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United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2001-2003) Mauritius

The UN Country Team reaffirms its faith in fundamental human rights, in the equal rights of men and women, and their contribution to promote social and economic progress towards a better quality of life for the Mauritian citizen, through their contribution to health, environment and social development.

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Executive Summary

The UN system support to Mauritius has evolved over the years to respond to changing demands in the face of a fast evolving economic, social and political situation in the country. The thrust of the UN system assistance has so far concentrated on a number of strategic interventions, the main ones being policy dialogue on critical development issues, advocacy and policy advice on the ratification and implementation of international conventions, support to research and data collection, support to the empowerment of vulnerable groups, gender mainstreaming and support for the consolidation of child rights.

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) – Mauritius has been developed to bring greater coherence to the United Nations (UN) programme of assistance. The UNDAF is a framework for collaboration and lays the foundation for greater co-operation between the UN system organisations and the Government of Mauritius, the private sector and civil society. The issues addressed in the UNDAF are based on the findings of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) – Mauritius and are in line with national needs and priorities as well as international conventions. The format adopted for the UNDAF is in line with the UNDAF guidelines issued in April 1999.

The follow up to world conferences and adherence to international conventions also offer a strong conceptual basis for the UNDAF Mauritius to give it a social, people-centred and gender sensitive dimension.

The process of dialogue between the UN team and national stakeholders (namely government officials, the civil society and the private sector) helped identify the following key areas of intervention which form the basis of UN collective action: **Social Development and Drug Abuse, Health and Population/HIV/AIDS, Environment and Human Rights/Gender and Child Rights.** These areas are in line with national priorities and, most importantly, are areas whereby UN intervention can make a critical difference. Crosscutting concerns, especially those related to gender and child rights were integrated throughout the entire framework of assistance.

Goal of Assistance

The over-arching goal of UN assistance in Mauritius is “*to attain the highest level of standard of living and quality of life for all within the framework of human rights*“. This goal has been formulated in line with the priorities of the Government and builds on the issues raised in the CCA.

Objectives of Assistance and Co-operation Strategies

To achieve the UNDAF goal, several objectives of assistance have been spelt out during the UNDAF discussions and reflect the specific contribution of the UN system to achieve the goal of assistance in partnership with national stakeholders. These objectives are summarised in the table below.

AREAS OF INTERVENTION	OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE
Social Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To alleviate poverty with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups including women, children and the elderly, thereby promoting the right of all to an adequate standard of living 2. To promote social cohesion through support to CBOs and other grassroots organisations involved in community work and neighbourhood activities to consolidate local community life 3. To promote equal opportunities, equitable access and treatment with regard to employment, resources and training, with particular emphasis on enhancing women's decision making capabilities at all levels 4. To promote every child's right to protection, care and optimal development 5. To reduce substance abuse as well as demand for and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while protecting the most vulnerable groups, especially youth and children 6. To assist in identifying and addressing the social determinants of vulnerabilities to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, thereby promoting the right to information and services in the field of HIV/AIDS
Health and Population, HIV/AIDS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase health system performance through effective participation of all stakeholders and strengthening of the scientific foundations of health policy, with emphasis on primary health care 2. To support the promotion of positive health seeking behaviour, including sexual and reproductive health, with particular emphasis on children, adolescents and youth 3. To assist in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, in the early identification of new HIV infections, and provide care and support to those infected and affected 4. To support every child's right to survival and good health
Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support sustainable management of natural resources, including Integrated Coastal Zone Management, water resource management (with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands) and conservation and protection of biodiversity 2. To support Integrated Waste Management, cleaner production, emission reduction and prevention of pollution of fresh water and marine environment

Corresponding co-operation strategies have been formulated to describe how the UN system proposes to achieve the respective objectives of assistance. These are mainly through advocacy, policy dialogue, and assistance for capacity building, support for research and data analysis and support for the delivery of essential social services.

Contribution of the UN System

The contribution of the UN system to meet the development challenges faced by Mauritius should not be seen solely in terms of financial resources, but much more in terms of its ability to promote new ideas, research initiatives, policy dialogue and advocacy, sharing best practices and lessons learnt, and facilitating access to data and research-based information, derived from its long co-operation in the country and the UN global and world-wide country office network.

Follow up and Review

The implementation of UNDAF will be monitored and reviewed by an UNDAF Steering Committee, comprising the UN, government, private sector and civil society. The Committee will meet every six months and the outcome of the initial meeting will be a Work Plan for implementation and monitoring. Theme Groups will be set up as the strategic operational mechanism to implement the Work Plan. A Technical Monitoring Unit will be set up to develop detailed indicators to enable efficient monitoring of the UNDAF. Existing CCA database will be consolidated.

1. The Rationale

1.1 The UN System in Mauritius

Co-operation between Mauritius and the UN system dates back to 1969. The following UN Funds, programmes and specialised agencies have programme activities in Mauritius: UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, ILO, FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNDCP, IMO, UNEP, IFAD, UNAIDS, IAEA and UNCTAD. With the exception of UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA which have offices in Mauritius, the majority of these other UN organizations are stationed in the region, as they have regional functions and mandates in the Indian Ocean countries, including Mauritius. Few simply operate from their respective Headquarters.

The UN system support to Mauritius has evolved over the years to respond to changing demands in the face of a fast evolving economic, social and political situation in the country. The thrust of the UN system assistance has so far been along the following lines:

- policy dialogue on critical development issues
- support to the development of coherent long and medium term policies, strategies and plans
- support to reforms towards modernisation or upgrading to new international standards
- capacity building and strengthening of institutions
- support to decentralisation and participation
- advocacy and policy advice on the ratification and implementation of international conventions, declarations and programmes of action of UN Global Conferences
- support to data collection, processing and analysis
- support to empowerment of vulnerable groups/communities, enabling them to cope with their development needs
- facilitating access to universal and multi-sectoral sources of knowledge and expertise
- support to cost-effective multi-sectoral systems
- sharing of best practices/success stories using the UN world-wide network
- support to resource mobilisation for strategic national programmes
- gender mainstreaming
- realisation of human rights

In response to the call of the UN member states to see greater integration of UN activities at the country level while preserving the specific characteristics and distinctiveness of various UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the UN Secretary-General Track-1 – Reform proposals were presented to the General Assembly in 1997. They underlined the need for arrangements to secure greater integration of UN activities at country level. To achieve this objective, several measures were proposed by the UN Secretary-General in his reforms, and these were endorsed by the General Assembly. They included, among other things, the strengthening of the UN Resident Coordinator System, the preparation of a common programme framework at country level (UNDAF), and the establishment of UN common premises and services arrangements.

To implement these measures in Mauritius, the UN agencies moved into common premises in 1998, and are now strengthening the common services arrangements for cost savings and cost effectiveness. As the need for co-ordinated UN action became particularly important and relevant, the UN system in Mauritius made a major breakthrough by uniting resident and non-resident UN agencies to collectively embark on

the CCA and UNDAF exercise. The CCA exercise completed in May 2000 has generated a UN common understanding of the national development situation and many development challenges facing Mauritius, as well as the possible areas of future UN interventions. The specificity of the CCA for Mauritius is that it was open to all members of the UN family to include resident and non-resident UN agencies, which have programmes activities in Mauritius and to the IBRD. A wide participatory process became a prerequisite to move forward, given the fact that the majority of UN agencies operating in Mauritius did not have offices in the country. To enhance effective participation of all UN organisations, stimulate collective analysis and validation of the elements of the CCA, communications through electronic mail were established. Two workshops involving non-resident and resident agencies were organised. The results of this approach were overwhelming, with 13 UN agencies and the IBRD providing inputs to CCA and 12 UN agencies, in addition to IBRD, participating at CCA validation workshop.

1.2 Lessons Learnt from Past UN Assistance

Prior to the UN Secretary-General Reform proposals of 1997, the UN agencies in Mauritius operated in a disparate way, each intervening separately according to its specific mandate. This resulted in some weaknesses whereby duplications arose, resources were dispersed, and the impact of interventions was diminished because of a lack of co-ordination. With the UN Secretary General's call for reforms, it became relevant to streamline and harmonise UN interventions in Mauritius, as this was seen to bring greater coherence to the UN presence, particularly vis-à-vis the national counterparts, and greater impact of actions undertaken.

As changes have occurred on the social, political, and economic fronts, the nature of UN assistance in Mauritius has evolved to be in line with the new priority needs. Thus, while in the past it was relevant to support the establishment of key institutions and structures, with full material and financial support required for these institutions, provide support to long term academic training of Mauritians, and supply long term international expertise to create national capacities, today this type of assistance is no longer feasible. Given the level of human development in Mauritius, as well as limited UN resources provided to Mauritius as a medium income country, the thrust of UN intervention would be more appropriate in strengthening existing human capacities and institutions, thereby utilising the human competencies which are available, and providing short term external assistance only in areas where national capacities do not exist. Furthermore, to maximise the cost-effectiveness of UN interventions, the UN system will support exposure of Mauritius to best practices and experiences available elsewhere. The UNDAF is thus an instrument to further enhance the outcome of programmes and activities in Mauritius, and leverage the UN presence in the country.

1.3 The UNDAF Preparation Process

The UNDAF Mauritius was formulated to bring greater coherence to the UN programme of assistance. It seeks to provide a framework for UN system co-operation and collaboration with Government and the Mauritian society in general. It has been developed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of UN operations in Mauritius by bringing about greater synergy in action, and demonstrating the collective impact of UN system presence in Mauritius. It is also intended to initiate a strategic process for forging effective partnership among UN organisations and with national stakeholders and other development partners.

The preparation of the UNDAF was made possible by the full and active participation of the UN system organizations based locally and regionally but having programme activities in Mauritius, the government, civil society, NGOs and the private sector. The UNDAF preparation process was launched in the April 2000 workshop which gathered 4 Resident and 7 non Resident UN agencies, the government as well as the IBRD, and with the involvement of a resource person provided by UN Staff colleague through UNDGO as well as a national facilitator. During the workshop, the CCA document was validated, a mission statement for the UN in Mauritius was formulated, a consensus was reached on 4 focus areas of UNDAF, and directional objectives defined for each focus area.

The substantive issues addressed by the UNDAF were guided by the findings of the Mauritius CCA, the national priorities spelt out in the Mauritius National Long Term Perspective Study (Vision 2020), the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 1999-2005, and the recent speech of the President of the Republic of Mauritius at the Opening of the New National Assembly on 3rd October 2000, the goals set out by relevant UN Global Conferences and International Conventions, as well as UN comparative advantages. Linkages with mechanisms such as the CAS and the CDF were not sought as the activities of the World Bank in Mauritius will be determined after the CAS is formulated. The format adopted for the UNDAF is in line with the UNDAF guidelines issued in April 1999.

