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In her first interview since taking up her posting in Mauritius, the newly appointed UNDP Resident Representative, Alka Bhatia, acknowledges the country's achievements but warns that a rapidly changing global environment leaves no room for complacency, at a time when global tensions are eroding the founding spirit of the United Nations and basic human development is suffering.

Alka Bhatia,
*UNDP Resident Representative
for Mauritius and Seychelles*

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MCCI EXPORT INSIGHTS

Services have accounted for 74% of total exports over the past four years

- While recent developments regarding the renewal of AGOA are considered encouraging, the report stresses the need to reduce dependence on a limited range of preference-driven products.
- Financial services remain the largest contributor, followed by professional and management consulting services, and tourism-related activities.

With exports of services now accounting for nearly three-quarters of total exports, Mauritius is undergoing a structural reconfiguration of its export model. The Export Insights 2025 report, unveiled by the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), provides a detailed assessment of this shift while identifying priority sectors, markets and policy directions needed to strengthen the country's export competitiveness.

The Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) has launched its Export Insights 2025 report at a press conference in Port Louis, presented by Dr. Drishtysingh Ramdenee, Secretary General, and Rooma Pillay Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, who outlined the report's strategic implications.

The report confirms a profound transformation in Mauritius' export structure. While exports of goods have stabilised at around Rs 81 billion, exports of services have expanded sharply and now represent, on average, 74% of total exports over the past four years. This evolution, the MCCI notes, reflects both global trade trends and structural changes within the Mauritian economy.

"This report reveals a fundamental restructuring of our export model," Dr. Drishtysingh Ramdenee said. *"The analysis goes beyond the figures. It identifies strategic opportunities, high-potential markets and the sectors where Mauritius must concentrate its efforts to maximise its export performance. It also proposes a concrete framework to modernise our export ecosystem and better leverage our trade agreements."*

GOODS EXPORTS: STABILITY, CONCENTRATION AND GRADUAL DIVERSIFICATION

In 2024, Mauritius' exports of goods amounted to Rs 81 billion, comprising Rs 61 billion of domestic exports and Rs 20 billion of re-exports. Five sectors continue to dominate the export basket: textiles and apparel (25%), fish and fish products (21%), cane sugar (13%), jewellery (4%) and medical devices (3%). Together, these sectors account for approximately two-thirds of total goods exports.

From a geographical perspective, Europe remains the leading destination with 47% of exports. Africa, however, has strengthened its position significantly, accounting for 28% of exports, up from 19% in 2015. Asia absorbs 14%, while the United States represents 10% of total exports.



ROOMA PILLAY NARRAINEN, Head of Advocacy, MCCI.

The textile and apparel sector illustrates both continuity and change. While garments remain the principal export item, exports of fabrics have increased markedly, particularly towards South Africa and Madagascar. Mauritius has consolidated its role as a supplier of intermediate textile inputs, ranking as the second-largest supplier of fabrics to South Africa and accounting for a substantial share of that market's imports.

The sugar sector has also undergone a geographical redistribution. Kenya has emerged as the leading export market for Mauritian sugar, followed by Madagascar, while traditional European markets now account for a smaller share. The fisheries sector remains a major contributor, but the report highlights a gradual move up the value chain through products such as fish oils, fishmeal and other by-products.



DR. DRISHTYSINGH RAMDENE, Secretary General of the MCCI.

At the same time, emerging and non-traditional sectors now represent close to 30% of goods exports. These include plastic packaging, animal feed preparations, industrial alcohol, pasta and alcoholic beverages. Medical devices stand out within this group, with exports exceeding Rs 2 billion, largely destined for European markets, particularly France.

PREFERENTIAL MARKETS: A STRENGTH THAT REQUIRES ACTIVE MANAGEMENT

A recurring theme in Export Insights 2025 is Mauritius' reliance on its network of preferential trade agreements. Nearly 88% of goods exports are directed towards markets where preferential access applies. This framework has provided resilience and stability, but it also exposes exporters to policy uncertainty in key partner countries.

Declining apparel exports to the EU over the past decade underline the limits of relying on historical strengths alone.

The United States remains a strategic destination, particularly for apparel exports under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). While recent developments regarding the renewal of AGOA are considered encouraging, the report stresses the need to reduce dependence on a limited range of preference-driven products.

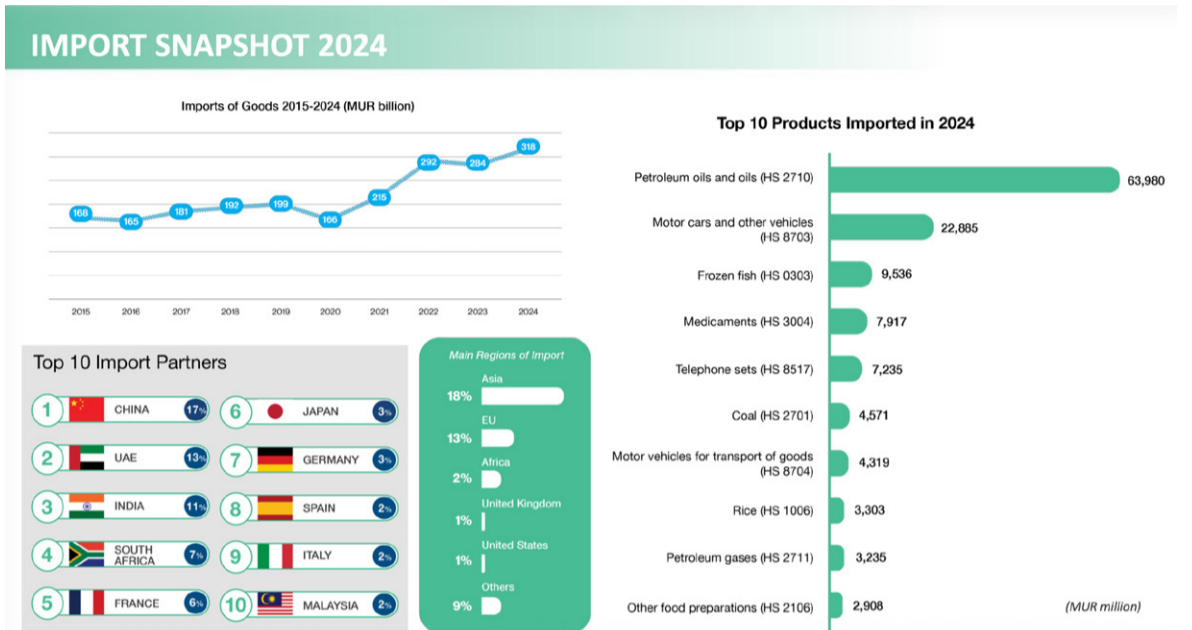
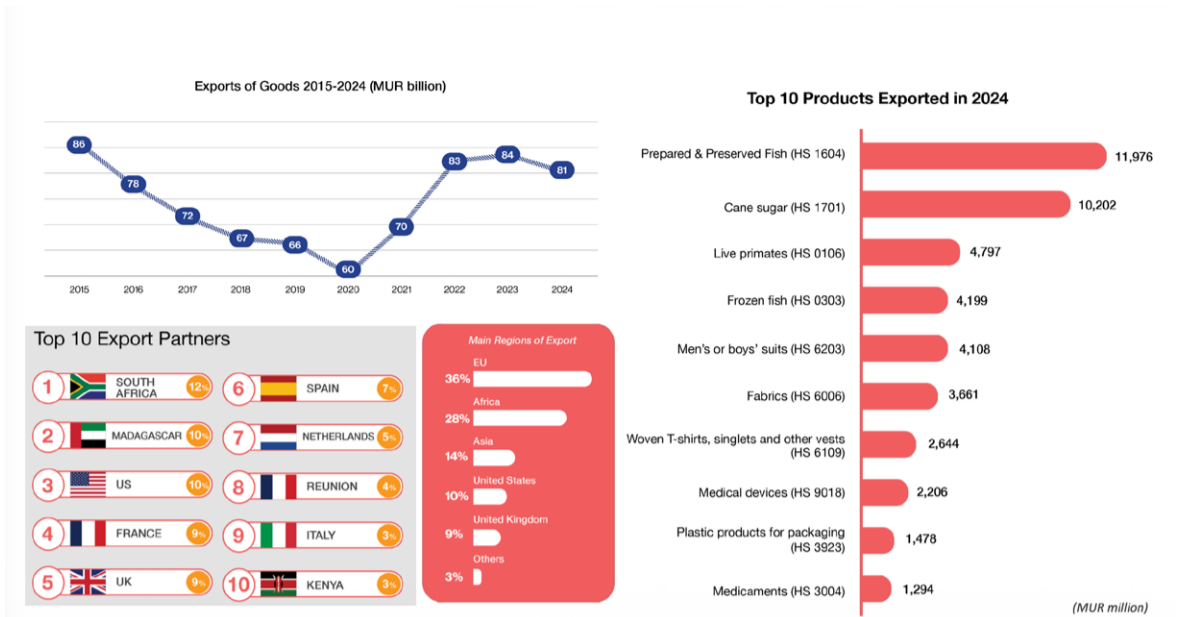
In Europe, duty-free and quota-free access under the interim Economic Partnership Agreement continues to support exports of sugar, fish, medical devices and alcoholic beverages. However, declining apparel exports to the EU over the past decade underline the limits of relying on historical strengths alone.

SERVICES EXPORTS: THE MAIN GROWTH ENGINE

One of the report's key contributions lies in its integrated treatment of services alongside goods. In 2024, services exports accounted for 76% of Mauritius' total exports of goods and services combined, confirming the country's position as a net exporter of services.

Financial services remain the largest contributor, followed by professional and management consulting services, and tourism-related activities. ICT services, while still representing a modest share, are identified as a sector with strong growth potential.

"Africa already represents 28% of our exports, but the potential remains largely underexploited, particularly for services," emphasised Rooma Pillay Narrainen. "Our emerging sectors are showing strong momentum. The challenge now is to consolidate the environment that will allow these dynamics to scale up. Diversification is no longer a choice; it is an operational necessity."



The report adopts the World Trade Organization's framework on trade in services, recognising four modes of supply: cross-border delivery, consumption abroad, commercial presence and movement of natural persons. Mauritius is active across all four, but the report notes that limited data availability constrains deeper market-level analysis.

A key finding is the absence of a clearly articulated national strategy for services exports. Current initiatives are fragmented, with limited coordination among institutions responsible for trade promotion, investment facilitation, skills development and digital infrastructure.

AFRICA: CONSOLIDATION BEFORE EXPANSION

The growing importance of Africa as an export destination is one of the most pronounced trends identified in the report. This expansion has been driven largely by preferential access under SADC, COMESA and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). However, exports remain highly concentrated, with South Africa, Madagascar and Kenya accounting for nearly 90% of Mauritius' exports to the continent.

The report identifies significant untapped potential in East Africa and other sub-regions, both for goods and for services such as consulting, financial services, ICT, education and healthcare. Unlocking this potential, it argues, will require more targeted market intelligence, sector-specific strategies and stronger regional

partnerships.

THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In response to these structural shifts, Export Insights 2025 proposes a roadmap structured around three main priorities.

The first is a sharper focus on high-growth sectors, particularly services and value-added goods, with targeted support mechanisms rather than broad-based interventions. The second is deeper regional integration, especially in Africa, through sectoral strategies aligned with regional value chains. The third is the modernisation of the export ecosystem through digitalisation, automation and the strategic use of artificial intelligence.

The report argues that AI and digital tools should be embedded across export-related processes, from market intelligence and regulatory compliance to payments and data interoperability. This transformation, it notes, is particularly critical for small and medium-sized enterprises seeking to compete internationally.

FROM ANALYSIS TO POLICY DIALOGUE

Beyond its analytical content, the report is positioned as a working platform for engagement between the private sector and public authorities. MCCI officials indicated that Export Insights 2025 will be used to inform consultations with ministries and agencies, including in the context of forthcoming budgetary discussions.

STÉPHANIE NG TSEUNG,
HEAD OF PAYMENTS AT MCB

MCB customers spent Rs 3.5 billion via cards and QR codes from 20 to 25 December

- Black Friday spending reached Rs 1.9 billion, an 8% increase year-on-year
- MCB customers carried out 17.3 million transactions using cards and QR codes between 1 November and December 2025
- 93% of Black Friday online transactions were conducted on foreign platforms, compared with 7% on local sites.
- The most frequently used platforms included Temu, Netflix, Apple, AliExpress and Orange Money.
- 67% increase in QR-code transactions, driven primarily by the interoperable MAUCAS QR system.

Digital payments are becoming firmly embedded in everyday transactions in Mauritius. Presenting MCB's 2025 payments review, Stéphanie Ng Tseung, Head of Payments at MCB, points to sustained growth in card, QR code and mobile-based payments, a gradual decline in cash usage, and evolving consumer and merchant behaviour – signalling a steady shift towards a more cashlite economy.

Digital payment habits among Mauritian consumers strengthened further in 2025, with data from the MCB Group showing sustained growth in card, QR code and mobile-based transactions, alongside a gradual but consistent decline in cash usage.

Presenting MCB's annual review of payment trends, Stéphanie Ng Tseung, Head of Payments at MCB, said the figures confirmed a structural shift in consumer behaviour rather than a temporary post-pandemic adjustment.

"The trend towards alternative means of payment to cash has clearly been confirmed in 2025," she said. "This is something the MCB has been supporting for several years, both in terms of usage and acceptance, particularly among SMEs."

FESTIVE SEASON TRANSACTIONS: GROWTH, BUT AT A MORE MEASURED PACE

Between 1 November and 31 December 2025, MCB customers carried out 17.3 million transactions using cards and QR codes, representing a 13% increase year-on-year.

During Black Friday, the number of transactions rose by 18% compared with 2024, while Christmas shopping and end-of-year purchases both recorded growth of 9%. The highest transaction volume was registered on 24 December, when 461,000 transactions were processed in a single day.

