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FOREWORD

This is the tenth issue of a yearly publication on Social Security Statistics prepared by Statistics Mauritius.

Statistical data presented in the report relate to the Republic of Mauritius, Island of Mauritius and Island of Rodrigues. This report covers various types of pension and social benefits, such as retirement pension, widow's pension, invalid's pension, orphan's pension, industrial injury benefits, social aid, etc. for at least the past five years. A projection of beneficiaries and their future costs for the next forty years is also covered. Furthermore, the last section presents a historical series of data for at least the past ten years. Figures for 2011 are subject to revision in future issues.

Data have been compiled on the basis of information obtained from the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions as well as from surveys conducted among charitable institutions.

It is hoped that data presented in this report will be of valuable help to users in general, in particular to social workers and policy makers. The co-operation and assistance of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions in the preparation of this report are gratefully acknowledged.

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APPENDIX

Specimen questionnaires used

SYMBOLS USED

- Nil
- . Not applicable
- ... Not available

Concepts and definitions

1. Introduction

As from year 2010, Social Security Statistics are reported on a calendar (January to December) year basis instead of the financial (July to June) year basis. This follows Government decision taken in July 2008 to change reporting period of Government account from year ending 31st June to year ending 31st December.

Thus for 2011 the number of beneficiaries relates to December 2011 while the amount paid refers to period, January to December 2011. On the other end, pension rates are renewed on 1st January instead of 1st July for years before 2010. Figures for 2011 are subject to revision in future issues as additional information becomes available.

2. Social Security benefits

Social Security benefits are classified as non-contributory benefits and contributory benefits.

Non-contributory benefits are entirely financed by government and are payable to every Mauritian citizen under certain residency conditions. These benefits include:

- ❖ Basic pensions which cater for the elderly, the invalids, the widows and the orphans, irrespective of their economic status;
- ❖ Allowances such as Social Aid, Food Aid and Income Support, Unemployment Hardship Relief and Funeral Grant which are payable to the low-income group of the population; and
- ❖ Inmates allowance and indoor relief payable to, or on behalf of, those Mauritians residing in government-subsidized institutions (such as old-people homes, infirmaries and orphanages) provided they would have otherwise benefited from a basic pension or from Social Aid.

Contributory benefits, on the other hand, are payable only to, or on behalf of, those persons who have paid contributions to the National Pensions Fund (NPF). The contributory pensions include old age, invalidity, widows and orphans pensions in addition to industrial injury allowances.

In the case of contributory benefits, the allowances payable vary according to the amount contributed to the NPF by the insured worker. For those persons whose contributions were marginal, government guarantees a minimum contributory pension.

3. Non-contributory benefits

3.1 Basic Retirement Pensions (BRP)

Basic Retirement Pension, also known as old-age pension, is payable to every Mauritian citizen aged 60 years and above subject to certain residency conditions. It is to be noted that during the period December 2004 to June 2005, Basic Retirement Pension was not paid on a universal basis. Persons aged 60 to 89 years were liable to pension subject to the amount of yearly income received.

The Severely Handicapped Basic Retirement pension (BRP/SH) is an additional allowance payable to old-age pensioners who are either

- ❖ Totally blind, or
- ❖ Suffer from total paralysis, or
- ❖ Need the constant care of another person

3.2 Basic Widow's Pension (BWP)

Basic Widow's Pension is payable to widows aged 15 to 59 years who were either civilly and/or religiously married and under certain conditions.

3.3 Basic Invalid's Pension (BIP)

The Basic Invalid's Pension is payable to any person aged 15 to 59 years, if certified by a Medical Board that the person is either permanently or substantially incapacitated to work to a degree of 60% or more for at least 12 months.

BIP recipients, who need the constant care and attention of another person, benefit from an additional allowance known as the Carer's allowance.

3.4 Basic Orphan's Pension & Guardian's allowance (BOP)

Basic Orphan's Pension is payable to all orphans under the age of 15, or under 20 years of age if they are in full-time education. As from 1 July 2007, orphans aged 3 to 20 years who are in full-time education benefit from much higher allowance than those aged less than 15 years who do not attend school.

A Guardian's allowance is payable to the person looking after one or more orphans. However, only one allowance is payable per guardian irrespective of the number of orphans under his/her care.

3.5 Child's allowance

Child's allowance is payable to children of beneficiaries of Basic Retirement Pension, Basic Widow's Pension and Basic Invalid's Pension in respect of a child below 15 years, or below 20 years if in full-time education. However, this allowance continues to be paid even after discontinuation of pensions to the parents for some reasons or another. Child's allowance is payable for up to three dependent children.

