

## Terms of Reference

### **Recruitment of a National Consultant (Economist)**

#### **Study on the Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak in Mauritius**

|                     |                                                   |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| BENEFICIARY COUNTRY | Republic of Mauritius                             |
| FOCAL AREA          | Crisis Prevention and Recovery                    |
| GOVERNMENT AGENCIES | Government of Mauritius                           |
| DURATION            | 30 Working Days                                   |
| DUTY STATION        | Off-Duty Station                                  |
| STARTING DATE       | 12 June 2020 over a period 2.5 months             |
| PROJECT TITLE       | Addressing the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 |

#### **A. Background**

The impact of COVID-19 is an unprecedented human crisis in the history of the United Nations, with far reaching consequences on people's physical and psychological health, and multiplier effects on the socio-economic and political landscape of countries globally. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) estimates that anywhere between 300,000 and 3.3 million African people could lose their lives as a direct result of COVID-19, depending on the intervention measures taken to stop the spread. UNECA also states that "the impact on African economies could be the slowing of growth to 1.8 per cent in the best-case scenario or a contraction of 2.6 per cent in the worst case. This has the potential to push 27 million people into extreme poverty". Similarly, McKinsey & Company's <sup>1</sup> analysis of the ramifications for growth within the African continent is poignant. In a scenario whereby COVID-19 were contained at the global and Africa level, it is estimated that growth would drop to 0.4 per cent. In the case that there is a lack of containment of the virus globally and within Africa, it is estimated that the rate would drop to -3.9 per cent, in the absence of fiscal stimulus packages or currency devaluations.

The World Health Organization<sup>2</sup> (WHO) reports 4,589,526 confirmed COVID-19 cases globally, with 310,391 reported deaths as of 18 May 2020; out of which, there are reportedly 61,163 confirmed cases in Africa. In Mauritius, as at 17 May 2020, there were no reported cases of COVID-19, with previously 332 positive cases recorded in the Country (40% females) and 10

<sup>1</sup> McKinsey & Company, April 2020, "Tackling COVID-19 in Africa", available online at <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/middle-east-and-africa/tackling-covid-19-in-africa>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation, 18 May 2020, "COVID-19 Dashboard", available online at <https://covid19.who.int>, Last Accessed 18 May 2020

deaths<sup>3</sup>. The WHO<sup>4</sup> reports that there are around 13 top priority countries in the African region, including Mauritius, that have had direct exposure to China. As its primary focus, the WHO has supported active screening in the airports in Mauritius and the other vulnerable countries.

## **B. Introduction- The Context of Mauritius**

The Human Development Index report of 2019 demonstrates that Mauritius ranked high in the human development category ranking 66<sup>th</sup> of 189 countries with HDI value of 0.796. The Gender Inequality Index ranked Mauritius 82<sup>nd</sup> out of 162 countries with the value of 0.369. In terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, Mauritius improved its ranking between 2017 to 2018 from 112 to 109 out of 149 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index scale<sup>5</sup>.

Mauritius has performed very well in various indices such as World Bank Doing Business 2020, Global Competitiveness Index 2019 and Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2019 and was seen as a model to replicate in the African Region. The country has continued to record positive economic growth, with a goal of reaching a High-Income Economy by 2030. Growth is estimated to have reached 3.8% of GDP from 2015-2019 by tourism, financial services, retail and wholesale trade, and ICT sectors<sup>6</sup>. The IMF forecasts a growth of 3.8% for 2020<sup>7</sup>, however due to the coronavirus pandemic which are affecting all countries around the world, it is unlikely that the economic situation of Mauritius will remain same.

On 18 March 2020, the Prime Minister Pravind K. Jugnauth confirmed that there were three cases of COVID-19 in Mauritius and declared a "Veille Sanitaire". By *General Notice No. 458 of 2020* under *Section 78 of the Public Health Act*, and *Orders 459 and 460 of the Quarantine (Quarantinable Diseases) Regulations 2020*, Mauritius closed its borders for the conveyance of goods and people in a bid to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Mauritius subsequently witnessed an exponential increase in number cases, with the latest official figures of 17 May 2020 showing that the country had registered 332 cases, however, there were no new cases registered since 26 April 2020. As at 17 May 2020,<sup>8</sup> there had been 322 patients that had been successfully treated in Mauritius, with 149 Passengers in Quarantine; 61,921 Rapid Antigen tests and 25,256 PCR tests effected.

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<sup>3</sup>Ministry of Health and Wellness, 17 May 2020, COVID-19 Communique, available online at <http://www.govmu.org/English/Pages/ViewAllCommuniquecovid19.aspx>, last accessed 18 May 2020.

