

**MISSIONS ATLAS PROJECT
AREA OF THE WORLD
COUNTRY**

Snapshots Section

Country Name: Republic of Mauritius

Country Founded in: March 12, 1968 (from UK)

Population: 1,284,264

Government Type: parliamentary democracy

Geography/location in the world: Mauritius is a series of small islands off the coast of southern Africa.

Number of people groups: Indo-Mauritian 68%, Creole 27%, Sino-Mauritian 3%, Franco-Mauritian 2%

Picture of flag:



Religion Snapshot:

Major Religion and % of population: Hindu 48%,

All religions and % for each:

Roman Catholic 23.6%

Muslim 16.6%

Christian 8.6%

Other 2.5%

Unspecified 0.3%,

None 0.4%

(2000 census)

Government interaction with religion: The government generally respects the rights of individuals to choose their own religious preference. Traditional religious groups such as the Catholic Church, Church of England, Presbyterian Church, Seventh-day Adventists, Hindus, and

Muslims, are given special status under parliamentary decree. These specific entities receive a payment from the government based upon the number of people attending their church at the time of the last census. Any new religious entities must register with the Registrar of Associations.

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2008/108381.htm>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mp.html#People>

Country Profile

Basic Facts

Country Name: Republic of Mauritius

Demographics:

The estimated population of Mauritius is 1,274,189. Children up to fourteen years of age account for 23% of the population. There are 148,573 male children between the ages of newborn to fourteen years of age. There are 143,859 female children between these same ages. Adults between the ages of fifteen and sixty-four years of age account for 70.1% of the population. There are 443,968 males in this age category and 449,670 females. In the last age category, sixty-five years and above, there are 35,269 males and 52,850 females. The adults who are 65 and over account for 6.9% of the population. The median age for males and females is 31.5 years old.

The birth rate is 14.64 births for every 1,000 people. There are an estimated 1.83 children born to every woman. The infant mortality rate is 12.56 deaths for every 1,000 live births. The death rate is 6.55 deaths for every 1,000 people. The life expectancy for the total population is 73.75 years. The life expectancy for males is slightly lower at 70.28 years while the life expectancy for females is slightly higher at 77.4 years.

The majority of the population is Indo-Mauritian. Twenty-seven percent are Creole while Sino-Mauritians account for 3%. The remaining 2% are Franco-Mauritian.

Language:

English is the official language, but French continues to be used frequently. People usually use French for cultural activities and English for administrative purposes. Creole is the most common trade language. Other languages include different dialects of Chinese and Hindi.

Society/Culture:

Mauritian society is quite mixed both racially and culturally. Because many different groups of people came to settle on the island in the past centuries, blends of ideology and cultural practices have come to be considered common. Yet, many groups continue to maintain some aspects of cultural uniqueness.

Each traditional ethnic group may have vastly different cultural practices surrounding marriage and family. For example, people of Indian descent may still contract arranged marriages for their children while people of French descent may allow their children to choose their own mates. In the past intermarriage between cultural groups has been low.

There are many different types of national food choices. *Rougaille* is a Mediterranean dish of tomatoes, while *Sounouk* is a dish of salted dry fish. Octopus stew is also popular. *Alooda* is a

brew of agar, milk, and vanilla or almond. *Dholl puri* is a wheat pancake stuffed with dholl and served with a tomato sauce.

A very popular pastime in Mauritius is to gather around a bonfire and dance the Sega. The Sega is the national dance. Musicians use the ravanne, the maravanne, and the triangle to harmonize melodies of African origin. Ti Frhre, who passed away at the age of 92, was a popular devotee of this dance.

Festivals are a favorite time for Mauritians to relax and enjoy spending time with family and friends. People of Chinese descent celebrate in the spring to recognize the Chinese New Year. Usually these celebrations involve times of great feasting and displays of fireworks. The Telegu celebrate Ugadi, another type of New Year, in March. Muslims mark the end of Ramadan with Eid-ul-Fitr. Although the Pere Laval Pilgrimage is largely associated with Roman Catholicism, people of all faiths will gather at his shrine in Sainte Croix, Port Louis in September.

