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FOREWORD

This is the third issue of a yearly publication on Social Security Statistics prepared by the Central Statistics Office.

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 the past five years. Figures for 2003/2004 are subject to revision in future issues.

Data have been compiled on the basis of information obtained from the Ministry of Social Security and National Solidarity 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 and National Solidarity in the preparation of this report are gratefully acknowledged.

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APPENDIX

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Concepts and definitions

1. 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, Unemployment Hardship Relief and Funeral Grant which are payable to the low-income group of the population.
- ❖ 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.

The pension rates for non-contributory benefits are fixed at the beginning of each financial year. 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.

2. Non-contributory benefits

2.1 *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.

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

2.2 *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.

2.3 Basic Invalid's Pension (BIP)

The Basic Invalid's Pension is payable to any person aged from 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.

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

Basic Orphan's Pension is payable to all orphans up to the age of 15, or up to 20 years of age if they are in full-time education. 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.

2.5 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. Child's allowance is payable for up to three dependent children.

3 Other non-contributory social benefits

3.1 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 especially with dependent children. It is also paid for a limited period in case of sudden loss of employment.

A number of other benefits are granted to a social aid beneficiary. There is also the provision of free spectacles, wheelchairs and hearing aids. Allowances are also payable to beneficiaries of examination fees for School Certificate (SC), General School Certificate (GCE), Higher School Certificate (HSC) and Industrial and Vocational Training Board (IVTB) Courses. Other allowances are funeral grant, refund of travelling to attend medical treatment, compassionate allowance for severe illness, carer's allowance, allowance for purchase of rice and flour, and allowances to fire victims, cyclone refugees, 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.

3.2 Food Aid

The Food Aid Scheme was introduced in March 1993 when government subsidy on rice and flour was temporarily discontinued. Under the Food Aid Scheme, a monthly stipend of Rs 30 is given to all needy Mauritians for the purchase of rice and flour. They are

- ❖ All recipients of Social Aid and their dependents.
- ❖ All beneficiaries of Unemployment Hardship Relief.
- ❖ 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 allowance has been increased to Rs 50 as from October 2004.

3.3 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 registered, as unemployed at the Employment Exchange, be willing and able to take up employment and be actively looking for work. A disabled person who can work but has not been able to find a job receives a UHR in addition to his Basic Invalid's Pension.

4. Contribution to the National Pension Fund and contributory benefits

4.1 The National Pensions Scheme

The National Pension Scheme was introduced in April 1976. It provides for the payment of contributory pensions to those 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.

4.2 Contributory Pensions

4.2.1 Contributory Retirement Pension (CRP)

The Contributory Retirement Pension is payable to a person on reaching the age of 60 if he has contributed to the NPF.

4.2.2 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.

4.2.3 Contributory Invalid's Pension (CIP)

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

4.2.4 Contributory Orphan's pension (COP)

The Contributory Orphan's pension is payable to orphans under the age of 15, or 18 if the child is at school, if any of the deceased parents had contributed to the NPF.

4.3 Industrial Injury Scheme

The Scheme covers all insured employee (contributing to the NPF) from the age of 18 to 65 years and would be insured persons, that is, employees or apprentices between the age of 15 and 18 years, although they are not liable to pay contributions. In case of fatal accidents, benefits are paid to the surviving spouse, children, orphans or dependents.

4.3.1 Industrial Injury Allowance

This allowance is paid to an injured person whose period of incapacity for work resulting from the industrial accident extends beyond two weeks. During the first two weeks, he receives his full wages from his employer. As from the 15th day, the Ministry pays a daily allowance representing 80% of the employee wages.

4.3.2 Disablement Pension

Whenever the industrial accident leads to a permanent incapacity which may be partial or total, a disablement pension is payable to that person. The pension is paid either as a monthly pension or as a lump sum basis.

4.3.3 Constant Attendance Allowance

This allowance is paid to a person who is receiving an industrial injury allowance or a disablement pension in relation to a permanent disability of 100% and that he requires, for his normal bodily functions, the constant personal attendance of another person.

4.3.4 Survivor's Pension

In case an insured employee dies as a result of an industrial accident, the widow will qualify for a survivor's pension provided she was civilly and religiously married. In case the deceased employee is a female person, the surviving widower qualifies for a survivor's pension if he is permanently incapacitated to the extent of 60% or more.

Where the surviving spouse has dependent children she is entitled to receive a **child allowance** for not more than three children. This allowance is payable to a child under the age of 15, or 20 years if he/she is in full time education.

4.3.5 Other Allowances

When an insured person dies as a result of an industrial accident and leaves one or more orphans, an **orphan's pension** is payable to them.

A **guardian allowance** is given to the guardian of the orphan.

A **dependent's pension** is payable on an income tested basis to collateral relatives like brothers, sisters, cousins living in the same household in case the deceased leaves no surviving spouse or children.

A beneficiary of Industrial Injury Allowance or Disablement Pension also qualifies for **refund of travelling fares** for expenses incurred for following treatment at a medical institution.

An insured person who has to use an **artificial aid** (e.g. spectacles, dentures, orthopaedic appliances etc.) as a result of the accident may apply for an allowance to cover its cost, maintenance and renewal. The replacement or cost of repair of **clothing** damaged or burnt in an accident may also be compensated.

