Country Profile on Disability
Republic of Mauritius

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Abbreviations

CBR	Community-based Rehabilitation
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
EU	European Union
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MBC	Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OPD	Organization of Persons with Disabilities
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEN	Special Education Needs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VDPI	Voice of Disabled People International
VNR	Voluntary National Review

1. Basic Profile

1-1. Basic Indicators[1]

Gross domestic product per capita[2]	USD 11,990.8	2024

Government Expenditure by Sector

Healthcare (% of GDP)	5.8 %	2022
Education (% of GDP)	4.1 %	2024
Social protection (% of GDP)[3]	9.4 %	2022

Population

Total population	1,245,779	2024
Male (% of total population)	49.9 %	
Female (% of total population)	50.0 %	
Urban population (% of total population)	39 %	
Rural population (% of total population)	61 %	
Life expectancy at birth (total)	73.4 years	2023
Male	70.1 years	
Female	76.8 years	

Health

Prevalence of undernourishment	8.7 %	2023
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	13.5	2023

Education

Duration of education system[4]		
Primary education	6 years	
Compulsory education	11 years	
Adult literacy rate (total)	94.3 %	2023
Male	96.2 %	
Female	92.8 %	

[1] Based on the World Bank (https://data.worldbank.org/indicator) (Accessed: 19 January 2026)

[2] Gross Domestic Product (hereinafter referred to as "GDP").

[3] Based on ILO (2024) World Social Protection Report, https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/WSPR_2024_EN_WEB_1.pdf (Accessed: 5 April 2026).

[4] Compulsory education in the Republic of Mauritius consists of six years of primary education and seven years of secondary education, beginning at the age of six, based on data from the Japan Foundation's "Survey on Japanese-Language Education Abroad: Country and Region Profiles – Mauritius" (Accessed: 20 January 2026).

School enrolment rate		
Primary (% gross) (total)	107.3 %	2024
Male	106.9 %	
Female	107.7 %	
Secondary (% gross) (total)	90.7 %	2024
Male	88.1 %	
Female	93.3 %	
Tertiary (% gross) (total)	45.8 %	2024
Male	36.6 %	
Female	55.1 %	

Employment

Unemployment rate (total)	5.5 %	2024
Male (% of male labour force)	4.2 %	
Female (% of female labour force)	7.5 %	

1-2. Definition of Disability and Indicators on Disability

1-2-1. Definition of Disability

According to Article 2 of the 2024 Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act[5] of the Republic of Mauritius (hereinafter referred to as "Mauritius"), "disability" means "a long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which substantially hinders a person's ability to carry out daily activities."

1-2-2. Indicators on Disability

According to the annexes to the combined second and third periodic reports submitted by the Government of Mauritius to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2020 (hereinafter referred to as the "2020 Report"), Statistics Mauritius conducts a census through door-to-door visits every ten years. At the census conducted in 2011, data on disability were disaggregated by sex, age, type of disability, region, marital status, school attendance, educational attainment, activity status, and employment, among other criteria. In that census, the Washington Group Short Set of Questions developed was used to identify persons with disabilities, and the same questionnaire set was also used in the census scheduled for 2021.

The results of the 2011 census have been published, showing that approximately 5% of

[5] https://mauritiusassembly.govmu.org/mauritiusassembly/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/bill2323.pdf (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

adults aged 15 and above in Mauritius had some form of functional difficulty. Details are shown in the following tables[6].

Table 1 Proportion of adults with functional difficulties by sex, area of residence, and age group (%), 2011

Category	Any difficulty※1	Some difficulty※2	At least a lot of difficulty※3
All adults	4.98	2.52	2.46
Female	5.22	2.57	2.64
Male	4.74	2.47	2.26
Rural residents	5.00	2.67	2.33
Urban residents	4.95	2.32	2.63
15～29 years	1.21	0.45	0.76
30～44 years	2.83	1.87	0.96
45～64 years	5.64	3.18	2.47
65 years and over	19.68	8.25	11.43

Source: Statistics Mauritius, "2011 Population Census"

**1 Any difficulty: persons who answered "Some difficulty," "A lot of difficulty," or "Unable to do" in at least one domain. *2 Some difficulty only: persons who answered "Some difficulty" in at least one domain and did not answer "A lot of difficulty" or "Unable to do" in any other domain. *3 At least a lot of difficulty: persons who answered "A lot of difficulty" or "Unable to do" in at least one domain.*

Table 2 Proportion of persons with difficulties by functional domain (%), 2011

Functional domain	Any difficulty	Some difficulty only	At least a lot of difficulty
Seeing	1.76	1.15	0.61
Hearing	0.71	0.38	0.33
Mobility	2.47	1.11	1.36
Cognitive	1.12	0.46	0.67
Self-care	2.16	1.60	0.57
Communication	0.64	0.24	0.39

Source: Statistics Mauritius, "2011 Population Census"

[6] Based on information published by the Disability Data Initiative using data from the 2011 Population Census. https://www.disabilitydatainitiative.org/country-briefs/mu/ (Accessed: 20 April 2026). In this document, the terms "Some difficulty", "At least a lot of difficulty", and "Any difficulty" follow the definitions used by the Disability Data Initiative.

2. Administration and Policy on Disability

2-1. Administration on Disability

According to the initial government report submitted by the Government of Mauritius to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as the "2012 Report"), the Government of Mauritius signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter referred to as the "CRPD") on 25 September 2007 and ratified it in 2010. In order to steadily fulfill its obligation to monitor domestic implementation under Article 33 of the CRPD, the "National Committee on the Implementation and Monitoring of the Convention" was established.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity (referred to in that report under its former name, the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions; hereinafter referred to as the "Ministry of Social Integration") is responsible for overseeing the implementation of government strategies to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Mauritius. Following the signing of the CRPD, the Ministry formulated the "National Policy and Action Plan on Disability" in December 2007.

<Central government>

Entities responsible for disability issues

Table 3 Entities responsible for disability issues in Mauritius[7]

No.	Name	Overview
1	Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity	・Formulation and implementation of disability policies and measures through the Disability Empowerment Unit, coordination with relevant agencies, and promotion of the social participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities (including CRPD-related measures)[8] ・Provision of disability pensions, allowances, and other services ・Operation of a disability database and management information system that manage personal data on persons with disabilities

[7] The names of the ministries in this table are those in use at the time of submission of the 2012 report. According to a search, an official updated cabinet list of the Government of Mauritius dated 27 November 2024 is available, and this document indicates that the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has been split into the Ministry of Education and Human Resource and the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science and Research, and that the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training has been renamed the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations.
https://www.maurice-info.mu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Updated-List-of-Ministers-28-11-2024.pdf#:~:text=The%20updated%20list%20of%20Ministers%20is%20as%20follows%3A,Social%20Integration%2C%20Social%20Security%20and%20National%20Solidarity%20 (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

[8] https://disability.govmu.org/disabilities/ (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

		・Operation of the disability portal website (disability.govmu.org) ・Provision of various services (free bus services, reimbursement of taxi fares, preferential treatment for vehicles and assistive devices, etc. ・Issuance of licenses to and supervision of residential care facilities
2	Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology	・ Implementation of measures related to Special Education Needs and inclusive education ・ Provision of equipment and teaching materials for special needs education (such as PCs for students with visual disabilities)
3	Ministry of Health and Wellness	・ Provision of free medical services at public medical institutions ・ Promotion of rehabilitation for persons with disabilities ・ Provision of mental health services and implementation of mental health care under the Mental Health Care Act ・ Implementation of health awareness campaigns through television broadcasts with sign language interpretation in collaboration with the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation
4	Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare	・ Provision of psychological support, shelters, monitoring visits, and other support for victims of violence and abuse, including women and children with disabilities ・ Reintegration of children, including children with disabilities, from institutions into families and foster families through the Back-to-Home Programme and Foster Care
5	Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training	・ Promotion of the participation of jobseekers, including persons with disabilities, in employment programs such as the Youth Employment Programme and the Back to Work Programme
6	Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation	・ Implementation of digital inclusion measures for citizens, including persons with disabilities, through the National Computer Board under its jurisdiction, including awareness-raising on information and communication technology (ICT) and provision of 3D-printed educational materials

Source: Prepared by the study team based on the 2020 Report.

