

Ministry of Economic Development, Financial Services and Corporate Affairs

Main results of the first round of the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey carried out from April to December 1999

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS) was launched by the Central Statistical Office (CSO) in 1999. The primary objective of this survey is to provide a permanent platform for the collection of information relevant to the computation of appropriate socio-economic indicators to keep track of development on the social front. The on-going nature of the survey allows any topic of current interest to be easily integrated as a distinct module in the questionnaire. The questions to be included are finalised after discussion with concerned ministries and government departments.

1.2 Coverage

Each year, a sample of around 6,000 private households is appropriately selected to represent the set of all such households in the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues. Each month some 500 of these households are surveyed.

1.3 Data Collection

The questionnaire designed to collect the required data comprises:

- (i) a basic module covering the general characteristics of the household and its members;
- (ii) one (or more) special modules dealing with topics of current interest and requiring in-depth investigation; and
- (iii) a final module grouping other topics of general interest but investigated in less details.

The data collection exercise is carried out by a team of trained interviewers outside office hours.

1.4 First round of the CMPHS

The first round of the survey scheduled for the period April 1999 to March 2000 was stopped at the end of December 1999 because of the taking of the decennial Housing and Population Census in 2000. During these nine months, a total of 4,725 households were surveyed at the rate of 525 per month. Some 42 field staff were employed during each survey month.

The special topic module for this first round of the CMPHS dealt with detailed information on the economically active population and its characteristics while in the third module some information was collected on the elderly population, women and household income and expenditure.

1.5 Response

Out of the 4,725 households selected for interview, 73 could not be contacted, yielding an initial response rate of 98.5%. However, these non-contacts were replaced by other households with similar characteristics.

1.6 Status of the survey results

The results in this report have been cumulated over the nine months from April to December 1999. They are based on responses of the respondents, without any evaluation and adjustment. For instance, no adjustment has been made for possible under reporting of income or over reporting of unemployment.

As for all sample surveys, the data are subject to both sampling and non-sampling errors. Sampling errors are due to the fact that information is collected from a small proportion of all possible respondents, whereas non-sampling errors are due to factors such as inaccuracies in reporting by respondents.

2 Housing conditions

[Table 1](#) below shows the distribution of the sampled households by some of the main characteristics of their housing units. Most of the households were living in detached houses (70%) or in semi-detached houses (22%). Detached houses are buildings used wholly as single housing units. Semi-detached houses are those forming part of buildings which comprise more than one housing unit (i.e. independent floors of a storeyed house, 'maison jumelée', flats and parts of commercial/industrial buildings being used for residential purposes).

About 83% of households were living in housing units occupied entirely by one household compared to 17% in multi-household housing units.

As far as tenure is concerned, 77% of the households were owners and 13% were provided with free accommodation. The remaining 10% were staying in rented accommodation. It is to be noted that households living in housing units belonging to parents/relatives or employers, without payment, were considered as being provided with free accommodation.

Table 1 - Households by housing characteristics

Housing characteristics	Number of households	%
Type of building		
Detached house	3,284	69.5
Semi-detached house	1,045	22.1
Building designed for one housing unit but crudely subdivided into smaller units	390	8.3
Improvised structure	6	0.1
Total	4,725	100.0
Type of housing unit		
One household housing unit	3,940	83.4
Multi-household housing unit	785	16.6
Total	4,725	100.0
Ownership of housing unit		
Owner	3,651	77.3
Tenant/sub-tenant	450	9.5
Free ¹	613	13.0
Other	11	0.2
Total	4,725	100.0

¹ includes households living in housing units belonging to parents/relatives.

3. Households characteristics

The households were classified by type as follows:

- one person household
- nuclear household, consisting of a single family nucleus, i.e. a couple with or without unmarried children or a lone parent with unmarried children.
- extended household, consisting of either one family nucleus and other related members or two or more related family nuclei with or without other related members, or just two or more related persons, not comprising a family nucleus.
- Composite household, comprising persons not related to the other members of the household.

Around 73% of the households were of nuclear type, while 8% comprised more than one family nucleus.

Households comprising of only one parent and unmarried children represented about 9% of the total.

Table 2 - Distribution of households by type

Household type	Number of households	%
One person household	291	6.2
Nuclear household	3,452	73.1
Extended household	975	20.6
Composite household	7	0.1
Total	4,725	100.0

The average household size works out to 3.88 compared to 4.12 at the 1996/97 Household Budget Survey.

