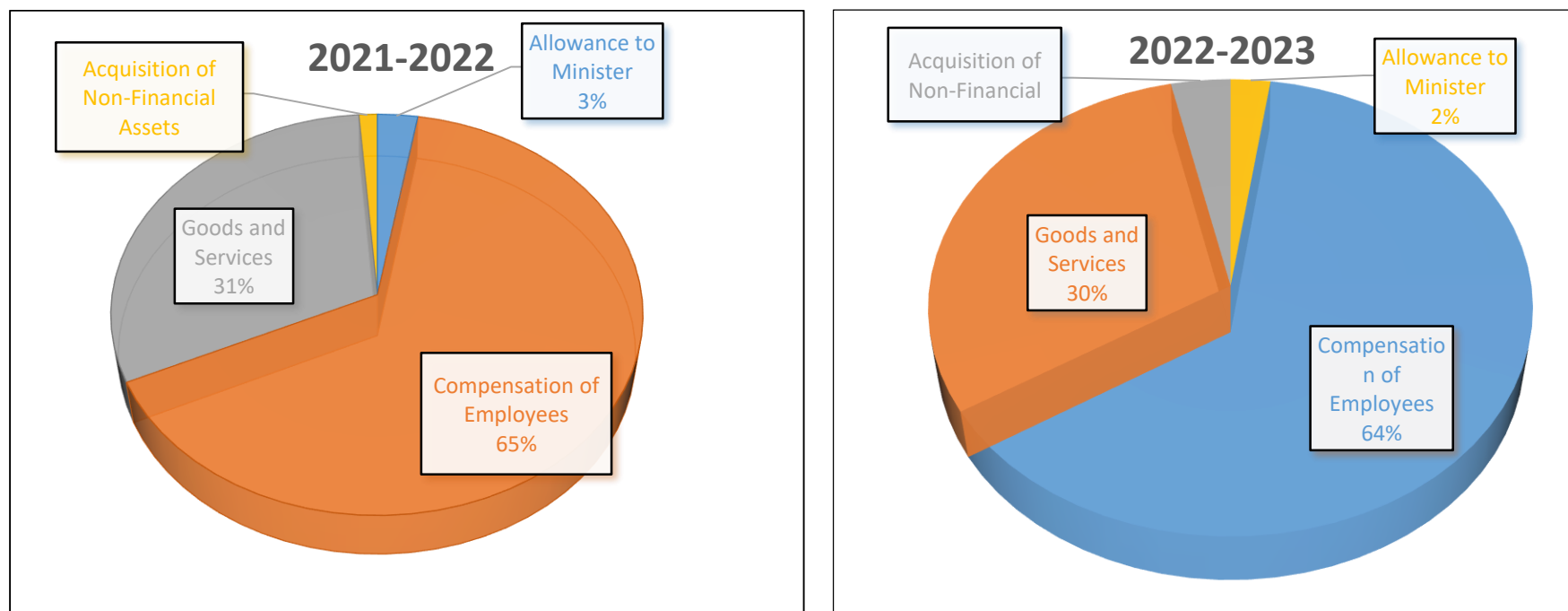


Figure 2 below shows budget appropriation under vote item 20-102 (Women's Empowerment and Gender Mainstreaming) for the year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

