



Gender Policy Document

Ministry of Housing and Lands

2025-2030

UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS

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Message from the Senior Chief Executive

It gives me great pleasure to present the Gender Policy of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, a critical policy instrument that underscores our Ministry's commitment to advancing gender equality and fostering inclusive development.

This Policy has been developed in close alignment with the National Gender Policy, the Government Programme, and key international frameworks such as the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). It reaffirms this Ministry's commitment to create an enabling environment where equality and equity are central to all policies, programmes, and institutional processes.

Building on the foundations laid by the previous Gender Policy, this updated document reflects a more focused and evidence-based approach to addressing persistent gender disparities in access to land and housing, representation in technical roles, and gender responsiveness within the Ministry's operations. The Policy identifies key challenges and proposes strategic responses rooted in four guiding policy statements, with clear action plans and monitoring frameworks to drive implementation and accountability.

This Policy was prepared with the valued technical expertise of the University of Mauritius, whose consultative and analytical approach has helped shape a document that is not only comprehensive but also practical and results-oriented. Their contribution has been instrumental in ensuring that this Policy reflects both the realities on the ground and the aspirations of a more inclusive society.

I take this opportunity to call upon all stakeholders—within the Ministry, across government agencies, and within civil society and the private sector—to embrace this Policy as a shared roadmap. The full integration of gender equality principles for this Ministry which is essential not only for social justice, but also for the sustainable development of our nation.

Let us work together to ensure that our Ministry provide a fair, inclusive, and reflective of the diverse needs and experiences of all—women and men alike.

Executive Summary

Gender equality is highly valued in Government Programme 2025-2029. More so, the National Gender Policy 2022-2030 further reiterates ‘the sustained commitment of the Republic of Mauritius to engender an all-inclusive legal, policy and administrative environment that promotes gender equality and equity as the basis for promoting sustainable development. The Gender Policy Document 2025-2030 of the Ministry of Housing and Lands (MOHL) thus aims to integrate gender equality into housing and land-related policies, programmes, and institutional frameworks. The policy is closely aligned to the National Gender Policy 2022-2030, the Government Programme 2025-2029, and international commitments ratified and signed by the Republic of Mauritius for example the Sustainable Development Goals, the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) among others.

While the Gender Policy Document 2013 has highlighted various policies to be implemented to achieve gender equity in the sector and the Ministry of Housing and Lands, several gaps still persist. This policy document identifies four key gender issues as follows:

- Gender disparities in land and housing allocation for vulnerable groups;
- Lack of gender responsive housing planning and design for accessibility, safety and security;
- Low gender representation in technical positions of the Ministry; and
- Low gender awareness and lack of gender mainstreaming knowledge.

The gender-related challenges identified include the following;

- Underrepresentation of women in technical roles, affecting decision-making;
- Limited involvement of the Gender Cell in developing gender-sensitive initiatives;
- Insufficient knowledge of gender mainstreaming among MOHL staff;
- Lack of gender statistics and data hinders effective analysis, making it difficult to develop targeted policies that address women’s specific housing needs, particularly for vulnerable groups such as single mothers, widows, and low-income women;
- Failure to integrate in the housing policies gender-sensitive urban planning that prioritises women’s safety;
- No structured framework to integrate gender considerations into programme design, implementation, and impact assessment, making it difficult to measure the effectiveness of gender-sensitive policies and initiatives;

The Gender Policy 2025-2030 of the MOHL is thus structured around four guiding policy statements in line with the gender gaps mentioned above.

- i. the promotion of equitable and gender responsive access to housing and lands;
- ii. strengthen gender representation in technical and leadership roles;
- iii. institutionalise gender mainstreaming across MOHL policies and operations ; and
- iv. enhance gender awareness and capacity building across the Ministry.

To ensure the effective implementation of these guiding policy statements, an action plan has been developed, detailing institutional responsibilities, key partnerships, and resource mobilization strategies. A monitoring and evaluation framework will track progress and drive continuous improvement in gender mainstreaming efforts. By integrating gender equality into the core policies and operations of the MOHL, the goal is to create a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable housing and land sector that ensures equal opportunities for all.

List of Acronyms

BPfA - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

FGDs – Focus Group Discussions

GDI - Gender Development Index

GGG - Global Gender Gap

GII – Gender Inequality Index

GPD – Gender Policy Document

GRB - Gender-Responsive Budgeting

KPIs - Key Performance Indicators

MOHL - Ministry of Housing and Lands

MGEFW- Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare

MOLIR – Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations

NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution

NHDC - National Housing Development Corporation

NSLD - New Social Living Development Ltd

PSC- Public Service Commission

SDG - Sustainable Development Goal

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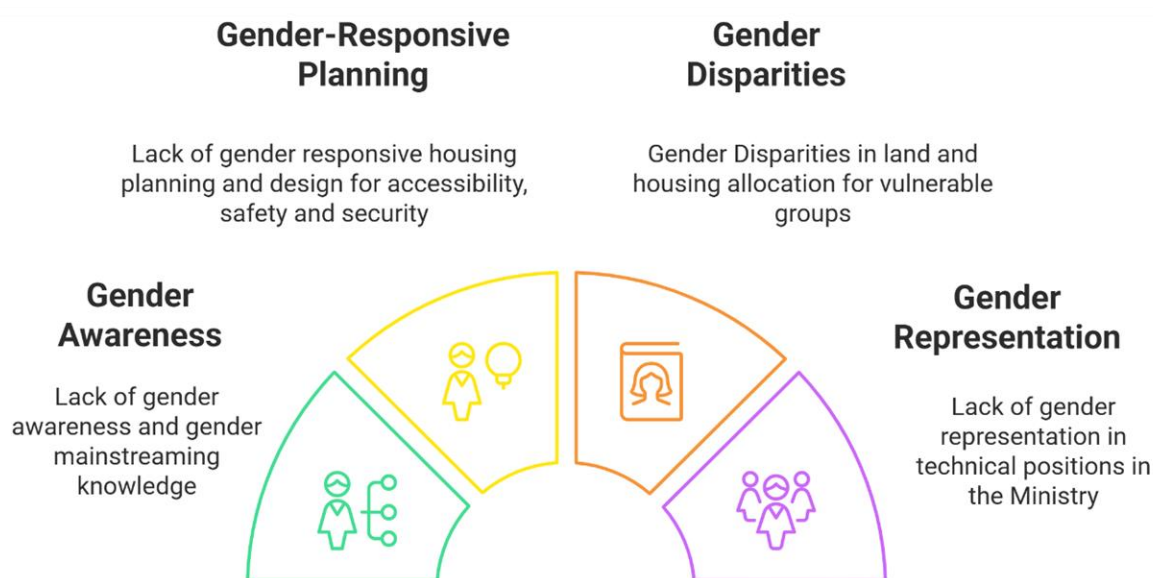
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Ministry of Housing and Lands (MOHL) fulfils the housing and land needs of the citizens and operators in the Republic of Mauritius. Its mandate includes ensuring sustainable land use, promoting equitable access to housing, and integrating social, economic, and environmental considerations into national development. It provides a solid basis for the long-term physical development of the country in line with the National Development Strategy 2003 and supports private sector development activities as well as ensures effective management and use of State Lands (Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning Annual Report, 2022-2023). The key aspects of its policy formulation include the development of policies to optimise land resources while ensuring environmental sustainability, the establishment of appropriate frameworks to provide affordable housing to low-income families and other vulnerable segments of the population and the implementation of policies that contribute to SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality) by promoting equitable access to housing and lands to all.

