



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

ECA/ACW/MR/MAR/2000

REPORT OF MISSION TO

Mauritius

3 – 7 May 2000

By  
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## **MISSION REPORT TO MAURITIUS: 3 - 17 MAY 2000**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The mission was undertaken in response to a request from the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development, for ECA to provide technical advisory services. With technical advisory services from ECA, the Ministry has established a Gender Bureau and a micro credit programme for poor women.

During the mission the regional advisor reviewed both programmes and provided technical advice as follows:

- reviewed progress made by the gender bureau;
- reviewed National Gender Action Plan in order to provide guidelines for developing gender monitoring indicators, and make recommendation for a research protocol;
- Carried out a monitoring review of the micro-credit programme.

In general, both programmes are relatively well established. However, the common problem that account for slow progress is an acute shortage of staff, and lack of technical expertise. In the following report, achievements of each programme and recommendations for enhancing effectiveness are highlighted. The following is a full report of discussions and reviews of the Gender Bureau and the Entrepreneurship Council.

## **II. THE GENDER BUREAU**

### **A. Review of the gender sensitisation and training strategy (GSTS)**

*Please, note that all the new additions made by the Regional Advisor are in bold, for ease of reference and discussion. The revisions emphasise a training perspective that focuses on change of attitudes, enhanced gender analysis skills and knowledge as well as training for women's empowerment*

#### **FRAMEWORK FOR THE GSTS**

#### **A DISCUSSION PAPER**

#### **GENDER BUREAU**

#### **MINISTRY OF WOMEN, FAMILY WELFARE & CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

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**Framework for the GSTS – A discussion paper**

## **1. THE GENDER SENSITISATION AND TRAINING STRATEGY(GSTS):**

It seeks to create awareness of gender issues, to train men and women to recognize and deal with gender issues at home, in the work place and in society and to train and put in place a pool of gender specialists. **It also aims at empowering women through leadership and assertiveness training as well as enhancing their skills in communication technologies.** More specifically, the GSTS seeks to:

1.1 Enhance positive attitudes to gender equality: this training will include

- **gender sensitisation for policy makers, political leaders, the media and local community groups, including schools.**

1.2 Strengthen gender knowledge as well as gender analytical and programming skills for the changing Mauritius society. This will include:

- **gender training for trainers , to create a core of gender specialists;**
- **training in gender focused research for institutions and government departments involved in research , data collection and statistical analysis;**
- **gender analysis (including gender budget )and gender responsive policy and programming training for all the ministries and institutions involved in implementing the National Gender Action Plan (NGAP).**

1.3 Empowerment training for women which will include:

- **Leadership and assertiveness training for women;**
- **Training in information communication technologies, including internet;**
- **Training in creative thinking for girls.**

## **2. THE RATIONALE FOR THE GSTS**

- 2.1** This paper provides a framework for discussion on the GSTS. During the national consultations for preparation of the NGAP( which has now been approved for implementation by government), participants identified many areas where they felt gender training would be necessary. These views and recommendations have been taken into account in developing the GSTS. However, further assessment will be carried out in key institutions and at different levels (policy and program levels) to ensure that the training offered meets specific needs and that the gender equality message reaches all levels of society.
- 2.2** The GSTS is a vital tool for the realization of the many objectives that are contained in the National Gender Action Plan(NGAP). The GSTS is particularly an important tool for gender mainstreaming, given that Gender and development is a fairly new concept and one that is unlikely to find much support with the more traditional segments of society but of more importance, there is an urgent need to build technical skills for gender policy design, and gender responsive research and programming. Much sensitization is necessary for the concept to be understood by all and in order to create a more gender sensitive culture, the gender dimension has to be built into the local culture. The whole exercise of gender mainstreaming will require a pool of local gender specialists as well as a pool of professionals in other disciplines who are not only gender sensitive but also have gender technical skills and knowledge.

### **3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NGAP**

- 3.1 "The NGAP which is a follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, defines a vision for gender equality, based on the Gender and Development concept. The long term objective is the attainment of greater equality and equity between men and women while preserving family welfare. The Plan, therefore, views the needs of women, in the context of the wider social and economic environment, while also considering the multicultural aspect of Mauritian society."
- 3.2 **The NGAP, identifies five critical areas of concern as: Gender Equality, Women and Human Rights, Women and the Economy, Women and Human Resources Development, Women and Health. The situation of women in Rodrigues is also highlighted an area for special concern.**
- 3.3 To achieve gender equality as envisaged in the NGAP, a variety of actions will be necessary. These will range from legal reform to the construction of new buildings for providing new skills, and providing loans and equipment to female entrepreneurs to make them more financially self sufficient and empowered.

#### **4. THE GSTS IS A TOOL FOR ENSURING GENDER MAINSTREAMING AND ANAGING CHANGE, AS ENVISAGED IN THE NGAP**

4.1 The NGAP implies change at all levels - from the conceptual to the level of action. Change has also to take place among politicians, policy makers, decision takers, government executives, officers and private sector CEO's and operators and among the women themselves. <sup>1</sup>The "human factor " is the most important in the change process. The change process involves a series of identifiable stages which are:

- analysis
- identifying resistance
- allocating responsibility
- developing and implementing strategies
- monitoring

4.2 The five stages for change should not be seen as separate or free-standing. "Instead planned change needs to be seen as an iterative process. That is, the stages should be seen as a series of 'steps' and like footsteps they may be taken backwards and sideways as well as forwards. In reality, the stages will be interwoven into the fabric of the change process and will occur in varying orders with some running concurrently and many retreats into previous stages.....What is of crucial importance is to recognize that for planned change to be effective each stage needs to occur, and that the way each stage is managed needs to ensure that they are mutually supportive and reinforcing."

4.3 Given the complex nature of the change that the NGAP implies the change process has to be examined for each target group separately. The GSTS should

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<sup>1</sup> See .....

provide for the change process to be applied to each of the target groups and a strategy evolved based on the analysis:

- **Analysis** - the felt need for each target group has to be identified e.g. the sensitization of policy makers will be different from that of grassroots women. Hence the approach, type of programmes etc. will need to be differentiate
- **Identifying resistance** - individuals or groups are unlikely to favour change unless they perceive it to be attractive and beneficial. So the benefits for each group have to be analyzed and explained;
- **Allocating responsibility** - as many individuals as possible should be given leadership roles in managing the change process;
- **Developing and implementing strategies** - there will always be some laggards, those unwilling to change, and the innovators who can anticipate change. The objective should be to convert the laggards to innovators through greater involvement;
- **Monitoring** - provides for an assessment of whether the planned change has been achieved.

4.4 It should be recognized that once the process of change has been accepted by a core group of dedicated innovators, much synergy could be gained by working collaboratively and co-operatively in teams to spread ideas, experiences and knowledge. In order to make change effective; the process of learning to change has to be effected at the three levels of existence. These are termed in psychology as the cognitive domain (level of thinking), affective domain (level of feeling) and action domain (level of doing). The cognitive and affective domains are difficult if not impossible to observe and they present great problems in measurement. Hence, the difficulty in assessing the impact of the GSTS.



