



**Convention on the
Rights of the Child**

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**WRITTEN REPLIES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS
CONCERNING THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/MUS/Q/2)
RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF
THE CHILD RELATING TO THE CONSIDERATION OF
THE SECOND PERIODIC REPORT OF MAURITIUS
(CRC/C/65/Add.35)***

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* This document has not been edited.

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PART I

Under this section the State party is requested to submit in written form, additional and updated information, if possible, before 23 November 2005.

A. Data and statistics, if available

1. Please provide disaggregated statistical data (by gender, age groups, ethnic groups, urban and rural areas) covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 on the number and percentage of children under 18 living in Mauritius.

Estimated population by age group and sex, 2002-2004
Republic of Mauritius

Age group (years)	2002				2003				2004			
	Male	Female	Both sexes		Male	Female	Both sexes		Male	Female	Both sexes	
			No.	%			No.	%			No.	%
0	9 842	9 524	19 366	1.6	9 907	9 753	19 660	1.6	9 708	9 289	18 997	1.5
1-4	40 153	38 500	78 653	6.5	40 009	38 379	78 388	6.4	39 994	38 657	78 651	6.4
5-9	52 451	51 953	104 404	8.6	51 264	50 464	101 728	8.3	50 440	49 357	99 797	8.1
10-14	53 635	51 768	105 403	8.7	54 939	53 243	108 182	8.8	55 251	53 698	108 949	8.8
15-17	27 896	27 301	55 197	4.6	28 186	27 770	55 956	4.6	29 434	28 885	58 319	4.7
<18	183 977	179 046	363 023	30.0	184 305	179 609	363 914	29.8	184 827	179 886	364 713	29.6
All ages	599 257	610 939	1 210 196		605 084	617 727	1 222 811		610 108	623 278	1 233 386	

Source: Vital Statistics.

Resident population ages less than 18 years by main religious groups,
2000 Population Census - Republic of Mauritius (population census
data available every 10 years)

Main religious groups	Number	%
Buddhist/Chinese	442	0.12
Christian	122 693	34.57
Hindu	169 298	47.68
Islam	61 222	17.24
Others and not stated	1 392	0.39
Total	355 047	100.00

**Resident population by urban/rural region, sex and age group
2000 Population Census**

Republic of Mauritius (Urban and Rural)

Age group (years)	Male	Female	Both sexes	
			No.	%
Under 1	9 574	9 341	18 915	1.6
1-4	38 066	37 322	75 388	6.4
5-9	53 037	52 152	105 189	8.9
10-14	49 428	48 312	97 740	8.3
15-17	29 326	28 489	57 815	4.9
<18	179 431	175 616	355 047	30.1
All ages	583 756	595 092	1 178 848	

Republic of Mauritius - Urban

Age group (years)	Male	Female	Both sexes	
			Number	%
Under 1	3 608	3 519	7 127	1.4
1-4	14 938	14 682	29 620	5.9
5-9	21 428	21 232	42 660	8.5
10-14	20 818	20 202	41 020	8.2
15-17	12 035	11 584	23 619	4.7
<18	72 827	71 219	144 046	28.6
All ages	247 844	255 201	503 045	

Republic of Mauritius - Rural

Age group (years)	Male	Female	Both sexes	
			No.	%
Under 1	5 966	5 822	11 788	1.7
1-4	23 128	22 640	45 768	6.8
5-9	31 609	30 920	62 529	9.3
10-14	28 610	28 110	56 720	8.4
15-17	17 291	16 905	34 196	5.1
<18	106 604	104 397	211 001	31.2
All ages	335 912	339 891	675 803	

Please note these figures are available only from Census.

2. In the light of article 4 of the Convention, please provide disaggregated data on budget allocations and trends (in absolute figures and percentages of the national and regional budgets) for the years 2003, 2004 and 2005 regarding the implementation of the Convention evaluating also the priorities for budgetary expenditures given to the following:

- (a) education (different types of education, i.e. pre-primary, primary and secondary education);

Indicators education sector

Pre-primary school

	2003	%	2004	%	2005	%
Number of schools	1 092	-	1 070	-	1 072	-
State-run	177	16	178	16	179	16
Private	848	78	825	77	824	77
RCEA	8		8		10	
Municipal/V. Councils	59		59		59	
Enrolment	38 620		37 483		37 356	
Male	19 433	50.3	19 120	51	18 934	50.6
Female	19 187	49.4	18 363	49	18 422	49.4
Gross enrolment ratio		99		96		94
Budget (Rs m)	78.4	1.6*	101.0	1.9*	99.0 (Provisional)	1.7*

Primary

	2003	%	2004	%	2005	%
Number of schools	291		289		291	
State-run	221	76	220	76	221	76
Private	70	24	69	24	70	24
Confessional	53		53		53	
Private aided/non-aided	17		16		17	
Enrolment	129 616		126 226		123 562	
Male	65 624	50.6	64 019	50.7	62 729	50.7
Female	63 992	49.4	62 207	49.3	60 833	49.3
Gross enrolment ratio		102		102		102
Pass rate (CPE)		62.6		63		-
Budget (Rs m)	1 514	29.3*	1 565	27.9*	1 771	29.8*

Secondary

	2003	%	2004	%	2005	%
No. of schools	175		176		188	
State-run	63	36	67	38	70	37
Private (confessional, private-aided, non-aided)	112	64	109	62	118	63
Enrolment	103 847		105 988		110 287	
Male	49 946	48	50 910	48	52 988	48
Female	53 901	52	55 078	52	57 299	52
Gross enrolment ratio		64		66		67
Pass rate						
SC		75.5		78.1		-
HSC		75.1		76.2		-
Budget (Rs m)	2 308	44.7*	2 579	46*	2 554	42.9*

* as a % of Government Recurrent Expenditure on Education.

**Budgetary Central Government Expenditure on Education
(Estimates) - (Rs) million**

Particulars	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Current expenditure on education	5 104	5 485	5 881
Capital expenditure on education	917	955	991
Total expenditure on education	6 021	6 440	6 872
Total expenditure on education as a % of GDP	3.8%	3.7%	3.7%
Current expenditure on education as a % of total current expenditure	13.8%	13.5%	13.6%
Total expenditure on education as a % of Government total expenditure	13.3%	13.2%	13.3%

- (b) **health care (different types of health services, i.e. primary health care, vaccination programmes, adolescent health care and other health-care services for children, including social insurance);**

Health-care expenditures

Year	Amount (Rs)	% GDP	% Health budget
2003/04	3 258 490 000	2.1	NA
2004/05	3 668 200 000	2.1	NA
2005/06	3 998 500 000	2.1	NA

The Ministry of Health and Quality of Life provides an integrated health services and consequently no disaggregated data is available as far as budget allocation is concerned. However, it is estimated that health care for children represents about 35% of Ministry of Health budget.

(c) programmes and services for children with disabilities;

	2003/04 (Rs)	2004/05 (Rs)	2005/06 (estimated) (Rs)
Transport services only (refund for parents and free for children)	3 722 600	5 105 600	3 000 000

(d) support programmes for families;

	2003/04 (Rs)	2004/05 (Rs)	2005/06 (estimated) (Rs)
Pension under NPF Act Basic Orphan Pension (B.O.P) and Child Allowance	6 600 000	5 576 000	6 200 000
Under Social Aid Act	142 000 000	151 000 000	170 000 000
Refund of examination fees	5 800 000	6 000 000	6 500 000

(e) support for children living below the poverty line (please also specify the criteria for “poverty” and indicate the number of children living below the poverty line);**Poverty**

There is no official poverty line for Mauritius and no quantitative data on the basis of which policies can be formulated. Several attempts have been made to establish a cut-off point below which a household is considered as poor. Based on an absolute poverty threshold at Rs. 2,250 (75 USD) and using the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD recommended equivalisation scale, the incidence of poverty in Mauritius has been estimated at 9.7% of the population in 1996/97. A relative poverty index has been estimated by evaluating the proportion of households below 50% of median per capita income. Based on the Household Budget Survey (HBS) 1996/97 data, the median per capita equivalised income has been established at around Rs. 4,456 (149 US\$). Using this poverty threshold, 9.4% of the Mauritian population is estimated to earn below 50% of median per capita income. There is also a significant income inequality: based on the 1990/ 91 Household Budget Survey (HBS), the lowest 20% of households had about 6% of the total income while the top 20% had a share of about 46%. From the HBS 2001/02, figures were 6% and 45% respectively.

In 2004, more than 13,000 children have benefited from the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the Trust Fund for the Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups both in Mauritius and Rodrigues. The Trust Fund provides transport facilities, uniforms and educational materials and basic furniture with a view to encouraging needy children to attend schools. It also finances the construction of Kindergartens, Day Care Centres, Pre-Primary schools, Library, Specialised Centre for the Physically and Mentally Disabled Children, playgrounds and football ground, and canteens in schools. Books as well as games have also been provided. Finally, the Trust Fund

has been providing training in skills to CPE dropouts, youths at risk and youngsters with a view to enabling them to become economically productive through integrating society. To date the Trust Fund has approved some 208 community based projects for the benefit of the child to the tune of Rs. 35.5 M.