A participatory approach was adopted right through the process which brought UN agencies and other partners into a workshop to agree on four strategic areas for UNDAF, for which directional objectives were developed. These were:

1. Social Development and Drug Abuse/Trafficking
2. Health and Population, HIV/AIDS
3. Environment
4. Human Rights/Gender and Child Rights.

The mission statement of the United Nations in Mauritius was formulated during the same workshop as follows:

The UN Country Team reaffirms its faith in fundamental human rights, in the equal rights of men and women and their contribution to promote social and economic progress towards a better quality of life for the Mauritian citizen, through their contribution to health, environment and social development.

Following the April 2000 workshop, comprehensive terms of reference for UNDAF preparation were elaborated by the office of the Resident Coordinator, circulated for comments to all parties including resident and non resident UN agencies, IBRD, and the government. The Terms of reference outlined key activities to be carried out, the specific roles to be played by various parties in the formulation process (by UN country team, thematic groups, steering committee, national consultants), the time frame for various steps of UNDAF preparation and the mechanism for monitoring progress in the UNDAF preparation (steering committee, Government, national consultants). Based on the terms of reference endorsed by all the parties, UN agencies, ministries, NGO, civil society and the private sector were asked to confirm their participation and provide names of their representatives in the thematic groups. All programme staff from resident UN agencies participated in the UNDAF thematic groups.

Thematic groups were constituted for each of the four UNDAF focus areas, with a UN agency taking the lead of each group. Thematic groups included UN agencies, Government, NGOs, the private sector and civil society. Each group, comprising 12 to 14 people, analysed its specific Strategic Area as defined by the CCA in relation to national needs and priorities, agreed on key development issues of intervention, and proposed goals and objectives of UN assistance. The groups also recommended co-operation

strategies to be adopted by the UN system to achieve the proposed goals and objectives, and made proposals for mechanisms to monitor and implement UNDAF. Concept papers were produced by each of the thematic groups, and these formed the basis for discussion at the UNDAF workshop at which goals, objectives and co-operation strategies, as well as UNDAF implementation and monitoring mechanisms were harmonized. The process of consultations through 4 thematic groups and workshops involving UN agencies, government, civil society, the private sector, and NGOs proved to be an effective mechanism that helped develop mutual understanding and collective commitment to move forward in developing a unified UN response, through partnership with national stakeholders. In addition to consultations and workshops, written inputs to the UNDAF were received from the 4 resident UN agencies and 10 non-resident UN agencies (UNESCO, UNFPA, ILO, UNIDO, FAO, IMO, UNDCP, UNAIDS, UNEP and IFAD) as well as the IBRD, the five key ministries involved in the UNDAF, and the UNDGO.

During the UNDAF harmonisation workshop, the UN Country Team and other stakeholders, including Government, private sector and NGOs, narrowed down the focus of collective UN action, bearing in mind the development challenges and the opportunities that exist for the UN System to make a meaningful contribution. Intensive dialogue led to the identification of three such challenges, namely (a) Social Development, (b) Health and Population, HIV/AIDS and (c) Environment. Special effort was made to integrate, throughout the framework of assistance, crosscutting concerns, especially those related to gender and child rights.

These identified development challenges are not to be exclusive goals of UN activity in Mauritius for the next three years. Every UN organisation will continue to have further goals specific to its mandate. The pursuit of common UNDAF goals is intended to enhance the effectiveness of each organisation and significantly contribute to the priorities of Mauritius in the development process.

A rights-based approach has been adopted in the formulation of the UNDAF. The rights of the individual to be respected in various fields, particularly with regard to vulnerable groups such as women and children, have been highlighted throughout.

Most importantly, emphasis was placed during the discussion on those areas of intervention identified in the CCA,

- (a) which represent opportunities for increased co-operation both within the UN system and between the UN system and other development partners (the government, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders)
- (b) where there is co-ordinated follow-up to UN conferences and support for the implementation of international conventions
- (c) which secure a key role for the UN system in development co-operation with the country
- (d) which increase and demonstrate the collective impact of UN system interventions in Mauritius

The UNDAF steering committee chaired by the Resident Coordinator met regularly to monitor progress in the UNDAF preparation, reviewing documents and comments as they are received before providing feedback and guidance to the formulation team. Subsequently, the finalised UNDAF was formally presented to the Government of Mauritius in November 2000, at a consultation meeting chaired by the Minister of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs. Following this consultation, a Cabinet Note was prepared and submitted to the Council of Ministers to secure Government approval and acceptance of the Framework. The UNDAF Mauritius was officially approved by the Council of Ministers on 22 December 2000.

1.4 Lessons Learnt from the UNDAF Exercise

The lessons learned from the preparation process are as follows:

The document received from UNDGO on «lessons learned from UNDAF pilot countries» served as a useful tool for our exercise. The support of a resource person provided by UN staff colleague through UNDGO as well as guidance received from UNDGO throughout the exercise was very instrumental in moving the process forward. The involvement in the UNDAF exercise of 3 members of the UN country team and of two former senior UN staff on retirement in Mauritius who had participated in the formulation of UNDAF Madagascar, Kenya, Romania and Cote d'Ivoire, was of tremendous help in moving the process forward. The full involvement at the early stages of the UNDAF formulation of both resident and non resident UN agencies, as well as national stakeholders and the participatory approach adopted reinforced the commitment of all parties to participate in the consultations through workshops, consultative meetings, email and written inputs, and facilitated the validation of the UNDAF working documents. The World Bank (non-resident) which intends to prepare its CAS in the course of 2001 participated in the CCA and UNDAF by electronically providing inputs to both documents and by participating in the CCA validation workshop which also launched the UNDAF process and defined its main parameters. This was also true for ten other non-resident UN Agencies who did participate electronically by providing inputs right from the start and throughout the exercise, and most of which physically participated in the three consultative workshops that took place in year 2000.

However, a number of constraints in preparing the document must be recognized. The time constraint was the major problem. In the absence of a UN Resident Coordinator for one year, the CCA process was suspended during that whole year. With one year delay in the CCA/UNDAF formulation exercise, two UN Agencies started preparing their new Country Programmes covering 2001-2003 before the UNDAF was finalised in order to comply with their respective Headquarters' programme cycle deadline for submission of the draft. However, these country programmes used as basis the findings of the CCA, as well as the strategic focus areas and other key elements already identified for the UNDAF. This situation is inevitably inconsistent with the ideological sequence of the programming instrument, but could not be avoided, given the circumstances. The process was revitalized in September 1999 with the arrival of a new UN RC, leaving little time to finalize both CCA and UNDAF before the end of year 2000. Given the limited presence of UN agencies in Mauritius, the tight schedule and staffing constraints linked to the size of small country offices, the UNCT (UN Country Team) decided to use the services of national consultants provided by De Chazal du Mée in order to accelerate the preparation of the document and guarantee its quality.

It is to be emphasized that while the support of national consultants from De Chazal du Mée constituted a key factor, the management and the drive of the UNDAF process remain with the UN country team, thereby ensuring active involvement of all parties concerned while paving the way for a service oriented exercise. The present UNDAF document is owned by all parties involved, in the sense that it is the result of elements (goals of assistance of UN Mauritius, goals and objectives of UNDAF and co-operation strategies) defined in the four Thematic Groups which were very representative of the Government, civil society, NGOs, private sector and the United Nations. The concept papers derived from the Thematic Groups were revised to take into account written comments from all parties and were validated at the workshop that gathered UN Agencies (resident and non-resident) and national stakeholders. In order to secure endorsement of the framework by the policymakers, two consultations between the UNCT and key senior policy-makers involved in the strategic focus areas of the UNDAF took place to agree on the

content of the document, its relevance to the key national priorities of the newly-elected Government administration and confirm partnership.

1.5 Development Challenges

The transformation of Mauritius from a low-income to a middle-income country in the course of a single generation has been based on an exceptional record of economic success. Between 1970 and 1995, the economy grew by an average of 5.6 per cent a year. The highest growth rate recorded was about 7% during 1985-89, reaching a peak of 8.3% in 1987. By the end of the 1980s, Mauritius was no longer a low wage economy. Per capita income at the end of the 1990s had reached \$3,600. The economy in 1998 grew at 5.8%. In 1999, due to severe drought which adversely affected the sugar industry, the second pillar of the country, the growth rate for that particular year was 2.6%.

In general, Mauritius has made tremendous improvements with regard to satisfaction of lower level basic needs of the population. The country has graduated to the group of upper middle-income countries as per World Bank classification. In the Human Development Report 2000, Mauritius ranked 71st among 174 countries, with a UN Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.761, and among the countries having achieved medium human development.

There have been enormous strides made in health and education in Mauritius. The country has a fairly long and well-established positive track record in its commitment to the Welfare State and to the respect of human rights. Mauritius is signatory to most of the international conventions and treaties in this field and is committed to further consolidate the human rights of each citizen. There is a very large and actively engaged civil society at the level of NGOs, service clubs and other social organisations as well as a very vigorous independent press.

Mauritius is a true multi-party democratic state based on the rule of law. The electoral system in the country works well. Indeed, Mauritius possesses appropriate machinery for managing the electoral processes at high levels of performance, although certain weaknesses remain. The government has strongly indicated its intention to reform the electoral system to ensure fairer representation. The judiciary is independent.

Nonetheless, the encouraging trends of the 1980s and 1990s have met with major setbacks in the recent years. Social inequalities and deprivation in the form of poverty and social exclusion are beginning to appear. According to the last Household Budget Survey 1996/1997, more than 14.5% of households are living below the poverty line, defined as 50% of median household expenditure. Rising cost of labour, erosion of the protected international markets due to gradual effects of globalisation, liberalisation and increasing competition with other countries have been some of the current brakes on economic development. Liberal economic policies relying on the market do not address sufficiently the distribution aspect of income and wealth. The increase in unemployment in recent years accompanied by inflation has contributed to a loss of purchasing power, especially affecting women. Very low income housing needs are not being satisfactorily met by the current housing schemes which have moved away from the policy of social housing to cost recovery and affordability principles. There has been an upsurge in the number of squatters in the last few years which indicates the seriousness of the problem.