Status of Coordination Mechanism

The 2012 Report states that the "National Committee on the Implementation and

Monitoring of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" was established for the implementation and monitoring of the CRPD. The Committee was described as a multi-sectoral body chaired by the Minister of the then Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions (now the Ministry of Social Integration), and composed of representatives from ministries and departments, the Attorney General's Office, the private sector, non-governmental organizations (hereinafter referred to as "NGOs"), organizations of persons with disabilities (hereinafter referred to as "OPDs"), international disability-related organizations, and persons with disabilities. The same report also indicates that an Accessibility Subcommittee was established under the National Committee. Chaired by the current Minister of Social Integration, the Subcommittee is composed of the Deputy Director of Architecture of the former Ministry of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping, representatives of the former Ministry of Local Government, the Road Development Authority, the National Development Unit, the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit, and local authorities.

The government report submitted in 2020 states that, as a domestic mechanism relating to human rights treaties, a "National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow-up" was established in 2017. This mechanism is responsible for preparing reports on human rights treaties, including those under the frameworks of the United Nations and the African Union, and for following up on recommendations, while also reviewing the implementation status of treaties through consultations with relevant ministries, agencies, and civil society. In addition, the report lists the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of the Ombudsperson for Children, the Sports Ombudsperson, the Financial Services Ombudsperson, the National Human Rights Commission, the Public Bodies Appeal Tribunal, the Medical Tribunal, and the Public Service Appeal Tribunal as bodies to which complaints of rights violations, including those involving persons with disabilities, may be submitted. It is also stated that the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Board is composed mainly of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations and holds monthly discussions on policies and action plans concerning persons with disabilities.

In contrast, the concluding observations adopted by the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2024 express several concerns regarding the domestic implementation and monitoring mechanism under Article 33 of the CRPD. First, they note that the National Empowerment Authority, planned as the national focal point and coordinating body for implementation of the CRPD, has not yet been established, and that the transition has been delayed despite the fact that the Authority is to integrate the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Board, the Training and Employment of

Disabled Persons Board, and the Lois Lagesse Trust Fund. Additionally, with regard to the independent monitoring mechanism envisaged under the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2024, the concluding observations point out that it lacks independence as a body monitoring implementation of the CRPD because it is chaired by the Ministry of Social Integration and includes representatives of the National Empowerment Authority and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade as members. The concluding observations recommend the prompt establishment of the National Empowerment Authority and a review of the composition of the independent monitoring mechanism in line with the Paris Principles relating to the status of national human rights institutions.

<Local government>

In the 2012 Report, as a measure to implement Article 9 of the CRPD (Accessibility), it is indicated that representatives of local authorities participate in the Accessibility Subcommittee established under the National Committee, thereby enabling actors at the local level to be involved in examining and coordinating accessibility-related matters.

Article 19 of the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act provides for the establishment of "Disability Rights Watch" in each region. The organization is positioned as a body responsible for promoting the empowerment of persons with disabilities, protecting their rights, and preventing and reporting abuse, and it is stipulated that its members shall be remunerated.

2-2. Laws and Policies on Disability[9]

Title	Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act[10]
Year of enactment	2024
Overview	This Act aims at the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and the elimination of discrimination. It prohibits discrimination and abusive treatment, and provides for training and education, employment, habilitation and rehabilitation, statistics and data collection, and international cooperation. It also sets out provisions on the establishment of an independent monitoring mechanism, an Empowerment Unit, Disability Rights Watch (regional monitoring bodies), the Empowerment Authority, obligations and fiscal incentives regarding the employment of persons with disabilities, and the establishment of a register of persons with disabilities.

[9] Based on the annexes to the 2020 report.

[10] https://mauritiusassembly.govmu.org/mauritiusassembly/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/act0124.pdf(Accessed: 21 April 2026)

Other major laws related to the rights of persons with disabilities include the following.

Title	Workers' Rights Act
Year of enactment	2019
Overview	Enacted in 2019, this Act aims to ensure equal treatment for all workers, including workers with disabilities, through provisions for the protection of workers with disabilities. It defines and prohibits "discrimination" as conduct by an employer which undermines equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation on the basis of, inter alia, an impairment and other grounds. It also defines and criminalizes "harassment" as unwanted verbal, non-verbal, visual, psychological or physical conduct on the basis of disability or other grounds.

Title	Special Education Needs Authority Act
Year of enactment	2018
Overview	Enacted in 2018, this Act provides for the establishment of the Special Education Needs Authority. The Authority is mandated to monitor and facilitate the implementation of Government policy on Special Education Needs, to advise the Minister on registration criteria and related policies for institutions and staff in the field of Special Education Needs, and to provide guidance on curriculum design and development in this field.

Title	Building Control Act
Year of enactment	2013
Overview	Enacted in 2013, this Act provides in section 3 that all buildings shall, as a functional requirement, be accessible to persons with mobility or communication disabilities, older persons and pregnant women, and that such persons shall be enabled to use the building and its facilities in comfort. Under this Act, the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations 2017 require, in particular, public-use buildings to incorporate features ensuring accessibility and gender compliance, such as ramps and audio-visual signage.

Title	Equal Opportunities Act
Year of enactment	2008
Overview	Enacted in 2008, this Act provides that all persons shall have equal opportunities to pursue their objectives in all areas, including employment and education, and shall not be placed at a disadvantage on the basis of age, caste, color, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation. Section 2 defines "impairment" and prohibits discrimination in employment advertisements, recruitment, promotion, training, dismissal,

	terms and conditions of employment, admission to educational institutions and the provision of goods, services and facilities, as well as specific discriminatory treatment by employers and prospective employers.

Title	Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act
Year of enactment	1996
Overview	Enacted in 1996, this Act establishes the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board as a body corporate. It requires all employers with 35 or more employees to ensure that at least 3% of their workforce are persons with disabilities. The 2012 amendment aligned the definition of "person with disability" with the CRPD and, in addition, clarified the functions of the Board, including preventing discrimination on the basis of disability, raising awareness among employers, encouraging the establishment of training institutions and other organizations for persons with disabilities, managing and promoting schemes and projects relating to training and employment, and improving the social and economic status of persons with disabilities. The composition of the Board was also reviewed by removing the position of a medical officer and adding persons with disabilities as members.

Title	National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act
Year of enactment	1986
Overview	Enacted in 1986, this Act establishes the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons as a body corporate, to be administered under the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Integration. Section 4 sets out, as the objectives of the Council, to coordinate the activities of OPDs, to promote the development and expansion of rehabilitation services, to advise the Minister on all aspects of the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, to collaborate and share technical information with international and national organizations working in this field, and to promote the welfare of persons with disabilities.

