

NATIONAL LIBRARY
(REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS)



STRATEGIC PLAN

2016-2018

SEPTEMBER 2016

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Foreword

The National Library of Mauritius, set up in 1999, has the responsibility to safeguard, protect and conserve the national, cultural and intellectual heritage, promote literacy and research across the nation and equality to all citizens of all ages, gender, race, religion, disabilities and sexual orientation.

This is my first Strategic Plan as Director of this institution, but the sixth Strategic Plan since the creation of the National Library.

Many of the National Library's priorities are summarised in the Strategic Plan 2016-2018 and a series of programmes and projects that we believe will help to push the National Library forward into the technological world.

To implement this Strategic Plan, we did not work alone but, numerous other partner organisations, such as the Ministry of Arts and Culture, public and academic libraries, Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, etc., who share our dedication to equality, good relations, dissemination of information and which we consider it vital to work in close collaboration shall form part of this group. But, above all, the Strategic and Development Committee members, a Sub-Committee of the National Library Board, newly set up following the recommendations of the new National Library Board of November 2015, has scrutinised and shared their ideas and input in this Strategic Plan.

In the coming years, we intend to further capitalise on the relationships which the National Library has been breeding with people and organisations that have an interest in the National Library's works and services. The Budget 2016-2017 has voted a sum for the construction of a purpose-built building to accommodate the National Library and the National Archives.

I wish to thank all the staff who have helped me by sharing their ideas and views, the members of the Sub-Committee and the Chairman and members of the National Library Board for their vision and help in implementing projects with the restricted budget, and for bringing their expertise on the development of this Strategic Plan.

T. K. Ramnauth(Mrs)
Director

1. Introduction

The National Library of the Republic of Mauritius was established as a body corporate under the National Library Act 1996 No. 32.

The main role of the National Library of Mauritius is to build the most comprehensive collection of our national heritage by collecting, receiving and preserving all publications and productions printed and produced in Mauritius for present and future generations. The main source of its acquisition is by means of the legal deposit system as per the National Library Act 1996 which stipulates that every printer in Mauritius is required to deposit free of charge with the Director of the National Library six copies of each publication, be it a book, periodical, report, newspaper or any other printed document. The same rule applies to all the producers in Mauritius who have to deposit six copies of any non-print materials produced. To ensure that access is given to the most comprehensive collection of Mauritian materials, the National Library has also to acquire all print and non-print materials published abroad, whose subject matter is related to Mauritius. Along with, the National Library will build a collection of foreign reference materials on different subjects of interest to Mauritius.

The aim of the National Library is to become the foremost library in Mauritius in the dissemination of both retrospective and current information, utilizing modern techniques and other technological advances. The National Library is at the service of the Mauritian people, for the purpose of their research, scholarship, creativity and of the international community.

Since its inception, in December 1999, the National Library of the Republic of Mauritius has been guided by its strategic plan. It is the sixth strategic plan that the National Library is elaborating for its sustained development. Previous strategic plans date back as below:

Year of Publication	Issue	Strategic Plan
1999	1	2000-2002
2003	2	2003-2005
2006	3	2006-2008
2008	4	2008-2010
2011	5	2011-2013

2. Historical Background

The establishment of a national resource centre in Mauritius, was first proposed in 1959 by the Mauritian historian, Dr A. Toussaint ⁽¹⁾. In 1965, the Sydney Hockey Report ⁽²⁾ recommended the setting up of a central library system. This was supported by several subsequent reports: the K.C Harrison Report (1978) ⁽³⁾ and the Pope Report (1988) ⁽⁴⁾.

The Fulbright Alumni Association was the catalyst in the establishment of the National Library. It organised, in 1992, a seminar on the need for Mauritius to have a National Library and its recommendation on the urgent necessity of setting up a National Library was sent to Government for necessary action.

In December 1996, the National Library Bill was presented at the National Assembly. The proclamation of the National Library Act and Regulations on legal deposit, were gazetted in October 1997. The National Library Board was constituted in December 1997. The then Prime Minister, Dr. N. Ramgoolam, in the presence of the then Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr. J. Tsang Mang Kin, officially inaugurated the National Library on the 8th December, 1999.



