**Annex III**

**STATUS ON NATIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN ON DISABILITY 2016-2020**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Creating an enabling environment for Collaborative Social Initiatives (public-private-NGO) to empower PWDs and to initiate innovative social programmes/projects for PWD.** | | | | |
| **Background:**   * **Strategic partnership and networking among Government, Corporates and NGOs help in constituting a pool of resources, capacities and assets that can be harnessed to generate innovative responses to the growing needs in the Disability Sector.** * **While government financial resources are limited, the CSR can be an opportunity, especially in the context of the recent budgetary measures relating to the removal of CSR guidelines.** * **This situation creates the conducive conditions for a tri-sector partnership by setting up priorities in terms of innovative programmes and projects in the Disability Sector.** | | | | |
| **Specific Objective 1: Enhance the physical infrastructure to foster integration of PWDs through collaboration with the private sector.** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | | **Implemented\ Not implemented** | | **Status** |
| 1. To enhance the accessibility of PWDs to all places where the public is deemed to have access in line with the concept of universal design. | | Partly Implemented | | 1. In 2017, the then Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport promulgated the Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations as from 01 November 2017, providing for universal design requirement in respect of new buildings and buildings under major renovation works. The regulations provide for the following:-  (a) talking features/Braille signage for automated teller machines (ATMs), lifts in museums and other places where appropriate;  (b) voice system in banks, lifts and other places where queues are required;  (c) signage system for directional and informational purposes for visual access and audio-sign;  (d) assistive listening system for persons who are hard of hearing in places such as conference rooms, auditoriums; and  (e) tactile cues to indicate changes in directions and changes in level.  2. New sports complexes, market fairs, bus and metro stations, hospitals and airport have been made disability-friendly.  3. Existing sports complexes and other public places which are being renovated in a disability-friendly manner in order to give accesss to persons with disabilities.  4. All primary schools having learners with disabilities have been retrofitted with ramps to provide easy access to classrooms and other spaces.  5. The following infrastructural works have also been carried out in various state secondary schools having learners with disabilities:   1. ramps and handrails to facilitate access to the classrooms; 2. covered links between building blocks to facilitate accessto specialised rooms located on the first floor for learners using wheelchairs; 3. adapted toilets; and 4. alighting bays for safe access in the school yard.   The above initiatives are being carried out in a phased manner in all remaining secondary schools. |
| 1. To enlarge the concept of accessibility to embrace access to information, ICT, braille services, sign language interpretation and access to new enabling technologies. | | Being implemented | | 1. Arrangement has been made in all Post Offices and in Rodrigues and Agalega to improve accessibility to free broadband internet facilities. It has been made available free of charge to the public at large including persons with disabilities in places such as Post Offices, Social Welfare Centres and Community Centres and WIFI hotspots have been installed around the island.  2. The national television station, the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity provides an 8 to 10-minute news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language. Over and above this, during the lockdown period, a comprehensive video in Mauritian Sign Language was also launched and broadcast by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation on a daily basis to sensitize people with hearing impairment on COVID-19.  3. Ongoing campaigns on health issues such as dengue, chikungunya and others are projected on the National TV in Mauritian Sign Language in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation.  4. The former Ministry of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms produced in 2018 the Constitution of Mauritius in Braille and video clips depicting the Rights of Disabled Persons.  5. The provision of Braille displays for blind learners  6. The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has procured 58 Personal Computers built-in with Screen Reader and Screen Magnifier Software which have been distributed to all students with Visual Impairment for accessing training and information as per their respective needs.  7. Around 21 Braille Displays were distributed to blind students which allow them to read information from their computer screen. Moreover, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology is in the process of procuring Braille Note for blind students in secondary schools so that they can access information easily.  8. During the general elections voting procedures are also explained using the Mauritian Sign Language on the national TV. |
| 1. To set up a monitoring mechanism to ensure all new infrastructure are disabled friendly and existing ones are retrofitted. | | Being Implemented | | 1. Prior to granting of building and land use permit for construction of building, the local authorities ensure compliance to norms and standards relating to the Building Act to be disability-friendly. |
| 1. To ensure that all sports infrastructures are incorporated with access features. | | Being Implemented | | 1. All new sports infrastructures are being made disability-friendly. The new Cote D’Or Sports Complex built in 2019 is an example of a modern sports infrastructure with access features for persons with disabilities.  2. As regard to existing sports infrastructures the necessary actions are being taken during renovations to make them disability-friendly. |
| 1. To provide sportspersons with disabilities with up-to-date equipment. | | Being Implemented | | Sportspersons with disabilities are provided with up to date equipment by the Ministry of Youth Empowerment and Wellness. A recent example is during the holding of the 2019 Indian Ocean Island Games where all athletes with disabilities were provided with up-to-date equipment. |