Equality of access to employment opportunities and the disparity in education with regard to quality of schools at primary and secondary level throughout the country, apart from being fundamental human rights of all individuals, are major potential causes of tension and conflict in a multi-ethnic society like

Mauritius, where there is still high level of ethnic concentration in some sectors of the employment market. There is a need to address this issue by expanding educational opportunities and at the same time introducing appropriate institutional or legal protection against discriminatory practices with regard to employment. Also, there are some major constraints to achieving gender equality in the labour market. There is still a glass ceiling at higher levels of the occupational structure and at lower levels, women are still concentrated in the low wage and low skill sectors.

It could be said that the universality of access to primary health care has been achieved. The small size of the island and comprehensive transport network, as well as the decentralisation of services have been the major facilitating factors. However, there are still some problem areas, such as Infant Mortality Rates (the Infant Mortality Rate – IMR - after experiencing a dramatic fall from 32.3 per thousand in 1980 to 18 per thousand in 1994, has remained stagnant at 19.4 per thousand since 1995) and the high incidence of low birth weight babies. A rapidly ageing population, changing life styles and more women entering the labour market are leading to increasing pressure on health services. There has also been a dramatic rise in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), namely cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension as well as cancer. Problems resulting from the emergence of NCDs could be largely attributed to rapid industrialisation which has brought in its wake unhealthy lifestyles and eating habits.

Mauritius has been largely successful in reducing population growth rate, which dropped from 3.12% per annum during the period 1952 to 1962 to 1.97% for the period 1962 to 1972 and to 0.79% from 1983 to 1990. This dramatic adjustment in fertility was mainly the result of postponement of age of marriage and the continuous increase in contraceptive prevalence rate. However, there have recently been some worrying signs of a shift from more reliable to less reliable contraceptive methods as well as a rise in abortion rates. It is estimated that there could be as many cases of abortions as there are live births over the period of one year.

Although the problem of HIV/AIDS has not reached the epidemic proportion that it has in some other countries, there are already some worrying signals especially with respect to poverty stricken regions, where there is an increasing problem of commercial sex activities, especially among the youngsters. Moreover, the issue of adolescent reproductive health is a matter for concern, given the virtual absence of sex and life skills education in schools.

Drug abuse, which is related to poverty and social deprivation, is becoming a serious problem in Mauritius, although there is evidence that it affects all social classes and regions. Mauritius reported a 0.83 annual prevalence of opiates abuse as a percentage of the population aged 15 and above (Global Illicit Trends, 2000 – ODCCP). The high rate of injecting drug use is particularly worrisome, especially in the light of the HIV/AIDS problem. Mauritius has not yet ratified the 1988 Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Subs which is one of the three main Conventions on Drug Control.

Considerable progress has been made with regard to the respect and protection of children's rights. However, some major issues have to be addressed, notably the issue of low performance and high drop out rates in schools in deprived regions. The fierce competition at the end of the primary cycle is a cause of major concern in view of its negative impact on the daily lives of children. The number of reported cases of child abuse is on the rise and it is estimated that 15,000 children may be in need of protection. Commercial sex exploitation of adolescents has been revealed in a recently published report and the problem is still to be addressed by the public authorities. There is probably a gross underestimation of the actual number of disabled children and a significant number of them are still excluded from schools. The most important barrier to inclusive education is the general negative perception towards disabled children, which reflects unfriendly attitudes and habits in schools and in the education system as a whole.

Environmental issues are of paramount importance in an island with a land area of only 1865 km² and a population of 1.12 million, giving a density of 620 people per km². The main economic activities are in agriculture, industry and tourism, all of which are concentrated in a very small land area, and compete for limited land resources, constituting important risks for the physical environment, especially to the water ways. The fresh water and marine environment is threatened by pollution from all of the three main economic activities. The severe drought which occurred last year, with dramatic economic repercussions, brought home rather brutally the critical importance of water resource management. There is an urgent need to maximise storage of water and raise awareness of the economic value of water in the population at large.

The island of Rodrigues faces some special problems in this context. Economic activity has remained limited to small-scale peasant agricultural activities on land and sea. Rodrigues has over the years become increasingly dependent on Mauritius as the island has not been able to generate sufficient income from its agricultural activities which have been steadily declining as a result of droughts, soil erosion and lack of water supply. Lack of employment opportunities in the island has led to a constant migration flow of young men and women to Mauritius to seek jobs in industry and domestic service. The island of Rodrigues ranks at the bottom of the Relative Development Index (1996) developed by the Central Statistical Office at 0.29 compared to 0.64 for the island of Mauritius. In 1997, it was estimated that 30% of households earn less than Rs1000 (USD25) which is barely subsistence level. It should be noted that there is a high proportion of female headed households in the island and the percentage earning less than Rs1000 was even higher, namely 63.6%. Other poverty related issues in the island are low educational performance, high school dropout rates, unemployment and illiteracy. These problems are more acutely experienced in large female-headed households. There are very few employment opportunities for women in the formal sector of the economy. The serious droughts which affected agriculture drove men out of this sector towards more secure government employment and this led to a further reduction of agricultural output. The continued engagement of women in small-scale peasant farming activities in very difficult conditions has maintained a certain level of food security in the island.

1.6 Government Interventions to Address National Needs and Priorities

The key issues identified, where it is believed that UN intervention can be meaningful, are in line with national needs and priorities. These priorities have been clearly outlined in the Address by the President of the Republic of Mauritius at the opening of the first session of the Third National Assembly of the Republic of Mauritius in October, 2000. The priorities spelt out in the Address are very focused and englobe those outlined in the Vision 2020 document as well as the National Strategy for Sustainable Development, 1999-2005.

The priorities spelt out for Social Development, Health and Environment are summarised below.

Social Development

- Government is aware of the threats posed to social peace and to the cohesion of our society in recent years and is determined to further consolidate national unity and promote social integration. A global strategy will be devised to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Welfare State. Priority will be given to the provision of high quality social services relevant to the changing needs of society. An Action Plan will be prepared to address the pressing problems of social deprivation and poverty. Adequate human and financial resources will be made available for the fight against poverty and the rehabilitation of deprived areas.
- Human Resource Development remains one of the cornerstones of our development strategy. Government is adopting an integrated approach to Skills Development, training and productivity with the creation of a new Ministry. A National Training Strategy will be formulated with a view to upgrading the knowledge and skills of our labour force and to promote employability.
- Government is determined to ensure that the fundamental democratic principles of equality of rights, equality of opportunities and equality of treatment for all Mauritians are upheld in all spheres of social and economic activities in our country. An Equal Opportunities Commission will be instituted to ensure respect for these principles with regard in particular to employment practices both in the public and private sectors.
- Government will strive relentlessly to ensure that women enjoy equal opportunities and equal rights within society and that the gender perspective is fully incorporated in decision making at all levels. A Sex Discrimination Bill will be introduced and existing legislation reviewed to eliminate all remnants of gender discrimination. Special attention will be given to the laws governing divorce, custody of children and alimony as well as the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. Government will support and encourage Non Governmental Organisations working with women.
- The need to uphold children's rights as stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the welfare of children will be a foremost concern of Government. A regulatory framework for kindergartens will be provided and training for child carers encouraged. An Early Childhood Development Programme will be introduced.
- Government will strengthen the child protection services and support the setting up of a National Children's Bureau.
- Government is conscious of the tremendous damage caused to society by the drug problem. It will wage a ceaseless battle against drug trafficking. A comprehensive campaign of prevention targeting the vulnerable social groups will be carried out in co-operation with non-governmental organisations. The law will be consolidated to provide for more severe punishment for drug traffickers and dealers. Provision will also be made for more effective co-operation with international agencies.
- Government will set up a Narcotics Bureau to monitor and support all organisations engaged in the fight against drugs. More centres will be set up for the treatment, education and rehabilitation of drug addicts.
- The Police, Customs and Immigration Services will be provided with modern and sophisticated technological facilities to prevent and detect the introduction of drugs into Mauritius.

Health

- Government is aware that fundamental reforms of our health sector are long overdue. It has become imperative to develop a new health strategy to provide for better services.
- The decentralisation of our health services will be accelerated with the setting up of five Regional Health Directorates in Mauritius and one in Rodrigues. Arrangements will be made to offer a 24-hour service and emergency care in Area Health Centres. Day care service will be introduced in hospitals.
- A Family Doctor Service will be introduced. Particular attention will be given to the availability of training facilities for students willing to become medical practitioners. The infrastructure and teaching capacity of the Nursing School will be reinforced to provide for training in basic as well as specialised skills. Continuous medical training will be promoted.
- A National Institute of Health will be set up to promote efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the Health Sector. In order to provide a better service to the public, a National Survey of Patient Experience will be conducted, a Health Complaints Bureau established and a properly equipped Information Desk will be set up in each hospital.
- The health infrastructure will be further improved by the construction of specialised hospitals for children and psychiatric patients whilst the existing Dr. Jeetoo and Souillac Hospitals will be completely rebuilt and the whole health service will be computerised.

Environment

- In order to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century, for the attainment of our environmental policy goals, Government will introduce a new Environment Protection Bill. A rational land use policy will be established to ensure successful environmental land management while respecting and protecting the environmentally sensitive areas.
- A National Cleaner Production Centre will be set up to encourage access to green technology. Fiscal incentives will also be provided to encourage environmentally friendly initiatives.
- The protection of coastal zone, which is a vital resource for tourism, will be high on the agenda of the Government. The Integrated Coastal Zone Management concept will be improved and put into practice.
- A well-structured "Police de l'Environnement" will be set up to ensure compliance with environmental laws. Legislation will be revamped to ensure the effectiveness of enforcement.
- A national environmental sensitization campaign will be launched with the participation of all stakeholders in order to inculcate among the public an environment friendly attitude.
- Government will review the overall policy of the development of the water sector and the status and the role of the Central Water Authority. The main objective will be the provision of good quality drinking-water on a 24 hour basis, an enhanced leak detection campaign, acquisition of appropriate technology and the creation of a regulatory body.
- Government will accelerate the implementation of the Sewerage Master Plan with a view to an increased coverage of the network and its extension to the peripheral areas of Port Louis, Plaines Wilhems, Flic-en-Flac, Mahebourg, Goodlands and Flacq.
- Government will give urgent attention to the improvement of the water situation in Rodrigues. Particular attention will also be given to land management with special emphasis on the fight against soil erosion. The Agricultural, Fisheries and Tourism Sectors as well as the airport, port and the road infrastructure will be further developed.

In fact, the Government of Mauritius has already taken a number of important initiatives in all the areas identified by UNDAF, namely social development, health and the environment.