Hindus have many festivals. In September, Hindus often celebrate the birthday of Ganesh Chaturthi, a god who supposedly gave wisdom and removed challenges for devotees. In January and February, Tamils celebrate the festival of Cavadee where devotees parade together to a local temple and offer gifts of milk and flowers to the deity. Body piercing is a common practice among devotees. Maha Shivaratree, which is also celebrated in February, honors a Hindu god called Siva. Devotees dressed in white carry special arches made of wood and decorated with flowers to the edge of a huge lake. This event is supposed to mimic the historic journey that Hindus in India take to the Ganges. One of the most popular Hindu festivals is called Divali. Each house places oil lamps or electric lights in front of their house to signify the fight that Hindu gods had over evil. Also, in the spring, people celebrate Holi, in which they douse others with colored water and rejoice in their relationships with friends.

Many in the work force are under 30 years of age and have been well-educated. Business hours in the public sector generally run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Some businesses may also open from 9 to noon on Saturdays.

Because of the long history of migration to Mauritius, the government is open to people from the international community coming to work in Mauritius. Between 2006 and 2008, work permits were issued for individuals from several different countries. About 1,030 permits were issued to people from France while 499 permits were extended to people of Indian nationality. About 275 South Africans received permits while 193 people from the UK did.

<http://www.worknlive.mu/fact.aspx>
<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/pmsite>

Government:

Mauritius is officially a parliamentary democracy. The country is subdivided into nine administrative districts and three dependencies. The nine districts are Black River, Cargados Flacq, Grand Port, Moka, Pamplemousses, Plaines Wilhems, Port Louis, Riviere du Rempart, and Savanne. The three dependencies are Rodrigues, Carajos Shoals, and the Agalega Islands.

The legal system is based upon concepts derived from the French civil law system and English common law. The highest court is the Supreme Court. The government accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations.

The executive branch consists of the office of the president, the vice-President, the Prime Minister, and the Council of Ministers. The President and Vice President are elected by the representative of the National Assembly and serve for five-year terms which are renewable. The President acts as the chief of state and appoints the Council of Ministers. As of 2003, the President was Sir Anerood Jugnauth. He was re-elected in 2008 and will serve until 2013. He received a unanimous vote in the 2008 elections.

The Prime Minister, which serves as the head of the government, is currently Navinchandra Ramgoolam. He has served in this capacity since 2005. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President.

The legislative branch consists of the National Assembly. It has 70 seats. Sixty-two representatives are elected by popular vote while eight are appointed in order to insure that all ethnic minority receive representation. All representatives serve for five years.

The last elections were held in 2005. In that election, 38 representatives came from the Alliance Sociale while 22 came from the MSM/ MMM parties. The MSM is the Militant Socialist Movement. The MMM is the Mauritian Militant Movement. Another 2 came from the OPR (Rodrigues Peoples' Organization). Of the 8 appointed seats, 4 came from the AS while 2 each were assigned to the MSM/ MMM and the OPR.

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mp.html#Govt>
<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/pmsite>

Economy:

Mauritius has a vibrant, growing economy. Although the economy largely rested on the production of sugar cane in the past, the government has worked diligently to diversify its interests since independence. Now, much revenue is gained from sugar, tourism, textiles and apparel, and financial services. The government is working to create new financial opportunities in other areas such as fish processing, information and communications technology, and hospitality and property development.

In 2008, the GDP was \$15.36 billion. The growth rate was 5.2%. The per capita income was \$12,100. About 5% of the GDP came from agricultural endeavors while industry accounted for about 20%. Another 6% came from construction while hotels contributed 9%. Real estate, renting, and business activities gave 11%, and financial intermediation accounted for 11%. The remaining 38% of the GDP came from other types of services.

The labor force consisted of 584,000 people. The unemployment rate was 7.6% in 2008. About 9% of those were engaged in agricultural work or fishing. The work done by these individuals produced items such as sugarcane, tea, corn, potatoes, and bananas. Also, cattle and goats were raised.

About 30% of the labor force worked in construction or industry. Many worked in food processing plants where sugar was milled. The textiles and clothing industry also provided many with jobs. Other industries included mining, chemicals, metal products, transport equipment, nonelectrical machinery, and tourism.

