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SECOND PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE GREEN CLIMATE FUND

Country case study report

Mauritius

January 2023

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Second Performance Review of the Green Climate Fund

MAURITIUS COUNTRY CASE STUDY REPORT

01/2023

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Accredited entity
APR	Annual performance report
BESS	Battery energy storage system
CN	Concept note
DAE	Direct access entity
EBA	Ecosystem-based adaptation
FP	Funding proposal
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross domestic product
GESI	Gender equity and social inclusion
GHG	Greenhouse gas
IAE	International accredited entity
IEU	Independent Evaluation Unit
IOC	Indian Ocean Commission
MARENA	Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency
NDA	National designated authority
NDC	Nationally determined contribution
PV	Photovoltaic
RPSP	Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme
SIDS	Small island developing State(s)
SPR	Second Performance Review
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

A. INTRODUCTION

This country case study has been conducted as an input into the Second Performance Review (SPR) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), as launched by the Board of the GCF through decision B.BM-2021/11. The SPR is being conducted by the GCF's Independent Evaluation Unit (IEU). The SPR focuses on assessing the progress made by the GCF in delivering on its mandate, as well as the results of the GCF, including its funded activities and its effectiveness and efficiency. The SPR is informed by multiple data sources and methods, including country case studies.

This country case study report for Mauritius is based on desk review, interviews (see annex 1) and a country mission undertaken from 4 July to 8 July 2022. The country mission included site visits to the Central Electricity Board's Wootton Substation, where a 14 MW battery energy storage system (BESS) has been installed, having been funded under FP033: Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy in the Republic of Mauritius. The country mission team included Colleen McGinn (ICF senior consultant) and Peter Mwandri (GCF IEU). The report benefited from findings by an earlier IEU country case study conducted during the GCF Forward-looking Performance Review in 2019.

B. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

This section presents information to help contextualize Mauritius's experience with the GCF, including background on the country (Table 1), climate change and climate finance contexts.

1. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Table 1. Overview of Mauritius country context

CATEGORY	COUNTRY
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total population is approximately 1.31 million, with 40.8 per cent in urban areas (Central Intelligence Agency, 2022). Around 10 per cent of the population are below the poverty line (Central Intelligence Agency, 2022).
GCF group status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small island developing State (SIDS); Africa
Governance conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As evaluated on six World Bank governance indicators, Mauritius ranks in the top 50 per cent for Control of Corruption (68th percentile) and Voice and Accountability (71st percentile), and in the top quarter for Government Effectiveness (76th percentile), Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism (78th percentile), Regulatory Quality (84th percentile) and Rule of Law (80th percentile) (World Bank, 2022b). Fragile and conflict-affected state status: N/A (World Bank, 2022c). Governance: Mauritius has a parliamentary republic with a mixed legal system based on French civil law with some elements of English common law (Central Intelligence Agency 2022). The President, Prithvirajsing Roopun, is the Head of State and was elected in 2019. The Prime Minister, Pravind Jugnauth, is the leader of the Militant Socialist Party and has been in office serving as the Head of Government since January 2017 (Africa Union, n.d.).
Economic and development conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development status: Upper-middle-income (World Bank, 2022a). Important economic sectors: The services sector accounts for 74.1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), followed by the industry sector at 21.8 per cent

CATEGORY	COUNTRY
	<p>of GDP and, lastly, agriculture, accounting for 4 per cent of GDP (Central Intelligence Agency, 2022).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlook: Mauritius became a high-income country in July 2020 (based on 2019 data) but regressed to upper-middle-income status in 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite a successful vaccination campaign that resulted in 76 per cent of the population being fully vaccinated by February 2022, the economic impact has been severe, and GDP contracted by nearly 15 per cent in 2020. GDP grew by about 4 per cent in 2021, although subsequent COVID-19 waves hindered further growth and output remains below pre-pandemic levels. Lingering output gaps in tourism, an increasing trade imbalance and rising inflation remain ongoing economic challenges (World Bank, 2022d).
Access to finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mauritius has a development model led by the public sector, with government policies aimed at stimulating economic growth across several areas. Its National Economic Development Board was established in 2017/18 to spearhead efforts promoting exports and attracting investment (Central Intelligence Agency, 2022). • The central government debt-to-GDP ratio was 64 per cent in 2017 and spiked to 100.6 per cent in the 2020/2021 financial year (Central Intelligence Agency, 2022; World Bank, 2022d). • World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index: Mauritius ranks very high among all countries, at 13 out of 190 (World Bank, 2021). • Mauritius has relatively large and strong financial and banking sectors and an expanding offshore sector (International Monetary Fund, 2021).

2. CLIMATE CHANGE PRIORITIES, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS

a. Climate vulnerability

Mauritius is significantly vulnerable to the threats posed by climate change, including severe weather events and natural disasters (e.g. cyclones), tidal surges, sea level rise and changing precipitation patterns (increases in drought, declining annual rainfall, and more frequent intense rainfall events and consequent flooding/flash floods). These and other adverse impacts of climate change are already occurring. Exposure to these natural hazards is high and increasing, which necessitates urgent action to confront the vulnerability of this SIDS (Mauritius, 2012; Mauritius, Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management, 2016; World Bank Group, 2021). Mauritius was ranked at 51 out of 180 countries for the highest disaster risk rating in 2021 by the World Risk Report (Mauritius, Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, 2021).