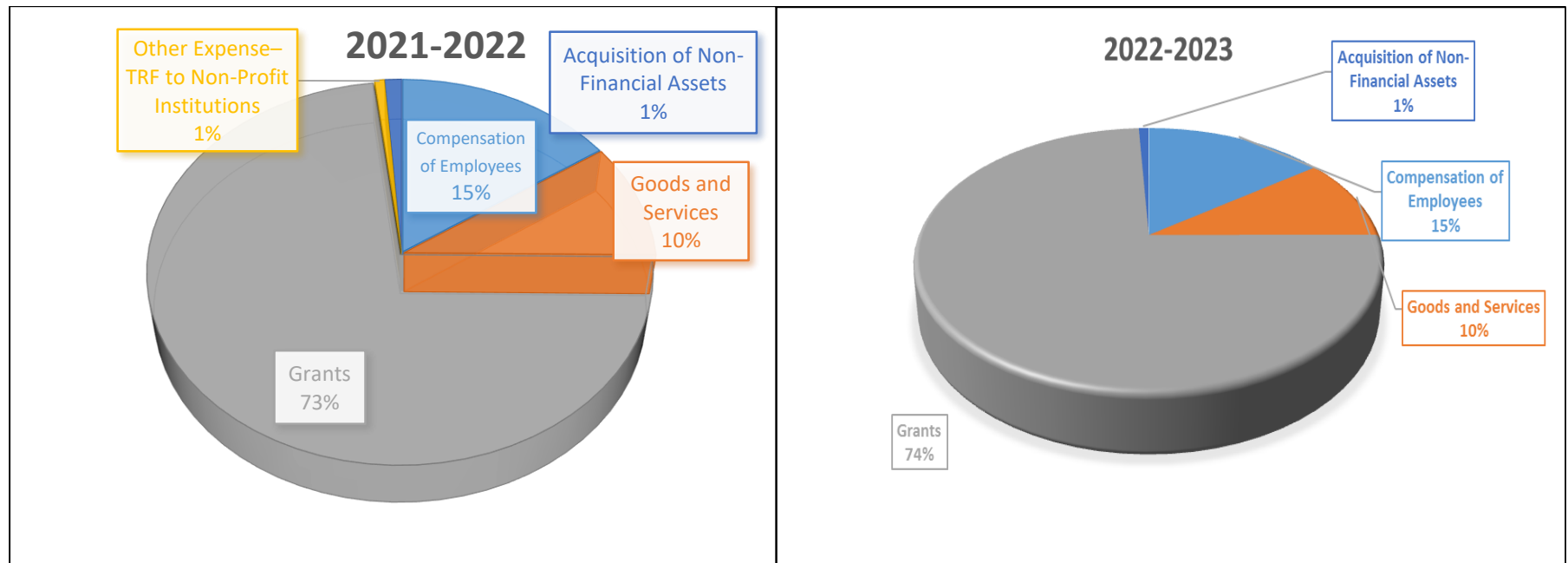


Figure 3 below shows budget appropriation under vote item 20-103 (Child Protection, Welfare and Development) for the year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023