Some important Government initiatives have been taken in the field of poverty where a number of poverty alleviation programmes have been introduced since the mid-1990s in several Ministries, namely in the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development. There are also a number of non-Governmental initiatives which have been taken to fight poverty. In 1995, a Marshall Plan for the Development of Deprived Regions was prepared whereby approximately 60 projects were identified, covering sewerage, supply of drinking water, upgrading of schools and infrastructural development. Also, in the 1995/1996 Budget, a new item entitled “Contribution pour la lutte contre l’exclusion”, managed by the Trust Fund for Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups, was created. The proposed areas for assistance by the Fund cover a wide range of issues including poverty, hunger and malnutrition, mortality and morbidity, social discrimination and exclusion, disability and family stability. A more efficient co-ordination between the different programmes and agencies involved in poverty alleviation, both governmental and non-governmental, could yield much better results.

On the issue of drug control, a National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers (NATRESA) was set up by an Act passed in 1996. A large number of non-governmental organisations involved in preventive programmes of substance abuse are affiliated to NATRESA. However, a good number of these NGOs are not very active. On the other hand, there are five Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres in Mauritius and one such Centre in Rodrigues, which are partly funded by NATRESA. In so far as the treatment of acute cases for alcoholics is concerned, facilities are available at Brown Sequard Hospital and Regional and District Hospitals where a certain number of beds are earmarked for such cases. A project to open a new Detoxification Centre is under way and is expected to become operational shortly. With regards to reinsertion, something is being done for ex-prisoners and to a certain extent by the NATRESA-funded NGOs but a lot remains to be done in this sphere. To contain the drug problem more effectively, the new National Assembly unanimously voted and passed the Dangerous Drugs Act.

In the field of health, Government has adopted a policy of decentralisation of health services. Although health indicators are generally satisfactory except for recently stagnant infant mortality rates, there are new emerging areas such as HIV/AIDS, abortion and NCDs which should be studied and monitored very closely. Since the 1960s, Government has been strongly committed to family planning and the policies and measures taken in this field have since then succeeded in averting the Malthusian trap scenario. The Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare (MWRCDFW) has introduced a number of measures in line with national priorities and international conventions to promote women and child rights. A Gender Action Plan which identifies strategic areas for intervention has also been prepared. However, a great deal more needs to be done.

In the area of environment, the government has produced a two-stage National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) to cover a period of ten years. The National Environment Strategy for the next ten years is as follows: to follow the principles of sustainable development by providing environmental services, encourage responsible environmental practices and enforce appropriate environmental standards in order to safeguard health and welfare, conserve the country’s natural heritage and enhance the quality of life of all the people of Mauritius. The NEAP1 paved the way for the comprehensive Environmental Protection Act (EPA) in 1991 which provided the Ministry of Environment with the legal framework for environmental protection of the whole country. The NEAP2 pays special attention to the development of the Island of Rodrigues. However, a great deal still needs to be done, especially at the level of the understanding of processes and organisational requirements for the successful implementation of policies and action plans in this field.

In the area of biodiversity, government has initiated the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which will be available in 2001.

Specific measures taken by Government in the areas where further action is being recommended will be elaborated in greater detail in the later sections of the report.

1.7 Contribution of the UN System

The UN system intends to make meaningful contribution in the areas identified in Section 3 of the present document. The contribution of the UN to meet the development challenges facing the country should not be assessed only in terms of financial resources but much more in terms of: its contribution to promoting new ideas, research initiatives, policy dialogue, advocacy, sharing of best practices, experiences and lessons learnt, facilitating access to data and research based on its long co-operation in the country. The UN system operates on a global basis and has the advantage of a worldwide country office network. The system can offer advice to adhere to international standards, practices and international conventions. It can also offer technical assistance, and technical backstopping to address development gaps identified by government. The UN can also play an important facilitating and catalytic role in joint initiatives between the public and private sectors of the economy and civil society towards the construction of a common platform to respond to the development challenges facing the country.

Furthermore, at the regional level, the UN system will actively support and strengthen the position of Mauritius so that the country continues to play a leading role in regional affairs, including issues relating to conflict resolution, drug trafficking, HIV/AIDS, disaster management, trade, economic integration and furthering the SIDS agenda at the regional and international level. The UN system will also assist the Government to respond to the pressure from globalisation by promoting South-South co-operation and transfer of successful experiences to the country.

2. Goal of Assistance

The one overarching goal of assistance of the UN system in Mauritius is: *“To attain the highest level of standard of living and quality of life for all within the framework of human rights”*. This overarching goal captures the combination of concerns cutting across all the key strategic areas identified, namely social development, health and the environment. This broad goal also provides an appropriate parameter within which a number of stakeholders could collaborate taking into account cross cutting concerns such as the respect of human rights, environmental sustainability, gender equality, poverty alleviation and child rights. It also corresponds to current national concerns and priorities as spelt out in the Presidential opening address to the newly elected Parliament on 3rd October 2000, in the National Long Term Perspective Study (Vision 2020), the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 1999-2005, and the goals set by the relevant UN Global Conferences, namely the World Summit on Social Development in 1995.

3. UNDAF Objectives of Assistance and Co-operation Strategies

To achieve the UNDAF goal, objectives of assistance and corresponding co-operation strategies have been identified. *The co-operation strategies identified describe how the UN system, in partnership with other development partners (the Government of Mauritius, the civil society and the private sector) proposes to achieve the objectives set.*

The table below summarises the various objectives of assistance and co-operation strategies for Social Development, Health and Population, HIV/AIDS and Environment. A more detailed analysis is provided in sections 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 respectively.

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
<p>(A) To alleviate poverty with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups including women, children and the elderly, thereby promoting the right of all to an adequate standard of living</p> <p>(B) To promote social cohesion through support to CBOs and other grassroots organisations involved in community work and neighbourhood activities to consolidate local community life</p>	<p>The UN system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in diversifying the livelihood systems of the poor • assist in sensitising all stakeholders on poverty through policy dialogue • support upstream strategic reflections and promote advocacy on key policy issues which have an impact on poverty alleviation, such as competitiveness, employment, and governance, so that national capacities to address these issues are reinforced • assist in the promotion of a more co-ordinated approach to poverty alleviation efforts as well as support and strengthen co-ordination at all levels and between each level (grass roots, civil society, private sector, government) to ensure two way communication channels • advocate and assist in the development of methodologies to integrate gender into poverty reduction strategies as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms • support the development of gender data profiles, indicators and gender-related research
<p>(C) To promote equal opportunities equitable access and treatment with regard to employment, resources and training, with particular emphasis on enhancing women's decision making capabilities at all levels</p>	<p>The UN system will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist through advocacy and policy advice for the implementation of CEDAW and ratification of Optional Protocol and assist through advocacy for follow up to Beijing Platform for Action • assist in increasing women's decision-making capacity through training • assist through advocacy and policy advice for ratification of international labour standards related to non-discrimination.

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
(D) To promote every child's right to protection, care and optimal development	<p>The UN system will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist in targeting the most vulnerable children • advocate for better understanding and dissemination of the CRC leading to fulfilment of children's rights • advocate for the use of a human rights-based approach to policy and programming for children • support training programmes for persons working with children • provide material and technical support to NGOs active in promotion of child development
(E) To reduce substance abuse as well as demand for and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while protecting the most vulnerable groups, especially youth Committee and children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist through advocacy and policy advice for the ratification of the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances • assist in establishing the Inter-ministerial Drug Control • support the rapid assessment of the extent of drug abuse in the country, the formulation of a national drug control strategy and master plan, as well as the implementation of drug abuse prevention programmes targeting groups most at risk within the community at large and in the workplace • support programmes for treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion
(F) To assist in identifying and addressing the social determinants of vulnerabilities to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, thereby promoting the right to information and services in the field of HIV/AIDS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN system will support research/ assessment of social determinants of HIV/AIDS, and assist in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into social programmes

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	HEALTH AND POPULATION HIV/AIDS HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
(A) To increase health system performance through effective participation of all stakeholders and strengthening of the scientific foundations of health policy with emphasis on primary health care improvement of health.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UN system will support the improvement of health system performance by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assisting in policy and legislation review • supporting institutional reform 2. The UN system will support medical and health research to facilitate evidenced-based policy
(B) To support the promotion of positive health seeking behaviour, including sexual and reproductive health, with particular emphasis on children adolescents and youth.	<p>The UN system will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support IEC (Information, education and Commination) by assisting in the development of an appropriate and effective national health education strategy 2. Assist to expand and sustain health promotion activities in the areas of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), Maternal and Child Health (MHC), HIV/AIDS and non Communicable diseases (NCDs). 3. Facilitate exchange information and best practices. 4. Promote optimal utilisation of appropriate IEC tools and techniques. 5. Support programmes to assess the shift from reliable to less reliable contraceptive methods and issues like teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation and infertility. 6. Support programmes to address the issue of abortion by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting in a full assessment of the problem by identifying the major causal factors leading to women resorting to abortion. • Assisting in the formulation of appropriate policies.
(C) To assist in the early prevention of new HIV infections and provide care and support to those infected and affected.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UN system will support the development and facilitate HIV/AIDS Plan within the Human rights framework. 2. The UN system will contribute in the area of HIV/AIDS in the following manner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve people living with HIV/AIDS in programmes designed to raise awareness on the causes and implications of these diseases. • Support to mainstream HIV/AIDS into actual programmes • Assist in IEC programmes • Assist in care and support of those affected • Assist in improving epidemiological surveillance of HIV, AIDS, STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) and Hepatitis C virus (HCV), in line with UNAIDS second generation surveillance system. • Assist in reducing mother to child transmission • assist strengthen blood transfusion safety • Help strengthen existing inter-regional co-operation.

