

M GENDER, SOCIAL ISSUES AND SOCIETAL PROBLEMS

M.1 Gender

M.1.1 Provisions by RRA

Provisions have been made in the 2007-2008 budgets for meeting the financial needs of women and Rs.1.7 million has been provided for the development and welfare of women. A sum of Rs 20 million will be provided under the Empowerment/Decentralised Cooperation Programme to finance the purchase of community boats and other projects under the IFAD/RDP Programme which will benefit mainly women including micro-finance projects, acquisition of furniture and equipment as well as agricultural and farm tools and the latest scientific techniques.

M.1.2 Summary of issues

The core issues affecting women are as follows:

Family level

- Inability of some women and girls at grass root level and poorer segments of society to fully take advantage of public sector facilities for education, health, family planning, etc;
- Increasing trend in teenage pregnancy which is paradoxical to an extent, as on average, girls are performing better in school. As indicated by several studies, this situation is linked with family and social dysfunction and needs to be treated in an imaginative and personalised manner;
- Strong patriarchal sentiment at the family and society levels where females are unwilling to stand up to domination by their partners for moral and cultural reasons;
- Women in the informal sector are unable to expand or function efficiently due to their multiple commitments and limited access to finance, markets and technology;
- Women appear to be subject to other social evils such as domestic verbal and physical violence arising from the lack of empowerment and support; and
- Lack of empowerment of women to ensure equitable decision making at the family level.

Business level

- Lack of job opportunities especially of the type that is in line with the aspirations of younger more educated segments of the unemployed; and

- Female entrepreneurs in the SME and handicraft sectors appear to have not been fully able to benefit from the facilities available at SEHDA and DBM to expand their business due to several factors, inter alia, their multiple roles.

Community and administrative level

- To date, there seems to be a lack of commitment from the authorities and social leaders to deal firmly with the situation of alcohol and sex abuse;
- Inadequate leisure and creative spare time activities and life styles which could lead to less desirable activities like drugs, prostitution etc;
- Although much is being done through the NGO network, some women have got trapped into situations of poverty and abuse from their male partners and are unable to free themselves; and
- The relatively high level of complaints regarding domestic violence brought to the attention of the relevant authorities.

Consultative Process

The issue of gender equality did not appear as a major issue during the Thematic Working Group meetings. Nonetheless, the above core issues emerged from discussions with various concerned parties and the detailed studies undertaken.

M.2 Poverty, Safety nets, and Societal problems

Poverty is estimated at 37% of households by the World Bank. There is a legitimate need to reduce the level of income poverty. The main thrust would be through improving productivity and creating employment and not by increasing Social Aid which would continue to be targeted to the old, the vulnerable and the neediest. The policy would be to put in place a proper system of assistance in terms loans, technical advice and support and market outlets for those who are unemployed or underemployed.

Single-headed female households are among the poorest in Rodrigues. Some studies also seem to indicate that external circumstances often result in such households finding themselves in a vicious circle of poverty from one generation to another. Teenage pregnancy also leads to unstable relations and poverty. Once again, it is only through education, sensitisation and direct empowerment that the vicious circle of early pregnancy, lack of education, poverty and unstable family relationships can be broken.

The social network system and legal framework has been laid down to cater for the elderly what is now required is proper follow-up and monitoring.

Improving the quality of life would include better facilities for sports, recreation and self improvement. Much infrastructure already exists. What needs to be done is to improve the utilisation of these facilities and ensuring a wider coverage of the population.

M.2.1 Provisions by RRA

The Social Security and Welfare provision accounts for around Rs 194 million in the 2004-2005 budget³. About 46.2% of the Social Welfare budget is for old age pensions. Another 4.9% is for welfare transfers to widows and orphans. The State is already responsible for the provision of free health services, education including transport, social housing for the poor and public transport for pensioners. Any further increase in State provision towards poverty reduction will be difficult to envisage.

