

Regional Workshop on AfCFTA

Mauritian perspectives on Trade in Services in Africa



Mrs Nirmala Jeetah

*Director, Bio Industry & Project Development, ITC
SheTrades Mauritius Hub*

 04 September 2025



Agenda

- 01 **Mauritius: A services driven economy**
- 02 **Opportunities under the AfCFTA**
- 03 **Positioning Mauritius as a regional hub**

The Mauritian Economy



Population
1.3 million



Land Mass
2,040 KM²



Exclusive Economic
Zone
**2.3 million
km²**



GDP Per Capita
(2024)
USD 11,927



GDP Growth
(2024)
4.7%



Inflation
(2024)
3.6%



Literacy Rate
91.3%



Languages
**English,
French &
Asian**



Bilateral Agreements
**46 DTAAs
28 IPPAs**



The Mauritius Advantage



A Secure Legal Jurisdiction



Conducive Business Environment

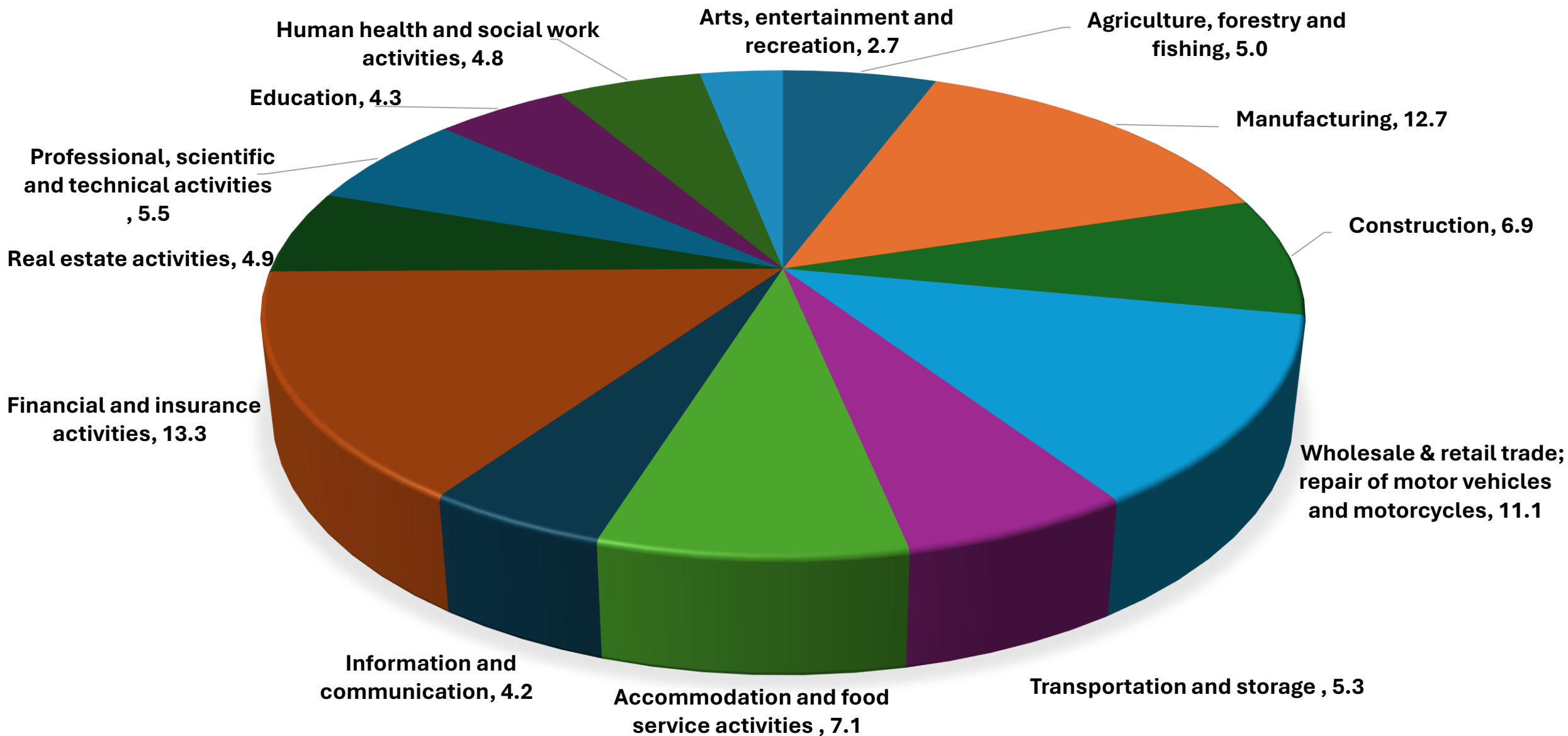


A Reliable and Expanding Logistics
Platform with Modern Infrastructure



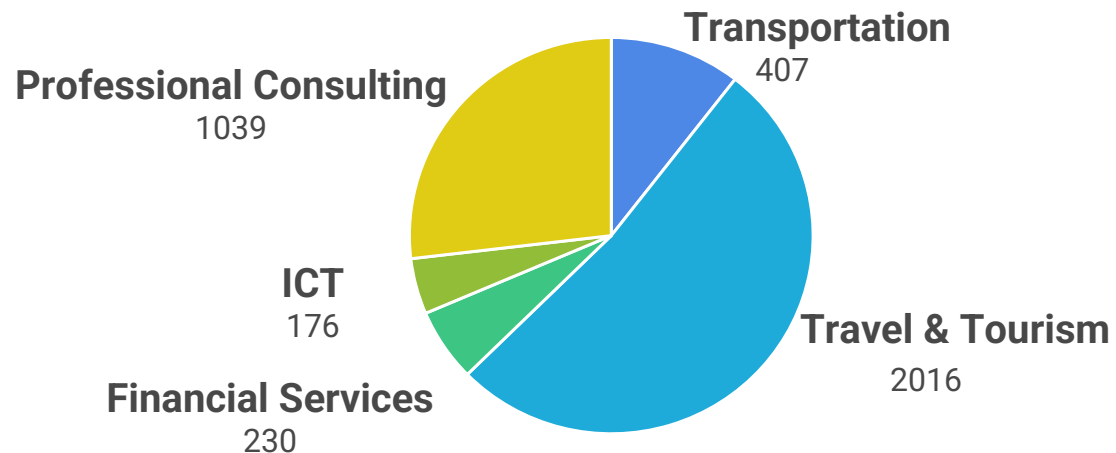
A Trusted Financial Jurisdiction

% GDP contribution 2024 – Key Economic Pillars



Mauritius: A services driven economy

Export of services (USD Million)



Breakdown of export of service 2024 source BOM

Export of services

- USD 4.2 billion
- 56% of GDP

Import of services

- USD 2.3 billion

Services exported

- Financial services
- ICT
- Tourism
- Education
- Healthcare
- Logistics and freeport
- Professional and Business Services



Africa: The New market for Trade in Services

- **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** world's largest single market, encompassing over **1.4 billion people**.
- Opportunity for Mauritius to partner with Africa - to serve as a **platform for investment, innovation, and service delivery** across the continent.