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	HEALTH AND POPULATION HIV/AIDS HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
(D) To support every child's right to survival and good health	The UN system will: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Support studies to determine the causes of high incidence of low birth weight babies and stagnant infant mortality rates2. Assist in programmes for the promotion of breastfeeding, paying attention to existing institutions constraints3. Strengthen community-based primary health service through upgrading of Area and community Health Centres

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	ENVIRONMENT HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
<p>(A) To support sustainable management of natural resources including Integrated Coastal Zone Management, water resource management (with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands) and Conservation and protection of biodiversity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UN system will assist in strengthening the existing Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN system will support improvement and harmonisation of legislative framework through capacity building, advocacy and awareness raising (monitoring) 2. The UN system will assist in Water Resource Management with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting the government in maximising storage and distribution of water • supporting awareness raising on the economic value of water • supporting community rehabilitation of forest water catchment areas in Rodrigues 3. The UN system will promote soil conservation and erosion control activities in Rodrigues 4. The UN system will assist in the conservation and protection of biodiversity in the following manner: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assist in the establishment, extension, consolidation and effective management of marine and terrestrial protected areas • assist in awareness raising and institutional capacity building on “biosecurity” (prevention of introduction and of establishment of alien species) • support community involvement in biodiversity conservation and/or sustainable use of natural resource • consolidate, strengthen and extend the conservation of native forest ecosystem (fauna & flora) • support education and awareness raising in biodiversity conservation 5. The UN system will support sustainable environmental development through its assistance in the artisanal fisheries sub-sector in Rodrigues

OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	ENVIRONMENT HIGH LEVEL AND SPECIFIC COOPERATION STRATEGIES
<p>(B) To support solid waste management cleaner production, emission reduction and prevention of pollution of fresh water and marine environments</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The UN system will support the implementation of International Conventions on marine pollution prevention 2. The UN system will promote environmental sensitisation of civil society, including the media 3. The UN system will promote Cleaner Production by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supporting the strengthening of zoning policy • encouraging the adoption of technologies which are environment-friendly • promoting horizontal integration among areas of activities which are high polluters 4. The UN system will support R & D by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting awareness of up to date and sustainable • technology (adaptive transfer of technology) • encouraging partnership building within the same industry • assisting to enhance training in order to promote effective R&D

3.1 Social Development and Drug Abuse

In the context of Social Development, the development assistance of the UN System will focus on the following objectives:

- Objective A:** To alleviate poverty with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups especially women, children and the elderly, thereby promoting the right of all to an adequate standard of living
- Objective B:** To promote social cohesion through support to CBOs involved in community work and neighbourhood activities to consolidate local community life
- Objective C:** To promote equal opportunities, equitable access and treatment with regard to employment, resources and training with particular emphasis on enhancing women's decision making capabilities at all levels
- Objective D:** To promote every child's right to protection, care and optimal development
- Objective E:** To reduce substance abuse as well as demand for and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while protecting the most vulnerable groups, especially youth and children
- Objective F:** To assist in identifying and addressing the social determinants of vulnerabilities to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, thereby promoting the right to information and services in the field of HIV/AIDS

The UN System will adopt a three-pronged co-operation strategy to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, as follows:

1. To contribute in the areas of information, advocacy, communication, research & evaluation
2. To provide technical support to ensure co-ordination and networking
3. To improve community empowerment and capacity building

The more specific strategies of intervention with regard to

- Objective A:** To alleviate poverty with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups including women, children and the elderly
- Objective B:** To promote social cohesion through support to CBOs and other grass roots organisations involved in community work and neighbourhood activities to consolidate local community life.

are as follows:

❖ **The UN System will assist in diversifying the livelihood systems of the poor**

The UN system will stimulate diversified and sustainable economic development for low-income households in support of the government's comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy.

❖ **The UN System will assist in sensitising all stakeholders on the issue of poverty through policy dialogue and advocacy**

Although there has been growing awareness of the issue of poverty in the last couple of years, there are still vastly diverging views about the nature and extent of poverty. The Government as well as other stakeholders have taken a number of initiatives in this field, but unless the problem is properly understood and there is consensus on the issue, intervention programmes might lead to confusion and even division in the country. There is a need for a shared vision of the problem. The UN system will contribute by giving support to the development of a common understanding and a shared vision of the problem of poverty by encouraging and supporting policy dialogue through advocacy.

❖ **The UN system will support upstream strategic reflections and promote advocacy on key policy issues which have an impact on poverty alleviation, such as competitiveness, employment, and governance, so that national capacities to address these issues are reinforced**

Furthermore, the UN system will intervene at a downstream level and address the empowerment of civil society at grassroots level, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) and NGOs in general to take care of their development through participatory approaches.

❖ **The UN system will assist in the promotion of a more co-ordinated and coherent approach to poverty alleviation efforts as well as support and strengthen co-ordination at all levels and between each level (grass roots, civil society, private sector, government) to ensure two way communication channels**

Although the Government has shown very strong concern for the problem of poverty and social exclusion, interventions have been effected in a piece-meal and top-down manner. Given the multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral character of the phenomenon, actions have now been initiated by the newly elected Government to adopt a participatory approach whereby consultative exercises are conducted, engaging all stakeholders, grass root organisations, civil society, the private sector and government. The results of this consultation will form the basis for a global master plan to combat poverty in the country. In this context, the UN system will provide assistance for a more co-ordinated and coherent response to poverty alleviation. Moreover, the findings of many studies on poverty carried out so far have not been efficiently disseminated. It is important that a pro-active approach be adopted in order to raise awareness of the problem through information dissemination and advocacy. The UN system will also assist in the dissemination of such findings.

❖ **The UN system will advocate and assist in the development of methodologies to integrate gender into poverty reduction strategies, as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms**

In Mauritius, a significant proportion of women in deprived areas have either been abandoned by their husbands or are in an even worse situation in cases where husbands have drinking problems and tend to be violent. In many such cases, husbands' salaries never reach home at the end of the month. In deprived areas, this is leading to the adoption of livelihood strategies among a few women where the line between promiscuity, adultery and commercial sex work has become very blurred.

The UN system will support the development of a common gender approach to poverty reduction among all stakeholders to ensure that gender considerations are accounted for in any strategy or programme aimed at reducing poverty.

❖ **The UN system will support the development of gender data profiles, indicators and gender-related research**

There is a serious lack of gender disaggregated data in the country, which hampers effective policy/programme formulation. Although a number of studies have been carried out by students, academics and practitioners in the field of gender issue, much more remains to be done. The UN system can make a significant difference in this area by supporting the development of gender data profiles, indicators as well as gender-related research. The UN system can also make available technical assistance for the gender analysis of data and by encouraging the development and inclusion of new gender sensitive indicators. The identification of missing gender disaggregated data for effective policy formulation and planning is of critical importance in this process.

The more specific strategies of intervention with regard to:

Objective C: To promote equal opportunities, equitable access and treatment with regard to employment, resources and training with particular emphasis on enhancing women's decision making capabilities at all levels

are as follows:

❖ **The UN system will assist through advocacy and policy advice in the implementation of CEDAW and the ratification of Optional Protocol and assist through advocacy in the follow up to the Beijing Platform for Action**

The Government of Mauritius ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985. An impressive number of administrative and legal changes have been brought to empower women but there are still major constraints in the way of implementation of strategies and policies. The two major constraints are firstly the lack of appropriately trained human resources and secondly the lack of co-ordination and interaction between the different organisations and Ministries. The UN system has supported and will continue to support the numerous Government initiatives and actions based on the critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

❖ **The UN system will assist in increasing women's decision-making capacity through training**

The proportion of women engaged actively in the political process is very low. In fact, while many of them militate at a grassroots level and in election campaigns, very few are found in decision-making levels such as politbureaus and central committees. The UN system will assist in increasing women's decision-making capacity through support to sensitisation and training activities and other empowerment strategies to facilitate their integration at higher decision making levels.

❖ **The UN system will assist through advocacy and policy advice in the ratification of international labour standards related to non-discrimination**

Inequality in access to employment and treatment in the employment market is a major potential cause of tension in a country where there has been up to now fairly strong ethnic concentration in some sectors of the employment market. There is consensus in the country that an Equal Opportunity Act should be introduced urgently.

In 1998, member states of the ILO adopted a Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work which member states have undertaken to promote and realise. These conventions relate to Liberty of

Association, Elimination of forced labour, Elimination of child labour and Elimination of discrimination related to employment and occupation.

In Mauritius, the declaration concerns particularly three unratified conventions: No. 87 on Freedom of Association and No. 100 and 111 on equal remuneration and non-discrimination respectively. In the case of child labour, a key convention (No 182) on the worst forms of child labour was adopted in 1999.

In this context, the UN system will assist in policy advice and advocacy for the development of the legal framework for non-discrimination and for ratification of ILO Conventions 100 and 111. More specifically, the UN system will assist in policy advice for the elimination of wage discrimination based on sex.

The UN system will also provide technical support to reduce practices which lead to gender inequalities in employment through support to national dialogue on conditions of work and family responsibilities, in particular, work time flexibility.

The more specific strategies of intervention with regard to:

Objective D: To promote every child's right to protection, care and optimal development

are as follows:

❖ **The UN system will assist in targeting the most vulnerable children**

The report released recently on commercial sexual exploitation of children especially in deprived regions has been a shock to the population. It is believed that this is a growing problem which needs to be addressed very urgently. There are many other instances of juvenile vulnerability such as physical and mental disabilities that need to be addressed urgently, especially in more deprived regions. The UN system will assist in targeting the most vulnerable children, more specifically early childhood and adolescents, school drop outs, girls, the disabled and those from poor social strata.

❖ **The UN system will advocate for better understanding and dissemination of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) leading to fulfilment of children's rights**

Successive governments have demonstrated deep commitment to child rights issues and a number of amendments have been brought to the law in line with the provisions of the CRC. However, legislation does not cater for all the problems affecting children. Beyond legal protection, the exercise of child's rights can only become a reality if the general philosophy behind the CRC is understood and accepted by parents, teachers, and policy makers. It is also necessary to equip all stakeholders with the practical skills to operate within this new perspective. The UN system will promote understanding and dissemination of the CRC through advocacy and policy dialogue

❖ **The UN system will advocate for the use of a human rights-based approach to policy and programming for children**

The rights approach is still not well understood and more advocacy and explanation campaigns should be carried out at all levels.

The UN system will promote the rights-based approach in the reform of national legislation, policies and administrative policies as well as in the design of social development programmes through advocacy and policy dialogue.

❖ **The UN system will support training programmes for persons working with children**

The UN system will develop capacity at community and national institution level to enable duty-bearers to respect and fulfil their obligations towards children. The UN system will achieve this by strengthening the caring capacities of individuals working with children through greater access to information and training that upgrade their skills.

❖ **The UN system will provide material and technical support to NGOs active in promotion of child development**

The issue of childcare became a priority only recently in Mauritius when the traditional community based family structure started to weaken. The trend towards nuclearisation and especially the increasing isolation of the family from the community is creating serious childcare problems. In the last few years, government has started to address the issue of care of children under the age of 3 with the support of UNICEF. The UN system will support initiatives to strengthen community based childcare facilities.

