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The Honorable Charles Gaëtan Xavier Luc DUVAL, G.C.S.K
Vice-Prime Minister
Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Port Louis

Dear Sir,

Annual Report 2013

I have the pleasure to submit the Annual Report 2013 of the Statistics Board for your information. The Annual Report outlines the work undertaken by the Board during the past year, while also highlighting its future plans.

Yours faithfully,

Gilbert Gnany
Chairperson

May 2014
MESSAGE FROM GILBERT GNANY
CHAIRPERSON OF STATISTICS BOARD

Introduction
True to fulfilling its role of offering guidance to the Minister responsible for statistical matters and other producers of statistics on the directions of and the priorities for Official Statistics, the Statistics Board made further inroads this year in contributing in the enhancement of processes leading to the gathering and dissemination of timely and high-quality data at the national level towards informed decision-making by public and private stakeholders in support of the country’s sustainable socio-economic development.

Achievements
In line with its mandate and functions, as set out under Section 23 of the Statistics Act 2000, the Board has further stepped up its contribution to the development of Official Statistics in the country. It provided guidance and support to Statistics Mauritius (SM) to further develop its portfolio of statistics as well as improve the quality and comparability of data being produced and disseminated. The Board has also monitored and coordinated statistical programmes of producers of Official Statistics in order to facilitate integration and enhance consistency. It also worked towards adherence to good practices in order to ensure the integrity and professional independence of Official Statistics in Mauritius.
The Board approved, during its 19th session in May 2013, the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics, which is based on the values of the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the African Charter for Statistics, the Data Quality Assessment Framework of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), other international best practices, as well as the core values defined in the Codes of Ethics of the Civil Service. The National Code of Practice for Official Statistics is an additional and conspicuous evidence of the philosophy and vision of the Statistics Board to ensure that statistics of the highest quality are derived across a professional and credible national statistical system, with due focus on fostering the relevance, impartiality, accuracy, timeliness and coherence of Official Statistics. It provides for an overarching framework, which organises and gives context to the activities and initiatives of various producers of Official Statistics, whilst ensuring greater transparency within all statistical processes, thus reinforcing the image of relevant institutions as credible providers of good quality statistics in the country. All producers of Official Statistics are required to abide by this Code and ensure that the statistics they generate are in conformity with the principles and values contained therein.

The Board has also relentlessly worked towards the promotion of better coordination mechanisms and the strengthening of working relationships amongst other domestic institutions actively involved in the gathering and dissemination of Official Statistics. In the same vein, it welcomed as co-opted member the Chief Executive Officer of the Financial Services Commission. In doing so, the Board enriched itself with the competencies and expertise, as well as augmented professionalism and better coordination in respect of specific areas relating to the compilation of economic statistics. Such intakes were particularly welcomed insofar as the Board has also been overseeing the work being carried out at various levels in the wake of the country’s bid to upgrade to the highest and even more stringent tier of IMF’s data standard, namely the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) Plus. In the same line of thought, the Board has been active in monitoring the arrangements being made in various respects, to ensure that the recommendations of the Fund’s February 2013 Multi-Sector Mission - regarding the implementation of latest internationally accepted methodological standards for the various macroeconomic statistics including inter-sectorial data consistencies – are adequately applied.

All in all, the Board met ten times during the year under review. Besides approving and launching the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics, the Board (i) approved the 2014 census and survey plan of SM as well as the related questionnaires; (ii) monitored the implementation of the recommendations of the three Committees set up by the Board in 2012 on Dissemination and advocacy of Official Statistics, Harmonisation of business censuses and surveys and administrative data collection, and Quality of life statistics respectively; and (iii) provided guidance and coordinated relevant work programmes regarding SDDS initiatives and the implementation of the latest international standards on economic statistics. The Board has, also, participated in the workshops organised by SM to celebrate the International Year of Statistics and the African Day of Statistics.

