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Views expressed by contributors are their own

Disaster Risks & Management

Flood related Emergencies: Strengthening National Readiness through Practical Training

Strengthening Mauritius' readiness to face flood-related emergencies was the focus of the National Flood Prevention and Preparedness Campaign 2026–2027, launched on6 November 2026, in Port Louis by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre (NDRRMC), under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with Landscope Mauritius.

The programme featured practical demonstrations and training sessions by various first responders near the South Subway Entrance at Port Louis Waterfront. These covered basic rope rescue techniques, freeing people trapped in vehicles, evacuating casualties during floods and administering first aid.



The Lord Mayor of Port Louis, Ms Christelle Pondard; the Officer-in-Charge of the NDRRMC, Mr Premanand Budhoo; the Chief Executive Officer of Landscope Mauritius, Mr Manilall Seetohul; and other personalities were also present.

In his address, Mr Budhoo highlighted the risks posed by torrential rainfall and flash floods, which can threaten lives, damage infrastructure and disrupt livelihoods. He emphasised that preparedness must begin well before an emergency occurs and called for greater awareness at household and community levels. Referring to this year's International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction theme, 'Resilience Starts at Home', he urged the public to take flood warnings seriously, understand the risks in their localities and familiarise themselves with evacuation arrangements.



Safety Equipment

He further underlined that effective emergency response requires well-equipped and adequately trained first responders, as well as close coordination among the agencies concerned. Mr Budhoo explained that practical exercises enable responders to strengthen their skills, become familiar with rescue equipment and build the confidence needed to make sound decisions under pressure.

He also called for regular training, the review of emergency plans and sustained public awareness, stressing that preparedness must be an ongoing effort to minimise flood risks and protect communities.

For his part, Mr Seetohul highlighted the measures undertaken by Landscope Mauritius to reduce the risk of flooding at Caudan Waterfront, notably the upgrading of the north and south underpasses to limit water ingress, the installation of flood barriers and improvements to the drainage system. He also reassured that arrangements have been made to provide safe shelter for people in the area in the event of rising water levels.



Ms Christelle Pondard, Lord Mayor of Port Louis



Rescue Exercise at Caudan



Seminar

Gender Equality

The Ministry of Gender Equality held, on 5 November 2026 at the Media Trust offices in Port Louis a One Day Capacity Building Programme on "integrating Gender Perspectives: Guidelines for Effective Policy Implementation for Media Professionals"

The seminar was conducted by Ms Winfred Lichuma, gender expert from the European Union. It was introduced by Mr Jean Daniel Philippe Labonne, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare.

Gender perspective is defined by Ai as "taking into account gender-based differences, status, and power dynamics when looking at any social phenomenon, policy, research, or process." In the case of the ministry's seminar, the process has to do the media world namely in the field of journalism.

The day was divided into three sessions:

Session 1: Understanding Gender Concepts and Terms:
- Defining Gender Concepts
- What does gender mean?
- What is gender mainstreaming?
- The role of MGEFW in implementing the NGP 2022-2030
- Practical skills

Session 2: Tools for Conducting Gender Analysis:
- Undertaking Gender Analysis
- Gender Mainstreaming

Session 3: Practical skills on How to Conduct Gender Analysis
- Group Work: Conducting Gender Analysis (step by step)
- Plenary Discussions

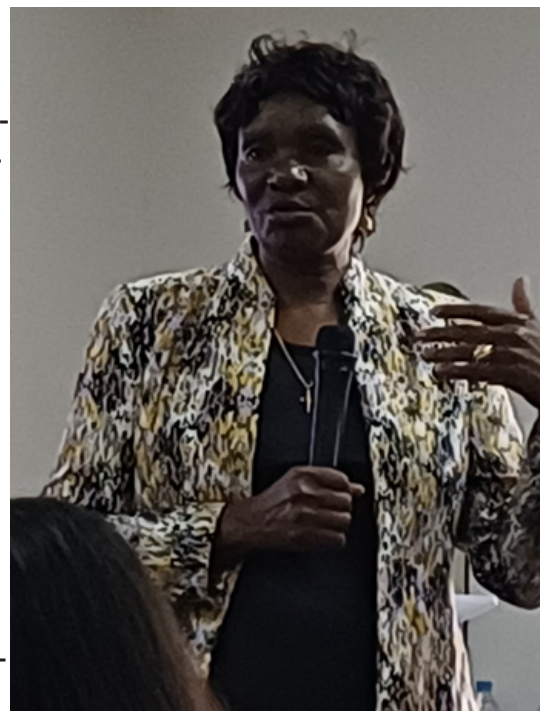


Mr Jean Daniel Philippe Labonne Permanent Secretary

Within our group discussions we tried to find out whether women in the media industry are effectively considered for employment and whether they are seen as man's equal. Journalism may be a new field for women who have so far concerned themselves with traditional employment like teaching, nursing, clerks, infant schooling, baby-sitting, (typists in the past), etc. It must be borne in mind that journalism is one of the poorest paid profession, even for men unless one is a star reporter. The low salary would not attract women. Today, it's another story. The press is doing well from advertising revenue and can afford to offer lucrative wages.

