



Tertiary Education Commission

STRATEGIC PLAN

2007-2011

April 2007

1. INTRODUCTION

Critical changes are intervening internationally in the form of globalization, trade liberalization and rapid technological progress as well as rising oil prices which are affecting the competitiveness of nations within the global economy.

In response to the above challenges, a new economic trajectory is unfolding in Mauritius, whereby the economy is shifting from one based on preferences and low skills to one which is knowledge and service-related intensive.

Over and above the diversification of manufacturing into higher value-added products and the consolidation of the services sector (offshore banking, regional financial services, free-port and informatics), new growth poles are being developed such as the sea-food industry, land-based ocean industry and knowledge industry.

In this new economic configuration, postsecondary education has to assume a pivotal role, in producing a competitive, dynamic, innovative and highly skilled workforce. Consistent with global trends, Mauritius is witnessing a post-secondary education sector increasingly market-driven, characterized by a growing number of private providers (local and overseas).

A new regulatory framework has been put in place to facilitate the emergence of a knowledge industry of international standard.

The TEC Strategic Plan 2007-2011 aims at unleashing the full potential and creativity of the Mauritian people and lays the foundation for transforming Mauritius into the rank of developed economies. The Plan also seeks to empower tertiary education to uncover and propagate the unique brand that Mauritius represents in the global village as a blend of the best from various civilizations as well as to showcase the multiple unique facets of Mauritius.

2. THE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

In planning for postsecondary education, this Section scans the environment confronting the Sector, in terms of its existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths

- A stable political system in a democratic set-up
- A multi-lingual and multi-cultural society
- A diversified higher education system
- A strong Mauritian diaspora
- Competitive advantage such as study costs and location
- An intellectual base composed of diverse educational background obtained from universities worldwide
- A conducive environment to the development of an Education Industry
- Transparent, simple regulatory framework for post-secondary education institutions and universities
- An overarching quality assurance framework
- Attractive investment climate for service providers and for developing campuses

Weaknesses

- Limited capacity of post-secondary education institutions locally
- Lack of infrastructure and related amenities (for e.g, accommodation on campus)
- Limited learning opportunities
- Limited research
- Life-long education and continuing professional development still unfolding
- Shortage of expertise in emerging and new thrust areas

- Difficulty in recruiting and retaining high-level faculty
- Insufficient links of educational institutions with industry and the economy
- Over-reliance on state funding
- Absence of a marketing strategy for export of education-related services

Opportunities

- Strategic location of Mauritius
- Reputation of Mauritius in the tourism, textile and sugarcane sectors to build on for the creation of centres of excellence
- Potential of postsecondary education as a major income generator and employment provider for the economy
- Attractive investment environment including infrastructural facilities for setting up educational campuses
- Setting for blending together higher education and leisure activities
- Growing demand for postsecondary education locally, regionally and internationally
- Availability of an untapped market for post-secondary education locally estimated at over 2 billion rupees annually
- Pro-active development and application of new learning modes and techniques
- Development of research and consultancy as a full-fledged activity of post-secondary institutions

Threats

- Scalability arising from small size
- Competition from other knowledge and education hubs in the region
- Larger economies in the region opening up their education sector
- Brain drain of high-level human resources
- Salaries and working conditions of similar professionals outside the Sector

3. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The present Strategic Plan which spans over a five-year period, more specifically between 2007 and 2011, is shaped by a number of parameters which tries as far as possible to reflect a realistic context. These parameters are based on the following assumptions:

- A new economic trajectory based on
 - Diversification of manufacturing into higher value-added products
 - Consolidation of the services sector and
 - Development of new growth poles such as ICT, land-based oceanography and sea-food industry
- The transformation of Mauritius into a regional knowledge hub and a centre of higher learning
- The attainment of a Gross Tertiary Enrolment Rate target of some 10 percentage points increase over the Plan period, to reach 45% equivalent to 48,750 students, by 2015
- Ready availability of increased space and infrastructure for the expansion of the Sector
- Improved regional mobility of students and staff arising from globalization and the internationalization of higher education and the labour market
- Availability of expertise in the Sector to be developed
- Demand above average for science, engineering and technology-based disciplines
- Greater emphasis on continuing professional education and lifelong learning
- Competition and greater market forces in the provision of postsecondary education
- A sustainable funding system of postsecondary education involving cost-sharing by students, the private sector and the state
- Increased emphasis on international norms of quality and performance.
- Enhanced synergy between the post-secondary education sector and the economy
- A stronger focus on research for national development in the Sector's activities