The Trust Fund has also financed the setting of a mobile Training centre to be run by the IVTB, to the tune of Rs. 128,925 to encourage school dropouts and young adults not attending school to integrate a training programme that would keep them away from the ills of drug addiction and other social problems. The main objective behind this is to arouse the interest of out of school students and socially vulnerable groups in getting trained and eventually, to participate in the economic growth of the country.

(f) protection of children who are in need of alternative care including the support of care institutions;

	2003/04 (Rs)	2004/05 (Rs)	2005/06 (estimated) (Rs)
Charitable institutions: orphanages	7 200 000	7 500 000	7 800 000

(g) programmes and activities for the prevention of and protection from child abuse, child sexual exploitation and child labour;

Recurrent expenditure for the Child Development Unit (CDU) of the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection and National Children's Council (NCC) operates under the aegis of the Ministry and is responsible for the protection of the Rights of the Child and protecting children from all forms of abuse.

	2003/04 (Rs.)	2004/05 (Rs.)	2005/06 (Rs.)
Child development unit	7 605 000	8 255 000	10 805 000
National Children's Council	3 565 000	4 600 000	5 200 000
Ministry (Total)	102 575 000	121 605 000	130 560 000

**Budget allotted to Police Family Protection Unit and
Brigade pour la Protection des Mineurs**

Financial year	Budgeted amount - Total (Rs.)
2002/03	2 480 000
2003/04	4 220 000
2004/05	5 645 000

There is no specific Budget allocation with regard to child labour: Monitoring of child labour is effected during normal routine labour inspections and is included in the Ministry of Labour's budget.

(h) programmes and services for abandoned children, including street children; and

	2003/04 (Rs.)	2004/05 (Rs.)	2005/06 (estimated) (Rs.)
Street Children Programme funded by UNESCO and Trust Fund for the Integration of Vulnerable Groups	-	1 612 780	1 045 000 (up to October 2005)

(i) juvenile justice and the recovery and reintegration of juvenile offenders.

	2003/04 (Rs.)	2004/05 (Rs.)	2005/06 (estimated) (Rs.)
Rehabilitation of Youth Centre	7 640 000	9 750 000	10 000 000
Payment of contribution to Probation Hostels for Boys and Girls	1 000 000	1 500 000	1 500 000

3. With reference to children deprived of a family environment and separated from parents please provide disaggregated data (by gender, age groups, if possible ethnic groups, urban and rural areas) for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 on the number of children:

(a) separated from their parents;

Year	Number of children living in institutions
2002	200
2003	197
2004	170
Total	567

Note: data for the number of children separated from their parents is the same as above.

Number of children admitted in institutions

Year	Age cohort	Male	Female
2002	0-5 years	4	3
	6-10 years	Nil	3
	11-15 years	9	2
	16-20 years	Nil	Nil
2003	0-5 years	2	1
	6-10 years	2	7
	11-15 years	5	Nil
	16-20 years	Nil	Nil
2004	0-5 years	Nil	Nil
	6-10 years	Nil	Nil
	11-15 years	1	Nil
	16-20 years	5	Nil

As from 2004, children are admitted through the Child Development Unit of the Ministry of Women's Rights, child Development and Family Welfare and Consumer Protection.

(b) placed in institutions;

(i) Probation Hostel for Boys

	2002	2003	2004
Number of admissions	5	3	6
Age groups	12-16	14-16	10-15
Ethnic group	Hindu (4) Roman Catholic (1)	Roman Catholic (3)	Roman Catholic (4) Muslim (1) Hindu (1)
Urban/rural area	Rural (1) Rodrigues (1)	Urban (1) Rural (2)	Urban (1) Rural (5)
Type of crime/charge	Child beyond control (2) Juvenile wandering without any place of abode (1) Child liable to be committed to an institution (1) Larceny 2 in No. (1)	Larceny 2 in No.(1) Attempt upon larceny (1) Application for child to be committed to an institution (1)	Application for child to be committed to an institution (3) Child beyond control (1) Emergency Protection Order (1) Larceny 2 in No.(1)

(ii) Probation Home for Girls

	2002	2003	2004
Number of admissions	2	7	2
Age groups	15	12-16	14
Ethnic group	Roman Catholic (1) Hindu (1)	Roman Catholic (5) Hindu (2)	Roman Catholic (2)
Urban/rural area	Rural (1) Rodrigues (1)	Rural (2) Urban (5)	Urban (2)
Type of crime/charge	Child beyond control (1) Found wandering (1)	Child liable to be committed to an institution (7)	Child liable to be committed to an institution (2)

(c) placed with foster families;

Number of placements in foster families					
	Male	Female	Total	Urban	Rural
2003	17	17	34	14	20
2004	3	3	6	5	1

Note: Foster Care Project established in December 2002.

(d) adopted domestically through simple or plenary adoption; and

Year	Number of adoptions (simple)	Number of adoptions (plenary)
2002	88	14
2003	70	9
2004	83	9

(e) adopted through inter-country adoptions.

Number of international adoptions					
	Male	Female	Total	Urban	Rural
2002	2	5	7	7	-
2003	4	7	11	5	6
2004	9	4	13	5	8

4. Please specify the number of children with disabilities, up to the age of 18, disaggregated by gender, age groups and, if possible, ethnic groups, urban and rural areas, covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004:

(a) living with their families;**Statistics for Children with disabilities, up to the age of 18**

Year	Males	Females	Total
2003	1 658	1 176	2 834
2004	(No statistics available, but approximately the same number.)		

(b) living in institutions;**Children with disabilities living in institutions**

Year	Male	Female
2002	11	6
2003	20	5
2004	4	4
Total	35	15

(c) placed with foster care;

Nil.

(d) attending regular schools;**Children with disabilities attending regular schools**

Year	Number of children
2005	300

(e) **attending special schools; and**

Special Schools	949
Day Care Centers	235
Total	1 184

(f) **not attending schools.**

Not available.

Children with disabilities

In 2002, a study to determine the official number of children with disabilities in Mauritius, the types of disabilities and the quality of services available was commissioned by the Ministry of Social Security with the support of UNICEF. There are about 3000 children with disabilities.

5. Please provide information on the number of children abducted from or to Mauritius.

Number of children abducted from or to Mauritius since June 2001 up to 2005: 22.
Details are as follows:

From Mauritius to countries		From countries to Mauritius	
United Kingdom	4	Switzerland	1
France	1	United States	2
Reunion	1	Norway	2
South Africa	1	France	2
Italy	1	Australia	1
Seychelles	1	England	4
		South Africa	1
	9		13
		Total	22

6. Please provide disaggregated statistical data (by gender, age groups, if possible ethnic groups, urban and rural areas) covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004:

(a) **rates of infant and child mortality;**

Infant mortality

	Infant mortality rate		Under-five mortality rate	
	Mauritius	Rodrigues	Mauritius	Rodrigues
2002	14.5	23.3	16.7	30.7
2003	12.4	24.2	15.4	29.1
2004	14.1	22.2	16.1	24.3

(b) rates of immunisation;**Rates of immunisation**

Immunisation coverage rates (%)						
	Mauritius			Rodrigues		
	2002	2003	2004	2002	2003	2004
BCG	86.9	91.9	89.8	93	97.3	95.8
DPT and Hepatitis (3rd Dose)	88.1	92	88.4	93	100.4	93
Polio	88.5	92.2	88.8	93	100.6	94.7
MMR	84.5	93.5	88.5	99	93.5	91
Tetanus toxoid (3rd Dose)	71.5	73.2	75.4	76.2	75.3	79.1

(c) rates of malnutrition;

Malnutrition statistics for the years 2002/03 for children up to the age of 18 are not available. However, a National Nutrition Survey was carried out in 2004 for that age group. The Survey Report will not be made available by January 2006.

(d) adolescent health, including early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), mental health and abortions;

Adolescents Health: The Contraceptive Prevalence Survey(CPS) carried out in 2002 reveals that 10.9% of adolescents are mothers or pregnant with their first child. Moreover, adolescents with lower level of education tend to start childbearing earlier.

There is a decline of adolescent fertility in Mauritius, from 44.10 in 1990 to 36.2 per 1,000 live births in 2004.

Year	Adolescent fertility rate
2000	37.7
2001	34.2
2002	36.2
2003	35.8
2004	36.2

**Number of reported cases at the Child Development Unit/
Family Support Bureau by nature of problem and sex,
2002-2004**

	2002	2003	2004
Teenage pregnancy	61	53	112

Moreover mothers below the age of 20 years contribute to about 9% of all births and every year there are about 25 registered live births to girls below the age of 15 years.