Stéphanie Ng Tseung underlined that growth in 2025 must be interpreted against an already elevated base. "2024 was a very specific context, with exceptional peaks," she explained. "In 2025, growth continued, but in a more moderate and



sustainable manner, starting from a much higher level."

SPENDING PATTERNS: PHYSICAL STORES STILL DOMINANT

Despite the continued rise of e-commerce, in-store transactions remained dominant, accounting for 89% of Black Friday purchases, while online transactions represented 11%.

In value terms, Black Friday spending reached Rs 1.9 billion, an 8% increase year-on-year, with an average transaction value of Rs 1,809.



If we want to move towards a truly cashlite economy, we need to multiply payment acceptance points



Cards & QR Transactions by MCB customers



Black Friday

Peak: **399K** (28 Nov 2025)

Growth: **+18%**



Christmas Shopping

Peak: **461K** (24 Dec 2025)

Growth: **+9%**



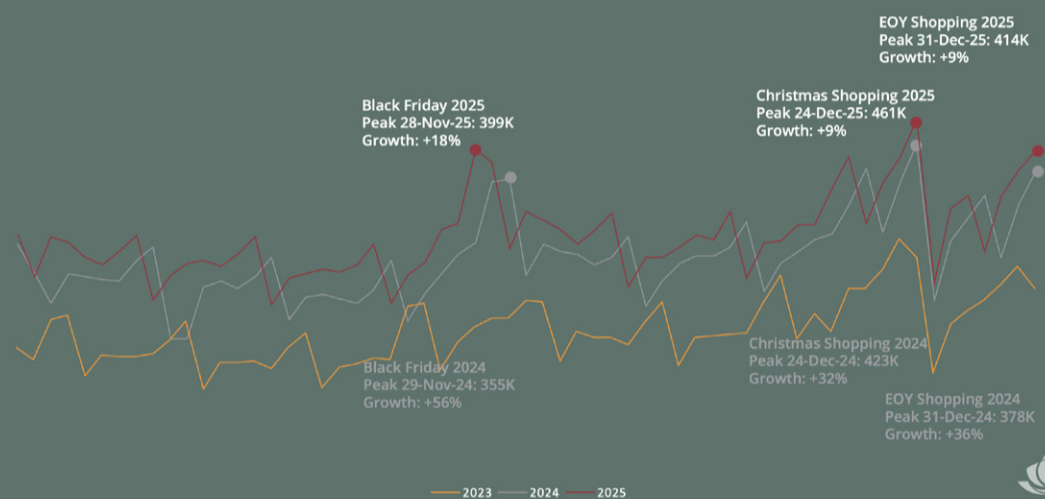
End of year Shopping

Peak: **414K** (31 Dec 2025)

Growth: **+9%**



Cards & QR Transactions by MCB customers



For the Christmas period, from 20 to 25 December, total spending via cards and QR codes amounted to Rs 3.5 billion, with an average transaction value of Rs 1,654. Retail stores and restaurants remained the primary spending categories, followed by logistics services and hotels.

ONLINE SHOPPING: FOREIGN PLATFORMS LEAD

When Mauritians do shop online, international platforms overwhelmingly dominate. Data shows that 93% of Black Friday online transactions were conducted on foreign platforms, compared with 7% on local sites. The most frequently used platforms included Temu, Netflix, Apple, AliExpress and Orange Money.

"This is not really a surprise," Stéphanie Ng Tseung observed. "We all see that foreign platforms are increasingly part of everyday consumption habits."

TRAVEL SPENDING CONTINUES

TO RECOVER

Card usage abroad continued to expand in 2025, reflecting the sustained recovery in international travel. France remained the most popular destination for MCB cardholders, followed by South Africa and the United Arab Emirates.

Average spending per cardholder reached Rs 57,000 in France, Rs 71,000 in South Africa, and Rs 52,000 in the UAE. Restaurants, hotels, duty-free stores and entertainment accounted for the largest share of overseas expenditure.

QR CODES AND THE SHIFT TOWARDS A CASHLITE ECONOMY

One of the most notable developments in 2025 was the 67% increase in QR-code transactions, driven primarily by the interoperable MAUCAS QR system, introduced under the central bank's Instant Payment System (IPS).

"MAUCAS QR is a cornerstone of the digitalisation

of payments in Mauritius," Stéphanie Ng Tseung said. "It is interoperable, low-cost and plays a central role in building a cashlite economy."

By contrast, contactless card payments stabilised, registering a 4% increase, reflecting their widespread adoption following the Covid-19 period. Tap-to-Pay, introduced more recently, still represents just 1.4% of total transactions, though MCB expects usage to rise as customer familiarity increases.

"We are still at the very beginning of Tap-to-Pay," she noted. "With education and time, adoption should follow a similar path to contactless payments."

MERCHANT ACCEPTANCE EXPANDS, CASH USAGE DECLINES

By the end of 2025, nearly 18,000 merchants were accepting digital payments through MCB, either via cards or QR codes. Expanding acceptance remains a central focus, particularly among micro-enterprises and SMEs.

"If we want to move towards a truly cashlite economy, we need to multiply payment acceptance points," Stéphanie Ng Tseung said. "This is an industry-wide effort, not just the responsibility of one bank."

The expansion of digital acceptance is contributing to a measurable decline in cash usage. Among individual MCB customers, the proportion of transactions conducted in cash fell from 30% at the start of 2025 to 27% by year-end, a reduction of three percentage points.

"Cash may appear free, but it has real costs and risks," she said, citing security concerns, handling costs, transportation, storage and delays before funds are credited to accounts.

INSTANT PAYMENTS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Stéphanie Ng Tseung described the Instant Payment System (IPS) as a major structural development for the Mauritian payments ecosystem.

"IPS is a game changer," she said. "It is interoperable, involves banks and non-bank participants, and is a key infrastructure for the country's cashlite strategy."

OUTLOOK FOR 2026

Looking ahead, she expects digital payment adoption to continue in 2026, albeit at a more measured pace. *"QR payments will continue to grow, online transactions will expand further, cross-border payments linked to travel will remain strong, and Tap-to-Pay will move beyond its early stage,"* she said.

Fraud prevention against pseudo-merchants and social engineering scams

Fraud prevention featured prominently during the Q&A session, particularly in relation to social media transactions and peer-to-peer payments.

Stéphanie Ng Tseung identified two main risks: pseudo-merchants operating on social platforms, and social engineering scams, where victims are tricked into sharing sensitive information.

"If someone asks for your PIN, OTP or card details, you should immediately know it is a scam," she stressed. "No bank will ever ask for this inform

She also cautioned customers against returning unexpected transfers without verification. "If money appears in your account unexpectedly and someone asks you to send it elsewhere, this should raise immediate red flags."

MCB has strengthened security on its Juice app, including biometric verification for sensitive actions, to mitigate these risks. In December alone, the app recorded nearly 35 million logins and close to 13 million transactions, underscoring the importance of system resilience during peak periods.

Tourist arrivals reached 1.44 million in 2025, representing a 3.9% increase

2025 closed on a positive note for the tourism industry in Mauritius. Overall arrivals increased, driven mainly by air traffic and strong growth from selected markets such as India and Southern Europe, but the year was also marked by a contraction in cruise tourism and weaker performances from some traditional European source countries. The latest figures highlight both areas of resilience and structural challenges for the sector.

Presenting the latest tourism performance figures at a press conference, Richard Duval, Minister of Tourism, outlined a year of moderate but sustained growth in tourist arrivals, supported mainly by air traffic and strong performances in selected source and opportunity markets, even as cruise tourism registered a marked decline.

DECEMBER PERFORMANCE SUPPORTS ANNUAL GROWTH

Tourist arrivals for December 2025 reached 161,440, representing an increase of 4.7%, or 7,232 additional visitors, compared with 154,208 arrivals recorded in December 2024. This monthly increase contributed to a positive overall performance for the year.

For the full January-December 2025 period, total tourist arrivals stood at 1,436,250, up 3.9%, or 54,073 visitors, compared with 1,382,177 during the corresponding period of 2024.

AIR ARRIVALS DRIVE GROWTH, WHILE SEA ARRIVALS DECLINE

A breakdown of arrivals by mode of transport shows that growth in 2025 was largely driven by air traffic. Tourist arrivals by air increased by 4.7%, or 63,391 visitors, rising from 1,348,400 in 2024 to 1,411,791 in 2025.

In contrast, arrivals by sea recorded a contraction. Total tourist arrivals by sea declined by 27.6%, from 33,777 in 2024 to 24,459 in 2025. This downturn was primarily reflected in cruise tourism, where arrivals fell by



From left to right: Indira Rugjee, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; Richard Duval, Minister of Tourism; Sydney Pierre, Junior Minister of Tourism.

33.3%, or 9,634 passengers, dropping from 28,960 to 19,326 over the year.

The number of cruise ship calls also decreased, from 49 arrivals in 2024 to 41 in 2025, confirming a slowdown in cruise activity during the period under review.

MIXED TRENDS ACROSS MAIN SOURCE MARKETS

The Minister highlighted contrasting trends among Mauritius's principal source markets. Several countries recorded increases in tourist arrivals during 2025:

- India posted the strongest growth, with arrivals rising by 33.5%, or 19,020 visitors, from

- 56,788 in 2024 to 75,808 in 2025.
- Italy recorded an increase of 18.2%, adding 5,375 visitors, to reach 34,864.
- South Africa saw arrivals rise by 3.5%, or 3,745 visitors, going from 106,542 to 110,287.
- Reunion Island registered a 3.1% increase, with arrivals growing by 4,411 to reach 145,029.
- Switzerland experienced modest growth of 1.9%, or 685 additional visitors, bringing arrivals to 36,014.

However, some of Mauritius's traditional European markets recorded declines:

- France, the country's largest source market, saw arrivals decrease by 0.6%, or 1,919 visitors, from 339,421 to 337,502.
- The United Kingdom recorded a decline of 2.0%, or 3,198 visitors, with arrivals falling to 154,990.
- Germany also registered a decrease of 1.3%, or 1,659 visitors, with arrivals totalling 122,166 in 2025.

performance of opportunity markets, which showed encouraging momentum over the year:

- Spain recorded a strong increase of 19.0%, or 2,642 visitors, with arrivals rising from 13,919 to 16,561.
- The Czech Republic saw arrivals increase by 13.2%, or 1,969 visitors, reaching 16,898.
- Austria registered growth of 7.4%, with arrivals increasing by 1,366 visitors to 19,906.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Overall, the figures presented point to a year of consolidation for the tourism sector. While growth remains moderate, the expansion in air arrivals and the strong performance of markets such as India, Italy and selected opportunity markets have helped offset declines in cruise tourism and softer demand from some traditional European sources.

The Minister indicated that these trends will inform ongoing tourism and air access strategies, with a focus on strengthening high-growth markets, diversifying the visitor base, and addressing the structural challenges affecting cruise tourism in the period ahead.

OPPORTUNITY MARKETS RECORD NOTABLE EXPANSION

Beyond the main markets, the Minister drew attention to the





MCB Monthly Financial Markets Analysis

Africa's FX Story: Resilience in 2025, Selectivity in 2026

African currencies proved more resilient than expected in 2025 despite heightened global volatility. This performance was supported by improving domestic fundamentals, a weaker US dollar and a favourable external backdrop. SSA registered record goods exports of USD 270.5bn in the first seven months of the year, up 10.5% year-on-year, driven by elevated commodity prices and stronger export volumes.

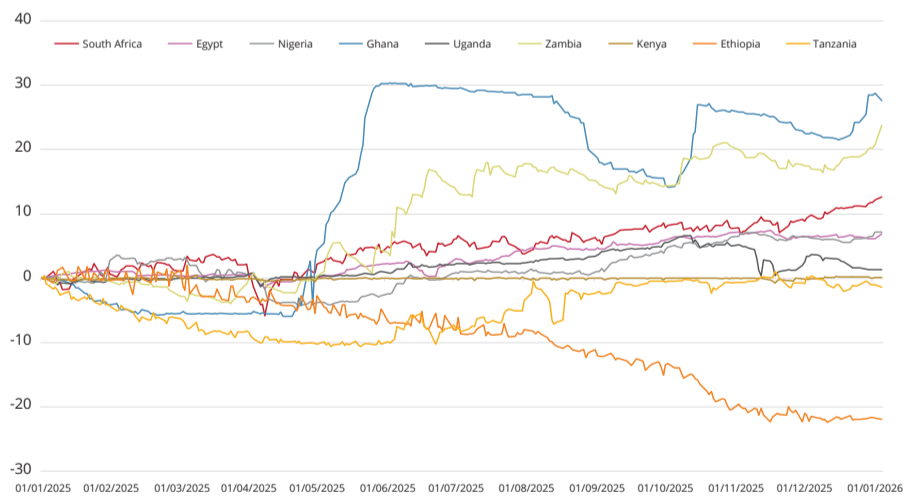
Commodity dynamics were central to FX outcomes. Softer oil prices eased fuel import bills and inflation for net importers, while weighing modestly on exporters such as Angola and Nigeria. Metals, however, provided a strong tailwind. Elevated gold prices boosted export receipts and allowed central banks to rebuild reserve buffers, supporting FX stability in Ghana, Tanzania and South Africa. In South Africa, higher platinum group metal prices, reform momentum and improved ratings dynamics helped keep the rand well supported. Zambia also benefited from strong copper prices and rising output, improving FX liquidity and stabilising the kwacha.

Beyond commodities, structural vulnerabilities and political developments drove divergences. Economies with high debt burdens, persistent current-account deficits and weak reserve buffers remained exposed. Ethiopia recorded the weakest performance, with the birr continuing to depreciate following exchange-rate liberalisation. Elsewhere, political uncertainty triggered episodic volatility, including around Kenya's aborted tax increases and election-related dollar hoarding in Tanzania.