The more specific strategies of intervention with regard to:

Objective E: To reduce substance abuse as well as demand for and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while protecting the most vulnerable groups, especially youth and children

are as follows:

❖ **The UN system will assist through advocacy and policy advice for the ratification of the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances**

❖ **The UN system will support the rapid assessment of the extent of drug abuse in the country, the formulation of a national drug control strategy and master plan, as well as the implementation of drug abuse prevention programmes targeting groups most at risk within the community at large and in the workplace**

❖ **The UN system will assist in establishing the Interministerial Drug Control Committee**

Mauritius has reported an annual prevalence rate of opiates abuse of 0,83% among the population aged 15 and plus (The Global Illicit Drug Trends, 1999 - ODCCP), a worrying level in spite of its relatively high cost. Out of a total population of some 1016 male prisoners, drug abusers accounted for 25.4%. The abuse of these substances seems to be occurring within most social classes, gender and ethnic groups, even the female participation is not spared. For example: the percentage of females drug abusers among a total of 48 female prisoners was 7.5%.

Drug abuse is therefore a serious public health issue, fuelled by the availability of the product, and its relatively low cost, even for the deprived. Added to alcohol abuse, it also becomes an economic issue, which is undermining productivity, competitiveness and the return on the considerable investment that the country has put in its most precious asset, namely its human resources.

Due to the increasing seriousness of the drug issue in the country, and the conviction that a unified UN system intervention could make a difference in supporting and strengthening national efforts to curb the increasing drug threat, Mauritius was selected by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination Subcommittee on Drug Control as one of nine countries to intensify inter-agency collaboration and to mainstream drug-related issues in sustainable human development programmes.

In this context, the UN system will:

- ☛ help to strengthen the capacity of the Inter-Ministerial Drug Control Committee
- ☛ provide assistance to develop a National Drug Control MasterPlan and support its implementation.
- ☛ support existing government institution, NGOs, CBOs working in this field

❖ **The UN system will support programmes for treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion**

The NATRESA (National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers) was set up by an Act passed in 1996. A large number of non-governmental organisations involved in preventive programmes of substance abuse are affiliated to NATRESA. However, a good number of these NGOs are not very active. On the other hand, there are five Treatment and Rehabilitation Centres in Mauritius and one such Centre in Rodrigues, which are partly funded by NATRESA. All these six Centres are quite active. However, Mauritius lacks the appropriate facilities and mechanisms for the treatment and rehabilitation of girls and women suffering from drug and substance abuse.

The UN system will therefore support programmes (including gender-sensitive programmes) for the treatment, rehabilitation and reinsertion of those requiring help through capacity building and advocacy.

The more specific strategies of intervention with regard to:

Objective F: To assist in identifying and addressing the social determinants of vulnerabilities to the HIV/AIDS epidemic

are as follows:

- ❖ **The UN system will support research / assessment of social determinants of HIV/AIDS, and assist in mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into social programmes**

3.2 Health and Population, HIV/AIDS

To promote the right of all to the highest attainable health, the development assistance of the UN System will focus on the following objectives:

Objective A: To increase health system performance through effective participation of all stakeholders and strengthening of the scientific foundations of health policy, with emphasis on primary health care

Objective B: To support the promotion of positive health seeking behaviour, including sexual and reproductive health, with particular emphasis on children, adolescents and youth

Objective C: To assist in the prevention of HIV/AIDS, in the early identification of new HIV infections, and provide care and support to those infected and affected

Objective D: To support every child's right to survival and good health

To achieve the above objectives, the UN system will assist and complement existing programmes as well as collaborate with other development partners through the following co-operation strategies, as follows:

FOR OBJECTIVE A

1. The UN system will support the improvement of health system performance

More specifically,

❖ The UN system will assist in the policy and legislation review

The UN system will assist in policy and legislation review in two ways:

- (a) UN assistance to update existing policies and legislation
- (b) UN assistance to have in-built mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation of policies

❖ The UN system will support institutional reform by:

- ☛ Assisting in loosening of constraints at the organisational, institutional and operational levels
- ☛ Supporting the review and reassessment of existing studies and current health policies and plans and make appropriate recommendations in line with the national priorities and globally agreed convention. Despite a large number of studies undertaken on health-related issues in the country, it is understood that recommendations made in some of them have not been implemented. The UN system will therefore provide technical support to the government for health sector reform in terms of assistance to conduct a review and reassessment of the different studies conducted in the sector and eventually assist in the formulation of strategies and plans of action to improve the efficiency of the health sector

- ☛ Capacity building through technical assistance. Continuous Medical Education (CME) has already started but this should be consolidated into Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and broadened to include development for all categories of health workers

2. The UN system will support medical and health research to facilitate evidenced-based policy

There is need for better co-ordination and more focused research in the medical and health fields. The UN system will support initiatives for capacity building among research staff and for the preparation of a framework for medical and health research.

FOR OBJECTIVE B

1. The UN system will support IEC (Information, Education and Communication)

To inculcate a culture of positive health-seeking behaviour, the UN system will support IEC by assisting in the development of an appropriate and effective national health education strategy that will also include Reproductive Health for young persons. This will include the more effective use of education and the media, for instance, through appropriate timing of programmes on the TV/radio for youth, working women and other groups and through the use of more modern audio-visual techniques. This will ensure that the IEC outreach will be made more gender sensitive by responding to the needs and realities of both men and women.

2. The UN system will assist to expand and sustain health promotion activities in the areas of SRH (Sexual and Reproductive Health), MCH (Maternal and Child Health), HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C virus (HCV) and NCDs (Non-Communicable Diseases)

Sexual and Reproductive Health

The need for sustained health promotion activities in the area of SRH has become even more important as more and more girls enter the labour force at an earlier age and are exposed to the possibility of getting involved with male partners at an earlier age. The absence of proper sex and life skills education in schools is also a matter of concern. There is ambiguity in parents' attitudes towards sex education in schools, with many believing that such activities will 'normalise' sexual activity of youngsters still attending school. The UN system will assist in health promotion activities in the area of SRH by targeting not only young working women and school youngsters but also, most importantly, out of school adolescents who represent major at risk groups. Special emphasis will also be placed on including boys and men in health promotion activities in the area of SRH.

Maternal and Child Health

There has been considerable improvement in the health status of women and children over the past years, as reflected in the increase in life expectancy from 62 in 1962 to 74.5 in 1998 for females and from 58.7 to 66.8 for males. However, there is still a relatively high maternal mortality rate (40 per 100,000 live births in 1999) in the country. The UN system will contribute to make a significant difference in the current situation through health promotion activities on the issue of MCH.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

There is evidence of a dramatic rise in NCDs, namely cardiovascular diseases and diabetes as well as the incidence of breast, cervix and prostate cancer. The prevalence of diabetes in Mauritius ranks among the highest in the world and that of hypertension is comparable to many of the industrialised countries. Over the period 1987-1998, the percentage of people suffering from Diabetes Mellitus rose from 14.5% to 19.5% while in the case of Hypertension (defined as BP μ 140/90 mm), it fell from 30.2% to 26.2% over the period 1987-1992 to rise to 29.6% in 1998.

A number of NCD programmes have already been undertaken in the country to address this concern. Assistance in capacity building and upgrading of the labs is also incorporated in the programme. The UN system will contribute in efforts already being made towards controlling the rising burden of NCDs through an intensification of health promotion activities.

3. The UN system will facilitate exchange of information and best practices

The UN system will facilitate the exchange of information such that the existing pool of knowledge with regards to best practices and application be shared across countries

4. The UN system will promote the optimal utilisation of appropriate IEC tools and techniques

More specifically, the UN system will assist in capacity building by training staff and also, most importantly, by encouraging closer linkages with the media to ensure that the latter is active in programmes promoting positive health-seeking behaviour.

The UN system will also assist in reviewing IEC techniques aimed at women and will encourage programmes targeting men and boys with regard to family planning intervention programmes. In fact, a decrease has been noted in the prevalence of users of contraceptive methods among women in unions between 14-44 (over the period 1985-1991). While aggressive domiciliary motivation campaigns on a face-to-face basis to promote usage of family planning methods was possible a few years ago, these are more difficult to conduct today with the increase in the female participation rate in the labour force as well as the longer working hours of women in industrial factories.

5. The UN system will support programmes to address the shift from reliable to less reliable contraceptive methods and issues like teenage pregnancy, sexual exploitation and infertility

In Mauritius, a shift from reliable to less reliable contraceptive methods has recently been observed. Changing lifestyles and more girls entering the labour force at an earlier age lead to early exposure to sexual activity among youth. This may explain the high figure of 9.4% of total births occurring in the age group 15 - 19 in 1999.

Factors related to the level of information and education as well the appropriateness and accessibility of services may explain this situation. However, knowledge does not necessarily translate into behaviour. A number of factors may discourage the use of contraception like lack of confidentiality, inappropriate delivery services at work sites and health centres closing down at 4.00pm. Moreover, due to a lack of integration and participation of men and boys in family planning services and IEC, there have been no improvements in the effective use of contraceptives at the household level. In this context, the UN

system will support a review of the current strategy for promoting the use of more reliable contraceptives.

Issues like teenage pregnancy and sexual exploitation are also becoming a major cause for concern on the island. About 9.4% of the total births in Mauritius in 1999 occurred in the age group 15-19, far above the figure of 4% which is the normally expected percentage for a country with a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2.1. The UN system will support programmes to address these issues.

6. The UN system will support programmes to address the issue of abortion

Abortion is illegal in Mauritius but we cannot deny the fact that there could be a high proportion of back street abortions in the country. Though family planning service is free, many women have unwanted and unplanned pregnancies and have recourse to back street abortion or self-induced methods to terminate those pregnancies, thus endangering their health. Every year, there are approximately 2500 women admitted in health institutions due to complications of their spontaneous or induced abortion. It is estimated that about 50% of those admissions are due to induced abortion. The UN system will support programmes to tackle the issue of abortion by addressing both the prevention and management of the consequences of abortion and the reinforcement of existing family planning methods.

More specifically, the UN system will:

- ❖ Assist in a full assessment of the problem by identifying the major causal factors leading to women resorting to abortion. Evidence on the issue of abortion is anecdotal and not empirical. There exists a lot of misunderstanding and confusion on the issue of abortion. It was agreed that the problem must be thoroughly studied, being given changing lifestyles and earlier exposure to sexual activity among youth. The UN system will therefore assist in conducting a situational analysis on the problem.

Alongside the above-mentioned two forms of assistance, it was suggested that the UN also:

- ❖ assist in advocating reforms to allow women to exercise their rights on their fertility
- ❖ support counselling services on the issue

FOR OBJECTIVE C

1. The UN system will support the development and facilitate the implementation of the National Strategic HIV/AIDS Plan within the Human Rights framework

Two studies on the situational analysis on HIV/AIDS in Mauritius have already been undertaken by a WHO Consultant. On the basis of data from these studies, a Strategic Plan is currently under preparation and the UN system will support the formulation and facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan and ensure that it is implemented within the human rights framework. For example, the right of patients to treatment, the right to be considered as a human being requiring help or the right to employment are important considerations which should not be ignored in the Plan.