b. National climate change and related policies

Mauritius has taken steps to enhance climate change mainstreaming nationwide. The Climate Change Act of 2020 frames commitments to mainstream and coordinate on climate issues at the highest governmental level. Mauritius has also developed several national strategies that it submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), including a nationally determined contribution and an adaptation communication. A national adaptation plan is currently under development. The country's climate change policies and strategies are summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Mauritius national climate change policies and strategies

STRATEGY	STATUS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
National climate policies	Enacted	<p>Climate Change Act (2020): This is the foundational legislative climate framework of Mauritius. It establishes climate-focused institutions and bodies and prescribes their responsibilities, implementation parameters and enforcement structure. It also creates additional national climate-related policies, strategies and action plans, and amends existing national policies with climate-related clauses (Mauritius, 2020b).</p> <p>National Climate Change Adaptation Policy Framework: This framework delineates an adaptation policy, including sector-level actions for water, agriculture, fisheries, biodiversity, tourism, human health and infrastructure, alongside an investment plan for climate change adaptation (Mauritius, 2021). It prioritizes capacity-building and mainstreaming of climate change adaptation into core national development policies, strategies and plans (Mauritius, 2012).</p> <p>Vision 2030: This is a strategic plan and budget document that delineates country strategies for sustainable development and other national-level goals. Climate action is included throughout sector-specific plans and is a key tenet in the mission statement for their sector-specific plans focusing on the environment (Mauritius, 2020a).</p>
Nationally determined contribution (NDC)	Submitted October 2021	Mauritius submitted an updated NDC in 2021, which increases the country's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction goal to 40 per cent by 2030 compared to baseline. This is an increase from the 30 per cent reduction included in the originally proposed NDC. Of this target, 35 per cent is unconditional and 65 per cent is conditional upon sufficient international assistance. Economy-wide emissions reduction targets encompass sector-specific mitigation goals for the energy, transport, waste, and industrial processes and produce use sectors, of which energy represents the largest share of GHG emissions reductions (Mauritius, 2021). An NDC action plan was also developed in 2022.
National adaptation plan	Under development	The national adaptation plan is currently under development with assistance from the GCF.
Adaptation communication	Submitted October 2021	Mauritius submitted its adaptation communication as part of its updated NDC in 2021. It describes priority sectors for intervention, including infrastructure and disaster risk reduction, water, agriculture, tourism and coastal zone management, fisheries, biodiversity and health. The adaptation communication also prescribes several ongoing and/or proposed adaptation actions, including rehabilitation of coastline, development of a coral restoration strategy and increased conservation area for terrestrial biodiversity, among others. International support is necessary to implement the proposed adaptation measures and priority actions, which require approximately USD 4.5 billion in investment by 2030 (Mauritius, 2021).
Long-term Low-emission Development Strategy	Not developed	Mauritius has not communicated a long-term low-emission development strategy to the UNFCCC.
Third National Communication	Submitted 2016	The Third National Communication summarizes Mauritius's climate conditions, institutional arrangements and national GHG inventory, and identifies priorities and actions for both mitigation and adaptation (Mauritius, Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management, 2016).
First Biennial Update Report	Submitted December 2021	The Biennial Update Report provides an update to the Third National Communication, including updated GHG inventory numbers, policy implementation progress (e.g. the National Climate Change Policy), and updated mitigation and adaptation priorities and activities (Mauritius,

STRATEGY	STATUS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
		Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, 2021).

c. Institutional roles and responsibilities for climate change

Institutional roles and responsibilities for climate change were defined in the Climate Change Act in 2020. The Act delineates that the Department of Climate Change – a part of the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change – is responsible for coordinating the implementation of commitments to international climate change agreements. An Inter-ministerial Council on Climate Change sets national objectives, goals and targets, whereas a Climate Change Committee works to foster multi-stakeholder participation for the preparation of national climate change strategies and action plans for both mitigation and adaptation (Mauritius, 2021). There are considerable constraints and gaps to the achievement of the country's climate goals. Technical, financial and capacity-building support is needed across sectors and objectives, although most notably those related to GHG inventory; monitoring, reporting and verification; and mitigation sectors (e.g. energy, transport, and industrial processes and produce use) (Mauritius, Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, 2021). Meanwhile, stakeholders indicate that despite the vulnerability of Mauritius, adaptation policies and interventions are still nascent.

3. CLIMATE FINANCE CONTEXT

a. Support for readiness

Mauritius is well positioned for climate finance, with an ND-GAIN readiness score of 0.554, ranked as the thirty-fifth most ready country out of 193 countries. However, to date, it has received relatively limited readiness support from either bilateral or multilateral sources (University of Notre Dame, 2022). In-country stakeholders noted several barriers, including that Mauritius is too small and its per capita income too high to attract international attention. Although it is extremely vulnerable to climate change, its risk profile resembles that of other SIDS rather than that of other African nations. It is therefore often overlooked if the vulnerability methodology prioritizes desertification or food security, which is often the case for finance directed to Africa.

b. Climate investment

Between 2002 and 2019, a total of USD 545 million of development finance targeting climate change was committed to Mauritius. More than 75 per cent of these funds focused primarily on mitigation (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2022).

These tables illustrate that France is the only provider of loans to Mauritius, providing six times more climate finance than the next four bilateral and multilateral partners combined according to the Stockholm Environment Institute's Aid Atlas. The climate finance that Mauritius does get is primarily in the form of loans rather than grants, and there is a little adaptation-focused work, which is startling for a SIDS. Overall, there appear to be critical gaps in both the amount and focus of climate finance in Mauritius. Development finance commitments targeting climate mitigation totalled USD 85.9 million from 2016 to 2019 (Table 3), whereas adaptation finance totalled only USD 10.6 million from 2016 to 2019.