**5. SPECIFIC TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND TARGETS IDENTIFIED IN THE NGAP**

ACTIVITY	BENEFICIARIES
<p>1. Build capacity in the public and private sectors through gender training programmes in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) to encourage a change of attitudes;</li> <li>(ii) to improve skills and competence for gender analysis and policy formulation.</li> </ul>	<p>Staff at policy, programme and local level.</p> <p>A regular programme of sensitisation on gender issues will be for different target groups, including middle and senior level management, trade unions, parliamentarians and other opinion leaders.</p>
<p>Build institutional capacity for gender responsive budgeting and preparation of a gender sensitive appraisal of the national budget.</p>	<p>staff trained from different ministries in gender budgeting.</p>
<p>2. Establish leadership and assertiveness, as well as creative thinking training programme for women and girls:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• training in leadership and assertiveness.</li> <li>• training in creative thinking.</li> <li>• Leadership Training</li> </ul> <p>Women Leaders Programme established to encourage leadership.</p> <p>Lobbying and advocacy training for gender equality.</p>	<p>Women and girls</p>
<p>Lobbing and Advocacy Training Programmes for Community Mobilization.</p>	<p>women's associations, and other community leaders.</p>
<p>Training programs to enhance gender Sensitivity and gender awareness of the media.</p>	<p>women and men in the media</p>
<p>Establish training programmes for women and their associations in the use of new communication technologies, including access to internet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women in different sectors.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Training in gender focused research.</p>	<p>Research institutions and government statistical offices trained.</p>

## **6. TRAINING METHODOLOGIES:**

A variety of training modes will be adopted. These will include lectures, training sessions, focus group discussions, awareness campaigns, seminars and workshops. Multi media modes will also be used for getting the message of gender equality across to the public. Distance learning modes will be an important means, as it will facilitate reaching a larger target group with limited resources especially as there are few local trained gender specialists. But it will require much expertise in the production of distance education and distance learning training material. The production of films will be crucial to reach out to the men and women at grass roots level as well as to children.

A table on the type of training/sensitization by target group is given in the Annex.

## **7. COLLABORATIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.1 One of the first objectives will be to create a pool of sensitized persons who can act as trainers and resource persons on gender issues. It is proposed to enter into collaborative arrangements with the UOM and MIPAM to assist with the training of trainers. Two to three week programmes will be held once or twice a year for the training of trainers. It is also proposed to conduct the training of trainers programmes for specific interest groups for example gender issues pertaining to agriculture, trade and industry, environment and other sectors.
- 7.2 Discussions will also be held with these institutions to ensure that gender issues are included in all their programmes. In the initial period, external agencies will be contacted to run programmes on leadership and assertive skills for women. Steps will be taken to purchase some of these ready-made programmes and to adopt them to Mauritian context so that the courses can be run by Mauritian trainers. This could also prove to be more cost effective in the long run. Similarly, contacts will be established with Universities abroad, which run degree and post graduate courses on gender issues, which will be adapted to local use.

Gender Bureau

24 January 2000

A: Framework for the GSTS

**B. COMMENTS ON PROGRESS MADE BY THE GENDER BUREAU,  
SINCE May 1999**

In May 1999, the staff of the gender bureau and the regional advisor agreed upon some basic benchmarks, and it is against these that the progress of the gender bureau would be measured. These have been reviewed and the comments made by the Regional Advisor, are highlighted in the following matrix.

PRIORITY LIST OF ACTIONS/ PROGRAMME	OBJECTIVE	EXPECTED OUTPUT	ACTUAL OUTPUT	REMARKS
1. Establish an effective GMS and STRUCTURE	To support the attainment of the objectives of the Ministry as stated in the mission of the Ministry	A strong effective Gender Bureau	The GMS established	Effectiveness of the structure is still questionable when there is still la shortage of technical staff. Future prospects: At least 3 technical staff needed for effective functioning of the bureau. The post of director has been budgeted but not the post of assistant director. The issue of delegation needs to be addressed .
Activities a. To review and Refine the mission of the Ministry to make it relevant		Revised ) Ministry ) statement ) ) )	Ministry's aims and objectives revised to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To promote and defend women's rights as human rights, work for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and ensure that legal measures are taken to promote equality between men and women.</li> <li>To promote women's political participation in peace processes and democratic decision making including their involvement in UN Conventions, Commonwealth and national</li> </ul>	Now is the right time to review the name of the ministry to reflect the gender and development work that is being done. The ministry has progressively moved from women programmes only, to addressing issues of gender inequality and development in general. The capacity of the Ministry also still needs to be strengthened in order to meet the challenge of implementing a gender and development agenda.

			<p>committees, consultations, debates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement gender-sensitive macro-economic policies and strategies, including those related to poverty alleviation.</li> <li>• To implement the recommendations of international conventions which target women and girls as a priority; and promote the gender balanced management of technology, environment and economic development, including the rights of children and of the family.</li> <li>• To develop national capacity in gender training, gender planning, gender impact assessment, gender management and accounting systems. In particular to strengthen all National Women's Machineryes so that they can formulate and influence policies to address women's concerns as integral components of socio-economic development.</li> <li>• To integrate gender into all government agendas, policies and programmes and create a culture within government which is gender-sensitive and where gender issues become the responsibility of all.</li> </ul>	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that regular government training programmes are gender-sensitive and gender-balanced.</li> <li>• To link the Ministry's Plan of Action (PAO) to government policies on women and to national development plans.</li> <li>• To take positive and affirmative action to provide equal opportunities in educational institutions and develop Equal Employment Opportunities policies (EEO) in public services and the private sector.</li> <li>• To increase women's participation in decision making positions.</li> <li>• To promote the welfare of the family.</li> <li>• To promote the development and welfare of children in accordance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child.</li> <li>• To outlaw all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation especially against women and children.</li> <li>• To provide support to Women's Associations.</li> </ul>	
b. Building institutional		A functioning	The staff of the Gender Bureau comprises of: Miss S. Canakiah (assisting the Head)	<b>The post of Director created in the recurrent budget but not yet</b>

framework structure i.e. recruitment of staff of the Gender Bureau		) Gender Bureau)	Ms P. (Clerical Officer) Mrs F. Dilmohammed (Typist)	<p>filled. No provisions for Asst Director/Secretary made. The Head of Bureau retired, yet to be recruited Post of Director should be filled. In the meantime provisions form Acting could be made. There is need for: assistant at senior level. -Support staff -Several members of staff left</p>
c. To establish the network of the Gender Bureau	Inter-ministerial Technical group formed		<p>The network of the Gender Bureau is expanding rapidly . The following committees have already been set up:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CHU(committee of Heads of Units of the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development</li> <li>• The Inter-Ministerial Technical Committee of gender focal points of different ministries which meets once monthly</li> <li>• The Advisory Committee on the Status of Women(comprising of various stakeholders such as Media, Academia, Trade Unions, Private Sector...etc) which meets once</li> </ul>	<p>The implementation of the NGAP requires collaboration of various organisations, institutions and ministries. There may be need to incorporate members of some of the big groups (e.g. sugar factories) into the committees of gender focal points.</p> <p>All partners in implementing the NGAP should have terms of reference developed. So far, only the gender focal points and the advisory committee have terms of reference.</p>