<sup>4</sup>WHO, 31 January 2020, "WHO Ramps up Preparedness for Novel Corona Virus in the African Region", Available Online at <https://www.afro.who.int/news/who-ramps-preparedness-novel-coronavirus-african-region>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020.

<sup>5</sup> Human Development Report 2019, December 2019, Available online at [http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr\\_theme/country-notes/MUS.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/MUS.pdf), Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>6</sup>AFDB, April 2020, Mauritius Economic Outlook, available online at <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/southern-africa/mauritius/mauritius-economic-outlook>, last accessed 14 May 2020.

<sup>7</sup>International Monetary Fund, April 2019, "IMF Country Report No 19/108", Available Online at <http://www.imf.org/>, ref 1 MUSEA2019001

<sup>8</sup>The Lancet, Info-Mauritius, 8 April 2020, "Coronavirus Statistics", Available online at <http://www.info-mauritius.com/english/coronavirus-local-global-statistics.html/>, Last accessed 9 April 2020 and <http://www.govmu.org/English/Pages/ViewAllCommuniquecovid19.aspx>

The figures show that there are high prevalence infections among men with 62% while 38% for women. The death rate for confirmed cases is 4.7% for males and 2.8 % for females, a figure which is almost double<sup>9</sup>.

The Authorities estimate that, if it were not for the rapid lockdown and strict measures taken right from the onset, the impact of COVID would have been higher for Mauritius, as compared to other countries within the sub-region, as Mauritius has a high incidence of comorbidities (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, hypertension, cancer)<sup>10</sup>. Concurrently, the WHO notes that the public health eco-system of countries characterized by a high prevalence of HIV, and other co-morbidities can increase the severity of the impact of COVID-19 with a resulting strain on the public health system<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, with an ageing population in Mauritius, there is a concern that this segment of the population may be more at risk of contracting the virus. In the same vein, Migrant workers remain a vulnerable cohort, especially considering their living conditions (in common dormitories, in some instances, and the language barrier with limited access to language and culturally appropriate information, that may exacerbate their risks during pandemics and post-recovery periods.

As interventionist measures, the Ministry of Health and Wellness converted 27 locations across the island to quarantine wards, including isolation wards to house people impacted by COVID-19, hotels and 2 hospitals (both Souillac and ENT) is now fully dedicated to treating COVID-19 cases<sup>11</sup>. Government intends to expand locations with the evolution of the pandemic. Government is further working in collaboration with the private sector to upscale its bedding services should the recorded cases increase. As far as Mauritius is concerned, the initial lock down was set to 2<sup>nd</sup> April and was extended to 15<sup>th</sup> April and then to 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020, with a staggered release till 1 June 2020. Similar quarantine measures are applicable within the Republic of Mauritius (Rodrigues and Agalega). It is noted that no cases have been reported in the outer islands as at 08 April 2020<sup>12</sup>.

As Mauritius moved from its Covid-19 readiness to a response plan, on 25 March 2020, Government announced distribution of 35,000 food packs to vulnerable families registered under the Social Register Mechanism that has been established with the support of the UNDP. Furthermore, Government announced a series of interventionist measures to assist workers both in the formal and informal economy for their economic empowerment. These include, *inter alia* a Wage Assistance Scheme, Self-Employed Assistance Scheme for the informal sector. As of 18

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<sup>9</sup>ibid

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Mauritius, 2000, "Housing and Population Survey, Analysis Report: Volume VI- Health & Quality of Life, Morbidity and Mortality", Available Online at <http://statsmauritius.gov.mu.org/English/Documents/census.pdf>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>11</sup> See different Communiqués from 16 March 2020 to 07 April 2020 in respect to addressing COVID-19. These include, conversation of Hospitals, removal of VAT on hand sanitisers and Masks; reduced operating hours of public transport, e-learning access to students, delivery of potatoes/onions/garlic seeds; opening hours and operations of supermarkets, workplace access permit during curfew (amongst others) Available online at <http://www.govmu.org/English/Pages/ViewAllCommuniquecovid19.asp>

<sup>12</sup> Government Information Service, 26 March 2020, Available Online at <http://www.govmu.org/English/News/Pages/Covid-19-cases-soar-to-81.aspx>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

April, 2020<sup>13</sup>, there were 160,000 beneficiaries engaged in the informal sector who had received the Self-Employed Assistance Scheme (SEAS). Additionally, the Government has set up the Wage Assistance Scheme which relates to an economic measure through the Mauritius Revenue Authority<sup>14</sup> to provide a Government wage subsidy to Employers, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that all employees are duly paid their salary for the month of March 2020. The measure was subsequently extended.