(e) number and percentage of health professionals working in health-care services for children;

Number of paediatricians (including private) - 49, that is 4% of total doctor population.

(f) number of children infected with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS;

Number of children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS - 10. No stigma and discrimination exists against children infected/affected by HIV/AIDS. They benefit from the same welfare services as any other child.

(g) drug use, alcohol, tobacco and other substance abuse.

Statistics are not available regarding drug use, alcohol, tobacco and other substance abuse by children.

7. With reference to child abuse, please provide disaggregated data (by age, gender, if possible ethnic groups and types of child abuse reported) covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 on the:

(a) number of reported child abuse cases;

**Cases reported directly to the Ministry of Women's Rights,
CD, FW and CP**

**Number of reported child abuse cases at the Child Development Unit/
Family Support Bureau by nature of problem and sex, 2002-2004**

Type of abuse	2002			2003			2004		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
Abandoned child	57	49	106	30	20	50	26	33	59
Child behavioural problem	273	258	531	298	317	615	279	288	567
Child mendicity	3	-	3	3	1	4	2	6	8
Child not attending school	72	55	127	88	71	159	65	56	121
Child prostitution	-	1	1	-	4	4	-	9	9
Child with psychological problem	408	453	861	273	315	588	186	220	406
Custody of child	216	234	450	168	190	358	153	148	301
Immediate care and control	16	23	39	12	5	17	18	14	32
Incest	4	20	24	2	35	37	1	8	9
Neglected child	116	160	276	122	120	242	151	151	302
Physical abuse by parents	182	206	388	118	110	228	62	93	155

Type of abuse	2002			2003			2004		
	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes	Male	Female	Both sexes
Physical abuse by teacher	10	7	17	7	3	10	6	3	9
Physical abuse by others	38	33	71	29	13	42	19	34	53
Social aid/finance	206	187	393	225	220	445	202	248	450
Teenage pregnancy	- . -	61	61	- . -	53	53	- . -	112	112
Undeclared child	68	52	120	4	3	7	6	12	18
Victim of sexual abuse	6	82	88	17	112	129	24	159	183
Other	139	129	268	136	175	311	230	312	542
Total reported	1 814	2 010	3 824	1 532	1 767	3 299	1 430	1 906	3 336

**Number of child abuse cases reported to the police for the period 2002-2004
(from Police Department)**

Sn.	Nature of abuse	2002		2003		2004		Total
		M	F	M	F	M	F	
1.	Physical abuse	166	232	41	145	71	47	702
2.	Neglect	-	-	17	18	4	17	56
3.	Abandonment	-	-	5	16	2	4	27
4.	Undeclared	-	-	3	-	2	2	7
5.	Behavioural problem	11	21	75	125	59	120	411
6.	Sexual intercourse under 16	-	75	-	98	-	72	245
7.	Attempt upon chastity	-	99	1	41	-	33	174
8.	Sodomy	11	15	7	10	9	3	55
9.	Rape	-	-	-	1	-	3	4
10.	Debauching youth	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
11.	Absorbing noxious substances	-	-	4	4	-	-	8
12.	Burns	-	-	2	2	-	-	4
13.	Indecent assault	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Total		188	442	152	474	150	309	1 715

(b) number and percentage of reports which have resulted in either a court decision or other types of follow-up; and

Number of cases referred to Court	
2003	67
2004	77
2005	67

Note: Data for the year 2002 are not available.

Officers of the Child Development Unit ensure a close follow-up of all cases reported to the Ministry. Intervention of officers is in various forms, namely:

- Site visits;
- Referral to services of a psychologist and/or a legal adviser;
- Referral to other institutions, Ministries, departments and organizations;
- Provide support and counseling to victims of abuse/neglect as well as to parents in view of facilitating their rehabilitation.

(c) number and proportion of child victims that have received counselling and assistance in recovery.

Number of child victims who have received counselling and assistance in recovery for the period 2002-2004

Sn.	Nature of abuse	2002		2003		2004		Total
		M	F	M	F	M	F	
1.	Physical abuse	166	232	41	145	71	47	702
2.	Neglect	-	-	17	18	4	17	56
3.	Abandonment	-	-	5	16	2	4	27
4.	Ill-treatment	-	-	-	10	5	10	25
5.	Behavioural problem	11	21	75	125	83	181	496
6.	Sexual intercourse under 16	-	75	-	98	-	72	245
7.	Attempt upon chastity	-	99	1	41	-	33	174
8.	Sodomy	11	15	7	10	9	3	55
9.	Rape	-	-	-	1	-	3	4
10.	Debauching youth	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
11.	Absorbing noxious substances	-	-	4	4	-	-	8
12.	Burns	-	-	2	2	-	-	4
13.	Mendicity	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Total		188	442	152	473	176	370	1 801

8. With reference to the right to education, please provide disaggregated statistical data (by gender, age groups, if possible ethnic groups, urban and rural areas, immigrant children) covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 in percentage of the relevant age group on the:

- (a) rates of literacy, below and over 18 years;**
- (b) rate of enrolment in pre-primary schools, primary schools and in secondary schools;**

- (c) **percentage of children completing primary and secondary education;**
- (d) **number and percentage of dropouts and repetitions;**
- (e) **teacher per child ratio and number of children per class;**
- (f) **number of children attending public schools;**
- (g) **number of children attending private schools; and**
- (h) **number of children attending school abroad.**

Statistical data on education

	2002			2003			2004		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
8 (a) Rates of literacy*									
12 years and over									
15 years and over									
15-24									
25 years and over									
(b) Enrolment rate									
Pre-primary schools	94	94	94	98	101	99	96	96	96
Primary schools	103	103	103	103	102	102	103	101	102
Secondary schools	61	67	64	63	69	66	63	70	66
(c) % of children completing									
Primary education	97	99	98	97	100	98	95	96	96
(d) Drop out rate									
Primary level	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.4
Secondary level (academic only)	8.8	8.3	8.6	9.2	8.7	9.0	7.1	6.7	6.9
Repetition rate									
Primary level	4.9	3.6	4.3	5.5	3.9	4.7	5.3	4.1	4.7
Secondary level (academic only)	12.3	11.1	11.7	13.2	10.9	12	12.3	9.6	10.9
(e) Pupil/teacher ratio									
Pre-primary level			15			15			15
Primary level			34			31			29
Secondary level - academic			18			17			17
Secondary level - pre-vocational			16			17			15
No. of children per class									
Pre-primary level	18 729	18 243	36 972	19 433	19 187	38 620	19 120	18 363	37 483

	2002			2003			2004		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Primary level	67 039	65 393	132 432	65 624	63 992	129 616	64 019	62 207	126 226
Std I	10 076	9 945	20 021	9 735	9 473	19 208	9 489	9 226	18 715
Std II	10 004	10 119	20 123	9 975	9 977	19 952	9 738	9 485	19 223
Std III	10 718	10 453	21 171	10 012	10 038	20 050	9 954	9 956	19 910
Std IV	10 729	10 778	21 507	10 688	10 450	21 138	10 026	9 988	20 014
Std V	11 145	10 886	22 031	10 779	10 766	21 545	10 655	10 395	21 050
Std VI	10 825	10 594	21 419	11 137	10 915	22 052	10 571	10 656	21 227
Std VI (repeaters)	3 542	2 618	6 160	3 298	2 373	5 671	3 586	2 501	6 087
Std VI (incl. repeaters)	14 367	13 212	27 579	14 435	13 288	27 723	14 157	13 157	27 314
Secondary level - academic	47 989	51 698	99 687	49 946	53 901	103 847	50 824	55 164	105 988
Form I	8 356	9 321	17 677	9 028	9 744	18 772	8 798	9 523	18 321
Form II	8 481	9 001	17 482	8 430	9 363	17 793	8 915	9 654	18 569
Form III	7 782	8 252	16 034	8 522	8 929	17 451	8 511	9 305	17 816
Form IV	8 174	8 583	16 757	8 254	8 722	16 976	8 715	9 242	17 957
Form V	8 283	8 741	17 024	8 398	8 914	17 312	8 486	9 064	17 550
Form VII	3 257	3 789	7 046	3 354	3 837	7 191	3 533	4 201	7 734
Form VIU	3 656	4 011	7 667	3 960	4 392	8 352	3 866	4 175	8 041
Form VII + U	6 913	7 800	14 713	7 314	8 229	15 543	7 399	8 376	15 775
Secondary level pre-vocational	3 926	2 040	5 966	4 673	2 653	7 326	5 457	3 031	8 488
Form I	1 836	985	2 821	2 106	1 207	3 313	2 302	1 339	3 641
Form II	1 468	796	2 264	1 475	834	2 309	1 833	1 033	2 866
Form III	622	259	881	1 092	612	1 704	1 322	659	1 981
(f) Enrolment in private schools									
Pre-primary level	15 309	14 943	30 252	15 920	15 780	31 700	15 750	15 210	30 960
Primary level	16 033	16 012	32 045	15 900	15 832	31 732	15 675	15 756	31 431
Secondary level	34 070	38 298	72 368	34 429	38 518	72 947	34 147	37 986	72 133
(g) Enrolment in public schools									
Pre-primary level	3 430	3 300	6 730	3 513	3 407	6 920	3 370	3 153	6 523
Primary level	51 006	49 381	100 387	49 724	48 160	97 884	48 344	46 451	94 795
Secondary level	13 919	13 400	27 319	15 517	15 383	30 900	16 773	17 092	33 865

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(h) number of children attending school abroad is not available.