			<p>monthly(last Thursday of the month ). The first meeting was held on 22 March 1999.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All partners:</li> <li>-Commissions Leaders / Chairpersons /</li> <li>-Rapporteurs of various consultations held in connection with the NGAP</li> <li>-Team of Youth Leaders</li> <li>-Team of Community Health Workers</li> <li>-Sugar workers from Sugar Estates</li> <li>-Village/Municipal/District Councillors</li> <li>-All stakeholders who participated in various consultations during preparation of NGAP</li> <li>-All stakeholders who will be involved in the implementation of the NGAP</li> </ul>	
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Priority List of actions programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	<u>Remarks</u>
2. Develop a National Gender Action Plan  <u>Activities</u> a. Set up a Co- ordination team at the Ministry	To have integrated plan for the achievement of the agreements made at Beijing for the advancement of women in Mauritius for ensuring gender equality	National Gender Action Plan	<p>A proposed plan of activities together with cost estimates, venue, time-frame and resources needed for the preparation of the NGAP was made in February 1999</p> <p>Commission Leaders/ Specialists appointed: Dr A. Pathack (Health) Mrs J. Lapierre (Economy) Me V. Badain (Legal) Mrs S. Hawaldar (Gender) Mr I. Hurbungs (Gender) Mrs M. Soonarane (Education) Ms Francine Ng Din (Statistician)</p>	<p>The plan was reviewed in April 1999</p> <p>The final GNP is an Excellent piece of work, it is very practically oriented and integrates both a gender perspective and a focus on some of the specific and persistent concerns of women.</p> <p>Review terms of reference for the co- ordination team at the ministry. It is not clear whether this is functioning yet.</p>

Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
Set up and train a team of local points/field workers to collect data at different levels grassroots, occupational ..etc for the preparation of the National Gender Action Plan)			A team of Organising Officers and Supervisors of Women's Associations comprising of: Mrs R.Jokhun, Mrs V. Jodhoa ,Mrs Iranah, Miss Ramnorauth,Mrs Ramdin (Organising Officers) and Mrs S. Mohunparsad, Mrs R. Soochit ,Mrs Veerasamy, Mrs J. Rene , Mrs Persand. Mrs K. Roopchand Mrs Bossondoyal, Mrs Dozekee(Supervisors) trained on data collection and group facilitation.	The participatory approach worked well to ensure that the grassroots women have substantial input into the NGAP.
Field visits for collection/ compilation of data through field workers			Consultations were held as from April 1999 with different stake-holders for collection of data relevant to the preparation of the NGAP as follows : • Tuesday 27 April - Floreal Women & Family Centre • Wed 28 April - Hassen Raffa State Secondary School • Thursday 29 April - Flacq Women and Facility Centre • Friday 30 April - St. Croix Social Welfare Centre • Monday 3 May - Bambous Women and Family Centre • Tuesday 4 May - Plaine Magnien	) ) ) ) ) ) ) Target Group: Women 's associations ) ) ) ) )

			<p><b>Social Welfare Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thursday 6 May – Cotton Bay Hotel (Rodrigues)</li> <li>• Monday 10-Tuesday 11 May - Coralia Hotel (Choisy)</li> </ul>	<p>- Various stakeholders(list annexed)</p> <p>- Various Stakeholders (List annexed)</p>
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Priority List of actions/ programmes	Objective	<u>Expected Output</u>	Actual Output	Remarks
d. Liaising with the different Ministries to obtain the point of view/feedback of different Ministries on Gender Mainstreaming			First draft circulated in June 1999 to obtain feedback  Second draft circulated in August 1999	A National Seminar held on 3 June 1999 with key stake -holders to finalise the draft NGAP and to obtain consensus.
e. Preparation of Report of the National Gender Action Plan			Cabinet Approval in December 1999 Official Launching by the Prime Minister on 7 March 2000 on the occasion of International Women's Day	The draft NGAP sent to different relevant Ministries for formal approval in August 1999
f. Cabinet Approval and dissemination of Report				<u>NGAP completed on schedule</u>

Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
3. Identify Training needs of all key partners, design and implement appropriate Training Programmes	To develop national and institutional capacity (skills for analysing, assessing, designing gender-responsive programmes) for Gender Mainstreaming	PS(24) Focal points(24) NWC (5 Regional Committees) Women Grassroots level (850) Women Associations) Farmers Fisherwomen EPZ workers Public Officers (Police women, teachers etc NGO's -Ministry's staff (5)	<p>Training needs assessment were made by Dr S. Bunwaree. (August 1998)</p> <p>Discussions were held with UNDP and UNDP Consultants ( Mrs Thokozile, Mrs Sibanda and Mrs L. Chiwara) to include the assessment of training needs which will form part of the UNDP Document on Gender sensitisation and training strategy (GSTS) for the Gender Bureau. The production of the document was undertaken by Mrs S, Ragoobar, at the University of Mauritius.</p> <p>Meeting was also held with MIPAM to include Training on Gender and Gender Sensitisation as part of MIPAM Training Courses.</p>	<p>Training in gender analysis is part of the ministry's plan for year 2000. UNDP has provided funding for 2 specialists. However, the training is not going according to plan. This is an apt opportunity for the ministry to strengthen its own capacity, and should be carried out within schedule. The shortage of staff means that the only one member of staff cannot leave for training.</p> <p>Perhaps the ministry could consider recruiting a short term consultant, otherwise, there is a danger of continuing to depend on staff who do not have adequate technical capacity. The success of the implementation of the NGAP will depend greatly on technical expertise available to co-ordinate the identified activities.</p>