Table 3. Top development partners, sectors and instruments for mitigation investments in Mauritius (2016–2019)

TOP DONORS		TOP SECTORS		TOP INSTRUMENTS	
Name	USD (M)	Name	Share (%)	Name	Share (%)
France	73.7	Industry, Mining, Construction	85.8	Official development assistance loans	85.8
Global Environment Facility	10.3	Energy	7.8	Official development assistance grants	14.2
United Kingdom	1.41	General environmental protection	6.4	-	-
Japan	.311	-	-	-	-
Germany	.0838	-	-	-	-

Source: Stockholm Environment Institute (2022). Aid Atlas.

c. GCF portfolio

National designated authority (NDA). The NDA of Mauritius is located in the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development.

Accredited entities. Mauritius does not have access to any accredited national direct access entities (DAEs); it is reliant on international accredited entities (IAEs) and regional DAEs. The chief partner is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Readiness and project preparation. Mauritius has received the same readiness support from the GCF as other SIDS countries have received, on average.¹ Mauritius has received two Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme (RPSP) grants (see Table 4), for a total of USD 0.6 million, of which USD 0.5 million has been disbursed.

As of early 2022, Mauritius has not developed a GCF country programme nor received support from the Project Preparation Facility.

Table 4. RPSP grants to Mauritius

RPSP GRANT NAME	DELIVERY PARTNER	APPROVAL DATE / STATUS	OUTCOME AREAS
Mauritius – Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Study for Port of Port Louis	UNEP-CTCN	22 January 2018 Completed	Strategic Framework
Mauritius – NDA Strengthening + Country Programming	Mauritius, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development	15 February 2019 Ongoing	NDA Strengthening, including country programming (Strategic planning, NDA, country programme)

Source: IEU DataLab

¹ On average, SIDS have received USD 0.6 million in GCF financing. (IEU DataLab, RPSP grants approved for 2015 to 2022).

Funding proposals (FP). Most of Mauritius GCF financing is from multi-country projects, which do not necessarily have significant presence in the country.² Five projects have been approved for Mauritius (see Table 5 **Error! Reference source not found.**) for a total of USD 498 million in GCF financing, of which one is a national project and four are multi-country projects. In general, multi-country projects often overlook Mauritius during implementation, and the GCF is no exception. The table below presents those who have an active footprint in Mauritius at time of writing. There is also a multi-country FP (FP095: Transforming Financial Systems for Climate) that potentially includes Mauritius but has no presence in the country. FP099: Climate Investor One has hired a national consultant to do some preliminary research and outreach, but the programme is not yet advanced enough to have a presence in Mauritius.

Table 5. Funded activity portfolio

FP	NAME	SINGLE/ MULTI- COUNTRY	PUBLIC/ PRIVATE	ADAPTATION / MITIGATION	AE	APPROVAL DATE
FP033	Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy in the Republic of Mauritius	S	Public	Mitigation	UNDP	15 December 2016
FP161	Building Regional Resilience through Strengthened Meteorological, Hydrological and Climate Services in the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) Member Countries	M	Public	Adaptation	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>	19 March 2021
FP135	Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Indian Ocean – EBA IO	M	Public	Adaptation	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>	21 August 2020
FP099	Climate Investor One	M	Private	Mitigation	FMO	20 October 2018
FP095	Transforming Financial Systems for Climate	M	Private	Cross-cutting	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>	20 October 2018

Source: IEU DataLab

C. KEY FINDINGS

1. COUNTRY NEEDS, OWNERSHIP AND STRATEGY

a. Links of GCF programming to broader climate strategy and finance

Currently, GCF programming is adequately linked to broader climate strategy and finance processes in Mauritius. Perhaps surprisingly for a SIDS, climate policy in Mauritius has tended to

² On average, SIDS have received USD 39.3 million in GCF financing. (IEU DataLab, finance by results area for 2015 to 2022)

be stronger on mitigation than on adaptation. There is high demand for renewable energy investments and climate mitigation to address the country's energy insecurity. The government has committed to a target of 60 per cent renewable energy in Mauritius by 2030, an extremely ambitious aim given the near-zero baseline from only a few years ago. GCF investments in Mauritius strongly support this priority: the major funded project (FP033: Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy) is single-handedly poised to enable Mauritius to meet this aim.

Opportunities for future RPSP grants to encourage better alignment of GCF and Mauritian goals include funding to build awareness among the Mauritian public and senior policymakers about climate resilience, as well as dedicating funding to the overstretched NDA to prepare a formal GCF country programme.

The GCF Secretariat has primarily played a reactive role in Mauritius with respect to the upstream programming process and aligning GCF partners and programmes with national and/or country strategy objectives. The NDA exhibits high capacity but is overstretched. The NDA reports limited contact with the Secretariat and, in the absence of a DAE, nearly all interactions are via multilateral intermediaries, especially the UNDP. Upstream FPs are largely driven by IAEs, although they are aligned with national policies and approved by national authorities. Some national agencies are keen to pursue more in-depth partnerships but are inhibited by the lack of an IAE that is interested in partnering with them. Although national stakeholders are satisfied with the IAEs they work with, they would very much appreciate more direct interaction with and access to the GCF Secretariat.

