The ‘Government Programme 2012-2015: Moving the Nation Forward’ setting out the priorities of Government for the three years was presented on 16 April 2012 by the Acting President of the Republic of Mauritius, Mrs Monique Oshan-Bellepeau, at the Sir Harilal Vaghjee Memorial Hall, Port Louis, following the prorogation of the National Assembly on 13 March 2012.

The document summarises Government’s key achievements and main goals for the future both legislative and non-legislative. It focuses on the following key areas: Prosperity for All; Enhanced Connectivity; Empowering People; Cohesive Society; Strong Nation; and, Sustainability. With this new Programme, Government aims to direct its national effort to achieve greater prosperity, raise the skills and capacities of the people, harness the power of technology, modernise and streamline institutions, accelerate innovation in existing industries and encourage diversification and growth in new and more sophisticated sectors.

Government, according to the Programme, will maintain its unflinching determination to nurture a more inclusive, plural and cohesive society based on human dignity, equality of treatment, economic...
efficiency and social justice. In so doing, it will continue to be guided by the same principles that have seen the nation improve its growth, and achieve historically stable economic performance and social justice which is the hallmark of a prosperous and inclusive society based on greater political and economic democratisation.

In the context of the current global situation Government will focus on ways to lead the nation forward by embarking on a new third stage development. Moreover, having successfully reached the level of upper middle income countries according to the World Bank, Government will now focus on a new phase of economic growth thereby transforming the country into a high income nation.

Hence, the ultimate objective of the Programme is to prepare the country to face the unflinching challenges ahead. Government is also committed to creating a society where everyone thrives and all have opportunities for prosperity and a better quality of life.

Those policies/measures as enumerated in the Programme are in line with the vision of the Government into making the country a high productivity, high efficiency and high wage economy.
Mauritius is featured as a case study for successful development of ICT in the World Economic Forum’s Global Information Technology Report 2012 which ranks the country 53rd among 142 economies in the Networked Readiness Index.

According to the Report, which was released on 4 April 2012 in New York City, USA, Mauritius is also described as the best performing Sub-Saharan African nation with a score of 4.06 followed by South Africa (72nd), Rwanda (82nd), Botswana (89th), Kenya (93rd) and Senegal (100th).

The Minister of Information and Communication Technology, Mr Tassarajen Pillay Chedumbrum, attended the launching ceremony of the report.

The case study

The case study, entitled The Making of a Digital Nation: Towards i-Mauritius, enumerates the milestones in the ICT sector reform of Mauritius. These include the liberalisation of the telecommunications sector in 2003, the conception of the first Cyber City project in partnership with India, Mauritius’ first connection to the submarine optical fibre route linking Europe to Asia via South

Africa, legislative reforms to create an enabling environment for the sector’s introduction and to ensure sustainability and predictability for the coming years, as well as the elaboration of a National ICT Strategic Plan in 1998.

The above initiatives, mentions the case study, reflect the foresight of the Prime Minister who, in 1997, ‘boldly created the first-ever ministry dedicated to the ICT sector’. This, the report says, was a turning point in paving the way toward the transformation of Mauritius into a knowledge-based economy.

The case study also describes major actions adopted by Mauritius along with their results, focusing on the challenges faced by the country in making the sector emerge as an important pillar.

On the basis of the lessons learned in terms of strengths and weaknesses, as well as the opportunities that lie ahead, the study presents some strategic moves—on both policy and operational levels—to undertake in the future in order to consolidate Mauritius’ position and enable the ICT/business process outsourcing (BPO) sector to emerge as an engine for sustained economic growth.