Title	National Pensions Act
Year of enactment	1976
Overview	Enacted in 1976, this Act defines "disabled" in some provisions as a person who has suffered at least 60% incapacity due to loss of mental or physical faculty, or as a person who has suffered at least 1% incapacity due to an accident at work or a prescribed disease. The Act provides for the payment of an "invalid's basic pension" to persons with disabilities under the age of 60 whose condition is expected to last for at least 12 months. It also provides for invalidity contributions pensions and other benefits

	for insured persons with total and permanent impairments before retirement age. The 2016 amendment abolished the minimum age requirement for the basic pension, thereby extending eligibility, previously limited to persons aged 15 and above, to children under 15 with disabilities. As a result, it is reported that more than 3,000 children with disabilities now receive financial support.

Disability Policies

Title	National Policy Paper and Action Plan on Disability "Valuing People with Disabilities" and subsequent Action Plan
Year implemented	・ 2007: Formulation of the first policy paper and action plan in line with the CRPD ・ 2016–2020: Disability Action Plan 2016–2020 ・ 2021–2025: Disability Action Plan 2021–2025 ・ 2025–2030: Disability Action Plan 2025–2030 (under preparation)
Overview	In December 2007, the National Policy Paper and Action Plan on Disability entitled "Valuing People with Disabilities" was formulated, setting out comprehensive recommendations for the realization of the economic, social, cultural, political and civil rights of persons with disabilities. Subsequently, the Disability Action Plan 2016–2020 was developed, establishing 83 actions and targets concerning, inter alia, revision of legal and institutional frameworks and procedures for the provision of social benefits and services, and it is reported that approximately 74% of these actions and targets have been implemented or are in progress. The actions and targets not implemented were carried over to the Disability Action Plan 2021–2025, for which deadlines and indicators were set. In addition, a new Disability Action Plan covering the period 2025–2030 is under preparation.

2-3. Measures on Disability

1) Healthcare

According to the 2012 Report, Mauritius has a free public healthcare system, and persons with disabilities have universal access to healthcare services on an equal basis with other citizens. The Ministry of Health and Wellness provides priority treatment at hospitals, separate queues at pharmacies and other facilities, home visits by nurses to administer injections and provide treatment, and early detection of children with disabilities at pre-primary and primary schools.

The 2020 Report states that orthopedic departments have been established in all public hospitals and that assistive devices such as prostheses and other orthoses and appliances are provided free of charge to persons with disabilities. With regard to community-based medical services, the same report notes that the Ministry of Social Integration provides free monthly home visits by doctors to bedridden persons and persons with severe disabilities of all ages,

and that 250 doctors are employed on a part-time basis for this purpose.

Concerning community rehabilitation, the Ministry of Health and Wellness operates outreach and Community-based Rehabilitation (CBR) services. According to the 2012 Report, as of December 2011, CBR staff had provided home-based support to 10,884 persons with disabilities, and the annexes to the 2020 Report state that the number of home visits reached 224,098 between 2015 and the time of reporting.

Regarding rehabilitation in residential facilities, the 2012 Report notes that the Ministry of Social Integration established a residential facility named "Foyer Trochetia" for 32 older persons with severe disabilities and that physiotherapy and occupational therapy were provided to children with disabilities at that facility. The 2020 Report states that these services are also provided to persons with disabilities.

On mental health, the 2012 Report and the 2020 Report state that admission to a mental health center is conditional on medical necessity and the consent of the person concerned or his or her close relatives. Where the person cannot give consent and close relatives are unknown or do not consent, the responsible psychiatrist submits a treatment plan to a committee, and treatment is carried out after its approval. The 2019 amendment to the Mental Health Care Act strengthened the legal framework for the proper management of mental health centers, with the prevention of long-term hospitalization and institutionalization being one of its objectives. The Mental Health Care Board and the Management Committee established under the Act bear responsibility for preventing involuntary admission; the former investigates cases of non-voluntary admission, while the latter examines admission, treatment, leave, discharge and continuation of treatment.

With regard to mental health and psychological support for victims of violence, the 2020 Report states that the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare provides psychological support to victims of abuse and violence, including persons with disabilities, and that support is also provided at home where it is difficult for victims to attend outpatient services. The Child Protection (Place of Safety for the Welfare and Protection of Children) Regulations, promulgated in September 2019, provide not only for the welfare and protection of children but also for their rehabilitation through physical, psychological and social recovery, including the designation of places of safety. Furthermore, the Ministry is reported to operate a residential care facility for children with disabilities who have experienced violence and abuse, in collaboration with the Mauritius Association of Disabled Persons, which is equipped with facilities and staffed with personnel trained to respond to special educational needs.

2) Education

According to the 2012 Report, in 2006 the Government of Mauritius formulated the "Policy

and Strategy on Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education," which commits to enabling children with disabilities to learn in inclusive settings. The policy aims to ensure access to education, the appropriateness and quality of educational content, and improved learning outcomes, and sets out the following three types of educational provision.

- Mainstream schools
  Children with disabilities are, in principle, to attend mainstream schools in their local communities. Based on appropriate assessment and the wishes of parents or guardians, children with mild or moderate intellectual or sensory disabilities are enrolled in mainstream classes where they can receive support services, assistance from support staff and support teachers, who complement the work of classroom teachers.
- Special Education Classes/Units within mainstream schools
  Children with more severe disabilities are provided with opportunities to learn in specialized educational environments in special education classes or units established in public schools and other institutions.
- Special Educational Needs Schools
  Children who, based on specialized assessment, are considered difficult to integrate into mainstream classes attend Special Educational Needs Schools. These schools engage in exchange activities with mainstream schools in the community, including joint activities.

According to the 2020 Report and its annexes, the government provides subsidies to Special Educational Needs Schools operated by NGOs. These subsidies apply to all eligible NGOs registered with the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, and cover the personnel costs of managerial staff, teachers, assistant teachers, caregivers, workers and drivers, as well as professionals such as psychologists, occupational therapists and speech therapists. They also cover per-child operating costs, teaching and learning materials, utilities, and furniture and equipment. At the time of the report, 53 NGOs were operating such schools.

With regard to improving access to school facilities and school attendance, the 2012 Report notes that ramps had been installed in 148 schools and accessible toilets for persons with disabilities had been provided in 30 schools. It also reports that additional time during examinations, enlarged learning materials and examination papers, and sign language interpretation were being provided. The 2020 Report and its annexes likewise state that the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has been promoting the

accessibility of schools. In the two years 2017–2018 and 2018–2019, 32 schools were renovated, and all newly constructed secondary schools were equipped with accessible toilets.

With regard to support for school attendance, the 2020 Report states that the bus fares of parents or guardians accompanying children with disabilities, taxi fares for learners with severe disabilities who have difficulty using public transport, and customs duties on vehicles purchased for school transport are covered. In addition, seven Special Education Needs Resource and Development Centres have been established as hubs for Special Education Needs, and seven vans have been allocated for transporting children to and from the centers and for treatment and training. These centers provide integrated services by psychologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and other professionals, and are equipped with classrooms for children with severe disabilities, multi-sensory rooms, and specialized equipment and furniture.

With regard to teacher training, the 2012 Report notes that the Mauritius Institute of Education provides training for teachers in mainstream schools as well as for teachers working with Special Education Needs. The Institute offers a certificate course in Special Education Needs, diplomas for primary and early childhood education, and postgraduate diplomas in Inclusive Education and Special Education. The curriculum includes early detection and early intervention, inclusive classroom practices, Deaf education and sign language. In 2011, 90 teachers received basic training in sign language. According to the 2020 Report, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has been implementing a three-year training-of-trainers programme, including training in Réunion Island, in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Education and the French Institute of Education.

