



Editorial

Growth, Well-being, Crises and Statistics

Economic growth has been a key contributor to social progress. It has widened employment opportunities, raised incomes, increased resources for health, education and social security, improved conditions of living and working, lengthened lifespans, driven science and technology to reduce working hours and domestic chores, and enhanced cultural and leisure pursuits.

But, like the oft-quoted example of weapons production, not all growth contributes to progress or well-being. The real cost of production to the environment and natural resources is often ignored. On the other hand, essential activities like child rearing, household maintenance, and home care for sick and elderly, which do contribute to human well-being, are given no value.

The continued existence, if not worsening, of poverty, unemployment and inequality in spite of sustained growth, has led both developed and developing nations to shift attention away from economic growth to broader social indicators.

Already in 1990, the UNDP integrated life expectancy and literacy to income in the composite Human Development Index. International consensus has now emerged on what the June 2007 Istanbul Declaration (EC, OECD, OIC, UN, UNDP, World Bank) calls “the need to undertake the measurement of societal progress in every country, going beyond conventional economic measures such as GDP per capita”.

The recent global crisis has brought further disillusionment with economic growth, while financial and economic sector bail-outs are seen as confirmation that governments and the economic system are biased in favour of the rich. Such perceptions coupled with rising unemployment, poverty and inequality have the potential for distressful social tensions.

This situation poses many challenges to statisticians, and also to bankers and economists, whose statistics and analyses tend to raise scepticism rather than trust among the population. It is difficult for the layman to understand why greedy markets should be left free when profits are soaring and given budget support when they go

In this Issue

Editorial	1
Memorandum of Understanding between Bank of Mauritius and Central Statistics Office	3
World Bank mission on Crime, Justice and Security Statistics	4
International Comparison Program (ICP)	5
International Seminar on Informal Sector in Africa	6
Africa Symposium on Statistical Development	7
Workshop on COMESA Trade Point	8
SADC workshop on improvement of civil registration and vital statistics	9
Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric	9
Performance Management System	11
Electronic Attendance System	12
Visits on the CSO Website	13
Important Indicators	14
Documentation Centre of the CSO	15
Training / Meetings	16
Staffing Development	17
Occupational Safety and Health	17
Tips on IT	18

into free fall. Information needs to be made available for describing, analyzing and evaluating complex financial, economic and social situations from different perspectives to enhance rational public debate, particularly in areas where consensus is not possible. Discussions are already under way with the Bank of Mauritius on ways and means to raise the level of economic, financial and statistical understanding among the population. Consultations with various groups, including non-state agents, will have to be engaged to identify major concerns and the data they call for.

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has already taken steps to ensure that important economic and social indicators such as sectoral growths, unemployment and inflation, are made available more frequently to more closely monitor the economic and social consequences of the crisis, and the effects of the remedial measures. The poor will need special attention: it is proposed to prepare a rough estimate of inflation for “poor” households and to monitor it alongside the inflation rate for the whole population.

In the short term, implementation of the 1993 System of National Accounts needs to be accelerated to produce financial accounts for all institutional sectors as well as balance sheets and assets accounts. The macro-economic accounts need to show the interrelations between financial and non-financial sectors as well as with the rest of the world. The balance sheets are expected to give a better insight into the financial positions of the various sectors, including the types of financial instruments used, for early identification of vulnerabilities that could signal potential crises. The closer collaboration needed between CSO, Bank of Mauritius (BOM) and Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment (MOFEE) for the development of these accounts is already acquired through the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed recently with the BOM, and working arrangements made between the three institutions.

As regards the impact of the financial crisis and economic recession on the population, work will continue on the construction of social accounting matrices. We will also have to keep abreast of initiatives to measure societal progress and well-being in line with the Istanbul Declaration. Household accounts integrating income, consumption, savings and indebtedness, coupled with economic accounts linking transfers of income and assets between economic sectors, between government and households, will need to be developed to analyse the effects of bailouts and bad debts on the distribution of wealth and income among households. This will be essential for trusted measures of poverty, well being and inequality.

Work already started on Environmental Economic Accounting and Tourism Satellite Accounts will be continued and extended to other areas to improve our understanding of relationships between economic growth and other dimensions of sustainable development, so that new measures of economic, social and environmental sustainability can be developed to inform policy debate.

It is expected that action already taken, or to be taken in the short term by government, bankers, economists and statisticians, will create better public understanding of the economic and financial system, and particularly the rationale behind bailing out enterprises rather than households to move quickly out of the crisis. The medium and longer term proposals coupled with better regulations, are expected not only to satisfy the information needs of governments, regulators, businesses and civil society in an evolving world, but also to narrow the gap between measures of sustainable economic, financial, social and environmental development on the one hand, and public perception of equity and social well-being on the other.

Memorandum of Understanding between Bank of Mauritius and Central Statistics Office

The Bank of Mauritius (BOM) and the Central Statistics Office (CSO) are statutorily empowered to collect statistics within their own areas of responsibility. With a view to have a more structured collaboration between the BOM and the CSO and to promote quality statistics and avoid overlapping and duplication in the collection and production of statistical information, the First Deputy Governor of the BOM and the Director of Statistics of the CSO have signed on 3 March 2009 at the Bank in the presence of the Governor a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU sets out the framework of co-operation between the two institutions with regard to, among others, the collection of statistics and the sharing of information under strict conditions of confidentiality.