The case study mentions that the aligned vision and efforts of all relevant stakeholders in the ICT sector at national level will contribute towards asserting the visibility of Mauritius on the international scene, especially in relation to the global ICT/BPO market. It also stipulates that continued and sustained efforts to bring down the costs of international connectivity, to improve the quality of the workforce, and promote a business-friendly environment will further ensure that Mauritius becomes a preferred platform and solutions provider in the global ICT/BPO realm.
A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at establishing a collaborative programme between the University College London (UCL) and the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life for the promotion of joint research, exchange of information and resources and the conduct of collaborative education and training was signed on 4 April 2012 in Port Louis.

Prof Derek Yellon, Professor of Cellular and Molecular Cardiology and Director of the Hatter Cardiovascular Institute, UCL signed the MoU on behalf of the UCL. He was in Mauritius at the head of a delegation to assist the Ministry in the formulation of National Framework for Cardiac Services. Prof Yellon was accompanied by Prof. Huon Gray, Deputy National Director for Heart Diseases and Stroke at the Department of Health, UK; Dr Malcolm Walker, Consultant Cardiologist at the UCL; and Dr Derek Housenloy, Consultant Cardiologist, UCL.

The MoU makes provision for support in the establishment of an Institute of Women’s Health in Mauritius. It also caters for the prevention of both diabetes and cardiovascular related diseases; assistance in capacity building for medical personnel as well as appropriate training and clinical opportunities for staff of the Ministry and related health facilities in Mauritius. The MOU will extend assistance with regard to organisation of workshops, conferences for the exchange and dissemination of knowledge and experience on related topics and exchange of research and teaching materials between UCL and health institutions in Mauritius.

Statistics reveal that diseases of the circulatory system remain the most common cause of death in Mauritius. In 2009, 33.7% and in 2010 32.2% of all deaths were due to this group of diseases. The number of patients requiring follow-up in the different cardiology services across the island is going up. 108 000 attendances were recorded in 2011 as compared to 95 000 in 2010 and 83 000 in 2009. 942 cardiac surgeries were carried out in 2011 as compared to 563 in 2010. 3038 angiographies and angioplasties were performed in 2011 as compared to 3010 in 2010 and 2642 in 2009.

Mauritius also has a high prevalence of diabetes and is taking an upward trend. The NCD Survey Report 2009 has revealed that the prevalence rate of diabetes in Mauritius is 23.6% in the population aged 25 to 74 years, and 24% are pre-diabetics in the same age group.

During their visit, Prof Yellon and his team worked with their Mauritian counterparts to prepare a National Service Framework for Cardiac Services. This Framework will make an analysis of the present situation and propose a series of measures intended to bring to international standards the quality of services offered to cardiac patients. The Framework will also define requirements for capacity building, research, rehabilitation, facilities and logistics for developing a Cardiac patients’ Register.

The development of the Framework is as a follow-up of the recommendations of the International Advisory Committee on Diabetes and Cardiovascular Diseases held in August 2010. The committee was made up of renowned resource persons from the UK, Australia, Finland and South Africa. Subsequently, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life set up a local technical team which recommended that the expertise of international consultants be obtained for the preparation of the Framework.
A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to ensure effective exchange of information in relation to financial reporting, auditing and corporate governance was signed by the Financial Services Commission (FSC) and the Financial Reporting Council (FRC), on 10 April 2012 in Ebène.

The signatories of the MoU were the Chief Executive of FSC, Ms. Clairette Ah-Hen, and the CEO of the Financial Reporting Council, Mrs. Selvida Naiken.

In her address, the Chief Executive of the FSC underscored the importance of enhancing the financial reporting framework and ensuring greater transparency for better conduct of business with a view to reinforcing credibility in the financial services sector. The MoU, according to Mrs Ah-Hen, establishes a common standard of cooperation with the FRC to avoid any duplication of work in terms of financial reporting and also to assist the FSC in its role to ensure a sound, effective and efficient regulation of the sector.

For her part the CEO of the FRC, Mrs. Selvida Naiken, recalled that the role of the Council is to promote the highest standards among licensed auditors and safeguard the interest of stakeholders in the sector that rely on effective financial reporting. She further reiterated the commitment of the FRC to ensure quality service to Public Interest Entities which are regulated by the FSC.