Gender equality is not only an explicit goal under the 2030 Agenda but also a driver of sustainable development in all its dimensions, namely Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) - 1: No poverty, SDG2: Zero hunger, SDG 15: Life on Land and SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goals but most relevant to the housing and lands sector is SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation and monitoring of this SDG is vital to create equitable and inclusive communities. Hence, the Ministry drafted a Gender Policy document in 2013 to put in place gender responsive policies to achieve gender equity in the sector. However, several gender gaps still persist. The Gender Policy Document 2025-2030 identifies five key gender issues as follows:

Figure 1: Four Key Challenges in the Housing and Lands Sector



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

1.2 Rationale for a Revised Gender Policy Document (GPD)

Despite legal and policy advancements, gender disparities persist in the land and housing sector as per Figure 1 above. Gender mainstreaming is important in securing women's legal rights and access to, and control over housing, land, and property. They are crucial as an asset for livelihood generation and well being (World Bank, 2023)¹. Gender-responsive land and housing policies are essential to:

- Address structural inequalities that prevent women, particularly female-headed households, low-income women, and informal workers, from securing land and adequate housing.
- Recognise the intersection of gender and housing insecurity, ensuring that policies consider single mothers, widows, women in poverty and women with disabilities, who often face economic exclusion.
- Challenge power structures and social norms that reinforce male-dominated land ownership and perpetuate women's economic dependence and vulnerability.
- Ensure housing policies account for women's lived realities, including safety, accessibility, affordability, and tenure security, which differ from men's housing needs.

The New Gender Policy Document 2025-2030 aligns with the objectives of both the National Gender Policy 2022-2030 and the Government Programme 2025-2029 as well as existing regional and international instruments which the Republic of Mauritius has ratified to promote gender equality.

1.3 Legal and Policy Frameworks

National Legal Framework

The revised Gender Policy (GPD) 2025-2030 aligns with key national legislations² governing land administration, housing, and urban planning to ensure gender-responsive policies that promote equitable access to land and housing for all (see Table 1 below).

Table 1: Gender Mainstreaming in Main National Legal Framework

	Acts	Gender Responsive Approach
1	Land Acquisition Act (amended 2013) - Regulates the government's ability to acquire land	A gender responsive approach is needed for vulnerable groups - women in poverty, female headed households with children, women with disabilities amongst others
2	State Lands Act (1982, 2023, 2024, 2025) - Governs the allocation and management of state-owned land	The mainstreaming of gender-inclusive land distribution policies is important
3	Landlord and Tenant Act (amended 2020) focus on rental housing policies	Need provisions to address gender-specific vulnerabilities - rental options and protections for female tenants.
4	Planning and Development Act (1982) & Town and Country Planning Act – regulates land use and urban planning	Need gender-responsive urban development to ensure safe and accessible public spaces.
5	Morcellement Act (1990)	Integrating gender equality principles can help improve women's access to residential land.

Source: Consultants Compilation, 2025

¹ World Bank (2023). Why Land and Property Rights Matter for Gender Equality.

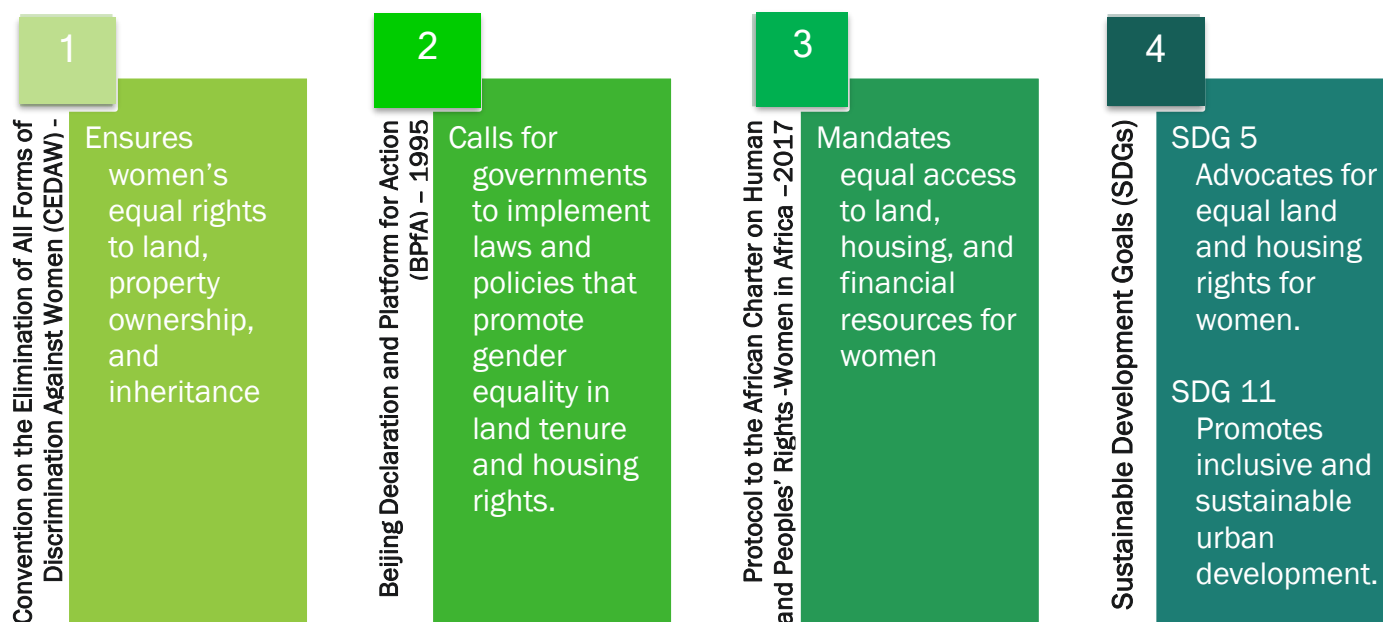
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/entities/publication/e376ce13-fbb6-4307-9fb6-8723087d3a41>

² <https://housing.govmu.org/Pages/Acts/Acts.aspx>

International and Regional Commitments

Mauritius has ratified several international and regional agreements³ that reinforce the need for gender-responsive housing and land policies. These are highlighted in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: International and Regional Commitments



Source: Consultants Compilation, 2025

1.4 Objectives of the Gender Policy 2025-2030

To address these gender disparities, the GPD 2025-2030 aims to integrate gender equality into land and housing policies, ensuring equitable access, participation, and representation in the housing and lands sector. The objectives of the policy document are:

1. Ensure gender-responsive land and housing allocation by addressing disparities that disadvantage women and vulnerable groups.
2. Promote gender-inclusive housing planning and design to enhance accessibility, safety, and security for all.
3. Enhancing gender representation in technical positions within the Ministry to ensure diverse perspectives in decision-making.
4. Strengthen institutional capacity by increasing gender awareness and integrate gender mainstreaming within the Ministry's operations.

³ <https://gender.govmu.org/Pages/Gender-Unit.aspx>

1.5 Methodology

The development of this Gender Policy is based on a mixed methodology with the use of a participatory approach with staff at different levels of the MOHL as well as the use of secondary data from the Ministry and from other official sources like Statistics Mauritius. The methodological approach is outlined as follows:

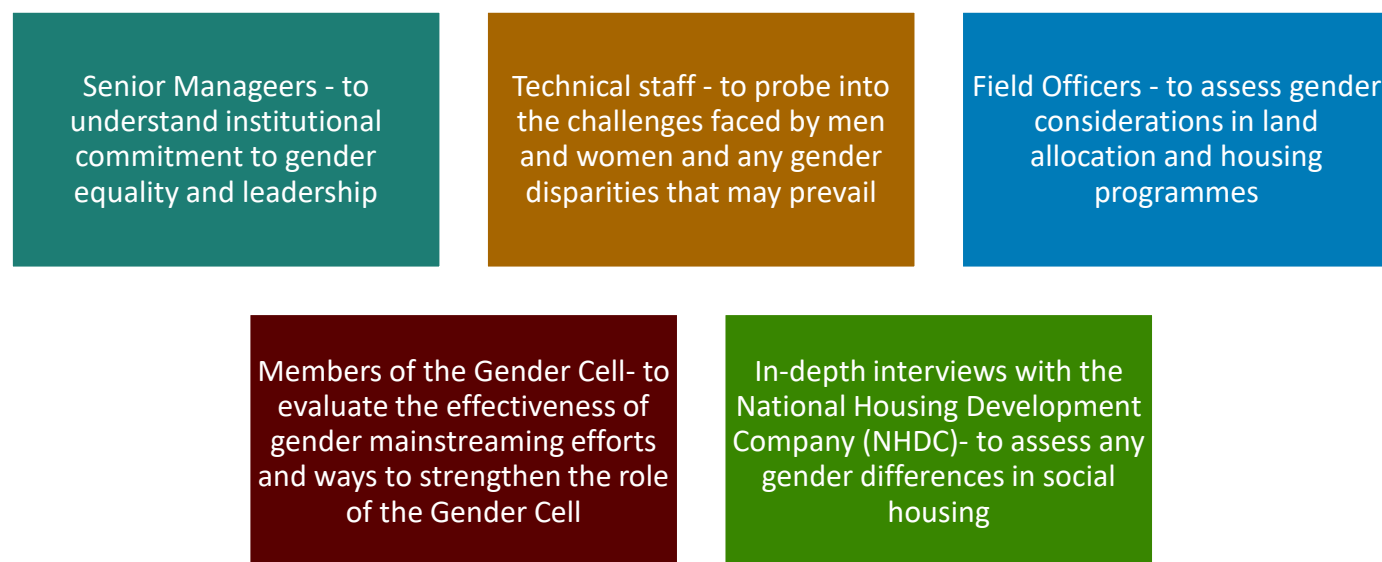
Figure 3: Methodology



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Five different focus group discussions (FGDs) were undertaken with the staff of the Ministry to gather in-depth insights into gender-related issues. These discussions aimed to assess existing challenges, perceptions, and opportunities for gender mainstreaming within the Ministry's policies, programmes, and workplace environment. To ensure a diverse representation of staff, the FGDs were planned in such a way to include the different cadres as per Figure 4 below. Each focus group discussion comprised approximately 12 to 15 staff members and lasted for around one hour and 15 minutes.

Figure 4: Focus Group Discussions and In-Depth Interviews



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

1.6 Structure of the Gender Policy 2025-2030 of the MOHL

The gender policy is structured as follows: Section 2 sets out the vision and mission of the policy 2025-2030 of the Ministry putting forward its commitment to gender equality. The key policy statements are also discussed emphasising on key policy recommendations. Section 3 sets out the implementation strategy of the Gender Policy, and the report finally concludes in Section 4.

2. The 2025-2030 Gender Policy of MOHL

2.1 Vision and Mission for Gender Equality at the Ministry of Housing and Lands

Vision

A land and housing sector that ensures equal access, ownership, and security for all, fostering gender equity, economic empowerment, and inclusive sustainable development.

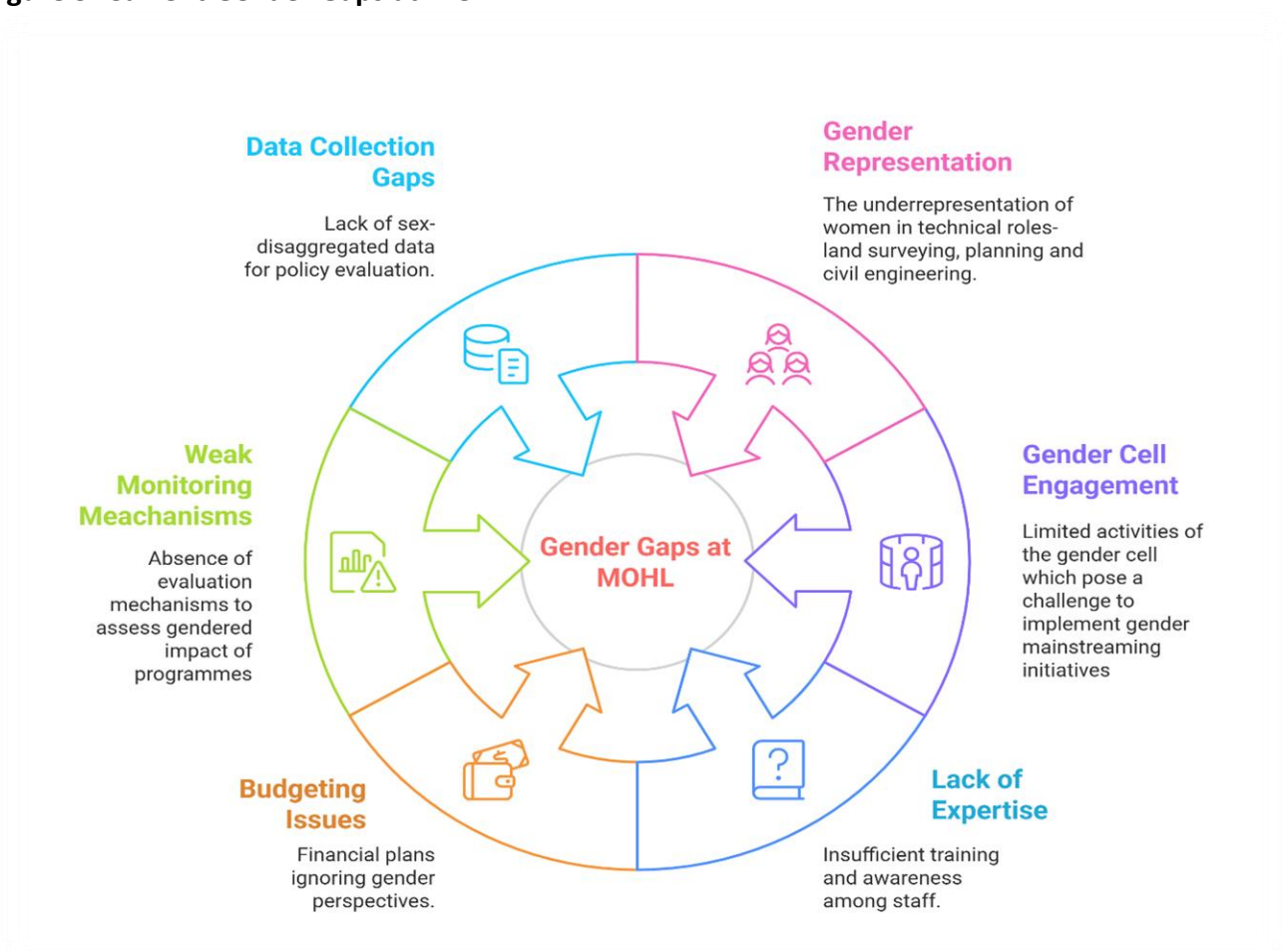
Mission

The Ministry of Housing and Lands is committed to eliminating gender-based barriers in land ownership and housing by promoting inclusive policies, ensuring equal participation in decision-making, and enhancing safety, security, and accessibility.

2.2 Institutional Gender Gaps in the Ministry of Housing and Lands (MOHL)

The current gender policy document and the information from the FGDs identify several policy gaps regarding gender mainstreaming at the level of MOHL (refer to Figure 5).

Figure 5: Current Gender Gaps at MOHL



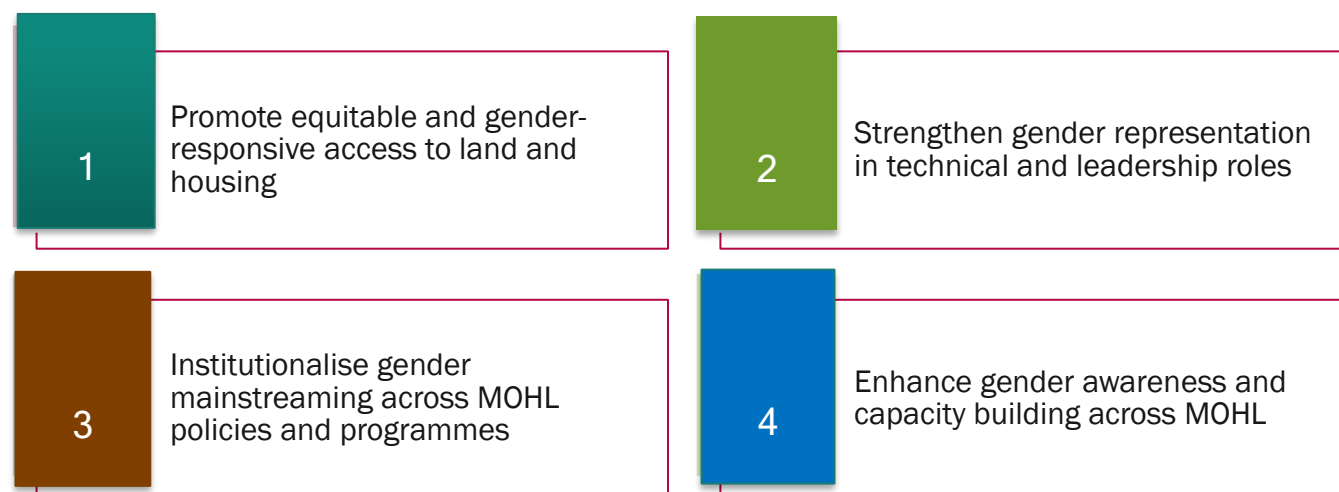
Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Addressing these gaps would help to strengthen the Ministry's gender policy and promote more inclusive outcomes.

