



ANNUAL REPORT FINANCIAL YEAR 2023 – 2024

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, SMEs and COOPERATIVES (SMEs Division)

October 2024



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1.0 ABOUT THE MINISTRY

1.1 INSIGHT OF THE MINISTRY

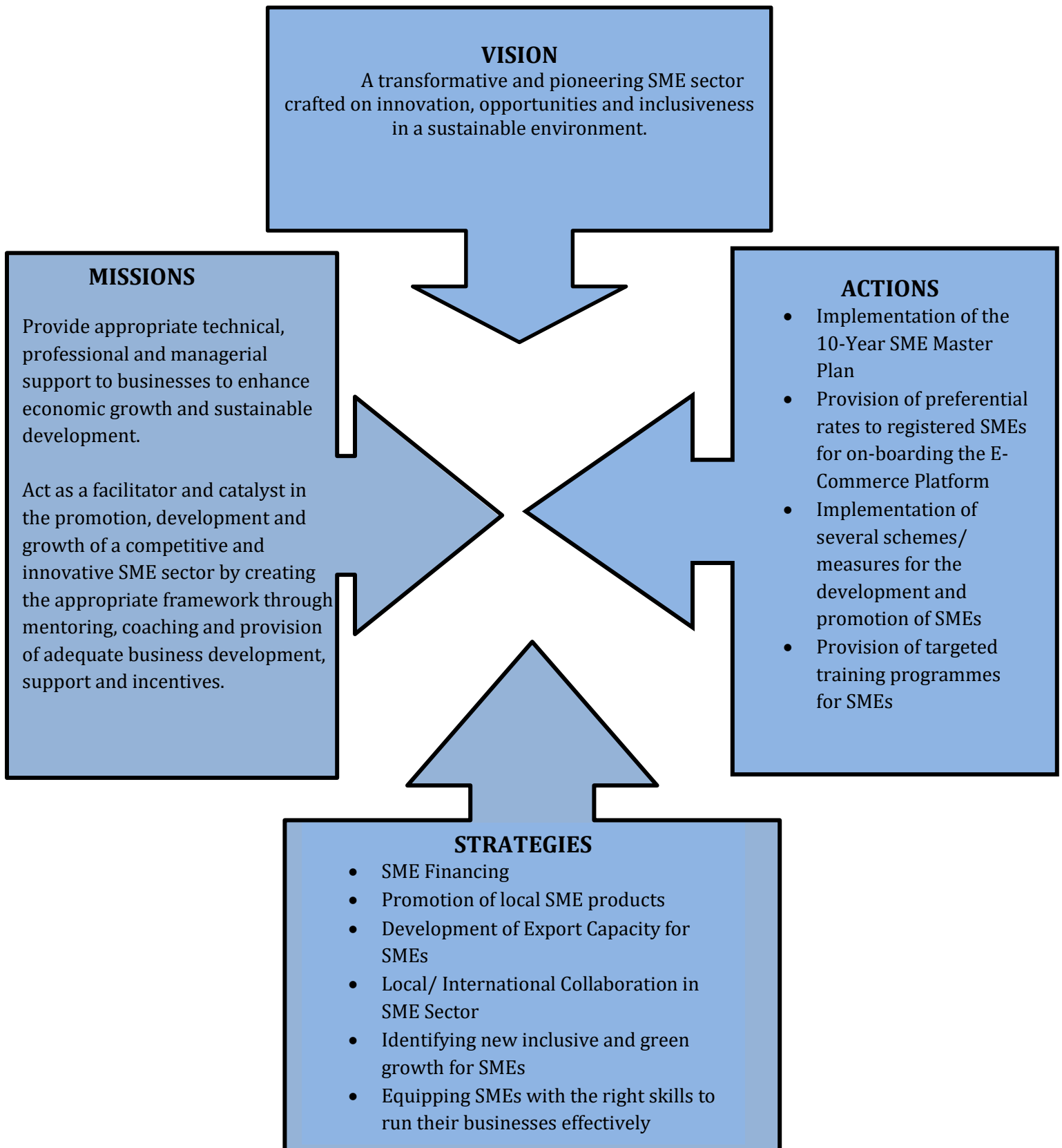
The Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives comprises three Divisions namely the Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives Divisions respectively. The main activities of the Ministry revolve around formulation of policies pertaining to Industrial Development, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Cooperatives.

The Industrial Development Division acts as a facilitator and catalyst for the development of a resilient, vibrant and competitive manufacturing sector with a view to fostering employment creation and wealth generation for higher economic growth.

The SMEs Division is responsible for the design and formulation of policies and schemes while ensuring that there is appropriate and adequate provision of support and facilities to existing enterprises as well as encouraging creation of new businesses.

The Cooperatives Division facilitates the promotion of diversified, emerging and innovative cooperatives and involvement of more young persons and women in the development, consolidation and advancement of the cooperative movement.

1.1.1 SMES DIVISION



1.2 STATEMENT FROM MINISTER



I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (SMEs Division) for the Financial Year 2023/2024.

Since assuming office as Minister in February 2024, I have been committed to advancing the fundamentals of the SMEs Division, whilst looking to improve efficiency and output. With a fresh perspective and renewed vigour, we have worked tirelessly to inject new energy into the dynamics of the sector.

I am proud to say that the Ministry has consistently championed the interests of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), placing them at the heart of our nation's economic development agenda. The Ministry's efforts have been relentless, and we have made significant strides towards empowering MSMEs, despite being confronted with unprecedented challenges.

The resilience of our MSME sector, despite the hardships posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical disruptions such as the Russia-Ukraine and Middle East conflicts, is testament to the pertinence of our policies. Indeed, the constructive measures adopted by the Ministry have enabled MSMEs to weather these storms. The more so, the sector has witnessed a growth in the quantity of new establishments, with the number of MSMEs rising from 124,972 in 2013 to 139,961 in 2018.

SMEs are the backbone of our country, driving forward economic advancement and contributing substantially to our GDP and employment. They account for nearly 40% of our GDP and over 46% of total employment, embodying an unyielding drive for innovation and entrepreneurship. Each MSME reflects the determination and creativity of spirited entrepreneurs that fuel our nation's prosperity.