Exports accounted for \$2.36 billion f.o.b. Exports included clothing and textiles, sugar, cut flowers, molasses, and fish. In 2007, Great Britain was the largest receiver of Mauritian exports as 35.1% of the exports went there. About 14.4% went to France while 7.7% went to the U.S. Another 6.3% went to Madagascar, and 5.8% went to Italy.

Imports accounted \$4.503 billion f.o.b. Imports included manufactured goods, capital equipment, foodstuffs, petroleum products, and chemicals. In 2007, Indian products accounted for 21.2% while China's contributions equaled 11.4%.

<http://www.boimauritius.com/>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mp.html#Govt>

Literacy:

Education is a high priority of the current government. In 2008/2009, 11% of the total government expenses were dedicated to educational expenditures. Of that total education budget, 2% went to support pre-primary education opportunities while 27% went to primary educational endeavors. About 49% went to secondary schools while 8% went to fund tertiary endeavors. Technical and vocational schools were allotted about 4%. The remaining 10% went to other types of educational expenses.

In 2008, there were 1,070 schools with pre-primary grades. Pre-primary education begins around three years of age and continues to about five years of age. About 76% of the schools were administered by private entities while 17% were associated with the government. The remaining 7% were run by Roman Catholics or Hindus. About 18,263 boys and 17,979 girls attended classes, and 2,541 teachers were employed. The student to teacher ratio was about 14 to 1.

299 schools offered primary education opportunities. Primary school begins at age six and continues until about age 10 or 11. In 2008, 219 schools were funded by the government while 2 were sponsored by the Hindu Education Authority. Another 51 schools were associated with the Roman Catholic Church while another 27 were funded by other private entities. About 51% of the students were males while 49% were females. Approximately 100% of the population was enrolled. The student to teacher ratio was 29 to 1. At the end of primary school, children must take the Certificate of Primary Education. The overall pass rate was 63%.

Secondary or pre-vocational studies begin after primary school. Usually, students are between the ages of 12 and 19. In 2008, there were 49 secondary schools and 7 pre-vocational schools. Another 131 schools offered both options concurrently. The government funded 69 schools while 101 were privately funded or non-aided. Approximately 116,503 students were enrolled in secondary programs while 8,495 students were enrolled in pre-vocational training. Student to teacher ratios in secondary institutions were about 16 to 1, while such ratios were slightly lower in pre-vocational schools at 13 to 1. Students have the opportunity to take two different types of

exams as a part of their educational experience at this level—the Cambridge School Certificate and the Cambridge Higher School Certificate. In 2007, students taking the SC had a 76.7% pass rate while students attempting the HSC had a 77.8% pass rate.

Tertiary education opportunities are offered after the successful completion of secondary school. Approximately, 35,023 students participated in 2007. About 73% of these enrollees attended schools in Mauritius while 27% decided to attend classes somewhere overseas. Of those that attended local schools, 45% went to publically funded schools while 28% went to schools funded by private entities.

School is compulsory for all students between the ages of 6 and 16 although attendance rates among the Creole population may tend to be somewhat lower than average. Some students attempt to drop out of school and start work, but the government is fairly vigilant about monitoring and quelling such attempts.

http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/cso/menuitem.dee225f644ffe2aa338852f8a0208a0c/?content_id=5506f4b54428c010VgnVCM100000a04a8c0RCRD

http://www.ei-ie.org/barometer/en/profiles_detail.php?country=mauritius

Land/Geography:

The country of Mauritius is composed of a group of islands that lie off the coast of Southern Africa. The largest island, Mauritius, is about 500 miles east of the island of Madagascar. Its total area is about 1,865 square kilometers. Another island, Rodrigues, is about 375 miles further east. Other smaller islands include the Agalega Islands and the Cargados Carajos Shoals. These two areas are mostly uninhabited. There are also smaller outcroppings of mini-islands that are barely wide enough to constitute the appellation of “island;” however, Mauritius has authority over these uninhabited strips. In all, due to the breadth of distance between these islands, Mauritius has economic authority over approximately 1.2 million square kilometers of the open ocean.