Other Moratoriums have also been announced as well as amendments to Regulation 13(2) within the Public Health Act on the Prevention and Mitigation of Infection Disease (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020, namely, The Consumer Protection (Price and Supplies Control) Act 1998 and the Consumer Protection (Consumer Goods) (Maximum Mark-Up) Regulations 1998 have been amended with effect from 20 March 2020 to control the price of Face Masks, Hand Sanitizers and Respirators and the removal of VAT on Masks and Health Sanitizers; Taxpayers who are unable to submit returns or effect payment of tax due to the lockdown will not be charged any penalty or interest for late submission/payment; making necessary arrangements to ensure learning from home measures on national television, by students, during the current national CoVID-19 confinement; amongst other measures<sup>15</sup>, in a bid to temporarily alleviate the immediate felt economic and social impact on different segments of the population.

It is to be noted that around 27.3% of total government expenditure and 7.0% of the Gross Domestic Products (GDP) at market prices is related to Social Security. With the increased number of schemes announced by the Government, it is now estimated that Government has injected MUR 2 billion as a social safety net to alleviate the socio-economic impacts of Covid-19. The Bank of Mauritius has announced a number of measures in support of addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on households, exchange markets and the economy<sup>16</sup>. These include an extension of 6 months for capital repayment on household loans; introduction of a Special Foreign Currency (USD) Line of Credit for Operators with foreign currency earnings, including Small and Medium Enterprises(SMEs); a swap arrangement with commercial banks to support import-oriented

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<sup>13</sup>See Communiqué 31 March 2020 <http://www.govmu.org/English/Documents/Plan%20d'assistance%20secteur%20informel.pdf>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

See Top FM Media Center, Available Online at <https://topfmradio.com/media-center/news/self-employed-assistance-scheme-le-gouvernement-versera-rs-2550-au-secteur-informel-une-aide-sans-precedent-qui-beneficie-160-000-personnes-deja-avance-renganaden-padayachy>

<sup>14</sup>See Communiqué 23 March 2020, <https://www.mra.mu/download/WageAssistanceScheme230320.pdf>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>15</sup> For a complete list, See <http://www.govmu.org/English/Pages/ViewAllCommuniquecovid19.aspx>

<sup>16</sup>Bank of Mauritius, 23 March 2020, "COVID-19 Support Programme-Additional Measures to Households and Businesses", Available online at <https://www.bom.mu/media/actions-regarding-covid-19/bank-mauritius-covid-19-support-programme-additional-measures-support-households-and->, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>17</sup> See also Economic Development Bank, Mauritius, 13 March 2020, "Support Plan, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development", Available Online at <https://www.edbmauritius.org/newsroom/posts/2020/march/the-minister-of-finance-economic-planning-and-development-announces-government-s-initiatives-in-response-to-covid-19/>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

businesses; Bank of Mauritius announced the reduction of 0.5 percentage point in the Key Repo Rate, i.e., from 3.35% to 2.85%; and waiving of fees applicable on shared ATM services<sup>11</sup>.

The Bank of Mauritius estimated a GDP growth rate of 2.6-2.8%, with a headline inflation of 1.5%<sup>17</sup> however, now it is foreseen by analysis in the local media that there will be a contraction of 5% with the impact of COVID-19<sup>18</sup>. The impact will bear both social and economic dimensions with multiplier and domino effects are yet to be seen, namely direct health impact of the population and social consequences including for gendered relations; and the impact on the tourism industry, falls in commodity prices, trade disruptions, and potential drops in investment and finance flows. In this connection, the Government has injected MUR 9 billion through its Support Programme for Business Enterprises.

### C. The Gendered Impact of COVID-19

Women and girls face differentiated impacts from crises, they are also already on the forefronts of the preparedness and response efforts and offer capacities, strengths and leadership that are crucial to effective response. The Centre for Global Development<sup>14</sup> reports that experience from the Ebola and Zika outbreaks shows that epidemics exacerbate existing inequalities, including those based on economic status, ability, age and gender.

The Center for Global Development and the World Health Organization highlights that women will be more affected in places with more female health workers<sup>21</sup>. Women form 67 percent of the health workforce globally, with 28% of Female Physicians, and 65% of Nurses in the African Region<sup>19</sup>. In China, it is estimated that 3,000 health care workers have been infected and at least 22 have died<sup>20</sup>. In Mauritius, there are around 4,000 registered Nurses with the Nursing Council, with a majority of women, and as the pandemic spreads, the toll on women health workers may be significant as well. The secondary education teaching staff in the general and extended streams stood at 8,813 (3,199 males and 5,614 females).

In Mauritius, it is noted that Government, in collaboration with the private sector has adopted a transparent communication management strategy and a reliable and evolving plan regarding

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<sup>11</sup> For a full list of measures, please refer to the official websites of the Bank of Mauritius available online at [www.bom.mu](http://www.bom.mu); Business Mauritius available online at <https://www.businessmauritius.org/latest-news/?category=communiqué-to-members>; Government of Mauritius available online at <http://www.govmu.org/English/Pages/ViewAllCommuniquécovid19.aspx>; and Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry available online at <https://www.mcci.org/enFul>

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.lemauricien.com/article/economie-croissance-2020-contraction-de-5-quasi-incontournable/>. There is no official communiqué by Government on this matter as of 8 April 2020.

