



Annual Report 2020/21

STATISTICS MAURITIUS

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1. Vision and Mission

Our Vision

To be a key provider of world-class statistical information.

Our Mission

To provide coherent, timely, relevant and reliable statistics, consistent with international principles and standards, for effective policy and decision-making and for monitoring national development processes.

Our Goal

An informed society using high quality, relevant, and easy to use official statistics

Our Values

- Our core values are consistent with the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the African Charter on Statistics.
- We are professionally independent.
- We commit to produce statistics in an objective and transparent manner.
- We commit to produce high – quality, relevant, and timely statistics.
- We guarantee the confidentiality of information collected, and comply with statistics and data protection legislations.
- We aim at reducing response burden on our data providers and ensure that other available data sources are used before surveying them.
- We aim at providing excellent service to our users.
- We value our staff and strive to provide an environment in which staff meet their full potential and flourish at work.

2. Statement from the Director of Statistics

During the past year, Statistics Mauritius celebrated its 75th anniversary and the third World Statistics Day. It completed the design of two important and contemporary strategies that will pave the way for a modern and efficient national statistics office: the National Strategy for Official Statistics, 2020 – 2025; and E-business Plan, 2021 - 2024.

Created in 1945, the original functions of the Office were to compile information on the remuneration of labour, employment, prices, cost of living indices, and to supervise data collection in various government ministries and departments. At that time, the Office had a staff of eight persons. Today, it has a work force of around 200 staff. We disseminate statistics on more than 25 subject areas, including Gender, Environment, Income and Poverty, Governance, Quality of Life, and SDGs. To improve the quality and accessibility of our statistics, we adhered to the IMF General Data Dissemination System (GDSD) in 2000, subscribed to the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) in 2012, and are now targeting the more stringent standards of the SDDS Plus. We operate under Statistics Act 2000, a modern piece of legislation which is in line with international best practices and the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. We have moved from paper censuses and surveys to Computer Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI), and adopted Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) for our household surveys since last year. To reduce response burden and cost, we make extensive use of administrative data, and are now looking into possibilities of the use of scanner data and eventually of big data in the computation of official statistics.

We celebrated the third World Statistics Day in October 2020, the universal theme being “Connecting the world with data we can trust”. In this context, we organized a workshop on “Covid-19 - A Statistical Perspective” focusing on challenges met during the COVID-19 related lock-down and the need to adapt our statistical system to the changes brought about by the pandemic. The workshop included a panel discussion on “What Strategy in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic” with discussants from UNSD, World Bank, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, Ministry of Health and Wellness, Bank of Mauritius, and Statistics Mauritius. The workshop concluded on the urgency to accelerate innovation and digitalisation supported by an agile, resilient and responsive statistical business model and data infrastructure.

The National Strategy for Official Statistics (NSOS), 2020-2025 has been finalised. The new strategy reflects our aim to achieve greater use of statistical information in Mauritius. It identified four objectives along with a set of actions on how we can improve our operations and services. They are (i) create a responsive, influential and sustainable national statistics office, (ii) build a strong national statistical system. (iii) transform how we deliver our statistics, and (iv) obtain more value from official statistics. The identified objectives require us to change to remain relevant in the rapidly changing environment in which we operate, to become more influential by increasing the use and impact of official statistics, and be sustainable. They address the changes and improvements that we need to bring to our organizational structure and business model to create an innovative and agile organization.

Alongside in June 2021, we completed a new e-strategy (E-business Plan, 2021 – 2024) which will shape our business operations in the coming years. The strategy was designed with the assistance of UNDP and the Government of Japan. Six initiatives have emerged, including the transformation of our operations with setting up of a modern Statistics Platform and the adoption of a Data Quality and Governance Framework. The Platform will lay the foundation for our processes to be metadata driven within a common data management framework that will result in efficiency gains by overcoming fragmentation in processes and data models and enforcing a “quality by design” approach. Implementation will start during the second semester of this year with the assistance of UNDP.

With the help of the World Bank, we conducted three rounds of high-frequency phone surveys known as Rapid Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (RCMPHS) during May – July 2020, to monitor the socio-economic effects of COVID-19 on the lives of Mauritian households. The results published as from August 2021 have shed light on the employment and unemployment situation of households as well as access to basic goods and services, food insecurity, changes in household income, shocks and coping strategies during the lock-down.

