

Fight against poverty

Fondation Espoir Développement Beachcomber strengthens dialogue and partnerships with NGOs

The Fondation Espoir Développement Beachcomber (FED) opens a two-day networking workshop entitled *"Together, for a more sustainable impact"* at the Hennessy Park Hotel on 17 July. This event brings together some 60 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) actively working to support vulnerable communities across the island.

Building bridges for joint action

The objective of this event is threefold:

- Foster exchanges between NGOs,
- Better understand their realities on the ground and
- Identify potential synergies for more effective and sustainable collaboration.

Prior to the workshop, the FED sent a questionnaire to 325 NGOs across the island to gather key information on their areas of intervention, specific challenges and operational needs. This initiative is designed to stimulate meaningful discussions during the two-day event and foster stronger connections among the stakeholders working in the field.

"For 26 years, the FED has supported NGOs dedicated to the inclusion of the most vulnerable. They are essential partners on the ground. To create lasting impact, we must go further, together," said Stéphane Poupinel de Valencé, CEO of Beachcomber Resorts & Hotels, during his opening speech at the workshop. Also present were His Excellency Oskar Benedikt, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and Karine Perrier Curé, Chairperson of the FED and Chief Brand & Communication Officer of the Beachcomber Group.

"A company's success is not measured solely by financial results, but also by its societal contribution and its ability to support local communities. With this in mind, in addition to the FED budget, the Beachcomber Group will allocate a fund of Rs 1 million to support NGOs in the development of their programmes over a period of one year," he added.

His Excellency Oskar Benedikt recalled the essential contribution of civil society. *"Civil society cannot act alone, but nothing can be done without civil society. This initiative by the FED allows for dialogue, the sharing of experiences and the networking of committed stakeholders,"* he said.

Listening, exchanging, acting

This meeting between the FED and NGOs will feature several highlights, focused on listening, sharing experiences, and identifying avenues for action:

Thursday, July 17

- Official opening ceremony
- Presentation of the FED and its main inclusion programmes, including Youth Employability Project, Beautiful Localhands, Vulnerable Lives Matter, etc.
- Roundtable discussion *"Converging Views,"* moderated by Karine Perrier Curé, with the participation of His Excellency Oskar Benedikt, Patricia Adèle Félicité, Secretary General of CARITAS Mauritius, Viren Vythelingum, CSR Manager of the Beachcomber Group and Edley Maurer, social worker and Manager of the NGO SAFIRE.
- Collaborative workshops around four themes: Financing, Communication, Training and Methodological Support for Calls for Projects.

Friday, July 18

- Workshop feedback: A summary of the discussions held during the various workshops will be presented, along with key recommendations made by participants.
- Presentation of results: This session will provide an insight into NGOs' expectations, areas of intervention and major challenges, based on data collected prior to the event.
- Open speaking time: Participating NGOs will have the opportunity to respond to the outputs from the workshops, share their field experiences and express their needs or suggestions.
- Speed Networking: This session aims to stimulate discussion, encourage synergies and lay the foundations for a dynamic and supportive network.
- Closing of the event: The day will conclude with a closing session to define the next steps and lay the foundations for a stronger and more sustainable collective commitment.

Enhancing NGO capacity

The two-day brainstorming is part of the FED's commitment to enhance NGOs' empowerment. Through this event, the FED reaffirms its commitment to supporting their field work.

"We are proud of the strong partnership built between the FED and NGOs over the past 26 years. To continue moving forward together, it is essential to understand their needs. This starts with listening and exchanging. By identifying priorities, challenges and expectations, we can offer truly relevant and sustainable support," said Karine Perrier Curé.

As part of its commitment to social integration, the FED already collaborates with some thirty NGOs across the island. These include Global Rainbow Foundation, SAFIRE, Inclusion Mauritius, DRIP, CARITAS Mauritius, Kolektif Rivier Nwar, Lovebridge and PILS.

"Collaboration with NGOs is essential in fighting poverty, driving community development and fostering the inclusion of the most vulnerable. This fight cannot be won alone; it requires joint, coordinated and sustainable action. While the FED develops its own inclusion projects, we are also committed to supporting initiatives led by NGOs, whose presence on the ground is a valuable strength. Last year, beyond our own programmes, we also partnered with several NGOs," emphasised Viren Vythelingum, CSR Manager of the Beachcomber Group. He added: *"It is by joining forces that we can generate a stronger and more sustainable impact. This two-day meeting is a unique opportunity to rethink how we collaborate—in a way that is more open, structured and effective."*

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