<sup>19</sup> WHO, March 2019, "Gender Equity in the Health Workforce: Analysis of 104 Countries", in *Health Workforce Working Paper 1*, Available Online at <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/311314/WHO-HIS-HWF-Gender-WP1-2019.1-eng.pdf>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>20</sup> Adams J & Walls R.M, March 2020, "Supporting the Health Care Workforce during the COVID-19 Global Epidemic", in JAMA Network, Available Online at <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2763136>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020.

<sup>21</sup> Center for Global Development, March 2020, "How will COVID-19 Affect Women and Girls in Low-and Middle Income Countries?", Available Online at <https://www.cgdev.org/blog/how-will-covid-19-affect-women-and-girls-low-and-middle-income-countries>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

preparedness, containment, mitigation, and response to the disease. However, the socioeconomic impacts have not been analyzed in an in-depth and gender sensitive manner.

Yet, with a population of 50.5% of females, such emergency responses which may be limited in their focus on gender issues and intersectionality's (age/abled-ness, location, ethnicity), existing inequalities will likely to be exacerbated, and have indirect negative impacts on gendered relations, gendered power dynamics and affect women's socio-economic status negatively. Based on the international scenario, the gendered impact of COVID-19 will revolve around the increased feminization of poverty and the unpaid care economy within the household; increased insecurities in the informal sector in categories dominated by women; increased cases of gender-based violence and unequal gender dynamics within the household as economic insecurities settle in. In Mauritius, given that there are more women heads of households, and more unemployed women, it is estimated that, in line with the global trend women would feel this impact in a more negative way.

As the International Labor Organization (ILO) predicts, COVID-19 will directly or indirectly lead to a rise in global unemployment by almost 25 million, with these estimates disproportionately affecting women.

In Mauritius, there are presently 7.9% of the population living below the income poverty line with an increased number of women heads of households and falling below the poverty line. In addition to unemployment and falling in a poverty cycle, there are other factors that makes COVID-19 a gendered disease that affects and impact on women and men differently, as well as influence their gendered practical and strategic needs.

Globally, UNWomen<sup>22</sup> reports that there are 243m cases of violence against women and girls aged 15-49 perpetrated by an intimate partner in the last 12 months. UNWomen estimates that this number is likely to increase with confined living conditions and accumulated stress caused by the virus.

At present, the estimated global cost of response to domestic violence is USD1.5 trillion, and in Mauritius, it costs the State Rs2b<sup>23</sup>. As Governments will increase allocations relating to managing the disease, there may be decrease in spending on addressing domestic violence. Moreover, socio-economic inequalities may vulnerable women at an even higher risk of violence as unemployment rises for women. Economic instability may place women in abusive

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<sup>22</sup>UNWomen, March 2020, "COVID-19 and Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Available Online at <https://www.unwomen.org/-/media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2020/issue-brief-covid-19-and-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-en.pdf?la=en&vs=5006>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

<sup>23</sup>UNDP Mauritius, 2017, The Economic Cost of Intimate Partner Violence. Study Conducted by the UNDP.

relationships in a difficult position to leave the relationship. In Mauritius, Statistics Mauritius<sup>24</sup> reveals that unemployment rate is at 6.7% for 2019, out of which 62% of women are unemployed. Therefore, following global trend where women are in most vulnerable groups, it is to be expected that more women will be unemployed as a direct and indirect impact of COVID-19.

In Mauritius, although there have not been any published official figures yet, it is expected that the present number of cases of domestic violence which stands at 6,329, would increase, as well as the nature and complexity of the violence- as the international research demonstrates that family violence increases after emergency and natural disaster situations. Addressing the increased cases gender-based violence would be crucial in a time where unemployment and increased alcohol and drug-use are characteristic of the recovery period. Moreover, increased contact between family members, often in shared accommodation in extended families may increase tension. The risk posed by disasters, in this case, the COVID-19 pandemic is greater for women in situations of existing domestic violence.

Having an intersectional approach to reaching Gender Equity and Equality needs to be at the Centre of response plans so that gender is not regarded as secondary in gender neutral plans.