So far the FSC has signed 29 such MOUs with its counterparts both local and international authorities.

The Financial Services Commission operates under the Financial Services Act 2007 to ensure orderly administration and sound conduct of business and uphold the sound reputation of Mauritius in the financial services sector.

The Financial Reporting Council was established in 2004 under the Financial Reporting Act with a view to providing quality reporting of financial and non-financial information by public interest entities and promoting the highest standards among licensed auditors.

The International Day for Monuments and Sites and the World Heritage Day was marked by a series of activities which were held from 14 to 29 April 2012. The theme chosen was World Heritage which coincides with the 40th anniversary celebration of the World Heritage Convention (WHC) this year.

The aim of the International Day for Monuments and Sites is to encourage local communities and individuals throughout the world to consider the importance of cultural heritage in relation to their lives, identities and communities and to promote awareness of its diversity and vulnerability and the efforts required to protect and conserve it.

The World Heritage Convention is the most ratified international treaty for cultural and natural heritage preservation in the world. This year, the World Heritage Convention celebrated sustainable development and the role of local communities.

At national level, activities kicked off on 14 and 15 April with the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund providing guided tours of indenture sites, projecting films on indenture and pedagogical activities for children. Mauritians also had free access to the Folk Museum, Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka; the Natural History Museum, Port Louis; the National History Museum, Mahebourg; the Robert Edward Hart Memorial Museum, Souillac; the Sookdeo Bissoondoyal Memorial Museum, Rivière des Anguilles; and the Frederick Hendrik Museum, Old Grand Port from 14 to 22 April 2012.
A consultative workshop focusing on the Draft National Women’s Council Bill, aiming to repeal the existing National Women’s Council Act and to replace it by a new one, opened on 3 April 2012 at La Cannelle, Domaine Les Pailles.

The new Bill is expected to better regulate the functioning, powers and membership of the National Women’s Council; provide a platform for women to voice out their needs, concerns and aspirations; and promote women’s empowerment and achieve gender equality in all sectors of development in Mauritius. It will also make better provision for the regulation and registration of Women Associations in the different regions of the country and for a more effective management of the Regional Committees responsible for the activities of Women Associations in their region.

The workshop brought together some 50 participants from several ministries, institutions, women and socio-cultural associations. Resource persons were from the State Law Office and the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare.

The new Bill will be an additional tool to further promote the women agenda which is an important segment for the Ministry, stated the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, Mrs. Mireille Martin, in her opening speech.

According to her, gender equality is an important component of Government’s policies and action. Furthermore, Mauritius has taken various commitments pertaining to gender equality at regional and international levels and hence has the duty and responsibility to eliminate inequality between women and men. In this context, said the Minister, it is logical that the National Women’s Council reviews its objectives and functioning. The new Bill will enable the personal development of women and as such ensure equality between women and men by taking into consideration social, economic and political parameters, she added.

About the National Women’s Council

It is recalled that the National Women’s Council is a corporate body set up in 1985, under an Act of Parliament. Its objectives are to establish and maintain effective communication with women and organisations of women, ensure coordination of groups of women and organisations, assist in the implementation and evaluation of Government policies as they relate to the needs of women, and, identify and recommend to the National Committee actions and projects that will promote the integration of women in development.

Five Regional Committees represent their respective Women Associations on the National Committee of the National Women’s Council. At present there are over 1200 Women’s Associations, representing some 30 000 women, which are affiliated members of the Council. They operate under the Regional Committees of their respective regions.
A passing out Parade marked on 11 April 2012 at the Prison Training School in Beau Bassin the successful completion of training for seventy-eight trainee Prison Officers. Medals were awarded to the best officers for their performance in shooting, physical training and self-defense.