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1. **Auguste Toussaint**
Report of the Technical Committee on Libraries – 1959.
 2. **S.W. Hockey**
Development of Library services in Mauritius – November 1965, Mauritius
 3. **K.C. Harrison**
Libraries, Documentation & Archives Services (Report prepared for the Government of Mauritius by UNESCO) – Paris, 1978
 4. **Elsbeth Pope**
Final report and recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture – March 28, 1988

3. VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

VISION

To develop the National Library as the nation's leading documentary resource pertaining to the Republic of Mauritius, and as the apex library serving the needs of the Mauritian people at large in research, scholarship and creativity.

MISSION STATEMENT

To support the provision of, and access to, information for the nation. We are committed to collect and preserve the collective memory of the country to best serve the nation and to provide access to the information resources of the world.

4. STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

The statutory responsibilities of the National Library are:

- To promote and encourage the use of library materials;
- To acquire library materials generally and in particular, a comprehensive collection of library materials relating to Mauritius;
- To collect, receive and preserve all library materials required to be deposited in the library;
- To lend library materials to the public through other libraries;
- To make library materials available to the public for reference;
- To participate in planning library services in Mauritius, promote research in library fields and provide assistance in information handling techniques;
- To act as the national bibliographic centre and maintain the national bibliography and other bibliographies;
- To act as an organising agency for national and international lending and exchange of library materials; and
- To initiate and promote cooperation between the library and other libraries, both local and overseas.

5. PLANNING CONTEXT

To be in line with Government Programme Vision 2030, the National Library of Mauritius has to be responsive to the continuously changing environment, which will have an influence on its development.

- Mauritius is moving into the information and knowledge age.
- Mauritius is fast adopting new information and communication technologies.
- Emergence of new economic sectors. Knowledge management is becoming a vital aspect of economic, political and social activities.
- New developments are taking place in the educational sector, especially at the tertiary level, where new institutions are being established and distance-learning mode is rapidly expanding.
- Increasing demand on Library or Documentation and knowledge centres.
- Exponential growth of documents published every year.
- Development of electronic form of publishing.

Regional co-operation and integration are also high on the national agenda. Mauritius is positioning itself to play a key role within the Indian Ocean Commission, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern Africa Development Community and the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation.

As far as the National Library is concerned, the implications include:

- greater collaboration and networking with national libraries and information agencies of the surrounding countries and internationally, particularly in areas such as acquisition, exchange and opportunities for dissemination.
- Increased interaction between staff of National Library and personnel of other information institutions.
- Formulation of a coordinated strategy relating to electronic information.

6. SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- The Board of the National Library consists of mainly academics and professionals, very conversant in librarianship and management, who can offer the best guidance in the development of the Library.
- The National Library has established itself as the apex institution in the library sector in Mauritius.
- The National Library is affiliated to the International Federation of Library Association (IFLA) and the Africa Library Network.
- The National Library is the national agency for ISSN Centre in the region.
- Compliance of printers and producers with legal deposit regulations, as stipulated under the National Library Act 1996, ensures regular and constant inflow of documents.
- Friendly countries, international agencies, mass media and the Mauritian public at large are supportive of the National Library.
- Almost all services offered by the National Library are free. The paid services are offered at very nominal fees.
- The availability of a healthy environment and a spacious Search Room are conducive to research and study.
- ‘*Windows of Shanghai*’ agreement with the Shanghai Public Library since 2006.
- The National Library has online an Open Access Catalogue, whereby bibliographical details of the Mauritiana Holding of the National Library are shown.
- The National Library has a rich collection of documents on International Monetary Fund (IMF), European Union (EU), United Nations (UN) and on China.
- The National Library has signed an MOU with the National Library of China, in expertise and exchange on training, preservation and management.

Weaknesses

- The present building is not appropriate to house a National Library.
- Inadequate floor space to accommodate the ever growing number of library materials.
- The National Library is currently operating with a minimum staff due to non-recruitment and lack of fund.
- The National Library is still being perceived as an institution which caters for information needs of the elite only, i.e., researchers, scholars, academics, historians, journalists, etc, and not as “youth-friendly”.
- The Mauritiana collection is far from being exhaustive due to gaps in the collection, non-receipt of all publications on time, and unawareness of many overseas Mauritiana publications.
- Several documents (especially the rare books, old manuscripts and newspapers) need to be restored and preserved through latest preservation techniques and digitisation.
- The amount and variety of library materials related to Mauritius, which are published abroad and housed in overseas national libraries, represent a big challenge for the library collection development. Due to lack of funds, the National Library is not able to purchase all of them.
- No library staff, on a permanent basis, to manage the Antenna of the National Library in Rodrigues.
- A national co-operative library system is yet to be established.
- No parking facility can be offered to the users and this demotivates them to come regularly.
- The National Library Act is, at present, felt to be outdated to fit the present environmental context.
- No WiFi for users in the Search Room.