With regard to higher education, the 2012 Report states that universities have been improving their environments to accommodate students with disabilities and that, at that time, 21 students with disabilities were enrolled in fields such as engineering, finance, law and information systems. According to the 2020 Report, a special scholarship scheme for students with disabilities pursuing higher education in Mauritius has been in place since 2016, under which a monthly living allowance of 5,000 rupees is paid in addition to tuition fees. A small number of students have been receiving this scholarship in each academic year since 2016–2017.

3) Gender

According to the initial State party report (2012), Mauritius accessed to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as "CEDAW"), and legislative and policy measures relating to the rights of women apply equally

to women with disabilities. The Equal Opportunities Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of various grounds, including mental and physical disability, and provides for equal opportunities for women, including women with disabilities, in areas such as employment, education, accommodation, the provision of goods, services and facilities, sports, the disposal of immovable property, membership of private clubs and access to public places.

According to the 2020 Report, in response to the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Government has reported as "implemented" the recommendations to "integrate the rights of women and girls with disabilities into all laws, policies and programmes" and to "take all necessary measures to protect women and girls with disabilities from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence." In addition, according to the annexes to the 2020 Report, the Protection from Domestic Violence Act was strengthened through amendments in 2004 and 2007, and the 2016 amendment further tightened penalties for violence against persons with disabilities. Within this framework, according to the 2024 Additional Info from the State Party, four shelters for women victims of violence have been established, two of which are equipped with accessibility features such as ramps, handrails and accessible bathrooms and toilets.

Additionally, since 2012, a Forum of Women with Disabilities has been established under the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (2020 Report). The Forum aims to advocate for and make visible the rights of women with disabilities, promote their empowerment, strengthen networking, enhance capacities through training and employment, and build a shared sense of purpose.

With regard to children, the 2020 Report states that the Child Protection Act provides for aggravated penalties for sexual offences against children with intellectual disabilities. The Child Protection (Place of Safety for the Welfare and Protection of Children) Regulations 2019 provide for protection and rehabilitation in "Places of Safety," and their scope includes girls with disabilities. The annexes to the same report indicate that, in response to recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, measures such as the explicit prohibition of compulsory treatment and forced sterilization of children, including girls and boys with disabilities, and the development of family- and community-based alternative care have been reported as "implemented."

In addition, according to the 2024 Additional Info from State Party, in cases where a pregnant woman with a severe mental disability is unable to express her will, abortion may be performed on the basis of written informed consent from the partner, spouse, parents or legal guardian. At the same time, forced abortion is prohibited, and violations are punishable by imprisonment for up to five years and a fine of up to 100,000 rupees.

4) Vocational Training and Employment

According to the 2020 Report, the employment of persons with disabilities in Mauritius is governed not only by constitutional provisions on non-discrimination and the general labour law framework, but also directly by the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act, the Equal Opportunities Act and the Workers' Rights Act. In line with Article 27 of the CRPD, these laws are structured around three pillars: prohibition of discrimination, affirmative employment measures and access to vocational training opportunities.

The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act requires all employers with 35 or more employees to ensure that at least 3% of their workforce are persons with disabilities. The 2012 amendment reaffirmed this 3% employment obligation and introduced a requirement for employers who fail to meet it to pay a contribution of 4,000 rupees per month for each missing employee with a disability. A Hearing Committee was established to examine non-compliant employers, and in cases brought before the courts, fines of up to 75,000 rupees or imprisonment for up to six months may be imposed.

The 2017 amendment to the Equal Opportunities Act prohibits discrimination in recruitment and promotion on the basis of a criminal record where it is unrelated to the nature of the job, and this provision also applies to impairment. The Act also prohibits discrimination in job advertisements, in selection and recruitment processes, and in vocational training programmes.

Article 64 of the Workers' Rights Act prohibits termination of employment contracts on the basis of impairment or other similar grounds, and Article 123(2) provides that breaches of Article 5 may be punished by fines of up to 25,000 rupees and imprisonment for up to two years.

With regard to the employment situation, the 2020 Report states that, according to the 2011 census, 8,435 persons with disabilities were employed in various sectors of the open labour market. The census scheduled for 2021 was expected to provide updated information on employment in both the public and private sectors, but those results had not been published at the time of preparation of this report. In addition, the number of jobseekers with disabilities registered with the Employment Information Centre of the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training who obtained employment or job placements between January 2012 and August 2020 has been compiled: 155 persons (51 women and 104 men) were registered as unemployed, while 42 persons (9 women and 33 men) were registered as employed, giving a total of 197 persons.

With regard to vocational training, the same report notes that the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board provides training in collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development. At the time of the report, trainees with disabilities were attending courses in housekeeping and waiter services, and efforts were being made,

in cooperation with the private sector, to expand both training opportunities and occupational fields. In the education sector, the Special Education Needs Authority has been developing a framework for the education and vocational preparation of children and persons with disabilities.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Labour, Human Resource Development and Training offers jobseekers with disabilities opportunities to participate in various programmes, including the Youth Employment Programme, the Back to Work Programme and the Dual Training Programme. The government also reports that awareness-raising activities are conducted, through employers' and workers' federations, on workplace accommodations and the provision of reasonable accommodation.

5) Social Security, Social Service for Persons with Disabilities

According to the 2012 and 2020 Reports, income security for persons with disabilities in Mauritius is supported mainly through pension schemes and cash benefits. The National Pensions Scheme defines "disability" and provides for an Invalidity Pension, consisting of a non-contributory basic pension and a contributory pension, for persons who have a certain level of disability and whose condition is expected to last for at least 12 months.

According to the annexes to the 2020 Report, Mauritius provides several welfare services and cash benefits to children with disabilities and their families. In addition to the basic invalidity pension for children with severe disabilities, transport support is provided, including reimbursement of bus fares for parents accompanying children to school and reimbursement of taxi fares for children with severe disabilities who have difficulty using public transport. The report also notes that residential care centres and respite care programmes for children with disabilities have been established, providing short-term residential care and leisure activities that offer temporary relief to families, particularly parents with heavy care responsibilities.

The National Solidarity Fund, established under the National Solidarity Fund Act, plays a role in subsidizing the high costs of surgery and medical treatment in Mauritius and abroad for persons with disabilities and their families who have significant medical needs. While the Fund is intended for citizens in difficulty regardless of disability status, it is positioned as a mechanism to support travel and treatment expenses, in particular for persons with severe disabilities or rare diseases who require treatment available only overseas.

In addition, under the Excise Regulations, persons with disabilities and parents of children with severe disabilities may receive substantial reductions in customs duties when purchasing adapted vehicles or cars suitable for mobility needs. The child protection framework provides support for children with severe disabilities and for children with disabilities at risk of abuse

or exploitation, through protection orders, residential care, mentoring programmes and other measures.

6) Transportation and Urban Development (including accessible urban planning)

According to the annexes to the 2020 Report, the Building Control Act plays a central role in ensuring accessibility in buildings. The Act imposes certain "functional requirements" on all buildings, explicitly including "accessibility" as one of those requirements. Its stated purpose is to ensure that persons with mobility or communication disabilities, older persons and pregnant women can access and use buildings and internal facilities easily and safely.

