



**DOWN SYNDROME ASSOCIATION (DSA)**  
(MAURITIUS)

Registered No - 12765

**Subject: Human Rights Council resolution 37/20 “Rights of the Child”**

An all-inclusive education system has been initiated since the great industrial revolution. In achieving so, countries have been able to capitalize of various capabilities and intellectual outcomes. All-inclusive hails from setting up the proper infrastructure and environment to meet the end user needs whereby the latter provides the least possible tiring effort.

1. Ensuring access to inclusive education for children with disabilities is one key way in which they can be empowered.

- a. .Schooling in the Republic of Mauritius is free for each of its citizens irrespective of race, differences and background. The country aligns its human resources from the traditional framework of schooling for all. The transition of education thresholds has known a revamp through the bridging the gap policy implemented by the Ministry of Education. However there pre requisites of children with disabilities have been overlooked over the last few years.
- b. All-inclusive education in Mauritius is yet to be answered based on the core needs. For the immediate instance, Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (ECCEA) providing equal access for all children to quality pre-schooling including those at risk of delayed development and disabilities and those coming from conditions of vulnerability, through a child-centered and play-based approach, with the involvement of the parents. Following the budget speech initiated in 2018; the need to ease access for children with disabilities towards the education rights, is in the process of being catered via the Special Needs Education Authority (SEN) under clause 184. Link: [http://budget.mof.govmu.org/budget2018-19/2018\\_19budgetspeech.pdf](http://budget.mof.govmu.org/budget2018-19/2018_19budgetspeech.pdf)



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However despite the presence of ECCEA, intellectual and psychological needs of children with disabilities are yet to be catered for, so that it answers to the education needs and capabilities enhancement.

2.

- a. The global context for inclusive education as it relates to children and young people with disabilities and main challenges to ensure the right to education for all is realised and considered. Ensuring close consultation with and active involvement of children with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting them. Addressing the needs for a cohesive environment that aids to the development of persons with disabilities towards their education, as enumerated above the ECCEA and SEN are the only regulated bodies to promote education needs while the Human Rights Commission, Equal Opportunity Commission and Office of the Ombudsperson for Children prompts regulations to be adhered to. Hereunder a specific framework is yet to be drafted and promulgated so as to accommodate for the intellectual and infrastructural needs for persons with disabilities and their surroundings.
  
- b. Under section 185 of the budget speech 2018: “185. Currently, there is an annual per capita grant for teaching aids, utilities, furniture and equipment for SEN students. I am pleased to announce that the grant for these three items is being increased fourfold, that is, from Rs 1,300 to Rs 5,200.” The minimum financial aid is present in the legal definition within the Republic of Mauritius. The minimum financial aid may serve as a basis to offer minimum support to persons with disabilities. However beyond monetary aid, participating in a child’s education means trying to understand and influence a complex system of policies, laws, and priorities .It means working closely with people within the system. The need to understand a child’s rights and rights and responsibilities, and also the roles and responsibilities of the professionals who work within the system.



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- c. Mauritius hosts 5 Sen Resource And Development Centres (SENRCDC) around the island in addition to 54 SEN Schools registered with the SEN Unit, MoE, HR, TE and SR. In contrast the urge to reconnect parent consultation into policy decisions draft in between Parent Teachers Association consultations. Linking the aforementioned parties shall define Inclusive education as not just a matter of moving children with disability to special schools into ordinary schools without provision for adequate infrastructure and expertise. The switch should be an upgrade to the psychology and capabilities of the children with disability. Therefore resulting into a 360° approach to augment capabilities.
3. As per the prevailing social and political conditions within the Republic of Mauritius, no adverse issues have been identified with the possible outlay on conflicts.
  4. The respite care programme has been a one off yearly project which caters for creative residential project for children with disabilities. However it may have been used as a residential interactive partnership vis a vis children with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities hence conduct a valid observation of how the children are interacting and developing their skills outside the contemporary education system. School principals and management committees need the skills, resources and budgets necessary to implement inclusive education. The involvement of parents and children in school governance can be critical. When families and communities work together with the school system, children have better grades, stay in school and develop better social skills and behaviour. Inclusive starts when children with disabilities are embarked on the policy decision committee. .
  5. Aside the constitution of Mauritius which made provision for acts in regards to decimation on the basis of disabilities. Human Rights Commission, Equal Opportunity Commission and Office of the Ombudsperson for Children act as the relative legal bodies which regulate discrimination in regards to children with disabilities. However no specific blueprint to address hindrances faced by children with disability in regards to access and combat



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discrimination have been made available. Children should receive regular and adequate professional support, follow-ups and therapy by medical and paramedical staff individually at schools or in the Special Education Needs Resource and Development Centres. Such support should be incorporated in the Individual Education Plan/Profile book and should be in line with the development of the child.

6.

- a. The ECCEA and SEN unit are supposed to possess full record of the data stated however same is not released for public consultation. Under the Data Protection Act of Mauritius, the data is kept for technical consideration thus ensuring privacy and confidentiality.
  
- b. Data is not available to public. Record available at different ministries.

**Acronyms used in the Document:**

ECCEA - Early Childhood Care and Education Authority

SEN - Special Education Needs

MoE, HR, TE and SR - Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research

**Conclusion**

The Research paper was done in conjunction with Down Syndrome Mauritius and U – Link. Input provided in the above document were referred from various sources linked to the Republic of Mauritius. The draft was done following consultation with Vice President of Down Syndrome Mauritius Mr Ali Jookhun and Executive Member of U – Link, Mr Dookhoo Soovan Sharma.