<p><b>Activities</b></p> <p>a. Training need assessment at different levels (Review of existing report on training needs)</p>		<p>Report on Gender Training needs.</p>	<p>Preparation of GSTS( Gender sensitisation and training strategy) which draws:the framework for all sensitisation, training at various levels</p>	<p>GSTS draft has already been prepared on the basis of information collected during consultations for preparation of NGAP. However, specific client-based training needs will need to be carried out to assess:</p> <p>(a) the level of gender awareness and gender knowledge at different levels</p> <p>(b) the technical gender skills in existence and/or needed at sector level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ministry needs to be clear about specific training needs at policy/decision making level and at implementation level (see the GSTS for details).</li> </ul>
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Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
b. Establishing a Training Team		<p>A Training Team has been identified and will be trained in one week TOT programme in August 1999 by UNDP Consultant Mrs Thokozile which will be followed by a two-day facilitator's programme prior to the Engendering Budget Seminar to be held in August 1999.</p> <p>An Engendering Budget Seminar financed by UNDP will be held in August</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A two-day Training Programme on gender issues (Gender concept, Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Analysis) was held in April 1999 by Mrs Thokozile UNDP Consultant to Gender focal points, members of the Advisory Committee on the Status of Women and members Of CHU.</li> <li>Dr M. Ladjali, TSS/Gender specialist from WHO conducted a two-day workshop on "Male involvement in Reproductive Health Programmes and Policies" to a team of Community Health Workers/Officers of the Ministry of Health/Action Familliale on 31 March and 1 April 1999.</li> <li>(ii) a two-day workshop to Youth Leaders and supervisors of Youth</li> </ul>	<p>Some training been carried out , with support from UNDP and a training consultant (Mrs Thokozile)</p> <p>Although some training has been carried out, it was not specifically TOT. This means that a gap still exists with regard to national capacity. The UNDP funded programme makes allowance for r capacity to compile context specific gender manuals. Can this be combined with a TOT?</p>



<p>c. Designing the training programme according to the assessment</p> <p>d. Training at the different levels</p>		<p>1999 for participants from Indian Ocean Commission by UNDP Consultants .</p> <p>It is being planned to conduct a one day seminar for Cabinet Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and high level officers on Gender issues in August 1999 using the same consultants from UNDP.</p> <p>One Training Manual</p>	<p>programmes on “ Exploring Gender Issues and Awareness Raising on 5 and 6 April 1999</p>	<p>To be provided under the GSTS</p>
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Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
4. Review, Design implement Gender focused Research programmes	1) Providing tools and information for better gender responsive planning (ii) Addressing the immediate need for change in policies (i.e.) allocation of budget	Report on Engendering budget	<p>“Sub-Regional Engendering Budget workshop” held in February 2000 with the assistance of CASE, South Africa, UNIFEM Harare and the Commonwealth Secretariat.</p> <p>The objectives were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To sensitise government officials on the need to be aware of and respond to gender issues with the context of macroeconomic policy; and</li> <li>• To build the capacity of the officials to integrate a gender analysis into national budgetary processes.</li> </ul> <p>The participating countries received practical knowledge to enhance the targeting of their national budgets and strengthen programme implementation by being able to determine the impact of expenditure programmes on men, women, girls and boys.</p>	

			<p>Report of the workshop circulated.</p> <p>As a follow-up of the workshop, it is proposed to conduct a pilot project involving the integration of a gender analysis into the budgetary processes of four line ministries(M/Agriculture, M/Social security, M/Education ,M/Health) for year 2000/2001 with planned expansion for the next and subsequent years. Each of the participating ministries has established a working group in order to conduct the gender analysis. The working group will collect, collate and analyse gender-disaggregated data and produce reports that reflect possible gender disparities and imbalances .It is intended that the report (a Gender Budget Statement)be presented to the Ministry of Finance in the context of the preparation of the Budget 2000/2001. This ministry will ensure the co-ordinating role.</p>	
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<p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>a. Review and Design guidelines for engendering Budget</p> <p>b. Disseminate the Report in Workshops with those preparing the Budget/focal points0</p>				
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Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
c. Assess gender impact of national Budgets		A Report on gender sensitivity of the Budget		There has been no initial assessment of the National Budget. This is to be done after several ministries have incorporated the concept of an engendered budget.
d. Assess the gender impact of social security programmes		Field based assessment report	Not yet undertaken	This is still to be undertaken.
e. Study the gender gaps in employment and promotion of opportunities for women in EPZ	Closing gender information gaps	A Report	Not yet undertaken	This is yet to be done and this activity will be carried out after the training for strengthening national capacity to engender Data collection and analysis
f. Study the gender gaps in Educational attainment				Same as above

- The research cycle will be approximately 18 months, but data analysis and dissemination may be carried out at regular intervals during the research cycle.

Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
5. Establishing a computerised data system within the Ministry to facilitate and informed policy Decision-making	To develop comprehensive data base. To develop assessment capacity (I) to establish a high level computerised documentation centre (Internet facilities ..etc (ii) to establish linkages with other Regional Centres		An officer from the Ministry of Information was assigned the responsibility of reviewing the documentation centre and to develop a comprehensive data base but left after a short period.	Technical capacity is the major issue but this is a system that is still very important. Efforts should be made to start putting this in place. The ministry has initiated several activities that, in future, will depend on data base and its availability to policy makers.

Priority List of actions/ programme	Objective	Expected Output	Actual Output	Remarks
<p>7. Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p><u>Activities</u></p> <p>a. Designing and monitoring tools.</p> <p>b. Monitoring the progress made in establishing the Gender Bureau.</p> <p>c. Progress made by the Gender Bureau in implementing its plan of action..</p> <p>d. Monitoring of International commitments to achieving Gender equality (e.g. CEDAW, Beijing, SADC)</p>	<p>To facilitate the monitoring progress made in achieving gender equality and the plan of action at all levels.</p>	<p>a. Regular Monitoring Reports/Guidelines/Tools</p> <p>b. Redesigned more gender focused programmes</p>	<p>To be done</p>	<p>The last monitoring was done in June 1999. Several recommendations were made then, with regard to capacity building of the Gender Bureau (especially regarding technical skills).</p> <p>The assessment of May 2000 still shows critical shortage of staff. But in spite of this, the ministry has made a lot of progress e. g the NGAP(an excellent document) has been produced; activities on engendering the budget have been initiated and some training has been carried out for a few categories of people.</p> <p>The shortage of staff, as well as lack of technical expertise will continue to slow the pace of the ministry, especially in the</p>

					<p>implementation of the NGAP. Even if the ministry has to recruit consultants, these will need to be supervised and monitored by a staff member who has competent technical skills.</p>
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Gender Bureau  
10 May 2000



## **C. INDICATORS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

### **1. Basic principles in gender mainstreaming**

The Ministry has an important role in coordinating the gender mainstreaming activities to be undertaken as part of implementing the National Gender Action Plan. In this regard the ministry should ensure that gender mainstreaming results in:

- Increased gender awareness and knowledge of gender issues
- Increased Gender sensitive institutions and
- Increased budgets and programs that address/ incorporate gender issues concerns and inequities/inequalities.
- Increased reduction (and eradication ) of gender inequality
- Gender sensitive practices within all institutions

### **2. In designing the monitoring indicators, the ministry has several levels that can be used as benchmarks**

#### ***At National Level:***

The National Gender Action Plan identified priority areas; so take each one and develops gender mainstreaming indicators.

#### ***At Regional Level:***

The SADC Gender Monitor provides regional benchmarks.

