

**122,700 Mauritians are affected by poverty. For a small country like Mauritius with around 1,286,240 inhabitants, it is alarming. The global agenda today is creating an inclusive world. Alone, the Government policies cannot create social inclusion. There is need for greater participation from all sectors to reach those left furthest behind and overcoming poverty in all its dimensions. How can we achieve greater social inclusion by enabling people from all walks of life to come together to respect the human rights and dignity of people living in poverty?**

## INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

# An Uphill Battle

According to statistics available at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, it is estimated that 33,600 households in Mauritius live below the poverty line, in other words 10% of the population. That is to say, poverty affects 122,700 Mauritians. Such extreme poverty, as defined by the World Bank, affects families living on less than \$1.25 per adult per day ('adult equivalent'). This equates to Rs 3,500 per adult per month in Mauritius. Extreme poverty has kept on rising since the early 2000s, so that it affects 1.2% of the Mauritian population today, while in 2004, it was only around 0.4%. To date, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is of the view that there is a real risk of Mauritian families sliding into extreme poverty.

For the World Bank, an inclusive society is one whereby



Nafissah Fakun

remains in supporting these inclusive projects over the long-term, for deep impact over one generation."

She adds that besides material poverty, which is the most visible form, another designation is social exclusion. "This is confirmed by field observations from our Lovebridge team and findings from 31,000 accompaniment hours per year with families living in poverty. There is also the perception among beneficiary families of a widening gap of relative poverty between them and other segments of the population. Poverty is also now not restricted to specific geographical areas. In that sense, Mauritius can learn from best practices implemented elsewhere, that is other countries facing similar situations."



Dr. Bhavish Jugurnath

inadequate education, housing, social, economic, political and cultural systems that contribute to the integration of a person into the community. "Many factors contribute to social exclusion, including poverty, and