The focus will need to be on greater efficiency in State financial outlay. With the exception of the aged, orphans, the infirm and handicapped, assistance to all other groups will need to be targeted, monitored carefully and time bound. Some contribution should also be forthcoming from the NGO community – in terms of service and labour, if not in finance – and the private sector for helping the poor. The expected development of the tourism, IT and other sectors should be linked to some social community development programmes. This will not only reduce the burden on the public budget, but also create some linkages with the community. Resistance to the changes that the new economic stance could create would be reduced.

M.2.1.1 Consultative Process

The issue of lack of support to vulnerable groups figured high in the Consultative process. It was felt that psychological support was also not adequate.

Among the solutions put forward at the meetings were as follows:

- Assistance to vulnerable groups should be suitable adapted to their needs;
- A ‘drop in and advice’ service and social accompaniment service should be set up in institutions; and
- Social assistance should be reviewed and beneficiaries empowered so as to be able to work.

³ Figures are taken from the Final Diagnosis Report (Table 11.1)

M.3 Action Plan

M.3.1 Strategies

The vision for Rodrigues is of an island of happy, contented and energetic people working hard and intelligently for the prosperity of their native land. This calls for empowerment, widening the circle of opportunities, and a considerable degree of advocacy and IEC programmes informing the population on different ways of how their lives could become more productive.

More specifically, given the specific nature of the issues highlighted in this chapter, the overarching goals are to:

- 1 Adopt policies for Gender Mainstreaming and deliberate promotion of women empowerment;
- 2 Increase likelihood of both men and women to find paid employment and seek to attain full employment level by 2015 (MDG target date), with 5% structural unemployment;
- 3 Reduce poverty levels and fully integrate Rodriguan development with mainland Mauritius through participatory development of home-based sustainable development strategies suited to the local context;
- 4 Ensure that single parent (generally female) headed families do not fall in the ‘poverty trap’ through better technological transfer; and
- 5 Reverse the number of cases of poverty among the aged.

M.3.1.1 Strategy for Cultural development

Infrastructural Developments required:

- Completion and operationalisation of the Cultural & Leisure Centre at Mont Plaisir. It is suggested that the Centre comprises:
 - A “Conservatoire de Musique” (to be developed in partnership with institutions from Mauritius and/or Reunion Island);
 - A national “Galleries d’Arts de Rodrigues” as well as two or three private galleries;
 - A theatre for the performing arts and a large meeting venue facility;
 - A museum on the national and cultural heritage;
 - A central contact point for organisations offering cultural outreach programmes;

- A state-of-the-art Conference Centre;
 - Dedicated space for visual artist's groups meeting and working needs;
 - Studio spaces for individual artists; and
 - An Archive Unit (the first of its kind in Rodrigues).
- Equipping existing libraries and pedagogical institutions with modern tools, pedagogical materials, and equipment, including access to ICT;

Promotion of the cultural heritage and cultural development:

The Cultural & Leisure Centre of Mont Plaisir is expected to be the focal point for cultural development in Rodrigues, which will include:

- Organisation of Cultural and linguistic festivals and events (such as Cultural Festival Weeks);
- Arts Awards for Young People - national scheme of accreditation, using peer education and facilitating leadership. This could also take the form of an annual Youth Arts Project;
- Improve access to and awareness of culture facilities via organisation and mediatisation of cultural events;
- Free admission to museums and galleries for children;
- Creation of an on-going program of technical assistance for local cultural organisations;
- Increased programming for teens and adults;
- Provision of culturally-balanced programs throughout the year;
- Development of arts/science/history interdisciplinary programs;
- Development of partnerships with regional and international libraries;
- Assessing the need for local children's learning centers and developing partnerships to support their creation;
- Exploring partnerships with science and history organisations (internationally);
- Stimulating increased group marketing and tours to cultural programs;

- Production of a leaflet and promotion of the use of Public Art in regeneration;
- Developing a website documenting and promoting cultural activities; and
- Developing a system of support for on-going regional festivals.