| (vi) To promote leisure, culture and entertainment facilities. | | Implemented | | 1. The Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage provides financial assistance to artists with disabilities for their creative works and encourages their participation in its cultural programmes and national events. Visually impaired artists are given the opportunity to perform at national events. The National Anthem is performed in Mauritian Sign Language by deaf children from the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf during national events and National Day celebrations.  2. A national troupe of artists with disabilities has been set up by the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons to promote the artistic talents of persons with disabilities.  3. The Ministry of Tourism organizes national events which target the whole population including persons with disabilities. These events include open day at Nature Parks and Leisure Parks.  4. The Yogeesh Patroo Award is organized on a yearly basis by the Disability Empowerment Unit of the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity. This Award is intended for artists with disabilities giving them the opportunities to showcase their talents and skills in the following areas:  (a) music;  (b) dance;  (c) song;  (d) poetry; and  (e) slam |
| **Specific Objective 2: Provide special support and intervention in favour of PWDs through collaboration with other stakeholders.** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** | |
| 1. To provide support services (e.g. Therapists, sign language interpreters, carers, etc.) to children with disabilities for their integration in the education system. | Implemented | | 1. All NGOs running SEN schools registered with the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology are allocated a Grant-in-Aid (GIA) as financial support to carry out their educational activities. There are at present 53 NGOs running SEN Schools. The GIA caters for the salaries of their personnel and logistics and specialised support services (Psychologists, Occupational Therapists and Speech Therapists) | |
| 1. To reserve a number of state scholarships for students with disabilities under the social criteria scheme. | Implemented | | 1. As from the year 2016/2017, five students with special education needs are offered each year a scholarship to pursue Post-Secondary/Tertiary courses. They are also benefitting from a stipend of Rs 5,000 (USD 125) monthly. | |
| 1. To provide for technical, vocational education and training to students with disabilities. | Implemented | | The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board, operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity, is working in close collaboration with the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD) to provide vocational training. Currently, trainees with disabilities are following Housekeeping and waiter training courses through the MITD at “Ecole Hoteliѐre Sir Gaetan Duval”. The collaboration of the private sector is also being enlisted to provide training to persons with disabilities. 13 persons with disabilities have been trained in cleaning services by a private cleaning company. | |
| 1. To make the nine-year schooling programme disability-inclusive. | Being Implemented | | The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has come up with a revised Policy Framework and Strategy Document for the Special Education Needs Sector. It focuses on Inclusive Education for Children and Youth with Special Education Needs (SEN) in Mauritius and is also in line with the policy directions of the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Curriculum for Nine Years of Continuous Basic Education. | |
| 1. To develop a programme for adult education for persons with disabilities. | Being Implemented | | The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology and the National Social Inclusion Foundation are providing funding for adult education programme for persons with disabilities. For example, funding is provided to Association de Parents des Déficients Auditifs (APDA) for special education to hearing impaired children (3-16 yrs) and sports and cultural activities. Courses in sign language and adult education programme for deaf persons. | |
| 1. To provide psychosocial support to persons with disabilities victims of violence and abuse. | Implemented | | 1. The Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare assigns a case officer to victims of violence and the following assistance is provided:  a) first hand counselling;  b) psychological counselling;  c) mediation and family counselling;  d) medical assistance if required;  e) temporary shelter if required; and  f) legal advice.  The Police Family Protection Unit, The Crime Prevention Unit, Brigade Des Mineurs and Traffic Branch work in close collaboration with other stakeholders to attend to the requests and needs of PWDs. First hand counselling, psychological counselling and family counselling are also provided to victims of violence and abuse as and when required. | |
| 1. To provide materials related to the electoral process in accessible format (e.g. ballot papers in braille). | Not yet Implemented | | However, voters with disabilities are assisted in the voting process. | |
| 1. To introduce daily news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language with suitable images and subtitles. | Being Implemented | | The national television station, the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity provides an 8 to 10-minute news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language. Over and above this, during the lockdown period, a comprehensive video in Mauritian Sign Language was also launched and broadcast by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation on a daily basis to sensitize people with hearing impairment on COVID-19. It is being proposed to increase the frequency of the news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language to two days per week. | |
| 1. To introduce appropriate technologies to enable hearing impaired and visually impaired persons to have access to TV programmes. | Not yet Implemented | |  | |
| 1. To develop a programme for parental education and home-school-community support. | Not yet Implemented | |  | |