In complementarity of this, the Ministry has been proactive in developing policies and programmes tailored to the specific needs of MSMEs. Through our strategic initiatives, we have facilitated access to financing, provided skill-enhancing

training and supported market expansion. We recognise the diverse challenges facing MSMEs—from high production costs and adhering to quality standards, to the pressing need for product and market diversification, altogether while observing good manufacturing practices.

Indeed, our commitment to sustainable development is equally strong. As we advocate for greener production practices, we encourage our MSMEs to embrace environmental-friendly manufacturing in a bid to respond to a new breed of eco-conscious consumers. The shift towards sustainable practices is not just a choice; it is a necessity. By fostering strategic partnerships and investing in clean technologies, we are strengthening the competitiveness of our MSMEs, while upholding our environmental commitments.

In today's rapidly evolving digital economy, the adoption of technology and innovation is quintessential. The rise of AI and digital tools offer unprecedented opportunities for our MSMEs to scale up operations, increase productivity and position themselves competitively in the global market space. Embracing these advancements will be key to ensuring long-term sustainability.

I encourage all MSMEs to take advantage of our expanding regional and international networks, particularly within Africa. With increased cooperation across borders, MSMEs have an avenue to broaden their market outreach, increase exports and forge new partnerships by leveraging on trade agreements with international organisations to expand their footprint.

I would like to place on record my appreciation to all my staff for their unflinching support. My heartfelt gratitude to them for their commitment and their efforts, which have been invaluable in advancing the mission of the Ministry.

Hon. (Ms.) Naveena Ramyad
Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives

1.3 Statement from Senior Chief Executive

I am pleased to be associated with the presentation of the Annual Report of the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs, and Cooperatives (SMEs Division) for the financial year 2023-2024.

Over the past year, we have witnessed a vibrant partnership between the Ministry and our constituency of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) falling under our purview. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our team and the MSME sector for the synergy we have built together. This strong collaboration has been pivotal in accompanying MSMEs to successfully navigate in an ever-evolving economic landscape and it speaks volumes about the sector's determination and adaptability.

The Ministry has played a crucial role in tackling the challenges of the past year, setting forth its professionalism and unwavering commitment to each initiative. The laudable efforts provided by one and all have empowered the Ministry to provide meaningful support to MSMEs, enabling the latter to seize new opportunities and overcome unprecedented impediments. Equally, I commend our MSMEs for their remarkable resilience and willingness to embrace change, showcasing their spirit of innovation and capacity to thrive, even in uncertain economic times.

The financial year 2023-2024 has been a period of recovery and growth for Mauritius. We have seen key economic indicators return to pre-pandemic levels, a testament to the strength and agility of our economy. Despite facing global challenges, MSMEs in Mauritius have demonstrated their ability to adapt and persevere. Much of this success can be attributed to the proactive measures taken by the Ministry to create a business-friendly environment, one that fosters growth, resilience and innovation for our MSMEs.

Looking to the future, I am confident that together, with renewed collaboration between the Ministry and our valued stakeholders, we shall continue to drive growth, foster innovation and promote inclusivity within the sector. By supporting our MSMEs in this journey, we are investing in the long-term growth of Mauritius, empowering entrepreneurs and building a strong foundation to further our economic success.

I seize this opportunity and invite each member of our team, as well as every stakeholder, to carry this momentum forward, as we unify our efforts to create a brighter future for our MSMEs and for the economic prosperity of our country.

Mohammad Salim Joomun
Senior Chief Executive

1.4 FUNCTIONS OF THE SMES DIVISION

The Division acts as a regulator and facilitator within its basic core values of effective administration: Teamwork, Trust, Transparency, Transformation and Timeliness.



1.5 OUR STRATEGIC FUNCTIONS

Devise, formulate, review and implement strategic policies relating to SMEs
Identify projects, programs and activities for the development and promotion of SMEs
Facilitate and coordinate research relating to development of SMEs through

Facilitate access to financial resources and other productive resources for SMEs
Coordinate with supporting partners and relevant stakeholders in the fulfilment of our objectives
Assist in the initiatives of public sector agencies

Facilitate networking among SMEs and development of linkages between large enterprises and SMEs
Collaborate with local and international agencies dealing with SMEs for their development through capacity building programs, among others
Collaborate in entrepreneurship activities carried out by public sector agencies and the private sector

Units of the SMEs Division



1.6 ABOUT OUR PEOPLE

The Hon. Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives is the political head of the Ministry and she guides the policy orientation of the Ministry.

Administrative Unit

The Senior Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer and Supervising Officer for the Ministry with effect from 22 April 2024. He is responsible for the administration of the different Sections/Units as well for ensuring the implementation measures and policies as approved by the government. He is assisted in his duties by one Acting Permanent Secretary, one Deputy Permanent Secretary, two Assistant Permanent Secretaries as well as Officers belonging to the Human Resources, Finance, Procurement cadres and general services grade. There are also two Business Enterprise Analysts who provide support and advice to management on SME matters.

Technical Unit

The SME Registration Unit is the technical arm of the Division. It is headed by a Registrar, SMEs and three Business Development Officers (Ex- SMEDA) and other supporting staff. The Unit is mainly responsible for the registration of SMEs,