4. Household expenditure

Column 2 of [Table 3](#) shows the average household expenditure on some specific items. Among these, food expenses averaged Rs.3,160 per household per month. Water and electricity expenditures were reported by 90% and 96% of the sampled households with averages of Rs.105 and Rs.335 respectively per month.

Average expenditures computed for those households having reported spending on these items during the survey month are shown in column 5. Thus about 54% of the households reported paying debt during the survey month, with monthly repayments averaging Rs.2,154.

Table 3 - Average household monthly expenditure on specific items

Item of expenditure	Average monthly expenditure of all households	Reporting households		
		Number	%	Average monthly expenditure
	(Rs)			(Rs)
Food	3,160	4,721	99.9	3,160
Medical care	460	2,815	59.6	775
Rent	155	481	10.2	1,534
Debt repayment	1,165	2,553	54.0	2,154
Educational expenses	585	2,493	52.8	1,106
Water bill	105	4,271	90.4	115
Electricity bill	335	4,542	96.1	347
Telephone bill	240	3,205	67.8	352

About 55% of heads of households reported having experienced difficulties at some time during the 12 months preceding the survey month to meet current expenses on essential items (food, rent, utilities, etc.) with their normal monthly income. To meet these

expenses they have had to draw from savings (40%), ask for credit (41%) and/or borrow from friends or relatives (43%).

5 Indebtedness

Among the 4,725 households surveyed, 2,818 or 60% reported having debts. Items on which these households were mostly indebted are: housing (39%), household appliances (34%) and furniture (30%).

Table 4 - Indebted households by debt item

Debt item	Number of households reporting debt	% of indebted households reporting debt on given item
Purchase of land	129	4.6
Purchase/construction of house	1,093	38.8
Auto/motor vehicle	292	10.4
Audio-visual equipment	497	17.6
Household appliances	955	33.9
Furniture	832	29.5
Purchases at retail shop	555	19.7
Medical expenses	64	2.3
Educational expenses	79	2.8
Other	177	6.3

Arrangements made by indebted households for repayment of debt are given in Table 5, from where it is noted that 60% of these households had recourse to hire purchase while the proportion having contracted loans from financial institutions was almost 49%.

Table 5 - Indebted households by type of debt

Debt type	Number	% of indebted households
Loan from bank or other financial institutions	1,367	48.5
Hire purchase	1,679	59.6
Loans from friends and relatives	332	11.8
Other	472	16.7

6 Characteristics of households members

6.1 Gender

The sampled households comprised a total of 18,315 household members, of whom 9,088 (49.6%) were males and 9,227 (50.4%) were females.

Table 6 - Household members by gender

Gender	Number	%
Male	9,088	49.6
Female	9,227	50.4
Total	18,315	100.0

6.2 Age

Some 35% of household members were below 20 years of age while the elderly, i.e. those aged 60 years and over, represented about 9%. The mean age was 30.3 years (29.7 years for males and 30.9 years for females), while the median age worked out to 28.9 years (28.4 for males and 29.4 for females).

Table 7 - Household members by age and sex

Age group (years)	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0-4	1,427	7.8	693	7.6	734	7.9
5-9	1,701	9.3	872	9.6	829	9.0
10-14	1,542	8.4	758	8.3	784	8.5
15-19	1,728	9.4	888	9.8	840	9.1
20-24	1,673	9.1	863	9.5	810	8.8
25-29	1,394	7.7	687	7.6	707	7.7
30-34	1,628	8.9	823	9.1	805	8.7
35-39	1,557	8.5	767	8.4	790	8.6
40-44	1,275	7.0	651	7.2	624	6.8
45-49	1,189	6.5	625	6.9	564	6.1
50-54	892	4.8	446	4.9	446	4.8
55-59	599	3.3	277	3.0	322	3.5
60 & over	1,710	9.3	738	8.1	972	10.5
All ages	18,315	100.0	9,088	100.0	9,227	100.0

6.3 Marital status

Some 48% of the members were single and 45% were married or living in a union. The number of widowed, divorced or separated accounted for less than 8%.