The 78 prison officers followed a six-month intensive training in various fields such as prison procedures, human rights, first aid, suicide prevention, physical training and self defense, amongst others. Moreover, these officers were also involved in various activities namely outdoor training at Anse La Raie, educational tours and on-the-job training at different penal institutions. After their passing out, the new recruits have been posted in various units of different institutions.

In her address on that occasion, the chief guest, Mrs K.O Fong Weng-Poorn, Senior Chief Executive at the Prime Minister’s Office recalled that reform of the Prison Service is high on the agenda of the Government. She pointed out that the problem of overcrowding in prisons, the increasing number of HIV detainees and the growing rate of recidivism need to be tackled.

To that end, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in collaboration with the Mauritius Prisons authorities, is preparing a strategic Framework with focus on human resource management, e-prison system, strategic planning capability, security management of prisons and management of detainees.

For his part, the Commissioner of Prisons, Mr Jean Bruneau, pointed out that the Prison department has embarked on a series of measures to enhance public protection. These include the establishment of the Correctional Emergency Response Team for the management of high profile detainees, operation of Barkly Special Prison for Women for management of high profile female detainees and upgrading the induction process for better identification of vulnerable detainees that require medical, psychological and social support.

According to Mr Bruneau, vocational training in a number of trades are provided to detainees with a view to inculcating work habits that will enhance their employability. The rehabilitation programmes are being revamped so as to reduce recidivism and develop marketable skills-oriented jobs for detainees.

The Prison Training School, set up in 1969, organises courses all year round for the newly enlisted officers and prison officers in general. The aim of the School is to provide physical, technical and professional training to officers of the service.
Minister Mohamed announces amendments to labour legislation to better protect workers

Several amendments will be brought to the Employment Relations Act and the Employment Rights Act, with a view to better protect workers, promote collective bargaining both in public and private enterprises and effectively strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

This was announced by the Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, Mr Shakeel Mohamed, at a press conference on 23 April 2012 in Port Louis. The Minister said that these amendments will further promote, through effective social dialogue, consensus building on issues of national importance, especially those related to the world of work. These amendments will furthermore define clearly the role and responsibilities of employers with regard to compliance to the laws.

The new provisions, the Minister said, have been worked out after various consultations with the trade unions, the Mauritius Employers’ Federation, the International Labour Organisation, the non-governmental organisations and the civil society.

These include:

- Setting up of an Employment Promotion and Protection Tribunal to determine whether cases of reduction of workforce/closure of enterprises are justified or not
- Provision of a legal framework for contractual work so as to prevent employers from having recourse to abusive termination of contracts of employment and the operation of shift/night work
- Provision of annual leaves and sick leaves for workers reckoning more than 6 months service but less than 12 months and also to part-time workers who are governed by the provisions of any Remuneration Order
- Streamlining the provisions under the terms Termination of Employment particularly as regards the breach of contract and abandonment of work
- Review of the conditions for laid off workers to integrate the Workfare Programme
- Extension of the provision of Gratuity on Retirement to all workers in other sectors such as the Sugar Industry and Air Mauritius, amongst others
- Provision of Gratuity at Death to workers on the basis of 15 days’ remuneration for each year of service in case of the death of an employee who has been in continuous employment with the same employer for not less than ten years
- Strengthening of the laws regarding industrial offences by increasing the fines from Rs 10 000 to Rs 25 000 and extending to two years the term of imprisonment
- Review of the conditions for the recognition of Trade Unions
Land Use Planning
Review of Outline Planning Schemes for Municipal Council Areas

For the planning system to be effective, there need to be appropriate planning instruments that help to attract investment and improve environmental conditions that enhance our quality of life, stated Dr. Kasenally. He also pointed out that whilst each Municipal Council Area has its own specific characteristics and needs, traditional town centres should be revitalised to make them more attractive as hubs of social and cultural activities and where people can walk safely while shopping and enjoying a variety of leisure opportunities and local amenities.