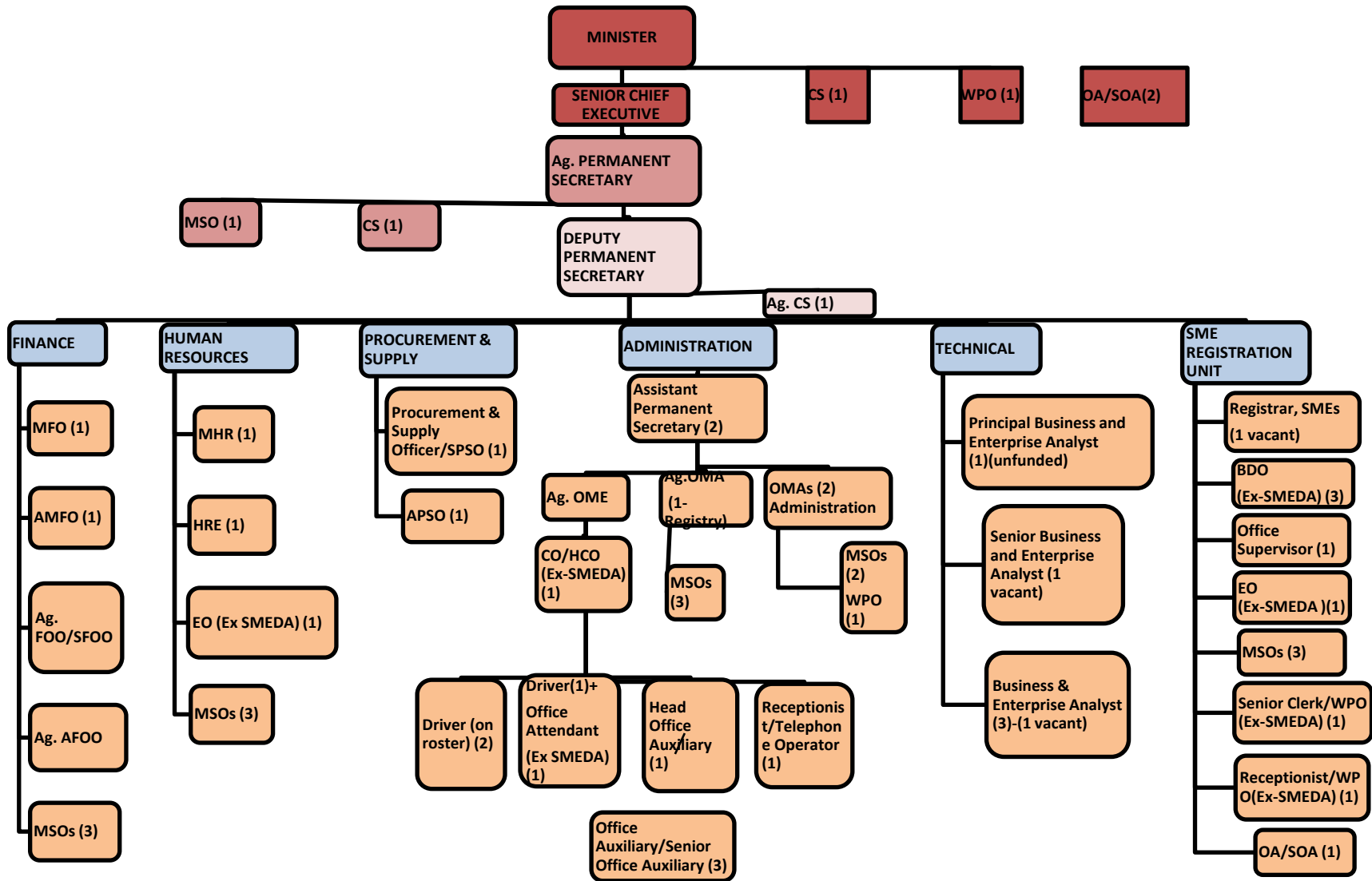
issue of Certificate of Registration to SMEs and provision of business facilitation services. The organisation chart of the Ministry is at Appendix.

Support Staff

One intern employed under the Service to Mauritius Programme and two trainees under the Youth Employment Programme are posted at this Division to provide support as well as to enhance their employability on the labour market. One Computer Support Officer/Senior Computer Support Officer from the Central Information Systems Division and one Safety and Health Officer/Senior Safety and Health Officer from the Occupational Safety and Health Division are posted on a twice and half day weekly basis respectively.



Ministry of Industrial Development (SMEs) and Cooperatives (SMEs Division)
Organigram as at 30 June 2024



1.6.1 MANAGEMENT TEAM

Designation	Name	Tel No	E-mail address
ADMINISTRATION			
Senior Chief Executive	Mr Mohammad Salim Ferhat JOOMUN (as from 22 April 2024)	Phone: 2603824 (thr' CS) Fax: 2105297	mjoomun@govmu.org
Acting Permanent Secretary	Mr Raj Kishore BUNJUN	Phone: 405 3157 (thr' CS) Fax: 2144152	rbunjun@govmu.org
Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mr Rajesh HUMATH	Phone: 405 3129 (thr' CS) Fax: 2139169	rhumath@govmu.org
Assistant Permanent Secretary	(1) Mr Muhammad Ziyaad MADARBOKUS (2) Mrs Nirma Devi ARJUNAN	Phone: 4053108 Phone:4053118 Fax: 2139176	mzmadarbokus@govmu.mu narjunan@govmu.org
HUMAN RESOURCES			
Manager, Human Resources	Mr Abdool Shamad BHEEKHOO	Phone: 405 3113 Fax: 2141487	abheekhoo@govmu.org
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS			
Manager, Financial Operations	Mrs Savita BOODHNA	Phone: 405 3115 Fax: 2139159	saboodhna@govmu.org
OFFICE ACCOMODATION/TRANSPORT			
Acting Office Management Executive	Mrs Lalita BUNDHOOA	Phone: 405 3126 Fax: 2139176	mbundhooa@govmu.org
PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY SECTION			
Procurement and Supply Officer/Senior Procurement and Supply Officer	Mrs Meenakshi Devi KHAYTOO	Phone: 405 3116 Fax: 2144154	mkhaytoo@govmu.org
REGISTRY			
Acting Office Management Assistant	Mrs Sookrani CHUTTARSING	Phone: 405 3120 Fax: 2139176	schuttarsing@govmu.org

TECHNICAL UNIT			
Business and Enterprise Analyst	(1)Miss Thaneshwaree RAMNARAIN	Phone: 405 3121	tramnarain@govmu.org
	(2)Mrs Varsha VEERAMAH-RAMIAH	Phone: 405 3122	vveeramah@govmu.org
SME REGISTRATION UNIT			
Officer in Charge	Mrs Bhooneshwaree BHUNDOO (as from 01 July 2023)	Phone: 202 0042 Fax: 2125760	bbhundoo@govmu.org
Business Development Officer (Ex-SMEDA)	Mr Lorga Pragessen SORNUM	Phone: 202 0050	Isornum@govmu.org
	Mr Soobeeraj NOWBUTSING		snowbutsing@govmu.org

