REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ONVENTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION (1960) / OMMENDATION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION (1960)

A. Legal and Administrative Framework

n Mauritius formal Education at all levels is governed by the Education Regulations of 1957 and the relevant amendments made subsequently to egislation to make the education sector responsive to the growing needs of the Mauritian society.

The Mauritian Education System has evolved from a completely private enterprise in the pre independence period to a National Education System.

The government ensures equitable access to pre school education through

(i) the setting up of a Pre- School Trust Fund (PSTF)as a regulatory body ,

(ii) a subsidy to all children aged 4+, and

(iii) construction of preschools attached to government primary schools.

Government's impetus for free Primary Education for All started in the 1940's resulting in near universal enrolment at primary level long before primary education was made compulsory in 1991.

Since 1977 free Secondary Education is also provided. This has caused enrolment at secondary level to rise considerably. There is no discrimination in provision of access to education. Boys and girls have equal rights to education and equal opportunity of access to primary, secondary and post secondary education. Gender parity index is 1.0 at primary and 1.1 at secondary level. Many schools have been constructed to provide access to all students. The Private Secondary School Authority (PSSA) was set up as a regulatory body for managing financial resources

and maintaining norms and standards. A policy of parity of esteem is pursued to ensure that children enjoy the same educational facilities in private and state schools.

Government pays a grant to Private School Sector for equalization of opportunities and facilities.

Education is free at primary level and secondary level. Tertiary education at the University of Mauritius is also free. At present two Universities & three Polytechnic schools are operational. Facilities in Distance learning mode are also available.

In 2005 the legislation was amended, making Education compulsory till the age of 16 with the introduction of 11 year schooling. This measure reflects government's commitment to broadening access to education.

Admission is not denied to any pupil on the basis of race, creed or sex. Pupils are admitted to secondary schools on the basis of merit, proximity of residence and parental choice. Provision is made for Foreign Nationals resident in Mauritius to have access to educational institutions.

National Strategy to support Education

Salaries of all teachers of government and government-aided schools are provided by the State.

In service and pre service teacher training is provided by the State to preprimary, primary and secondary school teachers.

Incremental in salary is equal for all officers of both public and private sector

Salary structure of teachers of private and state schools on the whole do not differ.

Pay Research Bureau regulations guide all equally

Doubts of discrimination are brought to the court under Industrial Law

An Ombudsperson office has been set up with freedom of rights to interfere and investigate in any type of discrimination including Education.

Educational institutions or / individuals can appeal to the court or Ombudsperson if ever any trait or sense of discrimination is experienced.

Text books are provided free of charge to Primary School children

Pre- school education is not free but subsidized by the State. A per capita grant is provided to children aged 4+ by the government

According to the Education Act, it is compulsory for all children- irrespective of gender, creed or colour - to attend primary school in January following their 5th birthday and to following schooling till the age of 16.

A Book Loan Scheme for needy student for the secondary education sector has been introduced to alleviate difficulties for purchase of learning materials

A Tertiary Education Loan Scheme for higher learning at a low interest rate has been devised to ensure equity of access for post Secondary studies. This scheme provides a moratorium on repayment by student after completion of studies and obtaining employment after one year period

A vast programme of construction of secondary schools and upgrading of existing ones has been undertaken to ensure equitable access.

Examination fees at secondary level are sponsored by the government.

A Computer Proficiency training programme has been mounted for teachers and the adult population to improve computer literacy.

Setting up of Education Action Zone (ZEP Schools)

Although education is free and all schools have similar facilities in terms of infrastructure, human and other resources, the level of achievement of children in some **disadvantaged areas** is particularly low

schools -about 30 of them- fail nearly 60% of the children attending them. The ZEP project was reviewed in 2003 to bring innovative strategies to the existing initiative. It targets schools where percentage of passes at Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) has been less than 40 % over 5 consecutive years. Students attending these schools come mainly from family having problems and the project aims at giving additional resources to such schools. Furthermore, allowance is given to the teachers/head teachers who are willing to work in such schools. Through the ZEP food project the government ensures that all students in ZEP school are provided a daily meal. School kits are also provided as learning aid.

Prevocational Education (PREVOC)

Despite of additional effort there is a proportion of children who at the end of the Primary cycle, do not achieve the basic competencies to continue with the normal curriculum at the secondary level. These pupils have not been left out of the system

A new Prevocational stream launched in 2001 alongside the mainstream students in secondary schools has focused on provision of access to pupils over age for primary or having, after two attempts, failed the end of primary examinations.

