GCAP-Mauritius


Friday 17 September, 2021.
Port Louis, Mauritius.

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Introduction

On the 17th September 2021, Halley Movement, under the auspices of Global Call Against Action of Poverty (GCAP) organised a National Mobilisation towards participation in the Global Week of Action 2021. The National Dialogue, hosted by Halley Movement, was a physical meeting. It started with opening remarks by Mauritius GCAP Representative, the President of Halley Movement Coalition and the CEO of Helpline Mauritius. Plenary and group work sessions together with a closing remark were in the agenda. The Dialogue was attended by thirty (30) participants.

One of our priorities on this day was the health and well-being of our participants as well as our staff. Temperature check was taken at the entrance and in the beginning. Social distancing was being maintained during the day, including the opening, the plenary and the ending sessions. Everyone wore their face masks and hand sanitizers were being kept on each table. Mauritius GCAP provided participants with face masks.

Participants were being provided with stationeries. Each participant was entitled with food and refreshment on this day.

Creole, the mother tongue of Mauritius and French Language were used on 17th September 2021.

Mobilisation activities prior to the national dialogue

GCAP-Mauritius has always been on the outlook to provide visibility of GCAP’s mission in Mauritius. The various stakeholders including the State, Private sector, Academia, CSOs and the Media have always been included in our community-based actions.

The Secretariat, given the past experience in our advocacy sessions, has taken advantage of our position and has involved the regional community leaders to identify the participants for our event. Informal meetings were scheduled to confirm venue and related facilities, identify local volunteers to work with us and take stock of facilities that would be provided to the participants.
Profile of the Participants: (Total number – 30)

- Young Leaders
- Women
- Older people
- Persons with disabilities
- Marginalised and Rural groups

Workshop Objectives

The National dialogue was hosted to discuss the following:

1. The way forward to COVID-19 pandemic
2. Listening to the demands of the communities
3. Enforce the global GCAP mission

Brief Description of the agenda

- Opening Session Speakers:
  a) Mr. Mahendranath Busgopaul, Mauritius GCAP Representative
  b) Mr. Jay Prakash Gour, President of Halley Movement Coalition
  c) Ms. Anne law Chen Feng, CEO, Helpline Mauritius.

- Plenary Session:
  a) Ms Preetisha Babajee – COVID-19 Pandemic
  b) Ms Ashna Armat – Community leaders and the SDGs
  c) Mr. Mahendranath Busgopaul – Vision of GCAP and its mission in Mauritius.

- Group Work Session

The participants were divided into two sessions with the following questions:

a) Success of SDGs in Mauritius
b) Communities’ role in taking forward the SDGs.

- Evaluation & Closing Ceremony

After lunch the session came to a close with closing remarks by Mr. Mahendranath Busgopaul
National Dialogue’s agenda

Opening Ceremony

During the Opening Session, Mr Mahendranath Busgopaul gave an outline of the work of GCAP and Mauritius GCAP. He pointed out the GCAP Mauritius Statement on COVID 19. In addition to this, he also mentioned about the consequences of the Covid-19 and the curfew order that had serious impact on economic and social issues.

On the other hand, Mr Jay Prakash Gour gave a brief overview of Halley Movement’s activities and programs. He mentioned about Halley Movement Coalition and the different projects the coalition has embarked on.

Ms Anne Law Cheng Feng, introduced herself by giving a nice presentation and speech on *Helpline Mauritius*. She talked about the service, which raises awareness of children and communities about their rights, provide phone guidance and support to children and parents.

Plenary Sessions

The plenary sessions were based on three (3) topics by three different presenters. Some key points to be noted here are as follows:

1. **Covid-19 Pandemic**

   Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age.

   The speaker also pointed out about the best way to prevent and slow down transmission about the disease and how the virus can be spread. She advised the participants to protect themselves and others from infection by staying at least 1 metre apart from others, wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently. Getting vaccinated was a good idea.