Table 1: List of Head of Sections

1.6.2 Human Resources

As at 30 June 2024, the SMEs Division had a workforce of 65 officers as follows:

SN	CLASSIFICATION	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1	Administrative Cadre	4	1	5
2	Financial Operations Cadre	0	3	3
3	Human Resources Cadre	1	1	2
4	Procurement and Supply Cadre	0	2	2
5	Technical Cadre	7	4	11
6	General Services Staff	5	22	27
7	Workmen's class	6	4	10
8	Trainees under the Service to Mauritius and Youth Employment Programme	1	2	3
9	Advisers (up to 13 February 2024)	1	1	2
	Total	25	40	65

Table 2: Human Resources as at 30 June 2024

The gender distribution is shown below:

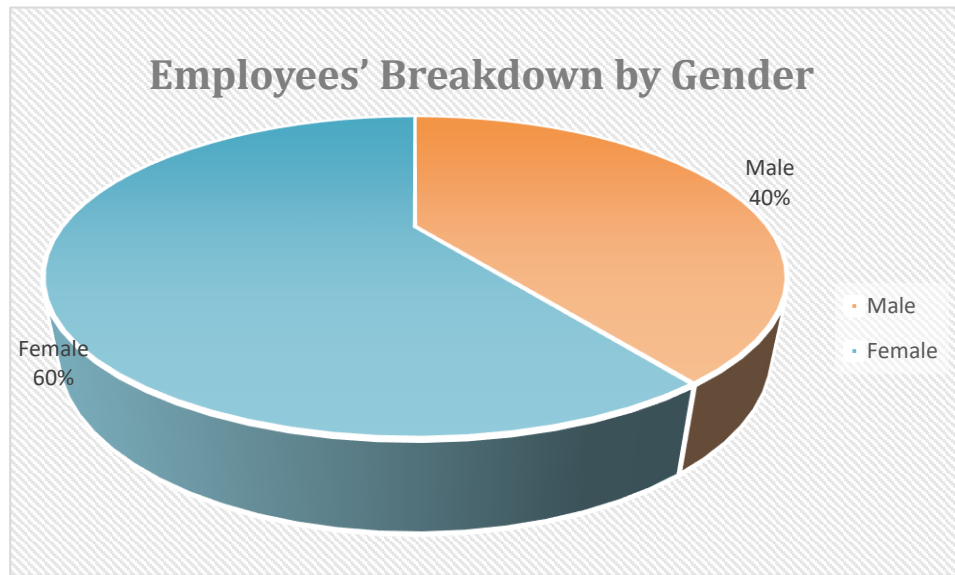


Figure 3: Employees Gender Distribution

1.6.3 Human Resource Training and Development

The SMEs Division firmly believes that training is closely associated with personal development and that it contributes to enhancing organizational effectiveness.

In this respect, employees were enrolled on training and capacity building programmes, both locally and overseas during the period under review. They benefited from local courses offered by the MPSAIR in collaboration with the Civil Service College, Mauritius as well from in-house training. The administrative and technical staff also benefitted from training courses abroad.

1.6.4 Local Training and Capacity Building Programmes

The following training courses were dispensed by the Civil Service College, Mauritius (CSCM) and list of training courses attended by officers of this Division at the CSCM is as follows:

Sn	Training Programme	Participants
1	2-day Training Programme on "Implementing OSH Management System - A Practical Approach"	1
2	5th Privacy Symposium Africa , at the Caudan Arts Centre, Port Louis.	1
3	Capacity building of Green cells	2
4	Essential of Psychology and counselling Techniques	2
5	Fire Safety and Fire Risk Management	2
6	Foundation course for Newly Recruited Management Support Officers	1
7	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) framework	3
8	Leadership	1
9	Leadership and Management Training Programme for Frontline/Supervisory/ Technical Cadre	2
10	Managing Risk at the Workplace	4
11	Operation and Processes Management Training Programme for Support Staff	4

12	Professional Development Programme for OA/SOA/HOA	2
13	Professional Development Programme for SWPO/WPO	1
14	Public Services Training Programme for workmen's Group	2
15	Safety and Health in the Workplace	1
16	Strategic Management and Leadership Programme for Middle Management	3
17	Training Combat on the combat against Alcohol consumption at the work place	2
18	Training Course on Advanced Microsoft Excel	2
19	Training Course on Bid Preparation and Evaluation	2
20	Training Course on Budget Preparation and Costing	1
21	Training Course on Effective Performance Appraisal	3
22	Training course on Essential of Psychology and counselling Techniques Batch 1	1
23	Training Course on Five case Model Foundation	1
24	Training Course on Fundamentals of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)	1
25	Training Course on Standard Defensive Driving	1
26	Training Course on Stress Management and Mental Health	1
27	Training on "Safety and Health in Practice" for Office Auxiliaries/ Senior Office Auxiliaries	2
28	Training on Improving Public Sector Governance through Audit Committee	3
29	Training Programme on " Managing Safely for for Line Managers (Officer-in-Charge of worksites/ Outstations)	2
30	Training Programme - Safety and Health in the Workplace	1
31	Training Session in line with Continuous Professional Development	1
32	Training Session on TikTok Online Safety	1
33	Training on Business Continuity Plan	8
	TOTAL	65

Figure 3 : Local Training Programmes



Training on Business Continuity Plan

1.6.5 Overseas Training and Capacity Building Programmes

Four officers from the Administrative Cadre and Technical Unit followed training abroad and which was fully sponsored by the ITEC and other organisations.