4 Other non-contributory social benefits

4.1 Social Aid

Social Aid is an income-tested scheme. It is payable to the head of a family who is incapable of earning his living adequately and who has insufficient means to support himself and his dependents. Social Aid is payable to the poorer section of the population where the persons concerned are unable to earn a living, to the dependents of prisoners, to abandoned spouses/single mothers especially with dependent children. It is also paid for a limited period in case of sudden loss of employment.

Other benefits granted to a social aid beneficiary are: free spectacles, wheelchairs, dentures, walking sticks and hearing aids. Other allowances are: payments of examination fees - School Certificate (SC), General School Certificate (GCE), Higher School Certificate (HSC) and Industrial and Vocational Training Board (IVTB) Courses, funeral grant, refund of travelling to attend medical treatment, compassionate allowance for severe illness, carer's allowance, allowance for purchase of rice and flour, allowances to centenarians for the purchase of medicines, allowances to fire victims, cyclone refugees and flood victims as well as bad weather allowance for fishermen.

Cases of social aid refer to the number of families benefiting from this type of assistance while **beneficiaries** pertain to the number of persons (heads of families and their dependents) receiving social aid.

4.2 Income Support for the purchase of rice and flour

In order to support needy Mauritians for the purchase of rice and flour, the Food Aid Scheme was introduced in May 1993 when government subsidy on rice and flour was temporarily discontinued. Under the Food Aid Scheme, a monthly stipend is given to every needy Mauritian for the purchase of rice and flour. The beneficiaries are:

- ❖ All recipients of Social Aid and their dependents;
- ❖ All those receiving the Unemployment Hardship Relief; and
- ❖ All needy beneficiaries of a basic pension under the National Pensions Act, i.e. beneficiaries of Basic Retirement Pension, Basic Widow's Pension, Basic Invalid's Pension and Basic Orphan's Pensions, who would have qualified to receive social aid if the basic pensions were not payable.

The monthly stipend has increased from Rs. 30 in May 1993 to Rs. 50 in October 2004. This allowance was Rs. 85, Rs. 100 then Rs. 115 as at 1 July of the year 2006, 2008 and 2009 respectively. As from 1st January 2011 this amount was doubled to Rs. 246 as compared to Rs. 119 effective in 2010.

In addition, as from 1 July 2006 with the government discontinuation of subsidy on rice and flour, an Income Support scheme was introduced whereby a monthly allowance is given to:

- ❖ Any head of household and his/her dependents whose average monthly electricity consumption does not exceed 75 KWh and who are not in receipt of Food Aid; and

- ❖ Any beneficiary of basic pension and his/her dependents (under the National Pensions Act) and who would have been eligible to receive social aid if he/she was not in receipt of that basic pension.

This monthly allowance increased from Rs. 40 to Rs. 115 in July 2009, further to Rs. 119 in January 2010. As from 1st January 2011 this rate was increased by around 100% to reach Rs. 246.

4.3 Unemployment Hardship Relief

The Unemployment Hardship Relief (UHR) is payable to unemployed heads of families whose family income is not sufficient to meet the needs of the members. The head should be

- i. Registered as unemployed at the Employment Exchange,
- ii. Be willing and able to take up employment and
- iii. Be actively looking for work.

A disabled person, who can work but has not been able to find a job, receives an Unemployment Hardship Relief in addition to his Basic Invalid's Pension.

5. Contribution to the National Pension Fund and contributory benefits

5.1 The National Pensions Scheme

The National Pension Scheme was introduced in April 1976. It provides for the payment of contributory pensions to employees of the private sector who have contributed to the National Pensions Fund (NPF). As from July 1978, contributions to the NPF were compulsory for all employees working for employers with at least 10 employees. Other employees joined the Scheme as from January 1980 except household workers for whom the operative date was July 1980. The self-employed were also eligible to join the Scheme as from July 1980 on a voluntary basis.

Contributions to the Scheme are payable at the rate of 10.5% by millers and large employers of the Sugar Industry (those having at least 100 arpents of sugar cane cultivation) and at the rate of 6% by other employers. For all employees, the contribution rate is 3%. Contributions are not payable on bonus, overtime pay and allowances.

5.2 Contributory Pensions

5.2.1 Contributory Retirement Pension (CRP)

The Contributory Retirement Pension is payable to a person on reaching the age of 60 if he/she has contributed to the National Pensions Fund.

5.2.2 Contributory Widow's Pension (CWP)

The Contributory Widow's Pension is payable to a widow whose late husband had contributed to the National Pensions Fund.

5.2.3 Contributory Invalid's Pension (CIP)

A person is entitled to a Contributory Invalid's Pension if he/she has previously contributed to the National Pension Fund and suffers from a permanent incapacity of at least 60%.