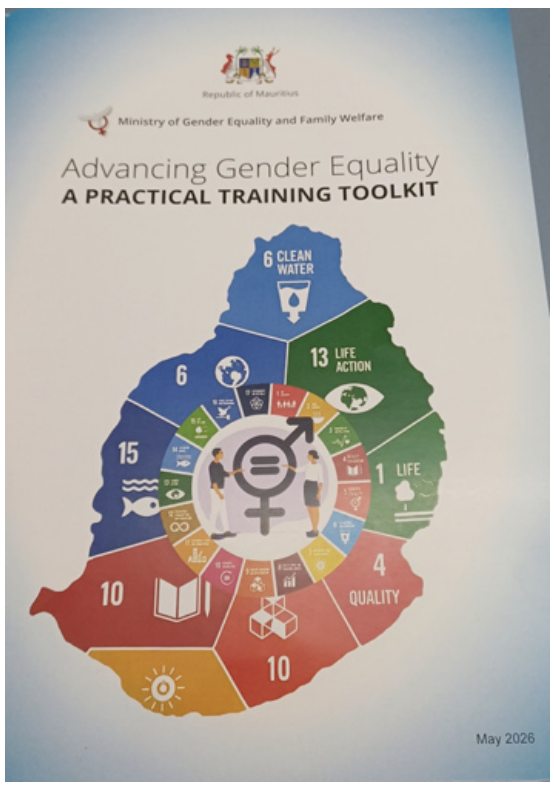
On the other hand, as I told Ms Winfred Lichuma, it's a matter of evolution to which she agreed but was not considered further. Evolution takes time. The process in any field has to be established first, which can take years before it eventually attracts women.
It is also a question of the right time, and now women themselves wish to embrace journalism as a career.

During group discussions, I expressed the view that "as far as I am concerned there have always been women associated with journalism as reporters etc. But then, it was felt that women in the press are not given any of the senior jobs. I referred then to Miss Marcelle Esclapon who was for years in colonial days in charge of an information office in Port Louis, Based at La Chaussée, which was subsequently turned into the Central Information Office (CIO) under Mr K. Hazareesing. There was also Ms France Boyer de la Giroday who was closely connected with the newspaper business. Her picture and details of her career grace the walls of the office of the Media Trust in Port Louis. They were certainly the exceptions then in a medium which was itself in metamorphosis.



Ms Winfred Lichuma, Gender Expert from European Union

The view was expressed within our group that perhaps woman were not considered for senior posts in the journalist profession. It is therefore relevant to highlight the fact that for years the weekly La Vie Catholique has been edited by women, the present one being Ms Martine Lajoie.



Manual issued by Ministry of Gender - 100 pages

Gender Perspectives, embracing the role of women in various fields of activities is a very broad topic that has been under discussion for years at international levels and on which lots have been written. But so far legislation has not been introduced in any country for its enforcement. It is believed by the authorities that anybody, man or woman, who feels aggrieved may still appeal for redress under the human rights legislation. The view was expressed that legislation itself will not ensure compliance, but then what to do to make sure that gender, as far as women involvement is concerned is no longer an issue in everyday life?

P.C,

L'argent, quand tu nous tiens

L'ancien Premier ministre du Royaume-Uni, Winston Churchill, a dit un jour :

« Un jour, j'ai pris un taxi pour me rendre aux bureaux de la BBC pour une interview.

À mon arrivée, j'ai demandé au chauffeur de m'attendre quarante minutes jusqu'à mon retour, mais il s'est excusé en disant :"Je ne peux pas, parce que je dois rentrer chez moi pour écouter le discours de Winston Churchill."

J'ai été étonné et ravi par le désir de cet homme d'écouter mon discours ! J'ai donc sorti dix livres et les ai données au chauffeur de taxi sans lui dire qui j'étais.

Recevant les dix livres, le chauffeur dit "Au diable Churchill, je vais vous attendre"

A letter from Haruka Takahashi (Japan)

I have just visited Sichuan Province in southwestern China,
and I'd like to share some photos about my trip.

China is a land full of wonders, with its rich history, diverse cultures and traditions,
cutting-edge developments in science and technology, and magnificent natural scenery.

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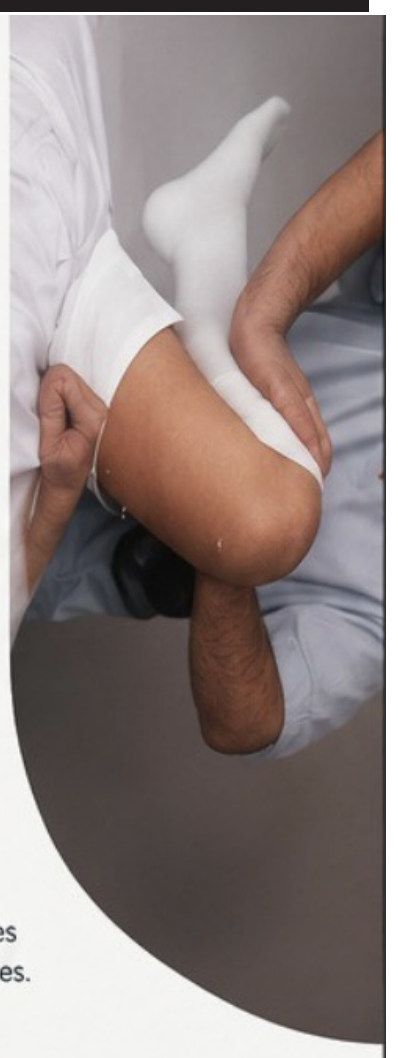
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