IUR - SIDS
INTEGRATED URBAN RESILIENCE IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES AND COASTAL CITIES

NATIONAL AND CITY ‘STATE OF PLAY’
PORT LOUIS, MAURITIUS
ABOUT IUR - SIDS
The Integrated Urban Resilience in Small Island Developing States and Coastal Cities (IUR-SIDS) is a Joint global Programme by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) processed through a Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for urban risk reduction and resilience building action. The Joint global Programme will unfold during a 2023-2025 first phase reaching 10 countries/cities, which will lay the foundation for potential scaling-up and scaling-out of the approach to support more cities and countries in a second phase from 2026 to 2030. The overall goal of the IUR-SIDS programme is that, by 2030, at least 100 small and medium-sized cities are supported to develop risk-informed urban development plans and implement urban resilience building interventions addressing all resilience dimensions viz. physical, environmental and socio-economic -- while strengthening urban governance informed by a systems’ thinking to secure resilient development outcomes. Through delivering as One, the two UN agencies will maximize synergies of action, opens opportunities and provide coherent results in SIDS and coastal cities.

About UNDP
UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

About UN-Habitat
UN-Habitat supports national and local governments, academia, civil society and the private sector, with the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and SDG11, which aims for sustainable cities and communities. We support processes of institutional capacity-building regarding sustainable urbanization and knowledge-transfer between regional counterparts, in particular through key initiatives like National Urban Policies, the City Prosperity Initiatives, Urban Integrated Solutions and others.
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I. National / City policies and strategies – Priorities for action (sustainable development, climate action, urban/town planning, DRR, NAPs, etc.)

Vision 2030 - Transforming Our Future for the Better is the long-term vision of the Government of Mauritius, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030. Acting as a national development plan or model, Vision 2030 sets the country on a higher economic growth path, with shared prosperity and improved quality of life for our citizens while leaving no one behind. Vision 2030 has been underpinned with a series of goals and objectives namely, a “high-income country”, “inclusive” and “high quality of life and sustainability”.

The Government Programme 2020-2024: “Toward an Inclusive, High Income and Green Mauritius, Forging Ahead Together” of the Government of Mauritius stresses the broad orientations for taking the country forward over four years. It proposes to steer the economy in the league of high-income countries, driven by technology and innovation and bringing higher levels of growth, equality and shared prosperity. The Government Programme lays out the vision for the next four years, reinforces Vision 2030, and is used as a source of inspiration and guidance for future policymaking. By bringing stakeholders together, and aiming to create long-lasting results, the Government demonstrates its willingness to put sustainable development at the forefront of its strategy.

The Climate Change Act (No. 11 of 2020) establishes a legal framework towards making Mauritius a climate-resilient and low-emission country. It entered into force on 22 April 2021. The document is divided into seven (7) parts: preliminary (I); inter-ministerial council on Climate Change (II); Department of Climate Change (III); Climate Change Committee (IV); Climate Change measures (V); application of Act to Rodrigues (VI); and miscellaneous (VII). Parts II, III and IV of the Act create climate-focused institutions and bodies, set their attributions and define their tasks and functions regarding Climate Change governance. The Act also makes provisions to commission studies on climate change, taking into consideration gender issues, among other thematic areas.
The National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework (NCCAPF) for the Republic of Mauritius was formulated in 2012 to foster the development of policies, strategies, plans and processes to avoid, minimise and adapt to the negative impacts of climate change on the key sectors. It recommends adaptation policy options and measures around the water demand and supply, agriculture and terrestrial ecosystems, fisheries and marine ecosystems, tourism and coastal areas, human health, and infrastructure sectors. It identifies specific actions to address flooding and coastal inundation, in both cases using structural and non-structural measures. The Updated National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework launched in 2021 with support from UNDP focuses on the potential of nature-based solutions for adaptation and provides a new policy orientation in key adaptation sectors to build resilience.