#### **D. Rationale for Study**

The coronavirus pandemic has already influenced the short and medium-term economic outlook and could potentially have a very significant socio-economic impact in Mauritius. With a pandemic that has multi-dimensional effects, there needs to be a whole-of-government approach to addressing its different aspects. Therefore, stakeholders, including, Government, Development Partners, the private sector and civil society organizations need to evaluate, rethink and act within the specificities of the local context. As part of its Offer, the United Nations Country Teams (UNCT), under the leadership of the UNDP is seeking to extend evidence based technical assistance to support the formulation of strategies to plan for recovery from the deleterious impact of COVID-19 within the socio-economic and gendered landscape of Mauritius. It is expected that a robust socio-economic analysis will elucidate opportunities/challenges, unpack the complexities arising out of the diseases and other interventionist measures, and inform future policies in an evidence-based manner.

Given that a pandemic of this magnitude has not been experienced in recent times, there are few sources of lessons learned. However, it is acknowledged that the spread of COVID-19 is a result of globalization, with international and national socio-economic impacts that are multidimensional in nature with both direct and indirect effects. As a Small Island Developing

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<sup>24</sup>Statistics Mauritius, 31 March 2020, "Economic and Social Indicators - Labour Force, Employment & Unemployment", Available online at <http://statsmauritius.govmu.org/English/StatsbySubj/Pages/Labour.aspx>, Last Accessed 8 April 2020

State, it is envisaged that the economic dimension would range from its direct impact on agriculture, trade, small business, tourism, migrant labor activities with substantial loss of income and employment; to food price increase associated with cut in supply to indirect effects on the fiscal position of the Governments through higher expenditures and reduced tax and non-tax revenues. In this latter case, it is already noted that there has been moratorium extended to taxpayers and a number of subsidies given that would have an economic impact on Government's stance.

Concurrently, in April 2020, Moody's has maintained Mauritius' BAA1 credit rating status with a recognition of the country's capability to absorb external economic shocks and has highlighted the strengthen of its institutional structure. However, the heavy reliance on the tourism sector exposes its vulnerability in a period of global lockdown.

While the Government has been proactive in its interventionist measures and regulatory frameworks, and it has also leveraged the existing institutional architecture through Ministries and parastatal bodies to distribute essential goods/ groceries to vulnerable groups, COVID-19 has brought the realization that structures may need to be strengthened in the future for increased operational efficiency. to address challenges. These include:

- A reflection on the (i) governance structure of the Universal Health System in Mauritius; and (ii) social protection measures for the most vulnerable groups (including women and migrants) to sustain their livelihoods during lock-down periods
- A strategy to enhance social cohesion in a multi-ethnic society and trust in Government's capability to address future crisis
- An assessment of the way that the Mauritius economy may be diversified to limit a heavy reliance on tourism in a context where globalization has had negative impact on the economic pillar (tourism) of the country
- A recommended plan to boost local production for food security as Mauritius is highly dependent on imports
- A strategy to induce the use of digital governance in the public sector for crisis management, including review of business continuity planning system in order to be at the service of the citizen in the event of future crisis
- An assessment of the UNCT Structure in Mauritius to analyze the need for a (temporary) re-orientation of how UN agencies support the development interventions post COVID-19

The Government, the United Nations and other stakeholders will also need to invest in greater preparedness to mitigate impact of future similar health emergencies that would have direct and indirect costs with mitigation strategies adapted to the local context. It is acknowledged across Member States that COVID-19 has created challenges across the world, across government and across societies and has triggered urgent challenges for countries, stakeholders and development partners to address.

It is against this backdrop that UNDP Mauritius now seeks to provide for technical effective and appropriate assistance by enlisting the services of Team of Consultants to conduct a “Study on the Socio-economic Impact of COVID-19 Outbreak in the Republic of Mauritius” (including Rodrigues and Agalega)

The multi-disciplinary team of Consultants will compose of

- One (1) International Consultant; (Lead Consultant) and
- Two (2) National Consultants
  - 1 National Consultant (Economist)
  - 1 National Consultant (Social Development Expert)
- One (1) Research Assistant to assist the International and National Consultants

to conduct a study on “The Socio-Economic Impact of COVID-19 in the Republic of Mauritius”.

The overall outcome of the Study is to assess the sectorial, social and macro-economic impacts of COVID-19 in the Republic of Mauritius with proposals for short, medium and long-term policy responses captured in an Action Plan.

The International Consultant will be the Lead Consultant responsible for the overall Consultancy. The Lead Consultant will advise, guide and oversee the work of the National Consultants with key inputs in the formulation of the conceptual framework and timeline of the Study. The Lead Consultant will provide a breakdown of tasks to be performed by the National Consultants and Research Assistant and ensure timely submission of deliverables.

The National Consultants will act as the local counterparts for the International Consultants. All information pertaining to the different sectors (sectorial, social and macro-economic fronts) will be collected by the National Consultants. Firsthand analysis will be undertaken and submitted to the Lead Consultant for other actions to be taken with a view to submitting a comprehensive document in line with the deliverables mentioned. The National Consultants will jointly prepare the workplan of the Research Assistant in consultation with the Lead Consultant.