| 1. Local universities to promote teaching and research on disability studies. | Being Implemented | | 1. The Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) which provides training to teachers at the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary level, has incorporated, the basics of Mauritian Sign Language and hearing impairment at the teacher training foundation courses and the other courses for Special Education Needs sector.  2. The Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) is responsible for the training of teachers in mainstream pre-primary, primary and secondary schools in the Republic of Mauritius. The mandate of the MIE is also to engage in educational research, curriculum development and to raise awareness on the values and principles of inclusive education.  3. The MIE provides ongoing training to special needs education teachers. The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology in collaboration with the MIE and the Centre International d’Etudes Pédagogiques (CIEP) has started a collaborative programme for the training of trainers at the MIE as well as in Reunion Island to empower participants in the context of inclusive education. The main objective of the training programme is to build capacity among staff from different sectors of education. The duration of the training is expected to be 3 years. Reading materials in large print and books in Braille are provided. This is being done phase-wise. Twenty-four participants including SEN educators, educational psychologists, educators at pre-primary and secondary schools have been roped in to follow the Training of Trainers Programme. These participants will act as facilitators to train around 125 educators in the education system in Mauritius.  5. The (MIE) also runs the following courses for the SEN sector:   1. Post graduate Diploma in Special Education (PGDISE); 2. Certificate in Special Education for Teachers working in the SEN Sector including NGOs; 3. Diploma in SEN; 4. Diploma in Inclusive and Special Education for Primary school teachers; and 5. Educators’ License in Special Education for Teachers already working in SEN schools (ELSEN). | |
| 1. To act as facilitator to persons with disabilities living in institutions and those with high support needs in the exercise of their legal capacity. | Not Implemented | |  | |
| 1. To replace Substituted Decision making by Supported Decision-Making. | As per existing laws of Mauritius | | As the law stands now, no person is deprived of his legal capacity unless he/she suffers from mental or physical disability as stipulated under article 494 of the Civil Code. Only those persons suffering from a mental or physical disability and who are not in a position to exercise their civic rights (such as the right to vote, to open a bank account) are placed under the regime of guardianship. The physical or mental disability must be confirmed by at least one specialist doctor.  The placement of a person under guardianship is closely monitored by the *Ministère Public* (operating under the aegis of the Attorney General’s Office), whose advice is sought by a Court of law prior to making an order of guardianship. | |
| To make disaster management activities disability-inclusive. | Implemented | | 1. Following the proclamation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act in July 2016, a National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Centre was set up to coordinate efforts of various agencies responsible for disaster mitigation.  2. This Centre carries out regular sensitisation campaigns on disaster risk reduction and organises frequent simulation exercises and activities. These campaigns and simulation exercises take into account the special needs of persons with disabilities. Safe evacuation procedures are tested for implementation in case of occurrence of disasters. | |
| **Specific Objective 3: Foster the economic empowerment of PWD** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** | |
| 1. To review the mechanism for placement and training of PWDs. | Being Implemented | | 1. The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board was set up under the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act 1996. Its main objective is to promote training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.  2. The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act has been amended in 2012 so that employers who have a workforce of 35 or above are required to employ 3% of persons with disabilities. Failure to do so entails a statutory monthly contribution of Rs 4,000 (USD 100) for each person with disabilities not yet recruited. Furthermore, the amended Act provides for a Hearing Committee to examine cases of non-compliant companies. The Act also provides that in case of prosecution before a Court of law, the non-compliant company is liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 75,000 (USD 1875).  3. The Equal Opportunities Act 2008 was amended in 2017 to provide for the prohibition of discrimination in employment on the grounds of **impairment. T**he Workers’ Rights Act 2019 also takes into account persons with disabilities so that there is no discrimination on the ground of impairment. | |
| 1. To develop telework and digital work. | Not Yet Implemented | |  | |
| 1. To extend the 3% quota system to the Civil Service | Being Implemented | | Recruitment in the Civil Service is made by the Public Service Commission on the basis of qualifications and merits. Person having the required qualifications, including persons with disabilities are given equal opportunity to join the public service. | |
| 1. To enhance employment opportunities for PWDs through provision of tax rebates to employers. | Not Yet Implemented | |  | |
| 1. To promote self-employment and provide an outlet for products of persons with disabilities at SME Park. | Being Implemented | | The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board which operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity operates an Empowerment Shop which is an outlet for the sale of products made by persons with disabilities. | |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific Objective 4: Promote the social model of disability** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| 1. To organize intensive national awareness raising and sensitisation campaigns. | Being Implemented | The State of Mauritius works closely with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for an effective planning, organisation and monitoring of awareness raising and sensitisation campaigns based on the human rights approach. These organisations are contributing enormously in the promotion of the welfare of persons with disabilities and are actively engaged in the fight for the rights of persons with disabilities. NGOs such as, the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf, Lois Lagesse Trust Fund, Lizié dan la Main, Association des Parents des Déficients Auditifs (APDA), and Association de Parents d'Enfants Inadaptés de l'Ile Maurice (APEIM) are involved in these campaigns. |