9. Please provide disaggregated statistical data (including by gender, age and type of crime) covering the years 2002, 2003 and 2004, in particular on the number of:

(a) persons below 18, who have allegedly committed a crime, reported to the police;

Number of convicted persons below 18 for period 2002-2004

Sn	Nature of offence	2002						2003						2004					
		5-10 yrs		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs		5-10 yrs		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs		5-10 yrs		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1.	Larceny			1		3					13							4	1
2.	Larceny breaking			3							2		1						
3.	Larceny violence					1												1	
4.	Larceny two in number					4					5								
5.	Larceny by persons on receipt of wages					3													
6.	Disturbance								1										
7.	Insult					1													
8.	Sexual intercourse with female under 16					1					2								
9.	Attempt upon chastity										1								
10.	Rape																	1	
11.	Damaging motor vehicle by band																	1	
12.	Arson					1													
13.	Damaging enclosure					1													
14.	Assault an agent of civil authority causing effusion of blood					1													
15.	Rogue and vagabond					1													
16.	Assault					2	1				2							2	
17.	Child beyond control											4							
18.	Involuntary wounds and blows by imprudence										1								
19.	Driving without licence										2								
20.	Taking motor vehicle without owner's consent										3								
21.	Damaging property										1								
22.	Trespass														2				
	Total	-	-	4	-	19	1	-	-	1	-	32	4	-	1	2	-	9	1

(b) persons below 14 tried or reported to the police;

Number of persons below 14 who have been prosecuted by police

Sn	Nature of offence	2002						2003						2004					
		0-5 yrs		5-10 yrs		10-14 yrs		0-5 yrs		5-10 yrs		10-14 yrs		0-5 yrs		5-10 yrs		10-14 yrs	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1.	Larceny			1		4					3							4	
2.	Larceny breaking					2					6							1	
3.	Attempt at larceny								1										
4.	Larceny violence					1	1												1
5.	Possession of stolen property					1													
6.	Aiding and abetting											1							
7.	Damaging property																	2	
8.	Damaging enclosure																	1	
9.	Child beyond control												1						1
10.	Sodomy					2													
11.	Murder					1						2							
12.	Attempt upon chastity																	1	
	Total	-	-	1	-	11	1	-	-	1	-	12	1	-	-	-	-	9	2

(c) persons below 18 who have been sentenced and the type of punishment or sanctions related to offences including length of deprivation of liberty;

(d) detention facilities for persons below 18 in conflict with law and their capacity;

Young persons under 18 in conflict with law, are released on parole and handed over to parents (who are agreeable) pending trial of cases, even serious cases. When parents are unwilling to take charge, these young offenders are remanded to Correctional Youth Centre (CYC) or Rehabilitation Youth Centre (RYC).

(e) persons below 18 detained in these facilities and persons below 18 detained in adult facilities;

No person below 18 are held in adult facilities.

(f) person below 18 kept in pre-trial detention and the average length of their detention;

As mentioned at part (d), in cases where parents are unwilling to take charge, these young offenders are remanded to Correctional Youth Centre (CYC) or Rehabilitation Youth Centre (RYC).

The period of pre-trial detention vary with average period of 6 to 7 months.

(g) persons below 14 in pre-trial detention;

Persons below 14 who have committed an offence (even a serious offence) are released on parole and handed over to parents who undertake to bring them to court when needed. The Prison service does not hold children under 14 in pre-trial detention.

(h) reported cases of abuse and maltreatment of persons below 18 occurred during their arrest and detention; and

There are no reported cases of maltreatment of person below 18 during detention.

Sn	Type of punishment	2002				2003				2004			
		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs		10-15 yrs		15-18 yrs	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1.	Fine			10	1			11				4	1
2.	Committed to correctional youth centre			2				1					
3.	Committed to rehabilitation youth centre	1											
4.	Probation	1		5		1		2	4			2	
5.	Conditional discharge			11				13				4	
	Total	2	-	28	1	1	-	27	4	-	-	10	1

(i) persons below 18 tried and sentenced as adults.

No person under 18 are tried and sentenced as adults.

10. With reference to special protection measures, please provide statistical data (including by gender, age, if possible ethnic group, urban and rural areas) for the years 2002, 2003 and 2004 on the number of:

(a) children involved in sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking and the number of those children who were provided with access to recovery and reintegration services;

Nature of abuse	2002		2003		2004		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Debauching youth	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Indecent assault	-	-	-	1	-	-	1

(b) children involved in substance abuse and the number of those children who received treatment and reintegration services;

Nature of abuse	2002		2003		2004		Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Absorbing noxious substances	-	-	4	4	-	-	8

(c) children involved in labour who are under 16;

According to the Continuous Multi-Purpose Household Survey (CMPHS), about 1.5% of total employed are children between 12-17 years. The minimum age for admission to employment is still 15 as per the Labour Act, Act 50 of 1975 as amended. However, subsequent to the introduction of the Education (Amendment) Act 2004 (Act No. 41 of 2004) which is effective as from January 2005 and makes it compulsory for any child to attend school up to the age of 16, it is being envisaged to amend the Labour Act 1975 so as to raise the minimum age to 16 years for admission to employment.

	Enterprise visited	Enterprise employing children	Children employed	
			Male	Female
June 2002-May 2003	4 777	17	14	5
June 2003-May 2004	2 934	1	1	0
June 2004-May 2005	2 747	19	12	11

(d) migrant unaccompanied persons below 18; and

Migrant unaccompanied persons below 18 is NIL.

(e) Street and homeless children.

The Trust Fund for Integration of Vulnerable Groups recruited, in 2002, 15 Street Workers to identify Street Children and to rehabilitate them. These children are mostly youngsters over whom their parents have lost control. The Street Workers also act as bridge builders between these youths and existing governmental and non-governmental organisations. In 2004, it is estimated about 1500 street children out of which 1207 are known to Street Educators and 440 have already been contacted. These children have been rehabilitated and the Street Workers are closely following the street children.

As from September 2004, five additional street workers were recruited for outreach work of young drug addicts.

Officers of the Child Development Unit ensure a close follow-up of all cases reported to the Ministry. Intervention of officers is in various forms, namely:

- Site visits;
- Referral to services of a psychologist and/or a legal adviser;
- Referral to other institutions, Ministries, departments and organizations;
- Provide support and counseling to victims of abuse/neglect as well as to parents in view of facilitating their rehabilitation.

B. General measures of implementation

- 1. The Committee would appreciate to receive information on activities meant to implement recommendations contained in the Committee's previous concluding observations on the initial report of the Republic of Mauritius (CRC/C/15/Add.64) which have not yet been fully implemented.**

- 1. Follow up to observations**

Following the recommendations of the Committee in its last concluding Observations, Mauritius has taken several measures to amend existing laws and introduce new legislation to comply with the CRC and translate the provisions of the CRC into Mauritian Law, as stated in the Government report (paras. 1 to 9). The setting up of a task force on child abuse to review all existing laws and procedures in the field of child protection was a positive initiative. New legislation and amendment of existing legislations in particular with regard to equality and protection were passed, in particular in 1998:

The Protection of the Child (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 1998 amended 24 laws, including:

Child Protection Act (1994)

The Child Protection Act has been amended, amongst which:

- (a) The definition of the word “harm” has been extended so that “harm” now is defined as “includes physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or moral injury, neglect, ill-treatment, impairment of health or development”;
- (b) The definition “place of safety” has been amended to also include “a convent, a charitable institution, an institution for children and a hospital”;
- (c) The definition of who can report cases of suspected abuse has been enlarged.

The Cinematograph Act

The Cinematograph Act was amended to provide for punishment for any person who admits a minor at the exhibition or proposed exhibition of a cinematographic film in breach of a condition imposed by the Board of Censors under the act or under the regulations. The offence is punishable by a fine of Rs 50,000 and imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years.

The Civil Service Protection Act

The Civil Service Protection Act as well as the Statutory Bodies Family Protection Act were amended to extend the pensions payable on the death of those employed by Government and statutory bodies to acknowledge children born out of wedlock.