Clinical expenses to a maximum of Rs 4000 are refunded when the injured employee has urgently been admitted in a clinic for treatment.

4.4 Lump Sum - NPF

A lump sum is payable to certain categories of insured employees under the National Pensions Fund.

- ❖ Sugar Industry Pensions Fund Lump Sum is payable to retired employees of the sugar industry who have contributed to the above fund which has been transferred to the National Pensions Fund in 1979.
- ❖ National Pensions Fund (NPF) Lump Sum is payable to heirs of those employees who have contributed to the NPF and who died before attaining the age of 60.

5. Charitable Institutions

The Ministry provides some assistance to charitable institutions looking after the care and maintenance of persons unable to support themselves.

(a) Indoor relief (also known as the capitation grant) is the grant paid to an institution in respect of every person residing in the institution if that person would have otherwise benefited from a basic pension or from Social Aid.

(b) Inmate's Allowance refers to the pocket money given to certain residents of government-subsidized institutions and of the only government psychiatric hospital, Brown Sequad Hospital.

Please note that the data concerning charitable institutions in this publication are not strictly comparable. Statistics shown in Table D are obtained from figures compiled by the Finance Section of the Ministry of Social Security while those in Section 7 are the results of an annual survey conducted by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry among the 25 institutions.

6. The National Savings Fund

The National Savings Fund has been set up in 1995 to replace the Employees Welfare Fund. The objectives of the National Savings Fund are:

- ❖ To provide for the payment of a lump sum to every employee on his retirement at the age of 60 or earlier, or to the beneficiary on his death; and
- ❖ To set up and operate for the benefit of employees, such schemes, including loan schemes, as may be prescribed.

The fund is compulsory in respect to all employees, except non-citizens, of both public and private sector. Contributions to the fund are payable at the rate of 2.5 % by the employers.

7. The National Solidarity Fund

The National Solidarity Fund started operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Security and National Solidarity on 1 June 1991. Initially, its objectives were to provide financial assistance to:

- ❖ Mauritian citizens residing in Mauritius who require surgical operations that can only be performed abroad
- ❖ Those undergoing “Severe Personal Hardships”.

Since November 1999, with the creation of the “Trust Fund for Overseas Treatment” operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Health, all surgical operations cases have been transferred to that Fund. Subsequently, in March 2000, the National Solidarity Fund enlarged the scope of its activities under the “Severe Personal Hardship Scheme”. The cases presently covered are:

- ❖ Tragic accidents resulting in loss of life or 60% incapacitated
- ❖ Needy students sitting for the SC/HSC/IVTB approved courses and not qualified for refund of their fees according to the Social Aid Act
- ❖ Victims of natural calamities e.g cyclone, flood etc
- ❖ Multiple births
- ❖ Repatriation of mortal remains (maximum of Rs 25,000)
- ❖ Destitutes
- ❖ Fire victims of small businesses like snacks, workshops, etc
- ❖ Assistive devices e.g hearing aid, spectacles, etc
- ❖ Patients suffering from incurable diseases
- ❖ Multiple disabilities.

The sources of revenue of the Fund are:

- ❖ Contributions from the General Public
- ❖ Contributions from Ministries and Departments
- ❖ Return on investments
- ❖ Unclaimed prizes and unclaimed winning tickets from Automatics Systems Ltd., Mauritius Turf Club and other commercial promotions.

8. Projections of basic pension beneficiaries and assumptions used for estimating their future costs

8.1 *Population projection and costs of basic pension beneficiaries*

The future costs of basic pensions are calculated on the basis of the pension rates of 2003/2004 (flat rate) and the latest population projection based on the estimated population as at June 2004 which was worked out by the Central Statistics Office.

8.2 *Basic Retirement Pension (including Severely Handicapped Pension and Child's Allowance)*

- ❖ The beneficiaries of Basic Retirement Pension (BRP) are assumed to be the projected population aged 60 years and over.
- ❖ The proportion of beneficiaries of BRP who are severely handicapped (BRP/SH) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.
- ❖ The proportion of children receiving Child's Allowance (BRP cases) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.

8.3 *Basic Widow's Pension (including Child's Allowance)*

- ❖ The proportion of women receiving Basic Widow's Pension (BWP) by age group in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.
- ❖ The proportion of children receiving Child's Allowance (BWP cases) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.

8.4 *Basic Invalid's Pension (including Carer's Allowance and Child's Allowance)*

- ❖ The proportion of pensioners receiving Basic Invalid's Pension (BIP) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.
- ❖ It has been assumed that the proportion of BIP beneficiaries who obtain an additional pension (Carer's Allowance) by age group and sex remains the same as in 2004.
- ❖ The proportion of children receiving Child's Allowance (BIP cases) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.

8.5 *Basic Orphan's Pension (including Guardian's Allowance)*

- ❖ The proportion of children receiving Basic Orphan's Pension (BOP) by age group and sex in 2004 has been assumed to remain constant in the future.
- ❖ The proportion of Basic Orphan's Pension beneficiaries per guardian has been assumed to remain the same as in 2004.