This practice has ensured coexistence amongst children of different abilities, mutual understanding, respect and a spirit of togetherness thus

pr ing national harmony. A new Pre Voc curriculum has been devised to
im basic competencies in literacy and numeracy and life skills.
Cl comprise of only 25 students as compared to maximum of 40 in a normal
cl pecialist teachers are trained to work with these pupils.A total number of
14 ools are involved (63 State Secondary schools and 79 Private schools).
After 3 years of Prevocational programme the students are offered to
fo the National Trade Certificate Foundation Course (NTCFC) which is a
br ng module between Pre Voc Education and Vocational Education. This
en s that the world of work benefits from the integration of a significant
nu er of children who have been saved from the streets.

Vocational and Technical education needs to be reorganized and
re ted in terms of increase in access, expansion, and out reaching in light of
th owth in small enterprises and demands for skills development.

[redacted]

Government caters for the Special Education needs of all disabled children
u r the aged 16 years.

Special Education is provided to children with

Physical handicaps (mild or acute)

Special learning needs

Learning difficulties (vulnerable groups)

uch special education is provided in

- Special Education needs Units known as Integrated classes on Primary School premises
- Specialized institution in the private sector (NGOs)
- Specialized State Sector Institutions e.g. Rehabilitation Youth Centres

- he Ministry of Education and Human Resources provides per capita
ant to NGO's for the Educational purposes. All teaching learning
aterials are provided to these children. A budget provision of Rs 17
illion has been made for the current financial year.
- he Ministry of Education and Human Resources provides the teaching
taff for the specialized integrated units, Rehabilitation Centres. Out of a
otal of 34 schools / organisations, 12 are sponsored by the Ministry of
ducation and Human Resources.
- The Mauritian Sign Language relevant to the Mauritian context has been
prepared and provided to schools.

[redacted]

5) Mauritius has already attained free Education as from the Primary, (aged
ertiary education till degree courses at the University of Mauritius.
In September 2005, the Government provided free transport to all
st ts. This has allowed poor students who otherwise would have missed
sc ing to attend school.

F **Curriculum renewal Programme**

T chool curriculum at primary level has been reviewed to provide such
e tion that will meet the needs for academic, aesthetic, physical as well as
s development of the child . New learning areas such as Citizenship
e ation, health & physical education and ICT have been included.
o mainstreams about Human Rights, Chidren's Rights, duties of all children,
hen Right's and concern for the environment. Also the curriculum is gender
dly.
owing a National Seminar held last November to obtain consensus in terms
ends in education etc the machinery is on for the review of The Lower

S ndary School curriculum to focus on ensuring provision of world class e ation.

[redacted]

At the Pre School level access is available to all children aged 3-5. To P de equitable access to pre school children, special attention has been given t lnerable and disadvantaged children in regions of greatest social need. Pre s ols have been constructed in the least developed regions.

T gross enrolment Ratio for children aged

4+ works out to 97%

4 to 5 works out to 99%

6 to 11 works out to 102 %

12 to 19 was 66% in 2003 but with the introduction of the Pre Voc Stream this is expected to reach 100%.

M ritius is a multiracial and multicultural country. The Educational system also P ides for instruction in seven oriental languages (ancestral languages) and of t otal primary school population studying any one of these languages totals 6 .

The Government has promoted the establishment of general Cultural c es which looks into cultural development and protection and promotion of c ral traditions and traits.

These centres receive grants from the government and the Ministry of and Culture provides facilities for activities organised by these centres.

[redacted]

The Government recurrent expenditure on education was estimated a[illegible]nd R 5,611.4 million for the financial year 2004-2005, representing 14% of the g[illegible]rnment total recurrent expenditure which amounted to Rs 40,490 million.

[illegible] Evening Schools

Government provides Rs 12 million as grant to religious bodies. This is [illegible]tributed to temples and places of worships.

Evening schools run by Socio Cultural groups teach Asian Languages.

[illegible] Festivals

The State supports religious festivals of all religious groups. [illegible]schools curriculum also provides an awareness of the different cultures [illegible]ent in the Mauritian landscape through the main festival celebrated here. [illegible]ents are exposured to festivals of all the segments of the population. In [illegible]tion these festivals have been declared public holidays so that all Mauritians [illegible]participate in them.

There is no racial discrimination in Mauritius.

[illegible] Access

There is a transparency in provision of education to children and youth in [illegible]ritius.

Access to education is advertised, published and all children are given [illegible]al treatment in terms of application for admission, processing and allocation [illegible]eats in Educational institutions.

[illegible] Non Formal Education by NGOs

Many NGOs and small groups all round Mauritius emerging from socio Cu[redacted]al organization, communities religious bodies and spiritual groups are ed[redacted]ing the population with regards to global issues, for e.g. HIV/AIDS.