### **3. Mainstreaming Conditions for Gender**

#### **At Individual Attitude Level**

- a) Political will: What are the indicators that this exists ? Govt.'s, mission statement of interest to mainstreaming gender issues;
- b) Public Awareness of gender equality issues resulting from:
  - Awareness creation and dissemination of knowledge by govt.
  - Research and training on gender equality issues.

#### **At Institutional level (most systems):**

- a) Gender equality National and Sectoral Policies;
- b) Financial and Human Resources allocated in different sectors for implementing programmes addressing gender inequality;
- c) GSM comprising of : Gender equality machinery as the medium for mainstreaming – Gender Focal Points etc.;
- d) Expertise available.

#### **At Programme Level:**

Comprehensive knowledge of gender issues and gender relations resulting from:

- a) Disaggregated Research data;
- b) Training in gender and gender analysis specific;
- c) Participation of women in political, and public life as well in decision making process.

In the following chart, indicators for measuring gender equality have been identified. For ease of monitoring the implementation of the National Gender Action Plan (NGAP), which is the main document for gender mainstreaming, monitoring indicators for all the critical areas of concern should be developed with the relevant stakeholders.

**4. Indicators for gender mainstreaming area ngap critical:**  
**Gender Equality**

These indicators were developed and discussed by the Regional Advisor with the Gender Bureau staff.

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
To establish mechanisms for mainstreaming gender into policies, programmes and projects so as to ensure greater equality between men and women in all sectors	1. Establish an effective Gender Management System (GMS) to ensure mainstreaming of gender into all government policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate adequate budgetary and human resources to National Women Machinery to enable capacity building, implementation and monitoring of programmes</li> <li>• Give the National Advisory Committee on the Status of Women a legal status and define its role and objectives within the government machinery</li> <li>• Encourage private companies and parastatal bodies to designate Gender focal points within their organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effective GMS comprising of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MWCDFW (Gender Bureau)</li> <li>• -Advisory Committee on the Status of Women</li> <li>• -Interministerial Technical Committee of focal points</li> <li>• -Management Team of Permanent Secretaries in key Ministries</li> <li>• gender focal points established in government ministries, private sector, and parastatals.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective implementation and monitoring of the NGAP</li> <li>• Greater collaboration and coordination in the implementation of gender sensitive and gender equality programs</li> <li>• An empowered NACSW</li> <li>• Gender sensitive institution structures</li> </ul>	1999-2002	Gender Bureau MWFWD

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	2. Establish mechanisms and tools for monitoring gender mainstreaming and assessing impact of policies/projects on women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial and Human resources for regular monitoring in different sectors.</li> <li>Training in Gender monitoring to assess impact of policies/projects on women.</li> <li>Sector Gender Policy instruments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular monitoring and Reports</li> <li>Follow up on results.</li> <li>Revision of policy instruments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender Sensitive policies and projects in all sectors.</li> <li>Enhanced gender equality</li> </ul>	1999-2005	Gender Bureau MFWCDA 11 ministries Private Sector and Parastatals NGOs

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	3. Establish a Gender and Training Research Centre and Identify research needs and encourage institutions to allocate funds for research in critical areas in order to provide useful tools for policy making to promote gender equality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research funds allocated to gender related research</li> <li>• Training in gender focused research</li> <li>• Financial resources for a sitting up of a Regional Gender Training and Research Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research needs identified by various sectors and institutions.</li> <li>• Training Reports and Guidelines for gender focused research.</li> <li>• More local level participation in research activities</li> <li>• Skilled Gender Researchers.</li> <li>• A Regional Gender and Training Centre established.</li> <li>• Number of people from research institutions and government statistical offices trained.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular availability of gender disaggregated data for dissemination</li> <li>• Data/Research based policies and programmes in all institutions.</li> <li>• Specialised institutions in data collection more gender sensitive.</li> <li>• More targeted and more effective programs</li> <li>• Regular training and research programs established</li> </ul>	1999-2005	Gender Bureau, MFWFCD Sector Ministries Mauritius Research Council UOM MIPAM MIE TEC

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
To create greater gender awareness and capacity among stakeholders for effective gender mainstreaming	1. Establish a Gender Sensitisation and Training Strategy as well as programs, with the collaboration of relevant ministries, NGO's and institutions	Financial and Technical resources for assessment of the level of awareness and skills in gender issues  Gender training of trainers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gender training needs assessment reports</li> <li>2. Document (GSTS) outlining Sensitisation and training strategy</li> <li>3. Gender Training programs designed</li> <li>4. Core group of trainers to undertake gender sensitisation and gender education programmes at all levels.</li> <li>5. TOT reports</li> </ol>	Gender training programmes established with the University of Mauritius, MIPAM and other training organisations	1999-2001	Gender Bureau MFWFCD NGO'S Gender focal points NACSW MIPAM UOM MIE TEC

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	2. Build capacity in the public and private sectors through gender training programmes in order to (i) to encourage a change of attitudes (ii) to improve skills and competence for gender analysis and policy formulation.	Financial resources and time allocated to gender training in different sectors and institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender training reports</li> <li>• Number of people trained at policy, programme and local level.</li> <li>• Improved skills and competence for gender analysis and policy formulation A regular programme of sensitisation on gender issues for different target groups, including middle and senior level management, trade unions, parliamentarians and other opinion leaders.</li> <li>• Gender issues incorporated in civic education at all levels</li> </ul>	<p>A gender sensitised culture</p> <p>Gender equity policies developed and established in different public and private organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender sensitive practices in the public and private sectors e.g elimination of gender bias in all civil service practices, including nomenclatures in use in occupational classifications, and causes for lack of women in these areas ; redress anomaly in wages and salaries in similar jobs for women and men.</li> </ul>		



Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	3. Build institutional capacity for gender responsive budgeting and preparation of a gender sensitive appraisal of the national budget .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget allocation for building capacity in designing gender sensitive budgets</li> <li>• Training in senior officers and policy makers in gender budgeting</li> <li>• Specialised consultancy services in Gender Budgeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No of staff trained from different ministries in gender budgeting</li> <li>• Training reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender Budget statements</li> <li>• Gender responsive national and sectoral budgets</li> <li>• Enhanced gender Equity/eq uality</li> </ul>	2000-2005	Gender Bureau Ministries UNDP

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
to enhance women's capacity and increase their participation in decision and policy making	Institutional level Encourage institutions to develop an enabling environment for women 's advancement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Budgetary allocation to Research on women and public life</li><li>A research on Women in Public Life with special reference to the cultural, economic and social factors that inhibit their participation in decision making</li><li>Development of policies within political machineries</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>legal reforms to prohibit the use of language which encourage gender stereotyping in public speeches and declarations including political meetings</li><li>A directory of women who would be eligible for appointment to decision making positions</li><li>Gender sensitive laws</li><li>Research report on women's decision making</li><li>Gender sensitive and affirmative policies in political parties</li><li><b>Lobbying and advocacy training for gender equality</b></li></ul>	gender balance in all Boards, Commissions and Councils, including Commissions responsible for selection and promotion of personnel.  At least 30% representation of women in decision making(Parliament, Top level management, District,municipal and village councils)  Gender Equitable participation in all decision-making positions.	1999-2005	Gender Bureau All ministries Political parties Parliamentarians NGO's Private sector Parastatal bodies