M.3.1.2 Strategy for promotion and development of Sports

Sport is crucial for the healthy development of the youth as well as older population. It also creates a spirit of competitiveness which is essential for the development of the island. Taking part in team games teaches the players to work together for a common goal.

The goals set for the sector are:

- Deliberate expression of commitment on the part of the RRA to formulate appropriate policies;
- Upgrading of existing facilities, in schools and at community level;
- Investment in new infrastructures, including:
 - a state-of-the art Sports Centre to be located within the compound of a brand new stadium that will act as a catalyst for sports development in Rodrigues. The stadium could also have a cultural orientation to be used as “un Espace Musical en Plein Air” which could welcome events such as open-air concerts;
 - erection of a new football pitch at the stadium;
 - construction of a modern and fully-equipped gymnasium at Marechal in the vicinity of the swimming pool;
- Training and creation of a pool of trainers to work with the Rodriguan sportsmen;
- Development of Sports Tourism as a distinct discipline, to be financed almost exclusively by international firms. Organisation of regular regional/international sporting events need to be included, such as:
 - a “Tour de Rodrigues Cycliste” that will attract cyclists from various places of the world, especially those who affectionate mountains and rocky tracks;
 - an annual Kite-Surf championship; and
 - a big-game fishing competition of international standing;

As highlighted in the chapter on Sustainable Tourism, sports tourism (which includes diving) attracts nearly one million visitors annually, with the diving segment being a crowd-puller (over 60,000 tourists annually). The development of sports tourism will also ensure that sports (mostly through sports tourism) eventually becomes a net contributor to government coffers as opposed to a burden;

- Development of long-term relationships with regional and international sports associations;
- Maximise community involvement in the organisation of events through volunteering and increased use of sports facilities;
- Increase the availability of free or low cost meeting spaces;
- Setting-up of a system to identify talents and to establish programmes to develop the talents; and above all
- Establishment of long-terms plans for the development of sports disciplines. These include:
 - Development of a Volunteer Programme for Sports Development (mainly to ensure the sustainable legacies of not only the participation of Rodriguan athletes in international games but also of games/events organised in Rodrigues.

