



**BROKEN
CHALK**

Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the United
Nations Human Rights Council 4th Cycle – 45th Session

Right to Education

Country Review: Mauritius

Submitting Organization: BROKEN CHALK

July 2023

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Broken Chalk is an Amsterdam-based NGO established in 2020 that monitors and minimises worldwide human rights violations in education. We aim to promote universal and equal access to education for all.

We encourage and support achieving societal peace with our international sponsors and partners by advocating for intercultural tolerance, preventing radicalism and polarisation, and tackling educational inequalities.

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I. Introduction

1. Broken Chalk is a non-profit organization with one main goal - To protect human rights in the world of education. The organization started with a website and articles and is currently working on multiple projects, each aiming to fight human rights violations in the educational sphere. As the UPR is related to human rights violations, inequalities, human trafficking, and other violations, Broken Chalk prepares this article for the 45th session regarding Mauritius.
2. The Republic of Mauritius is a tiny island in the Indian Ocean, located just east of Madagascar and the African continent. It gained independence from Great Britain in 1968 and became a Republic in 1992. As a former British colony, Mauritius' school system mirrors that of Great Britain. The emergence of new economic sectors and a multi-pillar economic base in Mauritius calls for a restructuring of the country's education and human resource development system.

II. Quality of Education

3. Ensuring a high-quality education system is a persistent challenge. Some schools in Mauritius need more modern infrastructure, including inadequate classrooms, a lack of modern facilities, and insufficient resources. This can impact the learning environment and hinder effective teaching and learning. Additionally, there need to be more resources. Textbooks, teaching materials, and laboratory equipment are limited, which can impede the delivery of quality education. Some schools may need help providing students with up-to-date resources and materials to support their learning.

III. Access to Education

4. While Mauritius has made significant progress in achieving near-universal primary education enrollment, there still needs to be more disparities in access to education. Children in remote areas, particularly those from disadvantaged communities, may face challenges accessing quality education due to limited infrastructure, transportation issues, and financial constraints. Mauritius has made progress in promoting inclusive education for students with disabilities. However, there are still challenges in providing appropriate accommodations, specialised support, and resources to ensure equal educational opportunities. Enhancing accessibility, training teachers in inclusive teaching methods, and fostering a supportive and inclusive environment requires continuous attention.

IV. Technical and Vocational Education

5. Technical and vocational education in Mauritius faces several challenges that impact its effectiveness and accessibility.

6. While Mauritius has made efforts to expand technical and vocational education, a limited range of programs is still available. This can restrict students' options and hinder their ability to pursue specific vocational fields aligned with their interests and aptitudes.
7. There exists a perception that technical and vocational education is inferior to academic education. This stigma can discourage students from pursuing technical and vocational pathways and influence societal attitudes toward these fields. Addressing this perception is crucial to promote the value and importance of technical and vocational education.
8. The relevance of the curriculum to the changing needs of the job market is an ongoing concern. Ensuring that the curriculum equips students with the skills and knowledge required for employment and entrepreneurship is necessary. Aligning educational programs with industry demands and promoting vocational and technical education can help address this issue.
9. Close collaboration between educational institutions and industries is essential to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of technical and vocational education. However, there may be challenges in establishing strong partnerships and maintaining up-to-date knowledge of industry needs. Strengthening cooperation can help align the curriculum with industry demands, provide work-integrated learning opportunities, and enhance students' employability.
10. The relevance of the curriculum to the changing needs of the job market is an ongoing concern. Ensuring that the curriculum equips students with the skills and knowledge required for employment and entrepreneurship is necessary. Aligning educational programs with industry demands and promoting vocational and technical education can help address this issue.

V. Teacher Training and Professional Development

11. There is a need for more qualified teachers in Mauritius, particularly in specialised subjects such as mathematics, science, and technical education. The limited number of teachers in certain areas affects the student-teacher ratio and can compromise the quality of education provided.
12. Attracting and retaining skilled teachers, especially in remote areas and disadvantaged schools, is a persistent issue. Factors such as salary discrepancies, limited career progression opportunities, and challenging working conditions can contribute to difficulties in recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers.
13. Continuous professional development is crucial to maintaining and improving teacher quality. However, there may be limitations regarding the availability and accessibility of professional development programs for teachers in Mauritius. Adequate training programs and workshops are necessary to enhance teachers' subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, and familiarity with innovative teaching methodologies.
14. Ensuring accountability and evaluating teacher performance can be challenging. There is a need for effective systems to assess and provide feedback on teacher performance, identify areas for improvement, and recognise outstanding teaching practices.