The purposes of the MOU are to meet, inter alia, international obligations, collaborate in the development and implementation of best practices and to assist in the development of methodologies in areas of mutual interest.

The BOM and the CSO have also agreed that staff and resources shall be made available to each institution for participation in technical committees to be established to ensure that the aims and objectives of the MOU are achieved.



The MOU signed by Mr. Yandraduth Googoolye, First Deputy Governor of the BOM and Mr. Harish Bundhoo, Director of the CSO, in the presence of Mr. Rundheersingh Bheenick, Governor of the BOM.

Following the signing of the MOU, a brainstorming session was held on 14 March 2009 to pave the way forward. The meeting was a golden opportunity for representatives of the BOM, CSO and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment (MOFEE) to meet their counterpart to discuss their respective work and to express their views on areas of possible collaboration.

During the meeting, it was decided that BOM will pursue action with Commonwealth Secretariat to tap the possibility of running a training programme on International Trade in Services that would be of interest to officers of the Bank, CSO as well as to those of MOFEE as trade in international services is becoming increasingly important for Mauritius.

Moreover four working groups were set up as follows:

- (i) **Working group on Literacy of the public under the leadership of BOM.** Topics which have been proposed include inflation, price indices, growth rate and indebtedness of households. CSO will make available to the group the series of 15 TV programmes prepared in 2007 in the context of Public Understanding of Statistics. These will help to prepare the literacy programme.
- (ii) **Working group on debt.** CSO will make available to the group tabulations that have been produced on household indebtedness based on CMPHS and HBS data as well as the respective questionnaires used. BOM will decide on the extent to which the information can satisfy their specific requirements. The group will decide on additional tabulations that can be produced on the data already collected and advise on other information that need to be included in future household and establishment surveys.
- (iii) **Working group on price indices.** The group will work out different series of inflation rate that will be used for different purposes. Moreover, the group will examine the work carried out by CSO pertaining to Producer Price Indices (PPI (M), PPI(A)), Construction Price Index and Trade Indices (EPI and IPI) and identify areas for improvement.
- (iv) **Technical group on leading indicator.** In order to help policy makers take effective decisions, representatives of the three institutions (CSO/BOM/MOFEE) will come up with a list of more frequent leading indicators that can be made available within a reduced timelag.

World Bank mission on Crime, Justice and Security Statistics

With financial support from the Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK, the World Bank is providing technical assistance to five Anglophone African countries, including Mauritius, to participate in the Crime, Justice and Security Module of the General Data Dissemination System (GDDS).

The project started in March 2007 with a launch workshop in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania and will end around mid-2009 with a closing workshop in Kenya. Through this project a series of activities was carried out in Mauritius to improve on quality, coverage and dissemination of crime, justice and security statistics in the Mauritius Police Force (MPF), Judiciary Department, Mauritius Prisons Services (MPS) and Probation and After-care services as follows:

- (i) Professor Christopher Lewis had a first visit to Mauritius in November-December 2007 to assess and recommend on the system of data collection and compilation. He also met the heads of the concerned institutions for advocacy.
- (ii) The Central Statistics Office (CSO) hosted the second regional workshop on crime, justice and security statistics in April 2008. The main objective of the workshop was to improve coordination in the African region.
- (iii) Mr. Etienne de Fortier, IT expert, visited Mauritius in April 2008 to assess and recommend on intermediate and long term IT systems to generate statistics.
- (iv) Professor Christopher Lewis had a second visit to Mauritius in January-February 2009 to assess and recommend on analysis and dissemination of an integrated report on crime, justice and security statistics according to international standards. He also met the heads of the concerned institutions for continued advocacy and to discuss long term IT development and capacity building in data analysis and use of statistics.



Working Session with Professor Christopher Lewis, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Criminal Justice Studies, University of Portsmouth

An Economic and Social Indicator (ESI) was prepared with the assistance of Professor Christopher Lewis and with the contribution of officers from the MPF, Judiciary Department, MPS and Probation and After-care services. This ESI was published on the CSO website (<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/cso>) on 1 April 2009.

Our special thanks to Professor Christopher Lewis for his invaluable help to the Mauritian Government in producing reliable and relevant crime, justice and security statistics for better management and policy decisions.

Regional Workshop on International Comparison Program (ICP) – Africa

The International Comparison Program (ICP) is a worldwide statistical initiative to collect comparative price data and estimate purchasing power parities (PPPs) of the world's economies. Use of PPPs instead of market exchange rates to convert to a common currency yields more meaningful comparisons of output of countries and the welfare of their inhabitants.

ICP was launched following the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) discussions in 1965 relating to the problems inherent in exchange rate comparisons and agreement that the United Nations Statistical Office (UNSO) should develop a more suitable method for international comparison of activity levels.

The 2005 round of ICP was organised into five geographic areas: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Commonwealth of Independent States, South America and Western Asia, coordinated by the ICP global office within the World Bank. The overall coordination for the collection of data and calculation of PPPs for the African region, of which Mauritius forms part, was entrusted to the African Development Bank (AfDB).

At its 39th session held in 2008, the UN Statistical Commission welcomed the successful completion of the 2005 ICP round and requested that preparations for the next round targeted for 2011 be initiated. Given the recognition of PPPs as a more appropriate currency converter to compare GDP and its components across countries, the Commission recommended that these should be computed on an annual basis. In this context, the African Development Bank organised a workshop from 16 to 19 February 2009, attended by 108 participants from 51 African countries, to discuss the general framework for the 2009 – 2010 data collection program and preparatory activities for the 2011 global ICP round.