M.4 Logframes

The following logframes provides action points to achieve the goals set within the broader objective of sustainable development.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Activity Description)	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT (Objectively Verifiable Indicators)	MONITORING & EVALUATION (Means of Verification)	RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS
<i>Policy Objective for Gender</i>			
<p>To move towards greater equality by empowering women and men to exploit fully their potential and unleash their creativity and entrepreneurial spirit through the provision of adequate infrastructure services, opportunities and training thus enabling them to move away from low-productivity agriculture and fisheries sectors to other more productive activities thereby raising their incomes. This includes the deliberate promotion of women empowerment and ‘gender mainstreaming.’</p>			
<p>Goal 1: Adopt policies for Gender mainstreaming (i.e., adopt strategies for “making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated”.)</p>	<p>1.1 Use of gender-diasaggregated data to identify gaps in gender equality 1.2 More resources and expertise are leveraged to monitor implementation 1.3 Gender analysis becomes a regular publication issued by the RRA</p>	<p>1.1.1 Data from the Commission for Women 1.1.2 Disaggregated data from the CSO</p>	
<p>Project Development Objective</p> <p>Ensure equality between men and women is fair and right</p>			
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1 Wage disparity between working men and women is reduced</p>	<p>Outcome Indicators</p> <p>1.1 More women enter the paid category jobs every year 1.2 Labour force participation rate of women is increased by at least 5% every year to reach 65% by 2020</p>	<p>1.1.3 Statistics from CSO 1.1.4 Digest of Labour Statistics (CSO)</p>	
<p>2 Violence against women and children remains on a downward trend</p>	<p>2.1 Reduction on an annual basis in the number of cases of violence</p>	<p>2.1.1 Statistics from the Commission for Women and CDU</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Activity Description)	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT (Objectively Verifiable Indicators)	MONITORING & EVALUATION (Means of Verification)	RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS
as from 2010	against women and children		
Goal 2: Increase likelihood of both men and women to find paid jobs	1.1 Detailed targets set for increased number of jobs in sectors e.g. Rodrigues labour force participation rate (male and female) and so forth	1.1.1 Sample surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of relevant government statistics • Analysis of local economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of targets given in sectoral Log frames • Implementation of various sectoral plans/programmes
Project Development Objective Both men and women are able to find employment and both men and women have access to loans, training, markets etc to enable them to start their own business and be self employed	Outcome Indicators 1.1 Changes in male/female employment levels 1.2 Reduction in male/female unemployment levels to 8% IN 2015 and 5% by 2020 1.3 Examine unemployment by sector/occupations/education qualification/locations 1.4 Identify jobs and skills mismatch 1.5 Study male/female wage differentials by sector/occupation	1.1.1 Data on employment by sector/occupations 1.2.1 Wage level changes 1.3.1 No of fisherwomen who have moved to other sectors 1.4.1 No of new firms started between 2007 to 2015 1.5.1 No of jobs created between 2007 to 2015	Men/women have necessary skills for jobs available or training facilities available or can be organised Hotel workers have the necessary skills to maintain Hotels rooms up to the international quality standards required
Outputs 1 Likelihood of women finding employment is increased	Output Indicators 1.1 Consultative meetings with potential employers 1.2 Wok in close collaboration with the Empowerment Programme	1.1.1 Cost-Benefit Analysis for each activity/initiative/programme	Ability to identify suitable employment opportunities based on economic development of island Ability to organise relevant training Funds from Empowerment Fund

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Activity Description)	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT (Objectively Verifiable Indicators)	MONITORING & EVALUATION (Means of Verification)	RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS
			forthcoming

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Activity Description)	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT (Objectively Verifiable Indicators)	MONITORING & EVALUATION (Means of Verification)	RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS
Development Strategy for the Social Upliftment (Socio-economic life of Rodriguans) of Rodrigues: 2007-2015 within the overall context of meeting Poverty Reduction goal			
<i>Policy Objective: To focus on improving the quality of life of all Rodriguans while targeting those who are in the fringes of society due to sickness, old age, lack of education or resources to earn an income, with the continued provision of financial assistance but more important by developing a gender sensitive strategy for economic and inclusive social development which can generate direct and indirect employment and thus reduce male and female poverty levels.</i>			
Goal 1: To reduce poverty and to fully integrate Rodriguan development with the main growth centres on mainland Mauritius through participatory development of home-based sustainable development strategies suited to the local context.	1.1 Poverty levels estimated 37.6 % of total population to be reduced to around 30 % by 2007 and 25 % by 2015	1.1.1 Data on poverty levels are obtained from the Household Budget survey and data from the 2006 /2007 should be available soon. A request has been made to have a separate report for Rodrigues for the first time.	Success of various Poverty Reduction/Alleviation programmes
Project Development Objective To estimate high risk group by type e.g. women, teenage girls with babies, aged and the unemployed e.g. Octopus fisher women	Outcome Indicators 1.1 Outcome/Impact indicators	1.1.1 Set up monthly targets for % of target group to be followed up	Sustained effort to reduce poverty equitably by successive administrators/ governments