It will be recalled that a full scale review of all the urban schemes is currently being carried out by Halcrow Consultants Ltd to the tune of some Rs 32.5 million. So far 75% of the review exercise has been undertaken by the consultants including work on the “Town Centre Plans”. A participative approach has been adopted and five local workshops were also organised where preliminary consultations were held with each of the Municipalities.

Review of outline planning schemes to enable optimisation of land resources

A National Workshop on the Review of Outline Planning Schemes for Municipal Council Areas with a view to have a more flexible and responsive pattern of land use planning, was held on 4 April 2012 at La Cannelle, Domaine Les Pailles.

Stakeholders at the workshop were called upon to examine and share their experiences and also make proposals regarding an interim draft of the revised Urban Outline Schemes which has already been prepared.

The revised Urban Outline Schemes would include a package of measures to reinstate the integrity of each “town centre”. These measures would incorporate policies for urban environment, traffic management, public transport improvements and enhancement of open spaces.

These schemes, when operational, will provide for the optimisation of land resources, regeneration of existing built-up areas, improved opportunities and development, safeguard of good agricultural land, integration of land use and transport strategies and at the same time reducing carbon emissions. The finalised Schemes will in due course, be deposited for public consultation where stakeholders will again have the opportunity to make proposals.

Speaking on this occasion, the Minister of Housing and Lands, Dr. Abu Twalib Kasenally, underlined that the review of the Urban Planning Schemes, which were prepared in the eighties, is now imperative for sustained development as half of the population live in the five major towns.
**European Union grants Rs 400 million to improve MDGs initiatives**

**Mauritius has benefitted from an additional grant of Euro 10.2 million (approximately Rs 400 million) from the European Union (EU) under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) Country Strategy Paper to improve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) initiatives in the country.**

The Addendum No. 4 of the 10th EDF Country Strategy Paper was signed on 3 April in Port Louis, by the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Mr Xavier Duval, and the Ambassador of the European Union in Mauritius, Mr Alessandro Mariani.

The additional allocation represents an increase of 20% over the initial National Indicative Programme of Euro 54 million thus bringing the total EDF envelope for Mauritius for the period 2008-2013 to Euro 64.2 million. Mauritius has benefitted from this grant for ranking among the 19 countries which have best performed among all ACP countries that are implementing programmes funded under the EDF.

The Rs 400 million grant will focus on improving the EU MDGs initiatives in Mauritius that are also showing slow progress at the worldwide level. They are namely, reducing of extreme hunger (MDG 1); reducing child mortality (MDG 4); reducing maternal mortality (MDG 5); and increasing access to water and sanitation (MDG 7). According to the MDGs indicators though Mauritius is largely on track for attaining the above mentioned MDGs, the MDGs for vulnerable groups are below the national average. The programme will hence help to address the disparities that exist between MDGs indicators for vulnerable groups with a specific focus on Rodrigues where the needs for water, food security and maternal and child health issues are more prominent than in Mauritius.

Speaking at the signature ceremony, the Vice-Prime Minister said that while Mauritius is on track to achieve most of the MDGs, more efforts will be put in to provide additional assistance to the vulnerable segments of the population. He added that the proposed programme will focus on 10,000 poorest families, 7000 in Mauritius and 3000 in Rodrigues. The objective, he said, is to bring those families to the national average.

For his part, Mr Alessandro Mariani, expressed his appreciation of the good results achieved by Mauritius under the Mid-Term review of the 10th EDF. The additional allocation comes as recognition of the good results achieved by Mauritius under the EU-Mauritius cooperation, he pointed out.

It will be noted that out of the Rs 400 million, about Rs 200 million will be used as general budget support, with key results on the MDGs in the health sector. The remaining will be primarily used as direct grants for non-state actors to be awarded under calls for proposals to directly finance activities related to the four critical MDGs mentioned.
First Model Farm in Pamplemousses

The first model farm for the cultivation of breadfruit was launched in Pamplemousses on 24 April 2012 in the presence of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, Mr S. Faugoo.