## **E. Scope of the Study and Institutional Arrangements**

Leaving no one behind remains a political promise and aspiration of Member States in achieving the SDGs. A human rights-based approach centered around building a strong social capital for a resilient economy remains key in COVID-19 response plans for the UNDP, as per its Global Offer to protect the poor and vulnerable and bolster economic recovery.

In Mauritius, the UNDP is seeking to extend an immediate country-focused response in terms of extending evidence-based policy advice/ technical assistance to assist the country in its foresight to cope with the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. COVID-19 should not be seen solely as a public health issue thereby focusing only on the humanitarian dimension. Its developmental orientation needs a cursory assessment.

The study will thus delve into the effect of COVID-19 at sectorial levels; on the social front levels; and on the macro-economic levels.

More specifically,

At the sectorial level, the following sectors should be investigated: the construction, financial and Foreign Direct Investment Sectors; as well as sectors relating to agriculture, food security, tourism, fisheries, SMEs, trade and investment; and social development through education, employment, entertainment, e-business models, supply chain and health. Consumer Protection matters has also featured prominently in terms of price standardization of products. The manufacturing and distribution channels of essentials (masks/sanitizers) also need to be analysed.

On the social front, vulnerable groups should include drug addicts, people with disabilities, single mothers, homeless individuals, and victims of gender-based violence, all who may be disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Intersectionalities such as gender, age, location, ethnicities, and income groups should be mainstreamed into the analysis.

At the macro-economic level, the impact assessment the “best” and “worst” case scenario of GDP, employment, debt, balance of payment should be investigated.

Based on the analysis of the above assessments, the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Study will propose policy responses on a short, media, and long-term basis to address the challenges raised and restore the macro-economic and sectorial economic resilience of the Republic of Mauritius. A gender sensitive lens should also be applied in all the above-mentioned assessments.

A Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SEIA) Project Steering Committee will be established to guide the project. The SEIA will be comprised of different stakeholders from the UN Country Teams, Government representatives, representative of the umbrella organization for the private sector, civil society organisations, and the media.

## **F. Objectives of the Study**

In addition to the overall objective of the study as listed above, the Study will also examine the implications of the outbreak on the realization of the SDGs.

The study will make policy recommendations to the UNDP and United Nations Country Teams in terms of realignment of programmes (if any) to reduce the sub region's vulnerability and strengthen its resilience to COVID-19 and future pandemics and crisis over the short-, medium- and long-terms.

Recommendations will also identify key areas for assistance by UNDP/UNCT to support the economy of the Republic of Mauritius as well as list the best-case scenario of GDP in mitigating the impact of COVID-19

The specific objectives are three folds, namely, at the sectorial level, on the social front and at the macro-economic level.

The Economics Consultant will work in close collaboration with the Lead Consultant and the Social Development Consultant to

- **provide technical assistance reflecting expertise and knowledge of economic matters, particularly in the Mauritian context**
- **mainstreaming high level economic and public policy advice and analysis within the Report to complement analysis from an economics perspective**
- **provide intellectual leadership on economic analysis throughout the Report**
- **provide integrative skills on economic analysis in cross-sectoral areas**

Through the provision of expert technical assistance from an economic development perspective, the Economics Consult will undertake the following activities.

These include, but are not limited to:

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|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| a. | Identifying the magnitude and dimensions of the outbreak by analyzing the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak, including loss in productivity and jobs, or disruptions of rural and urban livelihoods, and rise in criminality, with particular focus on vulnerable groups such as drug addicts, people with disabilities, single mothers, homeless individuals, victims of gender-based violence who may be disproportionately affected by the outbreak. The study will have to be sensitive to intersectionalities such as gender, age, location, ethnicities, and income groups. |
| b. | Assessing the economic, gender, and social issues that make containment of the outbreak quite challenging and difficult to manage, including the overall health system governance structure and capacity (including psychological support to affected families, the impact of Gender Based Violence, support to the personnel in direct contact with infected persons, and the population in general), the supply chain for food and other basic commodities and services as well as other policy and institutional factors that affect the responses and coping mechanisms;               |
| c. | Assessing the coverage and effectiveness of the existing social and financial assistance programmes/schemes, and propose ways and means to enhance/improve the support to the vulnerable groups to promote social inclusion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| d. | Carrying out an analysis to explain deficiencies in essential materials (masks, sanitizers) in pharmacies and distribution challenges during the lockdown period and address consumer protection matters.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| e. | Undertaking a succinct impact assessment of the fiscal measures and other schemes being implemented within the existing response plan of Government. The impact assessment should cover recommendations for mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on SMEs, the formal and informal sectors (amongst the other findings). The impact assessment will further be conducted through a gender-sensitive lens. |
| f. | Providing technical advisory support and recommendations to guide evidence-based policy making that is also gender sensitive; and advise on targeted social inclusion matters, especially for vulnerable groups, based on the results of the analysis and impact assessment,                                                                                                                          |
| g. | Advising on the potential development of ICT Solutions with respect to increasing high-tech entrepreneurs through new e-business models around supply chain, education, healthcare and entertainment industry                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| h. | Assessing the immediate and medium-term effects on economic growth and strategic sectors such as agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, tourism, transport, construction, migrants, SMEs, trade, financial sector, foreign direct investment, the informal sector and especially cross border trade, and the related activities;                                                                        |
| i. | Examining the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 outbreak, including loss in productivity and jobs, or disruptions of rural and urban livelihoods, and rise in criminality. The impact analysis should be gender sensitive.;                                                                                                                                                                           |
| j. | Discussing how the COVID-19 outbreak will impact on the UN agencies programmatic engagements in the affected countries including how the UN could respond to the short- and medium-term impacts; and                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|    |                                                                                                                                               |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| k. | Making necessary policy recommendations to address the established gaps, losses and weaknesses at the national and sub-national levels.       |
| l. | Advising on a (temporary) re-orientation of the UNDP interventions post COVID-19 to assist Government with a socio-economic recovery strategy |
| m. | Submitting an Action Plan with a Recovery Framework as discussed with the Project Steering Committee                                          |