Table 8 - Household members by marital status

Marital Status	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Married	8,165	44.6	4,082	44.9	4,083	44.2
Widowed	1,093	6.0	131	1.4	962	10.4
Divorced/Separated	334	1.8	98	1.1	236	2.6
Single	8,723	47.6	4,777	52.6	3,946	42.8
Total	18,315	100.0	9,088	100.0	9,227	100.0

6.4 Education

As for school attendance, 64% of the household members have been to school in the past, 25% were attending school at the time of survey while 11% have never been to school. The latter figure includes children below 5 years not yet at school (5%). Among those who have already left normal academic schools, 1% were following vocational or technical education full-time.

Table 9 - Household members by school attendance and sex

School attendance	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Now	4,568	24.9	2,257	24.8	2,311	25.0
Past	11,656	63.7	6,052	66.6	5,604	60.7
Never	2,091	11.4	779	8.6	1,312	14.2
Total	18,315	100.0	9,088	100.0	9,227	100.0

Analysis by educational attainment reveals that 44% have studied up to primary level, 39% up to secondary level and 2% have followed tertiary education.

Table 10 - Household members by educational attainment and gender

Educational attainment	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Nil	2,091	11.4	779	8.6	1,312	14.2
Pre-primary	702	3.8	327	3.6	375	4.1
Primary	7,967	43.5	3,940	43.3	4,027	43.7
Secondary	7,194	39.3	3,807	41.9	3,387	36.7
Tertiary	357	2.0	234	2.6	123	1.3
Undefined	4	-	1	-	3	-
Total	18,315	100.0	9,088	100.0	9,227	100.0

6.5 Health

The most common disease reported by household members was diabetes (3.9%), followed by respiratory problems (2.2%) and heart disease (1.7%).

Table 11 - Incidence of specific diseases or disabilities among household members

Type of disease/disability	Number	%
Blindness	61	0.3
Amputation	28	0.2
Stroke	130	0.7
Heart disease	311	1.7
Diabetes	714	3.9
Respiratory problems	398	2.2

7. Labour force characteristics

About 80% of the sampled household members were aged 12 years and over. They were requested to supply information on their activities during a specified week. Information could not be obtained for 6 respondents who were not present in their households during the survey week. Table 12 shows that 76% of males and 37% of females aged 12 years and over were economically active, i.e. they were either already employed or were looking for jobs at the time of the survey. It may be recalled that the percentages of economically active males and females estimated from the Labour Force Sample Survey (LFSS) carried out in 1995 were 74 and 35 respectively.

Table 12 - Population aged 12 years and over by activity status and gender

Activity status	Total	Male	Female
Employed	7,454	5,107	2,347
Unemployed	701	346	355
Not currently active	6,339	1,724	4,615
Total	14,494	7,177	7,317

7.1 Employed population

The number of persons at work was 7,454; comprising 5,107 (or 69%) males and 2,347 (or 31%) females. Employment gender ratio has remained at almost the same level noted at the 1995 LFSS, i.e. 2.2 males to 1 female.

7.1.1 Industry

[Table 13](#) below shows the distribution of the employed population by sector. Almost half of them were engaged in the tertiary sector, which includes trade, hotels and restaurants, transport and all service industries. The secondary sector, comprising manufacturing, electricity & gas and construction industries, accounted for another 38% while the remaining 13% form part of the primary sector which covers all agricultural, mining and quarrying activities.

Table 13 - Employed population by sector and gender

Sector	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Primary	13.1	13.7	12.0
Secondary	38.3	37.5	39.4
Tertiary	48.6	48.8	48.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

7.1.2 Occupation

The CMPHS results show that people engaged in the higher occupational groups, i.e. ‘Administrators, managers, professionals, technicians and clerks’, formed 21% of the total employed; 18% among males compared to 28% among females ([Table 14](#)). Service workers made up for a further 14% with almost equal proportions for males and females. Hence, nearly two thirds of employed persons were engaged in manual jobs, 68% among male workers and 57% among females.

Table 14 - Employed population by occupation group and gender

Occupation group	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Legislators, senior officials and managers	3.1	3.7	1.7
Professionals, associate professionals and technicians	10.4	9.4	12.4
Clerks	7.7	5.1	13.5
Service and sales workers	14.4	14.3	14.6
Skilled agricultural workers	4.8	6.1	2.3
Craft workers, plant and machine operators	36.9	40.8	28.4
Elementary occupations	22.7	20.6	27.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

7.1.3 Employment status

The majority (78%) of workers were employees, this proportion being higher among females than among males, i.e. 84% and 75% respectively ([Table 15](#)). As regards self-employment (i.e. employers and own account workers), a much higher proportion was noted among males (23%) than among females (11%).

