



Why does Mauritius need good statistics?

*Central Statistics Office
LIC Centre
John Kennedy Street
Port Louis
MAURITIUS*

Tel.: 212 2316

Fax: 211 4150

Email: csso@mail.gov.mu

Website: <http://statsmauritius.gov.mu>

Why does Mauritius need good statistics?

Better use of better national statistics leads to better Government policies and better development progress which benefits our people.

The likely success of Government policies is greatly increased by the use of statistics. Statistics allow our Government to carry out thorough analysis of complex social and economic issues, to make appropriate policy choices and to monitor and adjust government policies in order to achieve maximum impact over time.

Good statistics also improve the transparency and accountability of policy-making.

Good statistics enable our people to judge the success of Government policies and to hold Government accountable for its policies. Government is committed to the free flow of information to enable the public to be well informed in order to participate in national development and consolidate democracy.

Perhaps the most valuable contribution that statistics can make is to help ensure that our limited resources are used in the best way.

Investment in statistics will pay for itself many times over by improving how resources are allocated. Statistics highlight where resources are needed and what impact those resources have had.

Why now?

In 2006, Government launched a comprehensive and deep reform programme aimed at transforming the country into a competitive and resilient economy and widening opportunities for all. The 2006-07 Budget aimed at “securing the transition from trade preferences to global competition”. The 2007-08 Budget continued “consolidating the transition and securing full employment”. In 2008, Government moved to a Programme-Based Budget (PBB) for 2008-09 with indicative estimates up to December 2010, geared towards “sustainable economic growth, increasing quality of life and strengthening nationhood”. This programme requires statistics to help design policies, provide baseline information and track progress.

Objectives and indicators will be monitored and will be used in the budget discussion processes, reviews of Government programmes and partnership strategies developed with development partners. But data for many of the key indicators to track progress on specific programmes still need to be developed. Much more remains to be done to develop our statistics.

Our development partners also need statistics and indicators to monitor performance in areas which they are supporting and to have confidence in our policies and their implementation.

“It cannot be over-emphasized that statistical information and investment in its production and management have become too important for any government and society to ignore without serious consequences...”

Hon. Rama Sithanen
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Opening speech, Stakeholders' Workshop on the Design of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics,
14 December 2006

So Mauritius needs good statistics. How best can we organise them?

Our information needs can best be met by a well-planned and well-coordinated National Statistical System (NSS).

The NSS includes users of statistics, who create the demand for statistics, as well as the producers of statistics.

The coverage of the NSS will be as broad as possible for maximum coordination and cooperation in aligning the demand for statistics and supply of statistics. Its coverage includes the range of national data needs right down to the local area level as well as international data needs

In Mauritius, the NSS comprises the Central Statistics Office (CSO), statistical units in line ministries including Education, Health, Social Security, Agriculture, Environment and Labour, and other agencies and departments including the Bank of Mauritius, the Police, the Judiciary, local authorities and the University of Mauritius.

The NSS is focused on user needs and is being integrated into Government's "Policy and Strategy Development for Economic Growth and Social Progress" as well as sector strategies currently being developed.

Coordination is currently assured by the Director of Statistics through The Statistics Act 2000, statistical units in line ministries and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between the Central Statistics Office and other agencies.

How can strategic planning help?

Strategic planning can:

- Address data limitations;
- Help prioritisation of limited resources for statistics;
- Integrate statistics within the development policy processes;
- Look across the whole NSS and provide a coherent framework for all national and international statistical programmes and for donor support to those programmes;
- Provide an action plan for statistical capacity building; and
- Act as a catalyst for change.

The National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) has contributed to the preparedness of the NSS to satisfy the medium term data needs of policy makers. Streamlining of activities within the CSO has liberated resources for more analytical work, particularly in areas of immediate concern such as poverty alleviation and targetting of social assistance. Statistics are being integrated in sector strategies to generate performance indicators for programme-based budgeting (e.g. Justice and security, Environment, Health, Education). Coordination is being reinforced through a dedicated unit and statistical units within ministries as well as MOUs (e.g. with Bank of Mauritius). A comprehensive training programme on official statistics is being implemented with the assistance of the University of Mauritius. A performance monitoring system is already in place within the CSO and is being fine-tuned for merit-based reward and promotion.

The strategic plan will be regularly updated and extended for continuous improvement of statistical activities across the NSS.

Use of statistics in Mauritius

Mauritius enjoys a relatively high level of statistical awareness. Most stakeholders as well as the media look forward to the regular, periodic release of economic and social statistics, particularly on economic growth, unemployment and inflation. These data are used every year to determine the quantum of salary compensation. Poverty and income statistics play an important role in determining policies relating to social aid, whilst NGOs use mapping of local area relative development indices, based on census data, for poverty alleviation initiatives. Data from the Census of Economic Activities are used by the National Empowerment Foundation and Enterprise Mauritius to develop and promote programmes for small and medium enterprises. Population estimates for local authority areas are the basis for allocation of financial grants by Central Government. The Central Bank uses inflation as well as statistics of exports and imports among others, to inform decisions of the Monetary Policy Committee. The CSO participates actively in developing performance indicators and targets which are used by development partners such as the World Bank and the European Union for release of funds for budget support. As from 2009 the CSO will be more and more involved in measuring the satisfaction of users of services of various ministries and agencies.