The two major islands, Mauritius and Rodrigues, rose from the ocean floor as a result of the volcanic activity of now extinct volcanoes. They are part of a chain of such islands known as the Mascarenes. Mauritius is comprised of coastal plains that are sometimes hilly. The coastal plains rise towards a central plateau which is surrounded by a series of interspersing mountain ranges. Port Louis and Mahebourg provide good harbors, and so are very economically and politically important.

The central plateau forms the area where much cultivation occurs. Forests cover part of the southern portion of the plateau and rivers and streams intersect it. Overall all, this area covers about a ¼ of the entire island.

The mountains rise sharply and are interspersed with deep gorges or valleys. These areas often have beautiful waterfalls. Some of the rivers follow ancient lava flows. Two crater lakes exist. These are the only two natural lakes; however, through government planning others have been constructed by manmade power. The lowest peak is about 425 meters high while the highest stands as tall as 823 meters.

History

Mauritius remained largely uninhabited until around 1638 when the Dutch first attempted to establish a colony. Before that time, the island was most likely used as a stopping point for sailors and pirates who cruised around the Indian Ocean. In the Middle Ages, Arabs possibly visited the island and labeled it as Dina Arobi' on maps. The Portuguese explorer Domingo Fernandez Pereira visited the island in 1511. These early sailors and later the Dutch, who came to visit and settle the island, were largely responsible for the extinction of the Dodo bird, a flightless bird that had previously inhabited the island. The Dodo bird provided fresh meat for hungry sailors while their eggs provided food for the monkeys, pigs, and rats brought by the ships. By 1681, all of these unusual birds had been killed.

Dutch sailors began arriving in 1578. In fact, Admiral Wybrand Van Warwyck gave the island its name as a way of paying tribute to Prince Maurice Van Nassau of Holland. The Dutch settlers brought sugarcane, which would become the main economic product of the island. The first settlement failed, and although others attempted to establish permanent settlements, the island mostly remained a mere layover for ships. A penal colony did survive for a time; however, the Dutch ultimately abandoned their efforts in 1710.

Guillaume Dufresne D'Arsel arrived in Mauritius around 1715 and claimed the island for the French. He renamed it Isla de France. More French began to arrive around 1721 and development of the island occurred when Mahé de La Bourdonnais established a naval center at Port Louis. This center included ship building facilities which would attract ships on the route to India that needed repairs or supplies. Representatives of the French East India Company largely directed the affairs of the island until 1767 when control passed to the French government.

The French established the plantation system and imported African laborers as slaves to work in the sugarcane fields. These laborers were brought from areas all over Africa. These slave laborers inter mixed their own cultural traditions with those of the French elite to form the Creole traditions and language that are intricately intertwined into Mauritian culture today. Also, because of the importance of Port Louis as a port of call for ships trading with India, the cultures of many other nations have impacted Mauritian culture.

The French Crown held control of the island officially until 1810. During the French Revolution, the French planters actually broke connection with the main French government and formed their own assembly and councils. However, Napoleon successfully regained control in 1803. This rule lasted until 1810 when British warships sailed to the island and seized control.

The British would retain official control over Mauritius until granting independence in 1968. France officially ceded control of the island to Britain in the Treaty of Paris in 1814. Yet, in reality, the French elite continued to dominate the cultural and political life of the island. Few British settlers actually came to the island to stay. French remained the language used for socializing while English became the standard of communication in the government. The British did introduce the idea of parliamentary procedure to the island.

The British were also responsible for the eradication of slavery and the introduction of the indentured servant system that would bring thousands of Indian workers to Mauritius. The planters fought the eradication of slavery until 1835, but eventually, the British succeeded in freeing slaves. They paid the planters about 2.1 million pounds and tried to keep slaves as apprentices on the plantations for a few years after granting their freedom. The former slaves, however, abandoned the plantations and began to work as fishermen or civil servants. To solve the labor shortage problem caused by this desertion, the British encouraged the French planters to recruit poor Indians to come to the island to work. These recruits came with high hopes of making better lives for themselves only to find extremely harsh working conditions and a form of indentured servitude that bordered on slavery. The activities of these workers were largely controlled by their employers, and many suffered as a result. The indentured servant system would last until around 1917.