The agenda of the workshop comprised presentations and discussions on the following main topics:

- (i) A general overview of the objectives of the ICP-Africa framework which includes a statistical capacity building in prices and national accounts; making ICP an integral part of national statistical systems and facilitating cross country comparisons of price levels and economic aggregates in real term.
- (ii) Evaluation of ICP 2005 results and improvements needed for future ICP activities based on lessons learnt from the 2005 round.
- (iii) Implementation of ICP – Africa in 2009 and beyond, including short cut methods for computation of annual PPPs based on a reduced list of products.
- (iv) Outline of the 2011 ICP – Africa work plan and activities time frame.

International Seminar on Informal Sector in Africa

One representative of the Central Statistics Office of Mauritius participated in an International Seminar on Informal Sector in Africa which was held in Bamako, Mali, from 22 to 24 October 2008. The theme of the seminar was to focus on problems related to the integration of informal sector statistics into economic and social policies, as well as to build on relevant experience acquired over the past 11 years following the first seminar on the topic held in 1997. A paper on informal statistics in Mauritius was presented in the seminar, a synopsis of which is given below.

The informal sector is becoming increasingly important in Mauritius in terms of its contribution to the economy and in employment creation. Government is laying much emphasis on its development since small and medium sized enterprises and cooperatives are major contributors to job creation and help alleviate poverty. To monitor the development of the sector, it is necessary to have proper and coherent statistics.

Definition of Informal Sector

In order to collect statistics on informal sector, a proper definition is needed. The definition which was prepared by a sub-committee of the Statistics Advisory Council in 2003 and later approved by the Council reads as follows: The informal sector comprises household and unincorporated market enterprises, i.e. production units not incorporated as separate legal entities independent of the households or household members who own them. The definition meets the mandatory criteria adopted by the UN expert group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group).

Available Statistics for Mauritius

Currently the two main sources of statistics on the informal sector are the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) and the Census of Economic Activities (CEA). Questions to distinguish informal sector from the formal sector was first introduced in the 2004 CMPHS survey questionnaire. The questionnaire however did not allow for the capture of secondary employment. In 2007, this office conducted the fifth round of the CEA. The main objective of the survey was to collect data on the operational characteristics and structure of all types of economic activities, except agriculture where different techniques were needed for collecting data. In the census questionnaires, several questions were introduced in order to distinguish the informal sector from the formal sector. Given that analysis of the survey data is still on-going, estimates for the informal sector are not yet available.

The 2004 CMPHS data shows that around 70,500 workers were employed in the informal sector representing around 15% of total employment. The main sectors of employment were 'Private household with employed persons' (25%), followed by 'Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles, personal and household goods' (23%) and 'Agriculture, forestry and fishing' (17%).

Way Forward

For a complete picture of the development of the informal sector, it is necessary to complement employment statistics on the informal sector with data on the operational characteristics of the informal enterprises. This would help to better understand the relationships between employment in the informal sector, the precarity of this type of employment, gender and poverty. The information would also help policy makers to better target logistic support for the informal enterprises.

Information on operating characteristics can be obtained from economic surveys but the best method would be to conduct a specialised survey which consists of two phases. In the first phase households are interviewed and an estimate of informal sector employment can be worked out and at the same time identifying the informal enterprises. During the second phase, the informal enterprises are surveyed in order to collect information on their operating characteristics.

Africa Symposium on Statistical Development

Many countries in the African region have begun execution of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (RPHC), and have committed themselves to meeting on an annual basis through the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development (ASSD) to discuss issues of statistical development. The Symposium serves the dual role of encouraging African countries to participate in the 2010 RPHC, and as an exchange forum for evaluating the general pace of achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Africa. Moreover, the forum attempts to promote best practice and exchange experiences with regard to census-taking. Those who have already met the challenge of undertaking a census in the 2010 Round can share their experiences. Those preparing to undertake a census in the next couple of years have much to learn and share too.

The first symposium was held in Cape Town, South Africa in 2006, the second in Kigali, Rwanda in 2007 and the third in Accra, Ghana in 2007. The fourth one was held in 2009 in Luanda, Angola,

where around 300 participants from 53 national statistical offices in Africa and their stakeholders met to take stock of progress made as custodians of official statistics. The main objective of this forum was to deliberate on key issues of data processing for the effective production of useable data.

One key issue discussed during the fourth symposium was the use of scanning for data capture. Based on the presentations, all the countries that adopted the technology did not succeed during their first attempt. Lesotho and South Africa had to revert to manual data capture due to many technical problems. In Mozambique, it was a disaster. It was emphasized that there are unavoidable risks involved in the short term due to lack of experience. However, the short term gains would be experience and investment in new technology. In the long term, there would be additional gains related to timeliness and reduced staff costs as mentioned by Morocco and Portugal.

The Central Statistics Office is considering the possibility of using the scanning technology for data capture during the forthcoming census in order to improve on timeliness. However, in order to minimize risks, it has been decided that this service be outsourced to a private firm with extensive experience in census data capture through scanning. Before adoption of the technology, the selected firm would be called upon to carry out a pilot exercise to study the feasibility of using such technology. The office is also considering the possibility of seeking advice from Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) on this exercise.

Workshop on COMESA Trade Point

A Trade Point is a portal whereby buyers and sellers can communicate to import and export goods through e-commerce. The resource person provided training on the concept of Trade Point and related issues like e-commerce, trade statistics analysis, marketing and e-security and emphasized on the aspects of making the project successful.