**Strategic intents**

Moving forward, the Statistics Board is committed to further strengthening the role it plays in enhancing both the scope and quality of Official Statistics being produced in Mauritius. In so doing, the Board will continue to ensure that it assists all producers of Official Statistics in better responding to the challenges of the increasing complex economic environment as well as in pursuing the path of solid and sustainable socio-economic development.
Backed by reinforced institutional collaboration, the year ahead will be a year of continuation which builds upon past achievements, as well as initiatives currently in progress. The Board will continue to coordinate work within the national statistical system as well as provide advice and guidance to all producers of Official Statistics, in particular SM, whilst ensuring that Official Statistics being produced are ‘fit for purpose’ and responsive to the changing economic and social conditions of our society.

Furthermore, the Board encourages SM to work in collaboration with other parties in order to update the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) for the next five years, taking into account updated economic growth imperatives and emerging societal issues at the national level as well as the availability of new technologies, tools and methods for data collection and dissemination by institutions. Besides, the plan aims to address the requirements related to the strengthening of internal statistical capacity at the level of SM so that the latter can more effectively tackle the challenges being faced. In the process, the Board undertakes to assist the relevant stakeholders in reviewing the strategic plan.

As part of its work programme, the Board also plans to put into place additional mechanisms aiming at facilitating the sharing of knowledge among institutions within the statistical system, as well as exchanges with other public and private sector stakeholders. Amongst others, it intends to organise regular forums on major statistical themes of public interest. The forums are expected to encourage the use of statistics in informed decision-making, foster public debate and increase the visibility of SM. In specific and whilst the feasibility and specificities thereof are still being discussed, the Board is, currently, contemplating the organisation of a conference, either in 2014 or next year. This first conference is likely to depict and shed light on the challenges to which an expanding services-based economy like ours is confronted, notably in respect of the effective computation of its National Accounts. Resource persons from international statistical organisations will be invited to participate in the conference, in a spirit of mutual sharing of expertise and policy learning, as well as statistical capacity building.

**Concluding remarks**

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow members of the Board for their invaluable dedication, support and active participation in the work of the Board. I also wish to express my heartfelt appreciation of the openness and positive attitude displayed by SM to build on advice provided with a view to improving their functioning as well as the provision of secretariat services and other facilities to the Board.

As Chairperson of the Board, I reiterate my commitment to continue working with Board members and other relevant institutions so as to build a stronger national statistical system. We will all strive to ensure that the Board plays an increasingly meaningful and perceptible role in fostering the production of high quality, relevant and more accessible Official Statistics, thereby providing the country and its stakeholders with a stout statistical background in support of a stronger economy, a vibrant society and a better democracy.

Gilbert Gnany
Chairperson
Statistics Board
Legislative framework

In July 2011, the Statistics Act 2000 was amended to provide for the general reform of the national statistical system (NSS), alongside promoting its professional independence. The amendments aimed at reinforcing and modernising the set-up for the compilation and dissemination of Official Statistics by inter alia:

- providing for better coordination mechanisms among producers of Official Statistics through the replacement of the then Statistics Advisory Council by a higher-level Statistics Board;
- enhancing the professional independence of SM by reinforcing the duties and powers of the Director of Statistics; and
- broadening the scope of the Statistics Act to cover all producers of Official Statistics.

Functions of the Board

The Statistics Board was established in September 2011 under Section 23 of the Statistics Act 2000 (amended). The Board is an independent body and, in the discharge of its functions and the exercise of its powers under the Act, it is not subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority. Its members are high-level professionals specifically selected to improve the professional environment within which the NSS is operating and to ensure that the profile of Official Statistics is commensurate with their role in national development.