Export of services

Financial Services

- **Global Business Services:** Over 13,000 GBCs
- **Fund and Asset Management:** Fund domiciliation and management services for African-focused investment funds.
- **Fintech Solutions:** Fintech services including mobile banking platforms, digital payment systems, among others
- **Insurance and Reinsurance:** cross-border insurance and reinsurance services
- **Legal and Consulting Services:** Specialized advisory services in tax structuring, compliance, and investment facilitation

ICT and BPO

- **Customer Support & Contact Centers:** Multilingual services for telecom, finance, and retail clients across Africa.
- **IT Outsourcing (ITO):** Software development, systems integration, and infrastructure management.
- **Back-office Operations:** Accounting, HR, payroll, and data processing
- **Digital Transformation Services:** Cloud migration, cybersecurity, and digital platforms for African enterprises, payment solutions, E-commerce

Export of services

Tourism and Hospitality

- Eco-tourism, medical tourism, and cultural tourism - areas with strong potential for regional collaboration.
- Over 160,000 tourists from Africa visited Mauritius in 2024

Education and Health

- Mauritian institutions attract students and patients from across Africa, offering quality services at competitive costs.
- Over 1,000 Africans travel to Mauritius annually to receive medical treatment, particularly in the fields of cosmetic surgery, dentistry, cardiology, oncology, fertility among others.
- 4500 foreign students - 2000 come from Africa, with strong representation from Madagascar, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania.