| 1. To integrate persons with disabilities in local TV and Radio programmes and also as presenters and “animateurs”. | Being Implemented | The Society for the Welfare of the Deaf and the Association de Parents d’enfants aux deficient auditifs offer training of sign language interpreters and also provide sign language interpretation services for deaf persons. Around six persons have been trained as live interpreters by the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf. Seven persons with hearing impairment have also been trained to act as interpreters and three among them already work for the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation to present the weekly news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language. |
| 1. To make use of technology (multimedia and social media) in the promotion of the cause of persons with disabilities. | Being Implemented | 1. The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity and the Disability Empowerment Unit which operates under its aegis have their own websites to promote their services offered to persons with disabilities.  2. Other NGOs in the Disability Sector also have their websites and make use of social media in the promotion of the cause of persons with disabilities. |
| 1. To establish an electronic ‘Disability Online’ information desk. | Implemented | The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity has set up a website on disability with the main objective to provide persons with disabilities and other users a specific portal on the disability sector in Mauritius. Through this website, persons with disabilities can apply online for a number of services provided by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity and at the same time have access to other related information. The website is enhanced with special features for persons with visual impairment. Link to the website on disability is <http://disability.govmu.org>. |
| 1. To promote disability representation of persons with disabilities at all levels, including Parliament. | Being Implemented | Persons with disabilities are already represented on different Boards and Committees, for example, Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board, National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Board and Special Educations Needs Authority. Moreover, the Law does not debar any citizen including persons with disabilities to stand as candidate at the General |Election. |
| 1. To encourage the National Children Council and National Women’s Council to make provision for the representation of children with disabilities and women with disabilities respectively. | Implemented | 1. The National Children’s Council takes on board children with disabilities for campaigns on child protection.  2. The National Women’s Council and the National Women’s Entrepreneur Council provide a platform for women, including women with disabilities, to contribute to policies and action plans for their empowerment. |
| 1. To develop strategies for the effective delivery of sexual health and human relations information to address the diverse needs of men and women with disabilities. | Implemented | Health care services for all specialisations including sexual and reproductive health are provided free of charge to all citizens of the Republic of Mauritius. Persons with disabilities enjoy the same health care services on an equal basis with others. |
| 1. To increase the proportion of community-based service response. | Being Implemented | The Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) of the Ministry of Health and Wellness carries out regular and ongoing outreach and community based rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities. As from 2015 to date, a total of 224,098 regular visits have been effected by CBR officers.  The Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity provides rehabilitation services to all children suffering from Muscular Dystrophy and those attending SEN Schools. Physiotherapists and occupational therapists are also provided to persons with disabilities in all the charitable institutions. These services are also offered free of charge by various organisations such as Lois Lagesse Trust Fund, Association de Parents d'Enfants Inadaptés de l'Ile Maurice(APEIM), Society for the Welfare of the Deaf, Lizie dan la Main and Association des Parents des Déficients Auditifs(APDA) so that a maximum number of persons with disabilities are attended to. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: Review of Legal and Regulatory framework in the disability sector.** | | |
| **Background**   * + **Most legislations pertaining to disability and PWDs were enacted at a time when anachronistic concepts and the medical model of disability were in force.**   + **Following the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, we have a legal obligation to domesticate the provisions of the Convention in our legal framework.** | | |
| **Specific Objective 1:Prohibit disability related discrimination in the Constitution** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| To amend sections 3 and 16 of the Constitution. | Not Implemented |  |
| **Specific Objective 2: Provide a comprehensive legislation to reinforce the human rights of persons with disabilities in line with the social model of disability.** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| 1. To introduce a Disability Bill. | Not Yet Implemented | Government puts disability rights at the heart of its programme and aims at ensuring that persons with disabilities are consistently included in the formulation of policies. As regards the Disability Bill, the Ministry of Social Integration Social Security and National Solidarity has been working on a draft Disability Bill and consultations with stakeholders were being held. However, there are still a number of issues to be addressed to ensure the introduction of such a Bill such as amendment of sections 3 and 16 of the Constitution so that the fundamental rights and freedom of disabled people are fully respected. However, although the Bill has not yet been introduced, this has not prevented Government from taking key initiatives over the past five years to create an enabling environment for persons with disabilities |
