

# Statistics Mauritius

## Newsletter

Issue 14

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### The Amended Statistics Act

*S. Cheung Tung Shing*  
Principal Statistician

The Statistics Act 2000 was amended by the Economic and Financial Measures (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 in July 2011 following reforms to modernize the organization and to bring official statistics more in line with United Nations Principles of Official Statistics and the African Charter on Statistics.

The amendments include the rebranding of the office so that it is henceforth known as Statistics Mauritius, a name more recognizable by the international community. The amended Act positions Statistics Mauritius as a central authority and depository of all official statistics produced in Mauritius, and the hub of the national statistical system.

The scope of the Act has been broadened to cover all producers of official statistics within the national statistical system so that it becomes the fundamental law on statistics, taking precedence over provisions for statistical operations in other agencies of Government.

The Amended Act also provides for the reinforcement and modernisation of the national statistical system through better coordination mechanisms among producers of statistics. The Statistics Advisory Council is thus being replaced by a high-level Statistics Board who will, inter-alia, coordinate all activities across the system and ensure that all producers of statistics operate in a professional environment and adhere to international recommendations and standards. Furthermore, all producers of statistics will have to abide with the Code of

Practice for Official Statistics which will be prepared by Statistics Mauritius, while an independent assessment of the quality of statistics produced will be undertaken by an independent and competent body at least once every 3 years.

Finally, for more professional independence and to avoid the perception that statistical processes are being manipulated for political purposes, provisions have been made to ensure that in the discharge of their functions, the Statistics Board and the Director of Statistics are not subject to the direction or control of any other person or authority.

### AfDB Mission to Mauritius (11 – 22 July 2011)

*B. Unmar*  
Statistician

In July 2011, the African Development Bank undertook a mission to Mauritius for the preparation of the Mauritius Statistical Profile given its engagement with the international community on Management for Results for Aid Effectiveness.

The team comprised Mr. Fessou E. LAWSON (Team Leader), Prof. Emmanuel C. ANUSIONWU and Mr. Vitalis E. MUBA.

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*From left to right: Prof. Emmanuel C. ANUSIONWU, Mr. Fessou E. LAWSON and Mr. Vitalis E. MUBA*

Mr. Lawson kindly accepted to give us an interview at the very beginning of the mission.

Statistics Mauritius (SM): Mr. Lawson, can you please tell us about the aim of your team's mission to Mauritius?

Mr. Lawson: *By the end of the mission we expect to make concrete proposals, recommendations and the way forward concerning AfDB's statistical support to Mauritius.*

SM: Can you please let us know how you will proceed to gather the necessary information to achieve the aim of the mission?

Mr. Lawson: *Essentially, the mission will focus on three aspects, namely:*

- ◆ *the assessment of the National Statistical System - Institutional Architecture and Procedures – Statistics Act; capacities; constraints & challenges; and National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS);*
- ◆ *to see how far data collection and validation from different sources in the National Statistical System (NSS) as well as methodologies and tools including data presentations, conform with acceptable standards and norms;*
- ◆ *to have a series of consultations with local representatives of Development Partners such as World Bank, European Union and UNDP.*

SM: *Thank you very much Mr. Lawson.*

## Visit of Jamaica Team to Mauritius (18 – 29 July 2011)

*B. Unmar  
Statistician*

In July 2011, under the Supporting Human Resource Development and Energy Planning Project of the Government of Jamaica, a scientific team visited Mauritius to study the Energy Sector of our Island.

The team was composed of Dr. Betsy BANDY, *Director, Mine Development & Mineral Lands Management*; Mr. Omar ALCOCK, *Senior Economist from Ministry of Energy and Mining*; Mr. Lance WHITE, *Head, Agriculture Engineering Department from Sugar Industry Research Institute*; and Mr. Niconor REECE, *Project Engineer, Bio-fuels from Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica, Centre of Excellence for Renewable Energy.*



*From left to right: Mr. Omar ALCOCK, Dr. Betsy BANDY, Mr. Lance WHITE and Mr. Niconor REECE*

The visit focused on “*the organisational structure in the energy sector for effective preparation and implementation of energy planning and policies and energy database management system*” as reported by Dr. Betsy.