Pursuant to the Building Control Act, the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations were enacted in 2017, requiring, in particular, public-use buildings to introduce concrete accessibility features. These regulations specify design requirements such as ramps, handrails and lifts, as well as visual and auditory signage for persons with visual or hearing disabilities, and require that public facilities and service delivery points be made user-friendly for a diverse range of users.

According to the same annexes, physical accessibility in transport and mobility focuses mainly on adaptations in the road and vehicle environment. As noted earlier, amendments to the Excise Regulations have put in place a system under which persons with disabilities and parents of children with severe disabilities can receive substantial reductions in excise duties (customs duties) when purchasing adapted vehicles or cars suitable for mobility, such as vehicles equipped to carry wheelchairs or fitted with boarding lifts. This scheme is intended to secure means of mobility in daily life and for school attendance and medical visits, and is positioned as a mechanism to support access to accessible vehicles from a financial perspective.

With regard to roads and urban spaces, measures such as the elimination of level differences on pavements and at entrances and the installation of ramps are required as integral parts of building works. In particular, for external works, car parks and entrances associated with public-use buildings, standards are set for gradients, widths, handrails and other elements to ensure that wheelchair users and persons with walking difficulties can move safely. In this way, physical accessibility is required not only inside buildings but along the entire access route leading to them.

7) Information Accessibility

According to the 2012 Report, the former Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions (now the Ministry of Social Integration) cooperated with telecommunications operators to produce a Braille directory consolidating emergency

service contact numbers, making it available in Braille. NGOs have also produced a Braille version of the full text of the CRPD, enabling persons with visual impairments to access the contents of the Convention directly.

According to the annexes to the 2020 Report, the Copyright Act provides for exceptions to ensure information accessibility for persons with visual impairments and others. Section 23 of the Act allows the reproduction of published works in alternative formats and modes such as Braille, large print and audio materials, without the authorization of the copyright holder under certain conditions, thereby enabling the provision of accessible formats of published works for persons who are blind, have low vision, or otherwise have difficulty reading print. This provision is described as reflecting the spirit of the Marrakesh Treaty in domestic law and as a mechanism that supports access to published works for persons with visual impairments and others.

The 2012 Report further notes that, under the Building Control Act and the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations, ATMs, lifts, lobbies, fire alarm systems and other facilities in public-service buildings such as banks, museums, cinemas and police stations are required to provide visual displays and audio announcements. Examples given include Braille labelling on ATM and lift buttons, audio and visual guidance systems that are accessible to persons with visual and hearing impairments, and tactile indicators to mark steps and level changes.

According to the annexes to the 2020 Report, the introduction of assistive listening systems for hard-of-hearing persons is required in meeting rooms, conference halls and other gathering places. These provisions stipulate the installation of assistive listening devices to facilitate hearing and understanding of speeches and explanations by persons with hearing impairments, and also require that emergency alarm systems, including fire alarms, combine visual signals with audible warnings so that persons with hearing impairments can perceive danger.

Regarding information accessibility in the education sector, detailed information is provided in the initial report and other documents. The 2012 Report states that Braille and large-print materials are provided to learners with visual impairments and that computers equipped with screen readers and screen-magnification software are supplied. The annexes to the 2020 Report also state that persons with visual impairments are provided with computers equipped with screen readers and screen-magnification software, as well as Braille displays. With respect to textbooks, textbooks from the primary to lower secondary level are made available in electronic format on the website of an educational research institution so that learners can download and enlarge them, thereby improving access to learning materials.

For persons with hearing impairments, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education,

Science and Technology provides adapted educational materials for deaf and hard-of-hearing learners and, at secondary level and during examinations, deploys specialist teachers and interpreters to facilitate access to classroom content and examination information through sign language interpretation and other means. It is also reported that reasonable accommodation is provided, including additional examination time.

With regard to sign language, the 2012 Report notes that the development and use of Mauritian Sign Language has been promoted in several fields. Teacher training institutions have established diploma programmes that include Deaf Education and Sign Language and are training specialist teachers in Deaf education and sign language, and a certain number of teachers have received basic training in sign language. The government has produced the *Dictionary of Mauritian Sign Language*, the first volume of which has been published, and the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation broadcasts a weekly news programme with sign language interpretation and has produced a sign language version of the national anthem, which is used at official events.

With regard to access to information in judicial and administrative proceedings, the 2012 Report states that the Supreme Court maintains an independent list of sign language interpreters for persons with hearing and speech impairments and arranges sign language interpretation as necessary. The courts explicitly state that interpreters will be provided, as necessary, to enable parties and witnesses with hearing impairments to participate in proceedings, and the police are required to seek assistance from interpreters or specialists where necessary when taking complaints or statements from persons with disabilities.

8) Disaster Risk Management

According to the 2012 Report, the Government of Mauritius has established several Refugee Centres on the islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues to provide evacuation sites for local residents during humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters such as cyclones and tsunamis. All newly constructed Refugee Centres are reported to be equipped with entrance ramps and accessible toilets, and adult and child wheelchairs are placed in these facilities. Staff and supervisors are reported to receive training to enable them to respond to the needs of persons with disabilities.

The same report also states that a Social Aid Scheme has been established to provide livelihood support to victims of natural disasters. The Scheme provides cash benefits to disaster victims and is intended to help poor and other vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities, to cope with the effects of disasters.

According to the annexes to the 2020 Report, Mauritius had previously entered a reservation to Article 11 of the CRPD (situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies), but,

following the entry into force of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act 2016, the State has been taking steps to withdraw that reservation. After the Act came into force, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Centre was established to coordinate various activities related to disaster risk reduction and management.

The Centre is reported to conduct awareness-raising campaigns and simulation exercises on disaster risk reduction on a regular basis, taking into account the specific needs of persons with disabilities in these activities. It is also stated that various drills are conducted to verify that safe evacuation procedures can be properly implemented in the event of a disaster, and to ensure that these procedures function effectively in practice.

3. International Treaties and International Cooperation

3-1. Status of Implementation Following the Ratification of the CRPD[11]

The Government of Mauritius signed the CRPD on 25 September 2007 and ratified it on 8 January 2010, but has not ratified the Optional Protocol. The initial State report under the CRPD was submitted by the Government of Mauritius to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2012, was examined in August 2015, and the concluding observations were adopted in September of the same year. Thereafter, the government submitted the combined second and third periodic reports in 2020, which were examined by the Committee on 26 and 27 August 2024, and the concluding observations were adopted on 2 September 2024.

3-2. Status of Implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty

In 2014, the Government of Mauritius enacted the Copyright Act, which in section 23 allows, for the benefit of blind persons, persons with visual impairments and persons with print disabilities, the reproduction of published works in another mode or format without the authorization of the author, under certain conditions. It is explained that, through this provision, the government has incorporated the provisions of the Marrakesh Treaty into domestic law. Additionally, the Government of Mauritius acceded to the Marrakesh Treaty on 11 January 2021, and the Treaty entered into force for Mauritius on 11 April of the same year.

3-3. Initiatives on Disability Issues within SDG-related Policies

The concluding observations (2024) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities point out that there is a lack of meaningful participation of OPDs at all stages, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, of multilateral cooperation programmes, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and recommend that specific measures be taken to ensure close consultation with, and active involvement of, OPDs.