Logistics

- Daily flights through Kenya and South Africa
- Weekly sea cargo
- 7.5 million tons of cargo handled by the port annually
- Freeport with 550,000m² of warehousing facility

Key Services Mauritius Imports from Africa

Financial Services

- ❖ Mauritius imports financial advisory, investment structuring, and banking services from South African institutions which use Mauritius as a base for regional expansion

ICT

- ❖ While Mauritius is a net exporter in ICT, it also imports **software solutions, cybersecurity services, and digital infrastructure support** from African tech hubs

Tourism and Hospitality

- ❖ Growing collaboration in **tourism development**, including **hotel management, training, and destination marketing**, particularly with South Africa and Madagascar

Education

- ❖ Mauritius engages with African partners for **vocational training, academic exchanges, and technical education services**, especially in sectors like agriculture and health

Logistics and Transport Services

- ❖ Warehousing, freight forwarding, Cold Chain Management, Transshipment, Port Services, Supply Chain

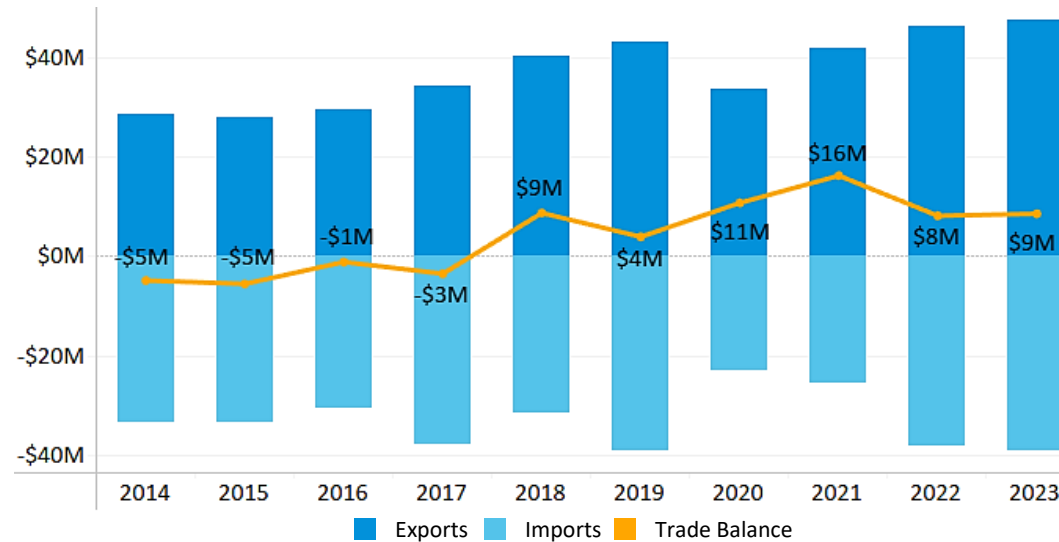
Retail and Manufacturing Support Services

- ❖ South African companies are active in **retail operations, supply chain management, and industrial services** within Mauritius

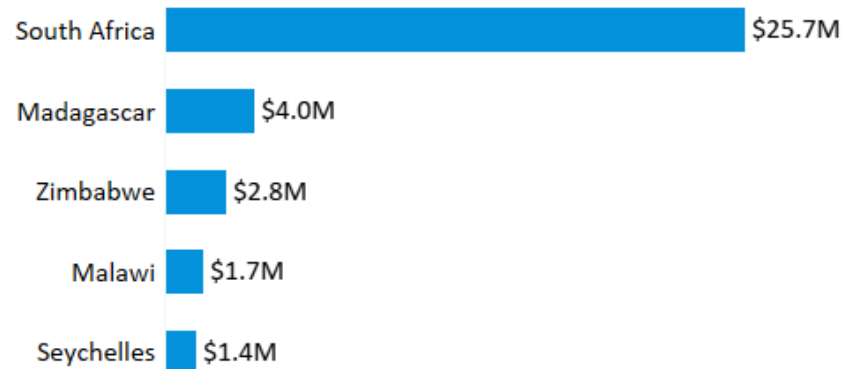
Mauritius ICT Sector in the African Market

- While Mauritius is a net exporter of ICT goods to Africa, with the majority of its exports to South Africa, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe, it also relies on imports of **Information, Computer, and Telecommunications services**, primarily from Egypt, South Africa, and Kenya.

