

Mauritius: Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 16 February 2009

Information on health care and education in Mauritius

Page 5 of a report from the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states:

“In the context of the policy of Government to maintain the welfare State, free health services are available to the population. Private clinics also exist to cater for the needs of those who choose to pay for their treatment. Education is free up to the secondary level whilst primary and secondary education is compulsory by law for all children up to the age of 16.” (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) (6 January 2009) Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights : 4th periodic reports submitted by States parties under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant : Mauritius

A report by the *UN Committee on all forms of Discrimination Against Women* states:

“Health care is also provided free of charge in hospitals, indiscriminately. There are also private clinics available to those who can afford to pay for medical care.” (UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (19 January 2005) *Periodic reports of States parties - Mauritius*, p.63)

This report also states:

“The initial and second periodic report mentions that in terms of quantity, Mauritius has achieved a breakthrough in health care. Focus is now on upgrading the quality of services and prevention of ill health in the first instance...A review of measures taken by the Government in terms of equality of access to health care shows that both men and women have benefited.” (Ibid, p. 62)

This report also states:

“Community / Area Health Centres have been established all over the island to cater for the needs of both rural and urban areas. Furthermore, about 70% of women centres are located in rural areas.” (Ibid, pp 68-9)

The World Health Organisation states that the life expectancy at birth in Mauritius in 2004 was 69 for males and 75 for females compared to 47 and 49 respectively for the WHO Africa region. (WHO - *Country Health System Fact Sheet 2006 - Mauritius*)

A report by the *US Department of State* under the heading “Children” states:

“The government placed strong emphasis on the health and welfare of children and displayed a commitment to expand educational opportunities for children. The ombudsman for children's issues had responsibility for ensuring that the rights, needs, and interests of children were given full consideration by government, private authorities, individuals, and associations. The Child Development Unit of the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare, and Consumer Protection enforced the laws and implemented policies and programs with regard to the welfare and development of children. The National Children's Council served as a platform for government institutions and NGOs to work together.

The law provides for free, universal, and compulsory education to 16 years. Authorities treated girls and boys equally at the primary, secondary, and post-secondary levels. Most children finished secondary education. More than 90 percent of primary students attended school.

The government provided full medical care for both boys and girls.” (US Department of State (11 March 2008) *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices 2007: Mauritius*)

A report by the *The Southern African Development Community* (SADC) states under the heading ‘Health Service’:

“The public health service in Mauritius is free. There are eight private clinics on the islands, four public hospitals and many well-stocked pharmacies.

Reforms in the health sector were announced in the 2003/2004 Budget including the reorganisation of public health care delivery, the introduction of a 24-hour family doctor service, expansion of high-tech medical services, and greater emphasis on health promotion and preventative medicine.

Other developments in the sector include the construction of a new hospital on the site of Dr Jeetoo Hospital; construction of a new Outpatient Department at Victoria Hospital; completion of a new psychiatric hospital at Brown Sequard; purchase of new high-tech equipment; and the recruitment of additional doctors, nurses, health care assistants, midwives, and other support staff. The government is also allocating Rs2 million for the reintroduction of Ayurvedic and other traditional medicines in government hospitals on a pilot basis. (SADC *Review 11th Anniversary: 1997-2008 - Mauritius*)

This report states under the heading ‘Human Resources’:

“Education in Mauritius is free at primary (compulsory), secondary and tertiary levels. The country enjoys a literacy rate of 85 percent.

The large pool of well-educated young people, versatile, easily trainable and bilingual in English and French, is a real asset in the country's effort to expand its services sector. There are many university graduates and qualified professionals.

With the reforms underway in the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels, government is now turning its attention to the tertiary education sector. The aim is to develop Mauritius into a knowledge hub and a centre for higher education.

The reform of the training system is also at an advanced stage. The Mauritius Qualifications Authority has been set up to regulate the activities of private training institutions and the Industrial Vocational Training Board (IVTB) provides training in various fields through its schools and centres. A Training Advisory Committee (TAC) has been set up in the IVTB to formulate and implement training programmes based on the requirements of industries. Cooperation with major international institutes ensures training is in the most modern and sophisticated technologies.

The University of Mauritius offers programmes ranging from certificate and diploma to undergraduate and post-graduate levels. The University's focus is on training people for practice and research in a wide range of disciplines." (Ibid)

References

SADC Review 11th Anniversary: 1997-2008 - Mauritius

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

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