The Republic of Fiji National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018-2030 is a key part of Fiji’s ambition for accelerated integrated and inclusive sustainable development, aligned with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. It outlines Fiji’s approach to disaster risk reduction, including measures for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. It emphasises the importance of building resilience to disasters and reducing vulnerability to hazards. The Policy promotes good disaster risk governance, emphasizes the need for better risk assessment, establishes clear priorities for future action, and highlight the importance of monitoring action.

The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan 2020-2030 guides the Republic of Mauritius’ approach to disaster risk reduction and management over 10 years. Launched in March 2021 by the Government of Mauritius, the National Policy, National Strategic Framework, and National Action Plan are closely aligned with the Sendai Framework for
II. Administrative / Political structure, electoral cycle and next elections (National government; city nodal authority)

The Republic of Mauritius is a parliamentary democracy modelled on the British system with a unicameral parliamentary system. The President is the Head of State while the Prime Minister has full executive power and is the Head of Government. The National Assembly comprises 70 members, out of which 62 are elected every 5 years during parliamentary elections. The remaining 8 are nominated with a view to correct any imbalance in community representation in Parliament. The political party or party alliance which wins the majority of seats in Parliament forms the government and its leader usually becomes the Prime Minister. The president and vice-president are then elected by the National Assembly for a five-year term. The next general elections are due to be held in Mauritius in 2024.

The Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management is responsible for the formulation of appropriate policies and strategies and the establishment of a necessary legal framework to ensure that Local governments under its purview operate smoothly. The Ministry administers the Local Government Act 2011 and provides general policy guidance to Local Authorities.

The city of Port Louis is administered by the City Council of Port Louis, formerly known as the Municipal Council of Port Louis. The Council is comprised of the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and 32 Councillors. Councillors are elected for a six-year term to administer the City Council; Councillors then elect from amongst themselves a Lord Mayor and a Deputy Lord Mayor for a period of 2 years. The Local Government Act 2011 provides for the holding of municipal/city council elections every 6 years. However, since the elections of 2015, no municipal elections have been held due to the health situation and restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic. The next municipal elections should be organized in June 2023.
III. Local competencies and jurisdictions (relevant to interventions; key sectors and stakeholders)

Local Authorities in Mauritius are empowered to control development within the administrative areas under their jurisdiction, providing services and carrying out infrastructural developments at local level. Municipal councils have the following statutory duties: provision of street-lighting; construction and maintenance of roads, drains and public spaces, environment and public sanitation, provision and maintenance of bus shelters and traffic centres, operation of markets and fairs, maintenance of cemeteries and cremation grounds, culture (public libraries, exhibition halls and art galleries, theatres and places of public entertainment, etc.), leisure and sport, and education (nurseries for infants, pre-primary school, etc.). Municipal councils are empowered to raise revenues via various fees. However, their main source of income is the central government grant.

The Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management through the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (NDRRMC) acts as the main coordinating body of the Ministry for the planning, organizing, coordinating and monitoring of disaster risk reduction and management activities at all levels. In accordance with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2016, Local Authorities are mandated to implement disaster risk reduction management at the Local level. In Port Louis, there is a Local Disaster Reduction and Management Committee and a Local Disaster Management Coordinator to work at a holistic level for DRM activities, including in the definition of the Local Disaster Management Plan.

As the capital of Mauritius, the City of Port Louis is host to most public institutions in Mauritius. It is the seat of Central Government, the National Assembly, the Supreme Court and most ministries and state-owned bodies and enterprises. Its harbour, the only one in the island, constitutes the economic lifeline of the country.
IV. Revenue and financing streams – national budgeting for city level planning, development and implementation, etc.

The activities of the City Council of Port Louis are financed mainly from the grant in aid received from the Government and partly from the Council’s own sources of revenue. These revenues are coming from property taxes, trade fees, rental income, building and land use permit fees, and others such as advertising fees, library fees, and burial and incineration.

In recent years, the amount of grant in aid received by the Council has been representing around 72% of the total revenue collected by the Council. For the period July 2019 - June 2020 (FY19-20) the amount of grant in aid was Rs 614,232,000 (total revenue Rs 847,949,927); for FY20-21, the amount was Rs 623,630,283 (total revenue Rs 868,933,190); and for FY21-22, the amount was Rs 681,256,820 (total revenue Rs 956,700,120). The budget of the Council provides for the allocation of resources to two main sub-heads, namely Administration and Finance, and Provision of Statutory Services and other facilities through the Public Infrastructure Department, the Public Health Department, the Land Use and Planning Department and the Welfare Department.