## G. Key deliverables

**The Economics Consultant shall work with, assist and report to the Lead Consultant to produce the key deliverables.**

| S/N                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Time frame          | Fee (%) |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------|
| <b>1. Submission of a Conceptual Framework</b><br>The Economist Consultant shall submit technical inputs from an economics perspective, to draft the Conceptual Framework of the Study. The Conceptual Framework shall detail the roadmap and outline of the report with its different Sections. The Conceptual Framework shall include the breakdown of tasks by the Lead Consultant; the National Consultants and Research Assistant, with the proposed succinct methodology to be used in carrying out the Study; | <b>15 June 2020</b> | 20%     |
| <b>2. Submission of a comprehensive draft report to the Lead Consultant of relevant</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>25 July 2020</b> | 20%     |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----|
| <b>sections of the Study pertaining to the Economist Consultant</b><br><br>The draft report shall cover the objectives of the Study (Section 7 of the ToR) with expert guidance from the Economist Consultant |                       |     |
| 3. Submission of Final Draft report incorporating feedback from the Lead Consultant and Stakeholders                                                                                                          | <b>5 August 2020</b>  | 20% |
| 4. Submission of a Gender Responsive Economic Policy Brief (max 5-7 pages)                                                                                                                                    | <b>10 August 2020</b> | 20% |
| 5. Submission of a final report with an Action Plan/ Recovery Framework (max of 45 pages)                                                                                                                     | <b>31 August 2020</b> | 20% |
| All deliverables will be certified by the UNDP Resident Representative prior effecting payment. The Final Report will be approved by the Project Steering Committee                                           |                       |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |     |
| <b>H. Duration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                            |                       |     |
| The study will be conducted starting from the date the contract is being awarded and not later than 31 August 2020                                                                                            |                       |     |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                       |     |
| <b>I. Reporting</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           |                       |     |
| The work will be coordinated by UNDP Mauritius. The Lead Consultant shall report to the appropriate persons designated by the Country Office.                                                                 |                       |     |

## **J. Competencies: Corporate Competencies**

- Demonstrated commitment to UN's mission, vision and values including working in a culturally diverse environment.
- Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability. The candidate selected will be required to take UN's mandatory training on Gender, and on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority, within two months of their assuming their functions in this position.
- Demonstrates ability to function in a team environment and shares knowledge and experience.

## **k. Functional Competencies**

- Relevant experience in economics and development, public health, social issues issues with particular focus on Mauritius, and developing economies.
- Excellent oral and writing skills with strong experience in economics matters
- Capacity to interact with Senior Officials of Government, Donor partners, Private Sector, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other stakeholders
- Outstanding analytical and drafting skills. Ability to present coherent and convincing positions both in writing and orally.
- Strong ability to take initiative to move complex processes forward to achieve articulated results, work at varying levels and on different initiatives simultaneously (personal organization and ability for multi-tasking). The consultant must also possess ability to work under pressure and to accommodate change.
- Demonstrable networking capability, interpersonal skills and strong ability to promote teamwork. Knowledge of gender mainstreaming in developmental interventions would be an advantage

## **L Qualifications: Economics Consultant (National)**

### **Education:**

**Advanced University degree in applied economics, macro-economics, statistics or related field. A PhD is desirable**

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### **Profile and Experience:**