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	2. Establish leadership and assertiveness, as well as creative thinking training programme for women and girls	Allocation of budget for women's leadership training. Training for women and girls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of women trained in leadership and assertiveness.</li> <li>• Number of girls trained in creative thinking.</li> <li>• Leadership Training Programmes designed for training women and girls.</li> <li>• Training reports.</li> <li>• An emerging Women Leaders Programme established to encourage leadership.</li> <li>• Reward Programme/System established for successful women role models/mentors</li> </ul>			

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	3. Mobilise the community (both men and women) to support and promote women candidates for political and decision making positions at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial and Technical for Advocacy and lobbying skills at different levels (community, political)</li> <li>Training for women's associations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lobbying and Advocacy Training Programmes for Community Mobilization.</li> <li>Number of women's associations training in and participating in decision making.</li> </ul>	Increased/effectiveness of Women's Associations to participate in decision making		

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
Improve the image of women in media	1. Enhance Gender Sensitivity and gender awareness of the media	Resources for training the media personnel and women/and or associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender sensitization training programme for the media.</li> <li>Media Training reports.</li> <li>Number of women and men in the media who are trained in gender sensitive reporting.</li> <li>Number of media communications in which women leaders are positively portrayed</li> <li>Legislative provisions against pornography and exploitation of images of women through the media, including internet.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender sensitive code of ethics established for the media.</li> <li>Increased number of women participating in positive portrayal of women in the media.</li> <li>Mass media communication on more gender sensitive and portrayal of women more positively.</li> </ul>		

Objective	Activities	Input Indicators	Output Indicators	Outcome Indicators	Time Frame	Responsible body/ persons
	2. Establish training programmes for women and their associations in the use of new communication technologies, including access to internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication Technologies training programme in place.</li> <li>• Communication technologies put in place for training.</li> <li>• Number of women trained in communication technologies.</li> <li>• Number of publications, and newsletters initiated at community level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use of new communication technology by women in different sectors.</li> <li>• Enhanced community level.</li> <li>• Communication among women, through the media.</li> </ul>			

## **6. MEETING WITH THE GENDER FOCAL POINT FROM VARIOUS MINISTRIES: 10 MAY (SEE MINUTES ATTACHED FOR FULL REPORT)**

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the follow-up process for finalizing monitoring indicators for implementation of the National Gender Action Plan (NGAP). It is expected that indicators will be developed for each of the priority area of concern in the HGAP. Working with the staff of the Gender Bureau, the Regional Advisor, developed the indicators for the chapter on Gender equality, since this is the key chapter that outlines the gender mainstreaming activities. The exercise was used as a training opportunity for the Gender Bureau only member of staff, who may have to work with the gender focal points to develop indicators for other sectors in the NGAP.

The discussion with the gender focal points highlighted the key concepts of gender mainstreaming. The indicators for mainstreaming were also presented and discussed. It was agreed that the gender focal points, working with the gender bureau staff would attempt to develop indicating for the rest of the priority areas. The Gender Bureau would then transmit the result of the work to the Regional Advisor who would advise on finalization of the indicators. It was noted, however, that all the gender focal points need substantive technical gender analysis training in general and skills in designing monitoring indicators in particular. The Ministry of women looks to different Ministries to facilitate the implementation of the NGAP. Without adequate gender analysis and programming skills and knowledge, the process of implementation will be hindered. Other issues discussed were:

- a) the lack of consistency of gender focal points. It was earlier discussed and agreed that ministries should ensure that gender focal points (at Senior Level) should be appointed. This was a way of ensuring that when meetings of gender focal points are called, there will be consistent participation. However, it was noted that this is still not happening. The Ministry was again advised to write to all the Ministries to remind them of the need (and value) of maintaining a regular group of gender focal points.

- b) The need for gender analysis training for the gender focal points: One of the most immediate needs is training in designing/development of indicators. This is particularly important at this time as each of the sectors is initiating activities identified in the National Gender Actions Plan.



### **III. MONITORING OF THE MICRO-CREDIT PROGRAMME**

1. The micro-credit programme allows for regular monitoring by ECA during the first three years of its establishment. The monitoring, in its second year of the implementation, focussed on assessing the management of the programme as well as reviewing progress made in resolving some of the programme related constraints that had been identified in an earlier monitoring exercise. It should be pointed out from the beginning that not enough time was allocated to the assessment of the micro-credit programme. One of the major constraints was that the programme coordinator was not able to allocate enough time, nor to delegate another staff, for full discussions and field visits. The assessment of the programme (except for Rodrigues) is based on very limited contact with the staff. While it was possible to meet with the recipients of the funds in Rodrigues, no field visits were undertaken in Mauritius.

**It is strongly recommended that the next and final monitoring visit should be field based. In addition, the final monitoring by ECA should focus mainly on assessment of the impact of the micro-credit programme on the beneficiaries.**

2. **General progress:** Some progress has been made since the last monitoring visit. For example:

- The entrepreneurship unit has now been established by an act of parliament as a National Council for Women Entrepreneurs. This gives the status of small scale women entrepreneurs more visibility, and hopefully, this new status will also translate into allocation of more funds, not only for micro-lending but also for establishment of a stronger and more effective staff capacity;
- A network of support services seems to be developing although the staff of the council needs to have a plan for utilization of these services;
- The advisory committee is fully functional and continues to give guidance to the staff;

- The programme continues to attract funding for micro lending;
- After the last monitoring visit, two important recommendation that were made have been implemented as follows:
  - a) The women in Rodrigues are now able to send their commodities to Mauritius for sale, through the market centre and with assistance of the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development. This is a very important service for the women in Rodrigues whose major constraint for business expansion is limited market outlet. However, the major problem the women voiced is that it takes long for them to receive the money from sales. It is noted that this slowness may be related mainly to the slowness in sales. The council staff should try to establish whether quality of goods is an issue and advise on quality control. As the staff of the council and the market centre gain experience in supporting the Rodrigues women entrepreneurs, it is hoped that the sale of goods and transfer of funds will be accelerated.
  - b) In the last visit, it was observed that the fact that all loan beneficiaries have to travel from all parts of Mauritius to Port Louis to transact their banking business was inconvenient and not cost effective. The Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) has now established six branches and the women no longer have to travel to Port Louis. The role of the bank in facilitating the micro-credit programme is commendable. In both Rodrigues and Mauritius, it was observed that the DBM is servicing the women entrepreneurs efficiently but also with genuine professional concern.
- The most noteworthy and pleasing observation is that the women entrepreneurs are making their loan repayments, contrary to the initial fears of the bank. Out of 122 beneficiaries, it was reported that only 2 women in Mauritius and only one woman in Rodrigues have been unable to repay. The bank acknowledges that the savings are slower and therefore repayment is also slower. But, so far

almost everybody is paying back, this in spite of having to pay what is a high interest rate for poor women (and in some cases in Rodrigues, quite poor).