According to the Voluntary National Review (hereinafter referred to as "VNR") conducted by Mauritius in 2024, the main initiatives in the field of disability within SDG-related policies concern responses to children and persons with disabilities in the areas of education, disaster risk reduction and climate change. In the education sector, the VNR refers to free provision of textbooks, free use of public transport for school attendance, coverage of fees for external examinations, cash transfers and school feeding programmes for learners in vulnerable situations, as well as higher education scholarships for outstanding persons with disabilities.

[11] https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=4&CountryID=111 (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

With regard to SDG indicator 4.5.1 on education, the VNR states that equal access to quality education and training is to be ensured for all learners, including children with disabilities, and notes that, since 2015, the Government has fully covered the fees for Cambridge examinations and has provided scholarships to students from vulnerable households and to persons with disabilities. In relation to indicator 4.a.1 on basic school infrastructure, it states that schools attended by persons with disabilities have been made accessible, and that learners with Special Educational Needs are provided with support such as Braille notebooks and adapted textbooks for children with visual impairments, assistants, sign language interpreters and support teachers, and that school buildings have been adapted to facilitate attendance by learners with physical disabilities.

In the field of disaster risk reduction and climate change, the VNR reports that, in a context where Mauritius is assessed as one of the countries vulnerable to climate-related disaster risks, awareness-raising programmes, training, workshops and lectures on disaster risks and measures have been conducted for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, children and older persons. As a challenge in capacity development for the implementation of the national disaster risk reduction policy and strategic framework, it is stated that, in addition to large-scale evacuation planning from vulnerable areas and community-based disaster risk reduction for tsunamis, there is a need to build capacity on how to engage with persons with disabilities when they participate in disaster drills, and to integrate considerations for persons with disabilities into disaster plans and simulations.

3-4. Ratification of and Initiatives regarding Other International Treaties related to Disabilities and Development

The Government of Mauritius accessed to CEDAW in 1984. In 2018, the eighth periodic report of Mauritius was examined and the concluding observations of the CEDAW Committee were adopted in November of the same year. The Committee calls on the State party to collect, analyze and publish data disaggregated by sex, age, disability, ethnicity, place of residence and socioeconomic status, in order to understand the situation of discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities, rural women, Creole women, migrant women and others. In relation to education, the Committee recommends that measures be taken to provide reasonable accommodation in schools for women and girls with disabilities.

The government has also accessed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (hereinafter referred to as "CRC") in 1990. In January 2023, the sixth and seventh combined periodic reports of Mauritius were examined by the CRC Committee, and the concluding observations were adopted in February of the same year. The Committee expresses concern that the legal framework on children with disabilities is not based on the human rights model of disability,

and identifies as issues negative attitudes and discrimination, lack of community-based support, and limited access to early screening and early intervention. It recommends, inter alia, the formulation of a comprehensive strategy based on the human rights model, the strengthening of professional training on the rights of children with disabilities, the guarantee of inclusive education, and the evaluation and improvement of family support and community-based rehabilitation.

Finally, the Government of Mauritius ratified ILO Convention No. 159 concerning vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities in 2004. The Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (hereinafter referred to as "CEACR") adopted a direct request in 2021, which was made public at the 110th International Labour Conference in 2022. The Committee notes that the number of men with disabilities who have gained access to employment (229) is significantly higher than the number of women with disabilities (81), and requests the Government of Mauritius to submit information on measures taken to increase the labour market participation rate of women with disabilities, on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on workers with disabilities and related support measures, and on detailed information including statistics disaggregated by sex.

3-5. International Cooperation on Disability[12]

- Government of Japan

<Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects>

- Project for the Provision of Wheelchair-accessible Vehicles for Grand-Rivière-Nord-Ouest (FY 2025)
- Project for the Provision of a Bus for Transport and Outreach Services for Persons with Disabilities in Poste de Flacq Village (FY 2021)

<JICA Knowledge Co-Creation Program>

- FY 2022: "Strengthening Inclusive Education Systems: Learning and Living Together with Children with Disabilities" – 1 participant
- FY 2021: "Strengthening Inclusive Education Systems: Learning and Living Together with Children with Disabilities" – 2 participants
- FY 2019: "Education Systems for Children with Disabilities: Building Inclusive Education Systems through Special Needs Education" – 1 participant

[12] Project names are listed exactly as they appear in the original text. However, this does not apply in cases where there is no English name or the English name is unknown.

- Other donors[13]

<International organizations>

United Nations Development Programme：UNDP

- Support for the development and establishment of a disability database (launched in January 2012)

European Union: EU

- Support for the formulation of the National Child Protection Strategy and Action Plan (2015–2022)
- Support for Special Educational Needs policy and curriculum

[Bilateral aid agencies and intergovernmental cooperation]

Government of India

- Memorandum of Understanding concluded in 2003 (for three years, subsequently renewed): cooperation in teacher and caregiver capacity development and vocational training
- Memorandum of Understanding concluded in December 2011 with the National Centre for Promotion of Employment of Disabled People (India)

Government of South Africa

- Cooperation on social assistance for vulnerable communities, including persons with disabilities
- Memorandum of Understanding concluded in November 2006; renewed for five years in 2011

- International NGOs

Leonard Cheshire Disability（now Leonard Cheshire）

- CRPD workshop (held in December 2010 by international experts, with more than 100 participants)
- Memorandum of Understanding on technical support for the establishment of a respite care centre (date not specified)

[13] In the 2020 report and its annexes submitted after the 2012 report, no descriptions of support from international organizations or international NGOs were found, and searches of government websites also did not clearly identify any institutions implementing ongoing support programmes that go beyond one-off workshops or participation in conferences. Therefore, although the information is somewhat dated, this document lists only those institutions mentioned in the 2012 report for which the period of support is explicitly specified.

4. Disability-related Organizations and Activities

4-1. Organizations of Persons with Disabilities

Name of organization	Overview
Inclusion Mauritius https://www.inclusionmauritius.org/	Inclusion Mauritius was established in 2003 and is a federation of 13 NGOs that support children and adults with intellectual disabilities and multiple disabilities. With the goals of improving the rights and welfare of children and adults with disabilities and realizing an inclusive society, it provides services, advocacy and public awareness activities through its member organizations. It is a member organization of Inclusion International.
U-Link and Down Syndrome https://u-linkandds.wixsite.com/u-linkmauritius/about	U-Link and Down Syndrome was established in 2004. It works to promote understanding in society about disabilities, with a particular focus on Down syndrome, to empower and educate parents and families of persons with disabilities, and to support the acquisition of employment and life skills by persons with disabilities through collaboration with other organizations.
Voice of Disabled People Mauritius [14]	VDPI Mauritius is a federation of 10 OPDs and is a member organization of Disabled People International. In a wide range of areas including inclusive education and employment, it engages in advocacy and lobbying for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities, the advancement of the human rights model of disability, and the realization of an inclusive society.

4-2. Disability Support Organizations

Name of organization	Overview
Global Rainbow Foundation[15]	The Global Rainbow Foundation was established in 2011. It implements projects in the areas of education and training, sports, health and rehabilitation, poverty reduction and promotion of education for persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations. Its main purpose is to support them to live fulfilling lives with dignity and respect by carrying out awareness-raising activities for the realization of an inclusive society, promoting employment opportunities and leadership, and strengthening collaboration with national and international institutions.

[14] https://www.facebook.com/VDPI.MU/ (Accessed: 30 April 2026)

[15] https://www.actogether.mu/find-an-ngo/global-rainbow-foundation (Accessed: 30 April 2026)

5. Barriers and Needs Faced by Persons with Disabilities[16]

5-1. Barriers to and Needs regarding Healthcare Services

According to the parallel report (2024) of VDPI Mauritius, although the public health services are free of charge, many persons with disabilities still do not have access to services because training for health professionals and paramedical staff is insufficient. It is also stated that there is no data on the number of persons with disabilities who do not have access to services on an equal basis with others.