This initiative which is funded by the Food Security Fund, falls under the Mauritius Sugar Producers’ Association (MSPA) 2000 Arpents Scheme and aims at strengthening the food security strategy by in turn reducing the country’s dependency on imports and producing what the population consume locally.

Seven sites have already been identified across the country to set up other such farms. The project is also extended to Rodrigues.

Inaugurating the farm, Minister Faugoo made an appeal to all citizens to at least have a breadfruit tree in their yard or fields. He underlined that with an average of 200-300 fruits per hectare, breadfruit has a good potential for agribusiness as well as for the local market and for export.

Breadfruit was introduced in Mauritius by the French in the year 1796. According to statistics, the export of breadfruit to Europe has increased from 40 tons to 196 tons over the last five years. The export price is around Rs 30,000 per ton. Because of its nutritional value, the Ministry is encouraging its production as a source of starch for the country’s food security.

AREU Launches activities to promote breadfruit production

In line with this initiative to promote the production and consumption of breadfruit in Mauritius, the Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU) launched a series of activities on 25 April 2012 at the Wooton Crop Research Station.

The aim was to share the results of several researches conducted on breadfruit with the stakeholders concerned and the public in general. It was also an opportunity to showcase the various benefits and advantages of breadfruit production and the techniques of processing and value addition to this product.

The activities which spanned over three days, comprised of demonstration on techniques and methods of breadfruit propagation, processing techniques and preparation of breadfruit based recipes, value addition demonstration and exhibition and lectures on breadfruit production amongst others. On this occasion a CD/information sheet on breadfruit was also launched.

A culinary competition and exhibition to showcase the various ways of cooking breadfruits and its benefits proposed by the AREU Women and Youth Unit was also on the agenda as well as an exhibition and sales of breadfruit based products.
**Maritime piracy**

**Mauritius and French authorities participate in simulation exercise**

A simulation exercise for the transfer of pirates was carried out by the French authorities on board French vessel Nivôse on 14 April 2012 at Quay D in Port Louis. This exercise is in line with Government’s policy to fight piracy in the Indian Ocean region and to fine tune the procedures regarding the transfer of pirates to Mauritian authorities for trial.

Representatives of the Prime Minister’s Office, the Police Department, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution, and the Attorney General’s Office also participated in this exercise.

Mauritius has pledged strong commitment in the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean. The country has demonstrated its concern through various actions which include an Agreement signed with the European Union for the transfer of suspected pirates for investigation, prosecution, trial and detention in Mauritius and the provision of a proper and adequate legal framework for that purpose.

In July 2011 the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Mauritius signed the Agreement on the Conditions of Transfer of Suspected Pirates and Associated Seized Property from the European Union-Led Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) to the Republic of Mauritius and on the Conditions of Suspected Pirates after Transfer or in short the EU-Mauritius Transfer Agreement.

This Agreement outlines the conditions and modalities for the transfer of persons suspected of attempting to commit, committing or having committed acts of piracy within the area of operation of EUNAVFOR on the high seas off the territorial seas of Mauritius, Madagascar, the Comoros Islands, Seychelles and Reunion Island and detained by EUNAVFOR. It also makes provision for the transfer of associated property seized by EUNAVFOR to Mauritius and the treatment of transferred persons.

The piracy scourge has cost nine billion US dollars last year in disrupted trade besides human tragedy in the Indian Ocean region.

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**Mauritius and UNFPA sign agreement on sexual and reproductive health**

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) proposes to provide funds to the tune of USD 360 000 (Rs 10 million Rupees) for period 2012-2015 to Mauritius for the promotion of safe and healthy sexual and reproductive health among the population.

In this connection, an agreement was signed on 24 April 2012 at the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life between the Government of Mauritius and the UNFPA for a new Country Programme Action Plan 2012-2015.