The production and processing of sugar remained the center of economic activity. In the early part of the 20th century, planters lost money due to fluctuation in the world market. As a result, the French elite were forced to sell less productive portions of their land in order to recoup their losses. This sale allowed Indians to eventually acquire about 35% of the island's cultivated land.

As the 20th century began, new waves began to occur politically as well. Back in 1831, the British had created a constitution for Mauritius that allowed a Council of Government whose members were nominated by the governor. Most of the initial representatives were Franco-Mauritians. In 1886, this provisional body was increased to include ten representatives from nine electoral districts. Municipal councils began to arise. Partially in response to this increased interest in governmental affairs, a Creole formed a group called Action Liberale to promote their interests. This group had dissolved by 1912.

In 1907, Gandhi sent a representative from India to help Indo-Mauritians form political action groups and in order to help Indo-Mauritians learn about their Indian heritage. The Indian Cultural Association also formed. A notable member of the ICA was Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, who later became the first prime minister. In 1936, Dr. Maurice Curé, founded the MLP. Urban Creole workers and rural Indian farmers both joined to work together.

After World War II, Britain began helping its colonies as they moved towards independence. A new constitution in 1958 gave suffrage to all people over the age of 21 while also creating forty single-member constituencies that elected representatives to the Legislative Council. Seven years later in 1965, members of the major political parties met with British representatives in London to pave the way for independence. Independence was officially declared on March 12, 1968. Mauritius maintained its status as a member of the British Commonwealth.

Indo-Mauritians initially gained political strength and continued to grow in power during the early days following independence. Also, following World War II, economic challenges caused the unemployment rate to rise. Such happenings caused discord to erupt among rival ethnic groups around the elections. In 1969, the MMM formed and began to seek power. It was especially popular among the youth of the nation. Through the 1970's, the popularity of this and other reform parties fluctuated, but grew.

Mauritius achieved a notable goal when it achieved the status of republic in 1992. The current government seeks to continue economic growth and political cohesion through promoting ideas of unity through diversity.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/mutoc.html#mu0014>

<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/abtmcius/menuitem.163fea3f13ca22984d57241079b521ca/>

Christian History

Catholic priests first arrived on the islands around 1722. These early priests were associated with the Lazarist Fathers. Later, in 1819, the Benedictines took over. Port Louis, as the largest city, became the center of Catholic work. In fact, it was first made a diocese in 1847. Later Jesuits and Holy Ghost priests arrived to work with local Catholics. The Catholic Church still has a strong influence today—especially on the island of Rodrigues.

Protestant missionaries first began to arrive in the early 1800's. The London Missionary Society sent representatives beginning in 1814. They had been preceded by the Anglicans who arrived in 1810. Seventh Day Adventists sent missionaries beginning around 1914 and had some success. The most recent growth among Protestant congregations has actually been among various Pentecostal churches which began sending missionaries in the late 1970's and early 1980's.

Religion

Non Christian

Islam—The Muslims living in Mauritius are largely of Indian origin. About 90% are Sunni and use Urdu as their common language. About 10% are part of the Ahmadiya Muslim Mission.

Hinduism—Indian immigrants who came as indentured servants under British rule first brought Hinduism to the islands. Hindus are the most predominant religious group at this time. Two separate groups exist in the Hindu community—the Sanatanists, who are considered to be Orthodox, and Arya Samaj, who are considered to be Reformed Hindus.

Buddhism—Chinese immigrants first brought Buddhism to the islands. Approximately 0.3% of the population may be practicing Buddhists. The number of Buddhists seems to be declining.

Baha'i—This religion was first introduced in 1953. Approximately 0.5% of the population practice it.

<http://news.bahai.org/story/274>

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons)—This group first started work around 185. In 1995 there were 2 congregations and 140 members.

Church of Christ, Scientist—This group was formed by missionaries from Boston, Massachusetts. In 1995 there was one congregation and 10 members.

Church of the New Jerusalem—This group started work around 1850. It is a part of the Swedenborgian Church. Some of their members believe that all people can go to heaven so long as they have lived “good lives.” In 1995 there was 1 church and 15 members. Membership has declined since the start of the 20th century.