In its concluding observations (2024), the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities expresses concern that universal design and accommodations are insufficient in many health facilities, citing as examples imaging equipment and mammography machines that cannot be used by wheelchair users. The Committee also points out that attitudinal barriers among health professionals hinder access to health services by persons with disabilities and that this situation is underpinned by the lack of appropriate awareness-raising, training and capacity-building.

With regard to women with disabilities, the parallel report states that they face serious discrimination in access to public gynecological services. It notes that women who use wheelchairs and have limited mobility are not receiving cancer prevention and screening, and identifies as a reason the fact that examination tables at health centers and hospitals are not accessible. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to provide appropriate and accessible sexual and reproductive health services to women and girls with disabilities, taking into account age and sex, and on the basis of equality with others.

Furthermore, the Committee expresses serious concern that women and girls with disabilities are subjected to forced sterilization and forced abortion, and calls on the State party to prohibit these practices, to prosecute and punish perpetrators and to provide appropriate remedies for victims and survivors. The parallel report (2024) also points out that information on sexual and reproductive rights is not being provided in accessible formats, particularly to women and girls with disabilities.

In the field of mental health, the Committee notes with concern that, despite multiple amendments to the Mental Health Act 1998, the Act still permits involuntary hospitalization and institutionalization of children and adults with disabilities on the basis of levels of impairment and perceived dangerousness in practice. The Committee also expresses concern that the Mental Health Commission and the Managerial Committee, which are responsible

[16] This chapter is based on the parallel report submitted to the CRPD Committee by Voice of Disabled People International (VDPI), "THE SHADOW REPORT OF VOICE OF DISABLED PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL MAURITIUS" (submitted in July 2024), and on the Concluding Observations adopted in the same year (2024). Although several documents entitled "Info from Civil Society Organizations (for the session)" are posted on the CRPD Committee's website, at the time of preparing this report they were all identified as full texts of laws or similar materials and were not considered to constitute parallel reports. Accordingly, the only parallel report referred to in this chapter is the above-mentioned document.

for overseeing deprivations of liberty on an involuntary basis, lack the operational independence and understanding of the CRPD necessary to fully discharge their roles.

With regard to rehabilitation services, the parallel report (2024) states that, despite the presence of CBR officers under the Ministry of Health and Wellness, CBR is not being implemented. The Committee also expresses concern that comprehensive and cross-sectoral habilitation and rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, are lacking despite the presence of such officers. It recommends that the government take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to comprehensive and cross-sectoral habilitation and rehabilitation services, programmes and technologies within their communities in all islands and districts of the country.

Regarding services for children with disabilities, the parallel report notes that the continuous provision of therapy for children with disabilities who require speech therapy is insufficient and that this constitutes a major challenge for parents. These services are provided mainly by NGOs, but due to the limited funding from the Government, persons with disabilities themselves are compelled to bear the costs. The report also points out that there are no early intervention strategies for children with disabilities from infancy to early childhood and that parents of children with multiple disabilities cannot obtain proper medical/social diagnosis to support their children to enjoy inclusive education.

With regard to assistive devices, the parallel report states that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has not taken measures to raise awareness and promote the use of assistive devices and technologies for persons with disabilities. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen measures to provide medical information in accessible formats to persons with disabilities, and enhance the capacities of all medical and health professionals at the community level on the rights of persons with disabilities, health care based on the human rights model of disability and inclusive methods of communication.

5-2. Barriers and Needs in Accessing Education

The concluding observations (2024) express concern that the government's understanding of "quality inclusive education" is limited, and that segregated educational settings, such as Special Educational Needs Schools and units within mainstream schools, are still widely used and continue to receive investment. The parallel report (2024) of VDPI also states that the very establishment of the Special Education Needs Authority, which is responsible for Special Educational Needs, runs counter to the implementation of Article 24 of the CRPD (right to inclusive education).

The parallel report further notes that the 2006 "Policy and Strategy on Special Education Needs and Inclusive Education" is already outdated and no longer valid, that the concepts of

inclusive education and integrated education are being confused, and that the government has not yet advanced the transition from integrated education to inclusive education. It also points out that the Special Education Needs Authority unilaterally decides which schools children will attend and, after medical assessments, allocates school placements in units within primary schools or Special Educational Needs Schools operated by NGOs without obtaining the consent of parents.

With regard to school-level practice, the concluding observations (2024) state that it is difficult for students with disabilities to request reasonable accommodation, individualized support and the necessary resources, making it hard to ensure equal educational opportunities. The accessibility of curricula, teaching methods and infrastructure at primary, secondary and tertiary levels is weak, with particular problems in subjects such as science and mathematics. The lack of a multidisciplinary assessment system for students with disabilities and the fact that official certificates are not always issued upon completion of courses and programmes are also identified as challenges.

In response, the concluding observations recommend that students with disabilities be included in mainstream education at all levels, that an inclusive culture be fostered among parents, educators and students, and that a strategy be adopted to transition from the Special Educational Needs model to quality inclusive mainstream education. The Committee further emphasizes the need to make education free at all levels and to ensure that students with disabilities can readily request individualized support and receive reasonable accommodation based on human rights-based individualized assessments of educational needs.

In addition, the concluding observations recommend: adapting learning materials; designing and providing curricula and teaching methods in accessible formats such as sign language, easy-to-read versions, Braille and electronic formats; making use of digital technologies; providing appropriate training for teachers at all levels of education; establishing and implementing an optimal multidisciplinary assessment system as required by law; properly issuing official certificates upon completion of courses and programmes; and improving the accessibility of school infrastructure and procedures. The Committee also calls on the State party to allocate sufficient resources and take effective measures to ensure that high-quality inclusive services for children with disabilities are available in both the public and private sectors.

The concluding observations (2024) further express concern about the lack of data on children with disabilities who are not receiving education. Specifically, the Committee points to the need to collect, analyse and publish data on children who were unable to enroll in mainstream schools, children attending Special Educational Needs facilities and educational programmes run by NGOs, children who attend mainstream schools only part-time and

children who requested individualized support or reasonable accommodation but were refused, as well as data on educational attainment, completion and dropout rates, suspension and expulsion rates and the use of restrictive practices.

The parallel report (2024) of VDPI also criticizes the government for not conducting studies on the socioeconomic and cultural benefits of inclusive education, despite calls from civil society to do so. It further states that more substantive meetings and consultations with OPDs and NGOs are needed in order to jointly examine and implement solutions.

5-3. Barriers and Needs in Employment

The concluding observations (2024) state that the employment rate of persons with disabilities in the open labour market is low and that, in particular, access to employment is difficult for women and young persons with disabilities. The parallel report (2024) of VDPI calls for disclosure of the specific number of persons with disabilities employed in each of the private sectors, parastatal bodies and public institutions.

The concluding observations also note that, despite the existence of the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act (1996), there is a lack of effective sanctions against employers who do not comply with the employment quota. The parallel report similarly calls for the publication of the number of enterprises that have failed to meet the quota and the number of enterprises that have been sanctioned.