Looking ahead to 2026, African FX markets are expected to be shaped by sustained economic momentum, still-elevated but gradually normalising commodity prices, and an improving external environment. While easing inflation and lower interest rates should support domestic demand and growth, they may also lift import demand and FX pressures in some economies.

However, performance will remain highly selective. Zambia's kwacha is well positioned to outperform, supported by strong copper fundamentals and progress on debt restructuring, albeit with some election-related volatility. Uganda's FX outlook should improve in the second half of the year as oil-related inflows materialise. Several currencies are expected to remain broadly stable, including South Africa's rand, Kenya's and Tanzania's shilling, underpinned by active central bank management, adequate reserves and resilient export performance. By contrast, the Ethiopian birr is likely to remain under pressure amid unresolved structural imbalances, while depreciation elsewhere should be gradual, with Nigeria's naira supported by capital inflows and a current-account surplus. The opportunity set in 2026 lies less in broad-based appreciation and more in identifying economies with credible policy frameworks, improving external buffers and durable reform momentum.

Africa currency performance
2025 performance against the USD in %



Source: Macrobond, ETM Analytics

For more information, please contact MCB Global Markets Team on gmsales@mcb.mu

Published in collaboration with our Strategy, Research and Development team and our Financial Markets research partner, ETM Group.





ALKA BHATIA,
UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE FOR MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES

“Sustainable development is about dignity”

- “Mauritius has done well compared to many countries but the global environment is changing rapidly.”
- “We are today witnessing a serious erosion of the founding spirit of the United Nations.”

In her first interview since taking up her posting in Mauritius, the newly appointed UNDP Resident Representative, Alka Bhatia, acknowledges the country’s achievements but warns that a rapidly changing global environment leaves no room for complacency at a time when global tensions are eroding the founding spirit of the United Nations and basic human development is suffering.

TEXT: RUDY VEERAMUNDAR AND KLYVEN VEERAMUNDAR
PHOTOGRAPHER: MANOJ NAWOOR

First of all, congratulations on your new appointment. For our readers to understand who you are and what you bring to this role, could you take us through your professional journey before coming to Mauritius?

Thank you very much. I have had a very long and, I would say, quite demanding professional journey. I began my career as a civil servant in my own country, India, where I worked for nearly 20 years, primarily on foreign trade issues. I entered the Indian civil services through the competitive examination in 1986, so that already gives an idea of the length of my career and the institutional environments I have been exposed to.

When I started out, India was operating under a highly controlled economic regime. Imports, exports, foreign exchange, almost every aspect of economic activity, was regulated. This was the late 1980s. Then, in the early 1990s, a major shift took place with the introduction of economic liberalisation. The economy opened up, and that period coincided with my early years in public service. It was a fascinating and formative time to be a young official.

As a young officer, you were not just implementing policy; you were witnessing the foundations of India's modern economic development being laid. Trade liberalisation brought about a very different way of thinking compared to the traditional bureaucratic mindset. It was not just about compliance with rules; it was about understanding systems, incentives, and outcomes. And when you are young, you are also idealistic. You want to see change happen. You want to contribute to something meaningful.

One of the most important lessons I learned during that period was about money flows and economic cycles. For the first time, I truly understood how interconnected everything is. If, at any stage of the process, an official delays a file, or someone's consignment is stuck, or an import licence or cash support is held back, the impact is never confined to that one transaction. It disrupts the entire money cycle. It creates ripple effects across businesses, livelihoods, and the broader economy. This is a lesson I have never forgotten.

That experience shaped my understanding of governance and responsibility. Decisions taken, or delayed, by public officials have real consequences for people's lives. This awareness stayed with me as I progressed in my career.

After nearly two decades in government service, I joined the United Nations Development Programme in 2009. I applied in 2008 and joined



Tourism has been a success story for Mauritius, but the model has become too narrow and too comfortable.



the following year, initially taking one year's leave from the Indian civil service. At that stage, I was driven largely by curiosity. I wanted to understand what "development" meant beyond the framework of trade and economic policy.

When I joined UNDP, it was the period of the Millennium Development Goals. The work immediately resonated with me. UNDP sits at a unique intersection, between policy, people, and partnerships, and that combination appealed strongly to me. It allowed me to connect my experience in global trade and negotiations with broader questions of poverty, inequality, livelihoods, and human development.

Having participated in international negotiations, I had been exposed to perspectives from across the world, from developed countries, developing countries, least developed countries, and small island developing states. I had seen how global solidarity can work, but also how power imbalances shape outcomes. This global exposure broadened my outlook significantly. It moved me away from a narrow domestic perspective towards a much wider understanding of development as a shared global responsibility.

Eventually, after much reflection, I took the decision to leave government service and continue my career with the United Nations. It was a major risk. UN positions are contractual and do not offer the same job security as the civil service. But I felt strongly drawn to the work. It gave me the opportunity to bring together my policy experience, my understanding of economic systems, and my growing conviction that development must be inclusive, equitable, and grounded in justice.

Over the years, working with UNDP, particularly in Africa, has further deepened that perspective. It has reinforced for me that development is not just about growth figures or technical solutions. It is about people. It is about dignity. It is about understanding context, history, vulnerability, and resilience. And it is very much about learning. Even now, at this stage of my career, I do not claim to know everything. Every day remains a learning experience for me.

What was the first reality shock you experienced in public service?

There were several shocks, not just one. I did not



Relying heavily on a single crop, such as sugar cane, limits resilience.



experience a single defining moment; rather, it was a gradual realisation that the system did not function in the way I had imagined it would.

I came from a very protected environment. My father was also a civil servant, so I grew up in that culture. What I learned from him was the value of service, of being helpful, of responding to people's needs, of understanding that public service exists for a purpose. So, I entered the system with a strong sense of idealism and a belief that if something did not make sense, it could simply be changed.

The first real shock came when I encountered the realities of bureaucracy and red tape. You enter wanting to make a difference, wanting to improve processes, wanting to correct inefficiencies. But very quickly, you realise that systems are deeply entrenched. They do not change easily, and certainly not quickly, especially when you are young and not at the decision-making level.

That was difficult for me. I had to learn, sometimes the hard way, that you cannot simply will change into existence. You have to work within constraints, move step by step, and build consensus over time. Patience was not something that came naturally to me. I was – and to some extent still am – impatient to get things done properly and without unnecessary delay. At that time, it was much more pronounced.

My colleagues were often taken aback by this. They would say to me, "Madam, you have just joined. Please wait. This is not how things work." For me, that was frustrating. I kept asking myself, "Why should it not work differently? Why should inefficiency be accepted as normal?" But I had to force myself to slow down and understand that systems have their own rhythm, and change



I see initiatives like biodegradable bottles made from bagasse in Mauritius, which are environmentally friendly and ingenious. And I ask myself: Why are they not exported? ”

requires persistence rather than confrontation.

There is one particular incident that I still remember very clearly. I was in the office when a businessman was sitting with my supervisor, loudly demanding that his licence be issued immediately. He was raising his voice, making a scene, and clearly expected compliance. He was a well-known businessman and was used to operating that way.

I did not even think twice. I stood up and walked into my supervisor's office without asking permission, which, in hindsight, was not the correct protocol. I told the gentleman very firmly that procedures existed for a reason, that documentation was missing, and that unless those requirements were met, nothing could be processed. I told him that while we wanted to get things done, we could not bypass the process. And then I walked out.

Later, I wondered whether that was imprudence or sheer temerity on my part. It could easily have backfired. But I was fortunate to have a very understanding supervisor. He called me later and said, *"Do you know what you did today? He has gone away. He is used to coming and asking, but today he listened and left."* That moment stayed with me.

What that episode taught me was not just about standing up to pressure, but about the fine balance between firmness and process. It showed me that while systems are slow to change, individual behaviour can sometimes be influenced by clarity and consistency.

So, the shock was twofold. First, the realisation that changing systems is far harder than changing intentions. And second, the understanding that while impatience can be a weakness, it can also be a strength if it is channelled properly, if it is grounded in fairness, integrity, and respect for process.

Over time, I learned to temper that impatience. Age and experience mellow you. But that early shock shaped how I approached my work thereafter: with a strong sense of responsibility, a respect for institutions, and an enduring belief that public service must ultimately serve people, not power.

Leaving public service is rare. Was that a difficult decision?

Yes, it was a tremendous risk. By the time I took that decision, I had already put in nearly 20 years of service in the government. I was at a senior level, with a clearly defined career path, job security, and all the safeguards that come with public service. Leaving that behind is not something people do lightly, and certainly not

something that is encouraged.

I initially joined the United Nations Development Programme almost out of curiosity, taking one year's leave from the Indian civil service. At that stage, my intention was not to leave government permanently. I simply wanted to explore. I was intrigued by the word *"development."* We had been doing what we called development work through trade policy and economic engagement, but I wanted to understand what development actually meant in practice, beyond policy documents and negotiations.

When I joined UNDP, it was the time of the Millennium Development Goals. That experience was an eye-opener for me. UNDP operates at the intersection of policy, people, and partnerships, and I found that deeply meaningful. It was not just about drafting policies or negotiating agreements; it was about seeing how decisions translated into real impacts on people's lives.

After one year, I was required to make a decision. Under Indian civil service rules, there is a provision that allows officers to remain outside government service for a limited period, up to several years, but eventually, you must choose whether to return. At that point, the government naturally expected me to come back.



UNDP is not a donor agency. We are development partners. ”

But I realised that I was not ready to do so. I was enjoying the work at UNDP. It was intellectually stimulating and, importantly, it allowed for a different way of working. While there is still hierarchy in the UN system, it is not the same as in government. There is more flexibility, more space for innovation, and more openness to new ideas. That mattered to me, because I had always believed that solutions need creativity, not just compliance.

So, I had to take a very serious decision. I asked myself whether I was willing to walk away from the certainty of government service for a contractual position with no long-term guarantees. UNDP appointments are not permanent. Contracts are typically renewed every two years. There



is no automatic security. You are assessed continuously. In that sense, the risk was real and very tangible.

I also had to consider my family. My husband was extremely supportive. He himself was a civil servant, working in the revenue services, customs and excise, so there was at least one stable anchor. That support mattered. But emotionally and professionally, it was still a leap into the unknown.

Eventually, I decided to opt for voluntary retirement from government service. Looking back, I would say that this was probably the biggest risk I have taken in my life. There were moments of doubt. There was uncertainty. But I felt strongly that the work I was doing at UNDP aligned more closely with my values and my evolving understanding of development.

What also influenced my decision was the global perspective UNDP offered. Through my earlier work in trade negotiations, I had already been exposed to a wide range of country perspectives, developed, developing, least developed, and small island states. But at UNDP, that exposure deepened. I could see development not as a narrow domestic issue, but as a shared global challenge requiring solidarity, cooperation, and fairness.

I also realised that my experience in trade negotiations had given me a moral lens. I had seen firsthand how global systems can disadvantage the most vulnerable, small farmers, informal workers, marginalised communities. For me, development was no longer just about economic efficiency or growth figures. It was about inclusion, equity, justice, and dignity. UNDP gave me the platform to work on those issues more directly.

So yes, it was a risk, financially, professionally, and personally. But it was also a conscious choice. I chose meaning over security. And despite the uncertainties that come with contractual work, I have never regretted that decision. The work has been fulfilling, challenging, and deeply aligned with what I believe development should be about. If anything, that decision reaffirmed for me that growth, whether personal or national, often requires stepping out of comfort zones. Public



Mauritius is on the right digitalisation path, but the pace needs to match the scale of global change.



service taught me discipline and responsibility. UNDP taught me perspective, empathy, and the value of partnerships. Together, those experiences have shaped who I am today.

What has been the most challenging aspect of your journey at UNDP?

Interestingly, I would not describe my journey at UNDP as “challenging” in the way people usually expect. I say this quite consciously, because when I joined UNDP, I did so with very little prior knowledge of the organisation, its internal culture, its ways of working, or even the full scope of its mandate. In that sense, everything was new to me.

What I found surprising was how quickly the work began to resonate. It was an eye-opener. UNDP works at the intersection of policy, people, and partnerships, and once I began to understand that, the logic of the organisation became very clear to me. That clarity is one of the reasons I ultimately decided to leave government service and continue my career in development.

If I had to identify something that comes closest to being a challenge, it would be the continuous process of adaptation. UNDP work requires you to operate in different countries, each with its own political realities, institutional capacities, social structures, cultures, and expectations. Every new posting is an adjustment process. You are dealing with different people, different value systems, different ways of thinking, and different priorities.

This requires a very high degree of adaptability. You cannot arrive in a country with preconceived notions or fixed solutions. You cannot impose your ideas or your will, no matter how well-intentioned they may be. You have to look at every situation through the lens of the local context. That demands humility and deep respect for the country and the people you are working with.

For me, that process of adaptation has been constant. Each time I move to a new assignment, I have to remind myself that I am still learning. I do not know everything. Even now, towards the later stage of my active working career, I do not claim to have all the answers. Every day remains a learning experience.

Another aspect that requires careful navigation

is managing expectations. Governments often look to UNDP as a source of solutions, sometimes even as a donor. But UNDP is not a donor agency. We are development partners. We work alongside governments and people. Yes, we have our strategic plans and country programme documents, but these are always aligned with national priorities. We are not here with a rigid agenda of our own.

Sometimes we act as facilitators, sometimes as collaborators, sometimes as conveners, and sometimes simply as partners walking alongside national institutions. That requires constant dialogue, trust-building, and clarity about roles. You have to ensure that ownership remains with the country, because sustainable development cannot be externally driven.

What has kept me grounded throughout this journey is a strong sense of purpose. I constantly remind myself why UNDP exists. We are not here to tick boxes or implement projects for the sake of implementation. We are here to support sustainable development, which for me is not a technical concept. It is a humane requirement.