V. Regional and international partners’ engagement and investments – development investments by IFIs, regional or other entities, etc.

L'Agence Française de Développement (AFD) has been active in Mauritius for decades. The AFD operates mainly in the areas of infrastructure, energy transition, climate and regional cooperation, and since 2006, has committed over 719 million euros in 25 projects. One of these is the “Adapt’Action” mechanism. This technical assistance operation is financed by the AFD as part of the Adapt’Action Facility. This Facility, launched in May 2017, supports African countries, LDCs and SIDS in the implementation of their commitments under the Paris Climate Agreement, through the financing of studies, capacity-building and technical assistance, particularly in the adaptation sector. For Mauritius, the Adapt Action Programme is focusing on three key sectors, namely: climate change vulnerability and adaptation assessment; the formulation of the National Land Drainage Master Plan; and the
elaboration of a new framework to enhance National DRR Management, namely the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Policy, Strategic Framework and Action Plan for the Republic of Mauritius. The Adapt’Action Enhancing Resilience to Climate Change (ER2C) in Mauritius assignment is providing technical expertise on climate vulnerability assessments, hydrological assessments of drainage capacity in relation to flood risks and identification of adaptation measures in 6 priority sites on Mauritius island using a multi-stakeholder capacity-building approach. The selected sites are Port-Louis, Flic-en-Flac and Tamarin, Bel Ombre and Riambel, Belle Mare, Pereybere and Grand Baie, Nouvelle France.

Another project financed by AFD is the 2050 Facility that supports some of the highest emitting and most vulnerable developing countries in their transition to a low-carbon and resilient development model. In Mauritius this project supports the development of the “2050 vision” of a Mauritian economy that is low carbon and resilient to climate change impacts. The technical assistance financed by the 2050 Facility supports the Mauritian authorities in developing long-term decarbonization and adaptation pathways. The ambition is to allow, as part of the periodic review of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), to regularly enhance Mauritius’ ambitions and to allow the country to present a long-term strategy to the UNFCCC Secretariat by 2025.

In 2020, at the Government of Mauritius’ request the CADRI Partnership facilitated a government-led diagnosis of the disaster risk management system at the national and local levels. The Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative (CADRI) is a global partnership that provides countries – Governments and UN Country Teams - with a unique mechanism to mobilize and pool expertise to reduce disaster and climate risks across the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Responding to the Government’s request, the CADRI Partnership deployed a multi-disciplinary team composed of 7 UN experts from FAO, IOM, OCHA, UNDP and WHO, and 4 experts mobilized through UNDAC, UNEP/OCHA Joint Environment Unit & EU to deliver an integrated offer of services. The diagnosis covered six sectors: tourism, environment, agriculture, water and sanitation, health, and education, with infrastructure development as cross cutting. Following the endorsement of the recommendations by the cabinet, the 200+ recommendations in the CADRI Report have been instrumental in the development of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Action Plan for Mauritius, with the aim of guiding disaster reduction and management activities in the country up to 2030, in line with the Sendai Framework.
The European Union (EU) and the Republic of Mauritius have a long-standing and solid partnership of over 40 years. The EU Multi-annual Indicative Programme (MIP) for Mauritius which runs currently has a duration of 7 years, from 2021-2027, with a Mid Term Review scheduled in 2024, coinciding with the end of the five-year Government Programme 2020-2024. In Mauritius, the MIP is based on a joint analysis of common strategic objectives using a Team Europe approach with France (notably AFD, Region Reunion), the European Investment Bank and the EU. Two priority areas have been agreed upon as an output of this process – Environment Protection and Climate Change adaptation and resilience, and Good Governance. The members of Team Europe are already particularly active in the area of Climate Change in the Indian Ocean region and in Mauritius. The indicative total allocation for Mauritius for the period 2021-2027 is EUR 9 million.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is a long-term partner of the Mauritius Government. In 2021, JICA extended an Official Development Assistance loan of up to 30 billion Japanese yen ($289 million) to support Mauritius’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic and rebuild its economy. The loan is a parallel co-financing agreement between JICA and the African Development Bank under the Enhanced Private Sector Assistance for Africa (EPSA) joint initiative to spur private sector-led sustainable and inclusive growth in Africa. The co-financing arrangement will help the Mauritius government contain the pandemic, secure livelihoods, and boost the resilience of the economy. A total commitment of $3.5 billion is targeted under the current EPSA over the period 2020 to 2022, with each of the partners co-financing up to $1.75 billion.
VI. Development challenges and gaps