The Dangerous Drugs Act

The Dangerous Drugs Act was amended to provide for increased penalties for those who provide drugs to children. The act of administering, selling or supplying drug to a minor or mentally handicapped person is an aggravating circumstances and the accused is liable to a fine not exceeding Rs 50,000 and imprisonment not exceeding 20 years.

The Divorce and Judicial Separation Act

The Divorce and Judicial Separation Act was amended to make it mandatory for courts to seek the views of child above the age of 10 and capable of discernment in any case in which he or she has an interest. Thus the courts should not decide to give custody of a child to his father or mother without ascertaining what the child feels about it. Before the amendment, the court was not under a duty but had a discretion as to whether to hear a child.

The Legal Aid Act

The Legal Aid Act has been amended to provide legal aid to a minor charged with a crime or misdemeanor.

The Explosives Act

The Explosives Act was amended to provide that no person should cause or permit a minor to handle explosives.

The Firearms Act

The Firearms Act was amended to ensure that child prosecuted for a crime or misdemeanour is assisted by counsel.

Interpretation and General Clauses Act

The Interpretation and General Clauses Act has been amended to include the definition of 'child' and 'minor'.

The Gaming Act

The Gaming Act was amended to ensure that no pool promoter or agent of a pool promoter or collector or bookmaker or pari mutuel organizer transacts any business with a minor. Any such transaction may be made void at the request of the minor.

The National Adoption Council

The National Adoption Council was amended to provide that in considering the adoption of a Mauritian child by a non-citizen the possibilities of local placement would have been given due consideration.

The Pawnbrokers Act

The Pawnbrokers Act was amended to prohibit pawn broking with a minor.

The Pesticides Control Act

The Pesticides Control Act was amended to prohibit the employment of a person under the age of 18 in certain operations.

The Pharmacy Act

The Pharmacy Act was amended to prohibit the sale to a minor of any poison specified in the schedule to the act.

The Police Act

The Police Act was amended to prohibit the issue of a license to employ a minor for security or protection services.

The Juvenile Offenders Act

The Juvenile Offenders Act has been amended to:

- (i) bring the definition of child in line with the Convention;
 - (ii) restrict the circulation of reports of all proceedings taken in Juvenile Courts.
- that where any person below the age of 18 is apprehended by the police, the police officer shall immediately take all reasonable steps to inform the parents or guardian of the child or and the place where the child may be seen
 - no statement should be recorded from an apprehended person below the age of 18 outside the presence of his parent or guardian unless such parent/guardian cannot be contacted within a reasonable time or fails to call at the police station.

The Reform Institutions Act

The Reform Institutions Act was amended amongst others to ensure that religious instructions be given to detainees who so consent or whose responsible parties consent.

The Registration of Associations Act

The Registration of Associations Act was amended to provide that a minor with the written permission of his responsible party be admitted as a member of a registered association. No minor is to be appointed to the committee or as an officer of a registered association.

The Shops Act

The Shops Act was amended to provide that no child of an occupier should be employed or allowed to serve customers where the child is below the age of 15 years.

The Stage Plays Act

The Stage Plays Act was amended to prohibit the admission of any minor to a public place where a stage play is being performed when such admission takes place in contravention of a conditions imposed by a board of censors.

The Civil Service Protection Scheme Act and Statutory Bodies Family Fund Act

The Civil Service Protection Scheme Act and Statutory Bodies Family Fund Act was amended to extend the pensions payable on the death of employees of the government and statutory bodies to acknowledged children born out of wedlock. Previously even though the Civil Code had been amended to give to natural children the same pension's rights as legitimate children, the two pensions funds made provisions for legitimate children only, in violation of Articles 2 and 26 of the Convention.

Civil Status Act

According to the Civil Status (Amendment) Act 1981, it is the responsibility of the father or mother of a child or any other person appointed by law, to declare the birth within a period of 45 days from the birth at the Civil Status Office of the district where the birth took place or where the parents reside.

Mauritius amended its Civil Code in 1999 to provide for the child to be heard in court in any case which concerns him or her, and protect his or her property.

Other legal developments that are not mentioned in the Government's report are:

- (1) The Ombudsperson for Children Act was passed in 2003 and amended in 2005 to increase its powers (see infra);
- (2) The National Children's Council Act has been repealed and replaced. The NCC Act of 2003 restructured the NCC in view of setting up a National Children's Committee, comprising boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 18 elected from children's organisations registered with the Council, who may deliberate on matters relating to child welfare and offer its views to the National Children's Board;
- (3) The Labour (Amendment) Act in 2004 to provide for specific offences and penalties in case of assault, verbal abuse, threat, bullying and others against workers;
- (4) The Protection from Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act in 2004 to broaden the scope of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act, in particular to cover all cases of domestic violence (physical, sexual, moral, against a spouse or his/her child) committed by persons living under the same roof, increase time limits and penalties and provide for counselling. Positive points are: the reference to the child's welfare and need when deciding a protection order and the possibility to take interim protection order in case of serious risk. The protective measure may be applied even when there is no criminal act;

- (5) The Civil Status (Amendment) Act in 2004 to amend the Civil Status Act to strengthen the obligation for either the father or the mother to declare the birth of their child, even if the child is born in an asylum, a prison or other institution, save in specified circumstances (section 14);
- (6) The Education (Amendment) Act in 2004 to provide that education shall be compulsory for every child up to the end of the academic year in the course of which the child attains the age of 16. It is a criminal offence for responsible party, including parents, to refuse or neglect to cause the child to attend school regularly without reasonable cause;
- (7) The Residential Care Homes Act in 2003 which regulates residential care homes by making provisions inter alia for licensing of residential care homes and for a regulatory body responsible for the control and discipline of these homes;
- (8) The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 2003 which introduced into the criminal law the offence of torture to give effects to article 2 of the CAT;
- (9) The Local Government Act in 2003 which modernises the law relating to local government with greater decentralisation and transparency in the management of the affairs of local authorities. It is of interest that section 41 related to the functions of the local authorities, state that they are responsible, in the limits of its area of jurisdiction, of the formulation and implementation, particularly in deprived regions, of policies aiming to respond better to poverty and exclusion, of the safeguard and promotion of the rights and welfare of children living within its administrative area, as well as the promotion of sportive and cultural activities;
- (10) The Sexual Offences (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act in 2003 which amended the Courts Act, the Criminal Code Act and the Criminal Procedure Act to inter alia provide for cases in which a person has been raped by 2 or more individuals to be tried before a judge without a jury, to increase the sentencing powers of the Intermediate Court;
- (11) The Mutual Assistance in Criminal and Related Matters Act in 2003 which enables measures of international cooperation in investigations, prosecutions or proceedings concerning serious offences and related civil matters.

Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse

Sexual exploitation of Children is covered mostly by the provisions of the Child Protection Act and the Criminal Act. A study on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) in Mauritius has been completed in 2002 and provides a comprehensive understanding of the problem.

A plan of action was developed with UNICEF assistance. The National Plan of Action (NPA) on CSEC in order to prevent and progressively eliminate CSEC and also to protect CSEC victims and ensure their recovery and integration in society is being implemented.

While preparing the NPA, an integrated and holistic approach has been adopted for the implementation of activities on protection of children. It has a broad scope geared towards the overall protection of children from any forms of abuse including commercial sexual exploitation in line with existing legislation and the provisions of the CRC.

The objective of the NPA is to ensure the protection of our children from any form of abuse and the creation of a conducive environment within the family and the civil society. It also aims at developing strategies and activities to be implemented by all stakeholders including government institutions, the private sector, NGOs, the Community and the family for the best interests of the child.

The NPA is based on the four components of the Agenda of Action Against CSEC adopted at Stockholm as follows:

1. Coordination and Cooperation;
2. Prevention;
3. Protection; and
4. Recovery and Reintegration.

Child Protection (Amendment) Bill

The Child Protection (Amendment) Bill was passed in the National Assembly on 06 December, 2005 to provide for better safeguard of children against child trafficking, child abandonment and child abduction which have been found to be the 3 main criminal activities that result in commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

The Ministry has an additional responsibility to cater for children in the cohort of 0-3. A study was commissioned on provision of early childcare in 1996, which has been used as a reference for the elaboration of a policy paper. In this respect, an Early Childhood Development (0-3) policy is being implemented to improve children's overall development through the introduction and adoption of integrated approach to ECD. Based on that Policy Paper, ECD Implementation Plan has been prepared. A proper legislative framework with established norms and standards has been enacted in 2000 to regulate childcare services including home-based facilities. The Government's long-term objective is to provide a national programme of support through which it can play a facilitating role in the provision of quality, affordable care for children in the age group 0-3 years. Hence the ECD policy paper is being integrated in the National Children's Policy.

A Child Care Accreditation Bureau has been set up to advise on quality care services, and to manage and monitor the Accreditation Project Process and to award certificates of accreditation to child care centres which satisfy all principles and standards established for quality care including Health and Nutrition.