**Minimum of fifteen years in macro-economics, development, national planning or public policy work**

**At least 5 years of relevant experience in economic assessment, evaluation, or/and economic research and rigorous analysis.**

**Strong quantitative skills and demonstrated capacity to perform outstanding original research including statistical analysis and data management.**

**Strong working knowledge of the UN and the SDGs**

**Strong knowledge of the Mauritius economy and development plans**

### **Language and IT Skills:**

- **Excellent written and oral English.**
- **Fully IT Literate, including use of teleconferencing**

## **Scope of Price Proposal and Schedule Payments**

### ***A. Price Proposal***

- The financial offer should be quoted as a lump sum amount, 'all-inclusive '. The term "All inclusive" implies that all costs (professional fees, travel costs, living allowances, communications, consumables, etc.) that could possibly be incurred by the Contractor are already factored into the final amount submitted in the proposal
- The contract price is fixed regardless of changes in the cost components. Payments will be effected based on deliverables

### *Payment Schedule*

| <b>S/N</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>1. Fee (%)</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>1. Submission of a Conceptual Framework</b><br>The Economist Consultant shall submit technical inputs from an economics perspective, to draft the Conceptual Framework of the Study. The Conceptual Framework shall detail the roadmap and outline of the report with its different Sections. The Conceptual Framework shall include the breakdown of tasks by the Lead Consultant; the National Consultants and Research Assistant, with the proposed succinct methodology to be used in carrying out the Study; | 20%               |
| <b>2.Submission of a comprehensive draft report to the Lead Consultant of relevant sections of the Study pertaining to the Economist Consultant</b><br>The draft report shall cover the objectives of the Study (Section 7 of the ToR) with expert guidance from the Economist Consultant                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 20%               |
| <b>3.Submission of Final Draft report incorporating feedback from the Lead Consultant and Stakeholders</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 20%               |
| <b>4. Submission of a Gender Responsive Economic Policy Brief (max 5-7 pages)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 20%               |
| <b>5.Submission of a final report with an Action Plan/ Recovery Framework (max of 45 pages)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 20%               |

All deliverables will be certified by the UNDP Resident Representative prior effecting payment.

The Final Report will be approved by the Project Steering Committee

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#### **J. Duration**

**The study will be conducted starting from the date the contract is being awarded and not later than 31 August 2020**

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#### **K. Reporting**

**The work will be coordinated by UNDP Mauritius. The Lead Consultant shall report to the appropriate persons designated by the Country Office.**

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#### **B. Proposed Work Plan and Indicative Time**

It is planned that the consultancy starts by 10 June 2020 and ends on or before 31 August 2020.

#### **C. Recommended Presentation of Offer**

Individual Consultants/Resource Persons are invited to submit the following applications and requirements:

- Duly accomplished **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the template provided by UNDP.
- Personal CV, indicating all past experience from similar projects, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the Candidate.
- Brief description of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment.
- Financial Proposal that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template provided. If an Offeror is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the Offeror must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

#### **D. Criteria for Selection of Best Offer**

The award of the contract will be made to the Individual Consultant whose offer has been evaluated using the “Combined Scoring Method” and determined as:

- Responsive/compliant/acceptable;
- Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial criteria specified below - (Technical Criteria with a weight of 0.7 and Financial Criteria of a weight of 0.3).

Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70 marks out of 100 in the Technical Evaluation would be considered for the Financial Evaluation. The technical criteria and weightage are as follows:

| <b>Educational Qualifications:</b>                                                                                | <b>Experience</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Knowledge and Skills</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>Language and IT Proficiency</b>                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Advanced University degree in applied economics, macro-economics, statistics or related field. A PhD is desirable | <p>Minimum of fifteen years in macro-economics, development, national planning or public policy work</p> <p>At least 5 years of relevant experience in economic assessment, evaluation, or/and economic research and rigorous analysis.</p> | <p>Strong quantitative skills and demonstrated capacity to perform outstanding original research including statistical analysis and data management.</p> <p>Strong working knowledge of the UN and the SDGs</p> <p>Strong knowledge of the Mauritius economy and development plans</p> | <p>Excellent written and oral English.</p> <p>Fully IT Literate, including use of teleconferencing</p> |
| <b>30 MARKS</b>                                                                                                   | <b>40 MARKS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>20 MARKS</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>10 Marks</b>                                                                                        |

**Important Note:**

- Qualified women are encouraged to apply
- Interested offerors above the age of 62: UNDP regulations require, at their own cost, to undergo a full medical examination including x-rays. Medical evaluation documentation does not need to be submitted with the other requested documents listed above but will be requested should the candidate be chosen.

**Approved by:**

|            |                              |
|------------|------------------------------|
| Name:      | Ms. Amanda Serumaga          |
| Position:  | UNDP Resident Representative |
| Signature: |                              |
| Date:      |                              |