The team learnt the system implemented in Mauritius for cogeneration, privatisation of the sugar industry and breeding of sugar cane.

“*The exposure we got from the study tour to Mauritius was significant in the areas of biofuels, electricity generation and the sugar cane industry.*” declared Dr. Betsy.

## Census 2011 – Use of Scanning and Recognition Technology

S.Mungralee /N. Gujadhur  
Statisticians

Statistics Mauritius conducted the 18<sup>th</sup> census of the Republic of Mauritius in 2011 and opted for the first time to make use of scanning and recognition technology for data capture. The processing of the census questionnaires in this manner proved to be one of the most challenging aspects of the census for which speed, accuracy, and security are paramount.

The firm *Urgence Informatique Europe (UIE)* was hired for the data capture after an extensive evaluation that included rigorous trials on the pilot census questionnaires to test the scanner's accuracy, performance, security, data integrity, and reliability and integration capabilities.

Both *Optical Mark Recognition (OMR)* and *Intelligent Character Recognition (ICR)* were used. Where a simple answer is required, such as 'yes/no', OMR was used. More complex responses such as names and addresses were captured using

ICR response areas.

This mix of *OMR* and *ICR* technologies necessitated the use of questionnaires of specific quality in terms of paper and colour specifications as well as design. Also, the questionnaires had to be kept in good condition for optimal scanning and recognition. Specially designed carton boxes akin to pizza boxes were used to protect them from being wrinkled.

Another important issue related to ensuring good handwriting and proper ways of filling in the questionnaires. For this reason, the census questionnaires were, unlike previous censuses, filled in by census enumerators who were given extensive training thereon.

After being completed on field, the questionnaires were returned to the office in the 'pizza boxes' and remained in the boxes as they were moved around the scanning area to ensure tracking. All the questionnaires were then guillotined to create stacks of loose-leaf pages which were scanned. Each Census questionnaire bore a unique barcode. The software reads data from the barcode and the image, performs verification checks, and submits any errors for manual review and correction by the operators using the Key from Image (KFI) technique.

Data capture of the Population Census started in August 2011 and ended in November 2011, i.e a duration of 4 months instead of 11 months for the previous census carried out in 2000. Data validation and coding are in progress and the first results will be released in June 2012, 6 months earlier than the 2000 census.

The experience of using Scanning and Recognition technology has been challenging for both the office and field operations but all the efforts put in paid off.



*Data correction by KFI operators*

### Brain Teaser!

$$5 + 5 + 5 = 5 5 0$$

The above equation is mathematically wrong!!

Are you good in Geometry? Then equate the above by placing a STRAIGHT LINE somewhere in the equation.

**Interview: Ms. Keertee CHAMROO  
(Newly appointed Statistical Officer)**

*S.Boodoo/ K.Jhummun  
Statistician/Statistical Officer*

Ms. K. Chamroo joined the office on 4 July 2011. Presently she has been posted in the Census Unit. She has kindly agreed to share her feeling of joining Statistics Mauritius.

SM: Can you tell us a little about yourself?

Ms. K. Chamroo (K.C) : *My professional journey started as a Customer Service Officer at the State Bank of Mauritius. Then I joined the Ministry of Local Government and worked there for the last 8 years.*

SM: What brought you to Statistics Mauritius?

*K.C: Being a holder of a degree in Mathematics and IT and the fact that I like technical work motivated me to join Statistics Mauritius.*

SM: Your first impression when you joined Statistics Mauritius?