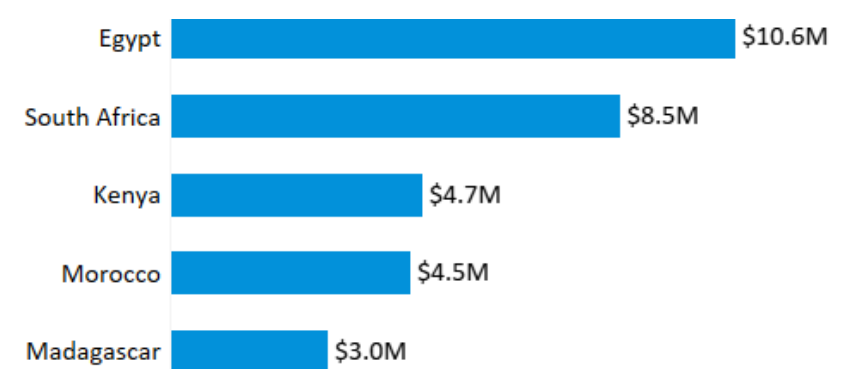
ICT services trade in Mauritius with Africa, 2014-2023



Top 5 African Destinations for Mauritius' ICT Exports, 2023



Top 5 African Sources of ICT Imports for Mauritius, 2023

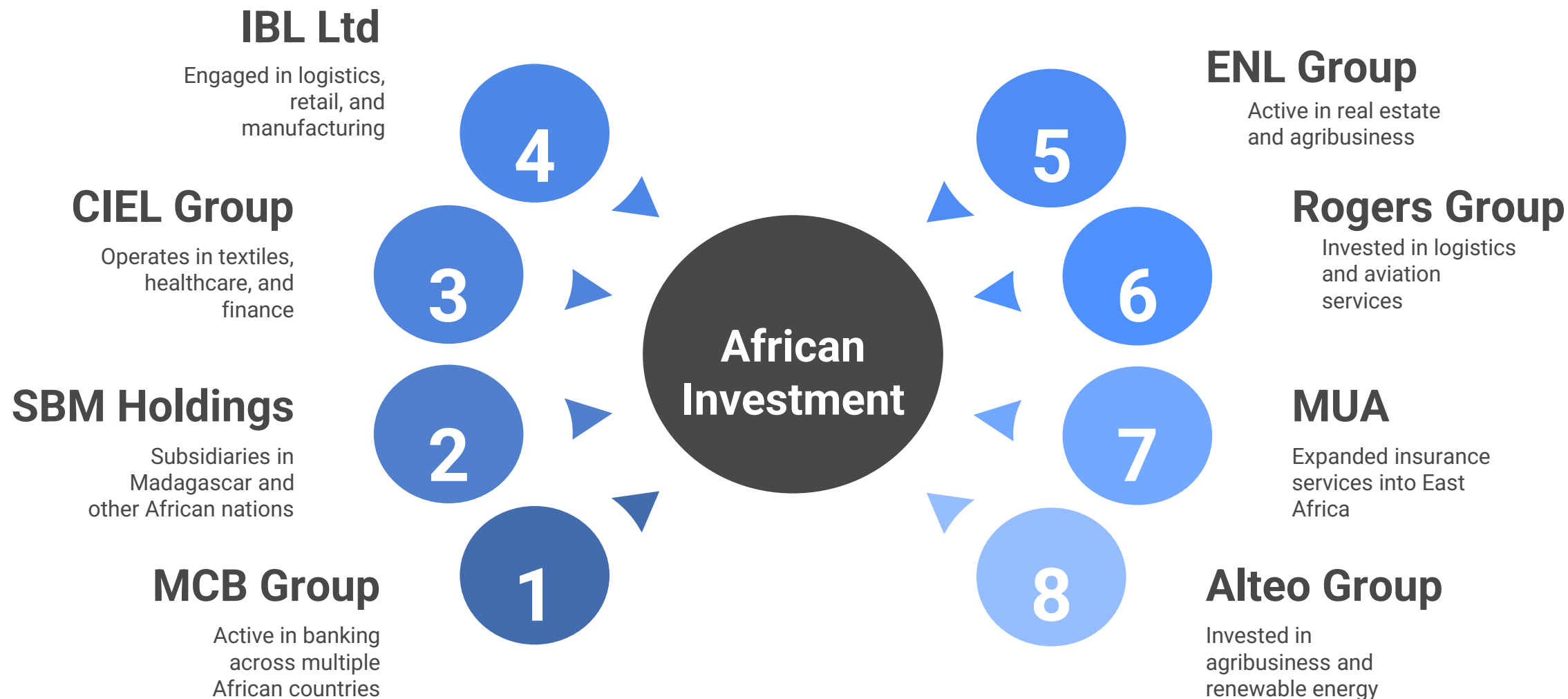


Note: Sectors considered are **Information, Computer and Telecommunications services**.

Source: IEC calculations on the basis of the WTO-OECD BaTiS database.



Companies having invested in Africa



49 Mauritian companies have invested in **14 African countries**, including Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, South Africa, and Senegal. Sectors include **agribusiness, banking, ICT, logistics, insurance, and renewable energy**

Outward Investment

- ❖ Expansion strategy of Mauritian companies in the healthcare, agro processing, ICT, Financial Services, Tourism and Hospitality
- ❖ Increase the economic space of Mauritian companies

Targeted SheTrades Mission to Seychelles

- ❖ **Business Forum** followed by targeted B2B meetings