2.3 Key Guiding Policy Statements for MOHL

Based on data gathered during the desk review, in-depth interviews and FGDs held with officers from the different departments of MOHL, four key policy statements are formulated (refer to Figure 6).

Figure 6: Four Guiding Policy Statements of the Housing and Lands Sector



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Policy Statement 1 – Promote Equitable and Gender-Responsive Access to Land and Housing

Gendered Dimensions of Housing Demand and Access

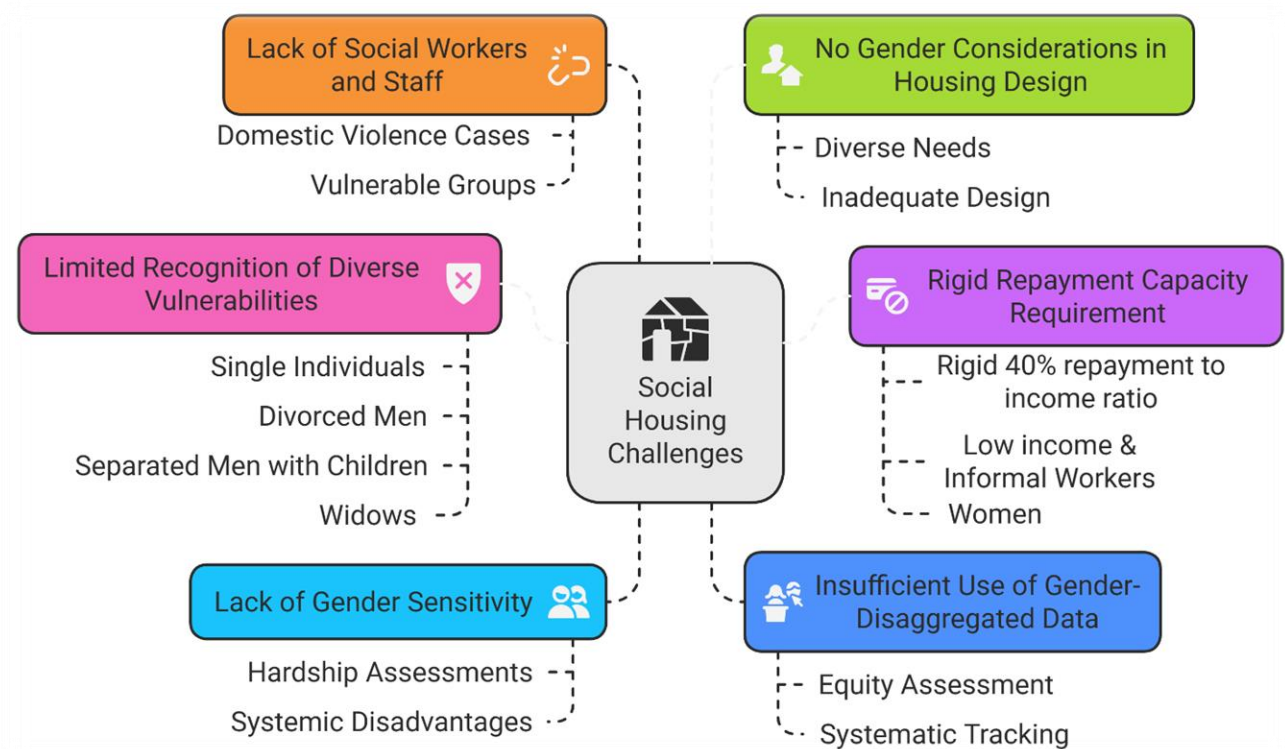
The data on NHDC housing demand and housing unit beneficiaries reveal a strong gendered pattern. Women, particularly those who are divorced, separated, widowed, or single with dependents, represent a significantly higher share of both social housing housing demand to their male counterparts. For instance, divorced, single women with children and widowed women are more than twice as likely as men to seek housing support, highlighting their heightened vulnerability to housing insecurity. Single individuals without dependents are absent from the list of beneficiaries, suggesting their exclusion from access to social housing. Furthermore, there appears to be a gender bias disadvantaging divorced man, separated men, and widowers. While women in these categories are more likely to benefit from housing support, men facing similar vulnerable circumstances are significantly underrepresented.

Table 2: Housing Applicants and Beneficiaries by Marital Status and Gender- Jan 2015 - 22 April 2025

Marital Status	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
	Social Housing Applicants			Social Housing Beneficiaries		
Divorced	3,922	1,574	5,496	708	154	862
Free Union	–	–	1,728	–	–	88
Married Civilly	–	–	17,449	–	–	2,079
Married Religiously	–	–	1,378	–	–	104
Separated	1,533	630	2,163	38	16	54
Single	6,983	9,274	16,257	0	0	0
Single with dependent	2,924	645	3,569	566	382	948
Widow	2,847	294	3,141	463	30	493

The different gender gaps in the current social housing system are shown in Figure 7 below:

Figure 7: Gender Gaps in the Current Social Housing System



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Table 3: Policy Statement 1 – Promote equitable and gender-responsive access to land and housing

Policy Statement 1	Policy Actions
Promote equitable and gender-responsive access to land and social housing	<i>NHDC to review and expand the Definition of Vulnerable Households</i> To facilitate access to housing for single applicants without dependents who are economically and socially vulnerable. Greater access to divorced, separated and widowed men.
	<i>NHDC to revise the marking system used for the ranking of applicants.</i> Special attention should be given to categories like divorced men, separated men with dependents and widowers who are currently underrepresented.
	<i>NHDC to review the repayment capacity assessment</i> that is the current fixed 40% repayment to income ratio. This could be replaced by a sliding scale approach which considers basic living expenses rather than gross income.
	<i>Establish a gender-disaggregated monitoring system to track the profile of applicants and beneficiaries over time.</i> This will allow the NHDC to identify persistent gaps and adjust interventions to promote fairness and inclusivity.
	<i>Integrate gender perspectives into social housing design</i> Housing that reduces exposure to unsafe travel, provision of communal spaces like childcare services, markets, etc and good lighting, secure entrances and well-managed common areas
	<i>Recruit social workers and specialised staff at NHDC</i> to support women experiencing domestic violence and related vulnerabilities

While social housing programmes have provided critical support, the data underscores the need for more targeted, gender-responsive policies to ensure equitable access to housing opportunities.

Policy Statement 2 – Strengthen Gender Representation in Technical and Leadership Roles

The data obtained from the MOHL shows that there is an underrepresentation of women in technical and leadership positions across divisions namely in planning division, housing division and the survey division. This is as per Table 4 below.