Sn	Programmes	Category	Number of Employees	Duration	Country
1	Training course 'SME Development for African Countries	Administrative	1	19-29 September 2023	Malaysia
2	Training course 'SME Development for African Countries	Administrative	1	11-19 September 2023	Malaysia
3	Training on the Development of the Regional Leather value chain through the identification of opportunities for Intra-Regional Trade and collaboration among Member states, held back-to-back with a workshop to VA	Administrative	1	18-22 March 2024	Johannesburg, S.Africa
4	Invitation to participate in a Regional Policy Dialogue on Leveraging Local Content Policies and Frameworks to accelerate Growth and Sustainable Development of MSMEs in Southern Africa in Maseru, Lesotho on 17th and 18th October 2023	Technical	1	17-18 October 2023	Maseru, Lesotho
5	Seminar on construction of Small Commodity Markets for Developing countries	Technical	1	8-21 May 2024	China
6	Regional Workshop on Women's Financial inclusion and Economic Empowerment	Technical	1	13-14 November 2023	Johannesburg, S.Africa
7	Training on the Development of the Regional Leather value chain through the identification of opportunities for Intra-Regional Trade and collaboration among Member states, held back-to-back with a workshop to VA	Technical	1	18-22 March 2024	Johannesburg, S.Africa

A Table 3: Training Programme abroad

1.7 SME REGISTRATION UNIT

The SME Registration Unit was set up following the promulgation of the SME Act 2017 on 18 January 2018.

Registration Certificates are issued within 7 working days after duly completed applications are received in accordance with provisions of the SME Act 2017;



1. All data collected from SMEs are treated with strict confidentiality; and
2. The SME Registration Unit is operating an online registration platform for SMEs since October 2019. Since its inception, 24,751 online applications have been received and processed. For Financial Year 2023-2024, 4146 online applications were received and processed, out of which 3628 Registration Certificates have been issued. The online system has considerably reduced processing time of applications.

1.7.1 MAIN LEGISLATIONS

The SME sector operates within the framework of the Small and Medium Enterprises Act 2017.

Total Number of SMEs registered by Gender FY 2022-23				
Gender	Mauritius	Rodrigues	Total	%
Male	2000	54	2054	57
Female	1506	68	1574	43
Total	3506	122	3628	100

For the Financial Year 2023-24, 3 6 2 8 SMEs were registered; 2 0 5 4 Males (Including 54 Rodrigues) and 1574 Females (Including 68 Rodrigues).

As percentage, it can be seen on the table as 57% of males and 43% of females were registered as SMEs in the FY 2023-24.

Total certificates issued for the same were 3628.

Total Number of applications received for 2022-23: 4146.

1.7.2 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS

Delivery Unit	Main Service	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2023/24	Achievement at 30 June 2024	Remarks
SMEs Division	Facilitate the development of SMEs	Number of new SMEs registered	2250	2362	Target achieved
		Number of jobs created by newly registered SMEs	3600	2206	Majority of startups are creating self-employment jobs
SME Mauritius Ltd	Provide support to SMEs	Number of SMEs assisted through SME support schemes	700	812	

1.8 OVERVIEW OF STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISE OPERATING UNDER THE PURVIEW OF THE MINISTRY

SME Mauritius Ltd is a private company wholly owned by the Government of Mauritius, incorporated in July 2017. It is responsible for the empowerment of SMEs to help them emerge and grow by implementing support programs that enhance their competitiveness.

2.0 MINISTRY'S ACHIEVEMENTS-ACHIEVEMENT OF THE SMES DIVISION

The main achievement of the SMEs Division for Financial Year 2023-2024 is as follows-

2.1 ONLINE BUSINESS DIRECTORY OF SMES

The Ministry embarked on the introduction of an online Business Directory of SMEs categorized by sector and district to enable the business continuity and the public to easily, contact, locate and interact via online technology.

The SME e-Directory is an initiative of the SME Division to promote the products/service of SMEs. It is a vital marketing tool that increases the visibility of SMEs and enables them to obtain orders from individuals as well as the private sector, SME Associations and Government bodies.

- This Directory has been conceptualised in categories (30) of activities and on a district wise basis. As at date, the GOC has already migrated a list of 8,634 SMEs. It can be accessed under the URL <https://smesdb.govmu.org>.
- The e-Directory is a laudable milestone in the process of business transformation of the Public Service. It provides an easy-to-access platform for business facilitation to SMEs free of charge.
- Graduate students can also have access to this platform and carry out surveys on the SME sector for their dissertation or any other research works.

The main benefits of the SME e-Directory are as follows –

- It is a practical tool for ventilation of information on SMEs.
- Gives users timely and coherent information.
- It is also a cost-effective way to build a presence in the local market place.
- It is available to the public on a 24/7 basis.
- It also gives a global reach
- It helps in promoting the activities of SMEs and also provide them with an onlinepresence where the reachability is easier.

3.0 Events

3.1 Journée Internationale des PME 2023

- La Journée Internationale des Micro, Petites et Moyennes Entreprises célébrée le 27 juin.
- PME jouent un rôle économique majeur.
- Contribuent à réduire le chômage.
- Stimulent la croissance et l'innovation.
- Favorisent l'émergence de nouveaux marchés et de nouveaux secteurs.
- Cette année, le thème porte sur l'entrepreneuriat des femmes et des jeunes et la résilience des chaînes d'approvisionnement.
- A Maurice : PME contribuent 44% à l'emploi national, 34.9% à la Valeur Ajoutée Brute.
- Aujourd'hui 1^{ère} activité en marge de la Journée Internationale des PME.
- Remise de certificats à 37 participants qui ont suivi des cours dispensés par SME Mauritius Ltd : création de bijoux, la pâtisserie et l'aquaponie.
- Exposition des bijoux et gâteaux confectionnés par les stagiaires pour démontrer leurs connaissances nouvellement acquises.
- 2^{ème} activité prévue demain, mardi 27 juin à SME Mauritius de Coromandel : Atelier de travail sur les facilités pour accéder aux marchés externes.
- Le Gouvernement, le Ministère et SME Mauritius Ltd multiplient les efforts pour promouvoir une culture entrepreneuriale dans le pays.
- Le Budget 2023/2024 est encore une fois preuve de l'importance accordée à ce secteur.
- Encourager et privilégier la production locale.
- L'accès aux financements a grandement amélioré ces dernières années avec des plans dédiés par la DBM.
- L'accès aux nouvelles technologies : plans de financement IFCM et des *grants* disponibles à SME Mauritius Ltd.
- L'accès à la main d'œuvre : procédure simplifiée comme annoncée dans le Budget 2023/24.

- Le *SME Employment Scheme* est en place.
- La formation continue : un pilier important. Plusieurs cours offerts dans les différentes branches de SME Mauritius Ltd.
- L'objectif: encourager l'émergence des PME et consolider les opérations des entreprises.