The GCF portfolio for Mauritius shows little evidence of complementarity with other climate finance channels. There are some coordinated projects (e.g. through IOC) and co-financing with others (namely *Agence Française de Développement*). However, opportunities for complementary climate finance in Mauritius are scarce. Mauritius appears to be overlooked by funders due to its small size, geographic isolation, diseconomies of scale (which characterizes all island economies) and a per capita income that is high by African standards. Co-financing with *Agence Française de Développement* has proven to be complicated insofar as there is an apparently intractable issue concerning FP033.

Compared to other climate finance channels, stakeholders in Mauritius report that the comparative advantages of the GCF are as follows:

- **The GCF potentially brings in unparalleled volumes of money.** This is seen as the chief comparative advantage. In some instances, the GCF is seen as the only possible source of funding.
- **The GCF's commitment to both Africa and SIDS.** This uniquely places Mauritius as a top priority, which is especially appreciated because it is often overlooked by donors.

The GCF is perceived as less well positioned in Mauritius in the following areas:

- **Direct access.** The country has no DAEs. While in-country stakeholders are satisfied with existing intermediaries, the lack of accredited DAEs in Mauritius limits options for partnerships, especially for interventions that meet GCF priorities but not those of the accredited entities (AEs) themselves.
- **Leveraging co-financing.** There is little international donor interest in Mauritius due to its small size and high per capita income. It is difficult to secure co-financing.
- **Responsiveness to the Mauritian context.** There is a strong sense that as a SIDS with stark contrasts to the rest of Africa, Mauritius is poorly understood by outsiders. The GCF's lack of in-country presence is seen as contributing to this perennial challenge.

b. Effectiveness of NDA, Secretariat and AE roles and their relationships effective at the country level

NDA staffing and technical capacity in Mauritius has improved since the initial resource mobilization period; overall capacity is strong. The NDA exhibits high capacity and eagerness to partner with the GCF, as do key ministries and other stakeholders. The NDA is, however, overstretched as it is responsible for managing other international donor funding to the government. Although the NDA and relevant ministries are knowledgeable about climate change, stakeholders report that awareness at the highest levels of government is weaker in Mauritius, with a grasp of climate resilience approaches and interventions characterized as uneven beyond a handful of specialists.

The NDA has benefited from RPSP support for NDA strengthening. Stakeholders report overall satisfaction with the GCF, and NDA representatives consistently demonstrated enthusiasm, high administrative capacity and engagement in the right partnerships (including with IAEs, in-country experts and counterparts in sectoral ministries) to get the job done. Nevertheless, the NDA is constrained by some factors:

- The NDA is responsible for international donor funding broadly, and as a result it is pulled in many directions. There are missed opportunities for leadership because it is short-staffed. It could, for example, more proactively position national agencies for accreditation, a point that is elaborated upon in greater depth below.
- The NDA is not positioned to address certain matters within the Mauritian government – for example, procurement processes. The result is an apparent mismatch between responsibility and authority.
- National stakeholders expressed a desire for the GCF to offer support through a roster of global experts who can be available and mobilized on short notice, which would lessen the need to work through intermediaries.³

The NDA's working relationship with the Secretariat has improved since the initial resource mobilization period. A country case study of Mauritius conducted for the Forward-looking Performance Review in 2019 found that relations were strained and that the NDA was trapped in some unnecessary bureaucratic loops, which have fortunately been resolved. While other issues have since arisen, it does appear that, overall, the partnership has strengthened over time.

AEs active in Mauritius report that they engage regularly with the GCF Secretariat. However, most of these engagements are led by the AEs' regional offices, and Mauritius is both small and strikingly different from other African countries. There are no DAEs; projects are funnelled through IAEs, with those representatives assigned to liaise with GCF staff not in Mauritius. Interactions are thus too often filtered through representatives who are removed from the local context. While most government stakeholders prefer to work with AEs with a physical presence in Mauritius, there are some concerning signs that they have become too dependent on them to lead proposals and project designs.

³ The authors note that these stakeholders appear to be unaware of the on-demand technical assistance using rosters of experts the Secretariat has recently rolled out.

2. IMPROVING ACCESS TO THE GCF

a. Access to AEs that cover country programming priorities for the GCF

Mauritius currently has access to AEs that partially cover its programming priorities for the GCF, and relationships are strong between the government and the IAEs. It is clear that the accreditation system is not working optimally for Mauritius. National agencies that wish to pursue GCF partnership cannot do so because they lack access to an AE that is willing to partner with them; the main reasons for this are the transactional costs of working with the GCF and a mismatch between the national agencies' priorities and AEs' strategies and mandates. The IAEs have hesitated to sponsor other agencies' initiatives unless they fit very squarely within their own mandate and country strategy. One national agency is pursuing its own accreditation, but it is sector specific and is not expected to open pathways for others.

b. Meeting DAEs' needs for capacity-building to access the GCF

In Mauritius, national DAEs' needs for capacity-building to access the GCF are not at all being met through GCF support. Both national and international agencies that are seeking accreditation voice serious complaints about the process. The first and only national agency that is applying for accreditation has not received any support from the GCF directly and has been apparently waiting for its system login credentials for over a year, despite repeated requests to the Secretariat to issue them. The NDA has tried to facilitate access but has not been successful. There is a perception that the GCF does not support the pursuit of accreditation.

3. PROGRAMMING AND IMPLEMENTATION

a. Meeting country programming needs through GCF readiness support

Overall, the needs of Mauritius appear to be only partially met through GCF resources or other resources available to them. To date, RPSP grants in Mauritius have benefited the agencies with strong, pre-existing relationships, such as support to the NDA delivered via UNDP.