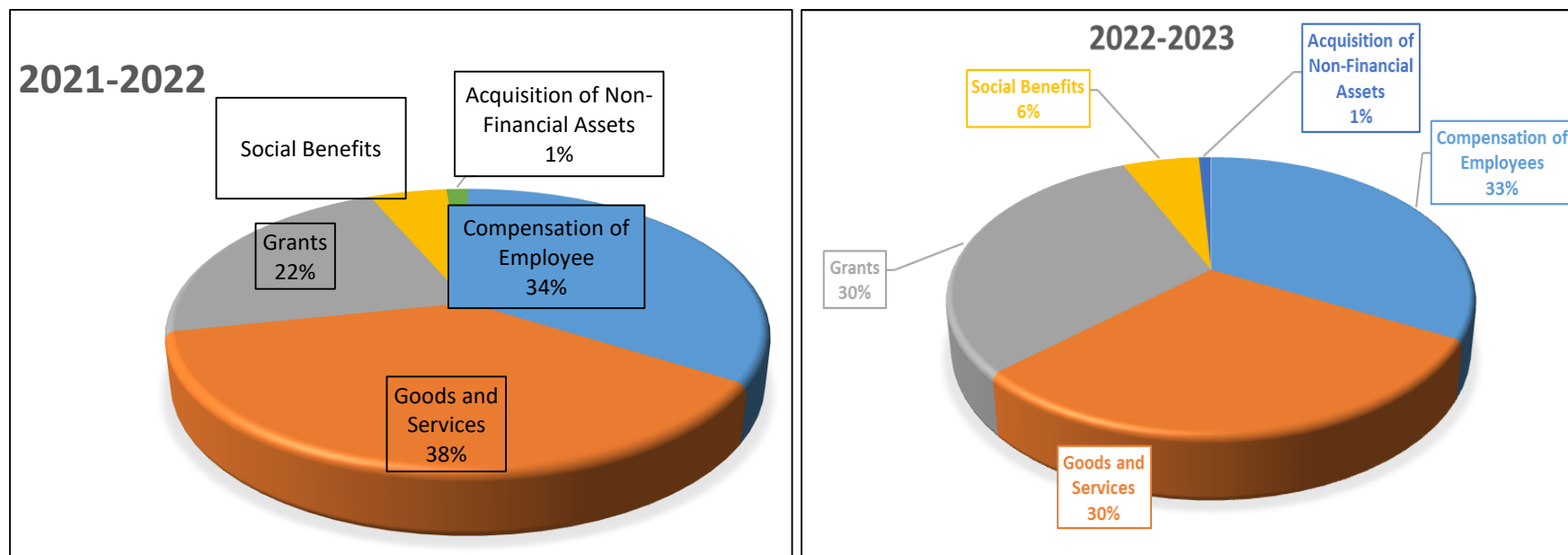


Figure 4 below shows budget appropriation under vote item 20-104 (Family Welfare and Protection from Gender-Based Violence) for the year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.

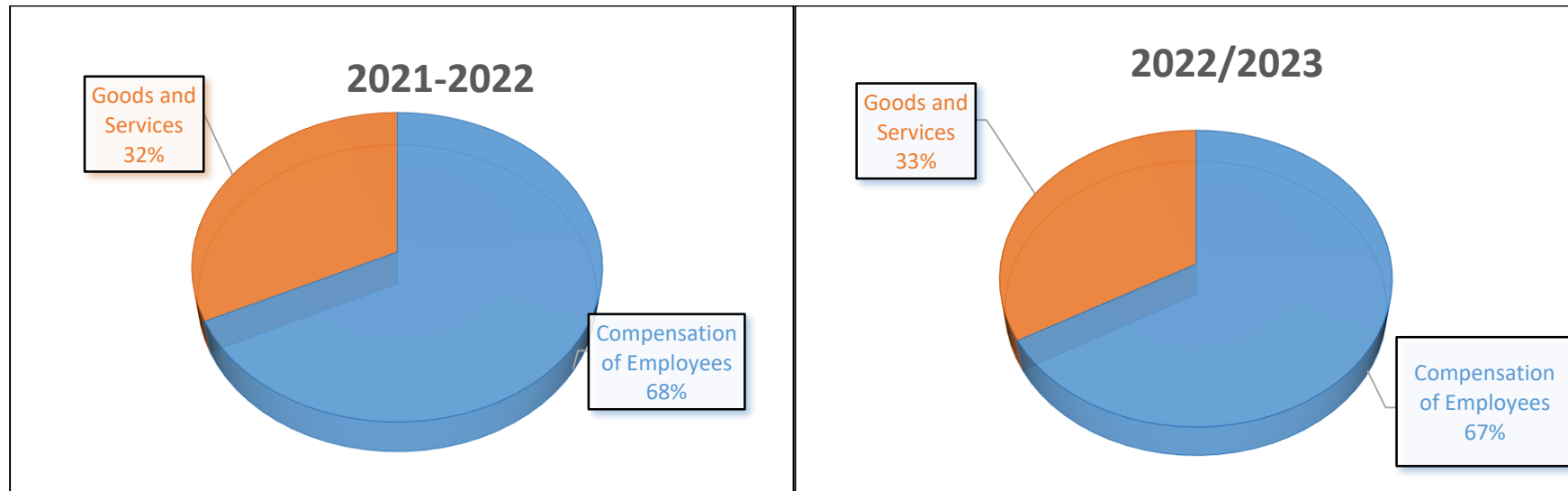
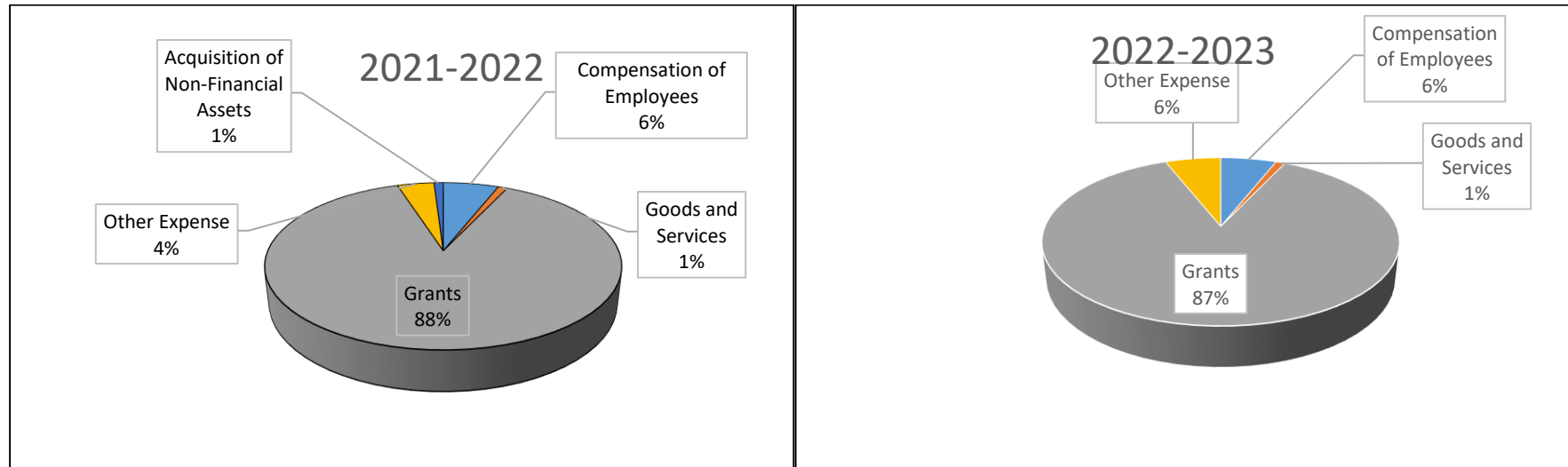