According to the amended Act, the Board shall

(i) approve, coordinate and monitor statistical programmes of producers of Official Statistics in order to achieve consistency and efficiency, facilitate integration and promote comparability of data from different sources, avoid duplication, minimise respondent burden, and improve design of data collection and analysis;

(ii) advise any producer of statistics on the policy, procedures and regulations relating to the development of Official Statistics;

(iii) promote and safeguard the quality of Official Statistics, particularly in relation to their relevance, impartiality, accuracy and timeliness and their coherence;

(iv) promote adherence to good practice including accessibility, and international recommendations and standards, in particular, the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the African Charter on Statistics and any other internationally accepted principles relating to statistics;

(v) promote and protect the integrity of Official Statistics, including professional independence; and

(vi) do every act or thing that is required to be done by the Board under the Act.

The Board also approves the collection of statistical information relating to matters set out in the Act, other than the Population Census, as well as the information to be collected and the frequency of the data collection.
Membership

As stated in the Act, the Board shall consist of:

(i) a Chairperson, suitably qualified and experienced in the field of statistics, economics, social sciences, finance, management or related fields, appointed by the President, acting in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister tendered after the Prime Minister has consulted the Leader of the Opposition, on such terms and conditions as may be determined by the Prime Minister;

(ii) the Financial Secretary or his representative;

(iii) a Deputy Governor of the Bank of Mauritius or his representative;

(iv) a representative of the private sector, appointed by the Minister on the advice of the Joint Economic Council;

(v) a qualified and suitable person having international experience on Official Statistics, appointed by the Minister responsible for statistics;

(vi) the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius or his representative; and

(vii) the Director of Statistics Mauritius.

The Board can also co-opt other persons for assistance in relation to any of its matters and set up committees to which it can delegate some of its functions.
Mr. Gnany is currently the Director and Chief Strategy Officer of the Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB) Group Ltd.

Previously, he had a two-year stint as Senior Advisor on the World Bank Group’s Executive Board where he was responsible for issues relating mainly to the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and to the private and financial sectors. Prior to joining the World Bank, he was the MCB Group Chief Economist after having been the Economic Advisor to the Minister of Finance.

During his career, he has been involved in various high-profile boards/committees. Amongst others, he chaired the Stock Exchange of Mauritius and the Statistics Advisory Council and has been a member of the Board of Governors of the Mauritius Offshore Business Activities Authority (MOBAA). He was also a member of the IMF Advisory Group for sub-Saharan Africa (AGSA). Whilst currently being a board member of several companies of the MCB Group, he is a Director on the Board of Investment and a Senate Member of the University of Mauritius.

Mr. Gnany holds a Masters in Econometrics from the University of Toulouse and a ‘DESS’ in Management/Micro-Economics from Paris-X.
The Statistics Board

MEMBERS

Mr. Dovindutt BAICHOO
(Representative of the Financial Secretary)

Mr. Baichoo was Lead Analyst at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.

He has wide experience in macroeconomic and fiscal policy, public financial management, debt management and Government Finance Statistics (GFS). He has represented the Ministry in various boards and committees, and was the Chairperson of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Subcommittee on Macroeconomic Convergence and the Technical Committee on SADC Peer Review Framework.

Mr. Baichoo holds a BA in Economics and Political Science from MS University of Baroda, India.

Mr. Mahendra Vikramdass PUNCHOO
(Representative of the Second Deputy Governor of Bank of Mauritius)

Mr. Punchoo is currently the Head of the Statistics Division at the Bank of Mauritius.

He has represented the Central Bank in various local and international committees and is currently the Central Bank’s representative member on the Irving Fisher Committee on Central Bank Statistics.

Mr. Puchoo holds a Maitrise in Sciences Economiques from Aix-Marseille Ill University, France, and a Masters in Economics from Birkbeck College, University of London.
MEMBERS

Mr. Nashad AUCHOYBUR
(Representative of Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius)

Mr. Auchoybur is currently Lecturer in Statistics at the University of Mauritius.

He holds a Graduate Diploma in Statistics from the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), U.K and a Masters in Applied Statistics from Sheffield Hallam University, U.K.