The advantages of a Trade Point are multiple. COMESA members would gain from increased opportunities for SMEs, employment creation, cheaper imports of raw materials, intermediate and finished goods, and reduced cost of document handling and customer satisfaction.

Following the successful implementation of a Trade Point in Egypt, the COMESA Secretariat decided to select four member countries to participate in a pilot project for capacity building in setting a Trade Point and Mauritius was one of them. Subsequently, a workshop was held in Mauritius from 16 to 20 February 2009 at Le Plantation Hotel, Balaclava and was facilitated by the COMESA Secretariat. The other Ministries and stakeholders invited besides CSO were Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Ministry of Industry, Science and Research, International Trade Division, Mauritius Revenue Authority, Enterprise Mauritius, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and Mauritius Export Association (MEXA). The resource person was Dr. Hussein Omran, Head of Egyptian Trade Point and he demonstrated how the Egyptian economy benefited from that project as there is demand of their products worldwide.

After this preliminary workshop in all the selected four countries, an advanced training would be held with the aim to implement the Trade Point successfully.

SADC Workshop on improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics

A workshop on the improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region was held from 1 to 5 December 2008 in Malawi. The objectives of the workshop, which was organised by the United Nations Statistics Division, were to:

- (i) provide training on the implementation of the United Nations guidelines and international standards on civil registration and vital statistics system in SADC countries;
- (ii) identify gaps to be filled; and
- (iii) review national capacities to produce and provide national vital statistics to UNSD through the Demographic Yearbook questionnaire.

The recommendations of the workshop are:

- (i) Civil registration should be mandatory in every country of the SADC region.
- (ii) Statisticians should familiarise themselves with the law that concerns civil registration.
- (iii) There is need to lay the foundation for a SADC Association of Civil Registrars and Vital and Health Statisticians.
- (iv) All countries in the region should adopt the 10th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-10).

According to the UNSD, civil registration is the best source for vital statistics as the data is provided continuously and information on causes of death is more accurate.

Mauritius is the only country in the SADC region having a complete civil registration system. Very few countries in the region have evaluated their registration system. It is to be noted that United Nations experts have evaluated censuses data for Mauritius and are of the opinion that registration of live births and deaths is now complete in Mauritius. The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life is currently using the ICD-10 for the classification of diseases. Moreover, with the implementation of the e-Business plan at the Central Statistics Office, timeliness of tabulations and publications will improve.

Working Group Meeting on “Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric”

The working group meeting on the “Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric” was the second one organised by COMESA, which sponsored one participant from the Central Statistics Office of Mauritius to attend:

- (i) the first two days of the “7th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI) Meeting”, which was held from 3 to 5 March 2009 in Cairo, Egypt ; and
- (ii) the second working group meeting on the “Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric”, which was held from 5 to 6 March 2009 in Cairo, Egypt.

7th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI) Meeting

The “7th ITU World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators (WTI) Meeting” was organised by the Telecommunication Development Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and hosted by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Government of Egypt.

The objective of the meeting was to address the following topics, inter alia:

- (i) Revision of ICT infrastructure and access indicators
- (ii) Benchmarking information society developments (including a presentation of the new “ITU ICT Development Index”)
- (iii) ICT household statistics
- (iv) ICT business statistics
- (v) Measuring impact of ICT on the economy

Based on the discussions held during the meeting, the following main recommendations were made:

- (i) Creation of an expert group with clearly defined terms of reference for the purpose of reviewing, revising and finalising the ITU telecommunication/ICT indicators and their definition.
- (ii) Collection of ICT household statistics via household surveys.
- (iii) ITU, in close collaboration with other international and regional organisations, will help countries to build capacity in ICT household statistics and ICT business statistics through training courses.
- (iv) Further work has to be carried out at the national and international level to measure the impact of ICT on the socio-economic development.
- (v) Reinforcement of the cooperation between ICT national policy makers, including the regulatory authorities and Ministries, and the National Statistical Offices, in identifying indicators and collecting ICT statistics.

Second Working Group Meeting on the “Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric”

The second working group meeting on the “Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric” was attended by seven participants representing each of the following countries: Seychelles, Mauritius, Uganda, Madagascar, Zambia, Kenya and Zimbabwe.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the COMESA e-readiness and information society project. The main issues discussed during the meeting were:

- (i) Revision and additions to Regional indicators
- (ii) ITU model questionnaire for measuring ICT access and use by households and individuals
- (iii) Review of roadmap for e-readiness and assessment and information society measurement in Eastern and Southern Africa

Based on the discussions held during the meeting, the following decisions/recommendations were made:

- (i) The regional indicators were reviewed in line with changes in the core ICT indicators developed by ITU. Further consultation will be sought from ITU and UNECA on the basic infrastructure (supply sides) and e-government indicators.
- (ii) A joint two-week training on household and business surveys will be conducted in July 2009 in conjunction with COMESA, UNECA, ITU and UNCTAD. Priority will be given to countries, which are ready to carry out household and business surveys in the near future. The questionnaires developed by ITU will be amended to include additional indicators common to the region prior to the training in July 2009.

- (iii) Following the training, a database model will be developed by ITU based on agreed indicators to enable member states to gather and store national and regional data.
- (iv) Member states are encouraged to set up e-readiness assessment and information society measurement unit (one stop shop) to ensure that ICT data is collected, organised and disseminated effectively within the region. A national ICT report will have to be produced annually.