Figure 5 below show budget appropriation under vote item 20-201 (Social Welfare and Community-Based Activities) for year 2021/2022 and 2022/2023.



3.2 Statement of Revenue and Expenditure

Statement of Expenditure

| 20- 101 – GENERAL | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| HEAD/SUB-HEAD OF EXPENDITURE | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2022-2023 |
| | ACTUAL | ESTIMATE S | ACTUAL |
| | (Rs M) | (Rs M) | (Rs M) |
| Allowance to Minister | 2.4 | 2.4 | 2.4 |
| Compensation of Employees | 58.5 | 66.9 | 65.7 |
| Goods and Services | 27.5 | 27.2 | 31.2 |
| Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets | 1.1 | 5 | 3.6 |
| Total | 89.5 | 101.5 | 102.9 |

| 20- 102 – WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING | | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| HEAD/SUB-HEAD OF EXPENDITURE | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2022-2023 |
| | ACTUAL | ESTIMATE S | ACTUAL |
| | (Rs M) | (Rs M) | (Rs M) |
| Compensation of Employees | 19.7 | 23.6 | 21.5 |
| Goods and Services | 12.4 | 18 | 15.4 |
| Grants | 93 | 105.5 | 107.1 |
| Other Expense – Transfers to Non-Profit Institutions | 0.9 | 2.1 | 0 |
| Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets | 1.5 | 4.3 | 1.2 |
| Total | 127.5 | 153.5 | 145.2 |

| 20-103 - CHILD PROTECTION, WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| HEAD/SUB-HEAD OF EXPENDITURE | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2022-2023 |
| | ACTUAL | ESTIMATES | ACTUAL |
| | (Rs M) | (Rs M) | (Rs M) |
| Compensation of Employees | 51 | 58.7 | 58.5 |
| Goods and Services | 55.4 | 67.7 | 53.5 |
| Grants | 32.8 | 46.5 | 53.9 |
| Social Benefits | 7.5 | 10 | 10 |
| Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets | 2.1 | 12.2 | 1.6 |
| Total | 148.8 | 195.1 | 177.5 |

| 20-104 – FAMILY WELFARE AND PROTECTION FROM GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| HEAD/SUB-HEAD OF EXPENDITURE | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2022-2023 |
| | ACTUAL | ESTIMATES | ACTUAL |
| | (Rs M) | (Rs M) | (Rs M) |
| Compensation of Employees | 27.9 | 29.8 | 29.7 |
| Goods and Services | 13.2 | 20.1 | 14.8 |
| Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets | - | - | - |
| Total | 41 | 49.9 | 44.5 |

| 20-2 - SOCIAL WELFARE AND COMMUNITY BASED-ACTIVITIES | | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| HEAD/SUB-HEAD OF EXPENDITURE | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2022-2023 |
| | ACTUAL | ESTIMATES | ACTUAL |
| | (Rs M) | (Rs M) | (Rs M) |
| Compensation of Employees | 22 | 24.6 | 24.9 |
| Goods and Services | 2.2 | 3.5 | 2.4 |
| Grants | 308 | 329.4 | 333.7 |
| Other Expense | 13.8 | 26.5 | 22.4 |
| Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets | 1.4 | 3 | 0.05 |
| Total | 347.4 | 387 | 383.45 |
| | 754.2 | | 853.55 |