2. The UN system will contribute in the area of HIV/AIDS

The first HIV positive case was detected in 1987 and the cumulative figure reached up to January 2000 among residents was 117 males and 58 females who were either full blown or HIV positive asymptomatic. 46 persons have passed away since then. Although the number of detected cases have not reached alarming proportions, there should be no room for complacency as experience from other countries show that large number of cases have remained hidden over fairly long periods of time before they could be detected or that without aggressive preventive measures the multiplier effect starts to operate in a dangerous manner after a certain percentage is reached.

More specifically,

- ❖ The UN system will assist in IEC programmes - the AIDS Unit of the Ministry of Health and PILS (Prevention Information Lutte Contre le Sida) are two organisations which are active in the field of HIV/AIDS and are involved in educational and support programmes for those affected and their families. However, there are serious constraints of human and financial resources. The UN system will assist in IEC programmes in this field
- ❖ The UN system will advocate for care and support of those affected
- ❖ The UN system will assist in improving epidemiological surveillance of HIV/AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and Hepatitis C Virus (HCV), in line with UNAIDS second generation surveillance system
- ❖ The UN system will assist in reducing mother to child transmission – UNICEF already has a current programme whereby treatment is provided to mothers.
- ❖ The UN system will assist in sustaining blood transfusion safety – to ensure safety of transfusion, the necessary mechanism needs to be put in place to guarantee that the right person gets the right blood. Currently, standards have already been set by the technical division of WHO with regards to blood transfusion safety but to ensure compliance, the UN system will provide technical backstopping.
- ❖ The UN system will help strengthen existing inter-regional co-operation

The UN system will also support the implementation of HIV/AIDS Control Strategies in the following manner:

- ❖ The UN system will involve people living with HIV/AIDS in programmes designed to raise awareness on the causes and implications of these diseases

- ❖ The UN system will support to mainstream HIV/AIDS into actual health and non-health programmes – this will be achieved by encouraging the introduction of the concept of HIV/AIDS in, for example, existing programmes on sex education at schools

FOR OBJECTIVE D

1. The UN system will support studies to determine the causes of high incidence of low birth weight babies and stagnant infant mortality rates

The infant mortality rate in Mauritius, after experiencing a dramatic fall from 32.3 per thousand in 1980 to 18 per thousand in 1994, remained constant at 19.4 per thousand since 1995 (Family Planning and Demography Yearbook 1998). On the other hand, there is a high incidence of low birth-weight babies (less than 2500 grammes) in the country, from 9.5% in 1991, 13.9% in 1995 and 14.3% in 1998 (Government hospital records).

The root causes of high incidence of low birth weight babies and stagnant mortality rates need to be researched in greater depth since they are multi-causal and go far beyond reasons associated with the lack of or inadequate specialised medical equipment. Also, the factors are changing over-time and the impact on women of long working hours, long travelling hours, food quality and nutritional habits need to be assessed. The UN system will therefore support studies to determine the causes of high incidence of low birth weight babies and stagnant mortality rates.

2. The UN system will assist in programmes for the promotion of breastfeeding, paying attention to existing institutional constraints

In Mauritius, all maternity wards of public hospitals are supposed to be Baby – Friendly, that is promoting exclusive breastfeeding as per the criteria of the WHO/UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative. However, the participants stated that breastfeeding is not sustained in the country and the easy availability of substitutes for mother’s milk, the lack of day care centres and poor legislative enforcement deter the promotion of breastfeeding. The UN system will therefore assist in programmes for the promotion of breastfeeding.

3. The UN system will strengthen community-based primary health service through upgrading of services at Area and Community Health Centres (AHCs and CHCs)

Evidence shows that countries with a strong Primary Health Care (PHC) enjoy relatively more favourable health indicators. In Mauritius, the upgrading of activities at AHCs and CHCs represents a good way of reinforcing the country’s PHC. The UN system will assist through capacity building as well as technical support for more efficient Area and Community Health Centres.

3.3 Environment

To promote the right to a healthy physical environment, the development assistance of the UN System will focus on the following objectives:

Objective A: To support sustainable management of natural resources, including Integrated Coastal Zone Management, water resource management (with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands) and Conservation and protection of biodiversity

Objective B: To support Integrated Waste Management, cleaner production, emission reduction and prevention of pollution of fresh water and marine environment

The following co-operation strategies have been identified to achieve the above objectives:

FOR OBJECTIVE A

1. The UN system will assist in strengthening the existing Integrated Coastal Zone Management

In Mauritius, pressure on the coastal zone is mounting and is threatening the degradation of this environment. Land-based activities like construction, pollution from sewage, industry and agriculture are identified as the major pressure on the coastal zone (National Environmental Action Plan - NEAP July 1999). A number of initiatives have been carried out to protect the coastal zone, namely:

- (i) The development of a National Sewage Master Plan and National Physical Development Plan, aimed at reducing land-side pressures on the coastal zone
- (ii) The establishment of an Institute of Oceanography and a National Oceanographic Data Centre (NODC) to improve the management of ocean-side risks

However, the institutional, policy and legislative framework related to coastal zone in Mauritius is inadequate and fragmented. Powers to enforce existing and enact new legislation are conferred on several different Ministries, whereby there is a lack of co-ordination and co-operation (NEAP, July 1999). With the establishment of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Unit in August 2000, it is expected that these problems will be addressed. Also, an important constraint identified towards the establishment of a holistic management of the pressures facing coastal zone is inadequate knowledge. Finally, although awareness raising activities with regards to coastal zone have already been initiated under the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) project formulated by World Bank in collaboration with IMO, further assistance is required in advocacy and awareness raising to protect coastal zone on the island.

The UN system will assist in strengthening the ICZM by supporting the improvement and harmonisation of legislative framework through capacity building, advocacy and awareness raising.

2. The UN system will assist in Water Resource Management, with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands

A fundamental problem facing Mauritius with regards to the management of water resources is the long-term pressure on water resources in the face of high population density and the extensive use of water for irrigation purpose. Moreover, there is a low level of awareness observed among critical groups such as agrochemical users and industrialists of the impact of pollutants on water resources and their health-related implications. Predicted demand threatens to outstrip supply within 50 years if no effective management is introduced (NEAP, July 1999).

Rodrigues requires special attention with regards to water resource management. Approximately 20% of the population are not connected to piped water, water supply cannot meet demand, water quality is poor, water testing is inadequate and there is no piped sewerage facilities on the island (NEAP, July 1999). Women, being primarily responsible for managing water resources, should become key partners in water resource management programmes and projects.

The need for intervention with regards to Water Resource Management is clearly reflected within the policy context for water resource management, as articulated in Vision 2020 and the NPDP (National Physical Development Plan) which emphasises improving the efficiency of water supply, cost recovery for water and waste water services. Also, the National Sewerage Master Plan (NSMP), prepared in 1994,

aims at achieving a comprehensive development of wastewater facilities to abate and control wastewater pollution over the period 1993-2013.

To address these concerns, the UN system will assist in water resource management by:

- ❖ supporting the government in maximising storage and distribution of water
- ❖ supporting awareness raising on the economic value of water
- ❖ supporting community rehabilitation of forest water catchment areas in Rodrigues

3. The UN system will assist in the conservation and protection of biodiversity

The continuing degradation of remaining habitat by invasive exotic species and human activities represents a major threat to biodiversity in Mauritius. Tourist development is also expected to put further pressure on remaining wetlands. A number of initiatives have been undertaken with regards to conservation and protection of biodiversity, namely the National Conservation Strategy (1985) and the Wildlife and National Parks Act (1993). In addition, the Government has signed a number of international conventions for the protection of fauna and flora. Furthermore, Government has initiated the ongoing exercise of developing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which will be available in 2001.

With regards the conservation and protection of biodiversity,

- ❖ **The UN system will assist in the establishment, extension, consolidation and effective management of marine and terrestrial protected areas**

In Mauritius, the National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS), created in 1994, is responsible for the protection of national parks and northern islands. Other organisations like the Mauritius Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and the National Parks and Conservation Fund, set up under the Wildlife and National Parks Act 1993, are also engaged in terrestrial biodiversity conservation. With regards to the protection of marine biodiversity, eight marine protected areas have been established and five fishing reserves developed for Rodrigues.

However, designation of responsibility for conservation is unclear and there is inadequate monitoring and evaluation. In this context, the UN system will assist in the establishment, extension, consolidation and effective management of both marine and terrestrial protected areas.

- ❖ **The UN system will assist in awareness raising and institutional capacity building on “biosecurity” (prevention of introduction and of establishment of alien species)**

To prevent the introduction and establishment of alien species on the island, the UN system will support institutional capacity building on ‘biosecurity’ and also, support awareness raising on its relevance. Failure to do so may threaten public health, reduce the potential for genetic engineering and bring a number of diseases on the island

- ❖ **The UN system will support community involvement in biodiversity conservation and/or sustainable use of natural resources**

The UN system will assist in maximising community involvement in biodiversity conservation and/or the sustainable use of natural resources in order to change behaviour and encourage citizens to be more committed towards improving the environment

- ❖ **The UN system will consolidate, strengthen and extend the conservation of native forest ecosystem (fauna and flora)**

The National Parks Conservation Service has been designed to establish protected areas, undertake habitat restoration and continue species breeding. However, there is continuing threat to native biodiversity especially due to inadequate institutional capacity to deal with the growing pressure on biodiversity. There is therefore scope for the UN system to consolidate, strengthen and extend the conservation of native forest ecosystem (both the fauna and flora).

- ❖ **The UN system will support education and awareness raising in biodiversity conservation**
4. **The UN system will support sustainable environmental development through assistance in the artisanal fisheries sub-sector in Rodrigues**

FOR OBJECTIVE B

1. **The UN system will support the implementation of International Conventions on marine pollution prevention**

With regards to the prevention of marine pollution from ships and other related activities, the UN system will assist in the implementation of the following international conventions:

- (i) International Convention on Control of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL)
- (ii) International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Co-operation (OPRC)
- (iii) International Convention on Fund for Compensation in cases of Marine Pollution by Oil (Fund Convention)
- (iv) International Convention on Civil Liability in Cases of Oil Pollution by Ships (CLC)
- (v) The Nairobi Convention on Regional Co-operation on Prevention of Marine Pollution (The Nairobi Convention)

2. **The UN system will promote environmental sensitisation of civil society, including the media**

Since there already exists an education programme (“Arpege” Programme undertaken jointly by the Indian Ocean Commission and the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE)), the UN system will focus its efforts on civil society, most particularly the media. The UN system will support media programmes which promote regular coverage of environmental issues.