It is to be noted that many of the ICT indicators recommended by “ITU and UN Partnership on measuring ICT for development” have been compiled by CSO and published in the Economic and Social Indicators on ICT statistics. And most of the topics included in the “ITU model questionnaire for measuring ICT access and use by households and individuals” have been covered in the module on ICT in the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) questionnaire.

Performance Management System

Reforms, leadership and employee commitment

A key element of the Performance Management System (PMS) is employee commitment. Performance Management is about organisational change and this implies that employees should be fully committed to the change process for the PMS or any other reform initiative to be smoothly and effectively implemented.

Employee commitment may be defined as the extent to which employees identify themselves with their organisation and willingly contribute to the achievement of organisational objectives.

It can be said that employees respond in three different ways to reform initiatives in the organisation. These are commitment, compliance and resistance.

Employees are committed when they enthusiastically support proposals for change and are prepared to run the extra mile to meet set objectives. They are compliant when they put in the minimum efforts when embarking on a change programme. Resistance (legitimate or not) is opposition on the part of employees to change initiatives. It may be open, active, subtle or passive.

Supervisors have a vital role to play in transforming the staff into committed employees. However, it is unlikely that this transformation will happen if supervisors do not demonstrate the appropriate leadership capabilities.

The leadership capabilities of supervisors will to a large extent determine the commitment of the staff to the PMS and other reform initiatives. Supervisors are expected to exhibit leadership behaviours that encourage the full participation of their staff in the process of reforms. This implies that supervisors should be able to communicate effectively with their staff as well as to support and motivate them. Communication, in particular, is very important since too often we take for granted that we are good communicators and we do not pay sufficient attention to how we relate to others. When communication is not effective, there is no common understanding of messages and desired outcomes cannot be achieved.

In a nutshell, supervisors have to:

- (i) properly allocate resources
- (ii) involve their staff in the planning and decision processes
- (iii) help with difficult tasks/assignments
- (iv) provide and seek for feed-back
- (v) acknowledge achievements/accomplishments
- (vi) listen to the concerns of their staff and take appropriate actions

This is not to say that it is the sole responsibility of supervisors to take necessary steps to ensure that there is employee commitment in the organisation. Subordinate staff equally have an important role to play in the process. They should be receptive to the efforts of their supervisors to drive any change initiative and should actively contribute to the promotion and maintenance of a climate of mutual trust between supervisors and subordinates. It is only then that the necessary conditions will exist in the organisation for the successful implementation of reform initiatives.

Electronic Attendance System

An Electronic Attendance System (EAS) is operational at the Central Statistics Office since November 2008.

The introduction of the EAS in Ministries/Departments fits into the wider context of reform initiatives taken by Government to modernise the Public Service.

The EAS is an effective tool for monitoring the attendance of staff. It can produce relevant management information for a more productive use of human resources. It relieves officers of the burden of signing the Attendance Registers and facilitates management and audit functions.

In the first instance, the EAS is being run at this office in parallel with the manual recording of arrival and departure times. The aim is to ensure that the new system is performing well for all the functions for which it has been designed.

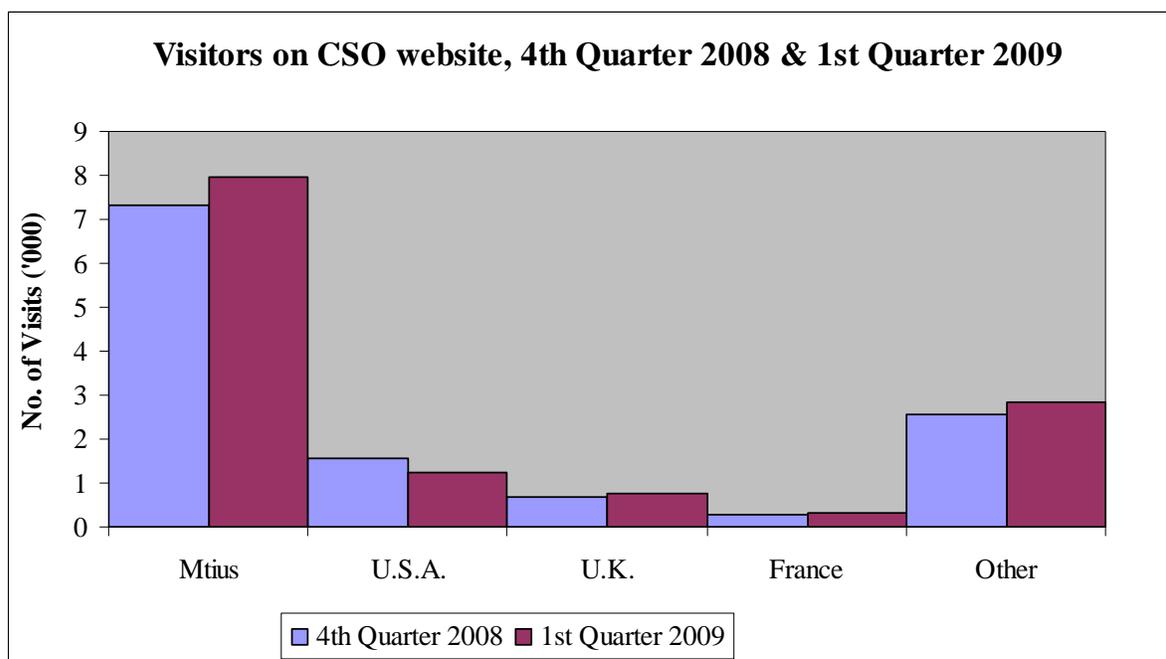
As soon as the necessary instructions are issued by the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms, attendance at this office will be recorded electronically only.