Table 4: Gender Gaps in Technical and Leadership Roles

Division	Total Employees	% Men	% Women	Key Observations
All Divisions	500	63%	37%	Overall male dominance, especially in technical roles
Valuation Department	187	39%	61%	Women dominate professional roles (Senior Government Valuers 88%, Government Valuers 70%); men hold all Chief Property Valuation Inspector posts
Planning Division	54	78%	22%	Leadership mainly male; small female presence at CTO and CPO levels
Survey Division	224	76%	24%	Women more present in Surveyor (33%) and Survey Technician (47.5%) roles; no women in senior surveyor leadership
Housing Division	10	70%	30%	All senior housing roles occupied by men; women severely underrepresented
Other Grade (Drivers, Store Attendants, etc.)	-	Mostly Men	4% Women	Men dominate 100% of Driver and Store Attendant roles; women occupy a minor role (Archives Officer)

Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

In response to the identified gaps, a clear policy direction is proposed to strengthen the representation of women in technical and leadership roles. Two key policy actions are formulated to achieve this objective, focusing on creating an enabling environment for women's career progression through fairer promotion processes and targeted capacity building. The policy actions are outlined as per Table 5 below:

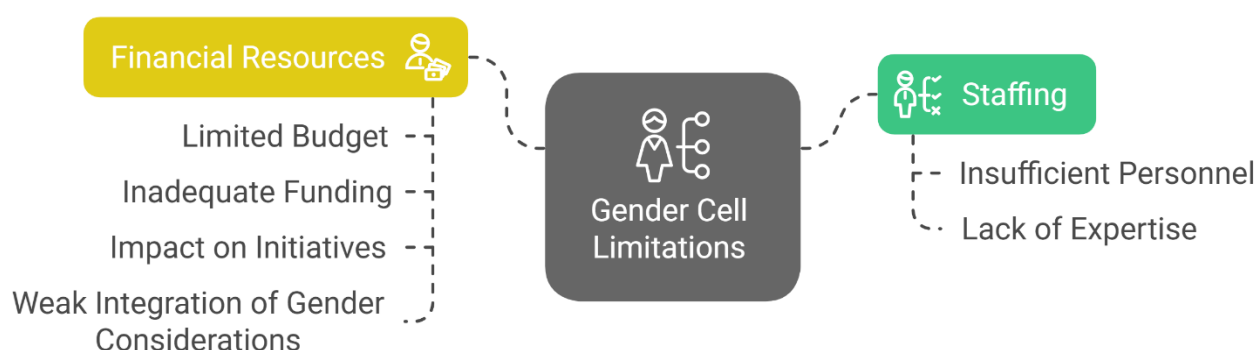
Table 5: Policy Statement 2 – Strengthen Gender Representation in Technical and Leadership Roles

Policy Statement 2	Policy Actions
Strengthen Gender Representation in Technical and Leadership Roles	Implement gender responsive promotion policies like ensure promotion panels include women and apply fair and inclusive evaluation criteria
	Collaborate with higher education or vocational and training institutions to offer technical training on leadership development aimed at women in surveying, planning, and housing professions.
	Organise quarterly networking and mentorship sessions, where women in technical and leadership roles share their experiences, challenges, and strategies for success.

Policy Statement 3 – Institutionalise Gender Mainstreaming across MOHL Policies and Programmes

Focus Group Discussions with representatives from the Ministry have highlighted several challenges related to gender mainstreaming efforts within MOHL. The Gender Cell faces significant limitations in terms of capacity, particularly with respect to both staffing and financial resources. The limited financial capacity of the Gender Cell significantly affects its ability to carry out activities effectively. It becomes difficult to implement critical initiatives such as gender training, awareness campaigns, research, and the development of gender-responsive policies and programs (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Gender Cell Limitations



Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

There is thus a weak integration of gender considerations into the Ministry's day-to-day operations and decision-making processes. The following policy actions are proposed to institutionalise gender mainstreaming as per Table 6 below.

Table 6: Policy Statement 3 - Institutionalise Gender Mainstreaming across MOHL Policies and Programmes

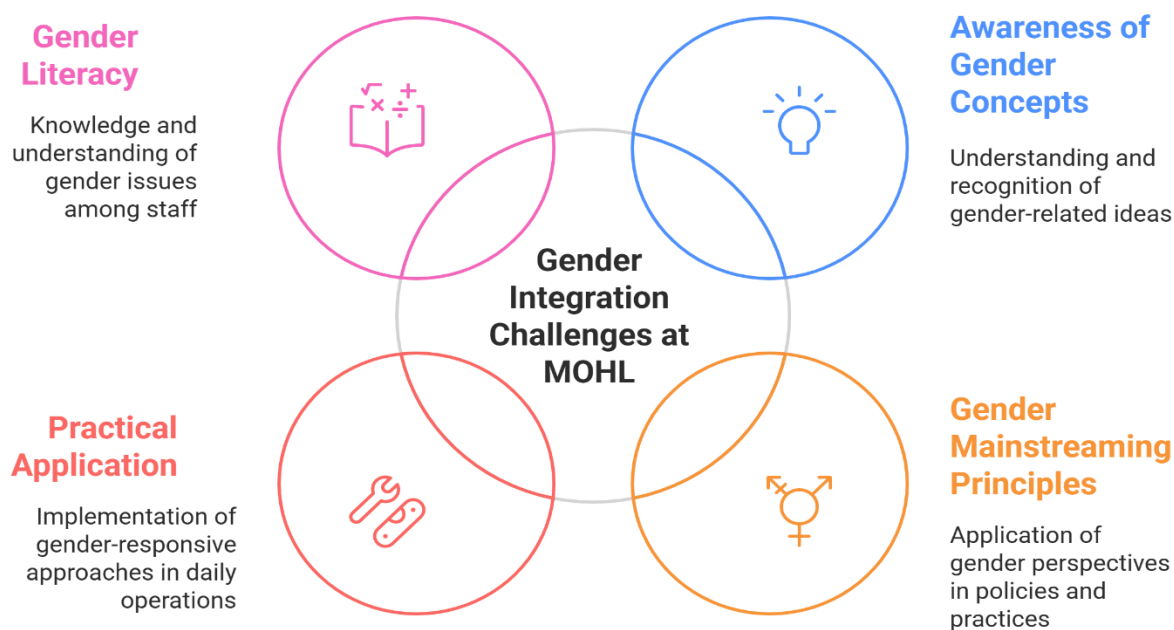
Policy Statement 3	Policy Actions
Institutionalise Gender Mainstreaming across MOHL Policies and Programmes	Ensure each department is represented in the Gender Cell, with both male and female officers as members.
	Secure additional funding through the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare for the Gender Cell to engage in gender mainstreaming activities
	Publish gender-related activities and updates monthly on notice boards and Ministry websites
	Collect sex-disaggregated data and gender related statistics across all departments to track progress in gender equality
	Develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track gender mainstreaming activities
	Ensuring mixed-gender teams during field work to ensure safety mainly in high-risk areas
	Develop a reporting mechanism at the level of the Ministry for harassment, threats, or safety concerns encountered during field work
	Conduct periodic gender impact assessments of land and housing policies and programmes to identify gaps and areas for improvement

Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Policy Statement 4 – Enhance Gender Awareness and Capacity Building across MOHL

The MOHL plays a crucial role in service delivery and policy implementation, making it essential for employees to be equipped with gender-sensitive knowledge and skills. Several gaps have been noted however, in terms of limited awareness and understanding of gender concepts, gender mainstreaming principles, and the practical application of gender-responsive approaches in the Ministry’s daily operations. This lack of gender literacy among staff at various levels hampers the effective integration of gender perspectives into the MOHL’s policies, programmes, and service delivery.

Figure 9: Gender Integration Challenges at MOHL



Source: Consultants’ Compilation, 2025

The following policies are recommended to promote gender awareness, training, and capacity development within the Ministry as per Table 7 below.

Table 7: Policy Statement 4 - Enhance gender awareness and capacity building across MOHL

Policy Statement 4	Policy Actions
Enhance Gender Awareness and Capacity Building across MOHL	Organise mandatory gender training for all employees, particularly on gender-based discrimination and harassment.
	Develop a gender training manual tailored to the Ministry’s specific operational context and challenges
	Conduct regular workshops on gender mainstreaming and gender issues as well as on stress management, mental health in collaboration with local universities or vocational and training institutions or the Civil Service College
	Train staff on sex-disaggregated data collection, analysis, and reporting with the support of Statistics Mauritius
	Evaluate training effectiveness through pre- and post-assessments and integrate feedback into future sessions.