Mr. Auchoybur is currently reading for a PhD in Statistics at Durham University, U.K.

Ms. Dheemun Devi MANRAJ
(Professional with international experience on Official Statistics)

Ms. Manraj is currently working as National Accounts Expert at the Ministry of Development Planning and Statistics in Doha, Qatar.

She has a long-standing experience in the field of national accounts, prices, industrial and Government Finance Statistics. During her career, she has worked as Government Statistician at the then Central Statistical Office of Mauritius, as Regional Advisor for the IMF East AFRITAC in Tanzania, and as Multi Sector Resident Advisor in Uzbekistan.

Ms. Manraj is a Chartered Statistician of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS), U.K.
Mr. Nunkoomar DEERPALSING
(Representative of the Private Sector)

Mr. Deerpalsing is now retired.

During his career, he was Manager at the National Pensions Fund, Commissioner at the Ministry of Social Security, and Senior Advisor to the Ministry. He was also a Board member of the Employees Welfare Fund, National Savings Fund and Mauritius Housing Company Ltd.

Mr. Deerpalsing holds a Diploma in Personnel Management.

Ms. Li Fa CHEUNG KAI SUET
(Director of Statistics)

Ms. Cheung Kai Suet is currently the Director of Statistics Mauritius.

During her tenure of office, Mauritius graduated to the IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS). She is the IMF SDDS National Coordinator (alternate) and Chairperson of the SDDS National Technical Committee. She assisted the Seychelles’ authorities in the SDDS initiatives, and is an IMF short-term expert in national accounts and data dissemination.

Ms. Cheung Kai Suet holds a Graduate Diploma in Statistics from the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) of U.K, equivalent to a U.K Honours Degree in Statistics, and is Chartered Statistician of the RSS.
Ms. Clairette AH-HEN
(Co-opted member, Chief Executive of Financial Services Commission)

Ms. Ah-Hen is the Chief Executive of the Financial Services Commission. She has a wide experience in financial reporting and corporate capital structures. During her career, she occupied the post of Vice-Chairperson of the Committee for Insurance, Securities and Non-Bank Financial Authorities (CISNA) of the SADC and chaired several committees at national level on Accounting and Auditing Standards.

She was the first Chief Executive Officer of the Mauritius Financial Reporting Council, Senior Advisor for Corporate Affairs to the Ministry of Economic Development, Associate Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Law and Management of the University of Mauritius, and visiting fellow of the University of Birmingham, U.K.

Ms. Ah-Hen holds an MPhil and a BA (Hons) in Accounting and Finance and is a fellow member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) and the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA - U.K).
Meetings of the Board

The Act stipulates that the Board shall meet at least once every quarter. In practice, it meets almost every month. The Board met ten times in 2013. Table 1 gives the dates of the meetings and the attendance of members.

The main tasks performed by the Board in 2013 are:

(i) Approval of the 2014 Census and Survey Plan of SM and the related questionnaires;
(ii) Approval of the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics;
(iii) Coordination and monitoring of implementation of recommendations put forward by the three Committees of the Board, namely ‘Committee on Dissemination and advocacy of Official Statistics’, ‘Committee on Harmonisation of business censuses and surveys and administrative data collection’, and ‘Committee on Quality of life statistics’; and
(iv) Coordination of activities of the NSS, particularly the sustainability of the adherence to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) of the IMF, upgrading to SDDS Plus and the implementation of recommendations of IMF Multi Sector mission held in February 2013.

Funding of Board

The expenditure of the Board in 2013 amounted to MUR 1.6 million and comprised mostly fees to members of Board.

