



Board of Investment
Mauritius



Manufacturing and SMEs

Rodrigues

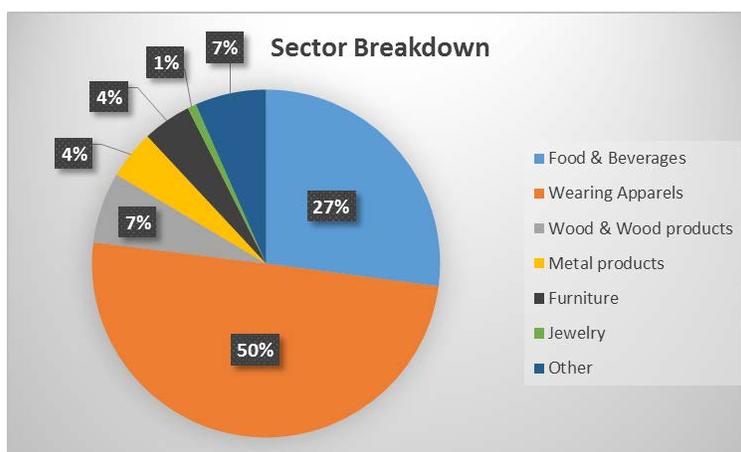
SME AND MANUFACTURING

The manufacturing sector is limited to a few enterprises, namely food processing, metal works, wood products, garment making (tailoring), shoe making and small agro-industries. The industries produce primarily for the limited local market. It is noteworthy that handicraft is a source of income to many families.

Local materials such as 'vetiver', aloes and coconut shells are utilised to manufacture handicraft products such as hats, bags, doormats, dolls and toys, crochet, fancy jewelry and coral sculpture. Basket making and weaving from natural fibres is an important activity for Rodriguans, who have a ready supply of cheap and useful articles for the household.

With the recent surge in tourism activity, the Rodriguans have become increasingly aware of the economic importance of their local crafts. A wide variety of handicraft goods are now available. These articles are readily purchased by tourists providing a non-negligible source of income.

The manufacturing sector is made up of approximately 620 small enterprises, employing some 1475 workers, comprising 825 women and 650 men. In 2014, the sector's gross output amounted to RS 169.7 million, with value added (at basic prices) amounting to RS 74.6 million.



As it can be observed from the diagram, the 2 major sectors are 'Wearing Apparel' and 'Food & Beverages'. There are 309 SMEs involved in the manufacture of 'Wearing Apparel', on a tailoring basis, only for the local market, and 169 SMEs are involved in the manufacture of 'Food & Beverages'. Each sub-sectors, being relatively small, employ only 382 and 377 workers respectively.

The agro-processing sub-sector is an integral part of the 'Food & Beverages' sector. In fact, out of 169 SMEs involved in 'Food & Beverages' production, approximately 127 enterprises are directly involved in food processing and agro-processing, employing some 250 workers.

The agro-processing sub-sector remains the main contributor to Rodriguans export (to Mauritius) and the most exported food commodities are as follows (2014):

Commodity	Quantity (Kg)
Dried beans	7,040
Dry Octopus	6,600
Honey	2,760
Salt Fish	1,375

Although the sector is gaining prominence in the economy of Rodrigues. The sector is faced with a number of challenges which is limiting its growth. These include:

- A low level of technology and manufacturing practices are still considered as archaic
- Product quality/safety processes are nearly inexistent
- No proper marketing strategies
- Relatively low level of training/unawareness on manufacturing best practices