4. Vision, Mission and Goals

I. Vision

The vision of the TEC is to

- **Make Mauritius the Intelligent Island of the Region in the Global Village**

II. Mission

The mission of TEC is to:

- **Position Mauritius in the Region as a world-class Knowledge Hub and the gateway for post-secondary education**

III. Goals

The goals of TEC within the plan period 2007-2011, will be to:

1. Create an enabling environment for Mauritius to emerge as a Regional Knowledge Hub and a Centre for Higher Learning and Excellence
2. Contribute significantly in the rapid transformation of Mauritius into the rank of developed countries
3. Develop Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as an instrument to increase access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning locally and regionally
4. Bring postsecondary education provision in line with international standard and quality
5. Encourage institutions to mount programmes that are relevant to the needs of learners, the country and the region
6. Promote and enhance teacher education and training in order to raise standards of feeder system to postsecondary education
7. Instill the principles of good governance, transparency and accountability in the postsecondary education system
8. Ensure optimum use of resources in the TEIs
9. Sustain research and consultancy

10. Foster regional and international understanding and cooperation through a diversity of studentship and overseas institutions
11. Reinforce and empower the TEC to fulfill its mission and objectives

5. OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES, 2007-2011

This Plan which is centred on harnessing talents and resources effectively to bring Mauritius to the threshold of a knowledge-based society rests on eleven core objectives.

Objectives and Strategies

1. Create an enabling environment for Mauritius to emerge as a Regional Knowledge Hub and a Centre for Higher Learning and Excellence

- 1.1 Create and Develop Regional Centres of Excellence
- 1.2 Prepare an integrated marketing strategy for promoting Mauritius as a Regional Knowledge Hub and a Centre of Higher Learning
- 1.3 Customize investment support for attracting investment in educational service
- 1.4 Encourage institutions to publish their prospectus and course calendars well in advance of the forthcoming academic year, to enable both local and prospective overseas students to plan their education
- 1.5 Facilitate the granting of student visas
- 1.6 Promote strategic alliances between local and overseas institutions
- 1.7 Guide institutions to establish strategic partnerships with industry and commerce, and the social and professional communities to assist the development of collaborative and cooperative knowledge- based system and promote innovation

2. Contribute significantly in the rapid transformation of Mauritius into the rank of developed countries

- 2.1 Require the TEIs to continuously review their access strategy for increasing and widening participation, so as to attain a Gross Tertiary Enrolment Rate of 45% by 2015
- 2.2 Encourage greater participation of local private providers and affiliates or branches of overseas institutions in the provision of postsecondary education
- 2.3 Develop modalities for local institutions with no awarding powers to offer award programmes through link arrangements with the University of Mauritius, the University of Technology, Mauritius, the Open University of Mauritius or any other awarding bodies approved by TEC

- 2.4 Construct a prior learning framework in collaboration with other relevant institutions to facilitate access of “mature” students to postsecondary education
 - 2.5 Develop equity mechanisms (scholarships, bursaries, student loans etc) for expanding and widening access and opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- 3. Develop Open and Distance Learning (ODL) as an instrument to increase access to postsecondary education and lifelong learning locally and regionally**
- 3.1 Plan for the strengthening of open and distance learning
 - 3.2 Concretise strategic alliances to provide relevant and quality ODL programmes locally and regionally
 - 3.3 Activate appropriate integration of ICTs including through e-learning and Open Educational Resources (OER) initiatives in the TEIs
- 4. Bring postsecondary education provision in line with international standard and quality**
- 4.1 Set quality criteria and standards
 - 4.2 Review the Quality Assurance Framework which seeks to address quality issues consistent with international practice
 - 4.3 Promote quality initiatives with the objective of enhancing quality in the design and delivery of programmes
 - 4.4 Implement the Recognition and Equivalence System of qualifications at post-secondary level
 - 4.5 Require institutions to develop guidelines for promoting good practice and innovation in teaching and research
- 5. Encourage institutions to mount programmes relevant to the needs of learners, the Country and the Region**
- 5.1 Establish a National Higher Education Committee to steer post-secondary education
 - 5.2 Organise annual lectures by eminent academics
 - 5.3 Encourage TEIs to develop and enhance links with industry, business and commerce, professional bodies and the world of science and technology