3.2 Salon des PME au Kendra Shopping Mall – St Pierre 29 Septembre 2023

Mesures pour soutenir les PME

- SME Mauritius, institution de support pour les entrepreneurs.
- Plusieurs plans d'aide.
- Demande aux entrepreneurs de profiter des plans d'aides.
- Les PME restent un des principaux moteurs de notre économie : Contribution 40% GVA et 46% à l'emploi.
- La performance des PME est importante pour le développement social et économique du pays.



3.3 Global Entrepreneurship Week 2023, SME Mauritius Coromandel, 13 Novembre 2023

Il s'agit d'une célébration annuelle au mois de Novembre qui vise à promouvoir la culture de l'entrepreneuriat et à encourager la création d'entreprises.

Cette année, ce thème distinct est mis à l'honneur : « Développer des solutions innovantes pour un avenir meilleur et prometteur ».

Tout un programme d'activités a été élaboré par SME Mauritius pour célébrer l'excellence et l'innovation dans le monde de l'entrepreneuriat.



3.4 Cérémonie de remise de certificats aux stagiaires de Social Entrepreneurship Program, 20 Novembre 2023 au Farmers Service Centre – 10h30

Points forts du discours du ministre du Développement Industriel, des PME et des Coopératives, Hon. Soomilduth Bholah

- Remise de certificats à 69 participants de Social Entrepreneurship Program de SME Mauritius Ltd.
- Formation dispensée en collaboration de l'Academy of Design and Innovation dans le domaine de la couture.
- 10 sessions de formations dans 8 centres sociaux (15 villages) de ces régions du Nord:
 - Amaury ;
 - Rivière du Rempart ;
 - Triolet ;
 - Petite Julie ;
 - Pamplemousses ;
 - Mont Goût ;
 - Pointe aux Piment ; et
 - Plaine des Papayes



3.5 Cérémonie de remise de certificats aux stagiaires de Social Entrepreneurship Program, 20 Novembre 2023 au Farmers Service Centre – 10h30

- L'objectif est de promouvoir l'entrepreneuriat. Devenir indépendante. Création d'emplois. Autonomisation.
- SME Mauritius qui met en place une série de formations dans plusieurs domaines à travers ses différents bureaux.
- SME Mauritius Ltd et ses formateurs sont là pour vous donner les techniques appropriées.



In February 2024, Hon. Naveena Ramyad, was sworn in as the new Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives.

3.6 Invitation à L'Assemblée Générale Annuelle de l'Association des Manufacturers Mauriciens, 25 Avril 2024



3.7 International MSME Day 2024, 27 June 2024



3.8 Courtesy Visit of Indian Delegation, SMEs Division, 16 July 2024



4.0 PROJECTS AND SCHEME OF THE MINISTRY

a) Consultancy Services on "Enhancement of the Leather Value Chain in the Republic of Mauritius"

With a view to enhancing the leather value chain from the sourcing of quality skin and hides to export of quality leather and leather-related products to niche regional and international markets, the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (SMEs Division) has enlisted the assistance of the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALLPI) to carry out a Consultancy Services on "Enhancement of the Leather Value Chain in the Republic of Mauritius"

The objectives of the project are to:

- identify international suppliers within the African continent from which Mauritius can source good quality raw hides and skins; and
- identify potential markets worldwide, including in Africa, for the export of Mauritian leather and leather- related products.

The Report is being finalised by ALLPI.

b) Setting up of Mini Fruit Processing Plant for SMEs and Cooperatives

In line with the Import Substitution Strategy to boost up local production and decrease import of consumables, the SMEs Division is encouraging SMEs to reduce wastage of seasonal fruits and develop value added products.

In Budget 2024/2025, an amount of **Rs 3 Million** has been earmarked under the National Resilience Fund for this project.

A financial grant of 50 percent (up to a maximum grant of Rs One Million), will be

provided to selected SMEs/ Cooperative Societies to cover only the cost of equipment and machinery procured to set up the Plant.

c) Implementation of an Integrated IT System for SMEs in Mauritius

The SMEs Division of this Ministry has embarked on an Integrated IT System for SMEs. The project aims at harmonising all data available on SMEs on a common platform and obtaining real time data and statistics to enhance service delivery and to enable policy makers to devise and formulate effective policies for SMEs. From capturing information on incorporated companies with the Corporate and Business Registration Department (CBRD) to online application and registration of entrepreneurs at the SME Registration Unit as well as gaining information on submission of tax returns by entrepreneurs to the Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA) would be starting points for data collection on SMEs.

The common IT system would be linked, inter-alia, with the systems of the CBRD and the MRA so that consistent data and statistics on SMEs are easily made available to policy makers for effective decision-making.

The SMEs Division had enlisted the services of a Consultant, namely the BDO IT Consulting Ltd for the digital transformation of the management of SMEs business process of the SMEs Division. A contract was signed on 17 April 2023 between the BDO IT Consulting Ltd and the Ministry. The BDO IT Consulting Ltd submitted its report for the Supply, Customization, Installation & Post Go-Live Support of an Integrated IT System for SMEs in March 2024.

The contract for the development of the IT system has been awarded to State Informatics Ltd and the design works are ongoing.

d) Grant for Potato Processing Scheme

An amount of Rs 5 million had been earmarked for financial year 2023/2024, under the National Resilience Fund for the Potato Processing Scheme. The objective was to convert locally produced potatoes into value added agricultural products such as potato chips, potato wedges, potato French fries, etc. In this respect, this Division had launched an Expression of Interest (EOI) on 06 November 2023, to invite potential Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)/Cooperative Societies willing to engage in potato processing. Two applications were received on 30 November 2023.

A financial grant (up to a maximum of Rs 300,000) would be provided to the two selected applicants to cover 50 percent of the cost of equipment and machinery only, to be procured to set up the production line. Letter of Intents were issued to the two applicants on 13 March 2024. They have been requested to inform this Ministry of the readiness of their plants following which site visits would be effected by officers of this Ministry. Upon compliance to all conditions as per the Letter of Intends, grants would be released accordingly.