Table 15 - Employed population by employment status and gender

Employment status	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Employer	2.1	2.7	0.8
Own account worker	17.0	20.2	10.2
Employee	78.2	75.2	84.3
Apprentice	0.4	0.6	0.1
Unpaid family worker	2.3	1.3	4.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

7.1.4 Income

[Table 16](#) shows the distribution by monthly income range for employed persons who have derived an income during the month preceding the survey. The median income works out to Rs 4,350, i.e. 50% of the employed were drawing an income of Rs.4,350 or less per month. The corresponding median monthly incomes for males and females were Rs.5,000 and Rs.2,980 respectively.

Table 16 - Employed population by income range and gender

Monthly income from employment (Rs)	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Up to 2000	14.6	7.7	30.0
2001 - 4000	31.4	26.8	41.6
4001 - 6000	25.2	31.3	11.3
6001 - 8000	12.0	14.5	6.4
8001 - 10000	6.4	7.3	4.5
10001 - 15000	6.7	7.7	4.6
15001 - 20000	1.9	2.2	1.0
20001 - 25000	0.8	1.1	0.3
25001 - 30000	0.4	0.6	0.1
30001 and above	0.6	0.8	0.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

7.1.5 Hours of work

The distribution of the employed population by number of hours actually worked during a week (including overtime) is given in [Table 17](#). On the average, 3.4% of employed persons were absent from work for one or more days during a survey reference week for various reasons.

Overall, the average weekly number of hours actually worked was 40 hours. Among males, the average was 42 hours while among females an average of 37 hours was noted. Nearly 17% reported having worked for more than 50 hours during the reference week (19% of males and 13% of females).

Table 17 - Employed population by gender and number of hours actually worked during reference week

Hours worked per week	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
0	3.4	3.1	4.1
1 - 30	20.0	16.2	28.3
31 - 40	29.7	31.2	26.3
41 - 50	30.0	30.9	28.1
51+	16.9	18.6	13.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

On the other hand, nearly 20% of the employed respondents reported having worked less than the normal/usual hours they are expected to work during a week, for the various reasons given in [Table 18](#).

Table 18 - Employed population having worked less than normal weekly hours by reason for working less and gender

Reason for working less than weekly normal hours	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Illness or injury	22.2	21.6	24.0
Holiday, study and other leaves	29.6	24.2	42.5
Temporary disorganisation of work due to bad weather/breakdown or insufficient work.	28.4	34.0	14.7
Full-time work week less than that fixed by legislation (e.g. piece rate workers)	12.6	12.6	12.9
Other reasons	7.2	7.6	5.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Employed persons interested in additional work numbered 815, representing 11% of the total number of employed persons surveyed. Among them, 310 were working less than their normal hours of work per week while the remaining 505 were already working full normal hours or even more.

7.2 Unemployed population

Out of the 14,494 persons aged 12 years or more, 701 were classified as unemployed (346 males and 355 females). The unemployment rate which represents the proportion of unemployed persons forming part of the labour force or economically active population worked out to 8.6% (6.3% for males and 13.1% for females) compared to 5.2% (4.1% for males and 7.4% for females) at the 1995 LFSS. It is to be noted, however, that these rates have been calculated from responses of the interviewees and have not been evaluated nor adjusted for possible over-reporting of unemployment.

First job seekers numbered 365 (168 males and 197 females), representing 52% of the total number of unemployed persons.

[Table 19](#) shows the distribution of unemployed persons by age and gender. It is to be noted that the profile of unemployed males was younger than that for females: 67% of unemployed males were below 25 years compared to 48% for females, whereas 24% of unemployed males were between 25 to 44 years compared to 47% for females.

Among unemployed persons aged 12 to 24 years, 70% were new entrants into the labour market and 30% had worked in the past while in the higher age groups, 28% were looking for their first jobs and 72% had work experience.

Table 19 - Unemployed population by age group and gender

Age group (years)	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
12 - 19	29.0	37.8	20.3
20 - 24	28.7	29.5	27.9
25 - 34	23.5	16.5	30.4
35 - 44	12.4	7.8	16.9
45 - 54	4.3	4.9	3.7
55 and above	2.1	3.5	0.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

More than half of the unemployed females were either married or had been married before while the majority (83%) of unemployed males were single ([Table 20](#)).