Mauritius is highly vulnerable to climate change, with risks including intense cyclones, tidal surges, droughts, floods, rising sea surface temperature, and sea level rise. The country experiences severe weather events and natural disasters such as storms, torrential rains, flash floods, landslides, and tsunamis. Exposure to these hazards remains high and continues to increase. Integrated measures are needed to assess vulnerability and prioritize adaptation. Floods caused by heavy rainfall account for over 70% of yearly disasters. Certain areas in Mauritius are at high risk for landslides, which have led to infrastructure and housing destruction. These disasters are typically the result of increased precipitation patterns in shorter periods of time, coupled with other factors such as the reduction or the lack of vegetation cover and risky constructions on sloppy areas. Unplanned urbanization and infrastructure development have increased flash flood occurrences, risking housing, infrastructure, crops, and public health. Housing quality and settlement patterns also contribute to vulnerability in Mauritius.

Mauritius faces governance and institutional challenges, as acknowledged by the government in its own policy papers and in various reports from other stakeholders. In addition to climate change and natural hazards, the country’s vulnerabilities as a small island developing state include limited resources and high dependency on imports. The country’s economy relies on agriculture, exports (seafood, textiles and apparel, and sugar), financial services, and tourism. However, the expansion of tourism infrastructure in the coastal areas disrupts natural drainage systems, increasing flood risk. Water resource management, including wastewater and sewerage infrastructure, needs improvement. The vulnerability of water and sanitation facilities to disaster risk is increased by damaged drinking water pipelines and the open sewerage system. At times of flooding, sewage can overflow with the risk of contaminating drinking water and causing serious health problems for the population.

In addition to these development challenges, Port Louis also suffers from a lack of adequate financial and human resources and a mismatch between revenues and expenditures leading to a reduction in core services and its quality. Inadequate infrastructure and equipment associated to insufficient technology skills have been pointed out as challenges affecting the city. As an example, incorrect disposal of garbage can get carried into the lower lying areas of Port Louis during times of intense rainfall and flash floods, or directly to the sea and the port, often resulting in the disruption of harbour activities.
I. Global policy frameworks and positioning

In 2005, the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States was held in Mauritius. The meeting was convened to seek a renewed political commitment of all countries to the Small Island Developing States. At the meeting in Port Louis, participants unanimously adopted the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Strategy sets forth actions and strategies in 19 priority areas, including the original themes of the 2014 Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

In November 2021, on the margins of COP26 in Glasgow, Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth intervened during the World Leaders Summit and during the launching of Infrastructure for Resilient Island States (IRIS), where he stressed upon the need to limit the rising global temperature by 1.5°Celsius is no longer a desirable objective but a critical imperative if we want to avoid a major catastrophe.

II. Agenda 2030

**VNR:** Voluntary National Review 2019
**NDC:** Intended Nationally Determined Contribution for the Republic of Mauritius released in 2015; Update of the Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Mauritius released in 2021.
**NAP:** two National Adaptation Plans (NAP) are under preparation through Green Climate Fund assistance: one on Infrastructure, bridges and culverts, DRR flood-prone areas and coastal zones; one for health.
**NUA national report:** Not available.
**MTR SF:** Mauritius’ Voluntary National Report for the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (MTR SF) was released in 2022.