- 5.4 Require the TEIs to review their academic structures including the setting up of centres of excellence in line with socio-economic development
 - 5.5 Support the TEIs to strengthen their capacity in selected areas and disciplines to produce a critical mass of know-how, inline with the needs of a knowledge-based and technology-driven economy
 - 5.6 Map out a strategy for developing a language industry
 - 5.7 Require the TEIs to increase continuing education and lifelong learning provision
 - 5.8 Update the List of Indicative Priority Fields of Study
- 6. Promote and enhance teacher education and training in order to raise standards of feeder system to post-secondary education**
- 6.1 Assist in developing policies for the promotion and advancement of teacher education and training, consistent with national objectives, including the promotion of human values, culture, and the development of the personality
 - 6.2 Support the Mauritius Institute of Education to increase training of teachers in science, technology and other priority areas, both primary and secondary
 - 6.3 Foster research in teacher education and school management
 - 6.4 Set up a scheme for the training of trainers
- 7. Instill principles of good governance, transparency and accountability in the postsecondary education system**
- 7.1 Require the TEIs to prepare, implement and update their strategic and academic plans
 - 7.2 Strengthen management capacities, through appropriate measures such as introduction of management information systems, promotion of principles of transparency, accountability and good governance and more efficient utilization of resources, more particularly in the TEIs
 - 7.3 Guide institutions, both public and private, to develop performance indicators and to report to the TEC annually on students enrolment, staff strength, programmes, teaching quality, output, space and infrastructure, financial health and research
 - 7.4 Develop mechanisms in collaboration with the TEIs to allocate resources, based upon institutional performance and plans
 - 7.5 Assist institutions to adopt transparent procedures in all

their operations

- 7.6 Require institutions to put in place robust complaint procedures
- 7.7 Develop and promote the implementation of a Student's Charter
- 7.8 Publish information on postsecondary education on a regular basis

8. Ensure optimum use of resources in the TEIs

- 8.1 Set up a Committee on Infrastructure and Resource Utilisation to consider all infrastructure projects at the level of institution and ensure the optimal use of existing physical facilities
- 8.2 Implement an effective and efficient financial management and Accountability system for the use of public funds
- 8.3 Guide the TEIs to review their staff, academic and non-academic, recruitment policy to allow institutional flexibility without compromising on quality
- 8.4 Develop and implement schemes for optimum use of resources

9. Sustain research and consultancy

- 9.1 Require institutions to develop their research plans including postgraduate/ postdoctoral activities, with policies and strategies towards the creation of centres of excellence and world class clusters of research
- 9.2 Draw up a list of priority areas of research with relevant institutions and support individuals and institutions to carry out research into those priority areas
- 9.3 Compile a database of research expertise, on-going research and research undertaken in the Sector
- 9.4 Require the TEIs to undertake periodic evaluation of their research activities
- 9.5 Promote collaborative research

10. Foster regional and international understanding and cooperation through diversity of studentship and overseas institutions

- 10.1 Assist institutions to develop student and staff exchange programmes with overseas institutions

- 10.2 Support institutions in organizing regular academic events with participation from the Region and Internationally
- 10.3 Foster participation of local institutions in regional and international events aimed at enhancing cooperation in higher education

11. Reinforce and empower the TEC to fulfill its mission and objectives

- 11.1 Revisit the organizational structure of the TEC in line with its new vision, mission and goals
- 11.2 Build appropriate capacity to meet its objectives
- 11.3 Benchmarking TEC with its counterparts internationally
- 11.4 Develop further its linkages with the University Grants Commission (UGC), India and establish strong networking with other peer institutions in the Region and at the international level