Background

Every year, on 18 November 2019, the African Statistical Community celebrates the African Statistics Day (ASD) with the objective of raising public awareness about the importance of statistics in the economic and social development of the continent.

ASD 2019 workshop in Mauritius

For this year, Statistics Mauritius has chosen the theme ‘Quality of Life Statistics’ and has organised a workshop to present the first results of the Living Conditions Survey (LCS) conducted from October 2018 to September 2019, and to gather views of stakeholders on issues that matter most to Mauritians to help us finalise proposed dimensions and indicators of Quality of Life Statistics (QoL).

The workshop discussed:

- **Development of Quality of Life statistics at international level**
  At international level, there is a lot of ongoing discussions about the ‘Beyond GDP initiative’ which is about developing indicators that are as clear and appealing as GDP, but more inclusive of environmental and social aspects of progress. Economic indicators such as GDP were never designed to be comprehensive measures of prosperity and well-being. There is need for adequate indicators to address global challenges of the 21st century such as climate change, poverty, resource depletion, health and quality of life.

- **Quality of Life statistics in Mauritius**
  At the national level, the Government Programme 2012-2015, presented in April 2012, recognised that “economic success is meaningful only if it leads to improvements in the quality of life for all in a sustainable way”.

  In that context, the Statistics Board (SB) recommended the setting up of a Committee with main objective to come up with recommendations on improving quality of life statistics in Mauritius. Workings of the committee were based on the report of the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Commission entitled “Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress”.

  In October 2012, the Committee came up with a list of indicators pertaining to Quality of Life and Sustainable Development to be disseminated by SM. A first data base, using available information, has since then been posted on SM’s website and is updated as and when new data become available.
The Committee also recommended that a Time Use Study be conducted at least once every 5 years to gather more data on time use/leisure/social connectedness/etc. for supplementing QoL indicators.

- **Main results of the 2018/19 Living Conditions Survey**
  A Living Conditions Survey (LCS) was first conducted in 2018/19. The data from the LCS, together with information from other surveys conducted by the office, namely the Household Budget Survey (HBS) and the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) will allow SM to come up with some new QoL indicators and to compile some SDG indicators for which data is missing.

Some results of the LCS:
- **Life satisfaction**: 23% of Mauritians were somewhat satisfied with their life; 53% were satisfied and 12% were very satisfied.
- **Material living standards**: 51% of households had difficulties to meet expenses with their income.
- **Social connections and relationships**: 75% of households stated that they can rely on their relatives, friends or neighbours if they need material help such as money or food.
- **Care of household members**: Sick, disabled and elderly persons who need assistance for their daily activities were mainly looked after by other household members – this was the case for 72% of households.
- **Health status of household members**: Two thirds of Mauritians found themselves to be in good or very good health.
- **Engagement in sports, recreational and cultural activities**: Only 36% of Mauritians usually practice some sports or physical activity.
- **Subjective well being**: 31% of Mauritians were not at all stressed with their daily activities and responsibilities, by contrast 4% were very stressed. 16% of Mauritians stated that they were never nervous/worried during the 4 weeks preceding the interview; by contrast 8% felt nervous/worried most of the time. 43% of Mauritians felt calm and peaceful most of the time during the 4 weeks preceding the interview; by contrast 1% was never calm and peaceful. 45% of Mauritians felt happy most of the time during the 4 weeks preceding the interview; by contrast 1% never felt so. 44% of Mauritians never felt lonely during the 4 weeks preceding the interview; by contrast 7% never felt so most of the time.

- **Participants’ views on proposed dimensions and indicators of Quality of Life Statistics (QoL)**
  The second part of the workshop comprised group discussions on the dimensions and indicators that would help to measure quality of life in Mauritius and how is life changing over time.

**Participants of the workshop**

Representatives of Ministries/Departments and the private sector as well as those of regional and international organisations.