Next year, we will conduct our 19th Housing and Population Census, the largest single statistical exercise to be taken in a country, largest in terms of resources mobilised and staff deployed, but also in terms of information gathered at the lowest area level. This Census round, which has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be conducted using CAPI technologies with the support of UNFPA and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS). The UNFPA consultancy includes technical guidance and oversight on the design and development of the CAPI applications as well as the setting up of IT infrastructure and data quality control measures. The Government of the Republic of Kenya, through the KNBS,

will provide on loan some 8,000 tablets and related accessories. Some main results of the Census are expected to be available as early as August 2022.

Other activities during the coming year include the implementation of wave 1 of the E-Business Plan, rebasing of our national accounts estimates on the results of the 2018 Census of Economic Activities, acquisition of scanner data to pilot their use in the computation of consumer price indices, the development of a data quality assessment framework, and training for new recruits.

Finally, I would like to commend my staff for their hard work and commitment throughout the year, and thank our data providers whose collaboration has been crucial in the preparation of our statistical releases.

3. Roles and Functions of Statistics Mauritius

Statistics Mauritius operates under the Statistics Act 2000. We produce official statistics relating to all aspects of the country's economic, demographic and social activities except health statistics which fall under the responsibility of the Ministry responsible for Health, and monetary and financial, banking and balance of payment statistics for which the Bank of Mauritius is responsible.

We collect, compile and analyse data which are collected through censuses and surveys, and from administrative sources. For more efficiency and to reduce response burden, we make maximum use of data collected for administrative purposes and collect data only where there is a need to do so.

Our statistics are compiled according to the latest international standards. We make use of international classifications to enable comparability at the international level.

By virtue of the Statistics Act, SM is mandated to co-ordinate statistical activities of all producers of official statistics including public sector agencies to ensure standards and to minimize overlap and duplication in production of official statistics in the country. It collaborates with Ministries and Departments of Government in the collection, compilation, analysis, publication and dissemination of statistical information. As working arrangement, staff of the statistical cadre are posted in line ministries, while several Memoranda of Understanding have been signed with some data producing agencies to set out the framework for cooperation, with a view to facilitating data sharing and coordination.

We conduct regular consultations with main data users to assess their needs in order to produce statistics of relevance and provide Government with statistics relevant for policy formulation and development planning.

4. Our People

Staffing

The office is headed by the Director of Statistics cum Chief Executive Officer, assisted by the three Deputy Directors, each in charge of a division, namely:

- Social and Labour Statistics;
- National Accounts and Prices; and
- Statistical Support, Informatics and Dissemination

As at June 2021, we were around 201 as follows:

Technical staff	147
<i>of whom</i>	
<i>Statistician Cadre</i>	42
<i>Statistical Officer Cadre</i>	105
General Services staff	41
Census and Survey Assistant	13

During the past year, we initiated process for the recruitment of Statisticians and Statistical Officers needed to extend our port-folio and hence meet our users' needs.

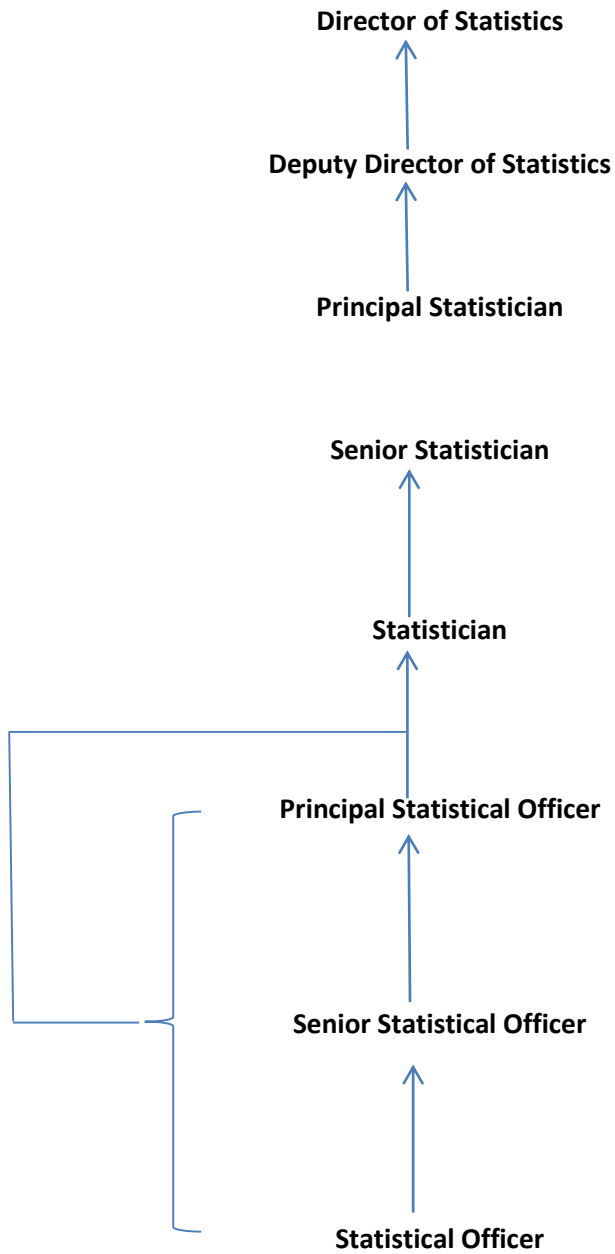
SM staff comprises more women than men:

	Male	Female	Total
Number of staff	69	132	201
<i>Of whom</i>			
<i>Senior management</i>	2	4	6

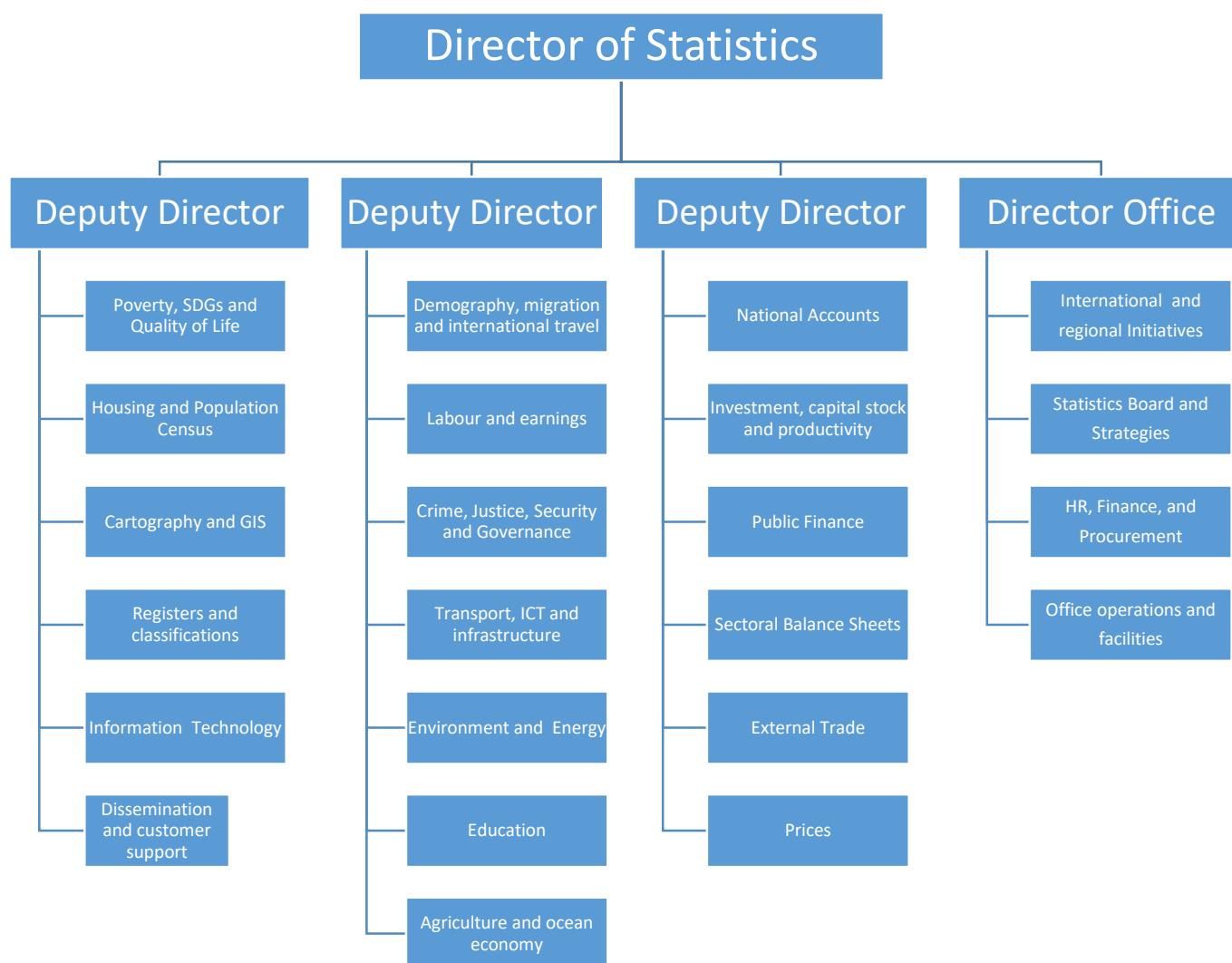
Organisational Structure

The hierarchical structure of the technical grades and the organization chart are below.

Hierarchical Structure



Organisational Chart



Capacity Building

Staff attended a number of webinars and face-to-face training as follows:

Civil Service College and other local	60
Regional and International organizations (meetings, conferences, and webinars)	69

Staff also benefitted from Technical Assistance from various international organisations. Because of the travel restrictions due to COVID-19 pandemic, the TAs were conducted remotely

The above includes among others:

- (i) *Training in IT Security Awareness* for all staff conducted during 19 - 31 August 2020 organised by the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation
- (ii) *4 half-days' training in Public Speaking in October 2021* mounted with the help of the Civil Service College of Mauritius. Some 50 staff including heads of administrative units attended the training.

- (iii) *14th session of the Committee of Director-Generals of National Statistics Office of Africa* during 17-18 December 2020. The meeting discussed progress and challenges in the production of data to support the implementation and monitoring of: (a) Strategy of Harmonisation of Statistics in Africa - SHaSA2, (b) Agenda 2030, and (c) Agenda 2063 amongst others. The session included discussions of the Forum of Statistical Development in Africa on “Harnessing the impact of COVID-19 crisis to accelerate the transformation and modernization of national statistical systems”.
- (iv) *Training course by the African Institute of Mathematical Sciences on Data Science Capacity Development* organised jointly by Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data (GPSDD) partners and African Institute of Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) in March 2021. The objective was to build capacity in the use of Python Programming Language on big data analytics. Five statisticians working across the economic, social and support divisions participated in the training course.
- (v) *Training on Scanner data for CPI calculation* organised by GPSDD in partnership with Government institutions across Sub-Saharan Africa during 24 May - 7 June 2021.
- (vi) *Training course on labour migration data collection and analysis* organised by the ILO during 17 May - 4 June 2021.
- (vii) *Workshop on the 20th ICLS Resolution on Work Relationships* organised by the ILO during 1 - 2 June 2021.