For the 0-3 year old, a handbook with programme guidelines for Early Childhood Development, has been prepared and is being distributed for implementation in all registered day care centres since early 2004. Efforts are being made to encourage the integration of children with special needs into regular centres through incentive schemes.

Training programmes on Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) are organized for managers and caregivers of Child Day Care Centres. Training is meant to equip them with adequate knowledge, skills and competencies so that they may enhance child care services in their Day Care Centres.

2. Please provide more information on measures taken to improve the system for collection of disaggregated data and children under 18 in all areas under the Convention, including on whether the NCC, which was expected to build a data base on children and compile statistics necessary for policy formulation, has been able to accomplish its task.

Data is being collected by appropriate Ministries/Departments in various sectors children's health, education, social security, protection and youth and sports, thus shedding light on the situation of children. At the level of the Child Development Unit (CDU), data on child abuse is collected through six regional outputs and monthly statistics pertaining to cases reported and referred to the Ministry are compiled. The data is gender disaggregated and available in terms of number of children concerned and the type of problems identified. Regular Statistical Reports on Women and Children are prepared and disseminated by the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection.

A Child Information Database Programme was developed by the National Children's Council (NCC) with the assistance of the UNICEF. The Programme is under the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection. The Ministry is currently working in collaboration with the Observatory for Child's Rights.

An Observatory for Child's Rights has been set and is fully operational at the University of Mauritius This is a joint project of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and UNICEF. It serves to ensure follow-ups of the children's rights, creates a regional database on social development of the child and derive statistical analysis in the five countries of the Indian Ocean namely Comoros, Madagascar, Seychelles, Reunion island and Mauritius. These countries contribute to the running of the Observatory, either in terms of direct funding or in kind (mainly in terms of human resources). For the first years, UNICEF will cover an important part of the financial costs to ensure the proper setting up and consolidation of the project. The IOC and UNICEF will develop a plan of action for fund-raising aimed at potential donors. The observatory is collecting information and data on Child right, analysing the data with comparison to different countries and will make available reports. The recommendations made therein will certainly enable the countries to take necessary *action and develop appropriate strategies to improve the welfare of children.*

The Observatory aims at:

- monitoring child rights in five Indian Ocean countries;
- building area data-base on child social development;
- developing statistical analysis at country and area level;
- establishing tendencies and comparisons;
- publishing periodical reports;
- promoting public debate and to make recommendations for action of children's rights duty bearers.

The overall formula of the project is to select a set of social indicators, investigate what patterns of change they show, and check whether prevailing policies are responsive to these. Therefore the success of the project relies mainly on the quality of human resources and the networks involved.

3. Please provide information on cases, if any, where the Convention has been directly involved in domestic courts, and if so, please provide examples of such cases.

Not applicable.

4. Please provide detailed information on the current restructuring of the National Children's Council (NCC), the body which is in charge with promoting the rights of the child and protecting children from all forms of abuse.

Protection of children is under the direct responsibility of the Ministry, whereas the NCC is responsible for promoting the rights of the child and protecting children from all forms of abuse.

The Children's Right to participation is now a reality in Mauritius with the enactment of the National Children Council Act. Under Section 13, the Act makes provision for children participation through Children's Committee comprising boys and girls from different children's club, students' councils and children in NGOs. The NCC offers a forum where matters pertaining to child welfare and child development can be discussed before appropriate recommendation are forwarded to the Government. One of the main objectives of the NCC Act promotes activities in line with the CRC.

5. Please provide further information on the National Action Plan for the Development and the Protection of Children and on the national children's policy which was being prepared by the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare, with the assistance of UNICEF.

A National Plan of Action (Phase II) for the Development and Protection of Children was prepared in June 1999. This document was based on the findings of the review of the National Plan for the survival, development and Protection of children carried out at the request of UN

Secretary General. The Programme of Action (Phase II) was prepared after consultation with Ministries concerned and NGOs working for children. It sets out main goals and supporting guides that have to be achieved through the collaboration of various stakeholders. The document was disseminated to all stakeholders for implementation.

In 2001, it was observed that Mauritius did not have an integrated approach to children policies. With the assistance of UNICEF and after consultation with all stakeholders including Government institutions, private sector, it was decided to develop a National Children's Policy (NCP).

The main objectives were to establish linkages with all relevant stakeholders among which Government Institutions and NGOs, to coordinate Children's policies. The production of the NCP is an important step taken by Government in its commitment to human rights generally to child rights and welfare specifically.

Based on the NCP, a National Plan of Action has been prepared with a view to implementing the policy statements. The dissemination process in the preparation of the NPA with stakeholders aimed at:

- Streamlining the objectives and action areas ensuing directly from the objectives already outlined in the NCP;
- Stating responsibility/ies of parties involved in implementation;
- Proposing measures for evaluating the effectiveness of such actions and programmes;
- Examining the possibility of immediate launching of actions and programmes for each core policy area;
- Following the Rights-based approach; and
- Addressing the Key issues of Community Participation/Development, Partnership, Information, Communication and Research, and Institutional Mechanisms and Legislations outlined in the Policy Document.

6. Please provide updated information on the dissemination of the Convention and the State party report and on efforts made to provide training, awareness on the Convention and on human rights in general, to children, parents, teachers, social workers and other professionals working with and for children in all parts of Mauritius.

Since its creation, the National Children's Council has been responsible for disseminating the Convention on the Rights of the Child through aggressive sensitization campaigns. Publications including posters and booklets on articles relating to the Convention have been disseminated regularly. Ministries and Non Governmental Organizations involved in the promotion of women's and children's rights were provided with copies of the publication.

Students of primary and secondary schools around the island have also benefited from the IEC campaigns. Debates and projects on issues related to the Convention were also organized in secondary schools. Sensitization campaigns including the organization of talks and seminars were also carried out at grass root level for people with lower level of education.

Training and activities on the CRC for children, teachers, social workers and other professionals.

2001

- (i) 40 Talks on CRC were held for children and students of primary and Secondary Schools;
- (ii) 61 Talks were for 605 Women of Women's Associations.

2002

- (i) Talks on Article 19 of CRC, through a Child Abuse Module was done at the Mauritius Institute of Education M.I.E (Tertiary Training Institution for Teachers as well as Trainee Teachers);
- (ii) 83 Talks on CRC for 1403 students of Primary and Secondary School;
- (iii) 70 talks on CRC for 55 Women of Women's Associations and 618 members of the public;
- (iv) 10 talks on CRC for 410 Primary School Teachers.

2003

- (i) 30 Talks on CRC have been held for 1657 students of Primary and Secondary Schools;
- (ii) 65 Talks on CRC done for 615 women of Women's Associations and 811 members of the public;
- (iii) 12 Talks for some 600 Teachers of Primary Schools.

2004

- (i) 90 talks on CRC for 1538 students of Primary and Secondary Schools;
- (ii) 62 Talks on CRC for 1316 Women of Women's Associations;
- (iii) 12 Talks for 30 Teachers of Primary Schools.

Training of trainers on CRC

(i) 2002:

40 Trainers were given training on CRC from 23-26 April 2002.

(ii) 2002:

35 Trainers were given training on CRC from 16 to 21 August 2003.

(iii) 2004:

3 days Training of Trainers Workshop on CRC;

25 Training were given Training on CRC from 20-25 April 2004.

7. Please provide updated information on the cooperation between the State party and the international community including non-governmental organizations, in the efforts to implement the Convention.

Up till 2003, UNICEF has been the main funding agency in assisting Mauritius in the effort to implement the Convention. Mauritius has also benefited from various International Community in conducting activities relating to children.

Bernard Van Leer Foundation provided assistance to carry out a Parental Education Programme. UNESCO is at present assisting the MWRCDFWCP in implementing two projects: (i) setting up an Early Childhood Development Resource Centre and (ii) Parental Empowerment Programme.

The MWRCDFWCP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bal Bhavan, New Delhi, India. Through the Memorandum of Understanding the Ministry has been benefiting from technical assistance for setting up a Creativity Centre for children and training of officers in the field of creativity activities for children.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding Exchange Programme for children between the two countries are organised annually.

Under the Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Mauritius, in February 2005, the Indian Authorities trained 12 Officers from Government institutions and NGO's on Child Protection. Another training Programme on Rehabilitation of Sex workers is scheduled for February 2006.

At national level, the support and collaboration of NGO's and private sector is enlisted in the implementation of Government Policy.

8. Please indicate the issues affecting children that the State party considers to be priorities requiring the most urgent attention with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

- Child Protection against:
 - (i) abuse including sexual abuse;
 - (ii) commercial sexual exploitation;
- Children with disabilities;
- Children in conflict with law;
- Tardy Declaration.