| 1. To amend existing legislations – Town and Country Planning Act, Morcellement Act, Local Government Act, Roads Act, Road Development Authority Act, Road Traffic Act, Building and Land Use Permit Guidelines, Civil Code, Passport Act, Jury Act, Civil Status Act, Equal Opportunities Act. | Being Implemented | The Building Control (Accessibility and Gender Compliance in Buildings) Regulations was promulgated in November 2017 to make provision for new buildings and buildings under major renovation to contain, inter alia, the following features:   1. talking features/Braille signage for automated teller machines (ATMs), lifts in museums and other places where appropriate; 2. voice system in banks, lifts and other places where queues are required; 3. signage system for directional and informational purposes for visual access and audio-sign; 4. conference rooms and auditoriums; and 5. tactile cues to indicate changes in directions and changes in level.   As regards to the Roads Act, the Morcellement Act and the Town and Country Planning Act there is no need to amend them given that the Planning Policy Guidance (PPGs)already include a special Technical Sheet on Access for Persons with Disabilities. The Technical Sheet provides that the needs of persons with disabilities should be considered as an integral part of the development process especially with respect to parking, ramps, steps and paths which are disability-friendly.  It is to be noted that as per the Road Traffic Act, free parking coupons are being provided to persons with disabilities with severe mobility problems to enable easy access to public places like shopping centres, etc. Dedicated spaces are available.  The Equal Opportunities Act 2008 was amended in 2017 to provide for the prohibition of discrimination in employment on the grounds of a person’s criminal record, both at recruitment and promotion level, where a person’s criminal record is not relevant to the nature of his employment. The said amendment also includes persons with **impairment** as defined by the Equal Opportunities Act 2008. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Specific Objective 3: Removal of Reservations on the UNCRPD** | | |
| To ratify the Optional Protocol following removal of reservations on Articles 11, 9.2 (d) and 24.2 (b) of the UNCRPD. | Being Implemented | Procedures for removal of reservations on Articles 11, 9.2 (d) of the UNCRPD are on-going. As regard to article 24.2 (b) of the UNCRPD, reservation is being maintained for the time being. |
| **Specific Objective 4: Application of the Provisions pertaining to the TEDPB Act** | | |
| 1. To ensure that all provisions of the Act are effectively applied with a view to meeting the training and employment needs of PWDs. | Being Implemented | Following the amendments to the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act 1996 in 2012, employers who have a workforce of 35 or above are required to employ 3% of persons with disabilities. Failure to do so entails a statutory monthly contribution of Rs 4,000 (USD 100) for each person with disabilities not yet recruited. Furthermore, the amended Act provides for a Hearing Committee to examine cases of non-compliant companies. Furthermore, the Act provides that in case of prosecution before a Court of law, the non-compliant company is liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 75,000 (USD 1875). |
| 1. To extend provisions of TEDPB Act to local government | Not Yet Implemented |  |
| **Specific Objective 5: Address the needs of children with special education needs** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| (i) To set up an appropriate regulatory body under the aegis of Ministry of Education and Human Resources for all matters pertaining to education of children with disabilities. | Implemented | In 2018, the Special Education Needs Authority (SENA) Act was passed and a Special Education Needs Authority was set up. This authority is responsible for monitoring and facilitating the implementation of special education needs policies of the Government. |
| (ii) To amend the Education Act to raise admission age limit of students with disabilities. | Implemented | Education is mandatory for all children up to the age of 16 years to attend school. As for children with disabilities, they are required to attend school up to the age of 20 years. |
| (iii)To amend Early Childhood Care and Education Authority Regulations to enable children with disabilities to pursue pre-primary education after the age of 5. | Not Implemented |  |
| (iv) To accelerate measures promoting inclusive education. | Being Implemented | In a bid to provide a barrier-free access to education for students with disabilities, the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology has in recent years taken a series of measures, which are outlined below:   1. Schools are being retrofitted with ramps to facilitate access to the classrooms; 2. For the years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019, 32 schools have been made disability-friendly; 3. All new secondary schools have been equipped with adapted toilets for the disabled; 4. Covered links between building blocks have been made to facilitate access to specialised rooms for children in wheelchairs; 5. Facilities like music room, library, science laboratory, computer room are available on the ground floor where necessary. In primary schools, head masters usually make arrangements to move the whole class to the ground floor wherever necessary; 6. Students with disabilities are released earlier than other students as a matter of convenience; 7. Carers have been provided in mainstream primary and secondary schools to help students with special education needs; 8. The same facilities are available in private grant-aided secondary schools to enable children with disabilities to move around the school compound and participate actively in academic activities; and 9. As from the year 2016/2017, five students with special education needs are offered each year a scholarship to pursue Post-Secondary/Tertiary courses. They are also benefitting from a stipend of Rs 5,000(USD 125) monthly.   The Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technologyhas taken additional measures to promote inclusive primary and secondary education to students with disabilities:   1. Educators are encouraged to provide extra assistance to children with disabilities so as to allow them to keep pace with their classmates; 2. Children with disabilities benefit from extra time for the Primary School Achievement Certificate(Grade 6 ) examination; 3. Children with hearing impairment are provided specialised Teacher/Interpreters in the mainstream secondary schools with the active collaboration of NGOs and for the purpose of examinations; 4. Enlarged print school books / manuals and question papers are provided to children with visual impairment; and 5. Presence of carers in the assessment room to assist learners with special education needs. |