Sustainable development is about dignity. It is about opportunity. It is about resilience. It is about equity and justice. It is about ensuring that people, especially the most vulnerable, have access to opportunities and are not left behind. When you hold on to that purpose, it becomes easier to navigate complexities, bureaucratic processes, and inevitable frustrations.

So, if I were to summarise, the most demanding aspect of my journey at UNDP has been the continuous need to adapt, to listen, to learn, to respect context, and to work collaboratively across cultures and institutions. But that is also what has made the journey deeply enriching. It has reinforced my belief that development is not something you deliver to people; it is something you build with them.

And as long as I keep that perspective, I do not see challenges as obstacles. I see them as part of the responsibility that comes with working in development.

What priorities do you see for Mauritius and Seychelles?

Our overarching priority, as UNDP, is to



Digitalisation is not just about introducing new technologies; it is about transforming how services are delivered, how institutions function, and how people access opportunities.



support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda. But I want to be very clear: this is not a light matter, and it is certainly not about ticking boxes. Sustainable development is about working with today's generation for the benefit of future generations. The word “sustainable” is often used casually, but very few people pause to reflect on what it truly means.

For me, sustainability is about legacy. It is about asking ourselves what kind of future we are leaving behind. Are we using resources responsibly, or are we simply extracting and consuming, leaving the next generation to deal with the consequences? That responsibility does not rest only with institutions like UNDP. It rests with governments, the private sector, communities, families, and individuals.

In Mauritius, there is currently an important moment of transition. The country does not yet have a formal national development plan, but the government is in the process of articulating a long-term vision, which I think is extremely positive. At the same time, the government has already put forward a clear programme, and what struck me very early on is how strongly that programme resonates with the work UNDP is doing globally.

Whether it is renewable energy, fast-tracking digitalisation, strengthening the digital economy, positioning Mauritius within regional and continental trade integration, or reinforcing institutions and governance, there is strong alignment. Mauritius is uniquely positioned geographically between Asia and Africa, and this presents opportunities—not just for trade, but for knowledge exchange, services, and regional cooperation.

Institutional capacity is another major priority. Strong institutions are the backbone of sustainable development. This includes public sector capacity, regulatory frameworks, and governance systems that are transparent, accountable, and responsive. But institutions cannot function in isolation. They must engage meaningfully with civil society, youth, women, the private sector, and academia. Development cannot be government-centric; it has to be inclusive.

Climate change and environmental sustainability are also central priorities for both Mauritius and Seychelles. These are small island states that are highly vulnerable to climate impacts, despite having contributed very little to global emissions. Adaptation and mitigation are therefore not optional; they are existential issues. UNDP is deeply engaged in areas such as climate resilience, the blue economy, biodiversity protection, and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

In this context, innovative financing becomes critical. Mauritius, in particular, is an upper-middle-income country, which means access to traditional official development assistance is limited. At the same time, debt levels are high,

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Patriotism is not about slogans, flags, or emotional rhetoric. It is about whether you feel responsible for keeping your country clean, safe, and sustainable.”

creating structural imbalances. This is not unique to Mauritius; even the least developed countries are not receiving the levels of assistance that were promised internationally. The long-standing commitment of allocating 0.7% of GNI to development assistance has simply not been met.

So, the question becomes: how do countries like Mauritius and Seychelles finance their development ambitions? This is where innovative financing mechanisms are essential – green finance, blue finance, climate funds, blended finance, and partnerships that mobilise private capital alongside public resources. UNDP is well placed to support countries in designing and accessing these mechanisms.

Another priority is economic diversification. Mauritius has a limited landmass and cannot pursue large-scale industrialisation in the traditional sense. Nor should it want polluting

industries. Instead, the focus must be on high-value, low-footprint sectors, services, digital industries, financial services, precision manufacturing, innovation-driven enterprises, and knowledge-based activities. Seychelles faces similar constraints and opportunities, particularly in relation to the blue economy and sustainable tourism.

Digitalisation is a major accelerator across all these areas. It is not just about technology for technology's sake. Digital tools can improve service delivery, increase efficiency, support transparency, and help countries respond to demographic realities, including ageing populations. Both Mauritius and Seychelles are moving in the right direction, but the pace and scale of transformation need to match the urgency of global change.

Food security and agriculture also deserve attention. Even with limited land, countries must reflect on how much they depend on imports and whether more can be done locally, through diversification, value addition, agro-processing, and sustainable practices. Resilience is not only about climate; it is also about economic and social stability.

Ultimately, the priority for Mauritius and Seychelles is transformation with purpose. Moving from middle-income to high-income status is not just about higher GDP figures. It is about the quality of growth. It is about inclusion. It is about reducing inequality, strengthening resilience – economic, social, and environmental – and ensuring that no one is left behind.

UNDP's role in this journey is not to impose solutions, but to accompany. We bring global experience, best practices, and analytical tools, but the vision and ownership must remain national. Sustainable development, after all, cannot be imported. It has to be built from within, in partnership, with clarity of purpose and a long-term view.

Do you think Mauritius needs to move faster in some sectors?

The first one I would clearly point to is energy, particularly clean and renewable energy. Without energy, nothing else works. You can talk about digitalisation, services, innovation, tourism, or industrial upgrading, but if your energy systems are under strain, the entire development trajectory is at risk.

Mauritius's energy infrastructure is already feeling pressure. Demand is increasing, systems are stretched, and reliance on imported energy remains very high. That is not sustainable, economically, environmentally, or strategically. For a small island state, dependence on external energy sources creates vulnerability to price shocks, supply disruptions, and global volatility.

What makes this particularly frustrating is that Mauritius has alternatives. You have sun. You have wind. You have technical capacity. So, the question is: why are we still importing so much? The transition to renewable energy should not be tentative or incremental. This is the moment for decisive action. Clean energy is no longer an environmental luxury; it is an economic necessity.

Another sector where faster movement is required is digitalisation. Mauritius is on the right path, but the pace needs to match the scale of global change. Digitalisation is not just about introducing new technologies; it is about



transforming how services are delivered, how institutions function, and how people access opportunities.

Digital systems can help Mauritius respond to its demographic realities, including an ageing population. Countries with similar demographic profiles, Japan and several European nations, have embraced automation and digital solutions to maintain productivity and service quality. Mauritius has to think along the same lines, not as an option, but as a necessity.

Tourism is another area where urgency is required. Tourism has been a success story, but the model has become too narrow and too comfortable. It remains heavily focused on a particular form of high-end, beach-based tourism. That model cannot be expected to deliver inclusive, resilient growth indefinitely.

Tourism needs to be reimagined, more diversified, more innovative, and more deeply connected to local communities. It should create value beyond coastal enclaves and provide meaningful opportunities for Mauritians, particularly young people. The fact that migrant labour is widespread while local youth are leaving the country should be a warning signal. Tourism must evolve if it is to remain relevant and inclusive.

Agriculture and food security also deserve greater attention. Even with limited land, Mauritius needs to reflect on how much it depends on imports and whether more can be produced locally through diversification, modern farming techniques, and agro-processing. Relying heavily on a single crop, such as sugar cane, limits resilience. Value addition and diversification are essential.

Institutional capacity and governance is another area where speed and decisiveness matter. Strong institutions underpin everything else – economic performance, investor confidence, social cohesion, and trust. Building institutional capacity is not glamorous work, but it is foundational. This includes strengthening public administration, regulatory frameworks, and coordination across ministries and agencies.

Mauritius also needs to accelerate its use of innovative financing mechanisms. As an upper-middle-income country, access to traditional development assistance is limited. At the same time, debt levels are high. This imbalance means Mauritius cannot rely on old financing models. Green finance, blue finance, climate funds, and blended finance must move from theory to practice.

Underlying all of this is a broader concern about complacency. Mauritius has done well compared to many countries, particularly in the region, and that success can create a sense of comfort. But the global environment is changing rapidly. Competition is intensifying. Climate risks are increasing. Demographic pressures are growing. Standing still is not an option.

Moving faster does not mean moving recklessly. It means being clear-headed about priorities, making informed decisions, and having the courage to implement reforms even when they are difficult. It also means thinking beyond short-term gains and electoral cycles.

So yes, Mauritius needs to move faster, but with purpose. Faster on energy. Faster on digitalisation. Faster on tourism transformation. Faster on institutional strengthening and innovative financing. These are not separate



Moving faster also means thinking beyond short-term gains and electoral cycles

agendas; they are interconnected. If Mauritius can accelerate in these areas, it will be far better positioned to achieve inclusive, resilient, and sustainable development in the years ahead.

You often speak strongly about the youth. Can you tell our readers more?

Yes, I do speak strongly about the youth, and I do so very consciously. One of the most common phrases we hear is that “the youth are the future.” I actually disagree with that framing. The youth are not just the future; they are very much the present. They are already shaping societies, economies, and cultures, whether we acknowledge it or not. The real question is whether we are giving them the space, the responsibility, and the trust to do so constructively.

Young people today bring something extremely important to the table: they question. My generation, largely, did not question authority or systems in the same way. We accepted many things as they were. Today’s youth ask, “Why does it have to be done this way?” Sometimes, that questioning can be uncomfortable. It can even feel irritating. But it is precisely through that questioning that innovation happens. New ideas emerge because old assumptions are challenged.

The youth today are also far more digitally savvy. I will be very honest; I know the basics of digital tools, but I often depend on younger people to guide me. That in itself tells you something. They are faster, more intuitive, and more adaptable when it comes to technology. In an era where digitalisation is transforming everything, from

governance to business to social interaction, this is an enormous asset.

But having said that, youth is not only about rights and opportunities. It is also about responsibility. Development cannot be built on demands alone. It has to be built on contribution. And this is where I think we need to have a very honest conversation.

I travel around Mauritius, and I see incredible natural beauty, beaches, oceans, landscapes... But I also see plastic waste. I ask myself: how many young people feel personally responsible for protecting these spaces? How many see environmental stewardship as their own duty, not just the government’s problem?

This sense of responsibility has to start early, at school level. Awareness about the environment, about energy use, about sustainability, cannot be abstract concepts. They must translate into daily behaviour, using less energy, reducing waste, respecting public spaces, and thinking about long-term impact rather than short-term convenience.

I also believe very strongly that young people should engage more actively in public life, including politics. And when I say politics, I do not mean dirty politics or power games. I mean constructive, policy-oriented engagement. Politics, at its core, is about shaping society, building communities, and setting the foundations for the future. If the youth stay away from these spaces, they will inevitably be occupied by others who may not represent their interests or values.

There is another dimension we often overlook: belonging. Patriotism, for me, is not about slogans or emotional rhetoric. It is about feeling responsible for your country and your community. It is about asking yourself, “*What am I contributing?*” rather than only “*What am I getting?*”

I sometimes feel that this sense of belonging and sacrifice is missing. It is very easy to criticise one’s country, to point out what is wrong. But building a country requires effort, time, and sacrifice. It requires staying engaged even when things are imperfect. It requires patience and persistence.

The youth have an enormous role to play in reimagining Mauritius, not just as a place to live, but as a society that is inclusive, innovative, and sustainable. This is the era of digitalisation, and young people should be at the forefront of that transformation. How do you make Mauritius a digital leader? How do you leverage its position between Africa and Asia? How do you contribute to regional development, and not just national success?

I would like to see more young people stepping forward with ideas, forming partnerships, engaging with communities, and even entering public service and politics, not out of ambition, but out of commitment.

For me, the youth are not a problem to be managed or a group to be spoken about in abstract terms. They are a powerful resource. But like any resource, they must be nurtured, trusted, and challenged to take responsibility. If we can strike that balance between empowerment and accountability, then the youth can become one of the strongest drivers of sustainable development.

And ultimately, development is not something that happens to people. It is something people do. The youth must see themselves not as spectators waiting for change, but as active participants shaping it, here and now.

You have often linked development to history, sacrifice, and a sense of national consciousness. Why do these elements matter so much in shaping a country's development path?

Because development is not only about policies, projects, or economic indicators. It is fundamentally about values. And values do not exist in a vacuum. They are shaped by history, by collective memory, and by the sacrifices that were made to build a nation.

Very often, when we talk about history, we reduce it to dates, names, and timelines. We teach children who was in power at which moment, or which event happened in which year. But what is often missing is the spirit behind that history. What were the sacrifices people made? What did it cost them, personally and collectively, to build the institutions, freedoms, and opportunities we now take for granted?

I sometimes ask myself whether we still carry that spirit today. Do we still have the same sense of responsibility toward our country? Do we still feel accountable not just for our own lives, but for the condition of the society we live in?

Patriotism is about action. It is about how you treat your environment, your community, and your fellow citizens. It is about whether you feel responsible for keeping your country clean, safe, and sustainable, not because someone is watching, but because you believe it is the right thing to do.

Development requires sacrifice. There is no transformation without sacrifice. And I do not mean dramatic sacrifices. Often, it is about small, everyday choices. It is about giving a bit of your time to your community. It is about not throwing rubbish on the beach. It is about accepting certain inconveniences for the greater good. It is about thinking beyond your own immediate comfort.

I have seen very powerful examples of this elsewhere. In Rwanda, for instance, community service is institutionalised. One day is set aside

for people to work together in their communities, and even national leaders participate. That sends a strong message: that no one is above responsibility, and that nation-building is a shared task. It creates pride, ownership, and respect for public spaces.

When I look at Mauritius, I see immense natural beauty, beaches, land, biodiversity, and also great potential for innovation. I see initiatives like biodegradable bottles made from bagasse, which are environmentally friendly and ingenious. And I ask myself: why are these not scaled up? Why are they not exported? Why are such innovations not turned into national strengths?

This again comes back to national consciousness. Do we see ourselves merely as consumers of what the country offers, or as contributors to what the country can become?