   She elaborated about how the virus can spread from an infected person’s mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. These particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. It is important to practice respiratory etiquette, for example by coughing into a flexed elbow, and to stay home and self-isolate until you recover if you feel unwell.
2. **Community Leaders and the SDGs.**

Ms Arnat gave an informative presentation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She pointed at all the 17 goals then pointed out the SDG 1: No poverty. She gave a definition of the SDG by mentioning that more than 700 million people, or 10% of the world population, still live in extreme poverty and is struggling to fulfil the most basic needs like health, education, and access to water and sanitation, to name a few. SDG 1 aims to end poverty in all its forms everywhere. She pointed out to the community eluders present on that day about the role in contrast to SDG 1.

3. **Vision of GCAP and its vision in Mauritius.**

Mr Mahendranath gave a presentation of Global Call Against Action of Poverty (GCAP). He mentioned that GCAP supports people in their struggles for justice and brings individuals and organisations together to challenge the institutions and processes that perpetuate poverty and inequalities. Together, GCAP defends and promotes human rights, gender justice, social justice, climate justice and the security needed for the dignity and peace of all.

He also pointed out that GCAP played a key role the creation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has organized community and national consultations in 39 countries since 2013.

As far as GCAP’s vision in Mauritius is concerned, Mr Mahendranath stated that Halley Movement is a coalition of charitable organisations working for the welfare of children and family in Mauritius and in the southern African region. The NGO, founded in 1990, is in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Various national activities geared towards SDGs have been successfully held mobilising thousands of women, young people, parliamentarians, academia, the media and the business sector. The community-based programmes are in line towards taking forward Agenda 2030 and roping in many participants in the years to come.

Working with women, the elderly, population with disabilities, marginalized youths and homeless people are the main focus for GCAP Mauritius.

Mr Mahendranath also mentioned to the participants about the GCAP Mauritius Statement on COVID 19. Recognizing the magnitude of the pandemic and responding to COVID-19, Halley Movement Coalition adheres to the following protocol, based on the ILO policy framework to fight COVID-19 and advocates for:

- Ensure physical distancing and other precautions
- Support for COVID-19 testing and related treatment
- Protection of jobs and pay across the COVID-19 lockdown
- Support for home and care-related responsibilities
- Acting in solidarity with workers and other vulnerable communities
Group work

The National Dialogue included also two Group Sessions with two questions whereby they had to brainstorm. At the end, the participants came out with a conclusion on both questions.

Question 1: Success of SDGs in Mauritius

The group came up with SDG 1 which aimed at Ending Poverty in all its forms and derives its actions from a Marshall Plan comprising measures such as the Minimum Wage, Negative Income Tax, income support and social housing to provide relief to the weakest, especially Women.

The group work was a more collaborative one as each participant in the group shared his/her knowledge so far what he/she understands by SDGs. Some even highlighted important points mentioned during the plenary session.

Besides SDG 1: Poverty, the youth participants mentioned their views on SDG 4: Quality Education. For them, during this pandemic period, most of their school lessons are being done online on zoom and some find this mode not practical but others find it useful. Some people mentioned some challenges about connectivity and lack of internet facilities in some regions.

Question 2: Communities’ role in taking forward the SDGs.

The group recognised the work done by Halley Movement Coalition and Mauritius GCAP in taking forward the SDGS as far as communities are concerned.

A young person from this group mentioned that a sustainable community uses its resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are available for future generations.

Another person said the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a monumental global endeavour that has one major goal- to leave no one behind. Therefore, the community needs to participate in taking forward he SDGs.

The elder people present in the group were happy to be part of this National Dialogue and to listen and participate in group sessions.

Media Coverage

On this day, we had the pleasure to have amidst us in the audience for the opening session the presence of representatives from two local media. A programme of the day and a brief of Halley Movement Coalition and Mauritius GCAP were handed to both of them.