5.0 STATUS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF BUDGET MEASURES

5.1 STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS

Delivery Unit	Main Service	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2021/22	Achievement at 30 Jun 2022	Remarks
SMEs Division	Facilitate the development of SMEs	Number of new SMEs registered	1,900	2,211	Target achieved
		Number of jobs created by newly registered SMEs	3,200	2,304	Majority of startups are creating self-employment jobs
SME Mauritius Ltd	Provide support to SMEs	Number of SMEs assisted through SME support schemes	700	812	

5.2 RISK MANAGEMENT, CITIZEN ORIENTED INITIATIVES AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

5.2.1 ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

The Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives (SMEs Division) is committed to maintaining the highest level of integrity in the conduct of its affairs through the adoption of appropriate corruption prevention strategies.

It is, in this context, that an Anti-Corruption Policy (ACP) was formulated at the level of this Division in December 2016, setting out its full commitment for the detection of corruption and for adherence to a culture of integrity.

For the purpose of ensuring sound implementation of this policy, the SMEs Division

ensures through its Anti-Corruption Committee that:

- employees have sufficient knowledge concerning the Anti-Corruption Policy (ACP) and that it is applied to all undertakings;
- adequate controls are in place to counteract corruption are known and used within the organization; and
- there are clear procedures and systems for handling suspected cases of corruption.

At the last Anti-Corruption Committee, it was decided that the Anti-Corruption policy be made available on the website of the Ministry. Further to that, it was also emphasized that a “No Gift Policy” be affixed on the wall in all Departments and at the reception counter of the SMEs Division.

Status as at 23 August 2023

- The “No Gift Policy ” has already been affixed on the wall in all Departments and at the reception counter of the SMEs Division.

5.2.2 RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

5.2.2.1 Control over Non-Financial Assets

The Ministry has put in place adequate control over non-financial assets in order to ensure judicious use of public funds.

5.2.2.2 Risk Management Framework

Since 17 May 2024, the SMEs Division has signed the Risk Management Policy which has been developed by the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development.

6.0 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

6.1 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

In accordance with Budget Estimates 2023-2024, the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs & Cooperatives (Small & Medium Enterprises Division) had for the Financial Year one Vote under its control namely 10-1 but with 2 sub-heads –10- 101 and 10-103.

6.2 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Overall Expenditure by Vote.

An amount of Rs133,900M was provided to the Ministry (Small & Medium Enterprises Division) in Budget 2023/2024 out of which Rs121,356M was spent.

6.3 STATEMENT OF EXPENDITURE

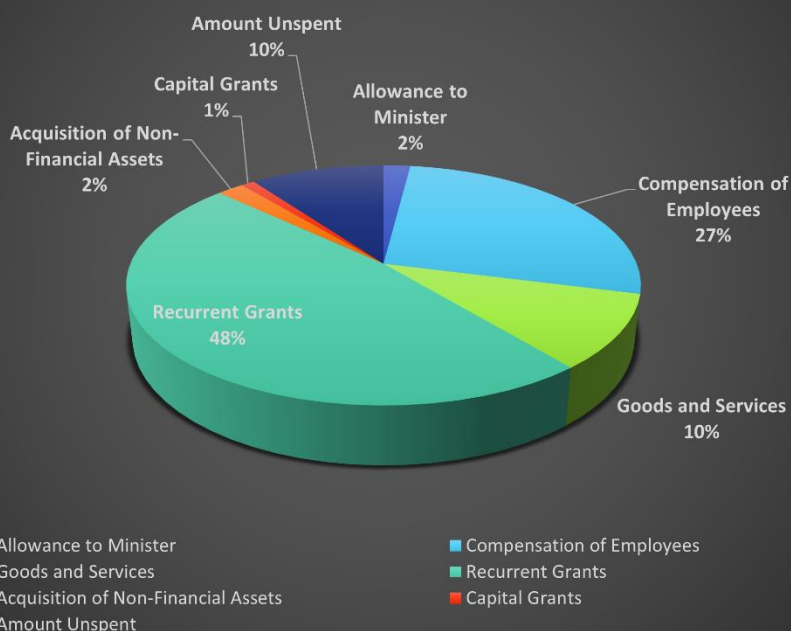
The Statement of Expenditure has been prepared according to the data obtained from the Treasury Accounting System (TAS).

Table below provides a summary of total expenditure incurred by the SMEs Division under Vote 10-1 which includes Sub-Heads 10-101: General and 10-103: Small & Medium Enterprises Division.

Statement of Expenditure under Vote 10-1

Sub-Head of Expenditure	2023/2024 Estimates (Rs)	2023/2024 Actual (Rs)
10-101: General	46,100,000	37,495,587
Allowance to Minister	2,400,000	2,400,000
Compensation of Employees	19,700,000	17,776,052
Goods and Services	19,800,000	13,514,709
Grants	800,000	663,311
Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	3,400,000	3,141,515
10-103: Small and Medium Enterprises	87,800,000	83,860,669
Compensation of Employees	22,300,000	18,360,669
Recurrent Grants (Operating Budget of SME Mauritius Ltd only)	64,000,000	64,000,000
Capital Grants	1,500,000	1,500,000

Expenditure Incurred by Small and Medium Enterprise Division- FY 2023/2024



Percentage is based on Actual Expenditure FY 2023/2024 category-wise over Total Expenditure FY 2023/2024.

Allowance to Minister, Compensation of Employees, Goods and Services, Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets and Grants accounted for around 90 % of Total Expenditure.

Compensation of Employees is made up of Basic Salary, Salary Compensation, Allowances, Extra Assistance, Cash in Lieu of Leave, End-of-year Bonus, Travelling and Transport, Overtime, Staff Welfare and Social Contributions.

Goods and Services are mainly recurrent expenses incurred and include Cost of Utilities, Fuel and Oil, Rent, Office Equipment and Furniture, Office Expenses,

Maintenance of Buildings, Plant & Equipment, Vehicles & Motorcycles and IT Equipment, Cleaning Services, Publications and Stationery, Fees, Travelling within the Republic and Other Goods and Services such as Uniforms, Miscellaneous expenses and Gender Mainstreaming.

Grants refer to funds provided to SME Mauritius Ltd which consists of the Operating Budget and Capital Expenditure.