I worry sometimes that the spirit of sacrifice is weakening. It is easy to criticise, to complain, to point out what is wrong. But building a country requires patience, effort, and a willingness to stay engaged even when things are imperfect. It requires commitment over time. We often forget that the people who came before us, those who fought for independence, who built institutions, who laid foundations, did not have it easy. They made sacrifices without guarantees. The question is: are we willing to do the same, even in smaller ways, for future generations?

For me, development is deeply linked to this sense of belonging and responsibility. If people feel connected to their country, not just legally, but emotionally and ethically, they will act differently. They will protect resources. They will engage in public life. They will care about long-term outcomes, not just short-term benefits.

So, when I speak about history, sacrifice, and national consciousness, I am really speaking about the kind of society we want to build. One where people ask not only, "What can my country do for me?" but also, "What am I willing to contribute?" That shift in mindset is essential if we want development to be truly sustainable.

You have repeatedly highlighted gender equality and inclusion. Could you elaborate on how central these issues are to your work?

For us at UNDP, gender equality and inclusion are not add-ons or standalone issues. They are foundational. Our normative principle is very clear: leave no one behind. Everything we do stems from that. Inclusion is not a slogan; it is the underpinning of all development work. And gender equality is absolutely central to that agenda.

When we talk about gender equality, we often refer to Sustainable Development Goal 5, but I want to stress that SDG 5 cuts across all other goals. You cannot achieve sustainable development if half the population is disadvantaged, whether in terms of access, opportunity, voice, or outcomes. For me, gender equality is not only about numbers or representation. It is about equality and equity of access. It is about opportunity. It is about fairness.

Once you achieve that, once women and men have equal access to education, employment, healthcare, decision-making, and economic opportunity, you fundamentally change the development trajectory of a country. That is why I say that if you get gender equality right, you win a large part of the development battle.



It is difficult to reconcile the extraordinary technological and scientific advances humanity has made with the level of destruction we inflict on societies, on communities, and on the planet.





Enormous amounts of financial resources, political attention, and energy are being channelled into wars and the perpetuation of conflict.

And yet, despite decades of progress, we still see persistent gaps. One of the most troubling is the gender wage gap. UNDP has done analysis on this, including in Mauritius. For the same job, women often earn less than men. There is no justification for this. Women work just as hard, and often harder. In addition to paid work, they carry a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work: caring for children, ageing parents, sick family members. This care burden is rarely recognised, valued, or accounted for in economic systems.

That imbalance has wider consequences. When women are economically disadvantaged, it feeds into other harmful dynamics, dependency, vulnerability, and in some cases, gender-based violence. These issues are interconnected. Gender-based violence does not exist in isolation; it is often linked to economic inequality, harmful social norms, and power imbalances.

This is why UNDP does not treat gender as something we simply talk about in speeches. It is embedded in our programme design and implementation. We use gender markers, gender indicators, and gender-responsive frameworks to ensure that our interventions actually make a difference on the ground.

One area where we have been very active is women's economic empowerment – particularly women entrepreneurship and women in trade. Where we see gaps, we intervene. At the same time, we are careful not to create new imbalances. Gender equality is not about privileging women at the expense of men. It is about fairness. It is about ensuring that everyone has a level playing field. In some contexts, that may require targeted support for women to address historical disadvantages, but the objective is equity, not exclusion.

Another important area is gender-responsive budgeting. Budgets are not neutral documents. They reflect priorities and values. When we talk about gender-responsive budgeting, we are not saying budgets should favour one group arbitrarily. We are saying budgets should be aware. A gender-aware budget recognises where disparities exist and allocates resources accordingly.

For example, if women are underrepresented in certain sectors, or if they face specific barriers,

such as access to finance, childcare, or training, then budgets should address those constraints. This is similar to SDG budget tagging, where governments track how much of their budget goes towards climate action, renewable energy, or social protection. Gender should be treated with the same seriousness.

We have also worked at the level of decision-making. Recently, we supported the establishment of a parliamentary caucus focused on gender issues. This is important because real change happens when people at the decision-making level understand the issues and are willing to act on them. Advocacy is important, but institutional change is essential.

Inclusion goes beyond gender. It also includes the youth, persons with disabilities, vulnerable groups, and those who are often excluded from mainstream economic and social processes. But gender cuts across all of these categories. A young woman faces different barriers than a young man. A woman with a disability faces compounded challenges. That is why intersectionality matters.

For me, inclusion ultimately comes down to dignity. Development cannot be considered successful if it leaves large segments of society behind. It is not enough for an economy to grow if inequality deepens and social cohesion weakens.

Gender equality, therefore, is not just a moral imperative, although it certainly is one. It is also an economic and social imperative. Studies consistently show that when women participate fully in the economy, GDP increases significantly. Countries become more resilient. Families are healthier. Communities are stronger.

So, when we insist on gender equality and inclusion, we are not pushing an abstract agenda. We are working towards a development model that is more just, more resilient, and ultimately more sustainable. For me, this is not optional. It is central to what development should be about.

Finally, how are the current global tensions impacting the UNDP?

They are affecting our work very deeply, and I would say very painfully. To understand this properly, we need to go back to why the United Nations was created in the first place. The UN was born out of devastation, out of world wars that caused unimaginable human suffering. Its fundamental purpose was to foster solidarity among nations, promote cooperation, and create the conditions for peace, so that development could take place in a stable and humane global environment.

What we are witnessing today is a serious erosion of that founding spirit. Conflicts have never really stopped, but over the past decades, and particularly in recent years, they have intensified. Africa, in particular, has suffered enormously from recurring conflicts. Every time a conflict erupts, years, sometimes decades, of development gains are either unravelled or pushed into the background. Infrastructure is destroyed, livelihoods are lost, and societies are pushed back into cycles of vulnerability.

What is especially troubling is the way global priorities have shifted. Enormous amounts of financial resources, political attention, and energy are being channelled into wars and the perpetuation of conflict. At the same time, basic human development is suffering. Resources that should be going into education, healthcare,

poverty reduction, social protection, climate action, and environmental sustainability are being diverted elsewhere.

We are also seeing certain industries thrive in this context – the arms industry, the defence sector, and even parts of the pharmaceutical industry – while the fundamentals of human development are neglected. This raises profound ethical questions. Can this be considered progress? Is this sustainable? Is this humane? Can we truly claim to be advancing as a global society when inequality deepens, poverty persists, and environmental degradation accelerates?

For UNDP, the impact is very real and very concrete. Over the past few years, contributions from member states have declined significantly. This is not always because countries are unwilling to support development, but because many are redirecting their budgets towards defence, security, and geopolitical positioning. Multilateralism itself is under strain, and that is deeply worrying. Global challenges like climate change, pandemics, inequality and food insecurity cannot be addressed by countries acting alone. They require collective action.

As a result, UNDP is increasingly being asked to do more with less. The demand for our work has grown substantially, countries need support more than ever, but our financial and human resources are shrinking. We are seeing smaller offices, reduced operational space, and increasing pressure on teams. This is not an abstract challenge; it directly affects our ability to respond quickly, to innovate, and to scale solutions where they are most needed.

On a personal level, I find this moment particularly painful. I am nearing the end of my active working career, and I never imagined that I would witness a period in which development cooperation would be so constrained at a time when global needs are so immense. It is difficult to reconcile the extraordinary technological and scientific advances humanity has made with the level of destruction we continue to inflict on societies, on communities, and on the planet itself.

This is why I keep emphasising that sustainable development is not merely a technical agenda. It is a humane one. It is about values, ethics, and choices. We can sign any number of international agreements and declarations, but if the underlying mindset does not change, if greed, short-termism, and power politics continue to dominate, those agreements will remain hollow.

We are also facing a crisis of leadership at the global level. We have many politicians, but very few statesmen – leaders who are willing to think beyond electoral cycles and immediate gains, and who are prepared to make sacrifices for the long-term collective good. Development, peace, and sustainability all require sacrifice – of ego, of control, and of narrow national interest.

In this context, partnerships become more important than ever. Governments cannot do this alone. International organisations cannot do this alone. The private sector, civil society, academia, and communities all have critical roles to play. What we need is collaborative governance, collective intelligence, and a willingness to put the common good above narrow interests.

Ultimately, global tensions are a wake-up call. They remind us that development cannot be separated from peace, ethics, and solidarity. If we fail to address these foundations, we risk not only slowing development but undermining the very basis of our shared future.

DR. OULIE KEITA,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GREENPEACE AFRICA

“Laws alone are not enough; they must be implemented effectively to benefit local communities.”

Greenpeace Africa launched its Mauritius office on 14 January 2026, reinforcing its mission to root “African consciousness” in environmental protection. For Dr. Oulie Keita, Executive Director the organisation, the new office, in collaboration with the Mauritian government, will empower local communities to shape priorities in ocean and climate protection, while advancing its 2025-2030 strategy focused on climate justice, ecosystem preservation, and polluter accountability.

With your focus on “African consciousness” and dismantling exploitative systems, how does the launch of the Mauritius office empower local communities to lead their own environmental agenda?

Greenpeace was founded more than 50 years ago, in 1971, by Europeans. Africa’s involvement initially came through consultations: teams visited the DRC to examine the Congo Basin, particularly the timber trade supplying European furniture markets, and they went to Cameroon for similar work. These were short-term missions, without a permanent presence.

Around 20 years ago, we began considering a permanent presence – not “Greenpeace in Africa,” but “Greenpeace Africa.” Today, we have established regional offices across five sub-Saharan regions.

Anchoring African consciousness means protecting the environment through African approaches. Our cultures and traditions differ greatly from those in Europe. When we speak of climate change, what does it mean for Africans? How do we ensure it is not perceived as a distant European ideology imposed on the continent?

We engaged in deep strategic reflection with communities across Africa, asking: “What does ocean protection mean to you?” The responses shaped our approach. It is not about Western terminology, but about grounding our work in African realities – protecting forests, oceans, food security, and addressing climate change – while integrating African culture, traditions, and methods into our operations.

Tell us more about Greenpeace Africa’s physical presence in Mauritius.

Wednesday, 14th January 2026 marks the launch of our office. Since 2020, we have been working to secure international support for Mauritius. We have engaged with fishing communities, recruited local volunteers and staff, and now established a permanent office. Our team will lead campaigns and collaborate with civil society to ensure community priorities are central to ocean and climate protection.

We are currently recruiting local staff. Several Mauritians have already joined, and about fifty volunteers have been trained. Recruitment continues. However, our priorities will be defined by Mauritians themselves. We expect consultations with communities to identify the most urgent areas

where Greenpeace should begin its work.

Greenpeace Africa often calls for “Justice, not Charity.” What specific policy changes do you expect from the Mauritian government following this launch?

Mauritius is a particularly progressive country in Africa regarding ocean protection. Your nation has enacted strong legislation. But laws alone are not enough; they must be implemented effectively to benefit local communities.

Take the 2020 oil spill (MV Wakashio). We raised international awareness to rally support for Mauritius, because the disaster was not the fault of Mauritians, but it affected communities, public health, and food security. We advocated strongly for international assistance.

What we want are policies that safeguard Mauritius. Another oil spill could happen – God forbid – but if it does, is Mauritius prepared to ensure its people are not penalized or forced to bear the costs? A comprehensive oil spill strategy, backed by international collaboration, would be invaluable. Those responsible must pay, not just for the immediate cleanup, but for the long-term impacts on livelihoods and biodiversity.

Mauritius positions itself as a leader in the blue economy. How can we ensure that sustainable development does not become a cover for industrial overexploitation of our waters? Mauritius cannot achieve this alone. As I discussed recently with the Minister of Environment, Honourable Bhagwan, sustainable development requires collaboration with regional bodies such as the African Union and SADC. The Indian Ocean is critical, not only for this region, but globally. What happens here affects the entire continent. Building strong ties with these organizations will help Mauritius maintain its leadership in the blue economy.

You have presented your 2025-2030 strategy. What are its main pillars?

We have just begun this process. Our previous three-year strategy concluded in 2024, and now we are entering a new dynamic for 2025-2030, as global circumstances are constantly evolving.

Our first pillar is climate justice. We will focus on energy, environmental protection, and renewable energy. The goal is to provide energy to communities while empowering young people to find sustainable solutions beyond carbon dependency. Electricity



is essential for education, health, and work, but it must be delivered sustainably. We want to harness solar, wind, and water to transform energy systems and meet the needs of populations in a climate-friendly way.

The second pillar is environmental and ocean protection. This includes safeguarding forests, such as the Congo Basin, which is vital for Africa and the world. We advocate for international support to enable Africa to protect these ecosystems. Ocean protection is equally critical.

Finally, the third pillar is the accountability of polluters. We want polluters to pay for the damage they cause. Climate impacts are not caused by Africa or Mauritius, yet we bear the consequences. At the international level, we push for mechanisms to ensure that those responsible cover the costs of damages affecting vulnerable populations.

Will Greenpeace Africa also support the government in achieving its renewable energy goals?

Absolutely. We want African governments to implement the commitments they made at the UN and internationally. We advocate for concrete implementation of legislation and help governments amplify their voices globally to secure resources. Governments often have the will but lack the means. That is why we put pressure on international actors – the EU, the UN, and donors – to support African governments in addressing climate change, which they did not cause.

When you say “polluters,” you mean companies?

Yes, companies, oil companies, textile industries, and chemical processing firms, among others.

So, is legislation being discussed?

We are working with the government and communities to determine priorities. We are not here to replace, but to support them. Our role is to strengthen what matters most to Mauritians.