9. Please provide updated information on the NGO Trust Fund which was established in 1998 in order to streamline grant procedures.

NGO Trust Fund

The Government is committed to the optimization of the Government/NGO partnership in improving the conditions of life of the vulnerable groups. This is being translated into reality through the NGO Trust Fund which was formed under Finance and Audit (Amendment of Schedule) Registrations 1999.

The NGO Trust Fund operates under the aegis of Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions and contributes to the development of NGO's in Mauritius through institutional support and assistance.

The objects of the Fund are:

- (a) to consider and approve applications for assistance from NGOs;
- (b) to finance, wholly or partly, services and projects of NGOs which have been approved by the Committee;
- (c) to ensure an effective use of resources; and
- (d) to rationalize the disbursement of funds to NGOs.

Criteria to be considered as an NGO

As per Government Notice No 50 of 1999 NGO means Non-Governmental Organisation which:

- (a) is run on a non profit making basis;

- (b) works towards the empowerment of the disabled, elderly, homeless or other vulnerable groups including children;
- (c) is approved by the NGO Trust Fund Committee.

General Criteria to receive any assistance from the NGO Trust Fund:

1. NGO's should be registered under the Registrar of Association;
2. NGO's should have a proven track record of activities to satisfy the NGO Trust Fund Committee;
3. NGO's should be able to attract funds from different sources;
4. NGO's should exhibit Transparency of actions;
5. NGO's should have no hidden agenda;
6. NGO's should preferably have a seat.

Financial Assistance from the NGO Trust Fund falls under the following categories:

- (a) Grant in aid;
- (b) Ad-Hoc assistance;
- (c) Micro projects (partial funding).

Grant in aid

It is an annual sum earmark for NGO's to cover their day to day running. Grant in aid is usually disbursed in two instalments, the first one being 60% and the second one 40%. This allows a more effective monitoring of the funds to the NGO's. The annual grant in aid varies between Rs 40,000 to Rs 2,000,000.

Specific Criteria to benefit from Grant in aid:

1. The type and quality of service offered by the NGO's;
2. NGO should be properly structured with: management committee, regular meetings, approval of important decisions by the executive committee, etc.;
3. Effective accountability and transparency to be ensured through proper keeping of books, Accounts, Minutes of Proceedings, receipts and other documents;
4. The NGO should have a centre or a number of centres (exemption may be exceptionally allowed depending upon the field of activity of the NGO'S and approval by the NGO Trust Fund Committee);

5. Size of the Target group. There need to be a reasonable number of people benefiting from the NGO whether at a national level or regional level;
6. NGO's should preferably have benefited from Micro projects or Ad-Hoc assistance from the NGO Trust Fund;
7. NGO's is expected to be credible and an untarnished image.

The following is a list of documents requested for the release of grant in aid:

- (i) a formal request for the release of grant-in-aid with full justification;
- (ii) the last Audited Statement of Accounts;
- (iii) the current budget estimates;
- (iv) latest copy of the bank statement;
- (v) a copy of the Certificate of Registration;
- (vi) a report on the activities of your organization for the past financial year;
- (vii) any other information deemed necessary at your end.

Ad Hoc Assistance

An Ad Hoc Assistance is granted to NGO's either to cover partly a capital project or to cover part of its current expenses or to help an NGO with financial difficulty. Any new application for grant in aid from NGO's not previously receiving assistance from the NGO Trust Fund is treated first as an Ad Hoc request. The sum earmarked for this type of assistance varies between Rs 50,000 and Rs 75,000 and is disbursed in one instalment.

Criteria to benefit from Ad Hoc Assistance are the same as those of Grant in aid. Similarly, the same documents are being requested as under Grant in aid.

Micro project

Micro project relates to the finance of projects up to a ceiling amount of Rs 100,000. But most projects are in the range of Rs 40,000 to Rs 60,000.

PART II

Please provide the Committee with copies of the text of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in all official languages or the State party as well as in other languages or dialects, when available. If possible, please submit these texts in electronic form.

1. Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF Publications);
2. "Les Droits des Enfants"* by National Children's Council.

PART III

Under this section, the State party is to briefly (3 pages maximum) update the information provided in its report with regard to:

– **new bills or enacted legislation;**

There have been new legislations and amendments of existing legislations in particular with regard to equality and protection, namely:

1. The National Children's Council (NCC) Act in 2003 restructures the NCC in view of setting up a National Children's Committee, comprising boys and girls between the ages of 15 and 18 elected from children's organisations registered with the Council, who may deliberate on matters relating to child welfare and offer its views to the National Children's Board.
2. The Residential Care Homes Act in 2003 which regulates residential care homes by making provisions inter alia for licensing of residential care homes and for a regulatory body responsible for the control and discipline of these homes.
3. The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act of 2003 which introduced into the criminal law the offence of torture to give effects to article 2 of the CAT.
4. The Local Government Act in 2003 which modernises the law relating to local government with greater decentralisation and transparency in the management of the affairs of local authorities. It is of interest that section 41 related to the functions of the local authorities, state that they are responsible, in the limits of its area of jurisdiction, of the formulation and implementation, particularly in deprived regions, of policies aiming to respond better to poverty and exclusion, of the safeguard and promotion of the rights and welfare of children living within its administrative area, as well as the promotion of sportive and cultural activities.
5. The Sexual Offences (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act in 2003 which amended the Courts Act, the Criminal Code Act and the Criminal Procedure Act to inter alia provide for cases in which a person has been raped by 2 or more individuals to be tried before a judge without a jury, to increase the sentencing powers of the Intermediate Court in relation to an offence of rape and to allow complainants in sexual offence cases.
6. The Mutual Assistance in Criminal and Related Matters Act in 2003 which enables measures of international cooperation in investigations, prosecutions or proceedings concerning serious offences and related civil matters.
7. The Ombudsperson Act was enacted in October 2003. It was amended in February 2005 and makes provision to:
 - Empower the Ombudsperson for children to compel witnesses to attend and give evidence on oath before, and produce documents to the Ombudsperson in connection with an investigation conducted under the Act; and

- Provides for various offences including failure to attend and take the oath before the Ombudsperson; giving false evidence; insulting the Ombudsperson and wilfully interpreting proceedings conducted before the Ombudsperson.
8. The Computer Misuse and Cyber Crime Act 2003 was enacted in 2003. It inter alia makes child pornography a criminal offence.
 9. The Labour (Amendment) Bill in 2004 to provide for specific offences and penalties in case of assault, verbal abuse, threat, bullying and others against workers.
 10. The Protection from Domestic Violence (Amendment) Act in 2004 to broaden the scope of the Protection from Domestic Violence Act, in particular to cover all cases of domestic violence (physical, sexual, moral, against a spouse or his/her child) committed by persons living under the same roof, increase time limits and penalties and provide for counselling. Positive points are: the reference to the child's welfare and need when deciding a protection order and the possibility to take interim protection order in case of serious risk.
 11. The Civil Status (Amendment) Act in 2004 to amend the Civil Status Act to strengthen the obligation for either the father or the mother to declare the birth of their child, even if the child is born in an asylum, a prison or other institution, save in specified circumstances (section 14).
 12. The Education (Amendment) Act in 2004 to provide that education shall be compulsory for every child up to the end of the academic year in the course of which the child attains the age of 16. It is a criminal offence for responsible party, including parents, to refuse or neglect to cause the child to attend school regularly without reasonable cause.
 13. The National Children's Council (Amendment) Act in 2005 with a view to create a Rodrigues Children's Council.
 14. The Child Protection (Amendment) Bill was passed in the National Assembly on 06 December, 2005 to provide for better safeguard of children against child trafficking, child abandonment and child abduction which have been found to be the 3 main criminal activities that result in commercial sexual exploitation of children.

– **new institutions;**

Ombudsperson for children

The Ombudsperson for Children's Office was set up in 2003. Its objectives are to promote and safeguard the Rights of the Child as well as to protect them against violation of these rights as provided for in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In practice, the Ombudsperson for Children's Office as a recognized institution can advocate strongly for children with local authorities. It has the right to conduct in-depth enquiries in respect of complaints on violation of children's rights and can make recommendations to different authorities for the protection of children in general.

Creativity Centre For Children

The first Creativity Centre for children has been set up at Mahebourg in the year 2000. Based on its success, a second creativity centre is currently under construction at Pointe aux Sables.

Observatory for the Rights of the Child

An Observatory for Child's Rights has been set up and is fully operational at the University of Mauritius with the UNICEF and Indian Ocean Commission. It serves to ensure follow-ups of children's rights, creates a regional database on social development of the child and derive statistical analysis in five countries of the Indian Ocean. The Observatory collects information and data on Child's rights, analysing the data in comparison to different countries and will make reports available. The recommendations made therein will certainly enable the countries to take necessary actions and develop appropriate strategies to improve the welfare of children.

