

Mapping of Fiscal and Social Protection Policy Responses to COVID-19 – Mauritius and Seychelles [20 March 2020]

UNDP COVID-Response Strategic Offer	Mauritius	Seychelles
Readiness (Pre-surge Basket)		
Health System strengthening, procurement; emergency facility;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of treatment and quarantine centres at various locations including a UNDP Adaptation Fund disaster preparedness refuge centre All Members of Parliament contributing 10% of salary to the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund signalling high level political commitment; strengthening state-citizen contract Rs208 million (\$5.3M) made available to the Ministry of Health and Wellness for the acquisition of new medical accessories and equipment, of which Rs108 million have already been disbursed. UNDP re-programmed \$300K to go to the Fund Received Jack Ma Foundation medical supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of treatment and quarantine centres at various locations Special allowance for frontline health workers, immigration staff and customs officials at the airport and seaport Received Jack Ma Foundation medical supplies UAE donation of health protection supplies for frontline workers Established a National Disaster Relief Fund to raise funds from governments, private individuals, corporations and institutions. The fund aims to provide emergency relief supplies; provide temporary relief for small business through short term loans for equipment, raw materials and; to assist charitable organisations provide community support. UNDP Prevention, Response and Early Recovery Project (PREP) to support targeting of vulnerable and high-risk groups for transmission – the elderly, prison populations, migrant labourers
Public Outreach and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established a PPP with Mauritius Telecom to provide public service messaging through an app. Includes: daily case stats; all government bulletins; curfew information; online shopping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Health website providing daily case statistics; travel advisories and health and safety information

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP Prevention, Response and Early Recovery Project (PREP) plans - messaging in Creole language; Advert buys in prime-time media slots; Advert buys on public and private mass transport system 	
<p>Minimize SDG regression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UNDP supported Marshall Plan Social Register of Mauritius for the un- or under employed used to identify those in need of social protection - to receive food redistribution for 5,133 (up to 30,000people) households in the immediate term • Essential goods pack delivered to Women in Domestic Violence Shelters, homes and charitable institutions • Provision of a Hotline Service put at the disposal of the public for first-hand information and medical advice on COVID-19; • Establishment of a COVID-19 Solidarity Fund under the Finance and Audit Act as a Special Fund to finance projects/programmes/schemes put in place to support individuals/workers/organizations being affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will be managed by a Managing Committee comprising a Chairperson appointed by the Minister and representatives of Ministries responsible for the subject of Finance, Health, Social Security, Labour and Commerce and the Accountant-General. • Setting up of an online platform where the general public would be able to effect online purchases for limited goods from authorised supermarkets. • Banks waived fees applicable on shared ATM services enabling customers to have access to the ATM of any bank regardless of the issuer of the card without having to pay any fee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3800 home carers looking after the elderly to receive special allowance on condition they continue to provide care and attention for the elderly • With school closure, children receiving financial assistance will n receive direct transfer through parents • Citizens with a social assistance cards will now be able to use the car for energy purchase (gas) • Government will increase the budgetary allocation for the Agency of Social Protection so that they are able to support those who are affected. A sum of SCR30 million (\$725,000) will be allocated to the Agency for Social Protection. • Government will increase the budgetary allocation for the Unemployment Relief Scheme (URS). A sum of SCR10 million (\$725K) will be allocated to the Department of Employment. (preCOVID unemployment stood at 3%) • Loan repayments will be reduced for a period of 6 months by 1%, following work between the Central Bank and commercial banks. In exceptional cases, there will be a moratorium on loan repayments during this period. This will cover both interest and capital repayments in this 6-month period. • Electricity tariff for the public sector will remain the same to allow the Public Utility Company to pass this extra benefit to other sectors; and the

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mauritian households impacted by COVID-19 may request their commercial banks for a moratorium of six (6) months on capital repayments on their existing household loans as from the 1st of April 2020. • In addition, for households earning a combined monthly basic salary of up to Rs50,000 the Bank of Mauritius will bear the interest payable for the period 1st of April 2020 to 30th of June 2020 on their outstanding household loans with commercial banks. 	domestic sector people see a 25 cents per unit+ reduction in electricity tariffs
Minimize recovery time		
Coordinate fiscal and monetary policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borrowed funds from IMF @ concessional rate of 1% 	
Response (Surge) Basket		
Flatten the curve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessation of all foreign traveller entry • 3-week total curfew • COVID Work Access permit; rollout of Work at Home policy • Planned scheduled shopping times by alphabetical order for social distancing • Internet Provider doubled data availability and extended digital TV access for individuals at no cost for business continuity and stay at home incentive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cessation of all foreign traveller entry • Barring of all Seychellois foreign travel • Closure of most shops and prohibition of gatherings of more than 4 people • Cessation of all marine travel including cruise ships and leisure boats
Protect, now and in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage Assistance Scheme by the Government of Mauritius to ensure that all employees in the private sector, foreign and expatriate, are duly paid their salary for the month of March 2020. • Boost local production of food crops and ensure greater food security for the population, sugar estates would be requested to also put at the disposal of small planters' additional rotational land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishing and agricultural sectors Committee for Food Security and Surveillance working to increase the level of production and manage food supplies • For the Agriculture sector, Government will ensure that through the Seychelles Trading Corporation, everything that is produced is bought. • Government will guarantee the salaries of all employees in the private sector for the months of