Mauritius has engaged in some ways with the GCF's RPSP, with two grants approved and three in the pipeline (see Table 4). Although grants have been approved, there is frustration that approved readiness projects are not launching properly due to slow legal processes to finalize grant agreements. Still, the NDA has benefited from general strengthening and country programming. Participants appreciate the past and ongoing support for capacity-building broadly, as well as for targeted efforts like feasibility studies for climate-proofing the nation's only deep seaport and to strengthen the national adaptation plan.

Stakeholders report that the RPSP grants are delivering high-quality support and capacity-building that are welcome, useful and being applied. At the same time, there is opportunity for improvement. Some national stakeholders expressed frustration that they are ready to "graduate" from the RPSP but have reached bottlenecks within accreditation and FP approval processes, thus limiting their ability to do so. As one stakeholder asserted, "readiness is not the big chunk of money that we need." Meanwhile, although RPSP grants funded feasibility studies for climate-proofing the port, the FP approval process has been slow enough that the validity of the study may expire.

The ideas for RPSP grant requests are primarily being driven by the core players: IAEs, such as UNDP and IOC, and sector-level ministries. RPSP ideas, priorities and motivation are generated by IAEs and sector-specific ministries in tandem, and the NDA supports but does not lead the processes. Which ones are pursued depends on a mix of having the right interested partner (usually UNDP), specific urgent concerns (e.g. climate vulnerability of the port) and proactive individuals who are especially committed to shepherding the application through. Some issues that

cross the mandate of several ministries, such as land-use planning, are reportedly not being addressed. Agencies that are smaller or beyond the core NDA/UNDP relationship either do not know about the RPSP or do not understand that they might be eligible for it.

The top reasons for not engaging with the GCF's RPSP are a lack of awareness about opportunities to do so or limited resources available for staff to prepare support requests.

There is an opportunity to broaden access beyond the “usual players” and, particularly, to expand to civil society and private sector agencies. A key gap is to support the sector-specific government agency applying for accreditation and/or to encourage the Mauritius Development Bank to pursue accreditation on behalf of a broader array of potential national partners. As discussed above, climate adaptation and resilience are gaps within the Mauritian national policy landscape, and knowledgeable experts assert that coastal erosion/protection is a particularly urgent concern that the government is unprepared to address. An entity willing to tackle this issue would be an ideal candidate for RPSP support.

b. Effectiveness of processes for funding proposal origination, development and appraisal to meet country needs

Mauritius has been active in submitting FPs, with a handful approved to date; however, most are multi-country projects that do not necessarily have significant presence in the country.

Some examples of the top reasons for not submitting more FPs to the GCF include challenging GCF processes and difficulty in finding an AE willing to sponsor a particular FP. The

processes for submitting concept notes (CNs) and FPs are widely criticized in Mauritius for being slow, contradictory, inefficient and arbitrary. Country and AE interviewees called for streamlined administration and focused and consistent communication.

Currently, stakeholders find the submission through appraisal process overly cumbersome, though possible. Overall, high transactional costs are seen as a necessary cost of doing business with the GCF, and this is one of main reasons why the core government stakeholders sometimes prefer working through UNDP rather than going through a time-consuming process of pursuing direct access.

Some of the frustrations expressed about proposal development and submission are as follows:

- Templates are constantly changing, requiring the applicant to completely rewrite the application and resubmit it, seemingly without progress.
- Submissions receive a steady stream of new requirements, additional requests for information and follow-up comments that are unconnected to (and sometimes contradictory to) previous comments. Frustrations are magnified when questions are posed that require the kind of complex, expensive data collection and analysis that is understood as better suited for an inception phase rather than a CN. In at least one case, a new requirement was reported not to be germane to the application at all, and yet considerable time and resources were necessary to prepare it. Another interviewee recounted that a project was more or less approved in one round and had then been picked apart in another.
- There is a lack of prompt, direct communication with GCF staff and reviewers who are familiar with Mauritius and/or the specific interventions being proposed in the FPs.
- There is a perception that the GCF does not abide by its own commitments and principles – for example, to prioritize Africa and adaptation for SIDS. There is a sense that Board decisions are arbitrary and/or politicized.

Some of the challenges relating to AE sponsorship are as follows:

- It is difficult to find an AE that is willing to sponsor the effort; this difficulty is reported by international as well as national potential partners. As noted elsewhere in this document, Mauritius is a small country of limited interest to international donors or agencies, and so very few donors or IAEs have any presence in the country.
- The core cadre of partners who are present are overstretched and express the need to be highly selective; meanwhile, potential partners beyond them do not know how to engage.

Agencies active in Mauritius have not pursued funding through the Project Preparation Facility or the simplified approval process.

c. Sufficiency of funded activity implementation and supervision processes

Activity implementation and supervision processes are progressing in Mauritius as well as can be expected given the exceptional challenges posed by COVID-19. These challenges include the global supply chain/shipping delays, which had an exaggerated impact on a SIDS with one port and closed borders for travel. The national project FP033 has also faced significant procurement delays associated with co-financing not disbursing as planned (see also the discussion on co-financing in section 4d below).

Stakeholders also expressed the view that the GCF's inflexibility regarding adjustments to funded activity agreements has added to the implementation difficulties. In the case of FP161, this multi-country IOC project proposed one set of equipment in its original budget; however, given the time that has passed, that equipment is now obsolete, and adjustments that consider more modern equipment are not straightforward.

4. PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS AND IMPACT OF GCF INVESTMENTS

a. Evidence that intended outputs and outcomes have been achieved/are likely to be achieved

GCF funded activities are behind schedule to deliver expected results in Mauritius, a situation that largely stems from operational difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic. In-country stakeholders are committed to making up for lost time, as very little could progress in the last few years. Mauritius, like many SIDS, closed its borders early. However, without any flights to or from Mauritius, it was closed from external technical assistance and suffered from exceptional economic strains as trade was disrupted and tourism – a pillar of the economy – collapsed. Because Mauritius is also extremely dependent on imports from abroad and its single deep seaport, the global shipping supply chain disruption of 2020–2022 wreaked considerable havoc on procurement. Essential supplies and equipment were delayed for months on end, and without face-to-face contact it became difficult to do business.

As noted above, two FPs (FP033 and FP161) are experiencing procurement issues and report difficulty in obtaining approval for modifications to their funded activity agreements. FP033 received a one-year, no-cost extension for Phase One, but the approval implies that the Phase Two timeline may be reduced by a year, which will likely impact project delivery.

Factors that propel positive achievement of results in Mauritius include high government capacity, strong relationships with IAEs and enthusiastic motivation to achieve results among all parties. The key driver influencing the expected achievement or failure to achieve intended project-level outputs and outcomes is the ultimate resolution of the FP033 procurement/co-financing issue. A summary of expected outcomes and progress achieved to date is presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Summary of evidence of outcomes

OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXAMPLES OF PROGRESS TO DATE
Reduced GHG emissions	<p>FP033: Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy in the Republic of Mauritius</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 / Component 2: The automatic generation control system and energy battery storage will be enhanced, and the grid will be able to absorb an additional 125 MW of energy. Phase 2 / Component 2: Total of 25 MW of rooftop photovoltaic (PV) capacity will be added and connected to the national grid. Phase 2 / Component 3: PV mini grids with generation capacity of 300 kW will be installed on the island of Agalega, covering three villages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 14 MW BESS has been set up to enable the grid to accommodate more intermittent renewable energy. An automatic generation control system is in place. Progress has been made on the BESS, despite major delays due to global supply chain problems during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Increased resilience*	<p>FP161: Building Regional Resilience through Strengthened Meteorological Hydrological and Climate Services in the IOC Member Countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-quality, climate-related data improved multi-hazard, impact-based forecasts and early warning systems (MH-IBF-EWS) and climate risk assessments. Enhanced accessibility and use of climate services for climate change adaptation, and improved capabilities in implementing a people-centred MH-IBF-EWS for disaster risk reduction. 	<p>At the time the case study was prepared, no annual performance report (APR) had been submitted; implementation in remote islands was effectively suspended by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>
Enabling environment**	<p>FP033: Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy in the Republic of Mauritius.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 / Component 1: Institutional framework will be put in place to strengthen the Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency (MARENA). <p>FP161: Building Regional Resilience through Strengthened Meteorological Hydrological and Climate Services in the IOC Member Countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity-building, institutional development, regional cooperation and public-private engagement. 	<p>FP033: Accelerating the transformational shift to a low-carbon economy in the Republic of Mauritius</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A management and information system has been set up at the MARENA. MARENA staff have completed technical training courses to equip them to marshal the transition to renewable energy. Outreach and awareness-raising have reached the Mauritian public broadly, as well as more specific trainings on solar PVs. A National Grid Code and other tariffs and frameworks have been adopted by the Utility Regulatory Authority and are being rolled out.
Co-benefits	<p>FP135: Ecosystem-Based Adaptation (EBA) in the Indian Ocean.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing strategic plans for EBA in the small island biodiversity hotspot that are well aligned with national climate change strategies. Supporting EBA activities through grants to 	<p>At the time the case study was prepared, no APR had been submitted; implementation in remote islands was effectively suspended by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p>

OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXAMPLES OF PROGRESS TO DATE
	civil service organizations.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring long-term sustainability and replicating success through knowledge products and tools for EBA. 	

Source: Projects annual performance reports

Note: At the time of writing this case study, no APRs had been submitted for the two multi-country Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) projects. Please note that the COVID-19 pandemic effectively suspended progress across this region. *Such as number of beneficiaries, value of physical assets and hectare of natural resource areas/land. **Such as strengthened institutional and regulatory frameworks, technology deployment/dissemination/development/transfer/innovation, and market development/transformation at sectoral, local or national level.

Box 1. Results from RPSP grant funding

The project Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Study for the Port of Port Louis (RPSP #1801-15053) funded critical feasibility research while capacitating targeted government agencies in Mauritius. It was delivered via UNEP-CTCN and set the stage to protect the country's economic lifeline: its only deep-sea harbour. As a SIDS, Mauritius has a limited natural resource base and is heavily dependent on imported food and commodities. The deep seaport is especially threatened by climate change: the sea level is rising, Indian Ocean typhoons are becoming more frequent and severe, and there is evidence that the storm path is shifting in a way that heightens the vulnerability of the port.

This grant became effective in January 2018 and was completed in December 2020. It financed studies to support an eventual FP application, including identification of policy gaps, mapping the port's vulnerability to climate change, budgeting appropriate adaptive measures (e.g. construction of a breakwater), setting priorities, and raising stakeholder awareness about the vulnerability of the port and how to protect it.