– **newly implemented policies;**

Over the past years, the Government has adopted several policy documents related to children. It is worth noting the National Children's Policy entitled "A Republic Fit for Children" adopted in 2003. Other main policy documents are:

- General document: National Poverty Action Plan (2001);
- Health: White Paper on Health Sector and Reform (2002);
- HIV/AIDS National Strategic HIV/AIDS Action Plan 2001-2005;
- Education: White Paper on Education 2000;
- Water and sanitation: National Environment Action Plan II (NEAP II) and the Environmental Investment Programme (EIP II) in 1998;
- National Gender Policy and National Gender Action Plan (2005);
- National Children's Policy (2003);
- National Children's Policy - Plan of Action (2004);
- A National Family Policy is currently being finalised.

– **newly implemented programmes and projects and their scope;**

Mauritius participated in the First and Second World Congress on **Commercial Exploitation of Children (CSEC)** held in Stockholm, Sweden in 1996 and Yokohama, Japan in 2001 respectively. The Government has approved a National Action Plan covering the period February 2003 to December 2004 to protect children against sexual abuse including commercial

sexual exploitation of children. A High Level Steering Committee set up to monitor the implementation of the NP A includes all the relevant Ministries and NGOs. Emphasis is being placed on preventive measures such as the development of an appropriate Information Education and Communication (IEC) strategy, the training of trainers and the training of community/youth leaders and awareness campaigns on the Rights of the Child. Support will also be organised for the recovery and rehabilitation of those who manage to get out of the trade.

National Children's Policy

The Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare with the assistance of UNICEF has prepared a National Children's Policy with a view to establish linkages with all relevant Government institutions and NGOs, to co-ordinate and monitor children's policies. The adoption of the NCP is an important step taken by Government in its commitment to human rights generally and to child rights and welfare specifically.

A National Plan of Action (NPA) has been prepared with a view to implementing the policy statements stipulated in the National Children's Policy (NCP).

Exchange Programme

The MWRCDFWCP has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bal Bhavan, New Delhi, India. Through the Memorandum of Understanding the Ministry has been benefited from technical assistance for setting up a Creativity Centre for children and training of officers in the field of creativity activities for children.

Under the Memorandum of Understanding Exchange Programme for children between the two countries are organised annually.

Under the Cultural Exchange Programme between India and Mauritius, the Indian Authorities trained 12 Officers from Government institution and NGO's on Child Protection. Another training Programme on Rehabilitation and Sex workers is scheduled for February 2006.

Parental Education Programme

Through a Parenting Education Programme, approximately 10,000 parents have been sensitized and another 8,000 parents have been reached through peer-to-peer education. This year, the programme will be extended to reach parents in the EPZ enterprises and in deprived areas, where child exploitation is most prominent.

A parenting programme (0-18 years) with emphasis on child care, protection, development and education (0-18 years) has been carried out in 15 ZEP schools on Saturdays from March 2003 to August 2004. 60 workshops have been organized and about 2,500 parents have been sensitized and another 3,000 parents reached through peer to peer education.

Parental Educational Programme will in due course be supplemented by 'National Parental Empowerment Programme' which will focus on counselling services with parents and other family members, liaison with NGOs and other stakeholders.

The main objectives of the National Parental Educational Programme are:

- to avoid conflicts at home;
- to help in strengthening care of children through support and education of parents;
- to empower parents in enabling them to ensure the holistic development of their children;
- to improve the relationship between parents and children.

Tardy Declaration

A child who is not declared does not have any identity and is not recognized as a citizen of Mauritius.

Declaration of birth must be done within 45 days following the birth of the child.

Tardy Declaration

	2002	2003	2004
Number of cases	90	62	44

The process of tardy declaration of birth is lengthy and cumbersome. The ministry is facilitating the registration process of undeclared children through a coordinated approach, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and other Government departments. Undeclared Children who are identified to be tardily declared are referred to the vaccination unit of the Ministry of Health for immunisation. The ministry of Education then steps in to get the children admitted in pre-primary, primary or vocational schools.

A high level Committee co-chaired by the Attorney General and the Minister of Women's Right's, Child Development, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection has been set up in August 2005 to take stock of the situation as at date and to find means to improve upon the existing system. This committee monitors the tardy declaration of birth program on a weekly basis.

In order to streamline procedures for the tardy declaration of birth, the following actions were taken:

- A pool of 3 Attorneys was set up to deal with cases, providing free legal aid;
- Arrangement has been made with the Magistrate to be on call at court in cases of tardy declaration;
- Transport facilities are provided to parents;

- Tardy declaration of birth can be made through a hotline which operates on a 24 hour basis;
- Sensitization is being carried out regularly on the media to increase public awareness.

Since the setting up of the Committee some 80 undeclared children have been immediately registered at the Civil Status Division.

Foster Care

One major step towards implementing measures aimed at ensuring better protection to children, especially those at risk and alternative residential care is the introduction of the Foster Care System as from December 2002. The aim of the Foster Care System is to provide children with a substitute family environment, which will enhance their physical, emotional and social development. Up to now, 38 families have been registered as foster parents and 45 children have been placed in foster families.

Drop in Centre

One of the recommendations of the CSEC study was the setting up of institutions like half way homes or drop in centres to take care of children victims of commercial sexual exploitation. In line with the recommendation contained in the National Action Plan, the MWRCDFW has proposed to set up a Drop In Centre based on the Philippines model with the collaboration of the MFPA. The Drop In Centre makes available to all children at risk or victims of sexual exploitation, all relevant information, education, psycho-social medical and logistic support to ensure their protection, rehabilitation and reintegration in the family, in school, at work and in the community at large.

This Project reaffirms the commitment of the Government through the MWRCDFW to fight the problem of sexual exploitation, including all forms of sexual violence and sexual abuse of children up to the age of 18. This project aims to protect children victims of sexual abuse, and to ensure their full reintegration in society as well as to prevent other children from becoming victims.

Brigade pour la protection des Mineurs

The Mauritius Police Force has, since May 2004, set up a new unit styled “*Brigade pour la protection des Mineurs*”. One of the priorities of the Brigade is to act as a watchdog against all forms of exploitation and abuse against children. The Brigade is providing a meaningful and sound customer care service aimed at optimizing the protection of children and helping to alleviate the anxiety of parents whose children have been subjected to such abuse.

Community Child Protection Programme

It will be formal forum set up on a district wise basis to ensure community development with respect to Child Protection/Child Welfare.

This forum will regroup Community Leaders, representatives of NGOs, CBOs, PTAs, faith-based organisations of the region.

The Community Child Protection Programme will revolve around a Community Child Protection Advisory Committee consisting of at most 12 members which will meet on a regular monthly basis with officials of the Ministry to discuss on the Community Child Protection issue and its progress.

The Community Child Protection Programme will be recipient of Information, Education Communication Campaign as well as empowerment processes. The Community Child Protection Programme will be interfacing and mediating between the service provider and service user. It will allow for the interplay of dynamic top-down and bottom-up forces and provides for equilibrium in an otherwise open system.

Community Watch, deriving from the Community Child Protection Programme will be set up in high risk areas of the districts and the Community Watch will be having representatives from the more immediate locality and will ensure early detection of child abuse.

A system of child mentoring will then be set up to allow the possibility of reconstruction in a one to one interaction between a “Parain” and an abused child.

Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs)

A National Child Protection Committee has also been set up since 2002 with a view to coordinating and monitoring the work of the Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs). The ACPCs were set up at districts levels since April 2003 with the objectives to:

- Reduce harm and prevent further injury or suffering to children victims of violence and abuse;
- Provide accessible, reliable and co-ordinated guidance on cases of violence and abuse and ensure that the victims receive appropriate medical or other treatment;
- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children generally.

16 Days 16 Rights

The 16 Days 16 Rights is basically a campaign with main objective to raise public awareness on children’s rights as per the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The first campaign was held in June 2004. Children and youth up to 18 years, through their schools, associations or institutions were invited to participate in an island wide production and exhibition of artworks depicting the Rights of the Child. This campaign is basically to encourage the active participation of children in the preparation and dissemination of information on their rights. It also purports to develop a sense of solidarity and belongingness amongst themselves as a group and side by side to give value to their creativity. For the campaign 2005, children have been

invited to participate through drawings and paintings on any support (paper, hardboard, textile, wood, etc) and to use any technique (painting with any kind of paint, embroidery, patchwork, collage, tie and dye or mixed techniques). Those participating had to hold their own exhibitions within their establishments and institutions. Some public places have been reserved during the 16 days and even afterwards to exhibit the best artwork chosen by each establishment/institution. Another important feature was the painting of fresques on walls which have been identified beforehand (stadiums, kindergartens, walls of Social Centres etc.). All participants were given a certificate of participation. The project is not a competition per se but is more a general mobilisation of children to think and act on their rights enshrined in the CRC as minimum standards against which cultural values are judged.