| **Specific Objective 6: Review discrimination by educational institutions on the basis of impairment** | | |
| 1. To amend section 17(3) of the Equal Opportunities Act. | Not Yet Implemented |  |
| 1. To provide appropriate education based on classification of impairment and disability. | Being Implemented | A Curriculum Framework for the SEN sector has been prepared by the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE)with effect from 2014. The new Curriculum has been adapted to cater for children with hearing, visual, and intellectual impairments, as well as those suffering from Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is complemented with activity books, a teachers’ guide, and pedagogical toys. |
| **Specific Objective 7: Review of assessment criteria for eligibility of pensions** | | |
| To amend the NPF Act and Social Aid Act to review of assessment criteria for eligibility of pensions. | Not to be Implemented | Upon request/application from persons with disabilities for Basic Invalidity Pension, these persons are first examined by a Medical Board to determine their eligibility for same. It is to be noted that Basic Invalidity Pension is given for a specific period of time. Three months prior to the expiry of the Basic Invalidity Pension the person is again examined by the Medical Board to determine the continuity of the pension. The Management Information system systematically auto generates the data disaggregated by gender, age, disability, place and residence. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Cooperation with International Organisations to build capacity and address emerging needs and challenges in the sector.** | | |
| **Background**   * **There has been a lot of innovation at international level regarding measures to improve quality of life of PWDs.** * **Equally there has been technological advancement in terms of specialised services and assistive devices.** * **The need is felt to respond to the needs of the ‘new generation” of PWDs who is more educated and aware of global trends.** | | |
| **Specific Objective 1:Develop cooperation with international organisations** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| 1. Conclude Memorandum of Understanding for bilateral cooperation. | Being Implemented | MOUs with India and Seychelles are being renewed. |
| 1. Enlist technical assistance to implement new programmes and services. | Being Implemented | Technical assistance under existing MOUs and MOUs to be renewed is being enlisted. |
| 1. To encourage the Forum of Women with Disabilities to network with sister organizations in other countries. | Being Implemented | This is being encouraged at the level of the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. Board. |
| **Specific Objective 2: Expand capacities of existing resources** | | |
| 1. Training of trainers/resource persons in key areas in line with international trend. | To be implemented | Training of Trainers/Resource Persons would be considered under MOUs, overseas training programs and in line with international trends. |
| 1. Provision of training on disability rights to service providers. | To be Implemented | To be considered under the forthcoming Action Plan on Disability. |
| 1. To create a site or building where local people can be trained in Rodrigues | To be Implemented | To be discussed with RRA.  To be considered under the forthcoming Action Plan on Disability. |
| 1. Carry out research on disability studies | Being Implemented | Comprehensive Study of People with disabilities in Rodrigues 2018 carried out by the University of Mauritius. |
| 1. To include a better health record system for people with disabilities at hospitals. | To be Implemented | To be considered under the forthcoming Action Plan on Disability. |
| 1. Review of curriculum and examination system to meet needs of students with disabilities. | Implemented | A Curriculum Framework for the SEN sector has been prepared by the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE)with effect from 2014. The new Curriculum has been adapted to cater for children with hearing, visual, and intellectual impairments, as well as those suffering from Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is complemented with activity books, a teachers’ guide, and pedagogical toys. |
| **Specific Objective 3: Transfer of technology and expertise** | | |
| 1. Development of alternate mode of communication, that is, Braille and sign language. | Being Implemented | 1. The Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) which provides training to teachers at the pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary level, has incorporated, the basics of Mauritian Sign Language and hearing impairment at the teacher training foundation courses and the other courses for Special Education Needs sector.  2. The national television station, the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity provides an 8 to 10-minute news bulletin in Mauritian Sign Language. Over and above this, during the lockdown period, a comprehensive video in Mauritian Sign Language was also launched and broadcast by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation on a daily basis to sensitize people with hearing impairment on COVID-19.  3. All awareness campaigns, events, projects and workshops carried out by the National Computer Board (NCB) are open to all Mauritians. Furthermore, the NCB has paid special attention to the visually impaired children by printing out a dozen sets of 3D printed objects (alphabets, objects and animals in Braille spelling, Mauritius topographic map) for two main schools namely 'Lois Lagesse Trust Fund and 'Lizie dan la Main' which look after the education and welfare of persons with visual impairment. |