Visits on the CSO Website

The number of visits on the CSO website was 13,106 during the first quarter of 2009, representing an increase of 5.7 % from 12,400 in the fourth quarter of 2008.

Visitors	4th Quarter 2008		1st Quarter 2009	
	No. of Visits	%	No. of Visits	%
Local	7,330	59	7,973	61
Foreign	5,070	41	5,133	39
Total	12,400	100	13,106	100

During the first quarter of 2009, visits from Mauritians accounted for around 61% of all visits. Foreign visitors who made up the remaining 39% came mostly from the United States, the United Kingdom and South Africa.



During the first quarter of 2009, the Economic and Social Indicator (ESI) on National Accounts (December 2008 issue) which went online on 31 December 2008, was the most accessed ESI with 1,659 visits. On the second position was the ESI on Consumer Price Index (Year 2008 issue) which was uploaded on 20 January 2009, with 1,236 visits.

Important Indicators released during the First Quarter of 2009

GDP Growth Rate

Data now available on the various sectors of the economy show that GDP grew by 5.3% in 2008, slightly higher than the 5.2% growth estimated in December 2008, mostly due to higher growths in “Other agriculture” and “Food manufacturing”, partly offset by a lower growth in “Transport, storage and communications”.

On the basis of information gathered on key sectors of the economy and measures announced in the stimulus package by Government in December 2008 to cushion the adverse effects of the international financial and economic crisis on our economy as well as delays noted in its implementation, the economy is now expected to grow by around 2.5% in 2009, lower than the forecast of 4.0% made in December 2008.

Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index (CPI), which stood at 115.5 in December 2008, registered a net increase of 0.5% during the period January to March 2009 to reach 116.1 in March 2009.

The inflation rate for the calendar year 2008 was 9.7% while that for financial year 2007/08 was 8.8%.

Based on price movements observed for the past months and forthcoming price trends, the inflation rate for financial year 2008/09 is forecasted at around 7.0%.

External Trade

Total export proceeds for year 2008 amounted to Rs 68,409 million and imports reached Rs 132,564 million, resulting in a trade deficit of Rs 64,155 million. Exports showed a decrease of 1.9% and imports an increase of 9.5% in 2008 compared to 2007.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2008 is estimated at 6.2% lower than the rate of 7.2% at the previous quarter of 2008 and 7.2%

at the fourth quarter of 2007.

Unemployment rate for the year 2008 is estimated at 7.2% against 8.5% in 2007.

Tourist arrivals

Tourist arrivals for the year 2008 increased by 2.6% to reach 930,456 compared to 906,971 for 2007. Data from the Bank of Mauritius indicate that gross tourism receipts for the year 2008 amounted to Rs 41,213 million, representing an increase of 1.3% compared to Rs 40,687 million for 2007.

Producer Price Index- Manufacturing

The Producer Price Index-Manufacturing stood at 177.5 in the fourth quarter of 2008 and when compared to the figure of 173.7 in the previous quarter, it showed an increase of 2.1%. Compared to the corresponding quarter of 2007, the overall index for the fourth quarter of 2008 went up by 16.0%. This was mainly due to increases in the sub-indices of “Manufacture of food beverages and tobacco (+22.0%)”, “Manufacture of chemicals and chemical products” (+3.7%), “Manufacture of other non-metallic mineral products” (+24.7%), “Publishing, printing and reproduction of recorded media” (+4.7%), “Manufacture of fabricated metal products” (+11.0%) and “Manufacture of basic metals” (+25.4%).

National Summary Data Page (NSDP) and Advance Release Calendar (ARC)

The NSDP and the ARC, as recommended by Mr. Michel Dessart, IMF Consultant, have been posted for the first time on the website of the Central Statistics Office (<http://www.gov.mu/portal/site/cso>) on 9 February 2009 and 19 March 2009, respectively. It is to be noted that not all the data categories are SDDS compliant. Such a NSDP is considered as data published by CSO and is not linked to the IMF website.

The following publications have been acquired during the first quarter of 2009.

Local Publications

Reports

- 1. Board of Investment**
Annual Report, 2007-2008
- 2. Financial Services Commission**
Annual Report, 2008

Foreign Publications

Periodicals

- 1. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Ethiopia**
African Statistical Newsletter, Vol.2, Issue 3, September 2008
- 2. INSEE, Paris**
Economie et Statistique, No. 414, 2008
- 3. STATA, USA**
The Stata News, October/November/December 2008

Reports

- 1. OECD**
Measuring Human Rights and Democratic Governance: Experiences and lessons from Metagora
- 2. United Nations**
 - (i) Designing Household Survey Samples: Practical Guidelines, 2008
 - (ii) International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), Rev.4, 2008
 - (iii) Demographic Yearbook 2005, 2008
- 3. International Labour Office**
Sources and Methods: Labour Statistics, 2009
- 4. PARIS21 and OECD**
 - (i) Partner Report on Support to Statistics (PRESS), Vol.1 and 2, 2008 Round
 - (ii) Global Directory of Partners in Statistical Capacity Building, 2009