7.0 WAY FORWARD

7.1 TRENDS AND CHALLENGES

The situation created by the global pandemic and geopolitical conflicts, coupled with natural disasters, has reshaped the international trade environment leading to major changes in the way businesses are conducted. There is a need to further leverage on the opportunities presented by the use of digital technology in order to promote the products and services in potential markets. Government is constantly providing the necessary support for the SME sector to be equipped with the right skills and become more resilient in the face of daunting challenges.

7.2 TRENDS

The worldwide developments that are drastically bringing forward major alteration in the SME sector include: -

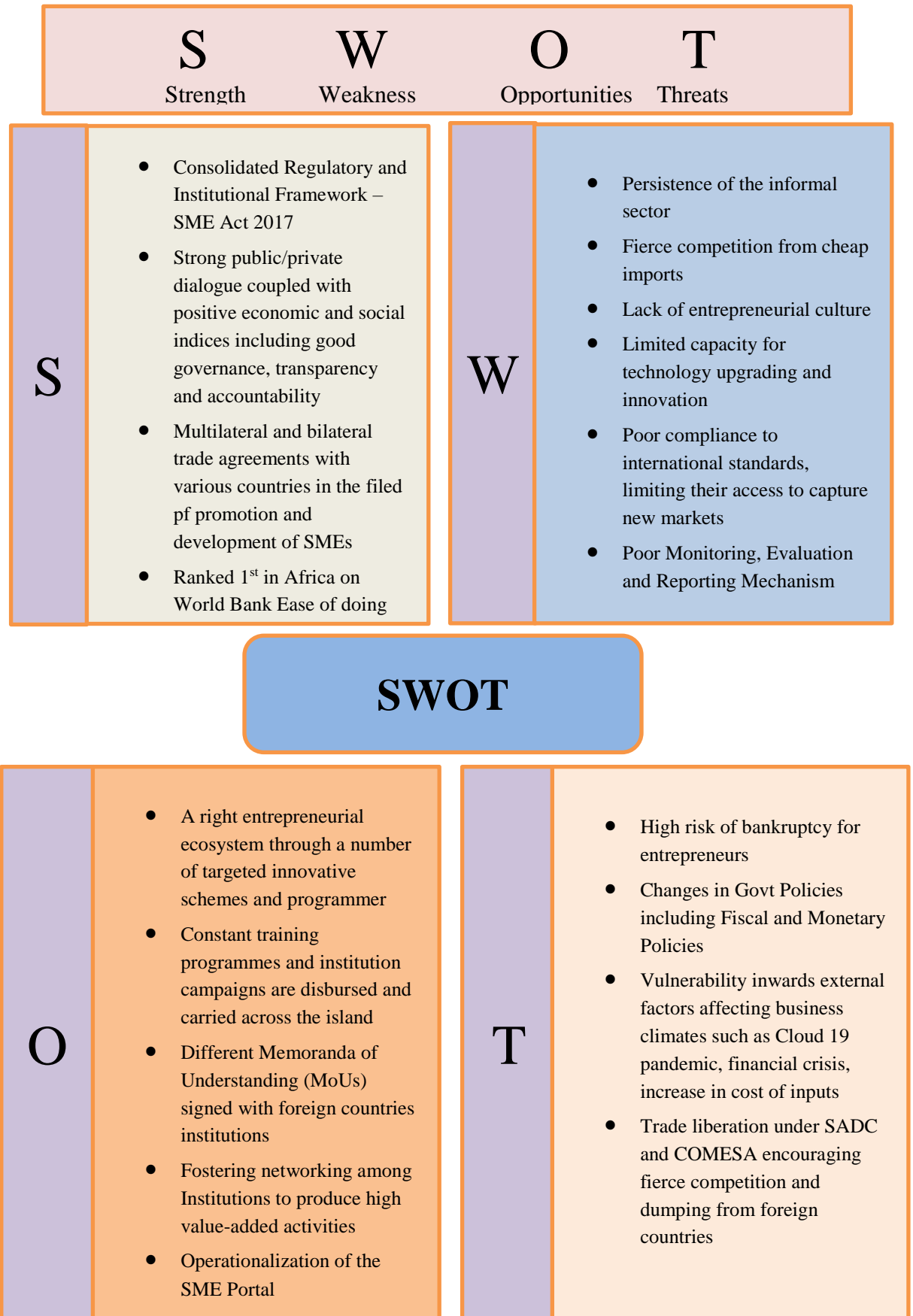
- Restructuration of business models to adapt to the new normal and the re-training of employees to enhance product/service delivery.
- Widespread changes in work environment resulting in employees working from home.
- Greater harnessing on innovative technologies for service delivery.
- Implementation of Quality Standards in their processes to meet international norms.
- Enhancement of ability of SMEs to weave in the global business market due to increased competitiveness.

7.3 CHALLENGES

The new economic challenges have brought in their wake major disruptions in economic activities worldwide. Mauritius has been no exception and this has had severe impacts on the productivity of our SMEs. The major challenges that could impact our SMEs in these testing times are –

- Decrease in business activities in international markets as a fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine and Middle East conflicts
- Increase in cost of production due to shortages of raw materials and rising cost of imports of raw materials
- Reduction in competitiveness due to hiking fuel prices leading to increase in freight charges
- Fluctuating exchange rates
- Geographical instabilities

8.0 SWOT ANALYSIS



9.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The MSME sector in Mauritius is at the crossroad of economic prosperity. Government is proving various incentives for the development of the MSME sector. The new poles of development would invariably involve the extensive use of digitalisation technologies and renewable energy sources.

10.0 CONCLUSION

Over the years, the SMEs Division has implemented policies to make growth stronger and more inclusive for the creation of an enabling market environment for SMEs and to strengthen the entrepreneurial spirit. These policies have helped the country make great strides in its efforts to support youth, combat unemployment, and enable the private sector to drive economic growth. Having a healthy, vibrant, barrier-free SME ecosystem is critical to economic development.

The SMEs Division will pursue its tireless efforts in a holistic approach to address the main constraints of SMEs by supporting the diversification of the local economy and promoting the growth of a vibrant and resilient SME ecosystem.