| 1. Organisation of study tours overseas. | To be Implemented | To be considered under the forthcoming Action Plan on Disability |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: Review of administrative procedures, eligibility criteria for social aids, data capture and service delivery.** | | |
| **Background**   * **The Ministry often receives complaints from members of the public that the procedures for grant of social aids and assistive devices are complex, lengthy and time consuming.** * **Currently persons with high support needs aged between 15 and 75 years are not benefitting from home-based rehabilitation services.** * **The absence of a comprehensive database on persons with disabilities prohibits informed policy decisions on disability issues.** * **A review of the whole system is required to make it customer friendly.** | | |
| **Specific Objective 1: Streamline procedures for grant of social aids and assistive devices to persons with disabilities**. | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented\ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| 1. Review eligibility criteria. | Being Implemented | 1. Threshold for eligibility of assistive devices reviewed.  2. Age criteria for domiciliary visit has been reviewed. |
| 1. Review protocol and composition of assessment panel for benefits and pensions. | Implemented |  |
| 1. Develop a system to provide choices to beneficiaries of assistive devices (cash in lieu of kind). | Being Implemented | Those who are eligible for dentures are given a one-off cash payment. |
| 1. Review procedures for grant of parking coupons. | Implemented |  |
| 1. Set up a mechanism to monitor and review performance in the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. | To be implemented |  |
| 1. Review formula for refund of transport cost to children with disabilities attending schools. | Implemented | Refund of taxi-fares, bus fares for accompanying parents, free public transport for persons with disabilities. |
| **Specific Objective 2: Domiciliary visit and counselling** | | |
| Extend domiciliary visits and therapeutic services, including Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy to all persons with severe disabilities. | Implemented | Persons above the age of 60 and below the age of 18 who are bedridden, or who suffer from a severe disability, benefit from monthly medical domiciliary visits. Following a budgetary measure announced in 2020/2021, the age criterion has been removed. This service has been extended to all bedridden persons and persons with severe disabilities. Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy services are also provided by relevant stakeholders. |
| **Specific Objective 3: Review of social benefits scheme for disability** | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | **Status** |
| 1. Enhance Carers’ Allowance for children with high support needs. | Implemented | Persons with disabilities who need the constant care and attention of another person are entitled to a carer’s allowance. As from December 2019, the carer’s allowance has increased from Rs 3, 000 (USD 75) to Rs 3,500 (USD 87.5) monthly. |
| 1. Provide newly designed assistive devices such as smart canes, mobility scooters and cochlear implants to persons with disabilities | To be Implemented |  |
| 1. Provide specialized assistive devices like oxygen equipment to persons with muscular dystrophy. | Implemented |  |
| 1. To develop special services for the growing number of elderly persons with disabilities. | Being Implemented | Recreation Centers, Homes and Charitable Institutions |
| **Specific Objective 4: Updating of a database on disability** | | |
| Maintenance of a comprehensive disaggregated database on all persons with disabilities at the Disability Empowerment Unit. | Being Implemented | The Disability System hosted at the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity makes provision for disaggregated data for persons with disabilities. |
| **Specific Objective 5: Ensure that persons with disabilities in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands enjoy the same benefits as in mainland Mauritius.** | | |
| 1. Extend the Francois Sockalingum Award to students with disabilities in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands. | Being Implemented |  |
| 1. To set up a focal/contact point for disability issues at the Commission for Social Security in Rodrigues. | Implemented |  |
| 1. To undertake a situational analysis in Rodrigues and the Outer Islands to determine the specificity of disability.   To extend the services of Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists and Physiotherapists in Rodrigues. | To be Implemented |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: Contracting out of specific services to NGOs/DPOs** | | | | |
| **Background**   * **There is a strong advocacy for the integration of persons with disabilities in mainstream society by empowering them through training and development, and offering them employment opportunities.** * **Structured DPOs are claiming for more and more active participation in decisions relating to disability issues and service delivery in line with the philosophy -“Nothing about Us without Us”.** | | | | |
| **Specific Objective 1: Create employment opportunities for PWDs** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** | |
| 1. Training and development of specific competencies among PWDs | Being Implemented | | NGOs are already involved in the training and development of specific competencies among persons with disabilities. | |
| 1. Assist PWDs to set up SMEs for manufacturing plants/service centres, e.g. manufacturing of wheelchairs, recycling of wastes and production of alternatives to plastic, etc. | Being Implemented | | SME Mauritius seeks to help entrepreneurs to improve:  -efficiency of their value chain  -responsiveness to customer requirements and market dynamics  -overall competitiveness through professional or technical input  It also enables SMEs to  -continuously invest in Technology and automated production capabilities  -create technology based integrated and sustainable SMEs  -improve their market accessibility and competitiveness in both local and export markets  -respond to more stringent requirements of diverse customer bases | |
| 1. Develop home-based schemes for persons with disabilities. | Being Implemented | | Self-employed persons including persons with disabilities are provided assistance from SME Mauritius Ltd which is a private company wholly owned by the Government of Mauritius, incorporated in July 2017. SME Mauritius is committed to promote a conducive SME eco-system and develop entrepreneurship at national level. SME Mauritius empowers SMEs to emerge and grow by implementing support programs that enhance their competitiveness. These SMEs also include home-based schemes for persons with disabilities. | |