Text Books

Social Statistics

Growing Unequal? Income Distribution and Poverty in OECD Countries, OECD

Trainings/meetings attended by Staff during the First Quarter of 2009

(i) Overseas

Name	Programme	Country	Period
Mr. D. Juleemun	4th African Symposium on Statistical Development in Africa	Angola	9 to 13 Feb
Mr. L. Dindoyal & Ms. G. Appadu	Regional Workshop on ICP - Africa	Tunisia	16 to 19 Feb
Mr. H. Bundhoo	40th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission	New York, USA	20 to 27 Feb
Mr. C. Ramnath	Development of a Harmonised e-Readiness Metric and Information Society Project	Egypt	3 to 6 Mar

(ii) Local

Seminar/Workshop

Name	Programme	Organising Institution	Period
Mr. D. Jagai	Workshop on COMESA Trade Point Forum	COMESA	16 to 19 Jan
Ms. C. Rughoobur	Monitoring & Evaluation Committee on HIV/AIDS	National AIDS Secretariat, PMO	23 Jan
Ms. T. Beerachee	Training in Programme Based Budgeting (PBB) and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)	Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms (MCSAR)	27 to 29 Jan
Mr. B. Unmar & Ms. W. Abdouramane	Training in PBB and MTEF	MCSAR	16 to 18 Feb
Ms. N. Joomun	Séminaire de formation en gestion de l'information commerciale	Commission de l'Océan Indien (COI)	18 to 19 Feb
Ms. N. Guillaume & Ms. N. Joomun	Training in PBB and MTEF	MCSAR	2 to 4 Mar
Ms. C. Rughoobur	Development of Monitoring & Evaluation tools for HIV and AIDS in Mauritius	National AIDS Secretariat, PMO	17 to 18 Mar
Mr. L. C. Lacroche	Training in Negotiation Skills	MCSAR	30 to 31 Mar

Staffing Development

(i) Appointment

Mr. R. Aubeeluck, Senior Office Care Attendant has been promoted Head Office Care Attendant. He has been posted to the Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit.

The following Statistical Officers have been promoted Senior Statistical Officers with effect from 16 March 2009:

Mr. Ali HOOLASH

Mr. Heerandhar RAMMA

Mrs. Dhanwantree RAMPHUL

Mr. Ram KRISHNAN

Miss Melanie Vladinie LUCHMUN

Mr. Eshan ROMJON

Mrs. Ojambal ANADACHEE

(ii) Resumption of duty

Mr. B. Unmar, Statistician, has resumed duty with effect from 16 January 2009, after leave without pay granted to him.

(iii) Assumption of duty

Mrs. L.D. Bodha, Receptionist/Telephone Operator, has assumed duty at this office on 5 January 2009.

(iv) Permanent Transfer

Mr. D. Ramgolam, Statistical Officer, has been permanently transferred to the Mahatma Gandhi Institute with effect from 28 January 2009.

(v) Retirement

Mr. K. Kowlessur, Office Superintendent, has retired from the service with effect from 16 February 2009.

(vi) Leave Without Pay

Mr. Y. Buxsoo, Senior Statistical Officer, has been granted one year's leave without pay with effect from 2 March 2009.

Occupational Safety and Health

Sensitisation Programme on HIV/AIDS for Public Officers

Under the National Strategic Framework HIV/AIDS 2007/2011, provision has been made for holding of sensitisation programmes for public officers with a view to create an awareness of the current situation and demystify the problem.

The programme also aims at attaining a larger proportion of the population as it is believed that Public Officers who are well educated will help in the transmission of the information/message to others.

The programme has already been held in various Ministries/Departments. Four sessions of 1 1/2 hour each have been arranged for the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Two of these sessions were held on 18 and 25 March 2009 respectively and the other two sessions will be held on 1 and 8 April 2009 respectively. Seventy seven officers participated in the first two sessions and these were conducted by Mr. Sewraz Corceal of Aids Unit, Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.



Mr. Sewraz Corceal of Aids Unit, Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, giving his talks on HIV/ AIDS at the CSO

Tips on IT

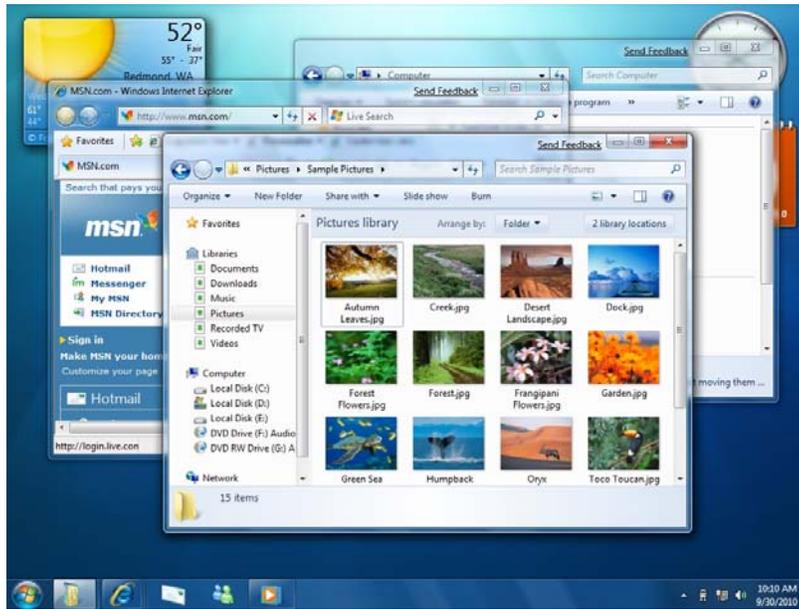
(by Ali Hoolash)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