Board Secretariat

SM provided secretariat services to the Board through Mr. M. Dawoonauth and Ms. C. Rughoobur, respectively Senior Statistician and Statistician, as well as other facilities.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Board Members</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Date of Meetings and Attendance</th>
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<tr>
<td>1 Mr Gilbert GNANY</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>2 Mr Dovindutt BAICHOO</td>
<td>Representative of Financial Secretary</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>3 Mr Mahendra Vikramdass PUNCHOO</td>
<td>Representative of Second Deputy Governor, Bank of Mauritius</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<td>4 Mr Nunkoomar DEERPALSING</td>
<td>Representative of the Private Sector</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Ms Dheemun Devi MANRAJ</td>
<td>Professional with international experience on Official Statistics</td>
<td>✓ X ✓ ✓ X X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Mr Nashad AUCHOYBUR</td>
<td>Representative of Vice Chancellor of University of Mauritius</td>
<td>✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Ms Li Fa CHEUNG KAI SUET</td>
<td>Director of Statistics</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Ms Clairette AH-HEN</td>
<td>Co-opted member, Chief Executive, Financial Services Commission</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓ X</td>
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Note: X = absent; ✓ = present

1 No longer member of Board since October 2013.

2 Co-opted member of Board since March 2013.
ACTIVITIES OF THE BOARD
(i) Approval of census and survey plan for 2014, and particulars and information to be collected

Section 10 of the Act stipulates that, on the recommendation of the Board, the Director can collect statistical information relating to any matters set out in the Act, except the Population Census. In addition, the frequency of the data collection and the particulars and information to be collected are subject to the prior approval of the Board.

In 2013, the Board approved the conduct of the Census of Agriculture in 2014 as well as particulars and information to be collected at the 2014 Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey. Regular surveys that were approved in the past were not subject to Board’s approval again, unless changes have been brought to particulars and information to be collected therein.

The census and survey plan for 2014 is given in Table 2.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 2: 2014 Census and Survey Plan</th>
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<td><strong>Censuses and Surveys</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Regular Surveys</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ad hoc Censuses and Surveys</strong></td>
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It is to be noted that two of the regular surveys conducted by SM will not be conducted in 2014. They are (i) the Annual Survey on Receipts and Expenditure as the data will be collected through the 2013 Census of Economic Activities – Phase II ‘Large establishments’, and (ii) the Survey of Inbound and Outbound Tourists (SIOT) given that data on the expenditure pattern of tourists do not change significantly from a year to another; the survey will henceforth be conducted every two years and next round will be in 2015.

(ii) Approval of the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics

The Statistics Board endorsed the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics at its 19th meeting held on 17 May 2013.

The Code which was prepared by SM in consultation with the Bank of Mauritius, the Financial Services Commission and the Statistics Division of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, is based on the values of the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the UN guidelines for the template for a generic National Quality Assurance Framework, the African Charter on Statistics, the Data Quality Assessment Framework of the IMF, the European Statistics Code of Practice, and the UK Code of Practice.

It contains 15 principles and associated indicators of best practices which take into account factors influencing the production and dissemination of high quality statistics. These can be viewed as three main components of the process:

(i) Institutional and Organisational Environment
(ii) Statistical Processes
(iii) Statistical Outputs
Box 1: The National Code of Practice for Official Statistics

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics represents a set of principles and indicators of good practice intended to improve the quality, relevance and credibility of Official Statistics, and ensure that the statistics are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards and that they are well explained.

The Code contains 15 principles and, in relation to each, a list of associated indicators of best practices. The principles take into account factors influencing the production of high quality, relevant and timely statistical information. They are:

**Institutional and Organizational Environment**
- Principle 1: Professional Independence (7 indicators)  
- Principle 2: Mandate for Data Collection (3 indicators)  
- Principle 3: Adequacy of Resources (4 indicators)  
- Principle 4: Quality Commitment (6 indicators)  
- Principle 5: Statistical Confidentiality (7 indicators)  
- Principle 6: Impartiality and Objectivity (10 indicators)

**Statistical Processes**
- Principle 7: Sound Methodology (7 indicators)  
- Principle 8: Appropriate Statistical Procedures (6 indicators)  
- Principle 9: Non-Excessive Burden on Respondents (7 indicators)  
- Principle 10: Cost Effectiveness (6 indicators)