Opportunities

- The policy makers are fully committed to make Mauritius an information/knowledge-based society, especially in the Government's Vision 2030.
- As Mauritius moves in an information society, there will be more and more users. Access to knowledge and management of knowledge will become important for creative and innovative industries, financial services, planners, administrators, etc.
- Knowledge resource is vital for any development to take place in the country.
- Acquisition of a plot of land at Réduit Triangle earmarked for the construction of the National Library's permanent building will provide the necessary space to enable the development and expansion of the National Library.
- With expected liberalisation of telecommunication and a fall in the cost of internet charges, technology can be more easily harnessed to encourage the free flow of information.
- Mauritius has a high rate of literacy and an increasing number of persons are computer literate.
- Growth in the number of students opting for tertiary education and research, through the traditional channel or distant mode will lead to greater use of the Library.
- Mauritius is witnessing a dynamic growth in literature output/productions, and this is very beneficial for the Library.
- Government, friendly countries, international agencies, mass media and a wide section of the public are supportive of the construction of a National Library's own building. Opportunities must therefore be tapped.
- Coming up of digitisation shall provide greater online access to users all over the world.

Threats

- The rising cost of information resources, for example, subscription to electronic databases may hamper the efforts of the National Library to provide a wider range of information services.
- Because of competing demand for public funds and economic crisis in the world, the National Library may not obtain the required funds for future development and projects which may cost a lot.
- Difficulty of recruiting library experts with certain specific skills, for example, in the field of indexing or preservation and conservation of documents.
- Delay in construction of National Library's own purpose-built building will lead to an increase in estimated cost.
- Present collections, like the newspapers, reports, rare books, etc., at its present location, are at risks to pollution and may cause irreversible damages to these materials.
- Opening of numerous restaurants below the National Library increase risks of fire and air pollution.

7. GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1st. Provide a comprehensive collection of the country's literature.

Strategic Objective:

- Act as the main collection of the National Literature (a) through the legal deposit and (b) through the acquisition of foreign literature (i) about the country (ii) of interest to the country and the collection of the country's manuscripts and private papers.

2nd. Conserve the collection as a national heritage in favorable conditions and environment for present and future generations.

Strategic Objective:

- Set up a proper preservation unit for the care of all library materials.
- Restore old and valuable documents.
- Digitise old documents instead of photocopy.

3rd. Provide, develop and maintain a National Bibliographic Centre

Strategic Objectives:

- Provide, develop and maintain the necessary bibliographic tools that will make literature accessible, such as the National Bibliography and Subject bibliographies.
- Record regularly bibliographic data in a standardized form.
- Provide indexing and abstracting services.
- Monitor cataloguing-in-print publication system.

4th. Provide dynamic leadership in the establishment of a national system of library and information service.

Strategic Objectives:

- Participate and assist in the planning of library services in the country.
- Provide assistance in information handling techniques.
- Provide professional training and research programme

5th. *Be the focal point of libraries in Mauritius and act as a link with overseas libraries.*

Strategic Objectives:

- Act as an organising agency for national and international lending and exchange of library materials.
- Provide access to the National Library's catalogue for other libraries.
- Provide a focal point for linkage with and access to international data banks.

6th. *To be recognised as a vital national institution in the provision of information by creating an awareness among the people in Mauritius about the importance of the National Library.*

Strategic Objectives:

- Develop and implement innovative projects to give a good image of the National Library.

7th. *Establish a digitisation programme*

Strategic Objective:

- Invest in technology that will ultimately lead to the creation of a digital library.
- Provide training on how to handle equipment
- Digitize old documents having historical and cultural values, which presently cannot be made available for consultancy due to risk of wear and tear.
- Make the digitised materials accessible to users over a network of libraries.

8th. *Set up a Training Unit within the Library.*

Strategic Objective:

- Provide in-house training along with overseas training courses that will empower staff in decision-making and enhance their skills.

9th . *Development of e-services*

Strategic Objectives:

- Disseminate the library collection and services through e-services.
- Publish Mauritiana collection (including dissertations and theses) on the Library's website.

10th . *Administer a national programme to provide reading materials for blind and physically handicapped individuals*

- Set up a separate section for the partially blind and physically handicapped persons.
- Purchase of specialised materials, furniture and equipment for this section.