NARRATIVE SUMMARY (Activity Description)	INDICATORS OF ACHIEVEMENT (Objectively Verifiable Indicators)	MONITORING & EVALUATION (Means of Verification)	RISKS & ASSUMPTIONS
	1.2 Systematic identification of the population at high risk to fall below poverty level		Adequate funding forthcoming EPMU continuing to play facilitative role
Outputs 1 A higher quality of life for more Rodriguans	Output Indicators 1.1 Reduction in the numbers seeking Social Aid as income levels improve	1.1.1 Follow up of high risk group by EPMU	Funding is forthcoming
Component Activities 1.1 Better utilisation of existing funds for poverty alleviation	Inputs 1.1.1 Data to be kept by EPMU which will be responsible for follow up and tracking of high risk group 1.1.2 Requests for assistance met within two weeks	1.1.1.1 CSO documents on education enrollment, health indicators, income levels from Household Budget Survey	
1.2 More effective outreach	1.2.1 Data to be kept by Ministry of Social Security and EPMU	1.2.1.1 Data from CSO and Dept of Social Security	
Goal 2: Ensure that Single parent (generally female) headed families do not fall in 'poverty trap' through better technology transfer	1.1 Use data from CSO and the community to identify Single female headed families who are poor	1.1.1 Data from CSO and Dept of Social Security	Support from the Dept of Social Security is forthcoming Assistance obtained from EU and UNDP Poverty alleviation programmes

<p>Project Development Objective</p> <p>NGOs to prepare projects for financial assistance from UN/EU agencies for assisting the poor improve productivity through adoption of improved and new technology</p> <p>The actual type of project will depend on the needs of the people and could include projects for providing and improving water supply, fertilizers for women farmers, improved technology for women entrepreneurs</p>	<p>Outcome Indicators</p> <p>1.1 Number of families assisted</p> <p>1.2 Number of projects prepared</p> <p>1.3 Amount of funding received</p>	<p>1.1.1 Department of Social Security with Rodrigues Women’s council and Rodrigues Entrepreneurship Committee</p> <p>1.2.1 Relevant NGOs</p>	<p>EPMU continuing to play facilitative role</p> <p>Facilities in monitoring project funding and implementation</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>1 Females heads sensitised on the need to increase incomes through improved technology and manage their time effectively</p>	<p>Output Indicators</p> <p>1.1 Evaluation of impact of new technologies adopted and correctly utilised</p>	<p>1.1.1 No of female headed families who have adopted new technology</p>	<p>Difficulty of coping with change</p> <p>Need sensitisation and support</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>2 Acceptance and implementation of technology transfers in production</p>	<p>Output Indicators</p> <p>2.1 No. of families who have adopted new technology</p>	<p>2.1.1 Follow up and monitoring by Dept</p>	<p>Support forthcoming from relevant departments e.g. agriculture, fisheries, SMEs</p>
<p>Outputs</p> <p>3 Workshops, meetings with employers and unemployed organised regularly to give females equal chance</p>	<p>Output Indicators</p> <p>3.1 Follow up done by Ministry of Social Security /EPMU</p>	<p>3.1.1 No of families helped</p>	<p>There is equity in the support provided</p>

to enter the world of work			
Component Activities	Inputs		
1.1 The regions where families are poor is identified and targeted for financial; support	1.1.1 Financial inputs from UN/EU agencies	1.1.1.1 Department of Social Security	Funding is available Community interested to work together Motivation for supporting and assisting the poor
1.2 The Community leaders, Community workers assist the poor in adapting new technology	1.2.1 No of community leaders who are involved	1.2.1.1 Action coordinated by Dept of Social Security and RCSS	

Goal 3: To reverse the number of cases of poverty among the aged	No of aged who is poor reduced by 10 % by 2015.	Data on numbers of aged who are poor to be prepared/ collected by CSO, community workers working with the EPMU	
Project Development Objective	Outcome Indicators		
To ensure that the aged are properly cared for and have access to the basic necessities	1.1 No of complaints to the Dept. of Social Security from the aged on being ill-treated	1.1.1 Department of Social Security	Funds available
Outputs	Output Indicators		
1 Set up 'drop in and advice' consultation service' in institutions	1.1 No of centres set up	1.1.1 Department of Social Security	Funds and social workers available



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