**Statistical Outputs**
- Principle 11: Relevance (4 indicators)  
- Principle 12: Accuracy and Reliability (3 indicators)  
- Principle 13: Timeliness and Punctuality (5 indicators)  
- Principle 14: Coherence and Comparability (5 indicators)  
- Principle 15: Accessibility and Clarity (5 indicators)

The Code of Practice shall be applied and respected by all producers of Official Statistics which must guarantee the standards of statistics produced and disseminated.
(iii) Committees of the Board

In 2012, the Board set up three Committees to work on:

- Dissemination and advocacy of Official Statistics;
- Harmonisation of business surveys and censuses and administrative data collection; and
- Quality of life statistics

SM started implementing the recommendations of the Committees in 2013 under the guidance of the Board and with the assistance of relevant stakeholders. The work status is as follows:

Dissemination and advocacy of Official Statistics

(a) Promoting awareness and organisation of promotional events

SM organized three events during 2013:

- a census data dissemination seminar in Rodrigues in July;
- a workshop to celebrate the International Year of Statistics in September during which it unveiled its logo and launched the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics as well as its Interactive Statistical Data Portal; and
- a workshop in November to mark the African Statistics Day.

(b) Upgrading of website

SM launched its Interactive Statistical Data Portal in September 2013. The Portal, developed in collaboration with the African Development Bank, is an interactive tool that enables users to compile their own tables and view pre-selected indicators using charts and maps. All outputs can be downloaded for use in reports. Further data sets are being added and improvements are being made in the light of users’ feedbacks.

(c) Dissemination of materials destined for the general public or lay users

On the occasion of the census data dissemination seminar in Rodrigues, SM prepared and distributed factsheets on key census results for Rodrigues covering population change and distribution, marital status, education, labour force, employment and unemployment, disability, living arrangements, housing and living conditions, ICT in households and Relative Development of administrative areas.

SM also prepared flyers on the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics and on the Statistical Data Portal which it distributed to key users at the workshop celebrating the International Year of Statistics.

(d) Recruitment of a consultant to advise on data dissemination and statistical literacy

SM recruited a consultant in December 2013 to advise and assist in the dissemination of statistics taking into account the
needs of different types of users, and to develop appropriate statistical literacy materials for promoting understanding of basic concepts and principles of statistics. The Consultant will also build capacity to produce improved statistical releases. His assignment will be completed in August 2014.

Quality of life statistics (QoL)

(a) Work plan for the implementation of the recommendations

SM developed a work plan with the assistance of members of the Committee to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations. The work plan is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiatives/Activities</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Set up a work group to monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee</td>
<td>March 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Compile and disseminate available statistics on Quality of Life (QoL) and Sustainable Development (SD) indicators</td>
<td>September 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Compile environmental economic accounts and analyse the impact of the economy on the environment or vice versa through the UN System of Environmental-Economic-Accounting (SEEA), including the valuation of environmental and natural assets, and the compilation of Green GDP</td>
<td>October 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Request for technical assistance to develop appropriate national QoL indicators, including measurement of subjective well-being from the time use survey and developing indicators for non-market services such as education and health</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Publish updated list of indicators on QoL and SD after public consultation and upon expert’s advice</td>
<td>June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Conduct a survey on time use and on subjective well-being to collect, amongst others, information on: (i) time use/leisure/social connectedness/etc for supplementing QoL indicators; and (ii) unpaid household work with a view to incorporating it in the estimation of GDP</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Produce more refined statistics on household sector consumption and debt (purpose and instrument of debt)</td>
<td>2017 Household Budget Survey</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(b) Dissemination of statistics on Quality of Life

A first set of 48 indicators on Quality of Life and Sustainable Development was released on SM website in October 2013 and are being regularly updated. They are grouped under the eight dimensions:

- Economic sustainability and material living standards (13 indicators)
- Health (3 indicators)
- Education (6 indicators)
- Personal activities including work (5 indicators)
- Political voice and governance (7 indicators)
- Social connections and relationships (4 indicators)
- Environment (8 indicators)
- Insecurity (2 indicators)

According to the work plan, a refreshed set of indicators will be produced around June 2014 following public consultation by an international expert to be recruited by SM.