Greenpeace Africa Extends its Commitment to Climate Justice and Ocean Protection to Mauritius

On Wednesday, January 14, Greenpeace Africa officially inaugurated its office in Mauritius. During a press conference held at Hennessy Park Hotel, Dr. Oulie Keita, Executive Director of the NGO, emphasized Greenpeace Africa's commitment to supporting Mauritius in confronting climate injustice and highlighted the benefits of the United Nations High Seas Treaty, which has now entered into force. Junior Minister of Environment Joanna Bérenger, who attended the event, drew attention to the importance of forging strong and productive partnerships with NGOs. She stressed that the presence of Greenpeace Africa will enable Mauritius to address pressing environmental challenges, particularly those arising from climate change.

Greenpeace Africa's installation in Mauritius marks both a strategic expansion in the Indian Ocean region and a long-term commitment to working alongside Mauritian communities and partners. The goal, according to Executive Director Dr. Oulie Keita, is to protect marine ecosystems, strengthen the enforcement of environmental laws, and advance ocean justice.

For Dr. Keita, this presence symbolizes the future of the continent and the planet, which will be decided in our oceans. Those living closest to the sea, she argued, hold the wisdom needed to protect it. *"The opening of a Greenpeace Africa office in Mauritius represents our commitment to the Indian Ocean, to island states, and to the millions of Africans whose livelihoods depend on healthy marine ecosystems. The ocean knows no borders, and neither does environmental injustice. What happens in island states like Mauritius will have a lasting impact on the future of ocean protection and climate action far beyond these shores,"* she explained.

Dr. Keita acknowledged that Mauritius has already taken significant steps to protect the environment, with institutions implementing some of Africa's most innovative legal frameworks in areas such as plastic pollution control, marine protection, and the development of a sustainable blue economy. Yet, she noted, Mauritius now stands at a historic crossroads, burdened by the realities of climate injustice: coastal erosion, coral bleaching, and increasingly extreme weather events.

As an ocean state, Mauritius relies heavily on the health of its seas, with nearly a quarter of its GDP linked to ocean resources. *"Your jurisdiction extends over marine spaces on which millions of lives depend. With the return of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, you now hold stewardship of one of the largest and most precious marine protected areas on the planet,"* she said. However, this ecosystem faces mounting threats: plastic pollution, warming

waters, illegal fishing, and the looming prospect of deep-sea mining.

Dr. Keita reassured that Greenpeace Africa is not in Mauritius to teach, to lead, or to save, but rather to learn, to support, and to serve. These three missions reflect the organization's identity as an African NGO led by Africans and guided by African realities.

The Executive Director also stressed the historic significance of the Global Oceans Treaty, which provides humanity with a legal framework to protect ecologically sensitive areas in the high seas, which are beyond national jurisdiction. This includes the Saya de Malha Bank on the Mascarene Plateau, considered the largest seagrass meadow on the planet.

She explained that the treaty empowers Mauritius to reject harmful marine exploitation, including destructive industrial fishing, and to resist decisions imposed by distant powers over waters that rightfully belong to the nation. *"Mauritius faces a major challenge: ensuring that polluters pay, that commitments are translated into action, and that the ocean surrounding us remains alive for our children and future generations,"* she declared.

Mauritius, Dr. Keita said, can count on Greenpeace Africa to help meet these challenges. The NGO brings investigative tools, legal expertise, and international platforms to amplify Mauritian voices across the globe. Dr. Keita spoke of continental solidarity and a durable presence, with opportunities to learn from Mauritius while strengthening struggles in Senegal, South Africa, Kenya, and beyond.

In her own address, Junior Minister Joanna Bérenger highlighted the numerous environmental challenges that Mauritius has been grappling with, including the impact of climate change on coastal erosion, rising sea levels, the degradation of coral reefs, and the mounting pressures



on natural resources. These impacts, she said, are increasingly felt by the population, ecosystems, and the Mauritian economy.

Joanna Bérenger stated that since taking office at the Ministry of Environment, one of her priorities has been to open spaces for reflection and decision-making to civil society and integrate NGOs into the ministry's various committees and consultation platforms. The objective, she emphasized, is to ensure that *"the voice of civil society is heard, respected, and considered in important decisions."*

Indeed, she explained that environmental protection cannot rest on the shoulders of a single actor, and that we need to come up with answers based upon science, cooperation, shared responsibility and a long-term vision.

She noted that public authorities have the duty to establish a clear framework, legislate, regulate, and guide public policies in the general interest, while organizations such as Greenpeace play a vital role in monitoring, raising awareness, mobilizing citizens, and innovating in approaches to action. As for citizens, they are central actors in the ecological transition through their choices, behaviours, and daily commitment.

"It is through the complementarity of these roles, and not through constant opposition, that we will be able to respond effectively to the environmental challenges of our time," she explained.

Joanna Bérenger indicated that the Ministry of Environment places strong value on learning from the expertise developed by Greenpeace Africa, particularly in scientific research, the production and analysis of environmental data, and innovative strategies for awareness-raising and stakeholder mobilization at local, regional, and international levels. She believes this expertise can meaningfully enrich the formulation of public policies, strengthen their credibility and impact, and inform strategic thinking on sustainable development pathways at both national and regional scales.

Looking ahead, the Junior Minister views the establishment of Greenpeace Africa as an opportunity to reinforce Mauritius's regional leadership on environmental and climate issues in the Indian Ocean, while at the same time consolidating bridges between Africa and small island states. She added that the presence of Greenpeace Africa helps to *"consolidate our position as a platform for dialogue and cooperation in service of the Indian Ocean and the African continent."*

SAJID BODHY,
HEAD OF TRANSACTIONAL SERVICES, ABSA MAURITIUS

“With rerouted vessels and fluctuating surcharges, winners will be those who see cash movement in real time”

In an environment marked by disrupted supply chains, tighter liquidity and rising trade costs, transactional banking and working capital management have become central to business resilience. In this interview, Sajid Bodhy, Head of Transactional Services at Absa Mauritius, explains how digitalisation, risk-mitigated trade instruments and real-time cash visibility are reshaping the way Mauritian SMEs and corporates manage cross-border operations, optimise working capital and navigate an increasingly uncertain global trade landscape.



How does Absa currently position its Transactional Banking and Trade & Working Capital offerings in an environment marked by tighter liquidity and ongoing pressures on global supply chains?

Absa Mauritius has positioned itself as a *digitally led* transaction bank that helps clients move value with speed and certainty, both domestically and across borders, while insulating their cash cycles from today's supply-chain volatility.

The dynamics and depth of the global marketplace are changing at a much faster pace than ever before in the history of mankind. Global maritime trade, for example, is still feeling the effects of rerouted vessels and elevated freight costs; UNCTAD expects maritime trade growth to slow to 0.5% in 2025 after 2.2% in 2024, while freight costs are rising faster than volumes due to Red Sea diversions. This translates into longer transit times, higher working capital needs and more volatile supplier terms for our clients.

As a partner, we are invested in our client stories and take it as our responsibility to first understand and thereupon carve our service offerings to match the specificities of each person, each entity and also matching that with each peculiar situation.

In more concrete terms, we do acknowledge the growing tight liquidity environment and ensure that access to financing doesn't impair the proper functioning of businesses that bank with us. The partnership we build with clients helps us anticipate their requirements in order to pre-empt their liquidity requirements in the current dynamic operating landscape.

How do these two functions work together to support businesses, particularly SMEs and corporates with cross-border operations?

We operate as one team around the client's cash conversion cycle. Transactional Banking ensures fast, well-tracked payables/receivables, while Trade & Working Capital provides documentary risk mitigation and balance-sheet-friendly financing (e.g., LCs, guarantees, supply chain finance) tailored to shipment milestones. For SMEs, the backbone of Mauritius, contributing over 40% of GDP and about half of national employment, we integrate low-cost digital collections with scalable trade instruments to keep liquidity turning even when freight is delayed.

Our Pan-African connectivity increasingly matters for cross-border clients. Absa Group has concentrated efforts to narrow Africa's trade finance gap estimated around US\$100–120bn, with a focus on SMEs, women and youth-led businesses as well as sustainable funding. We seek to provide Mauritian corporates access to deeper liquidity pools against the daily reality of supply chain stretches.

What are the main challenges facing Mauritian and regional companies engaged in international trade today?

The operating dynamics of the Mauritian business is no less complex than any global organization given the open trade-economy and dependencies of both import and export trades. Three headline challenges are increasingly apparent:

- 1. Logistics unpredictability and cost:** Red Sea rerouting has extended transit times and raised freight volatility; Suez Canal tonnage was some 70% below 2023 levels by May 2025, pushing up freight costs and globally tightening capacity. For exporters/importers here, that's working capital strain.

- **Container and port pressure:** African lanes have seen surcharges and congestion spikes, e.g. peak season surcharges to East Africa and 3-5 day port delays reported mid-2025, thus affecting regional distribution and inventory buffers.

- **Regulatory tightening and data demands:** More rigorous AML/CFT expectations and cross-border exposure guidelines mean treasurers must invest in data quality, not just cash balances.

These challenges are at play against a backdrop of geopolitical tensions which make cost predictability very difficult, hence working capital predictability becomes erratic.

Have you observed a shift in client needs when it comes to trade finance instruments such as letters of credit, guarantees, and documentary collections?

Yes, there is a definite pivot back to risk-mitigated instruments in the wake of a highly volatile environment, coupled with data-rich execution. ICC's 2024 Trade Register reaffirms that traditional trade finance products carry low default rates across regions, which is why we see more exporters demanding confirmed LCs and buyers preferring standby LCs or guarantees to secure performance and delivery. While open account still remains very relevant, clients are demanding higher visibility of flows to address the variations in working capital needs and move towards a more data-led business model.

How does Absa help companies secure their trade transactions while improving operational efficiency?

We combine structured risk mitigation (LCs, confirmations, supply chain finance, Structured Trade and Commodity Financing) with digital execution:

- Our digitalisation agenda has helped us reinforce our risk and fraud mitigation capabilities and we can proudly say that over 98% of our eligible client transactions are done through our Digital Channels.
- Transaction tracking on cross-border payments gives end-to-end status and fee transparency. In fact, industry data indicates that circa 89% of SWIFT transactions are now credited within an hour. This makes reconciliation and supplier communication faster.
- Our Group Financial Institution team is continuously broadening our partnerships with global institutions worldwide and helping in ensuring that our client transactions are effected instantly and are tracked at each stage within the process cycle.

In a context of rising costs and tighter financing conditions, how can companies better optimise their working capital?

We encourage clients to treat working capital as a board-level KPI tied to ground realities. Three disciplined actions will prove helpful:

- 1. Shorten receivables with data:** faster turnaround is key to success and tracking the receivables pointers can only add value with better decision making.
- 2. Synchronise inventory:** With the reality of ever-changing cost components (freight, logistics,

wage bill, inflation) CFOs should rebalance safety stock only where service levels require it and offset with supplier term renegotiations secured by bank guarantees or standby LCs rather than pure price concessions.

- 3. Adopt supply chain finance selectively:** Given the evidence of low risk in trade instruments, receivables finance can unlock liquidity at competitive spreads even amid macro uncertainty.

What practical solutions does Absa offer to help businesses strengthen their day-to-day liquidity and cash flow management?

- **Spark Business:** A first-in-Mauritius collection suite enabling real-time, low-cost, omni-channel payments (MauCAS QR, Tap-to-Pay via cards, Pay by SMS) to any settlement account, plus cash/credit recording and sales dashboards, reduces reconciliation friction and collection costs for SMEs and merchants.

- **Digital Banking:** We offer a suite of Digital Banking platforms (Absa Access Online, Host-To-Host and Trade Management Online) that helps Cash Flow and Liquidity Management. These digital tools allow a consolidated view of pan-African Absa accounts, instant domestic transfers, international payments, a full suite of Trade transactions and are designed to seamlessly integrate client's backend systems for increased efficiency.

- **Digital onboarding.** Recognised at the Digital Banker MEA Awards 2024, compressing time-to-cash with backend integration for faster account opening.

Are you seeing increased awareness among companies of the importance of actively managing working capital?

Absolutely. Mauritius' business community has been responding to wage, cost and logistics pressures, and CFOs see the need to move from passive to predictive liquidity management.

The pressure on margins, tight liquidity environment and increased competitive landscape are all adding to pressure for positive jaws on numbers (higher turnover, lower costs) - these urge CFOs to find ways and means to improve cash velocity and optimize cash turnaround.

More than ever, managing working capital is a key element to competitive success that is essential for survival.

How is digitalisation reshaping transactional banking and trade finance services at Absa?

Digitalisation has become the cornerstone of our client experience. We have received recognition for the "Most Innovative Digital Banking Services – Mauritius 2024" and for excellence in digital innovation. Being named "Best Trade Finance Bank" in Mauritius by The Asian Banker for four years in a row speaks volumes of our tangible capabilities.

For trade, we are preparing clients for the ISO 20022 end-state and we acknowledge the need for structured data across payables/receivables to improve screening and matching of transactions. SWIFT Transaction tracking, backend integration and offering a diverse suite of Digital Channels are the stepstones for us to ensure we are at the forefront of technological developments in the banking environment. Our Digital Asset Teams are actively involved in exploring opportunities in stablecoins, tokenization and the digital asset



custody space.

What tangible benefits does this bring to clients in terms of speed, transparency, and transaction tracking?

There are three measurable wins:

- **Speed:** With industry migration to SWIFT GPI and ISO 20022, crediting within an hour is becoming the norm across many corridors; fewer exceptions mean faster cash posting and fewer manual reconciliations.
- **Transparency:** End-to-end payment tracking combined with enriched remittance data enhances payment visibility and supports audit readiness under stricter AML/CFT regimes.
- **Backend integration:** It is not only a matter of providing seamless experience but reduction of client cost and fraud/risk mitigation.

How do you balance technological innovation with risk management and regulatory compliance?

We see technological innovation as an excellent medium to improve risk mitigation and an enhanced regulatory compliance opportunity both for our clients and ourselves. We are committed to ensuring that we challenge legacy practices and embed risk and compliance at each and every product delivery. Our Enterprise Risk Management Framework ensures that every component of our steps in technological innovation are in sync with values that uplift our corporate culture.