Source: Consultants’ Compilation, 2025

3. Conclusion

The Gender Policy 2025- 2030 of the Ministry of Housing and Lands represents a significant step towards ensuring gender equality and social inclusion in the housing and land-use sectors in Mauritius. This policy framework is built upon a commitment to mainstream gender considerations into the Ministry's organisational structure as well as programmes, projects, activities and services provided. By addressing gender disparities and incorporating gender-sensitive approaches, the Ministry aligns itself with national and international commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5 on Gender Equality and Goal 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities. The Gender Policy Document highlights four key policy statements (1) the promotion of equitable and gender responsive access to housing and lands (2) strengthen gender representation in technical and leadership roles (3) institutionalise gender mainstreaming across MOHL policies and operations (4) enhance gender awareness and capacity building across the Ministry. Successful implementation of this Gender Policy 2025-2030 requires the collaboration of multiple stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, the private sector, and international partners. The Ministry is committed to promote gender-sensitive practices within the housing and land sectors. By institutionalising gender equity principles, the Ministry of Housing and Lands reinforces its dedication to building an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient Mauritius, where all individuals, regardless of gender, can thrive.

Annex1: Situational Analysis: Gender and the Housing and Lands Sector

The Gender Landscape in Mauritius

The Republic of Mauritius has demonstrated its commitment to promoting gender equality by ratifying several regional and international human rights instruments that advocate for the equal participation of women and men in public life, decision-making, and policy development. The country signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1984, endorsed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) in 1995, and ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2005, later acceding to it in 2017. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action underscores the importance of addressing gender disparities in power-sharing and emphasizes that women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making are essential strategies for achieving gender equality. Advancing equality in participation and leadership requires the effective implementation of international and national commitments, the adoption of temporary special measures, and the development of supportive institutional frameworks and enabling environments (UN ECOSOC, 2020).

Gender equality plays a key role in the Government Programme 2025-2029, recognising it as the centre of the development agenda. The National Gender Policy 2022-2030 also emphasises the country's ongoing commitment to fostering a legal, policy, and administrative framework that ensures gender equality and equity as fundamental principles for achieving sustainable development (Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, 2022)⁴. The Government of Mauritius drafted a Gender Equality Bill, which is in consultation phase aimed at promoting, protecting, and regulating gender equality across both public and private spheres. It incorporates gender equality principles into existing and proposed laws and aim to address socio-economic inequalities and achieve substantive equality in all aspects of society, including social, economic, and political domains, including housing, land distribution, and ownership.

In 2024, Mauritius was ranked 98 out of 146 countries worldwide with the Global Gender Gap (GGG) score falling from 0.689 in 2023 to 0.683 in 2024⁵. Overall, it can be observed that the GGG scores have remained relatively constant with moderate progress over time. This confirms existing challenges in closing the gender gap. While there has been an improvement in economic participation and opportunity for women over the past years, gaps still exist in wage equality and in leadership roles. Other indices like the Gender Development Index (GDI) improved from 0.894 in 1990 to 0.976 in 2022 and the Gender Inequality Index (GII) drops from 0.375 in 2013 to 0.369 in 2022 showing progress in reducing gender disparities (UNDP, 2024)⁶. The Table below shows the ranking and score of the GGG index for Mauritius from 2015 to 2024.

⁴ Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare (2022). National Gender Policy 2022-2030. Republic of Mauritius

⁵<https://www.weforum.org/publications/global-gender-gap-report-2024/in-full/benchmarking-gender-gaps-2024-2e5f5cd886/>

⁶ <https://hdr.undp.org/gender-development-index#/indicies/GDI>

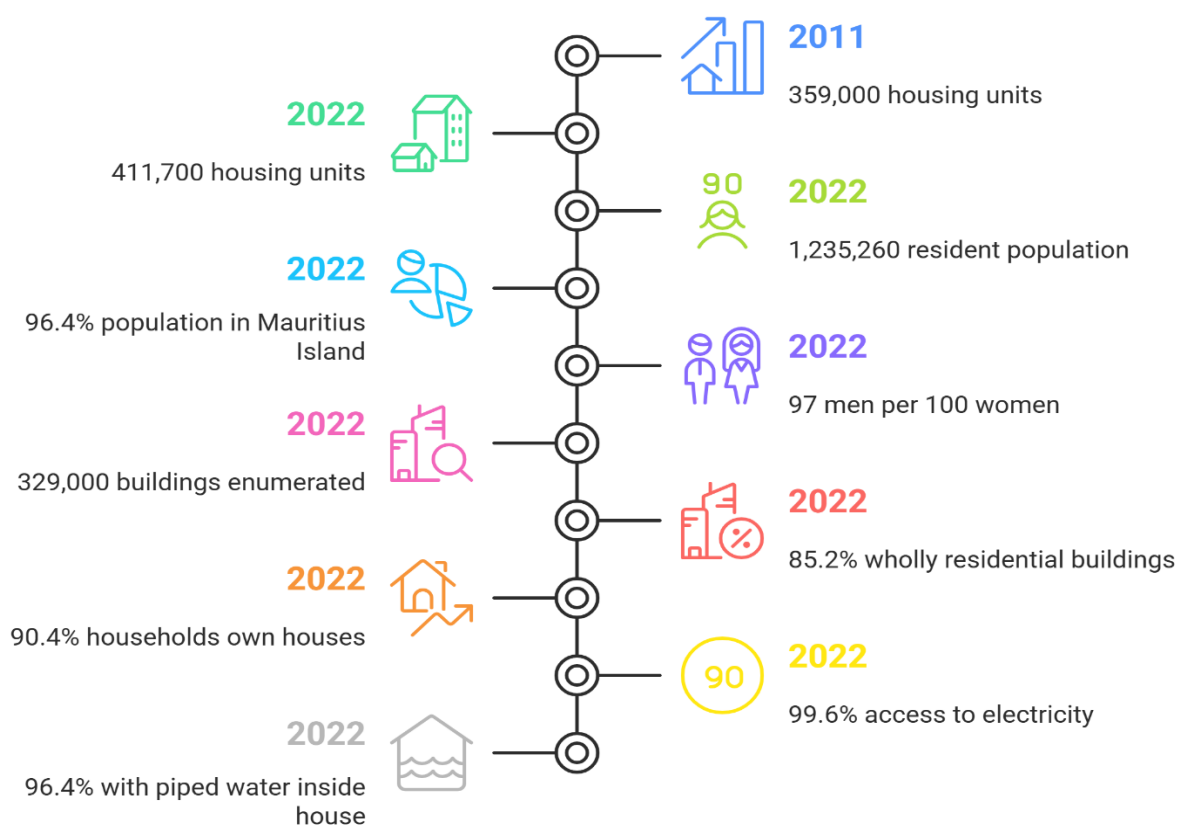
Table A: GGI Ranking and Score for Mauritius (2015-2024)

Year	Ranking	Score
2015	120th	0.646
2016	113th	0.652
2017	112th	0.664
2018	109th	0.663
2020	115th	0.665
2021	110th	0.679
2022	105th	0.679
2023	98th	0.689
2024	107th	0.683

Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

The Housing and Land Use Context in Mauritius

Over the last two decades, the population of the Republic of Mauritius has remained fairly stable (see Figure 10). The demographic trends and housing landscape have significant implications for gender-responsive housing and land policies. With women outnumbering men and making up a larger share of the population, it is crucial to ensure that housing and land policies address the specific needs and challenges faced by women in accessing secure housing and property ownership. The increase in housing units between 2011 and 2022 further reflects a growing demand for residential spaces, which must be met with inclusive policies that promote gender equality in homeownership and land access⁷.

Figure 10: Mauritius Housing and Population Trends, 2011-2022

Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

⁷ Statistics Mauritius, Census 2022

Mauritius is committed to empowering all its citizens with decent housing. The most vulnerable communities are being prioritised. Families from low-income groups are also supported through grants for the casting of roof slabs and purchase of building materials. The eligibility thresholds have been increased in the Budget 2023/24. The Social Housing Units are being considered within the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to achieve the objective of 60% of renewable energy from green sources and leave no one behind. To cater for the increasing demand and facilitate access to decent, safe, affordable and ecological housing units within green conscious communities, the NSLD is engaged in the construction of 12,000 residential units in two phases across the island. During Phase I, the construction of 8,000 social housing units over 38 sites is under implementation. Phase II of the project will consist of the construction of a further 4,000 social housing units. Moreover, Government provides an 80% subsidy for acquiring social housing, with only 20% repayment required over 15 to 35 years. The housing scheme includes the construction of fully concrete housing units up to 50 m² for families who own a plot of land, but lack the resources to build, and the allocation of 10% of social housing units constructed by the NHDC to landless beneficiaries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, 2024)⁸.