(c) Recruitment of an international expert to develop appropriate national QoL indicators

The Board members assisted SM in the preparation of the terms of reference of the international expert. The expert is expected to (i) advise on the measurement of QoL in Mauritius, taking into consideration the local context, and (ii) come up with appropriate indicators that would measure and track progress on QoL in the country. He will hold discussions with key stakeholders and prepare a consultation paper around which public views would be sought before coming up with a refreshed set of domains and indicators.

The tender was launched in January 2014.

(d) Environmental Economic Accounts

SM obtained technical assistance from a Consultant of the Indian Ocean Commission on Ecosystem Accounting. The Consultant held consultations with main stakeholders to identify which ecosystems/natural accounts should be compiled for Mauritius. These are (i) land cover, (ii) water, (iii) biomass – carbon, (iv) biodiversity and (v) coastal sea. Provisional accounts were compiled based on available data and presented at the international conference on ‘Valuation and Accounting of Natural Capital for Green Economy (VANTAGE)’ held in December 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya.
**Harmonisation of business surveys and censuses, and administrative data collection**

(a) **Use of common definitions and classifications in line with best practices**

SM has taken stock of terminologies and definitions currently used by the producers of official economic statistics, in particular the Bank of Mauritius and the Financial Services Commission; it has identified some differences among definitions used by the various producers as well as some deviations from international standards. The next step is to seek consensus to arrive at a national list of definitions which is in line with international standards.

(b) **Setting up a Business Register with a common identifier that can be used by organizations involved in data collection**

SM is receiving technical assistance from the African Development Bank to set up a Statistical Business Register. The register will provide:

- Up-to-date information that will be used for compiling business demography (i.e. births and deaths of businesses, businesses which are active, dormant, changed activity or merged, changed names or location, etc.)
- Up-to-date and regular information on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) for which statistics are currently lacking; and
- Up-to-date and complete frame from which efficient samples can be drawn for conducting business surveys and which can be shared with other organizations involved in data collection.

(c) **Online access to the Central Business Registration Database of the Registrar of Companies**

Most stakeholders involved now have access to the database.

(d) **Signing of Memoranda of Understanding between the different organizations**

Memoranda of Understanding between different organizations regarding cooperation on collection and compilation of statistics and sharing of information under conditions of confidentiality were already in place. In 2013, SM initiated actions for an agreement with the Mauritius Revenue Authority on data sharing to build the Statistical Business Register and to supplement/replace business survey data with a view to reducing response burden and cost.

(e) **Circulation of questionnaires and forms among members to ensure that requirements of one another are taken on board**

SM has recourse to such practice since a long time. It usually requests Government Ministries and Departments to submit their data needs whenever it conducts a census or a survey. This practice is now being adopted by other members.
The Financial Services Commission has thus integrated the needs of SM in some of its annual survey questionnaires, and assisted the Bank of Mauritius to collect data among businesses falling under its supervision while SM and the Board of Investment are envisaging joint data collection on the services sector.

(iv) International Year of Statistics 2013

A series of events was organized by SM with the support of the Board, to mark the first International Year of Statistics, a worldwide event whose primary objective is to increase public awareness of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society and on how statisticians are improving the global society.

(a) Workshop conducted in Rodrigues in July titled ‘Census 2011: Key Statistics for a Better Understanding of Rodrigues’

Presentations on changes that occurred in Rodrigues from Census 2000 to Census 2011 were made to show the island’s evolution since it achieved its autonomy in 2002. Topics covered included Housing and Living Conditions, Socio-economic Profile of Rodriguans, Situation of Rodriguan-born residents in the Island of Mauritius and Relative Development in Rodrigues.