*K.C: I was surprised with the production of such a huge amount of different type of data to be disseminated to the public. Also the team spirit and professionalism dedicated to work caught my attention.*

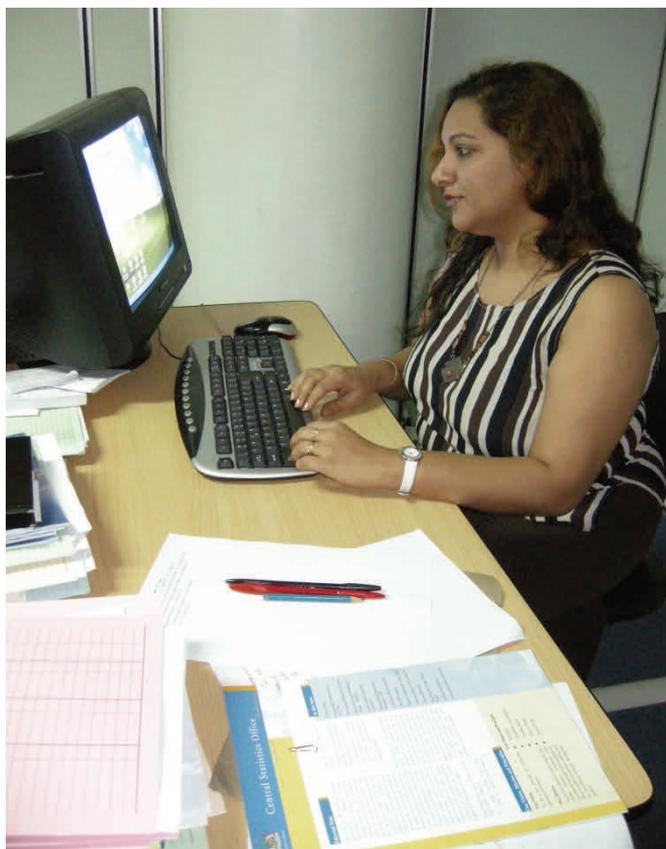
SM: And what is your opinion on the staff of Statistics Mauritius? I mean how friendly are they to you?

*K.C: The staff here are very friendly and welcoming. The team spirit which prevails here makes work enjoyable.*

SM: What is most satisfying about your job?

*K.C: What I find most satisfying is that one can assess oneself as there are Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and Supervisors for monitoring. In other words, there are end results.*

SM: How do you like to be recognized for a job well done?



**Ms. K. CHAMROO , newly appointed statistical officer , at work**

*K.C: For me, a job well done can be acknowledged with a gratifying note, a pat on the shoulder or the supervisor telling me about my good performance. These will act as a motivating factor to perform better in the future.*

SM: What sort of situations do you find challenging?

*K.C: When you have to deal with new technology, new system to be implemented or working on new projects. It is challenging to acquire new skills and new capabilities.*

SM: What are your short and long term goals?

*K.C: My short term goal is to achieve and deliver the best of what I am doing actually. My long term goal is to see myself in a higher position through dedication and merit. I want to climb the ladder by merit and share my experience and skills with the juniors.*

## The Household Budget Survey (HBS), 2012

*S. Bhonoo*  
Statistician

The first Household Budget Survey (HBS) was taken in 1961/62 under the guidance of Mr. Wolf Scott, an expert from the International Labour Office (ILO) and the second in 1975 with the assistance of an Indian Expert, Mr D.S. Ramaratnam. As from the third round in 1980/81, HBS have been carried out regularly every five years by local staff.

The primary objective of the HBS is to collect information on the consumption pattern of the population with a view to updating the basket of goods and services used to compute the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This is in line with international recommendations. The survey also caters for a wide range of other purposes, namely, estimation of household consumption expenditure for the National Accounts, computation of income distribution and poverty analysis.

The survey is carried out over a period of one whole year to take account of any seasonal variation in the expenditure pattern of the population. It covers a sample of 6,720 private households in the islands of Mauritius (6,240) and Rodrigues (480).