At Absa, we believe technological innovation is an

integral part of the client-bank ecosystem, with the relationship component remaining at its core, and that is what constitutes our competitive edge.

Beyond products and services, how does Absa position itself as a strategic partner for companies pursuing regional or international growth?

We bring pan-African connectivity, local execution, and sector depth. Absa's Trade & Working Capital leadership engages across continents in shaping conversations on supply chain finance, sustainability and SME inclusion. That thought leadership translates into practical deal structuring for Mauritian businesses scaling into Africa and beyond.

We take pride in handholding Mauritian corporates in foraying in Africa and we have a well-established network of physical presence in Africa adding to representative offices in New York, Beijing and London, with more in the pipeline.

How do you tailor your solutions to meet the different needs of SMEs versus large corporates?

It is important for us to match the ground realities of our clients with our offerings, as the requirements are quite separate.

SMEs: Emphasis on real-time, low-cost collections (Spark Business), digital onboarding (Digi), and working capital lines that flex with sales cycles, plus education on selecting the right instrument (e.g., standby LC for securing distributor performance without over-collateralising). This is vital in a market where SMEs contribute over 40% of GDP and over 50% of employment.

Large corporates: Multi-bank payment file integration, Backend integration, SWIFT monitoring across borders, Structured Trade & Commodity Finance and capex flows, and Forex & treasury analytics.

What major trends do you believe will shape transactional banking and trade & working capital solutions in the coming years?

1. **Data-rich payments become the default:** Completion of SWIFT's ISO 20022 migration ushers in an era where structured data reduces friction, supports faster investigations, and enables AI-led exception management—shifting treasury workloads from manual to analytical.
2. **Digitisation of trade documentation:** The shift to Digital channels is a basic tenet of doing business today. With Mauritius legally recognising electronic bills of exchange, expect increased adoption of digital trade platforms.
3. **Liquidity resilience as competitive advantage:** Basel III monitoring shows global banks are maintaining higher buffers. Corporates will mirror this by building contingency liquidity and multi-route supply options as freight costs stay elevated.
4. Pivot back to secured risk-mitigating instruments in the wake of a highly volatile environment, such as LCs, Guarantees and Escrow accounts.
5. **Backend integration:** Financial institutions are increasingly becoming API-friendly and adopting Open Banking platforms in order to allow backend integration with client ERPs. Beyond the obvious cost reduction, the benefits of seamless integration and risk mitigation, there is a definite pattern for AI driven credit analytics and on-the-spot credit approval algorithms that will address the needs of the clients for transactional-based working capital financing.

Finally, what message would you like to share with businesses seeking to secure growth while maintaining strong cash flow in an increasingly uncertain economic environment?

Treat cash velocity and transaction visibility as your strategic goals. In a world of rerouted vessels and fluctuating surcharges, winners will be those who see cash movement in real time, de-risk shipments with proven instruments and align treasury data to ISO 20022/SWIFT standards for fewer exceptions and faster posting.

Foremost, partner with institutions that combine digital execution with risk discipline. Our job is to compress your order-to-cash timeline, expand your liquidity options and back you with pan-African capacity when you cross borders. For Mauritian SMEs and corporates, this is a moment to grow—smartly. We are keen on building expertise and extending assistance to our clients... one story at a time.

The right banking partner will elevate discussions beyond products towards operating discipline in a volatile world. If your payment data is structured, your shipments are risk-mitigated and your treasury is instrumented for speed, you will outpace disruption.

Our role at Absa Mauritius is to make that discipline practical, backed by technology, compliance, and pan-African scale, and to help our clients grow confidently, even when trade winds shift.

Navigating the Crypto Market in 2026



BY **BENITO ELISA**,
FOUNDER AND CEO OF SCRYBIT

The cryptocurrency market in 2026 continues to evolve rapidly, offering both opportunities and challenges for investors, institutions, and regulators. Total market capitalisation has stabilised at multi-trillion-dollar levels, while institutional interest continues to grow. Understanding the trends shaping digital assets, from adoption rates to regulatory developments, is essential for navigating this dynamic market.

MARKET OVERVIEW

Bitcoin and Ethereum remain the largest digital assets, together accounting for a significant share of the global crypto market. Bitcoin continues to serve as a store of value, while Ethereum's ecosystem, driven by smart contracts and decentralised finance applications, remains a hub for innovation and network activity.

Beyond these two, other major tokens including BNB, XRP, and Solana hold leading positions by market capitalisation. Each reflects different market functions, from liquidity and settlement to smart contract platforms. Stablecoins have become increasingly important, widely used for transactions and cross-border transfers, supported by clearer regulatory guidance in multiple jurisdictions.

PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT

Market activity in early 2026 has remained volatile, with fluctuations across most tokens. Bitcoin has maintained its dominant position, trading around \$92,000 after strong gains in late 2025. Ethereum continues to see strong network usage, supported by upgrades that improve efficiency and scalability.

Smaller layer-1 networks such as Solana have experienced growth, driven by increased developer activity and ecosystem expansion. Stablecoins, pegged to fiat currencies, continue to play a key role, providing liquidity and serving as a bridge between traditional finance and digital markets.

TRENDS TO WATCH

Regulatory Clarity and Institutional Participation

Regulators in multiple jurisdictions have introduced clearer standards for digital assets, providing greater certainty for investors and



Bitcoin has maintained its dominant position, trading around \$92,000.

businesses. This clarity has encouraged institutions to allocate capital into crypto-related products, including exchange-traded instruments and custody solutions.

Stablecoins as Market Infrastructure

Stablecoins have become a key component of the crypto ecosystem, facilitating faster, cheaper transactions and enabling cross-border transfers. Their adoption by financial institutions and wider compliance with reserve requirements have strengthened their role in the market.

Institutional Adoption and Portfolio Integration

Institutions are moving from speculative trading toward strategic inclusion of digital assets within diversified portfolios. This includes direct holdings, regulated investment products, and adoption of blockchain-based settlement solutions.

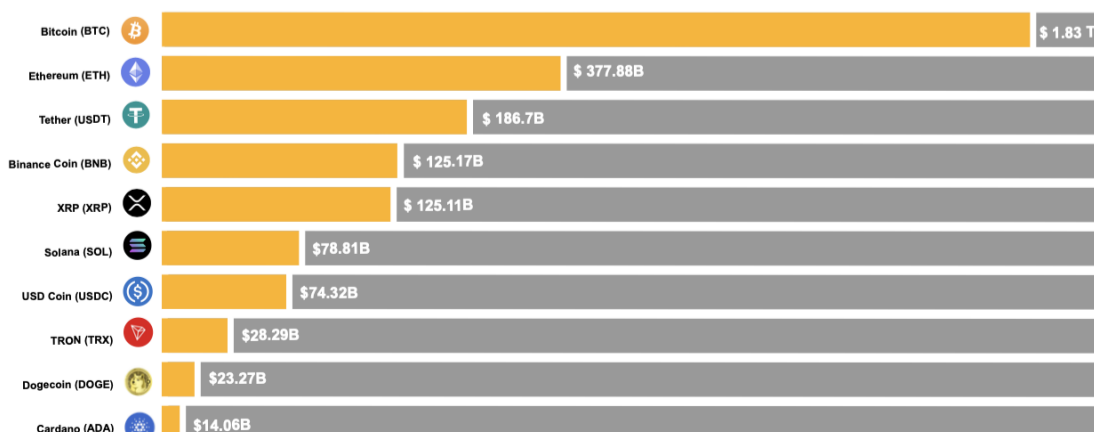
CONCLUSION

The cryptocurrency market remains dynamic and multifaceted. While volatility persists, regulatory clarity, institutional participation, and technological innovation are strengthening the market. Investors and business leaders who monitor these trends closely will be better positioned to navigate opportunities and risks in the coming year.

Stablecoins have become a key component of the crypto ecosystem, facilitating faster, cheaper transactions and enabling cross-border transfers

TOP 10 CRYPTOCURRENCIES BY MARKET CAPITALISATION AS AT 12 JANUARY 2026

Market cap (USD)



DHANANJAY RAMFUL,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

“We are now forging new chapters that transcend traditional diplomacy”

From trade agreements and regional integration to multilateral commitments and diplomatic realignments, Mauritius is positioning its foreign policy as a lever for economic stability and international credibility. Addressing the diplomatic corps, Foreign Affairs Minister Dhananjay Ramful reviewed a year of transitions and outlined how diplomacy will support the country’s strategic and economic objectives in 2026.



Mauritius will pursue a foreign policy in 2026 centred on economic diplomacy, multilateral engagement and regional cooperation, according to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Dhananjay Ramful. Speaking at a *vin d'honneur* hosted for the diplomatic corps on 15 January 2026, the Minister reviewed developments in 2025 and outlined priorities for the year ahead.

Addressing ambassadors, representatives of international and regional organisations, and members of the press, the Minister said that the gathering reflected “*the partnership and mutual respect that characterises the diplomatic community in Mauritius.*” He added that, in the current international context, “*the consistency of our dialogue remains our greatest strength.*”

DIPLOMATIC TRANSITIONS IN 2025

The Minister referred to several departures from the diplomatic community during 2025, including the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom, the UNDP Resident Representative, the Consul-General of Ghana and the WHO Representative. He expressed appreciation for their contribution

to bilateral and multilateral relations during their respective mandates.

Special mention was made of the outgoing United States Ambassador, Henry Jardine, whose tenure was described as having strengthened relations between Mauritius and the United States. The Minister cited three areas in particular: progress on the new US Embassy complex in Mauritius, support for the US-Africa business summit hosted in the country, and engagement on the renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

At the same time, Mauritius welcomed new resident ambassadors from China and the United Kingdom, a new UNDP Resident Representative, as well as 17 non-resident ambassadors and several new consular representatives. According to the Minister, their arrival is expected to “*strengthen ties and foster enduring partnerships*” with Mauritius.

DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY AND BILATERAL RELATIONS

Reviewing 2025, the Minister described the year as one marked by increased diplomatic engagement and visibility. He referred to high-level visits,

including those of India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi and France’s President Emmanuel Macron, as well as the opening of Mauritius’ new diplomatic mission in Tokyo.

The Prime Minister’s visit to Japan in August 2025, on the margins of the TICAD summit, included the inauguration of the new Mauritian Embassy in Tokyo. The Minister also highlighted Mauritius’ participation in Expo 2025 in Osaka, stating that it “*strengthened global visibility, and created new opportunities for bilateral and business partnerships.*”

Within the region, Mauritius continued to engage with neighbouring countries and regional organisations. The Minister referred to visits linked to Comoros and Seychelles, and ongoing cooperation within SADC, the African Union and the Indian Ocean Commission.

TRADE, INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Economic diplomacy featured prominently in the address. Dhananjay Ramful referred to the entry into force, on 1 April 2025, of the Comprehensive



Mauritius will host the Indian Ocean Conference in April and the US-Africa Business Summit in July



Economic Partnership Agreement between Mauritius and the United Arab Emirates, signed in July 2024. He also cited progress in cooperation with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE on development and health sector projects, including the Flacq Teaching Hospital and the Rivière des Anguilles dam.

According to the Minister, Mauritius is seeking to expand cooperation with these partners in areas such as double taxation avoidance, investment promotion, trade, tourism and judicial cooperation. *"We are now forging new chapters that transcend traditional diplomacy,"* he said, referring to efforts to integrate emerging sectors into bilateral relations.

Africa remains a central focus of Mauritius' external engagement. The Minister noted that Mauritius was designated in 2025 as the Primary Jurisdiction for the headquarters of the Africa Credit Rating Agency by the African Peer Review Mechanism. He said the decision reflected recognition of Mauritius' financial services sector and regulatory environment.

MULTILATERAL ENGAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Dhananjay Ramful reiterated Mauritius' commitment to multilateralism and international law, stating that *"it is this framework that has enabled Mauritius, a Small Island Developing State, to play its part on the global stage."*

He referred to the advisory opinion of the



International Court of Justice on the Chagos Archipelago and subsequent UN General Assembly resolutions, which led to the agreement signed between Mauritius and the United Kingdom in 2025. The ratification process is currently under way.

Mauritius' election to the United Nations Human Rights Council for the 2026-2028 term was also highlighted. Elections held in October 2025 resulted in Mauritius securing 181 votes out of 187. *"We are honoured by the trust placed in Mauritius,"* the Minister said, adding that the country would use its position *"towards upholding the universal values of human rights."*

He also referred to Mauritius' engagement on global health and climate issues, including support for international initiatives such as the Pandemic Treaty and continued advocacy on climate change as a Small Island Developing State.

OUTLOOK FOR 2026

Looking ahead, the Minister stated that *"the year*

2026 will be one of action," with foreign policy aligned to the Government Programme 2025-2029 and the Mauritius Vision 2050. He said priorities would include economic diplomacy, sustainable growth, climate resilience, strategic partnerships and regional integration.

Mauritius is expected to host several international events during the year, including the Indian Ocean Conference in April 2026 and the 18th US-Africa Business Summit in July, which is expected to bring together approximately 3,000 participants from government, business and development institutions.

Minister Ramful thanked members of the diplomatic corps for their role in strengthening Mauritius' international relations. *"Your personal contribution to building and enhancing the relationship between Mauritius and your respective countries is instrumental to our success,"* he said, before proposing a toast *"to the enduring friendship between our nations, to the health of our leaders, and to a peaceful and prosperous year 2026."*



L'Asie, nouvelle frontière de croissance pour Maurice



PAR **DAREN MOODELY**
PASSIONNÉ DE TOURISME

On doit aller bien au-delà du traditionnel modèle soleil, mer et plage.