(b) Launching of SM logo, the National Code of Practice for Official Statistics as well as the Interactive Statistical Data Portal

The logo of SM is inspired from a wave - never static - and demonstrates SM as a dynamic organization. The two complementary colours that form the logo illustrates the letters ‘S’ and ‘M’ in a unique visual which also represents a curve-form graph familiar to the world of statistics.

The Code of Practice for Official Statistics sets the standards for developing, producing and disseminating Official Statistics in Mauritius and contains a set of key principles and indicators of good practice to improve the quality, relevance and credibility of Official Statistics. For its part, the Interactive Statistical Data Portal enables users to compile their own tables while also allowing them to view preselected indicators from various time periods by country or region using charts and maps.

(c) Celebration of the African Statistics Day themed ‘Quality Data to support African Progress’

SM organized a workshop on Data Quality Initiatives and Dissemination of main results of the 2012 Household Budget Survey covering Household income and expenditure, Household indebtedness and Poverty.

Based on the level of the interactions of users, it can be concluded that the events have sparked interest in statistics, and provided SM with some insights about how to shape its statistical products to better serve its users.

(v) Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Implementation of the recommendations of the Fund Multi-Sector Mission

The Board which supported adherence to the SDDS of the IMF in 2012, has been providing guidance to SM and other producers of Official Statistics throughout the year on how to implement the latest enhancements of the SDDS and progress to the highest and more stringent tiers of the SDDS Plus. Implementation of the latest enhancements will be completed in September 2014, while four out of the nine categories of the SDDS Plus are already available.
In addition, the Board is following up on the implementation of the recommendations of the IMF Multi-Sector Mission aimed at improving the economic statistics of the country. At the end of 2013, some 30% of the work was completed and needs for specific technical assistance identified, in particular relating the conduct of Other Financial Corporation Survey, the development of a Residential Property Price Index and the compilation of Sectoral Financial Accounts and Balance Sheets.
Looking Ahead
The Board will continue to provide due support to SM and other producers of Official Statistics and to further the development of the national statistical system as well as guide and monitor initiatives to be adopted to pave the way for the adherence of the country to the SDDS Plus.

**Strategic direction**

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) was first designed in 2006 and published in 2007. The 2007 NSDS, which was a five year plan for reforming the national statistical system, focused on efficient and effective coordination of statistical activities at national level, as well as credibility, trust and policy relevance of Official Statistics produced.

For various reasons, the update of the strategy which was on the last year agenda of SM was not contemplated. The Board therefore reiterates the need for an assessment of the achievements under the 2007 NSDS and an update of the strategy to give the necessary institutional directives over the next five years with a view to strengthening the statistical system and promoting the production of high quality statistics to support the design, implementation and monitoring of socio-economic policies. The updated NSDS should take into account the evolving configurations of the economic and social fabric of the country and the complex and growing demands of data users.

**Statistical Capacity**

There is no doubt that capacity building is inexorable in the production of gratifying Official Statistics for their utilisation by all. The Board will contribute in the organization of knowledge sharing sessions among institutions within the national statistical system and by other institutions from the public and private sectors. Such exercises, though not necessarily of statistical nature, will equip SM officers with the necessary side information required for a better understanding of the various subjects so that they are in a better position to produce the relevant statistical information.

**Organization of regular forum**

SM has been increasingly interacting with stakeholders notably through workshops to communicate on various achievements including results of major statistical exercises and to enquire on the broadening range of data requirements of users. Building on such exchanges, the Board now intends to organize regular statistical forum on major themes of public interest to create public debate; such forum is expected to enlighten users, build interest on and augment the use of statistics among the population while increasing further the visibility of SM. It is also intended to provide an opportunity to Mauritian participants to present papers and attract both regional and international participation.