| 1. Provide loans at concessionary rate for self-employment ventures by persons with disabilities including women entrepreneurs. | Implemented | | 1. Loans are already being provided at concessionary rate for self-employment ventures by persons with disabilities including women entrepreneurs. For example, the Financial Support schemes under the Maubank provides the following:  • Entrepreneurs including with disabilities are entitled to a Maximun of Rs 20 M (USD 0.5M)loan for a period of 10 years with a moratorium of 2 years at a low interest rate.  • Entrepreneurs including with disabilities holding an SME Certificate as Micro Entreprises are entitled to a loan amounting to Rs 250,000(USD 6250) for 10 years.  Development Bank of Mauritius (DBM) provides a financial support to entrepreneurs including those with disabilities who are in the following sectors, inter-alia, agricultural sector, fishing sector, Manufacturing Sector, services sector/ Professionals, health sector and ICT Sector. The DBM grants 75 % of project cost upto a ceiling of Rs 3M(USD 0.075M)  Moreover, following budgetary measure 2020/2021, the DBM will provide Rs 200(USD 5M) million for loans at a concessional rate For women entrepreneurs including those with disabilities. | |
| 1. Allow employers to make use of CSR funds to  * recruit persons with disabilities * Provide facilities and amenities to PWDs at work * finance projects related to PWDs and; * invest in technology and scholarships to PWDs. | Being Implemented | | The National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF) is the Central Body to receive and allocate public funds to NGOs. These funds can be used in the following areas, inter-alia, and support for persons with disabilities, education and training, leisure and sports, health, family protection and social housing. The funds can be used by NGOs and employers to recruit persons with disabilities, provide facilities and amenities to persons with disabilities at work, finance projects related to Persons with disabilities and invest in technology and scholarships for persons with disabilities. | |
| 1. Reserve a percentage of seats for persons with disabilities in placement programmes on NEF and YEP and vocational training programmes of MITD and HRDC. | Being Implemented | | 1. As part of its empowerment programmes, the National Empowerment Foundation (NEF) registers people with disabilities and circulates a list to employers. The NEF also partially funds placement of people with disabilities in enterprises through a poverty reduction program.  2. The HRDC provides funding for training of employees with disabilities which are approved by the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA).  3. The MITD is responsible to:   * Facilitate the entry of persons with disabilities provided that they are registered with the TEDPB * Adapt the entry and course requirements to enable persons with disabilities to follow relevant parts/modules of the courses. * Mount courses that will meet the aspiration of persons with disabilities. * Provide the necessary technical assistance to upgrade the training programme of the TEDPB. * The Youth Employment Programme provides placement of youth including those with disabilities who are unemployed in the labour market so that they can acquire the necessary skills that will help in their employability. | |
| **Specific Objective 2: Optimize on resource potential of NGOs to ensure effective service delivery to PWDs.** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** | |
| 1. To identify and outsource services to NGOs to maintain complementarities and avoid duplication. | Being Implemented | | Services are outsourced to NGOs to maintain complementarities and avoid duplication. For example, the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity provides funding to the Society for the Welfare of the Deaf in the further development of the Mauritian Sign Language project and for the ear moulding project. The Lois Lagesse Trust Fund is also funded to promote the welfare of persons with visual impairment. | |
| 1. To detect cases of abuse on children with disabilities and train social workers, teachers and NGO personnel in same. | Being Implemented | | The National Social Inclusion Foundation funds NGOs on diverse projects including training of social workers, teachers and NGO personnel. | |
| **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: Reengineering of the institutional set up to streamline services to PWD.** | | | | |
| **Background**   * Currently services are fragmented with various institutions at the level of MSSNS&RI and other Ministries. * This causes duplication and resources are not effectively optimised. * This causes inconveniences to PWDs in terms of access to those services. | | | | |
| **Specific Objective 1: Redesign the services provided by government institutions to PWD.** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** |
| 1. To set up a National Disability Authority which will regroup the various service systems in favour of PWDs. | |  | | To be considered in the forthcoming Disability Bill |
| 1. To make provision for the setting up of a disability unit in Rodrigues. | | Implemented | | A Disability Empowerment Unit already exist under the Commission of Social Security |
| 1. To develop and implement a person-centered approach for access to comprehensive services to PWDs at the first point of contact itself. | | To be Implemented | | To be considered under the forthcoming Action Plan on Disability |
| 1. To decentralise the services of the National Disability Authority including Rodrigues to facilitate access of PWDs to services and enhance its responsiveness to their needs. | |  | |  |
| 1. To restructure the Disability Empowerment Unit of the Ministry | | Being Implemented | |  |
| **Specific Objective 2: Foster the disability-inclusive development policy of the Post 2015 Development Agenda.** | | | | |
| **Action Required** | | **Implemented/ Not implemented** | | **Status** |
| To set up Disability Desks in different Ministries/Government Departments with a view to addressing disability issues on a fast track basis. | | Being Implemented | | Ministries/Departments are being requested to designate focal points to deal with issues on disability. |