The Role and Organisational Structure of MOHL: A Gender Perspective

Mauritius has a dedicated MOHL which aims at satisfying the housing and land needs of the people of the country and achieve more effective management and use of lands. It consists of three main divisions namely the Housing Division, the Survey Division, and the Planning Division. The Housing Division is responsible for the formulation of strategies and policies for the social housing sector and for the implementation of social housing programmes through the National Housing Development Company Ltd (NHDC), its executive arm. The New Social Living Development Ltd (NSLD), a subsidiary of the NHDC, is responsible building residential units to meet the demands of the population. The Survey Division manages State lands that may be leased for residential, industrial, commercial, socio religious, agricultural or other purposes. The division also comprises nine survey sections for each district, a Cartography Section, a Hydrography Section and a Land Acquisition Section. The Planning Division is responsible for land use planning including, policy formulation with respect to land development. The main objective is to ensure that the country's development takes place in a well-planned and sustainable manner and that scarce land resources are used effectively. The Ministry of Housing and Lands also has different bodies under its aegis namely the Town and Country Planning Board, Morcellement Board, NHDC, the NSLD and the Valuation Department.

The data compiled by the MOHL for January 2025 highlights the distribution of employees by gender across different divisions (Tables B to F in Appendix 3). The figures reveal notable gender disparities in specific job categories and hierarchical levels. Across all divisions, there are 315 men and 185 women, totalling 500 employees. Men constitute 63% of the workforce, while women make up 37%. This disparity is particularly pronounced in technical and field-based roles. With 187 employees, the Valuation Department shows a relatively higher proportion of women (61%) compared to men (39%). Women dominate professional roles such as Senior Government Valuers (88%) and Government

⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade (2024) -Republic of Mauritius Voluntary National Review 2024

Valuers (70%). However, men hold all positions at the Chief Property Valuation Inspector level, reflecting potential barriers for women in leadership within this division.

The Planning Division consists of 54 employees, of whom 78% are men and 22% are women. Leadership roles such as Principal Town and Country Planning Officer and Senior Town and Country Planning Officer are predominantly held by men. However, a small but significant female presence is seen at the Chief Technical Officer and Chief Town and Country Planning Officer levels. The Survey Division has 224 employees, with a significant 76% male workforce. Women hold 55 positions, largely in roles such as Surveyors (33%) and Survey Technicians (47.5%). However, women remain underrepresented in senior positions like Chief Surveyor, Deputy Chief Surveyor, and Principal Surveyor, all of which are exclusively occupied by men. Further, the Housing Division comprises of only 10 employees, this division also exhibits gender imbalance, with men holding 70% of positions. Leadership roles such as Chief and Principal Housing Development Officers are entirely occupied by men, indicating a potential lack of female advancement in this sector. In the category of 'other grade', women occupy just one position (4%) as an Archives Officer, while men dominate roles such as Drivers (100%) and Store Attendants (100%)⁹.

Women remain underrepresented in higher-ranking positions, particularly in technical fields such as surveying and planning. While women have a stronger presence in valuation positions, suggesting progress in certain professional categories, the predominance of men in survey and planning-related technical roles highlights the need for initiatives encouraging women's participation in these fields. Strengthening gender-responsive recruitment and promotion policies can help bridge existing gaps, ensuring a more equitable workplace. Overall, while some progress has been made in integrating women into professional roles, gender imbalances in leadership and technical positions underline the need for continued efforts towards gender equality in employment across MOHL.

A Gender Perspective of MOHL's Services and Programmes

The allocation of NHDC housing units and the distribution of the Slab/Building Materials Grant Scheme reveal gender disparities in housing assistance programmes of MOHL. From the data (Table 2), a total of 4,628 households have been allocated NHDC housing units, from January 2015 to date. In terms of Slab/Building Materials Grant Scheme, the data shows that 13,085 households have benefitted from same since 2015. There is an important gender imbalance where 71.3% of the beneficiaries are male-headed households (9,335), while female-headed households make up only 28.7% (3,750). Single women with dependents (1,356) have a substantial presence but are significantly lower than single men with dependents (5,560). This disparity could indicate financial or administrative barriers preventing women from accessing the grant at the same rate as men. Married male beneficiaries (3,426) vastly outnumber married female beneficiaries (1,136), suggesting that men are the primary applicants for housing improvement assistance in marital households. Widowed women (759) have a far higher number of allocations than widowed men (74), highlighting again the financial vulnerabilities of widowed women in securing housing improvements.

⁹ The data is presented in Tables B to F in Annex 3

Table G: Number of Beneficiaries of Slab/Building Materials Grant Scheme by Gender and Marital Status from January 2015 to date

Marital Status	Headed Household		Total
	Female	Male	
Divorced	397	248	645
Married	1,136	3,426	4,562
Separated	102	27	129
Single with dependent	1,356	5,560	6,916
Widow	759	74	833
Total	3,750	9,335	13,085

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Women, particularly those who are divorced, widowed, or single with dependents, appear to face higher housing insecurity and require substantial support. Male-headed households dominate in both housing allocation and grant assistance, which may indicate systemic barriers to women's access to housing-related resources. The lower participation of women in the grant scheme suggests possible structural challenges, including financial constraints, lack of information, or administrative hurdles. It should be noted that men are more likely to be heads of households in Mauritius. This traditional structure continues to shape access to housing and financial assistance, often placing women at a disadvantage in securing resources for independent living. The data underscores the need for enhanced gender-sensitive policies in housing allocation and financial assistance schemes. Specific measures, such as prioritizing vulnerable women-headed households, easing eligibility requirements for female applicants, and targeted outreach programmes, could bridge the existing gender gap in MOHL's services. Addressing these disparities is essential to ensuring equitable access to housing and fostering gender-inclusive planning and development.

The Ministry plays a crucial role in formulating policies that govern land use, housing development, and sustainable urban planning in Mauritius to ensure balanced economic growth, environmental protection, and social inclusiveness. Aligning the Gender Policy with the sustainability and inclusivity objectives of the Government Programme 2025-2029 reinforces SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Despite progress in housing development, gender disparities in property ownership and land tenure remain a concern. Women often face barriers due to legal, financial, and socio-cultural constraints that limit their ability to acquire and retain property. The situational analysis underscores the need for gender-sensitive policy interventions that align with national strategies and international commitments, including SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), to foster an inclusive and equitable housing sector.

Annex 2: Implementation Strategy /Gender Action Plan (GAP)

Policy Statement 1	Policy Actions	Institutional Role	Timeline
Promote Equitable and Gender-Responsive Access to Land and Housing	NHDC to review and expand the Definition of Vulnerable Households To facilitate access to housing for single applicants without dependents who are economically and socially vulnerable. Greater access to divorced, separated and widowed men.	MOHL, NHDC, in collaboration with NGOs, MGEFW	Medium Term (6-12 months)
	NHDC to revise the marking system used for the ranking of applicants. Special attention should be given to categories like single individuals, divorced men, separated men with dependents and widowers who are currently underrepresented.		Medium Term (6-12 months)
	NHDC to review the repayment capacity assessment that is the current fixed 40% repayment to income ratio. This could be replaced by a sliding scale approach which considers basic living expenses rather than gross income.		Medium Term (6-12 months)
	Establish a gender-disaggregated monitoring system to track the profile of applicants and beneficiaries over time. This will allow the NHDC to identify persistent gaps and adjust interventions to promote fairness and inclusivity.		Ongoing
	Integrate gender perspectives into social housing design Housing that reduces exposure to unsafe travel, provision of communal spaces like childcare services, markets, etc and good lighting, secure entrances and well-managed common areas		Medium to Long Term (1 to 3 years)
Policy Statement 2	Policy Actions	Institutional Role	Timeline
Strengthen Gender Representation in Technical and Leadership Roles	Implement gender responsive promotion policies like ensure promotion panels include women and apply fair and inclusive evaluation criteria	MOHL, MLIR, Public Service Commission	Medium Term (1 year)
	Collaborate with higher education or vocational and training institutions to offer technical training on leadership development aimed at women in surveying, planning, and housing professions.	MOHL and training institutions	Medium Term (6-12 months)
	Organise quarterly networking and mentorship sessions, where women in technical and leadership roles share their experiences, challenges, and strategies for success.	MOHL	Ongoing

