

Questions to Human Rights Council Resolution-25.10.13

1. **Do the national or local constitutions or laws of your country prevent or restrict access to any student with disabilities to regular schools at any levels? (E.g. based on diagnosis or an assessment of their capabilities)**

No

In Mauritius, formal Education at all levels is governed by the **Education Act and Education Regulations of 1957** as subsequently amended. The legislation was amended in 2004 to make **Education compulsory for all till the age of 16** with the introduction of 11 year schooling as from 2005.

2. **Is all education of children and adults with disabilities under the control of the Ministry of Education? Please specify if other Ministries (e.g. Social Affairs or Health) have control over some educational facilities and detail the functions of such facilities.**

Since May 2010, Education is being catered for by two different Ministries, namely the **Ministry of Education and Human Resources** (covering the preprimary, primary and secondary subsectors, including technical and vocational education and training) and the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology (postsecondary subsector). A new Ministry has also been established to look specifically after Social Integration and Economic Empowerment.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources provides education and specialized services to children with disabilities aged from 3 to 20 years in collaboration with 38 registered NGOs to which it provides financial assistance based on the number of students through a grant-in-aid formula.

To assist in the education of children with disabilities, the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Reform Institutions provides the following facilities:

- (i) Refund of transport costs for one accompanying parent of children with disabilities attending schools/day care centres.
- (ii) Refund of taxi fares to students with severe disabilities attending university who cannot travel by ordinary means of transport.
- (iii) Scholarship Scheme by the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons to encourage students with disabilities to pursue secondary and tertiary studies.
- (iv) Annual Grant-in-Aid by the NGO Trust Fund to NGOs running special schools.

Vocational training is also provided to children with disabilities by the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board, which operates under the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Reform Institutions.

3. Does your country have a plan or program that progressively promotes the transformation of the education system into an inclusive education system including some or all of the following measures? (Please specify with measures)

Yes.

In 2006, the Ministry of Education and Human Resources after multi-sectoral consultations, developed a **National Policy and Strategy Document on Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education in Mauritius** to respond to both the specific and emerging educational needs of all children with special educational needs with focus on the special educational needs of all children with disabilities. It provides for the inclusion of these children in our educational system through appropriate partnership with relevant Ministries and Non-Government Organisations.

The Ministry's **Education & Human Resources Strategy Plan 2008-2020** includes among its strategic goals "Encourage and support the inclusion of children with special needs" and "Give a greater thrust to special education needs" while the Ministry's Programme –Based Budgets as from 2011 provide a special programme "Special Education Needs of School Age Children" with clearly defined Outcome (Successful integration of children with special education needs into the world of higher education, training or work/Increased access to quality education for children with special needs"), services to be provided, service standards and quantifiable enrolment targets for 2011 (60%) to 2023 (95%).

An **outreach exercise** was carried out as from 2010 to encourage parents with disabled children to come forward and register their disabled children at the primary school nearest to their residence and to sensitize heads of schools and other staff to give them a special support. A survey exercise was scheduled as from April 2012 to determine the number of children with disabilities and the type of their impairment.