	<p>for the cultivation of crops like potato, onion, pulses and other vegetables.;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeds for the cultivation of potato, garlic, bean and onion to be provided through the Seed Purchase Scheme. • Environment Protection Fee of 0.85% charged on the monthly turnover of hotels, guest houses and tourist residences suspended up to 31 July 2020; • Reduction in the training levy for tourist operators from 1% to 0.5% for operators from 1 April 2020 up to 31 July 2020 	<p>April, May and June 2020. A total of SCR1.2 billion has been budgeted for this intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government will not approve any redundancies.
<p>Stimulus for Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of an Equity Participation Scheme by the State Investment Corporation (SIC) Ltd to assist enterprises to overcome their financial difficulties; • Established a Revolving Credit Fund of Rs 200 million (\$5M USD) at the Development Bank of Mauritius Ltd to help companies with turnover of up to Rs 10 million to ease their cash flow difficulties up to 31 December 2020; • Provided for a double tax deduction for enterprises affected by COVID-19 for their investment in Plant and Machinery for the period 1 March 2020 to 30 June 2020; • Introduction of a Special Foreign Currency \$300M USD Line of Credit by Bank of Mauritius targeting operators having foreign currency earnings, including SMEs to be made available through commercial banks at 6-month USD Libor for this facility. Repayment will be over a period of two (2) years from the effective date of disbursement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government providing financial assistance to struggling businesses to ensure that all their employees are paid in April, May and June 2020. • The Ministry of Finance and Central Bank are finalising a framework by which these businesses will be able to access credit quickly and more affordably to support businesses with liquidity. • Interest rates for investment loans in agriculture or fisheries will be reduced to 1%. • Employer Pension Contributions towards the Seychelles Pension Fund of 3% of employee salaries for April, May and June deferred to September 2020. • Business taxes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All tax payments due in March are being postponed to September 2020. ✓ Payments for all other taxes whose deadlines are in April, May and June will remain in place (i.e. they will be due in April, May and June respectively).

Recovery (Post-Surge) Basket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatically extended all work permits that would expire in 2020 up to 31 December 2021 to preposition human resources for immediate scaling up when work resumes • Manufacturing companies Freight Rebate Scheme and Support for Trade Promotion & Marketing Scheme extended to 31 December 2021 • Waived fees for all exports up to 31 December 2020 and port charges imposed by the Mauritius Ports Authority and Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd • Rs100 million (\$2.5M) earmarked to encourage local production of food crops • Agricultural Marketing Board to purchase at a guaranteed price, products such as potato, garlic and onion on a long-term basis • The Agricultural Marketing Board has also taken precautionary measures to increase significantly its Strategic Buffer Stock in potato, Buffer Stock in potato, onion and garlic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Social Responsibility Tax, Tourism Marketing Tax, and Business Tax payments for April, May and June are also being postponed to September 2020. • The commercial sector will also benefit from a reduction of more than 25 cents per unit on their electricity tariffs. • Government has identified 14 plots of land that will be made available to the Farmer’s Association for further production.
Impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP aims to support Ministry of Finance and Department of Economic Planning capacity for sectoral scenario modelling and rapid diagnostics for policy response in tourism Sector; Migrant labour and EIAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP aims to support Support Ministry of Finance and Department of Economic Planning capacity for sectoral scenario modelling and rapid diagnostics for policy response in tourism Sector; Migrant labour and EIAs
Social and economic recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Ministry of Finance and Department of Economic Planning capacity for sectoral scenario modelling and rapid diagnostics for policy response in the tourism Sector; for Migrant labour and Environmental Impact Assessments • Support the Government of Seychelles leverage the government bond to raise domestic and international funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Government of Seychelles leverage the Blue bond to raise domestic and international funding

<p>Strengthening Institutions delivery services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for the establishment of an e-Government Digital Bureau to fast track the provision of public services through electronic means. • UNDP applied for Crisis Funding to enhance the use of digital governance in the public sector for crisis management including review of Business Continuity Planning systems; and • Use geospatial and big data tools for mapping impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
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