III. National / local engagement (networks, MCR2030, inter-regional forums, etc.)

Mauritius is a member State of the African Union (AU), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), African Group of Negotiators (AGN), Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), among other international and regional memberships.
Port Louis is a member of the Association Internationale des Maires Francophones (AIMF), Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), Association des Villes et Collectivités de l’Océan Indien (AVCOI), Observatoire Villes Ports Océan Indien (OVPOI). Since 2011, Port Louis is a member of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability. The city has joined the Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030), following its original commitment to the Making Cities Resilient Campaign.

Disaster Risk Profile Mauritius. This disaster risk profile for Mauritius was developed in 2016 as part of the Southwest Indian Ocean Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative (SWIO RAFI) of the World Bank Group through the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). This analysis seeks to provide a basis for the future implementation of disaster risk financing through the improved understanding of disaster risks. The risk modelling undertaken focused on three perils: tropical cyclones, floods and earthquakes. The profile suggests that, on average, Mauritius experiences over US$110 million in combined direct losses from earthquakes, floods, and tropical cyclones each year.

Disaster risk management: A capacity diagnosis – The Republic of Mauritius. This report, released in 2020 provides a complete diagnosis of Mauritius’ vulnerability and exposure to disaster risk, together with a diagnostic of the need for multi-hazard risk assessment. It presents a series of recommendations based on a cross-sectoral and inclusive approach to DRR and provides directions for Mauritius to strengthen its capacities to pursue integrated and coherent solutions to reduce disaster risks across the Sustainable Development Goals. The assessment was conducted in 2019 under the leadership of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (NDRRMC) in close collaboration with the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, with the support...
of the United Nations Country Team in Mauritius and the CADRI Partnership. The assessment is based on the CADRI Capacity Diagnosis and Planning Tool, a self-assessment tool that considers several dimensions of capacity: policies, organization, institutional arrangements and coordination at national and sub-national levels, skills and competencies, tools, methodologies, SOPs and financing.

Building Climate Resilience - A Handbook for adaptation to climate change and increasing resilience for Port Louis, Mauritius. This Handbook launched in 2012 is a key deliverable of an ICLEI-Africa project entitled Sub-Saharan African Cities: A Five-City Network to Pioneer Climate Adaptation through Participatory Research & Local Action. This project falls within the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa Programme, a jointly funded initiative by Canada’s International Development Research Council (IDRC) and UK’s Department for International Development (DFID). The Five City Network project aims to address the knowledge, resource, capacity and networking gaps by strengthening the ability to plan for, and adapt to, impacts associated with climate change.

Mauritius: National Urban Profile and Mauritius: Port Louis Urban Profile. Developed by UN-Habitat and launched in 2012 as part of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP), Urban Profiles are an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building gaps at local and national levels. The PSUP methodology consists of three phases: (1) a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on Governance, Local Economic Development, Land, Gender, Environment, Slums and Shelter, Basic Urban Services, and Waste Management, and proposed interventions; (2) detailed priority proposals; and (3) project implementation.
Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Study for the Port of Port-Louis in Mauritius. The objective of the study launched in 2020 was to conduct a climate change vulnerability and adaptation study for the port of Port Louis to improve its resilience and sustainability, and assist with the identification of adaptation options and their monitoring. This technical assistance of US$ 324,764 over a 15-month period was funded by the Green Climate Fund through a Readiness proposal presented by UNEP and UNFCCC Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN).

Coastal Cities of the Western Indian Ocean Region and the Blue Economy: City Case Study - Port Louis. Commissioned by the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) and UN-Habitat and produced by Arup, this report launched in 2021 provides specific blue economy recommendations for Port Louis, focusing on strategic and operational opportunities for the city and its blue economy stakeholders. In addition, it offers knowledge resources for city and national government stakeholders, WIOMSA, UN Habitat, the private sector, and civil society.

**ADDITIONAL PARTNERS TO CONSIDER FOR ENGAGEMENT**

The Association of Urban Authorities of Mauritius consists of representatives of the urban authorities of Mauritius, known as municipalities. The Association is empowered to represent and address issues faced by the 5 municipalities island-wide.
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