<http://www.newchurch.org/about/articles/bess-jared-story.html>

Jehovah’s Witness—This group first came to the island around 1933. In 2005, there were 17 congregations with 1,317 members.

Non-religious—About 0.4% of the population are non-religious.

Catholic—Port-Louis is the only diocese. It covers 711 square miles. It was started in 1847. The current bishop is Maurice Piat. In 2004 there were 46 parishes and 97 priests. About 24.3% of the population of Mauritius is Catholic.

Rodrigues is a Vicariate Apostolic. It was erected in 2002. Alain Harel is the Vicar. In 2003 there were 3 parishes and 4 priests. About 91.1% of the population of the area is Catholic.

<http://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/country/dmu2.html>

Christian/Evangelical

Anglican Church—Anglican missionaries arrived in 1810. In 2005 there were 25 congregations and 4,545 congregants.

Assemblies of God—Work was started by French missionaries. In 2005 there were 110 congregations and 25,000 members.

Baptist Association of Mauritius—This group was founded in 1977 by Southern Baptist missionaries associated with the Southern Baptist Convention. In 1995 there was one church and 116 members.

Chinese Christian Fellowship of Mauritius—This group formed around 1960. In 1995 there were 6 congregations and 600 members.

Church of Christ—In 1995 there were 11 congregations and 280 members.

Church of God (Cleveland)—This group began work in 1983. In 2005 there were 46 congregations and 10,350 members.

Dutch Reformed Church—This church formed in 1975 as a mission of the DRC of South Africa. In 1995 there was 1 church and 60 members.

Evangelical Church of Mauritius—This church started as a mission of the AFF in 1968. In 2005 there were 6 congregations and 460 members.

New Apostolic Church—This church began work around 1980. In 1995 there were 5 churches and 100 members.

Pentecostal Church—This denomination has English-speaking congregations on Rodriguez and on Mauritius. In 1995 there were 15 churches and 1,000 members.

Presbyterian Church of Mauritius—This denomination started missions work 1814. In 2005 there were 6 congregations and 660 members.

Seventh Day Adventist—This group entered the country around 1914. In 2008 there were 30 churches and 4,135 members.

http://www.adventistdirectory.org/view_AdmField.asp?EntityID=13472

Sino-Mauritian Evangelical Church—This church formed around 1975. In 1995 there was 1 church and 30 members.

United Pentecostal Church—This group came around 1982. In 1995 there were 14 churches and 1,170 members.

Voice of Deliverance Church—This denomination formed in 1975 as a result of a schism within the Assembly of God denomination. In 2005 there were 82 churches and 1,650 members.

People Groups

15345

British (749)

The British took control of Mauritius in 1810. The government of Mauritius continues to have a good relationship with the British government so most likely the British living there are businessmen or diplomats. The British speak English. About 70% profess connection with some type of religious organization. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. The Bible is available in their language and the *Jesus* film is accessible. Audio recordings exist.

15361

Cantonese (545)

The Cantonese people speak a dialect of Chinese called Yue.

They primarily engage in ancestor worship. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Several Christian resources exist in their language.

15346

Franco Mauritian (24,038)

Franco Mauritians speak French and are most likely descendents of early French immigrants. In the past, the Franco Mauritians held great cultural and political power.

The people are predominantly Roman Catholic. About .036% of the population is evangelical Christian. Since they speak French, several Christian resources are available.

15362

Hakka (535)

The Hakka people speak a dialect of Chinese called Hakka. Many of the Hakka may have immigrated to Mauritius during the 1940's.

About 55% of the people have some type of religious belief. The number of evangelical Christian is unknown.

15357

Han Chinese (37,203)

The Han Chinese entered as immigrants during British rule. Others also immigrated in the 20th century to form businesses there.

The Chinese largely practice Buddhism or ancestor worship.

The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. They speak Mandarin Chinese so they have access to many Christian resources.

15348

Ilois (2,144)

The Ilois people speak a language called Morisyen. The Ilois were originally inhabitants of the Chagos Islands, namely Diego Garcia. They were either descendents of African slaves brought there by early French settlers to work on the coconut plantations or they were the descendents of Indian laborers.

Today most live in slum areas in Port Louis. In the late 1960's the British government arranged to lease the island to American military interests.

