

Bioculture Cares Grantee Forum 2026

1. Introduction

The Bioculture Cares Grantee Forum 2026 brought together 2025 and 2026 grantees to foster collaboration and shared learning. The objective was to move beyond media headlines and individual blame toward a systemic understanding of social issues in Mauritius. Participants analyzed ten real-world case studies to identify why these issues persist and how they are interconnected.

Summary of Forum Discussions by Group

Group	Article Title & Source	Theme	Key Summary of Group Discussion
1	A persisting 20% failure at PSAC (Le Mauricien)	Education	Discussion focused on "rote learning" and a hyper-competitive system that lacks continuity between regimes.
2	Nouveau-né abandonné devant une église (Defi Media)	Child Welfare	Identified issues with self-esteem, lack of recourse/information, and mental health of the mother.
3	Augmentation des incidents en ligne (Defi Media)	Cybersecurity	Connected to social values, "online bullying," and the influence of sensationalist media.
4	Des zombies sous l'influence du simik (L'Express)	Drugs	Highlighted "fleeing reality," peer pressure, and the "feminization" of drug use as a taboo.
5	Sarvesh Dhookeeya : propos mal interprétés (L'Express)	Social Cohesion	Explored the "mindset" of society, social respect, and how media can amplify division.
6	Un Camerounais commet un crime choquant (CamerounWeb)	Crime	Linked to financial stress, aggressiveness, and the need for long-term service continuity.
7	Alimentation : 1 Mauricien sur 10 a faim (Le Mauricien)	Nutrition	Tied to the "cost of living" (Rs 220/day) and a lack of political direction in agriculture.
8	Harcèlement : 147 cas signalés (L'Express)	Bullying	Focused on the "breakdown of the family unit" and parents failing to provide role models.
9	La mort en live (Le Mauricien)	Mental Health	Viewed as a "cry for help" where life skills and support systems were unavailable.
10	4 jeunes tués dans un accident (Le Mauricien)	Road Safety	Attributed to youth "excitement," systemic lighting issues, and a lack of alternative activities.

2. Synthesis: The Interconnected Ecosystem of Root Causes

The forum discussions revealed that the ten themes are not isolated silos but are symptoms of a shared set of underlying failures. These failures form an "interconnected web" where one issue acts as a catalyst for another—for instance, financial stress leads to family instability, which creates educational vulnerability, eventually resulting in social or mental health crises.

1. The Fragility of the "Primary Support" System (Family & Values)

The most frequent root cause across all groups was the deterioration of the family unit. The breakdown of the family cell and the phenomenon of "absent parents" (*parents démissionnaires*) create a vacuum of transmitted values.

This erosion is seen as the shared root for bullying, abandonment, and youth delinquency. Without a moral or emotional "compass" at home, youth become more susceptible to peer pressure and "fleeing reality" through drugs like *Simik*.

2. The "Survival" Economic Context (Socio-Economic Vulnerability)

Financial instability acts as a pressure cooker for the social fabric. The rising "cost of living" and heavy "indebtedness" (specifically noted as a survival threshold of Rs 220/day) drive a survival mindset.

This context sacrifices long-term well-being for immediate needs. It is a direct driver of malnutrition, but also a secondary driver of domestic aggression, crime, and the chronic stress that leads to mental health breakdowns.

3. Institutional & Educational Gaps (Systemic Fragmentation)

There is a profound lack of continuity in both social services and the education system. The current PSAC framework is criticized for its "academic only" and "rote learning" nature.

The system fails to equip citizens with "Life Skills" or "Emotional Literacy" (*gestion des émotions*). When individuals fall through these cracks, support systems are often described as unavailable, difficult to access, or purely reactive rather than being part of a preventative, cross-sectoral roadmap.

4. The Media and Digital "Mirror" (Modern Catalysts)

The digital landscape and sensationalist news prioritize "the buzz" over empathy, acting as a modern catalyst that worsens existing vulnerabilities.

This is evidenced by "Online Bullying" and the "Death on Live" phenomenon. Technology has outpaced current social safety nets and moral frameworks, creating new platforms for harm, distorting social respect, and amplifying social division.

3. Conclusion: From Individual Symptoms to Systemic Solutions

The overarching takeaway is that social issues in Mauritius are systemic rather than individual. The "Interconnectivity of Issues" means that financial stress leads to family instability, which leads to educational failure, which in turn leads to youth vulnerability.

To create lasting change, interventions must move beyond "project delivery" and focus on strengthening the family unit, integrating emotional literacy into education, and ensuring policy continuity across institutional regimes. Addressing one symptom in isolation is no longer enough; the shared root causes require a collaborative, holistic approach.

