# **Inputs to the Questionnaire of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, appointed under the Human Rights Council Resolution 26/20 submitted to the Prime Minister’s Office by the Min/Social Security, National Solidarity & Reform Institutions**

**Disability-Inclusive Policies**

1. **Rights of Persons with Disabilities in policies aimed at implementing and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals**

* The Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions has elaborated a new Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2019 on Disability, which is in consonance with the Sustainable Development Goals.
* The cost implications for the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan have been worked out.
* The Disability Unit of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions has the responsibility to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. Furthermore, the Action Plan makes provision for the setting up of a High-Powered Committee for this purpose.
* The Action Plan makes provision for inclusion of women and girls with disabilities in the National Women’s Council. It also provides for the Forum of Women with Disabilities to network with sister organizations in different countries.
* The issue of children with disabilities is taken on board through the promotion of inclusive education and provision of enhanced social benefits to children with high support needs.
* Mention is also made for the need to develop special services for the growing number of elderly persons with disabilities.
* The new Strategy and Action Plan on Disability makes provision for the participation of disability activists and Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) at the level of the High-Powered Steering Committee to be set up to monitor implementation.

2. **Legislative and policy framework in place concerning non-discrimination**

* “Impairment” is specifically mentioned as a prohibited ground of discrimination on the Equal Opportunities Act 2011.
* The Government Programme 2015-2019 stipulates that “Government proposes to amend Sections 3 and 16 of the Constitution to prohibit discrimination and introduce a Disability Bill to provide further protection to persons with disabilities”. In this context, it is worth mentioning that a draft Disability Bill has been put up and consultations with stakeholders are currently being held.
* For the time being, there is no specific budgetary arrangement to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodation by public entities. These are included in the provisions of the different line ministries.
* On certain matters, especially regarding accessibility to public buildings, the denial of provision of reasonable accommodation can be tantamount to discrimination.
* The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons (Amendment) Act 2012 provides for the workforce of all enterprises having 35 or more employees to include 3% of persons with disabilities.
* In hospitals and Health Centres there are special queues for persons with disabilities.
* The Equal Opportunities Commission looks into cases of discrimination against, inter alia, persons with disabilities. Once it is satisfied that discrimination has effectively taken place on the basis of disability and mediation has failed, the case is referred to the Equal Opportunities Tribunal for adjudication.
* Any aggrieved citizen, including a person with disability, can seize the Supreme Court for redress in case of discrimination.

3. **Legislative and Policy Framework concerning acquisition for Persons with Disabilities**

* The Building Control Act 2012 makes provision for accessibility for all categories of persons with disabilities with regards to buildings, physical environment, telecommunications, audiovisual and information services.
* Draft accessibility regulations have been prepared and they specify national standards and guidelines.
* Time bound action plans have been included in the new Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2019 on Disability.
* Buildings have to be constructed in line with the provisions of the Building Control Act, which makes provision for accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities.
* The Ministry of Local Government enforces accessibility standards as Section 16 Building Control Act provides that “an authorised officer shall carry out at least one inspection to a building to ascertain …whether the conditions of the building are being complied with”
* Seminars and workshops on accessibility are organised regularly by Ministries and other relevant organisations.

4. **Legislative and Policy framework concerning support services**

* The Strategy and Action Plan 2016-2019 on Disability recommends that substituted decision-making be replaced by supported decision-making.
* It also recommends that support measures be instituted to enable exercise of legal capacity by persons with disabilities living in institutions and those with high support needs.
* In schools support services in terms of physiotherapy, occupational therapy, parents’ mediators and carers are provided.
* The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board assists persons with disabilities in securing employment.
* Sign language interpreters are available for news broadcasts and for interpretation in court.
* Government has developed a strong partnership with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) for delivery of services.
* Persons with disabilities benefit from a wide social coverage.
* Persons with severe disabilities benefit from a Carer’s Allowance which enables them to buy services.

5. **Data**

* According to the last population census, there were 59,868 persons with disabilities as at 2011 in Mauritius, which has a population of around 1.3 million.

6. **Other disability-inclusive policies**

* Youth Employment Programme (YEP) which is a placement scheme for unemployed persons take on board persons with disabilities.
* The implementation of an inclusive education programme is being accelerated.
* The Ministry of Arts and Culture organises inclusive programmes on the occasion of Music Day, National Dance Day, Mother Tongue Day and Independence Day.