Table 20 - Unemployed population by marital status and gender

Marital status	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Married	31.1	15.6	46.2
Widowed/Divorced/Separated	4.7	1.2	8.2
Single	64.2	83.2	45.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Nearly 58% of the unemployed persons have studied beyond primary level with a higher proportion among females (66%) than among males (50%) as shown in [Table 21](#).

Table 21 - Unemployed population by educational attainment and gender

Educational attainment	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
No education	1.9	1.4	2.2
Primary	40.0	48.3	32.1
Secondary	57.5	49.7	65.1
Tertiary	0.6	0.6	0.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Respondents looking for jobs had to report on their job search methods and the results are shown in [Table 22](#). It is to be noted that some of them have had recourse to more than one means of looking for work. Only 24% of the unemployed were registered with the Employment Service of the Ministry of Training, Skills Development and Productivity.

Table 22 - Unemployed population by job search method and gender

Job search method	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Registration with Employment Exchange	24.0	22.5	25.4
Applied to prospective employers	41.9	41.3	42.5
Checked at factories, work sites	45.6	52.3	39.2
Placed or answered advertisements	18.6	13.6	23.7
Sought assistance or advice	32.2	33.5	31.3
Taken steps to start own business	4.3	4.9	3.7
Other	2.1	3.2	1.1

Around 52% of the total number of unemployed persons have been looking for work for a year or more ([Table 23](#)). The proportion of males and females with duration of job search lasting one year or more was 51% and 53% respectively. Two thirds of unemployed persons who have been looking for work for a year or more were in search of their first jobs.

Table 23 - Unemployed population by duration of job search and gender

Duration of job search (months)	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
1 - 11	48.0	48.8	47.0
12 - 23	21.1	22.3	20.0
24 - 35	14.6	14.7	14.4
36 - 47	7.7	6.7	8.7
48 - 59	2.8	3.5	2.3
60+	5.8	4.0	7.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Unemployed persons having worked before numbered 336 or 48% of the total number of unemployed respondents. These persons left their last jobs for reasons specified in [Table 24](#) below.

Among those who left because they were not satisfied with their jobs, 55% were males and 45% were females.

Table 24 - Unemployed population having worked in the past by gender and reason for leaving last job

Reason for leaving last job	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Reduction in workforce or closure of Establishment	25.0	23.0	27.3
Completion of contract/temporary job	20.0	32.0	6.3
Sickness/accident or retirement	8.6	12.4	4.4
Household responsibilities	16.1	-	34.2
Insatisfaction with job	22.6	23.6	21.5
Other	7.7	9.0	6.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

8. The Elderly

The number of persons aged 60 years or more numbered 1,710 (738 males and 972 females), representing about 9% of the total number of persons covered by the survey.

Table 25 - Elderly population by age group and gender

Age group (years)	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
60-69	985	57.6	444	60.2	541	55.7
70-79	540	31.6	230	31.2	310	31.9
80-89	163	9.5	57	7.7	106	10.9
90+	22	1.3	7	0.9	15	1.5
Total	1,710	100.0	738	100.0	972	100.0

Among the elderly persons, 987 or 58% were reported as heads of households, 17% were spouses of the heads and 21% were parents of the head of household or of his/her spouse.

8.1 Physical disability and dependence

The number of elderly persons who reported not being able to carry out certain specified normal basic activities, and were receiving assistance from another person for such activities, is given in [Table 26](#) below.

Table 26 - Elderly persons receiving assistance to carry out normal activities

Activity	Number of persons receiving assistance	% of elderly
Personal hygiene	152	8.9
Dressing and undressing	139	8.1
Eating	72	4.2
Moving about the house	90	5.3
Moving about outdoors	208	12.2
Climbing steps	298	17.4
Travelling by bus	425	24.9
Buying food	394	23.0
Cooking	387	22.6
Cleaning the house	405	23.7
Managing money	296	17.3

Assistance was received mainly from members of the same household or relatives, and 39% of elderly persons reported such type of assistance. Another 6% were getting assistance from friends/neighbours or had to pay for assistance.

Elderly persons also reported on specified disabilities. The disability mostly reported on was "sight" (19%) which in the majority of cases has resulted from an illness/accident or old age. [Table 27](#) below gives more details on all the specified disabilities.