- (viii) *Expert Group meeting on the Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Population and Housing Censuses* and the potential role of census data in developing mitigation strategies in Africa during 10 - 24 June 2021.

Rotation Policy

SM has in place a staff rotation policy. The aim is to provide staff with opportunities to work in different topical areas so as to expand their work knowledge and skills as well as to broaden their understanding of the organization. The policy also works towards overcoming potential job boredom, and creates back-up for long leaves and retirements.

Health and Safety

Our Occupational Health and Safety Committee comprises of representatives from concerned Units of Statistics Mauritius, the Health and Safety Officer and one representative from the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC). The Committee meets whenever needed, or else every two months in accordance with the regulations in force, to resolve issues related to health and safety of our officers. The Committee was particularly active with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, advising on sanitary measures to be taken and ensuring that all guidelines are followed.

5. Major Achievements

6.1 The main achievements are given below:

- *100% of Social and Economic data planned for the year published. Some 5% could not be released on time due to delay in the processing of data.*
- *Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) introduced in May 2020 with the help of the World Bank maintained for the 2021 round of the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey*
- *Finalisation of the National Strategy for Official Statistics, 2020 - 2025*
- *Completion of the E-Business Plan, 2021 – 2024*
- *Co-operation between SM and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics and the UNFPA for the conduct of the 2022 Housing and Population Census*
- *Partnership with Business Mauritius in the conduct of the Pulse Survey to assess the short-term and long-term impact of the COVID-19 on businesses*
- *Increased collaboration with different Ministries through participation, amongst others, in:*
 - *Steering Committee and subcommittees of the UN Covid-19 Socio economic Recovery Plan (SERP)*
 - *National Steering Committee on the Elimination of Gender Based violence*
 - *Preparation of Country-level Report on the progress in the implementation of Agenda 2063*
 - *Establishment of a Disaster Information Management System (DIMS) to generate and monitor disaster related statistics and to meet the requirements of the Sendai Reporting Framework.*