Implementing fair and transparent evaluation mechanisms can help maintain and enhance teacher quality.

- 15.** There is a gender disparity within the teaching profession in Mauritius, with a higher representation of female teachers compared to male teachers. This disparity can impact the diversity and perspectives within the teaching workforce. Efforts to attract and retain male teachers, particularly in subjects where they are underrepresented, can help address this imbalance.
- 16.** Pre-service training programs for teachers play a crucial role in equipping educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and pedagogical approaches. It is essential to ensure that teacher training programs are comprehensive, up-to-date, and aligned with the evolving needs of the education system. Emphasising practical teaching experiences and incorporating classroom management strategies can enhance teachers' preparedness.
- 17.** Providing ongoing support and mentorship to teachers can positively impact their professional growth and overall effectiveness. Establishing mentorship programs and collaborative networks can facilitate sharing of best practices, guide early-career teachers, and create a supportive professional community.

VI. Digital Literacy and ICT Integration

- 18.** While Mauritius has made efforts to integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into education, the challenge still must be addressed in terms of infrastructure, connectivity, and access to digital resources. Ensuring effective integration of ICT tools and promoting digital literacy among students and teachers require attention.
- 19.** In Mauritius, there are disparities in digital literacy levels among students, teachers, and the general population. Some individuals may need more skills to navigate online platforms, evaluate digital content, and utilise digital tools for learning.
- 20.** While efforts have been made to improve access to technology and the internet in Mauritius, there still needs to be more connectivity and device availability. Not all students and schools have equal access to computers, reliable internet connectivity, and digital devices necessary for effective ICT integration in education.
- 21.** Building the capacity of students, teachers, and education administrators in digital skills is vital for successful ICT integration. This includes skills such as digital communication, online collaboration, information literacy, critical thinking, and responsible digital citizenship. Fostering a culture of digital skills development and providing opportunities for hands-on experiences are essential.
- 22.** Moving beyond simply using technology as a substitute for traditional teaching methods is essential. The effective integration of ICT in pedagogy involves incorporating technology tools and resources to support active learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. Emphasising pedagogical approaches that leverage ICT for meaningful and engaging learning experiences is crucial.

VII. Early Childhood Education

- 23.** Access to quality early childhood education remains limited, particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, rural areas, and marginalised communities. There is a need to expand the provision of early childhood education facilities, especially in areas where accessibility is challenging.
- 24.** The cost of early childhood education can be a barrier for many families in Mauritius. High fees and limited financial support options can prevent children from accessing quality early childhood education programs. Ensuring affordable and accessible options for all families is crucial to promote equitable access.
- 25.** Parental involvement and support are vital in a child's early development and learning. However, there may be limited parental awareness of the importance of early childhood education and their role in supporting their child's learning. Raising awareness among parents and creating opportunities for parental engagement can contribute to better outcomes for children.

VIII. Recommendations

- 26.** Efforts should be made to refine teaching methodologies, develop relevant and updated curricula, and promote innovative approaches to ensure students receive a comprehensive, high-quality education.
- 27.** Continued efforts should focus on providing educational opportunities to marginalised groups, including children with disabilities, those in remote areas, and individuals from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds. Infrastructure development and targeted initiatives are necessary to address disparities in access.
- 28.** It is essential to enhance the availability, accessibility, and relevance of vocational programs, ensuring they align with industry requirements and equip students with the necessary skills for employment and entrepreneurship.
- 29.** Efforts should focus on attracting, retaining, and continuously developing skilled educators. Adequate resources should be allocated to comprehensive teacher training programs, including pedagogical skills, subject knowledge enhancement, and the effective integration of technology in education.
- 30.** It is crucial to promote digital literacy among students and teachers, expand access to digital resources and infrastructure, and facilitate the integration of ICT tools into the curriculum. Capacity-building initiatives should be implemented to enhance the effective use of technology in teaching and learning.
- 31.** Efforts should be directed towards expanding access to quality pre-primary education, ensuring the availability of trained educators, and promoting holistic child development approaches.

IX. References

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