Maurice a clôturé 2025 avec 1 436 250 arrivées touristiques, soit une croissance de +3,9 % par rapport à 2024, preuve d'une reprise durable après plusieurs années de relance progressive. Le mois de décembre 2025 a même battu un record historique avec 161 440 visiteurs, ce qui montre que l'attractivité de la destination n'est plus seulement saisonnière, mais tend vers une présence plus constante sur le marché mondial.

Cependant, derrière ces chiffres encourageants se dessine une vérité stratégique : si Maurice progresse, elle ne capte pas encore l'essentiel de la croissance internationale, en particulier celle issue des marchés asiatiques – aujourd'hui moteurs de l'industrie touristique mondiale.

UNE TENDANCE MONDIALE QUI PROFITE À L'ASIE

Les données publiées par l'Organisation mondiale du tourisme montrent que les arrivées internationales devraient croître de +3 % à +5 % en 2025 par rapport à 2024, après une reprise robuste en 2023 et 2024. Cette croissance est tirée par un rebond particulier des flux long-courrier et des voyages vers des destinations lointaines.

Plus précisément :

- Plus d'1,1 milliard de voyages internationaux ont été effectués sur les neuf premiers mois de 2025, soit une augmentation de plusieurs dizaines de millions par rapport à 2024.
- La région Asie-Pacifique affiche une croissance d'environ +8 % des arrivées, reflétant une demande soutenue des marchés tels que la Chine, l'Inde et l'Asie du Sud-Est.

Cette reprise mondiale est structurée par de « nouveaux » comportements de voyage : plus lointains, plus diversifiés, avec une forte demande pour des expériences culturelles, gastronomiques, urbaines ou haut de gamme, au-delà de la simple plage.

MAURICE FACE À SES CONCURRENTS : OÙ SE JOUE LA COMPÉTITION ?

Les Maldives : un succès éclatant en 2025

Les Maldives ont connu une année record en 2025, attirant plus de 2,2 millions de visiteurs au total, soit une augmentation d'environ +9,8 % par rapport à 2024.

Le mois de décembre 2025 a atteint un niveau jamais vu : 224 455 arrivées.

Cette performance place les Maldives nettement devant Maurice en termes de flux globaux, et démontre une capacité à capturer des segments touristiques premium et lointains, y compris une part significative des marchés asiatiques (par exemple la Chine, l'Inde et la Russie).

Les Seychelles : croissance soutenue sur une base plus modeste

Les Seychelles ont continué de progresser en 2025, avec une croissance régulière des arrivées mois après mois. Cela montre qu'une offre bien

positionnée, même sur un marché plus réduit, peut capter efficacement la demande internationale, y compris sur des segments issus d'Europe et d'Asie.

Le Sri Lanka : relance offensive

Après des années de turbulences, le Sri Lanka a franchi la barre des 2,3 millions d'arrivées en 2025 et vise environ 3 millions en 2026, grâce à des politiques d'ouverture, des campagnes marketing agressives et des initiatives de facilitation des visas. L'Asie est principalement visée.

MARCHÉS ASIATIQUES : UN GISEMENT STRATÉGIQUE ENCORE SOUS-EXPLOITÉ

Les marchés asiatiques, en particulier la Chine et l'Inde, ne sont plus des marchés de niche. Ils représentent des volumes extraordinaires de voyageurs qui recherchent aujourd'hui des destinations lointaines, des expériences haut de gamme, des séjours culturels riches ou des voyages familiaux diversifiés.

Et pourtant, les statistiques mauriciennes disponibles montrent que la part des visiteurs en provenance d'Asie reste encore inférieure aux parts des marchés européens ou africains dans les arrivées totales. Cela signifie que Maurice n'a probablement pas encore capté sa juste part du marché asiatique, même si ce dernier constitue aujourd'hui une source essentielle de croissance mondiale.

Maurice dispose d'atouts naturels indéniables – climat tropical, stabilité, infrastructures modernes. Mais pour capturer davantage les touristes asiatiques et rivaliser avec les autres, on doit aller bien au-delà du traditionnel modèle « soleil, mer et plage ».

CONNECTIVITÉ AÉRIENNE : UNE CONDITION MINIMALE

Les voyageurs asiatiques attachent une importance majeure à la facilité d'accès et à la durée des vols. Les destinations qui réussissent à attirer ces marchés investissent massivement dans des vols directs ou des correspondances efficaces :

- Les Maldives font bien, boostées par une stratégie offrant des connexions aériennes variées depuis la Chine, l'Europe et l'Asie du Sud-Est.
- Bangkok et Phuket (Thaïlande) sont devenues des plaques tournantes régionales grâce à des liaisons directes depuis Pékin, Shanghai, Delhi ou Kuala Lumpur, ce qui les place en haut de la liste des destinations asiatiques court- et long-courrier.

Pour Maurice, renforcer les vols directs vers les hubs asiatiques clés (Pékin, Shanghai, Delhi, Bangkok, Singapour) est une première étape essentielle pour capter ces flux structurés.

Hôtellerie réinventée : équipement, numérisation et expérience personnalisée

Les touristes asiatiques modernes sont numériques avant tout : ils réservent, payent, communiquent et partagent leurs expériences via des applications mobiles et des plateformes sociales.



Pour répondre à cela, l'offre hôtelière (et surtout en para-hôtellerie) doit s'adapter à des standards technologiques élevés :

- Check-in/out digital, clés numériques et assistants virtuels intégrés dans les chambres.
- Wi-Fi haut débit, intégration d'applications locales de paiement (comme WeChat Pay ou Alipay), et services digitalisés disponibles partout.
- Chambres équipées pour le télétravail (zones bureau, prises adaptées, éclairage réglable), car de nombreux voyageurs asiatiques combinent aujourd'hui loisirs et activités professionnelles.

RÉINVENTER L'OFFRE : EXPÉRIENCES COMPLÈTES AU-DELÀ DE LA PLAGE

Les attentes des voyageurs asiatiques se sont profondément transformées : ils veulent une expérience complète, immersive et émotionnelle. Voici ce que recherchent aujourd'hui les segments asiatiques, et comment certaines destinations s'y prennent :

- Expériences culturelles et immersives : Singapour et Tokyo parviennent à attirer des visiteurs asiatiques non seulement par leurs sites emblématiques, mais aussi par des expériences culturelles urbaines combinant art, design, musées et histoire.
- Shopping premium et lifestyle : Kuala Lumpur ou Séoul attirent des voyageurs par leurs quartiers de shopping sophistiqués (Bukit Bintang, Myeongdong), intégrant marques internationales et offre locale.
- Vie nocturne et événements : Bangkok ou Hong Kong sont des exemples où la vie nocturne structurée, les spectacles, les marchés de nuit et les festivals créent des séjours riches et prolongés.

Maurice doit proposer des alternatives attractives à la simple plage : circuits culturels locaux, festivals saisonniers, zones shopping premium, événements musicaux ou gastronomiques, activités nature guidées et programmes familiaux qui donnent envie de prolonger le séjour.

SÉCURITÉ PERÇUE ET RÉELLE : UN CRITÈRE DE DÉCISION FORT

Aujourd'hui, la sécurité ne se limite plus à un lieu sans danger : elle inclut le confort, la clarté des informations et la compréhension des attentes

culturelles. Les marchés asiatiques valorisent :

- une assistance multilingue disponible 24/7,
- une signalétique claire dans plusieurs langues (mandarin, hindi, japonais, thaï),
- des zones bien éclairées et accueillantes la nuit,
- des services numériques intuitifs (paiement mobile, support digital).

Des destinations comme Singapour ou Tokyo ont intégré ces services de manière systématique dans leurs infrastructures, facilitant la mobilité et le sentiment de sécurité du visiteur.

Une destination peut être spectaculaire, mais si le voyageur ne se sent ni compris ni rassuré, il choisira une autre option, souvent déjà mieux organisée.

COMMUNICATION MULTILINGUE ET CULTURELLE : ALLER AU-DELÀ DES MOTS

Parler une langue ne suffit plus ; il faut communiquer de manière culturellement pertinente. Cela signifie :

- créer des contenus en mandarin, hindi, japonais, thaï,
- être présent sur des plateformes sociales locales comme WeChat, Douyin ou Xiaohongshu,
- nouer des partenariats avec des influenceurs locaux (Key Opinion Leaders) capables de raconter Maurice de façon authentique.

Des destinations comme Singapour, la Thaïlande ou Tokyo exploitent déjà ces canaux pour :

- diffuser des campagnes adaptées à chaque marché,
- illustrer des expériences locales vécues par des influenceurs,
- répondre aux questions en temps réel sur les réseaux utilisés par les voyageurs.

Cette approche ne se contente pas de traduire des messages : elle crée une connexion émotionnelle avec le public cible, renforçant l'attractivité de la destination.

CONCLUSION : CAPTER L'ASIE POUR AVANCER

Maurice a démontré une résilience appréciable en 2025, avec une croissance soutenue des arrivées et une capacité à attirer des visiteurs même hors saison traditionnelle.

Mais dans un contexte mondial où le tourisme international continue d'augmenter et où les marchés asiatiques sont aujourd'hui des leviers structurants de croissance, la destination doit revoir ses priorités pour rester compétitive à long terme.

L'exemple des Maldives montre que capturer les flux asiatiques n'est pas une chimère, mais une stratégie qui porte des résultats mesurables.

Maurice ne doit plus simplement espérer attirer des touristes. Elle doit concevoir, offrir et communiquer une destination qui parle directement à ceux qui voyagent le plus aujourd'hui, à savoir les voyageurs asiatiques.

Dans un monde où le tourisme dépasse déjà plus d'un milliard d'arrivées internationales en 2025, ne pas capitaliser pleinement sur l'Asie, c'est rester sur la touche.

LFL valorise la cohésion de ses équipes dirigeantes lors d'un séminaire stratégique

Livestock Feed Ltd (LFL) a marqué une étape clé de sa dynamique régionale en réunissant son 'top management' pour un atelier stratégique dédié à la cohésion et à la collaboration entre ses équipes dirigeantes. Présent sur cinq territoires – Maurice, Seychelles, Madagascar, Rwanda et Kenya – le groupe évolue dans un contexte d'expansion où l'unité managériale joue un rôle essentiel. Cette rencontre, organisée à mi-parcours de l'année financière, a offert aux responsables un cadre pour se reconnecter, approfondir une confiance déjà solidement installée et renforcer l'alignement des pratiques de leadership afin de soutenir une coordination plus fluide et harmonieuse entre les pays.

Cette rencontre regroupant Romain Harel, Managing Director de LFL Group, et l'ensemble de son équipe directionnelle a été rythmée par des sessions de travail et des échanges visant à confronter les perspectives de chacun et à renforcer la confiance mutuelle. Une valeur essentielle pour une équipe dirigeante confrontée à des réalités opérationnelles diverses. Dans une atmosphère propice au dialogue, les participants ont pu affiner leur compréhension des attentes de chacun et ainsi créer une cohésion encore plus forte.

Cette initiative répond à un besoin essentiel pour le groupe.

« Nous ne pouvons progresser que si nous avançons réellement ensemble. Ce séminaire nous a offert l'opportunité de prendre du recul, d'enrichir notre compréhension mutuelle et de renforcer les liens qui structurent notre équipe. Notre

priorité est de maintenir un collectif uni, aligné et capable de se soutenir efficacement. C'est sur cette base humaine, solide et cohérente que nous pourrions construire notre vision de 2026 et aborder avec confiance les défis qui nous attendent », a déclaré Romain Harel.

« Dans un groupe en pleine croissance, la compréhension mutuelle est essentielle pour soutenir une expansion durable. Ces échanges nous ont permis de renforcer notre vision collective, d'améliorer la coordination au sein de l'équipe et de consolider les bases d'une collaboration efficace entre les différentes entités. Cette dynamique constitue un véritable levier pour atteindre nos objectifs dans la durée », a pour sa part souligné Sébastien Rae, Chief Financial Officer de LFL Group.

Les résultats de cette rencontre serviront de base à la feuille de route 2026 de LFL.



Vivo Energy Mauritius équipe l'ONG Rêve et Espoir pour améliorer le quotidien d'enfants en situation de handicap

Vivo Energy Mauritius, détentrice de la franchise Shell à Maurice, a remis à l'ONG Rêve et Espoir un ensemble d'équipements adaptés pour accompagner ses pensionnaires en situation de handicap dans leur quotidien éducatif, thérapeutique et récréatif. Cette initiative s'inscrit dans le cadre du projet « Building Healthier Futures » porté par l'entreprise au titre de son engagement sociétal en faveur de la santé.

La cérémonie s'est déroulée au siège de l'association, à Rivière Noire, en présence d'Arnaud Guichard, EVP Retail & Commercial de Vivo Energy, de Fouad Khfifi, Managing Director, et Belinda Teeroovengadam, Communications Manager de Vivo Energy Mauritius et de Teeraj Tupsy, Manager de Rêve et Espoir.

Des fauteuils roulants permettent désormais aux élèves de circuler de façon autonome dans l'enceinte de leur établissement et de participer plus activement aux activités pédagogiques. Des prothèses et attèles d'immobilisation offrent à certains jeunes la possibilité de retrouver une indépendance dans les gestes, de regagner confiance et de s'impliquer pleinement dans les ateliers et les exercices physiques. L'espace lecture, installé dans l'aire de jeux, propose un lieu propice à l'éveil intellectuel. Les livres destinés à la bibliothèque proviennent à la fois de dons directs de Vivo Energy et de contributions personnelles des employés. De nouveaux pupitres adaptés viennent compléter l'aménagement des salles de classe.

« Cet appui représente un investissement dans le potentiel de chaque enfant. La santé et l'éducation sont au cœur de la stratégie sociale du groupe Vivo Energy, et nous sommes heureux de pouvoir contribuer à leur autonomie et à leur apprentissage », a déclaré Fouad Khfifi, Managing Director de Vivo Energy Mauritius.



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