11th . *Relocate the National Library in a purpose-built building at Réduit Triangle*

- Centrally located in a knowledge-hub
- Upgrade the general services to users
- Provide access to physically disabled persons

12th . *Review the National Library Act of 1996*

- Adapt the National Library Act to new challenges of the 21st Century.

8. ACTION PLAN

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

Provide a comprehensive collection of the country's literature

- ✓ *Act as the main collection of the national literature (a) through the legal deposit and (b) through the acquisition of foreign literature (i) about the country (ii) of interest to the country and the collection of the country's manuscripts and private papers.*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Advise printers and producers of their obligations in respect with legal deposit regulations	Ongoing	Library Staff
Publication of the Collection Development Policy	End 2017	Strategic and Development Committee
Acquire relevant library materials from overseas	Ongoing	Management
Acquire private collections, manuscripts and theses locally, which do not fall under legal deposit regulations	Ongoing	Management
Collaborate with local booksellers and maintain standing orders with them	Ongoing	Management
Visit printers and producers as per Regulations on legal deposit.	Ongoing	Management & Library Staff
Allocate ISSN	Ongoing	Management

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

Conserve the collection as a national heritage in favourable conditions and environment for present and future generations.

- ✓ *Set up preservation units for the care of all library materials.*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Construct a purpose-built complex	2017	Government
Consolidate the bindery	Ongoing	Management
Consolidate the preservation unit by acquiring more sophisticated equipments like heavy-duty scanner, computers.	2018	Management
Train staff in preservation techniques – de-acidifying and restoration of materials.	Ongoing	Management
Photocopy/scan rare and slightly damaged documents	Ongoing	Management
Provide a secondary storage for Mauritiana collection (since 2014)	Ongoing	Management (with the construction of new complex)
Acquire expertise in preservation techniques with the National Library of China	2016-2018	Management & Library Staff
Collaborate with National Archives in preservation of Mauritiana documents	2017	National Library and National Archives

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

Act as a National Bibliographic Centre

3.1 Provide, develop and maintain the necessary bibliographic tools that will make literature accessible, such as the National Bibliography and National Union Catalogue.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Compile the current National Bibliography (Annual)	Ongoing	Library Staff
Publish the National Bibliography 2005-2015	2017	Management
Up-date and edit the National Union Catalogue of Mauritiana and Periodicals	Ongoing	Library Staff
Provide Online Public Access Catalogue of Mauritiana to users.	Ongoing	Library Staff
Provide online reference services.	Ongoing	Library Staff

3.2 Record bibliographic data in a standardised form and maintain its database

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Monitor the cataloguing in publication system	Ongoing	Library Staff

3.3 Provide indexing and abstracting services.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Continue indexing and abstracting of newspapers and periodicals	Ongoing	Library Staff
Index and abstract new books	As from 2017	Library staff

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

Provide dynamic leadership in the establishment of a national system of library and information service.

4.1 *Participate and assist in the planning of library services in the country.*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Hold meetings of Librarians of different libraries of Mauritius	As and when	Management and other professional bodies
Improve library services in Rodrigues	Ongoing	Management and Rodrigues Regional Assembly

4.2 *Formulate and provide assistance in information handling techniques*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Provide consultancy on request.	As and when	Management
Formulate national standard for information handling techniques	2017	Management

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

Be the focal point of libraries in Mauritius and act as a link with libraries overseas.

5.1 *Act as an organising agency for national and international lending and exchange of library materials.*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Promote international library co-operation and resource sharing.	Ongoing	Management
Enter into agreements with overseas libraries for the exchange of information, of bibliographic records and of staff.	2016-2018	Management
Attend regional, international conference/seminars on library and information matters.	Ongoing	Management

5.2 Provide access to the National Library's catalogue for other libraries.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Computerisation/digitisation of library catalogue	Ongoing	Library Staff/or private firm
Develop working relationship with overseas libraries	Ongoing	Management
Consolidate the Antenna of the National Library in Rodrigues	Ongoing	Management – books sent every year

5.3 Provide a focal point for linkage with and access to international data banks.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Continue to develop working relationship with overseas libraries	Ongoing	Management
Visit some National Libraries overseas in view of signing protocol d'accord for mutual benefit	2016-2018	Ministry of Arts and Culture/National Library and other libraries
Affiliate the National Library to:		
(a) the Standing Committee on national libraries (IFLA)	Membership	Management
(b) Shanghai Public Library	Since 2006 Ongoing	National Library
(c) Strengthen links with National Library of China	MOU in 2014 (effective as from 2015-2017)	National Library and Chinese Embassy
(d) Establish links with Bibliothèque Nationale de France	In 2017-2018	Ministry of Arts and Culture/National Library/BN de France
(e) Establish links with British Museum/National Library of UK	Initiated in 2014	British High Commission/National Library
(f) Establish links with Library of Congress	2017-2018	National Library/Ministry of Arts and Culture/US Embassy

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

To be recognised as a vital national institution in the provision of information by creating an awareness among the people in Mauritius about the importance of the National Library.