### 3. Some key concerns and recommendations:

#### 3.1 Staffing situation and effectiveness of the Council

The staffing situation of the Entrepreneurship Council in 2000 is worse off than it was in 1999. There has been no new recruitment, although a desirable staffing situation was discussed and appropriate recommendations made. This, together with the fact that some staff have left, makes the Council ineffective. Some of the indications of this ineffectiveness are that:

- a) The programme coordinator has not been able to settle down and to study and understand all the different aspects of the programme. He had not “seen/read” the monitoring reports and was therefore not able to address the key problems of the programme that had been identified in 1999. These problems are still posing challenges for the entrepreneurs. For example, women entrepreneurs are not able to penetrate the markets because they are not conversant with the regulations, and in some cases the standards set are too high for the women’s products.
- b) The staff has not been able to monitor the women entrepreneurs, and they cannot therefore provide required services – or link the women with the appropriate service providers. During the last monitoring visit, major risks were identified and benchmarks were discussed and agreed upon. No one had referred to them since then and the Project Manager did not know they exist.
- c) The staff were supposed to make monitoring visits once every three months, but they have only made these visits once in the last twelve months were in Rodrigues. Obviously, by the time these visits were made in March, many women were facing a

lot of operational problems. As one staff member put it “we are all so overwhelmed, we are not able to look back where we are coming from.”

### 3.2 Recommendations:

- i. During the mission, it was noted that the micro-credit programme is marketed as one of the most important programmes of the Ministry. However, it does not have the requisite financial and technical requirements for sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness. The council must be given financial capacity to recruit staff with appropriate skills mix according to the goals and objectives of the programme. There should be enough skills mix to provide support or identify necessary support services. The Project Manager should be required to draw up a structure and appropriate skills mix to be put in place, and a regular monitoring schedule.
- ii. The only two technical staff on the programme are on contract. They have been able to maintain a certain level of momentum of the programme even when they have lacked effective leadership. However, their contract situation puts programme sustainability at very high risk. Considering that they have the institutional memory and the only technical expertise available, their contract situation should be addressed.
- iii. On monitoring: The biggest concern is that there is no effective monitoring, although some major monitoring indicators were agreed upon last year. While this problem is related to the staffing situation, it is strongly recommended that the Council explore all means of monitoring the progress of women entrepreneurs benefiting from the programme. Perhaps a temporary solution would be to hire a local expert every 3 – 4 months for a period of 2 – 3 weeks to monitor the women who have borrowed at different phases. So far, ECA has provided an annual monitoring visit. In the case of Rodrigues, this has been the only time monitoring visits are made. The council will have to find local and practical ways of addressing this issue, until there is enough staffing capacity.

- iv. It is recommended that the final monitoring visit by ECA in 2001 should focus on impact evaluation. Some of the major questions that need to be asked at that time are, how many women below or on the poverty line have been helped to transform their lives under the programme, in what way are the lives of women and their families being transformed and what are some of the major success factors of the programme?
- v. This evaluation should be a tripartite one, carried out by ECA, the Ministry and the Bank. The programme manager at the Council will need to programme this exercise in his/her work plan, so that it does not end up in a haphazard manner. This evaluation will be crucial in determining whether the programme is truly focusing on empowering women on and below the poverty line. Although this was the original objective, there are fears that this objective may be lost because the staff who have a time constraint find it more difficult and time consuming to work with, or reach the poorer women of the society.

3.3 Review of the guidelines: Although there has been no evaluation or effective monitoring, and in some cases no clarity about the existing guidelines, it was noted that some staff members are anxious to revise the guidelines. Whatever revisions are made, they should be of the type that will make it easier to focus on women on the poverty line. In Mauritius, there are many other credit programmes that are available for the men and women above the poverty line so the Grameen type of credit scheme should be left to serve the purpose for which it was designed.

It was noted that the poverty line has been revised to include women who are receiving up to 6000 Rupees a month. While this may not affect the programme substantially, the proposal to extend the criteria to 8,000 Rupees may negatively affect the poverty alleviation objective of the programme.

3.4 Loan payment and savings: The Bank has observed that women's savings are coming in very slowly and that this is affecting the rate of repayment, although in reality there are hardly any defaulters. The reasons for low savings must be ascertained. However, one way of relieving the pressure for the beneficiaries is to reconsider and revise the interest rate. Currently, the Grameen programme is charging 8%. This is very high especially for women in Rodrigues (where other programmes are lending at much less interest) and especially for women who have started agricultural enterprises. The interest rate on agricultural loans is not more than 3%.

3.4.1 Recommendations:

- i. The Ministry should invest the necessary time to renegotiate with the Ministry of Finance to reduce the interest rate charged under this micro-credit programme to 3% for all the beneficiaries. Originally it was understood that if the money for the Grameen Program was coming from DBM an interest rate had to be paid. If the source of the credit finance is no longer the bank but the government, which has instituted a comprehensive poverty alleviation program, then the Ministry should make a strong case to relieve the "poor" women of what is currently a relatively high interest rate.
- ii. The group principle was said to be one of the strong aspects of the guidelines and the staff in Mauritius and Rodrigues strongly recommended that it should be maintained. However, given that there is very good recorded repayment, in the very few cases where the women have not been able to pay, the group members should be allowed to borrow. This could be revised on a case by case basis.
- iii. For Rodrigues, the persistent problem is that the guidelines stated are usually not followed by the staff based in Mauritius. The result is a tendency to redefine the "unread" Guidelines and to give confusing instructions to the staff in Rodrigues. It was suggested last year that when new staff join, they should be indicated through a

short training on what the programme is and the guidelines. This applies even at the programme management level. In addition to this, it is strongly recommended that the staff recruit a coordinator in Rodrigues, this coordinator should be brought to Mauritius for induction. If this is neglected, the current arrangements arrangements will stifle the programme in Rodrigues.

- 3.5 The biggest constraint that was identified, especially for the women in Rodrigues is the weak support service structure. As was observed in 1999, unless the weak infrastructure, especially the water shortage in Rodrigues is not resolved, the women's agricultural enterprises in particular have very little chance of survival. This problem was clearly articulated by the women in Rodrigues, especially those involved in vegetable growing and other agricultural enterprises. Another constraint is the lack of consistency, in supporting the small scale farmers, by the department of agriculture. The poultry and piggery farmers are experiencing major problems because of lack of effective support systems. In Rodrigues, the problem is compounded by lack of regular/full time staff on the micro-credit programme to follow-up, identify the problems and link the women with appropriate services. In both Rodrigues and Mauritius, however, it was reported that many women have taken initiative to discuss with the bank and agree on convenient repayment schedules. It should be noted that one of the characteristics of being poor is lack of information on available supports/services and inability's to move from one place to another lobbying for services. In the face of this disempowerment, the Ministry and the Entrepreneurship Council in particular need to ensure that the women have access to information and services, If the loans they obtain are to be utilized effectively. In 1999 it was recommended that the Centre. Unit staff should compile and disseminate a directory of support services available, this recommendation should be implemented.