Most specifically, these sensitisation programmes were deemed imperative with regards to Integrated Waste Management, which is a national priority for the country and figures in the National Environment Strategy Plan.

3. **The UN system will promote cleaner production**

The UN system will assist in planning future industrial development in order to reduce localised problem of pollution in the country. This can be achieved through the following strategies:

- ❖ **The UN system will support the strengthening of zoning policy such that high-polluting industries are grouped together in areas which are not highly residential in nature**
- ❖ **The UN system will encourage the adoption of technologies which are environment-friendly**
- ❖ **The UN system will encourage the promotion of horizontal integration among areas of activities which are high polluters**

4. The UN system will support R & D

The UN system will support R & D in the highly polluting industries in order to minimise the rising emission level.

More specifically,

- ❖ The UN system will promote awareness of up-to-date and sustainable technology. The high sunk cost nature of conducting R & D in technological development which are environment-friendly is identified as a major deterrent for industries to undertake such activities in the first place. In this context, the need for adaptive transfer of technology is identified as a viable solution for Mauritian industries
- ❖ The UN system will encourage partnership building within the same industry. To the extent that there exists a large number of firms requiring the same technology to reduce adverse effects on the environment, there are economies of scale to be derived from partnership building within the same industry to conduct R & D. A typical example is the sugar industry
- ❖ The UN system will assist to enhance training in order to promote effective R & D

4. Follow up and Review

4.1 Implementation, Monitoring and Review

The implementation of UNDAF will be monitored and reviewed by an UNDAF Steering Committee, involving the UN, government, private sector and civil society. The UNDAF steering committee, as a policy body that oversees, owns and monitors the UNDAF implementation, will meet every six months. The outcome of the initial meeting will be a Work Plan to facilitate monitoring. Thematic Groups will be redefined accordingly and will constitute the strategic operational mechanism to get the job done. The Guidance Note on Preparing Joint Programmes/Projects issued in June 2000 and which has been endorsed by the United Nations Development Group, will be used by the UN organisations in Mauritius when developing and managing joint programmes and projects, while seeking to select modalities which are best suited for the particular situation of Mauritius.

Progress of the UNDAF will be monitored by a common set of core indicators which measure the combined UN System's impact on national capacity and development. A Technical Monitoring Unit will be set up to develop detailed indicators to enable efficient monitoring of the UNDAF. In this context, the existing CCA database will be consolidated and will be part of the UNDAF Action Plan. At the end of the three-year UNDAF cycle, a joint evaluation will be carried out to set the stage for the next UNDAF (if necessary).

4.2 UNDAF Time Frame

The UNDAF Time Frame relates to the period 2001 – 2003. It will be in line with the 3-year synchronised programme cycles of two UNDGGO agencies, namely UNDP and UNICEF. Other UN agencies do not have programme cycles, but one or two-year programming period. This period also fits within the time frame of the national strategy for sustainable development (1999-2005). As the UNDAF is dynamic, it will be revisited annually to review the progress made in its implementation, but also its relevance to the evolving situation of the country, and will be adjusted, if necessary.

Following the UNDAF exercise, UN agencies will use UNDAF as a UN system frame of reference when preparing their respective programs with the Government of Mauritius.

5. Programme Framework

While at this time UN agencies know the UNDAF objectives to which they can contribute, it would be too hypothetical in the current situation for them to be more specific and affirmative in formulating the programme UN resources. The financial allocations of respective UN agencies can therefore only be indicative. The tables below present the links among the objectives in the UNDAF and the mobilisation and allocation of resources by participating UN system organisations in an indicative framework. While implementing the UNDAF, the UN support will involve the key Ministries listed hereunder. As programmes are formulated, partnership will be sought with all stakeholders including Government, civil society, NGO and private sector as well as with other development partners.

PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK – SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND DRUG ABUSE		
OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	UN AGENCIES	Government Institutions
(A) To alleviate poverty with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups including women, children and the elderly, thereby promoting the right of all to an adequate standard of living	UNDP, ILO, IFAD, FAO	Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs
(B) To promote social cohesion through support to CBOs and other grassroots organisations involved in community work and neighbourhood activities to consolidate local community life	UNDP, UNFPA, IFAD, FAO, UNAIDS	Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions, Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare, Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs
(C) To promote equal opportunities equitable access and treatment with regards to employment, resources and training, with particular emphasis on enhancing women’s decision-making capabilities at all levels	UNFPA, UNDP, ILO, FAO, IFAD	Ministry of Labour & Industrial Relations, UNIFEM, ILO, Ministry of Training, Skills Development & Productivity, Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare
(D) To promote every child’s right to protection, care and optimal	UNICEF	Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare, Ministry of Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of Health and Quality of Life
(E) To reduce substance abuse as well as demand for and trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances while protecting the most vulnerable groups, especially youth and children	UNDCP, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions, Ministry of Youth and Sports
(F) To assist in identifying and addressing the social determinants of vulnerabilities, to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, thereby promoting the right to information and services in the field of HIV/AIDS	UNFPA, UNAIDS, UNDP	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life

PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK – HEALTH		
OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	UN AGENCIES	Government Institutions
(A) To increase health system performance through effective participation of all stakeholders and strengthening of the scientific foundations of health policy, with emphasis on primary health care	WHO, UNFPA	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life
(B) To support the promotion of positive health seeking behaviour, including sexual and reproductive health, with particular emphasis on children adolescents and youth	UNFPA, WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, IFAD	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare, Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Rural & Urban Development
(C) To assist in the prevention of new HIV/AIDS, in the early identification of new HIV infections, and provide care and support to those infected and affected	UNFPA, UNAIDS, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF, ILO	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions
(D) To support every child’s right to survival and good health	UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare

PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK – ENVIRONMENT		
OBJECTIVES OF ASSISTANCE	UN AGENCIES	Government Institutions
(A) To support sustainable management of natural resources including Integrated Coastal Zone Management, water resource management (with special attention to Rodrigues and outer islands) and the conservation and protection of biodiversity .	UNDP, IFAD, UNIDO, FAO, UNEP, IMO	Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Rural & Urban Development, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Public Utilities
(B) To support solid waste management cleaner production, emission reduction and prevention of pollution of fresh water and marine environments.	IMO, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNDP, FAO, UNEP, IFAD	Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues, and Rural & Urban Development, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Public Utilities.

United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

TABLE FOR PROGRAMME RESOURCES FRAMEWORK (millions of USD)													
UN AGENCY	INDICATIVE FIGURES (US\$)	OBJECTIVES											
		SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT						HEALTH				ENVIRONMENT	
		Obj. A	Obj. B	Obj. C	Obj. D	Obj. E	Obj. F	Obj. A	Obj. B	Obj. C	Obj. D	Obj. A	Obj. B
UNFPA	600,000 (200,000 per year)		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
WHO	1,951,000					✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
UNICEF	1,650,000				✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		
UNDP	5,119,000	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
ILO	200,000 for the period 2001-2003	✓		✓		✓				✓			
FAO	1,800,000 (600,000 per year)	✓	✓	✓								✓	✓
UNIDO	5,550,000 (for next five years)											✓	✓
IMO	To be completed											✓	✓
UNEP	300,000 (excluding GEF future finding)											✓	✓
IFAD	11,120,000 (for next six years)	✓	✓	✓					✓			✓	✓
UNAIDS	To be completed		✓				✓		✓	✓			
UNIFEM	To be completed			✓									
UNESCO	To be completed												✓
UNDCP	To be completed				✓								

The World Bank has participated in the preparation of the CCA and the UNDAF. The Bank will be formulating its next three-year CAS (Country Assessment Strategy) with the Government of Mauritius in the course of 2001 – that strategy will determine the Bank's activities in Mauritius.

Note: Due to differences between UN agencies programmatic and budgetary approach, allocation per objectives and figures are indicative.

List of Acronyms

AHCs	–	Area Health Centres
CAS	–	Country Assessment Strategy
CBOs	–	Community Based Organisations
CCA	–	Common Country Assessment
CDF	–	Comprehensive Development Framework
CEDAW	–	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHCs	–	Community Health Centres
CME	–	Continuous Medical Education
CPD	–	Continuing Professional Development
CRC	–	Child Rights Convention
FAO	–	Food and Agriculture Organisation
GEF	–	Global Environment Facility
HDI	–	Human Development Index
IAEA	–	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBRD	–	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICZM	–	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IEC	–	Information, Education, Communication
IFAD	–	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOC	–	Indian Ocean Commission
ILO	–	International Labour Organisation
IMO	–	International Maritime Organisation
MCH	–	Maternal and Child Health
MIE	–	Mauritius Institute of Education
MWF	–	Mauritius Wildlife Foundation
MWRCDFW	–	Ministry of Women’s Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare
NATRESA	–	National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers
NCDs	–	Non Communicable Diseases
NEAP	–	National Environmental Action Plan
NGOs	–	Non Governmental Organisations
NPCS	–	National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS)
NPDP	–	National Physical Development Plan
NSMP	–	National Sewerage Master Plan
ODCCP	–	Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention
PHC	–	Primary Health Care
PILS	–	Prevention Information Lutte Contre le Sida
RDI	–	Relative Development Index
RSA	–	Rapid Situational Assessment
SRH	–	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STIs	–	Sexually Transmitted Infections
STDs	–	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TFR	–	Total Fertility Rate
UN	–	United Nations
UNAIDS	–	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	–	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Programme
UNDAF	–	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

UNDCP	–	United Nations Drug Control Programme
UNDGO	–	United Nations Development Group Office
UNECA	–	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	–	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	–	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	–	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIDO	–	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNIFEM	–	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	–	World Health Organisation
WTO	–	World Trade Organisation

INSTITUTIONS / INDIVIDUALS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE UNDAF EXERCISE		
RESIDENT	UNDP UNFPA UNICEF WHO	
NON RESIDENT UN AGENCIES/ PROGRAMMES BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS	FAO IBRD IFAD ILO IMO UNAIDS	UNDCP UNEP UNESCO UNFPA (country Director) UNIDO
MINISTRIES	AIDS Co-ordination Unit (Ministry of Health and Quality of Life) Ministry of Agriculture, Food Technology & Natural Resources Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs Ministry of Education and Scientific Research Ministry of Environment Ministry of Fisheries Ministry of Health and Quality of Life Ministry of Justice and Human Rights Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Inland Transport Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare Trust Fund for the Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups, Ministry of Finance (Ministry of Finance) Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions	
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	<i>*by electronic mail only</i>	

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