6.1 Develop and implement innovative projects to give a good image of the National Library

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Develop outreach programmes – talks, conferences, newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, video films	Ongoing	Library Staff
Update the website regularly	Ongoing	Library Staff and Government Web Masters
Mount exhibitions at regular intervals throughout the island.	Ongoing	Library Staff
Carry out public relation exercises through essay competitions, study tours, visits, etc.	Ongoing	Management
Publication programme (at least one publication per annum)	Ongoing	Management
Organise public conferences by eminent personalities	Ongoing	Management
Sensitise students on the importance of the National Library by organising talks to colleges in Mauritius	Ongoing	Management
Organise talks in colleges of Rodrigues	Annually	National Library and the other professional bodies
Implement the Independent Commission for Anti-Corruption (ICAC) Framework policy	Ongoing	Management and ICAC

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7

Setting up of a digitization programme

7.1 Invest in technology to create a digital library

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Carry out a cost analysis for the hardware, software and training needed	2017	Management
Acquire equipment	2017-2018	Management
Start digitisation of valuable documents.	2018	Library

7.2 Provide training to handle equipment.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Train staff for the use of hardware and software	2018	Private companies

7.3 Digitize old documents having historical and cultural values

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Digitization of out-of-copyright Mauritiana materials	2018	Library Staff

7.4 Make the digitized materials accessible to users over a network of libraries.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Upload the digitized material on the website of the National Library	2018	National Library & Government Web Masters
Provide access to these digitized materials online for public references	2018 onwards	Library Staff

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 8

Set up a Training unit within the Library

Provide in-house training along with overseas training courses that will empower staff to take decisions and enhance their capacity to offer excellent services.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Set up a committee and draft training needs analysis for the National Library and for various libraries	2017	Training Committee/Management
Seek expertise from abroad	2017-2018	Foreign countries/Ministry of Arts & Culture
Devise an in-house training scheme for staff	2017	Management and other professional bodies
Provide yearly training programme	Annually	Foreign countries/Institutions

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 9

Development of e-services

9.1 Disseminate the library collection through the electronic services

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Provide basic e-reference service	Ongoing	Library Staff
Email / SMS services for Mauritiana collection	2017	Library Staff
Introduce tailor-made/customised report on demand, which will be chargeable and delivered by email.	2017	Library Staff

9.2 Publish Mauritiana's collection (including dissertations and theses) on the Library's website.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Identify and upload all publications on the National Library's website.	Ongoing since 2013	Library Staff
Sign Memorandum of Understanding regarding dissertations and theses.	By end 2016	Management and other academic organisations

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 10

Administer a national programme to provide reading materials for blind and physically handicapped individuals

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Separate section for partially blind and handicapped persons.	Awaiting new building	Management / NGO's
Purchase specific materials, furniture and equipment	Awaiting new building	Management

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 11

Relocate the National Library in a purpose-built building

✓ *Upgrade the general services to users*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Upgrade the Bindery Section to render it cost-effective.	Awaiting new building	National Library Board
Introduction of new services in the purpose-built building	By end of 2017	Management
Provide a Reading Corner for leisure reading	By end of 2017	Management
Exhibition of rare documents on a regular basis	As and when	Management
Offer local authors a special platform on a monthly basis	Awaiting new building	National Library/Local authors

Centrally located in a knowledge hub

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Situated at Réduit Triangle. Sum of Rs410m allotted in Budget 2016	For a period of 3 years	Ministry of Arts & Culture
Serving educational and cultural institutions in the vicinity		National Library
New building to serve physically disabled persons.		National Library

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 12

Review the National Library Act of 1996

✓ *Adapt the National Library Act to new challenges of the 21st Century*

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Review the number of documents to be deposited as legal deposit	2017	National Library Board/Parent Ministry
Review the quorum for Board	2017	National Library Board/Parent Ministry