- 3.6 Recommendation on common facility: The Ministry has initiated discussions with the government of India to identify (and supply ??) appropriate technologies for the women entrepreneurs. This should provide a welcome relief for women entrepreneurs. The

possibility of a common facility for women in Rodrigues (similar to, but on a smaller scale than that in Mauritius) was discussed with the Island Secretary and the idea was welcomed. There are many women involved in agro-processing, (some have very high quality products) but they are all using manual production processing. It is strongly recommended that the Ministry assesses the cost effectiveness of a common facility and discusses with the Ministry of Rodrigues a joint programme to set up and equip a common facility. Initially, it could provide a facility for women involved in agro-processing and handicrafts, the two activities Rodrigues is well known for.

3.7 Incentives for repayment: Currently, it is reported, there are no serious defaulters, although savings are slower, and affecting the rate of repayment. The following are suggested for discussion as a basis for introducing an incentive programme to encourage faster loan repayments:

- For those who are making regular payments, reduce and/or freeze the interest rate to enable the women to pay back the equivalent of what was borrowed. To those who are unable to pay back, extend the period for loan repayment and freeze the interest rate of the same time.

Considering that up to 98% of the women are still making their payments, the above suggestions will work as incentives to enable the women make reasonable savings. In the meantime, the Ministry should make attempts to renegotiate and a lower interest rate 2 - 3% for the women.



Notes of meeting of Gender Focal Points with Dr H. Tadia to discuss monitoring indicators held on 10 May 2000 at 13.00 hrs in the Conference Room of the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare & Child Development.

Present:

Dr Amita Pathack, Ministry of Health  
Ms Zahira Auladin, Ministry of Industry and Commerce  
Mrs Kooswantee Doolhur, Ministry of External Communications  
Mrs B. Gurrib, Ministry of Arts and Culture  
Mr O. Jankee, Ministry of Social Security and National Solidarity  
Ms Francine Ng, Ministry of Women, Family Welfare & Child Development (from Central Statistics Office)  
Mr T. Pawan, Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations  
Mrs M. Mudaliar, Ministry of Agriculture  
Miss M. Ramborun, Ministry for Rodrigues  
Ms U. Rughoo, Family Counselling Service, Ministry of Women, Family Welfare & Child Development  
Miss R. Munrakhan, Adviser, Domestic Violence Unit  
Mr S. Ghoorah, Planning & Research Unit Officer  
Mrs K. Upadhyaya, Ministry of Economic Development, Productivity and Regional Development  
Mrs P. Rugjee, Ministry of Public Utilities  
Dr H. Tadia, ECA Regional/Adviser (Facilitator)  
Miss S. Canakiah, Gender Bureau, Ministry of Women, Family Welfare & Child Development

1. Miss S. Canakiah welcomed the members present and presented Dr H. Tadia, ECA Regional Adviser who was on mission to the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development to monitor the work of the Gender Bureau.
2. The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss the Implementation Plan Matrix of the National Gender Action Plan.
3. Two papers on Indicators for Gender Mainstreaming and the Implementation Matrix Plan for the first critical area of the NGAP : Gender Equality, were circulated at the meeting.
- 3.2 Dr H. Tadia explained the basic principles in gender mainstreaming and in designing the monitoring indicators. She also pointed out that the NGAP is part of the implementation of the Regional Agreements - Dakar/Beijing 1995 as well as the SADC Gender and Development.
4. She also explained that the Ministry of Women, Family Welfare and Child Development being the co-ordinating Ministry oversees gender mainstreaming at national level whereas gender focal points look at gender issues at specific sectors. Concerning our attitude in terms of belief on Gender Equality, if the answer is positive, do we want it to happen at our place of work ? at our home ? We need to explore our own personal convictions that lead up to gender issues at our place of work/home.
- 4.2 The Gender Focal Points presented the gender mainstreaming process in their various

" sectors.

#### 4.3 Ministry of Health

In relation to the various health promotion projects, the gender focal point makes sure that projects are gender-sensitive at the level of project formulation, implementation. One project which falls under the Strategic Action of the NGAP - the Dietary Counselling Service is in the pipeline. Statistics are disaggregated at the Ministry of Health.

#### 4.4 Ministry of Labour

The Ministry of Labour is concerned with enforcement of labour legislation with respect to allocation of work to men and women. Wherever there are some legislation between men and women based on gender discriminations, they are referred to National Remuneration Board e.g fixing wages on job content basis rather based on gender.

Before the ILO Convention No. 100 will be ratified, legislation must first be gender neutral and meanwhile the Ministry of Labour is looking at the legislation. Reports of the SADC Employment and Labour Sector (ELS) has been circulated.

#### 4.5 Ministry of Social Security

If we consider that child rearing is a national duty at par with many developing countries, parenting leave has not been considered in Mauritius. Dr Tadia raised the question as to how best can we solve underlying problems? If we think of gender mainstreaming at sectoral level, let us see at the picture behind and see how best we can make it gender sensitive.

#### 4.6 Ministry of Industry

No gender policy at the Ministry of Industry.

In the EPZ Sector, there are very few women at decision making level. The Ministry of Industry organised career forum for students. The majority of the 90,000 workers in the EPZ sector are women but if we consider the quality of life of these women, very few schemes have been set up by the Ministry of Industry for these women.

#### 4.7 Public Utilities

The sector is a male dominated area where there is only 1 women engineer. Gender mainstreaming has a role in improving the situation of women. In developing countries, fortunately we have strong family ties and we cannot ignore the role of the family in the process of gender mainstreaming. The style of parenting has an influence on the child as each one is a product of a family structure.

#### 4.8 Domestic Violence Unit

The Implementation of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act has a gender perspective. It is now intended to carry out training for perpetrators.

#### 4.9 Family Counselling Service

The clients are mostly women.

### 5 After discussion it was agreed that:

5.1 A letter should be sent to all ministries to ensure that the representation at the meeting of gender of focal points are senior officers and that for consistency, one technician/one at policy level should attend the meeting.

5.2 The first implementation plan matrix for the area of Gender Equality of the NGAP was worked out by Dr H. Tadia and Ms S. Canakiah. The other chapters need to be reviewed out in collaboration with the gender focal points. It was agreed to continue with the chapter on Health, send it on email to Dr H. Tadia for comments and views and the rest will follow on the same guidelines.

5.3 For the chapter on Rodrigues, a team comprising of Commission Leaders/Gender Bureau/Ministry of Rodrigues should finalise the implementation plan.