In light of this situation, the concluding observations recommend that the State party promote and ensure access to employment in the open labour market and in private and public institutions for persons with disabilities, on the basis of equality with others and with respect for the right to freely choose work, and that particular efforts be made to expand employment opportunities for women and young persons with disabilities. The Committee also calls on the State party to take the necessary measures to strictly enforce the quota system in accordance with the 2024 Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, and to provide information on employers that do not comply with the quota, including through strengthened sanctions and financial incentives.

With regard to reasonable accommodation in the workplace, the parallel report notes that, while the Act obliges employers to provide reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities, it also allows employers to invoke a defense of “undue burden”. The report identifies as a major issue the fact that the meaning of “undue burden” is not clearly defined in law. It also raises questions concerning the number of persons with disabilities who do not wish to work or are assessed as unable to work, whether sheltered employment specifically for persons with disabilities, such as sheltered workshops, is still widely practiced in the country, what the actual situation is, and how employment of persons with disabilities and

follow-up, including in such settings, are supported.

The parallel report further recalls that, in its initial concluding observations (2015), the Committee had already recommended that the Government of Mauritius formulate and implement effective legislative and policy measures to promote the transition from sheltered employment to employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market and to ensure protection from discrimination in employment, including by clearly positioning the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation. It calls on the government to fully implement the 2015 recommendations, to hold more substantive consultations between OPDs and the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board, and to work in cooperation with OPDs and NGOs to promote inclusion and employment of persons with disabilities in the workplace.

5-4. Barriers to and Needs regarding Transportation

The concluding observations (2024) express concern that, despite the adoption in 2017 of the Building Control Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings Regulations, many buildings in the country remain inaccessible. The parallel report (2024) of VDPI also points out that the Building Act, the Roads Act, the Morcellement Act and the Town and Country Planning Act have not been amended to promote the development of a built environment that takes persons with disabilities into account, and that, as a result, there is no consistent strategy at either national or local government level for advancing accessibility policies.

With regard to public transport, the parallel report notes that the Government's 2020 Report describes semi-low-floor buses (Semi Floor Buses) as "accessible", but strongly contests this characterization on the grounds that, in practice, passengers must climb steps before boarding and that the buses cannot be considered accessible. While the Metro Express itself is considered accessible, the report points out that regional buses connecting to the stations are not accessible, thereby preventing wheelchair users and passengers with mobility difficulties from using the system. In addition, it reports that pavements and jogging tracks are not designed in ways that make them easy to use for persons with physical disabilities and others with mobility difficulties. The concluding observations likewise express concern that there are restrictions on physical access to public transport in both urban and rural areas, that semi-low-floor buses are not fully accessible for all users of mobility aids and assistive devices, and that physical access to Metro Express stations is difficult.

The concluding observations (2024) further call on the State party to effectively enforce relevant laws, regulations and policies on accessibility for persons with disabilities and to ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities in all areas of life in accordance with the principle of universal design. The Committee also recommends that the State party promote

initiatives to increase understanding of accessibility within the construction industry, take measures to ensure accessibility on all islands of Mauritius and establish clear indicators to track progress, and promote public-private partnerships to improve accessibility.

With regard to individual mobility, the concluding observations point out that financial support for covering the costs of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and spectacles is severely lacking. They also criticize the fact that tax-exempt purchase of adapted vehicles is limited to persons with disabilities who are employed and under 60 years of age, and propose reverting from the current cash benefit support to the former system of direct provision of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and spectacles. In addition, the Committee recommends expanding the eligibility criteria so that all persons with disabilities who need private vehicles can purchase any type of vehicle free of customs duties, incorporating accessibility standards for users of mobility aids and assistive devices, such as ramps, into public procurement specifications, and taking concrete measures to improve physical access to Metro Express stations.

5-5. Barriers to and Needs regarding Information Access

The concluding observations (2024) express concern that the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act does not explicitly recognize the right of persons with disabilities to receive information in accessible formats, and that measures to improve the accessibility and affordability of printed and electronic information and communication are very limited.

According to the parallel report (2024) of VDPI, although freedom of expression is guaranteed under Article 11 of the Constitution of Mauritius, no steps have been taken to recognize sign language as an official language. Other formats such as Braille and easy-to-read versions are also available only through specialized NGOs. Subtitles in films are limited to those that were originally provided, and local programmes on the national television channel do not have subtitles. Additionally, assistive devices and technological tools are not provided free of charge to persons with disabilities, particularly those who use alternative means of communication, and no measures have been taken to systematically develop accessible information, such as allocating budgets for research to promote the use of modern technologies for persons with disabilities in the information and communication field. It is also noted that news alerts on national television are not consistently accompanied by subtitles or sign language interpretation.

The concluding observations (2024) recommend that the State party, in close consultation and with the effective involvement of representative organizations of persons with disabilities, take measures to: develop accessibility standards for information and communication media,

technologies and websites in line with international standards; provide printed and electronic information and communications in accessible formats, including Braille, easy-to-read versions, sign language, plain language, subtitles, tactile information and augmentative and alternative communication; and ensure that assistive communication technologies are affordable for persons with disabilities. The Committee also recommends promoting the development and use of Mauritian Sign Language and recognizing it as an official language in law, strengthening the training and deployment of professional sign language interpreters and expanding the use of sign language on national television and other media.

The parallel report of VDPI likewise calls for Mauritian Sign Language to be recognized as an official language under the Constitution, for a large number of professional sign language interpreters to be trained and for sufficient budget to be allocated for assistive devices for all persons with disabilities.

5-6. Barriers and Needs regarding Gender

The concluding observations (2024) express concern that disability-related laws and policies in the country lack a gender perspective and that the legal framework does not explicitly recognize intersectional discrimination against women and girls with disabilities in relation to access to health care, education, political participation and social life. The Committee also notes that women's organizations such as the National Women's Council and the National Women's Entrepreneur Council do not include representatives of women with disabilities among their members. It therefore recommends that the perspectives of women with disabilities be integrated into gender and disability-related strategies and policies, that multiple and intersectional discrimination against women and girls with disabilities be explicitly recognized in law and that the effective participation of women with disabilities in the relevant councils be ensured.

The parallel report (2024) of VDPI, in addition to pointing to the lack of inclusion of women with disabilities in policies, criticizes the Government of Mauritius for having failed, even after the recommendations in the initial concluding observations (2015), to adequately address gender inequalities affecting women and girls with disabilities. Specifically, it notes that detailed data on the discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities have not been collected, that statistics on domestic violence inside and outside the home have not been developed and that women's organizations of persons with disabilities were not consulted during the drafting of the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act. The report calls on the government to begin by implementing the recommendations of the 2015 Concluding Observations. It also notes that women's organizations of persons with disabilities affiliated with VDPI have requested the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family

Welfare to conduct surveys on the number of cases of violence against women with disabilities. Furthermore, pointing out that total dependence on family members and partners is one of the factors exposing women with disabilities to violence, the report calls for the establishment of organizations of women entrepreneurs with disabilities to support economic independence and for the development of reporting mechanisms through which women can feel safe when reporting abuse.

The concluding observations (2024) also recommend that a system be established to regularly collect, analyze and publish data on complaints of gender-based violence and exploitation in all settings, including the home, the workplace, schools and institutions. The Committee states that this system should include information on prosecution and conviction rates, penalties imposed on perpetrators and reparations for victims and survivors, including compensation. It further recommends that services and shelters for victims of violence, particularly women and girls with disabilities, be made accessible both physically and in terms of information and communication, and that procedures and standards for responding to persons with disabilities be put in place.

6. References

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＜Web information＞

Embassy of Japan in Mauritius
https://www.mu.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_ja/index.html