The main achievements include the following:

- A detailed methodology was developed and applied to estimate the cost of climate change impacts to the port, which is inclusive of direct costs, indirect costs and induced costs at the economic level.
- Ten priority climate risks and 148 port actors were incorporated into the quantitative analysis. For each identified climate risk, a cost estimation method was proposed and calculated based on economic and technical assumptions. This is the first time the cost of climate change has been estimated in such detail for a port.
- A detailed characterization of flood hazard in the port locality was conducted, based on a research and development level numerical model.

The selected adaptive measures were included in a draft CN to apply for GCF co-funding. Unfortunately, the transition from RPSP to FP has not gone as promptly as stakeholders anticipated. At time of writing, the CN has not advanced. Stakeholders express frustration that each new reviewer raises different points, and so the process has been slow and circular rather than progressive. There are now worries that the feasibility studies and budgeting will expire before the FP is funded. One lesson learned from this example is that there is opportunity for a better segue from RPSP to FP funding.

Source: Interviews and annual performance reports (including 2020 APRs for FP033)

b. Progress of funded activities towards paradigm shift

Paradigm shift in regard to climate action is seen in different ways by various stakeholders in Mauritius. As noted, climate policy in Mauritius has focused on energy security and/or specific climate vulnerabilities rather than taking an integrated systems approach. Sectoral specialists demonstrate that they are willing, eager and capable to forge the architecture to advance comprehensive and transformative climate action, including in the adaptation arena.

GCF funded activities in Mauritius show emerging signals of paradigm shift. As discussed above, GCF funding through FP033 is single-handedly enabling Mauritius to transition to renewable energy and a low-carbon development pathway, and government stakeholders have sophisticated

ambitions to further advance this with GCF partnership over the long term. Meanwhile, the multi-country IOC FPs (FP161 and FP135) are poised to make far-reaching changes to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services, advance an early warning system and reach other climate aims. RPSP grant 1901-15053 contributed to significant achievements to pave the way to protect the nation's lifeline – its only deep-sea harbour and port – but momentum has been lost as the CN has not progressed. Table 7 summarizes evidence of paradigm shift.

Table 7. Summary of evidence of dimensions of paradigm shift

DIMENSION	EVIDENCE FROM GCF FUNDED ACTIVITIES
Scale* and replicability**	FP033 is poised to almost completely transition Mauritius from energy insecurity and dependence on imported fossil fuels towards green energy.
Sustainability	Multi-country projects spanning the Indian Ocean states may not be fully scalable or replicable, but they are uniquely poised to deliver essential adaptation actions to extremely vulnerable SIDS, which other donors are overlooking.

Source: Projects annual performance reports

Note: *Scale: degree to which there has been a significant increase in quantifiable results within and beyond the scope of the intervention. This could include a situation where the GCF is scaling up earlier demonstrations or a GCF project will be scaled up outside project bounds. **Replicability: degree to which the GCF investments exported key structural elements of the proposed programme or project elsewhere within the same sector as well as to other sectors, regions or countries.

c. Women and other vulnerable populations, including indigenous peoples

In Mauritius, GCF funded activities under implementation adequately include women in capacity-building, training, decision-making and sharing of benefits. The NDA staff are mostly female, and MARENA is female-headed. The primary IAE, UNDP, has its own well-respected gender standards. Many women hold senior-level positions in Mauritian government at all levels, and there are efforts to target them in certain activities, especially technical ones like solar PV panel maintenance. Across all interviews, around 30 per cent of attendees were women, and they were often confident and outspoken. Interviewees were able to discuss specific gender issues, such as representation of women in electrical engineering and other STEM topics, and some initiated conversations about gender without prompting. Interviews confirmed that an approved gender action plan is in place on FPs.

The current portfolio of funded projects in Mauritius does not explicitly emphasize empowerment. The current projects focus on broad public goods such as energy security and ecosystems protection, and they do reach and benefit women and other disadvantaged populations. Within these projects, there is a relatively limited array of activities that directly interface with a broad population, and therefore there are fewer opportunities for directly transforming gender relations per se. Importantly and positively, one IOC project intends to focus on the country's remote outer islands, which are home to a small but disadvantaged and vulnerable population. Key stakeholders do express awareness of the importance of gender mainstreaming and are able to identify opportunities to do so appropriately. There is opportunity to broaden engagement to better include non-state actors, including the public, civil society, academia and the private sector.

Despite some positive approaches to gender equity and social inclusion (GESI), there remains an opportunity for more ambition in this regard. It is likely that as Mauritius's climate portfolio matures, avenues for more specific GESI interventions will manifest (for example, in regard to coastal protection and livelihoods). There are no indigenous peoples in Mauritius, which was only settled in recent centuries. It is noted that some stakeholders are eager to better demonstrate their

qualitative achievements in regard to GESI in ways that are contextual but do not generate crisp metrics or fit into standardized indicators and thus do not fully fit into reporting templates.

d. Catalysing public and private finance

For FP033, co-financing has not disbursed as planned from all sources, with disbursement of the loan portion on hold for at least a year causing a multi-year delay in procurement processes that will now likely have to be relaunched. UNDP is engaging with project stakeholders and the GCF to facilitate a resolution to these co-financing issues. Interviews for this case study pointed to differences in understanding among involved parties on how binding co-financing commitments identified in the funded activity agreement actually are, and how changes are addressed and managed with the GCF.