The Ilois were slowly taken to Seychelles or Mauritius through various means. Some left because there were no longer viable jobs while others went for a short trip to Mauritius and then found that they were unable to return. In 1982, the British government gave about 4 million pounds to the Mauritian government due to pressures from lawsuits instituted by the Ilois and pressure from the international community. As of 2008, some were still petitioning to return to their homeland or to be given further compensation.

The Ilois are predominantly Hindus. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Portions of the Bible are accessible. The *Jesus* film and audio recordings also exist.

Dodd, Jan and Madeleine Philippe. *Mauritius, Reunion, and Seychelles*. Lonely Planet, 2004.
<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic.463af2212,497477982,49749ce6c.0.html>

42179

Indo-Mauritian (884,793)

Indo-Mauritians are descendants of Indian laborers brought over under British colonial rule. When the British abolished slavery, there was a labor shortage. Administrators devised a system whereby Indians could be recruited in India and then moved to Mauritius to work on the plantations. Many of the workers were from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

Indo-Mauritians will generally be familiar with the language of their home state in India, as well as Creole, French, or English. As recruits came to the island, they often found working conditions to be highly primitive. Yet, they brought with them a determination to succeed. Indo-Mauritians have gained political power in recent years.

Today they practice primarily Hinduism or Islam. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Some may have converted to Catholicism. Some Christian resources are available to them.

15358

Malagasy (1,071)

The Malagasy people may have originally migrated from Madagascar. They speak a language called Malagasy.

The people primarily practice the religious rites of their ancestors. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Portions of the Bible have not been translated, but the *Jesus* film and audio recordings are accessible.

15360

Mauritian (Creole)

This group comes from quite a variety of backgrounds. Originally, Creoles were descendants of relationships between African slaves that were brought to work on the plantations and French settlers. They speak a language that developed from the mixture of different African languages, French, and later English. This language is sometimes referred to as Morisyen, but is more widely known as Creole.

The people are syncretistic due to the influence of African religious traditions and Catholicism. The number of evangelical Christians is unknown. Portions of the Bible have been translated and the *Jesus* film is accessible. Audio recordings exist.

Missiological Implications

1. Evangelical Christians and churches should develop and train local Christians to use materials for sharing the Good News with Roman Catholics. Several groups, such as

the Rodrigues Islanders, the Chagos Islanders, and the Chinese have become Catholic and need the complete Gospel.

2. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to aid local believers to begin more intensified church starting efforts in these islands.
3. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to gain more open access for believers to enter and evangelize in Mauritius.
4. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek to reach the youth who are showing increasing signs of openness to the message of Christ.
5. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek ways to train local leaders (both lay and career) for service in the churches.
6. Evangelical Christians and churches should study the Pentecostal groups to understand the ways the Holy Spirit is using them and seek ways to incorporate the findings into other evangelical groups.
7. Evangelical Christians and churches should develop patterns to reach the non-religious in Mauritius. While this group numbers less than 10,000 they are increasing at a rate of + 9.3% annually. This growth rate is over 9 times that of any other religious group.
8. Evangelical Christians and churches should seek ways by which they can contribute to the physical needs of the peoples on these islands.
9. Evangelical Christians and churches should accept responsibility for the Ilois people and move to reach them through evangelism and church starting. The Ilois have high rates of alcoholism and suicide largely due to the trauma experienced when they left their traditional homes. Job training and counseling could help these people as they seek to escape the stressors caused by their impoverished situation



Links

<http://www.mauritius.net/index.php>

<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/Mainhomepage/menuitem.cc515006ac7521ae3a9d5ea5e2b521ca/>

<http://www.mauritius.com/>

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mauritius>

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2833.htm>

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/mutoc.html>

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/world/A0832290.html>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1063172.stm

<http://www.tourism-mauritius.mu/>

http://library.thinkquest.org/C0110237/Population/Mauritian_Society/mauritian_society.html

<http://www.mauritius-travel.info/people-culture.html>

<http://www.uom.ac.mu/International/aboutmtius.html>

http://mauritius.voyaz.com/cultural_festivals.htm

<http://www.hku.hk/linguist/program/MauritiusFAQ.html>