Part IV- Way Forward

4.1 Trends and challenges

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

The financial year 2022-2023 was marked by the following key milestones:

- 122 Certificates of Registration of Child Day Care Centres for the period July 2022 to June 2023 were issued by the Early Childhood and Development Section;
- In August 2022, a first National Steering Committee on Gender Mainstreaming was launch demonstrating a strong commitment in catapulting gender equality at the highest level in the public sectors;
- An Inter-Ministerial Gender Technical Working Committee has been set up, since October 2022, with Gender Focal Points of all Ministries to take stock of actions being planned from a gender lens within their respective sectors;
- The recommendations of the National Strategy and Costed Action Plan for Women Entrepreneurship in Mauritius, which was launched in March 2023 are being implemented by the National Women Entrepreneur Council;
- In May 2023, a Professional Development Training for around 60 Caregivers in Residential Care Institutions was initiated by the Mauritius Institute Education in collaboration with the Ministry and National Social Inclusion Foundation;
- As at June 2023, 57.1 % of the recommendations of the Strategy on the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence was set as completed;
- The Home Economics Unit published 2 recipe booklets.

Gender Equality

Mauritius continues to make progress in terms of gender parity. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2022, Mauritius improved its ranking from 110th in 2021 to 105th in 2022 among 146 countries worldwide.

The strategies and innovative approaches recommended in the National Gender Policy (2022 to 2030) are being implemented to drive and support gender equality goals.

Gender-Based Violence

In line with the recommendation from the National Strategy and Action Plan of the High Level Committee for the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence for the setting up of a One-Stop Assistance Centre, the Family Support Services has been set up, where, Officers of this Ministry and Police of the Brigade Pour la Protection de la Famille (BPF) work under the same premises to ensure the delivery of holistic services to victims as well as to ensure streamlining of procedures. the Family Support Services was launched at

Abercrombie in November 2022 and a Standard Operating Procedures delineating the roles and responsibilities of Officers of the Ministry and those of the Brigade de la Protection de la Famille was signed. The Family Support Services is also operational at Phoenix, Souillac, Port-Louis and Rose-Hill.

Child Protection and Welfare

From July 2022 to 16 April 2023, 25831 calls were recorded through the Integrated Support Center of Phoenix. The total number of cases of child abuse reported at the level of the Child Development Unit were 5,448 in 2022.

The main challenges are:

- Financial and human resources constraints for the implementation of programmes, projects and actions plans;
- Absence of a support mechanism for separated or divorced parents with tools and skills to raise their children;
- Under representation of women in decision making.

Means to address challenges

- Budget advocacy and recruitment for better implementation of programmes, projects and actions plan
- Provision for a co-parenting counselling plan for parents undergoing divorce or separation;
- Advocacy for better women representation in decision making positions.

Strategic Direction 2022-2023

Bridge the gender gap

- Implement the National Gender Policy 2022-2030 through an action plan in collaboration with international agencies

Enhance Family Well-being

- Formulate a new National Policy Paper on the Family
- Set up an Integrated Shelter for victims of Gender-Based Violence
- Implement the Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS)
- Improve the Protection from Domestic Violence Act
- Formulate policies based on empirical evidence from the Gender-Based Violence Observatory report.

Build Resilience in children and fulfil children's rights

- Prepare an Early Childhood Development Policy, Action Plan and Guidelines

- Scale up the Foster Care Programme to also cater for children with varying degrees of physical, mental, behavioural and/or emotional conditions

- Operationalise new Child Protection Services
- Strengthen the Back-to-Home Programme
- Introduce the National Adoption Bill in National Assembly

Enhance community development

- Revamp Community Centres into Community Wellness Centres
- Review the Government Social Welfare Centres Act and the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund (SILWF) Act.