Table 27 - Elderly persons suffering from specified disabilities

Type of disability	Partial disability		Total disability		Partial or total disability	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Sight	317	18.5	14	0.8	331	19.3
Hearing	161	9.4	4	0.2	165	9.6
Speech	50	3.0	5	0.2	55	3.2
Use of legs	155	9.0	20	1.2	175	10.2
Use of arms	83	4.9	11	0.6	94	5.5
Mental	45	2.6	5	0.3	50	2.9

8.2 Leisure activities of elderly

The most popular leisure activities among elderly persons were 'daytime sleeping/resting' and 'watching TV and video films' reported by about 87% of the elderly. An average of 13 hours per week was spent in daytime sleeping/resting and 12 hours in watching TV and video films. Quite a large proportion (68%) of the elderly also reported visiting friends and relatives.

Table 28 - Elderly persons engaged in specified leisure activities and average number of hours spent per week in these activities

Leisure activity	Elderly persons engaged in the activity		Average number of hours spent per week
	Number	%	
Reading	531	31.1	6.7
Watching TV and video films	1,489	87.1	11.5
Kitchen gardening & animal rearing	319	18.7	5.8
House maintenance and repairs	120	7.0	3.3
Sewing, knitting, etc.	154	9.0	3.4
Visiting friends/relatives	1,154	67.5	5.8
Club activity	183	10.7	4.2
Sleeping/resting	1,485	86.8	12.9
Other (cinema, picnic)	57	3.3	7.4

8.3 Economic resources and support of elderly

Apart from their old age pension and income from work (if they were still at work), elderly persons surveyed were asked whether they had other regular sources of income. The number of elderly who reported having one or more such other regular sources of income was 1,193 (70% of the total number of elderly respondents). [Table 29](#) shows the distribution of these persons by such sources of income.

Table 29 - Elderly persons by source of income (other than old age pension and income from work)

Source of income	Number	%
Pension from former employer	542	31.7
Income from property	79	4.6
Social security benefits (other than old age pension)	179	10.5
Financial assistance from children/ relatives	733	42.9
Other	33	1.9
None	517	30.2

Many elderly persons also received non-financial assistance from their children or relatives. Type of assistance received and the number of persons receiving such assistance is shown in [Table 30](#).

Table 30 - Elderly persons receiving non-financial assistance from children/relatives by type of assistance

Type of assistance	Number	%
Provision of food	889	52.0
Housing/payment of rent	387	22.6
Medical expenses	739	43.2
Payment of bills	820	48.0
Other	102	6.0
No assistance	606	35.4

As far as adequacy of basic necessities was concerned, 15% of the elderly reported insufficiency of food, 14% considered their clothing needs to be inadequate, 10% reported inadequacy of housing and 25% were not satisfied with provision of their medical requirements ([Table 31](#)).

Table 31 – Satisfaction of basic needs of elderly persons

Item	Largely sufficient		Just adequate		Not sufficient	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Food	520	30.4	931	54.5	259	15.1
Clothing	526	30.8	944	55.2	240	14.0
Housing	622	36.4	913	53.4	175	10.2
Medical	431	25.2	826	48.5	433	25.3

8.4 Medical care

[Table 32](#) shows the type of medical care sought by elderly persons when they are ill or injured. It is to be noted that some of them had recourse to more than one source of medication for the same health problem.

Table 32 - Type of medical care sought by elderly persons

Type of medical care	Number	%
Public hospital	974	57.0
Health Centre	613	35.8
Private Clinic	100	5.8
Private Doctor	755	44.2
Pharmacist	338	19.8
Self-medication	154	9.0
Physiotherapist/massage/etc.	26	1.5
Other	5	0.3

Expenditure incurred on health and health related items works out to an average of Rs 486 per month per person for the 1,036 elderly persons who reported having made such expenses.

8.5 Companionship

Nearly 35% of the elderly persons reported having gone out for leisure activities on their own at least once during the month preceding the survey month. Another 33% went out with their children, while those who were accompanied by other relatives or friends represented 22%.

Some 7% of the elderly population surveyed reported that they were lonely, as they did not have someone to chat with when they felt like it. About 48%, including those living with children, felt that at times they needed company.

[Table 33](#) shows preferences of elderly persons regarding the type of companionship desired.