The programme has been prepared by different stakeholders involved in the provision of sexual and reproductive health services, namely Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, Rodrigues Regional Assembly and Non-Governmental organisations.

The four main components of the programme relate to sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS, gender, ageing and Rodrigues.

The objectives, amongst others, are to strengthen the family planning services in deprived areas; provide youth-friendly services and reinforce awareness on sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS and Life skills education in and out of school in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The programme also aims at enhancing parental education on teenage pregnancy; increasing awareness on reproductive tract and breast cancers; mitigating the challenges due to the rapid ageing of the population and easing access of young Rodriguans to quality information and services on sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

The goal of the UNFPA Country Programme is to improve the quality of life of the population in Mauritius through increased access to gender equality, sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS services targeting vulnerable women and young people. Youth and adolescents are the primary focus in terms of access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.
Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is a growing scourge which afflicts human rights and constitutes a threat to public health.

With a view to improving knowledge and understanding on the issue, a Capacity Building Programme focusing on how to end GBV, was launched on 2 April 2012 at the Gold Crest Hotel in Quatre Bornes. Participants were mostly members of Area Domestic Violence Committees (ADVC).

A working session was also held for members of Zero Tolerance Clubs (ZTCs) on 14 April at the same venue. It provided first hand information about current legislations, policies of the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare, regarding GBV offences and services available to victims and perpetrators of GBV.

Area Domestic Violence Committees

Area Domestic Violence Committees constitute the link between Government and non-governmental services and the civil society on issues related to Gender-Based Violence.

Since members of ADVCs are front-liners, some as service providers in their respective Ministries, their empowerment is expected to contribute enormously to tackle the scourge of GBV throughout the island.

Zero Tolerance Clubs

Zero Tolerance Clubs have been set up with representatives of various community-based organisations with a view to enlisting the participation of the community in the fight against domestic violence. Members of these clubs act as watchdogs to ensure that their respective localities are violence free.

Six ZTCs have been set up in the following regions: Abercrombie, Mare D’Albert, Goodlands, Pointe-aux Sables, Montagne Blanche and Grand Gaube.

Prevention of violence

Prevention of violence through awareness-raising and capacity building of stakeholders constitutes the key pillars/strategic areas of the National Action Plan to End GBV.

Besides, with the costed National Action Plan to End GBV which was launched in November 2011, the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare has adopted new strategies in tackling the issue of GBV by using a multi-pronged approach. Therefore, ADVC members as well as those of ZTCs have to be kept abreast of recent developments.
A new fisheries post, built at the cost of Rs 4.9 million is operational at Trou aux Biches since 12 April 2012. The unit will cater for some 186 fishermen in the regions of Grand Baie, Pointe aux Piments, Pointe aux Cannoniers and Trou aux Biches.

For sanitary and security reasons, the old fisheries post has been pulled down and replaced by the new one which has sufficient office accommodation for the officers of the Fisheries Protection Service (FPS) to carry out efficiently their daily duties.

Located near the public beach and with direct access to the sea, the fisheries post will provide, under one roof, numerous services to facilitate the work of fishermen and to attend to the queries of the public.

All 15 fisheries posts around the island operate on a 24/7 basis and act as links between the fishermen community and the Ministry. The functions of a fisheries post are amongst others, to apply the provisions of the Fisheries and Marine Resources Act for the sustainable exploitation of the fishery resources and enforce legislations to combat illegal fishing.

Officers posted at a fisheries post, monitor fishing activities and collect fisheries statistics for management purposes as well as ensure safe marketing of fish and fish products at fish landing stations and other sales points.

Furthermore, the FPS at the fisheries post also registers fishermen and fishing boats, issues and renews licences of fishing gears, and sensitises fishermen good fishing practices and the protection of the marine environment.

For the year 2011, the FPS carried out a total of 5 792 patrols during which illegal nets, spear guns and illegal underwater fishing equipment were seized.