- ❖ **Outcome:** Consultancy Services in IT Security, Auditing and Training

Participation in Export of Services Events

- ❖ **ICT Events** – Togo, Cote D'Ivoire, Senegal
- ❖ **Financial Services** : South Africa
- ❖ **Healthcare & Life Sciences:** Madagascar, Seychelles, Kenya
- ❖ **Education:** Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Botswana

AfCFTA is also about encouraging Trade in Services

❑ **Five priority sectors:** Financial services, Business services, Communication services, Tourism services, and Transport services.

Trade Liberalisation

New markets opening up for trade.



Technical Assistance

Foster training and cooperation among member states.



Mutual Recognition

Recognition of professional qualifications across member states.



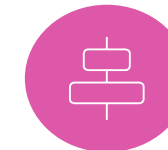
Most Favoured Nation

Benefits extended to third parties are given to Member States.



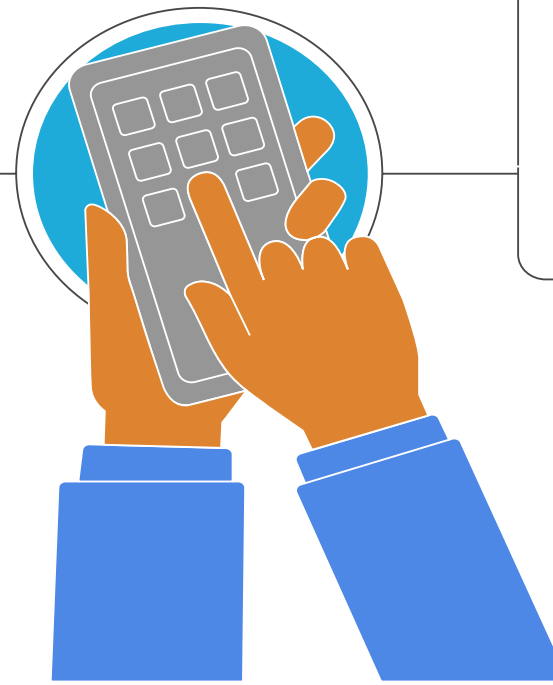
Regulatory Cooperation

Harmonization of standards across the African continent.