There is other evidence that the GCF funded activities have some opportunity to catalyse public and private finance; however, expectations need to be considered alongside contextual constraints. Lack of interest in Mauritius by development partners is a constant constraint. Meanwhile, although the nation has a comfortable per capita income, gross national revenue is necessarily restricted by the small population size. Although stakeholders report that they are overlooked on broader African projects, multi-country projects across the Indian Ocean are promising. Leveraging private finance for these nations is challenging, however, due to the diseconomies of scale that characterize SIDS. FP033 has the potential to be financially sustainable in the long run because it will reduce dependency on fossil fuels and lower electricity costs, benefiting human welfare and the private sector. In addition, if the submitted CN on climate-proofing the port facility is successful, there is revenue-generating potential.

Private sector (and all non-government) representatives interviewed for this case study indicate high interest in engaging with the GCF, but also highlight limited opportunities to do so. They are also unaware of avenues to engage with the GCF directly. Governmental procurement issues in Mauritius reportedly further discourage public–private partnerships.

e. Knowledge management and learning efforts within GCF funded activities, either in country or vis-à-vis the GCF

GCF funded activities under implementation show some evidence of knowledge and learning efforts. There may be more cross-learning than is obvious because Mauritius is a very small country, and all the stakeholders know each other well. Formal knowledge management and learning platforms are thus viewed as less important compared to rich, working relationships. However, there is considerable investment in capacity-building of government partners and important outreach activities that build public awareness – for example, about the benefits of solar power.

D. EMERGING LESSONS FOR THE GCF

The following emerging lessons for the GCF can be drawn from the Mauritius case:

- In a SIDS with limited donor interest, the GCF is uniquely poised to enable paradigm shift in both mitigation and adaptation.
- Stakeholders are eager for a participatory partnership with the GCF but experience significant barriers to access.
- Raising awareness about climate resilience and climate finance at more senior political levels as well as for the general public would advance the climate agenda in Mauritius, but neither are currently reached by the RPSP or other GCF modalities.

- The lack of GCF in-country presence is challenging. Stakeholders wish for the GCF to have more presence and direct relationships with key stakeholders, as doing so would enable better decision-making, adaptive management and the personal relationships that shape operations within small populations. There is demand for the GCF to conduct regular missions to Mauritius.
- Stakeholders call for deeper understanding of the challenges as well as the opportunities in addressing climate change in Mauritius. It is important for climate finance experts and decision makers to better understand mitigation in Mauritius (and the SIDS context more generally), particularly the nexus between energy insecurity, dependence on expensive and dirty fossil fuel imports, and adaptation. Meanwhile, the country's small size and geographic isolation, paired with a high per capita income by African standards, lead to mismatched expectations between in-country stakeholders, external donors and climate finance.
- The current portfolio and pipeline reflect tight relationships between the national government and multilateral/intergovernmental partners. There are opportunities for more meaningful outreach and engagement with non-state actors, including civil society, the private sector and beneficiaries (including women and other disadvantaged populations).
- Gender is mainstreamed into current projects, and stakeholders are aware of its importance. Programmes are poised to reach women and other disadvantaged populations; the pipeline project on adaptation in the outer islands is especially notable in this regard. There is opportunity to reach towards more systematic empowerment of women and other disadvantaged groups.
- Accreditation to the GCF remains elusive for prospective DAEs, and agencies that are eager for GCF partnership cannot always find a willing intermediary. Both national and international agencies voice complaints that the accreditation process is slow and opaque.
- The RPSP is welcome and participants consistently express appreciation for it. There are, however, calls for the transition from readiness to FPs to be more smooth, straightforward and efficient.
- The process for reviewing CNs and FPs has generated frustration among many stakeholders. They point to slow processes, circular feedback and comments that are not fit for purpose within the Mauritian context. Others point to changing templates, priorities and expectations.
- The GCF is seen as a “difficult donor” that is slow, arbitrary and inflexible, with high transactional costs. GCF operational procedures can better enable problem-solving and adaptive management.
- Co-financing arrangements have been problematic, insofar as there are gaps in contractual responsibilities involving all parties. Interconnected issues around procurement and co-financing are impacting the ability of FP033 – the premier GCF project in Mauritius – to continue.

Appendix 1. LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

NAME	FUNCTION
Usha Beegun-Ramduny	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Ashna Koushmita Nothoo	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Sneha Kesso Ujoodah	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Ashveen Bochowa	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Doumeraj Jahajeeah	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
Iqbar Tripol	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
Nawit Bandur	Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities
Sajjid Mooniaruck	UNDP – Country Office
Daniel Mcmondo	UNDP – Country Office
Vichitra Purdassee	UNDP – Country Office
Jana Koperniech	UNDP – Country Office
Arjun Sandrichand	World Health Organization
Antonious Kolmekakis	World Health Organization
Chan Seem Mee	World Health Organization
Amy Savage	World Health Organization
Mahmad Fazil Khodabocus	World Health Organization
Jogeeswar Seewoobaduth	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Sarita Meeheelaul	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Anita Kawol	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Satyanand Buskalawa	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Jacques Rudy Oh-Seng	Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change
Gina Bonne	Indian Ocean Commission
Jean Donat	Central Electricity Board
Yatindra K. Ramgolam	University of Mauritius
Jaykumar Chummun	University of Mauritius
Sanjeev K. Sobhee	University of Mauritius
Prithiviraj Booneeady	Mauritius Meteorological Services
André Pouilles-Duplaix	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>
Marie Cerceau	<i>Agence Française de Développement</i>
Ishwarlall Bonomally	Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development
Bussunth K. Rughooputh	Mauritius Ports Authority
Vimal Motee	Business Mauritius
Avinash Naek	Outer Islands Development Corporation
Mreedula Mungra	Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency

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