6. Status on Implementation of Key Actions

The status of implementation of key actions is given in the table below:

Key Action	Key Performance Indicator	Target	Achievement 2020/21
Social and economic data are available to support policy decision making	% of Social and Economic data and monthly are published as per release calendar	100%	100% released (5% not timely due to delay in the processing of data)
Conduct Living Condition and Time Use Survey - 2019	Survey completed and results released on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main results published in December 2019 - Quality of life indicators based on survey results updated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) How satisfied Mauritians are with their lives released - August 2020 (ii) How Mauritians feel about their health – October 2020 (iii) Database of indicators updated – December 2020 (iv) How Mauritians spend their time - March 2021
Conduct Census of Economic Activities - 2018 Phase 1-Small establishments Phase 2-Large establishments	Data collection completed and results released on time Data collection completed in 2019 and results released on time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main results published in August 2019 - Analytical report published in December 2019 Report published in June 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical report released in April 2021 - Delayed as data collection was completed in March 2020
Conduct of Housing and Population Census in 2021	Housing and Population Census completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Conduct of Housing Census in February (ii) Conduct of Population Census in June 	Census postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19.

7. Risk Management, Citizen Oriented Initiatives & Good Governance

We continually work towards improving the quality of our statistics to better satisfy users' needs. Some of the main actions include:

- We interact with our main stakeholders to gather their views so as to produce statistics that are relevant.
- We have an advance release calendar posted on our website and release our statistics accordingly on our website so that all users have free access simultaneously. We send email alerts to our main stakeholders whenever there is a new release.
- To ensure transparency, our methodologies are published together with the statistical releases. Advance notice is given to our users whenever there are major changes in methodology, including data sources and statistical techniques.
- We produce our statistics according to professional standards and publish them in ways which explain and inform without advocating a particular position.
- We have an agreement with respondents; they are encouraged to provide accurate information while we ensure that the data provided are strictly protected. Our staff is required by law to give an undertaking of secrecy while we make sure that in publishing the statistics, identifiable information is not released. We also take necessary measures to ensure the security of the statistical information collected.

To improve accountability, we regularly receive the visits of the Internal Control Unit of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development as well as the National Audit Office. Remedial actions are promptly taken whenever shortcomings are brought to the attention of management.

PART III – FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

8. Financial Highlights

Statement of Revenue

Rs

Revenue (Rs million)	2019-2020 Actual	2020-2021 Estimates	2020-2021 Actual
Property Income			
Sales of Goods and Services	896,213		714,961
Fines, Penalties and Forfeits			
Miscellaneous Revenues			
Total Revenue from Property Income, User Fees and other Sources	896,213		714,961

Statement of Expenditure

Rs 000

Head/Sub-Head of Expenditure (Rs million)	2019-2020 Actual	2020-2021 Estimates	2020-2021 Actual
Compensation of Employees	103,424	108,205	96,771
Goods and Services	55,753	62,156	30,200
Subsidies	-	-	-
Grants	31	39	35
Social Benefits	-	-	-
Other Expenses	-	-	-
Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	0	61,000	111
Acquisition of Financial Assets	-	-	-
Total	159,208	231,400	127,117

Major changes from 2019-20 to 2020-21

The actual budget shifted from 159 M in 2019-20 to 127 M in 2020-21 due to unfilled vacancies and reduced activities as a result of COVID-19.

Major variances from budget estimates for 2020-21

The major variance for 'Compensation of Employees' is mainly explained by unfilled vacancies at the close of the financial year.

The major variance for 'Goods and Services' is principally due to recourse to CATI interviews during the year, in lieu of face-to-face.

PART IV –STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- a. Implement the new national strategy for official statistics
- b. Implement the E-business Plan to modernize our operations, and ensure business continuity during crisis, disaster and pandemic situations
- c. Conduct the decennial Housing and Population Census using CAPI technologies in 2022
- d. Exploit new data sources, in particular, investigate the possibilities of using of scanner data in the compilation of Consumer Price Indices
- e. Work towards meeting the requirements of the highest tier of the IMF data dissemination initiative capacity (Special Data Dissemination Standard – SDDS - Plus)
- f. Develop appropriate tools and methodologies to assess the quality of official statistics.