Cross border supply,
Consumption Abroad

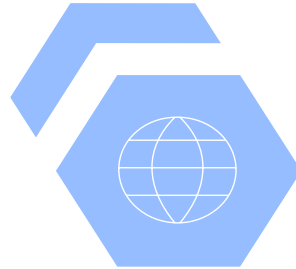
Commercial presence,
Movement of people



Opportunities under AfCFTA

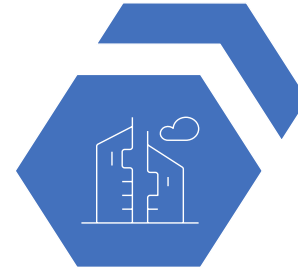
New Markets

Diversifying exports and
accessing new markets



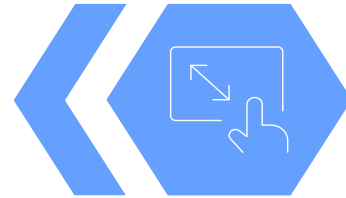
Financial and ICT Hub

Attracting businesses to
Mauritius for financial and ICT
services



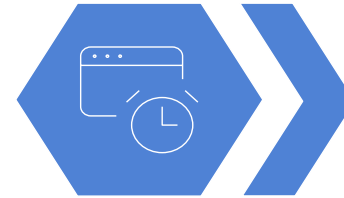
Capacity Building

Empowering women
entrepreneurs with knowledge
and tools



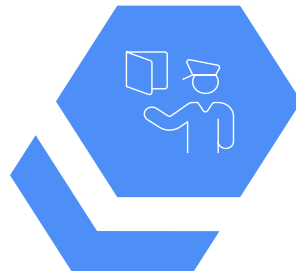
Regional Value Chain

Building interconnected service
industries across regions



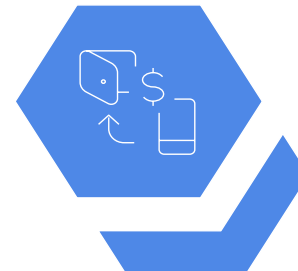
Duty Free Access

Ensuring duty-free trade and
clear rules of origin



Digital Trade Protocols

Utilizing digital trade protocols for
ecommerce growth



- ☐ Mauritian company can provide cybersecurity services to Banks in Africa / BPO Services / Telehealth
- ☐ Patients can come to Mauritius for medical treatment on cardiology, oncology amongst others / Wellness travel
- ☐ Mauritian company setting up a commercial presence in another Member State
- ☐ Consultants / Engineers travelling to another Member State to provide services

Challenges

Regulatory fragmentation:

Different rules and licensing requirements across countries.

Limited recognition of qualifications:

Professional credentials not universally accepted.

Weak digital infrastructure: Hinders delivery of ICT and remote services.

Poor transport/logistics:

Affects mobility-dependent services like tourism.

Lack of market intelligence: Mauritian firms struggle with local insights and networks.

Limited Access to Finance:
Restricts growth and competition

Skills mismatch:
Shortage of specialized talent in high-value service sectors.

Political/economic instability: Deters long-term service investments.

Lack of Business Innovation: Businesses underutilize available trade frameworks.

Language Barriers and Currency:

Challenges for intra-African trade



Strategies to boost trade of services



Leverage AfCFTA

Utilise Protocol on Trade in Services- under discussion

Priority sectors: Financial Services, tourism, transport, Business Services and Communication



Empower SMEs

Support export readiness and market entry



Strengthen Financial Ecosystem

Facilitate cross-border banking and trade finance



Enhance Market Access

Utilise trade agreements

Reduce non-tariff barriers and regulatory friction



Promote Professional Services

Expand legal, medical, and educational services

Work on mutual recognition of qualifications



Invest in Digital Infrastructure

Support ICT and fintech service exports

Enable e-commerce and digital platforms

AfCFTA as a door opener for women entrepreneurs

Use SheTrades Mauritius Hub platform and encourage B2B Meetings

Market Access: Opens regional markets for women-led services businesses by removing tariff and nontariff barriers

Economic Empowerment: Boosts opportunities for income and formal employment

Regulatory Support: Promotes gender-sensitive policies and recognition of qualifications

Encourages training and digital upskilling for women

Training on export readiness and AfCFTA trade policies

Guidance on navigating new African markets

Platforms to connect with investors, buyers, and other women entrepreneurs

Financial Literacy & Support

Access to funding and trade facilitation tools

Entrepreneurship Growth

Helps MSMEs run by women expand beyond national borders

Digital Inclusion

Facilitates access to online platforms for service delivery




Thank you



Head Office

 Ground Floor, 7 Exchange Square, Wall Street, Ebene, 72201,
Republic of Mauritius

 T: +230 203 3800 F: +230 210 8560
E: nirmala@edbmauritius.org / shetrades@edbmauritius.org