It is well known in the world of short article writing that the simplest way to escape the author's block syndrome is to write a FAQ article. This is what your humble servant just did! Even sitting in the porch under a starry night with steam from a cup of coffee swirling upwards in a cool breeze could not get my creative juices flowing back. So my dilemma was to find the topic for my next article. You must surely be thinking that interesting subject matter for Information Technology abounds and it should not be major problem for a writer to come up with an interesting article. Well, you are partly right; that is unless the author's block syndrome hits you! And when the pressure is on, creativity is the first victim. This is how the subject of this article came into existence and it's all about the FAQs in Information Technology (IT). Writing FAQs on such a vast subject as IT proved to be both a daunting and an exciting task in itself. The amount of research that it commanded was no mean feat and I guess that I have only scratched the surface of this topic. So how do you come up with an exciting FAQ article on IT? Well, think Microsoft, think Apple, think Virus, think Office applications, throw a little of computer support advice in the mix, stir well and serve hot! Hope you will enjoy reading! Here we go!

1. What will be the next operating system of Microsoft?

The successor of Windows Vista will be Windows 7 and reports have been surfacing that it will be released around October 2009. A few websites have reviewed the beta version (released in February 2009) and reviews have been quite favourable till now. I guess that Microsoft will iron out a few glitches here and there before the final release.



Windows 7 (beta) desktop

2. Can I just unplug my pen drive from the USB port without going through the “Safely Remove Hardware” procedures?

Opinions diverge about this issue. However, you should know that if your PC is writing or reading from the pen drive, it is generally unsafe to just pull the pen drive from the USB port. Some experts say that it is just a safety hype.

Latest pen drives have hot swap technology embedded into them and this allows you to just unplug the pen drive from the USB port without any fear of damaging the hardware. Do what you feel best but don't send me the bill if something turns out wrong!

3. What is the best antivirus software?

Well, it's like asking which is the best car! Some people love Toyotas and others love Nissan; some love Fords and others love Audis. You get the idea? There's no “best” antivirus software. If your PC's been infected lately, you should have noticed that certain viruses are only detected by certain antivirus software while others just miss the bad guy or do locate it but are unable to remove it. So, should you have a dozen of antivirus software installed on your PC? Well, not at all! Around six would do! (Joking!). Your best bet is to find an antivirus software that has a proven track record of being effective at removing most viruses and spywares. I recommend you check the “Top Ten Reviews” at the following address <http://anti-virus-software-review.toptenreviews.com/> and decide from there. You can also do a search in Google and look for antivirus software reviews. Basically, you should choose an antivirus software that does not bog down your system resources. So as you can see, it's a matter of different choices for different PC configurations.

4. When I press the power button on my PC, the screen displays “Disk Boot Failure - Insert System Disk and Press Enter”. What should I do?

Your best bet is to call the Support Team! Well, not exactly if you keep on reading! What this message simply means is that the computer did not find the operating system to start. The main causes are the following:

- (i) A new hard drive was installed.
- (ii) You have inadvertently left a diskette or a CD in the PC and the computer is trying to boot from one of these drives. Simply check the drives and remove any diskettes or CDs.
- (iii) You have corrupted files. You will need to reinstall or repair the operating system.
- (iv) You have a damaged disk. You are out of luck here and you will need to replace the hard disk.

5. Which is the worst virus known in the computer industry?

If your machine has never fallen victim to a computer virus, you must surely be asking yourself what all the fuss is about. Well, it is good to know that according to Consumer Reports, computer viruses helped contribute to around \$8.5 billion in consumer losses in 2008. Staggering figure, isn't it? But sadly true.



Among the Top Ten in the hit parade list is the 'Melissa' virus. In 1999, David L. Smith created a computer virus based on a Microsoft Word macro and the virus could spread itself through email messages. Smith said that he had named the virus after an exotic dancer from Florida. The Melissa computer virus tempts its email recipients to opening a document with an email message like "Here is that document you asked for, don't show it to anybody else." Once activated, the virus replicates by sending itself to the top fifty people in the recipient's address book.

Another virus which caught a lot of attention was the "I LOVE YOU" virus which caused havoc in the year 2000. It was more of a worm (i.e. a standalone program capable of replicating itself) than a virus. This worm replicated itself and did around \$10 billion in damages. It travelled through the internet by making use of email with the subject saying the message was a love letter from a secret admirer!

There are lots of other well known computer viruses that were made famous because of the damages they caused to the computer industry. If you want a deeper dive into this interesting topic, you can Google your way through the internet for more information.

6. Which is the fastest computer in the world?

Surely not the one sitting on your desktop right now! According to TOP 500, which ranks supercomputers by speed, the top three supercomputers are as follows:

- (i) IBM's BlueGene/L - 360 teraflops
- (ii) IBM's BGW - 115 teraflops
- (iii) IBM's ASC Purple - 93 teraflops

To spare you the hardship of borrowing a dictionary, a teraflop is a measure of a computer speed and means "a trillion floating point operations per second".

However, it is interesting to note that this supercomputer is still no match to the human brain. Scientists say that the human brain handles a rough estimate of 10 quadrillion instructions per second! So, the fastest computer in the world is not the one sitting on your desktop but the one sitting on your shoulders!

I hope these few FAQs have been an interesting read for you. The next instalment is due shortly. See you then!