Key Statistics, Republic of Mauritius, 2000, 2006 – 2008

	Unit	2000	2006	2007	2008
POPULATION					
Total Population	No. ('000)	1,186.9	1,252.7	1,260.4	1,268.5
Population growth rate	%	1.09	0.66	0.65	0.65
HEALTH					
Life expectancy at birth - Male	Years	68.2	69.1	69.1	n.a
Life expectancy at birth - Female	Years	75.3	75.9	75.8	n.a
Infant mortality rate	Per 1,000 live births	15.9	14.1	15.3	14.3
Under 5 mortality rate	Per 1,000 live births	18.2	16.9	17.1	15.9
Proportion of 1 year children immunized against measles	%	84.0	92.4	90.0	90.8 ¹
Maternal mortality rate	Per 100,000 live births	20	17	36	51
Death rate associated with tuberculosis	Per 100,000 population	0.5	0.6	1.1	n.a
EDUCATION					
Gross Primary Enrolment Ratio	%	104	102	101	101
Gross Secondary Enrolment Ratio	%	60	69	69	69
Gross Tertiary Enrolment Ratio	%	13	34	37	n.a
Proportion of pupils starting grade I who reach last grade of primary	%	98.9	97.2	97.5	98.3
LABOUR					
Unemployment Rate	%	6.5	9.1	8.5	7.8
Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector	%	37.7	35.7	35.7	36.7
ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL					
GDP Per Capita at Market Prices	Rs.000	101.3	164.7	186.9	208.5
Growth of GDP (basic prices) % over previous year	%	+9.7	+5.1	+5.4	+5.3
Investment rate	%	22.9	24.3	25.1	25.4
Rate of inflation	%	4.2	8.9	8.8	9.8
Net International Reserves (end June)	Rs.bn	25.2	64.7	83.5	83.9
Foreign Direct Investment in Mauritius	Rs.mn	7,265	7,222	11,514	7,247 ¹
EXCHANGE & INTEREST RATES					
US\$ (Average of buying & selling for the year)	Rs.	26.26	31.15	31.37	27.43 ¹
Bank Rate (end June)	%	10.65	7.30	10.98	7.45
Interest Rates on Savings (end June)	%	6.50-8.50	5.70-6.27	7.20-7.60	6.25-7.25
STOCK MARKETS					
Market Indices					
- SEM-7 (March 1998=100)	End of year	94.7	264.4	477.4	261.6 ²
- SEMDEX (5 July 1989=100)	End of year	390.1	1,204.5	1,852.2	1,171.1 ²
- SEMTRI (5 July 1989=100)	End of year	650.7	3,060.7	4,868.6	3,175.1 ²
ENVIRONMENT					
Carbon dioxide emissions per capita	metric tons	2.1	2.7	2.7	n.a
ICT					
Mobile telephone subscribers	Per 100 population	14.6	61.5	73.4	n.a

POVERTY		2001/02	2006/07
Proportion of poor ³ persons	%	7.8	8.5

n.a - Not available

¹ January to September

² Closing month (November 2008) end figures

³ Persons living below the relative poverty line which is based on half the median of household income adjusted for household size and age composition as well as for economies of scale. Upon using this line, a one-person household was found to be poor if its income resources fell below Rs 2,804 in 2001/02 and Rs 3,821 in 2006/07.

To sum up

Better use of better statistics leads to better policy and better development outcomes.

The NSDS has been overtaken by reforms which are aimed at achieving many of the objectives of NSDS e.g. autonomy for independence and operational flexibility. Programme-based budgeting, with its emphasis on performance indicators and performance targets has put statistics in the national policy processes.

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Empowerment has undertaken to provide resources on a needs basis to support the provision of statistics in general (including Census 2010) and for monitoring the PBB in particular. It has also allocated funds for capacity building under two programmes which CSO is tapping.

The CSO is also being assisted by development partners through technical assistance in specific areas such as poverty analysis and mapping, compilation of Social Accounting Matrices, environment accounts and tourism satellite accounts.

Civil service reforms initiated in the wake of the 2008 recommendations of the Pay Research Bureau are expected to provide operational flexibility, particularly with respect to recruitment of the variety of skills required by the NSS, and for merit-based reward and promotion.

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: To improve development outcomes and governance by strengthening National Statistical Systems in the country

This booklet was prepared by the Central Statistics Office in conjunction with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21)

PARIS21 is a unique global partnership of national and international statisticians, development professionals, policy makers, analysts and other users of statistics who are committed to making a real difference to the contribution of statistics to development progress. The partnership was established following an international meeting in November 1999 by the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations, and the World Bank. Its secretariat is hosted by the OECD.

PARIS21's goal is to develop a culture of evidence-based policy making and implementation which serves to improve governance and government effectiveness in reducing poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.



PARIS21 - OECD/DCD
2 rue André Pascal - 75775 Paris Cedex 16
contact@paris21.org
Tel: +33 1 45 24 90 51 - Fax: +33 1 45 24 94 06
www.paris21.org