Policy Statement 3	Policy Actions	Institutional Role	Timeline
Institutionalise Gender Mainstreaming across MOHL Policies and Programmes	Ensure each department is represented in the Gender Cell, with both male and female officers as members.	MOHL	Short term (1 – 3 months)
	Secure additional funding through the MGEFW for the Gender Cell to engage in gender mainstreaming activities	MOHL, MGEFW and Ministry of Finance	Medium term (6-12 months)
	Publish gender-related activities and updates monthly on notice boards and Ministry websites	MOHL	Ongoing
	Collect sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics across all departments to track progress in gender equality	MOHL	Ongoing
	Develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to track gender mainstreaming activities	MOHL	Ongoing
	Ensuring mixed-gender teams during field work to ensure safety mainly in high-risk areas	MOHL	Short term (1 – 3 months)
	Develop a reporting mechanism at the level of the Ministry for harassment, threats, or safety concerns encountered during field work	MOHL	Short term (1 – 3 months)
	Conduct periodic gender impact assessments of land and housing policies and programmes to identify areas for improvement	MOHL	Ongoing
Policy Statement 4	Policy Actions	Institutional Role	Timeline
Enhance Gender Awareness and Capacity Building across MOHL	Organise mandatory gender training for all employees, particularly on gender-based discrimination and harassment.	MOHL	Medium term (6-12 months)
	Develop a gender training manual tailored to the Ministry's specific operational context and challenges	MOHL, MGEFW and Training Institutions	Medium term (1-2 years)
	Conduct regular workshops on gender mainstreaming and gender issues as well as on stress management, mental health in collaboration with local universities or vocational and training institutions or the Civil Service College	MOHL, MGEFW and Training Institutions	Ongoing
	Train staff on sex-disaggregated data collection, analysis, and reporting with the support of Statistics Mauritius	MOHL, Statistics Mauritius and Training Institutions	Medium term (6-12 months)
	Evaluate training effectiveness through pre- and post-assessments and integrate feedback into future sessions.	MOHL	Ongoing

Source : Consultants' Compilation, 2025

Annex 3: Organisational Structure of MOHL by Gender

Table B: Number of Employees by Sex in the Valuation Department - January 2025

Grade	No. of Men Employed	No. of Women Employed	Total
Director	-	-	-
Deputy Director	-	3	3
Lead Government Valuer	3	2	5
Senior Government Valuer	1	7	8
Government Valuer	3	7	10
Chief Property Valuation Inspector	4	-	4
Principal Property Valuation Inspector	7	13	20
Senior Property Valuation Inspector	12	24	36
Property Valuation Inspector	26	31	57
Assistant Manager, Human Resources	-	1	1
Assistant Manager, Financial Operations	-	1	1
Human Resource Executive	1	-	1
Finance Officer/Senior Finance Officer	-	1	1
Office Management Executive	-	1	1
Office Management Assistant	-	2	2
Assistant Procurement & Supply Officer	-	2	2
Confidential Secretary	-	1	1
Systems Analyst	-	1	1
Office Supervisor	1	-	1
Management Support Officer	6	13	19
Word Processing Officer	1	1	2
Receptionist/Telephone Operator	1	-	1
Office Auxiliary/Senior Office Auxiliary	6	3	9
Driver	1	-	1
TOTAL	73	114	187

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Table C: Number of Employees by Sex in the Planning Division- January 2025

Post/ Grade	No of men	No of women	Total
Planning Division			
Chief Technical Officer	-	1	1
Chief Town and Country Planning Officer	-	1	1
Deputy Chief Town and Country Planning Officer (Temporary capacity)	1	1	2
Principal Town and Country Planning Officer	4	0	4
Senior Town and Country Planning Officer	5	1	6
Town and Country Planning Officer	11	4	15
Sociologist/ Planner	-	-	-
Chief Technical Design Officer	1	-	1
Principal Technical Design Officer	1	-	1
Senior Technical Design Officer	3	-	3
Technical Design Officer	5	1	6
Trainee Technical Design Officer	2	1	3
Senior Development Control Officer	1	1	2
Development Control Officer	8	1	9
Total	42	12	54

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Table D: Number of Employees by Sex in the Survey Division- January 2025

Survey Division	No of men	No of women	Total
Chief Surveyor	1	-	1
Deputy Chief Surveyor	3	-	3
Principal Surveyor	14	-	14
Senior Surveyor	12	5	17
Surveyor	20	10	30
Trainee Surveyor	12	8	20
Principal Survey Technician	1	2	3
Senior Survey Technician	7	3	10
Survey Technician	21	19	40
Head Survey Field Worker	16	-	16
Survey Field Worker/ Senior Survey Field Worker	44	7	51
Chief Cartographer	1	-	1
Principal Cartographer	3	-	3
Cartographer/ Senior Cartographer	14	1	15
Trainee Cartographer	-	-	-
Total	169	55	224

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Table E: Number of Employees by Sex in the Housing Division- January 2025

<u>Housing Division</u>	No of men	No of women	Total
Chief Housing Development Officer	1	-	1
Principal Housing Development Officer	2	-	2
Housing Development Officer	4	3	7
Total	7	3	10

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Table F: Number of Employees by Sex Other Grades- January 2025

<u>Other Grades</u>	No of men	No of women	Total
Driver	21	-	21
Store Attendant	2	-	2
Machine Minder/ Senior Machine Minder	-	-	-
Plans and Records Officer	1	-	1
Plan Printing Operator	-	-	-
Archives Officer/ Senior Archives Officer	-	1	1
Total	24	1	25

Source: Compiled by MOHL, 2025

Annex 3: List of Stakeholders

Table H: list of Stakeholders

Name	Position
Mr F. Tarsoo	Senior Surveyor
Mr K. Rambarassah	Senior Development Control Officer
Mr R. Soborun	Principal Town and Control Planning Officer
Mrs S. Calcutteea	Management Support Officer
Ms B. Bissoondeeal	Office Auxiliary
Mr K. Reesaul	Assistant Financial Operations Officer
Ms D. Beenund	Trainee Surveyor
Mr A. Lallbeeharry	Housing Development Officer
Mr R. Saulick	Development Control Officer
Mrs N. Seennapen	Principal property Valuation inspector
Mrs H. Kheddoo	Survey field worker
Mrs D. R. Auchoybur	Survey field worker
Mr D. Ramgoolam	Cartographer
Mrs M. Ganga	Management Support Officer
Mrs H. Mollye	Management Support Officer
Mr A. Bhoobdasur	Management Support Officer
Mrs S. Valaydum	Management Support Officer
Mr Y. Bhoobeechurn	Principal Surveyor
Ms. J. Varma Jootun	Trainee Surveyor
Ms A. Teeluckdharee	Management Support Officer
Mrs L. Sadaful	Senior Town and Country Planning Officer
Mrs J. Appadoo	Office Management Executive
Ms S. Tapsee	Management Support Officer
Mrs M. Seewoosaha Dinnoo	Management Support Officer
Mr S. Auchoybur	Head Attendant
Mr J. L. Casimir	Principal Surveyor
Mrs S. Peerbux	Assistant Financial Operations Officer
Mrs V. Gobin	Management Support Officer
Mrs D. Prayag	Office Management Assistant
Ms B Luchmun	Management Support Officer
Mrs P. Nundoo	Surveyor
Mr N. Ramsahye	Acting Principal Town and Country Planning Officer
Mr S. Soborun	Deputy Chief Town and Country Planning Officer
Ms H. B. Kurimbaccus	Housing Development Officer
Mrs H. Souky Jeewootah	Management Support Officer
Mr S. Toolsee	Cartographer
Mr Y. DAMOO	Manager, Customer Service Centre, NHDC

Source: Consultants' Compilation, 2025