Table 33 - Elderly persons by type of company interested in

Type of company	Number of elderly persons	% of total number of elderly persons
Having somebody to keep them company	650	38.0
Attending day care centre	176	10.3
Living with their children (if not already living with children)	218	46.0 ¹
Living with somebody of same age	315	18.4
Living in a home	68	4.0
Other	15	0.9

¹ As a % of elderly persons not living with their children

9. Women

At the 1999 CMPHS, there were 6,407 female household members aged 12 years and above who were not studying on a full time basis. [Table 34](#) shows the distribution of these women according to certain specific activities and the corresponding average number of hours spent during the reference week.

Table 34 - Average number of hours spent on specified activities

Activity	Women having spent time on the following activities		Average number of hours spent per week
	Number	%	
Work (including travelling time)	2,262	35.3	41.9
Studies outside home	124	1.9	6.7
Studies at home	314	4.9	7.1
Club/association	1,534	24.0	3.7
Sports	259	4.0	3.2

9.1 Working women

About 37% (2,345) of the total number of women aged 12 years and above and who were not studying on a full time basis, reported having a job. Among them, 83 were absent from work during the reference week.

Half of them declared that it was difficult to cope with work and family responsibilities but they managed to do so, while around 40% claimed having no difficulty. Only 10% reported having much difficulty to cope with their situation ([Table 35](#)).

Table 35 - Reconciliation of work and family responsibilities

	Number	%
Very difficult	245	10.4
Difficult, but can manage	1,169	49.9
No problem	931	39.7
Total	2,345	100.0

On the average, a working woman had absented herself from work for 1.5 days per month. The main reason of absence was illness, either of the woman herself or other members of the household. Some 20% of working women reported being away from work due to their own health problems.

Table 36 - Absence from work

Reason for absence	Women absent	
	Number	%
Own illness	474	20.2
Illness of children	143	6.1
Illness of other members of the household	56	2.3
Baby care	41	1.7
School holidays	59	2.5
Other reasons	203	8.6

Among working mothers who have babies, 51% left their babies in the care of grand parents while they were at work. Arrangements made by others are shown in [Table 37](#).

Table 37 - Care of babies when mother was at work

Babies looked after by	Women reporting	
	Number	%
Grand parents	136	50.9
Relatives without payment	37	13.9
Paid child minder	33	12.3
Nursery	44	16.5
Other	17	6.4
Total	267	100.0

Among working women with school going children, 43% reported that their children were left on their own after school, while 32% left their children in the care of grand parents ([Table 38](#)).

Table 38 - Care of school going children after school hours while mother is still at work

Children taken care by	Women reporting	
	Number	%
Grand parents	285	32.3
Relatives, friends or neighbours without pay	34	3.9
Relatives, friends or neighbours with pay	110	12.5
Nursery	22	2.5
No one (left on their own)	379	43.0
Other	51	5.8
Total	881	100.0

9.2 Women not at work

Among women aged 12 years and over and not studying on a full-time basis, 63% reported as not being at work at the time of the survey. Among them, 26% expressed their intention to work in the future.

Among those who reported as not interested to work in the future or were undecided,

9% would be interested in jobs with flexible hours and 10% in part time jobs.

9.3 Role of women in decision making at household level

[Table 39](#) shows by whom decisions at the household level are taken. The table reveals that most of the major decisions are taken jointly by both spouses.

Table 39 - Decision making at household level

	Decision taken by				
Decision	Husband only	Wife only	Husband and wife together	Other household member	Not applicable
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Purchase/construction of house	19.9	1.8	67.0	0.9	10.4
Contracting loans	25.0	1.8	61.2	1.1	10.9
Savings and investment	23.0	4.4	66.2	1.1	5.3
Purchase of household appliances/furniture	11.6	9.9	75.7	1.4	1.4
Purchase of food	23.1	17.2	58.2	1.2	0.3
Daily choice of food to be prepared	6.1	46.7	45.0	1.8	0.4
Medical care of family members	15.9	11.5	71.1	1.5	0.0
Children's education	9.9	9.0	54.3	1.5	25.3
Participation of family members in sport activities	17.4	3.1	38.3	4.5	36.7
Participation of family members in religious activities	7.9	11.7	72.8	2.0	5.6
Participation of family members in social/cultural activities	12.9	6.1	61.8	2.2	17.0
Participation of family members in political activities	20.9	1.1	41.8	2.7	33.5

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Port Louis

November 2000