Data collection will spread evenly over the twelve months of the year 2012. The information to be collected on the selected households will cover demographic characteristics, housing and living conditions, detailed expenditure incurred by the household over a one-month period and detailed income of members of the household.

The budget for the HBS 2012 is estimated at around Rs 33 million. This will cover the cost of data collection, data processing and analysis, and publication of the results.

## Main Indicators

*S. Boodoo*  
Statistician

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <b><i>GDP Growth Rate</i></b>   | <b>%</b>      |
| Year 2011                       | 4.1           |
| Year 2010                       | 4.2           |
| <b><i>Inflation Rate</i></b>    | <b>%</b>      |
| <u>Calendar Year</u>            |               |
| 2011                            | 6.5           |
| 2010                            | 2.9           |
| <u>Financial Year</u>           |               |
| 2010/11                         | 5.1           |
| 2009/10                         | 1.7           |
| <b><i>External Trade</i></b>    | <b>R M</b>    |
| <u>Year 2011 (Provisional)</u>  |               |
| Total Exports                   | 65,000        |
| Total Imports                   | 149,000       |
| Trade Deficit                   | 84,000        |
| <u>Year 2010 (Provisional)</u>  |               |
| Total Exports                   | 69,556        |
| Total Imports                   | 135,394       |
| Trade Deficit                   | 65,838        |
| <b><i>Unemployment Rate</i></b> | <b>%</b>      |
| Year 2011 (Provisional)         | 7.9           |
| Year 2010                       | 7.8           |
| <b><i>Tourist Arrivals</i></b>  | <b>Number</b> |
| Year 2011                       | 964,642       |
| Year 2010                       | 934,827       |

### *Survey*

A survey is an investigation about the characteristics of a given population by means of collecting data from a sample of that population and estimating their characteristics through the systematic use of statistical methodology.

***OECD***

## Staffing Development

*N. Seebaluck*  
*Senior Human Resource Officer*

There have been major staffing developments at the office during the year 2011.

### Promotion

| <i>Name</i>             | <i>From</i>                | <i>To</i>                  | <i>Date</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Ganoo Meera Bye (Ms)    | Principal Statistician     | Deputy Director            | 27.07.2010  |
| Pothegadoo Karoona (Ms) | Senior Statistical Officer | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Ramjan Bibi Naseem (Ms) | Senior Statistical Officer | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Luchmun Melanie (Ms)    | Senior Statistical Officer | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Ramphul Dhanwantee (Ms) | Senior Statistical Officer | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Jawahir Meethoo         | Senior Statistical Officer | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Changeya Dharmarajen    | Statistical Officer        | Temporary Statistician     | 14.11.2011  |
| Bookal Sita             | Statistical Officer        | Senior Statistical Officer | 11.04.2011  |
| Kausmaully Zameer       | Statistical Officer        | Senior Statistical Officer | 14.11.2011  |

We congratulate all the officers who have been promoted during the year.

### Appointment

#### **Statistician**

Mr. Kaviraj Persand and Mr. Rajive Ajodhea have been appointed Statistician on probation at this office with effect from 14 November 2011 and 22 December 2011 respectively.

#### **Temporary Statistical Officer**

Thirty four (34) officers were offered appointment as statistical officer in a temporary capacity out of which only 28 have reported for duty . The remaining six vacancies have been reported to PSC and will be filled soon.

#### **Officers**

Twelve officers in the General Services grade have been appointed as Officers with effect from 21 March 2011 and 11 August 2011 respectively.

### Change in Posting

Mrs. N. Seebaluck, Senior Human Resource Officer, assumed duty at this office on 11 November 2011 replacing Ms. G. Veeramah-Ramasawmy who has been posted to Local Government Service Commission.

Mrs. N. Rojoa, Office Management Executive, has assumed duty on 7 September 2011 to replace Mr Pillay who has been posted to the Ministry of Business Enterprise.

Mr. A. Kumar Beekaree, Telephone Operator/Receptionist, assumed duty on 9 May 2011 to replace Mrs. L. D. Bodha who has been appointed Officer.

We wish to convey a warm welcome to all staff who joined Statistics Mauritius during the year 2011.

### Retirement

We seize this opportunity to convey our best wishes for a happy and peaceful retirement to our colleagues after having served dedicatedly at this office. They have retired from the service with effect from the dates mentioned below:-

| <b>Name</b>           | <b>Grade</b>               | <b>Date</b>        |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|
| Tse Ve Koon Len Ching | Senior Statistical Officer | 3 March, 2011      |
| Rujbally Bibi Rashida | Statistical Officer        | 25 May, 2011       |
| Haumeer Sobha         | Statistical Officer        | 22 September, 2011 |

### Resignation

Mr. G. Chumroo, Officer, has resigned from the service on 28 June, 2011.

### Leave Without Pay

Mrs S. Sanauth, Temporary Statistical Officer, has proceeded on one year leave without pay with effect from 31 October, 2011.

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### **Central Statistical Office Staff Welfare Association - Activities carried out during the year**

*D. Chinee  
Statistical Officer*

The CSO Welfare Association (**CSOWA**) participated in the Public Officers Welfare Council Football tournament in 2011. Unfortunately, the team selected was not able to go beyond the preliminary group round. The tournament was won by the team from the Jawaharlal Nehru Hospital. The CSOWA held its Annual General Assembly at “Marie Reine de la Paix Social Hall” in September 2011.

The end of year party was held at “**Domaine de l’Etoile**” in Sebastopol on 26 December 2011. The programme included:

- ◆ *A “randonnee” in the domaine*
- ◆ *An open buffet lunch*
- ◆ *End of year address of the Director*
- ◆ *Indoor games*



The draw to determine the winners for the tombola took place during the occasion. The first prize, a “Corbeille Menagere” was won by Mr. Anil Bulloram. Mr. Maherally won a microwave as the second prize and the winner for the third prize, a printer, was Mr. Kim Ah Leung. In her end of year speech, the Director thanked all staff for their collaboration, especially for the success of the “2011 Housing and Population Census”. She also welcomed those staff who joined the office. Finally she extended her best wishes to all staff and their family for the year 2012.

## Passage Benefits

*N. Seebaluck*  
*Senior Human Resource Officer*

Passage benefits may be used for various reasons, some of which are:-

- ◆ Travelling purposes and be cashed partly
- ◆ Medical treatment for themselves or family members
- ◆ For the payment of SC or HSC exams of their children even if the balance standing to their credit is less than Rs10,000.

As from 1 July 2008, an officer on permanent and pensionable establishment drawing a minimum monthly basic salary of Rs 19,000 or reckoning at least eight years' service should earn passage benefits at the rate of 5% of his gross salary annually or the equivalent cost of 3900 km of the Group Tour Air Fare Mauritius-London-Mauritius at off peak (low season) rate, whichever, is the higher.

An officer may sue his passage entitlement to meet the cost of tickets towards the destination of his choice provided that the balance standing to his **credit** is Rs10,000 or more.

- ◆ Where an officer and his spouse are public officers and they are both eligible for passage benefits, they may use their passage benefits provided they have jointly accumulated an aggregate of Rs20,000 or more.
- ◆ Where an officer or any immediate member of his family has travelled abroad at his own expenses, he may, on application be refunded the amount disbursed on overseas travel up to the amount of his passage benefits accumulated at the time of travel provided his application is made **within three months** from the date of return.
- ◆ On the death of an officer, the monetary value of all accumulated passage benefits shall be paid to his heirs.
- ◆ Where an officer retires from the service, his passage benefits shall be computed up to the date preceding the day on which his leave prior

to retirement starts.

- ◆ On the death of an officer, his passage benefits shall be computed up to the date of death.
  - ◆ In all other cases, the passage benefits of an officer shall be computed up to the end of the month preceding the date of departure on leave.
-