

# Strategic Plan 2000-2002

## Foreword

*This Strategic Plan sets out the vision, strategic management principles, goals and objectives and plan of action that will govern the National Library for the next three years.*

*We are confident that the Plan will be an effective tool to enable the Library to develop by making optimum use of resources to achieve its strategic objectives.*

*All stakeholders were involved in the preparation of this Plan: the Board, Management and staff of the National Library and representatives of the Library Association. The process was rather long-winded; however, the experience was very enriching and the discussions were very frank. The outcome is a consensual one.*

*We would like to extend our thanks to all those who have, directly or indirectly, helped in the production of this Plan.*

**Dr R.S. Lutchmeah**

**Chairman, National Library Board  
May 2000**

## 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 Mauritiana materials, the National Library has also to acquire all print and non-print materials published abroad, whose subject matter is related to Mauritius. Besides, even publications or productions by Mauritian authors or artists overseas are to be purchased. Alongwith, 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 premier 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 and creativity.

## 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 Harrisson 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 Prime Minister, Dr. N. Ramgoolam, in the presence of the Minister of Arts and Culture, Mr. J. Tsang Mang Kin, officially inaugurated the National Library on the 8<sup>th</sup> 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. Elspeth Pope**

Final report and recommendations to the Ministry of Education, Arts & Culture – March 28, 1988

***TATUTORY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE NATIONAL LIBRARY***

Consistent with its Act, 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.

## 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.***

## PLANNING CONTEXT

The National Library of Mauritius has to be responsive to the continually 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 and Documentation 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 Indian Ocean region 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.

## **SWOT ANALYSIS**

### **Strengths**

- The Board of the National Library consists of mainly academics and professionals, very conversant in librarianship, who can offer the best guidance in the development of the Library.
- The National Library through its Director is the current President of the Banque Internationale d'Information Sur les États Francophones.
- 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 in favour of a National Library.
- The core collection received from the Mauritius Institute Public Library and the Archives Department provides a solid base from which to develop.
- The services offered by the National Library are mostly free. Paid services are offered at a nominal charge.
- The availability of a salubrious environment and a spacious Search Room are conducive to research and study.

### **Weaknesses**

- Inadequate floor space to house the increasing number of library materials.
- The National Library is currently operating with a core staff.
- The National Library may seem to be perceived as an institution which caters for information needs of the elite only, ie, researchers, scholars, academics, historians, journalists, etc.
- The current National Library collection is restricted to Mauritiana only and is far from being exhaustive (there are gaps in the collection).
- Several documents (rare books, old manuscripts and newspapers) need special treatment. Conservation and preservation programme is lacking.
- 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.
- Unavailability of the complete library catalogue for use by the public.
- Unavailability of a Reference Collection.

- A national co-operative library system is yet to be established.

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- The policy makers are fully committed to make Mauritius an information/knowledge-based society.
- As Mauritius moves in an information society, there will be more users. Access to knowledge and management of knowledge will become important for creative and innovative industries, financial services, planners, administrators, etc.
- Acquisition of a plot of land at Moka earmarked for the construction of the National Library permanent building will provide the necessary space to enable the development and expansion of the National Library. Furthermore, the location is ideally suited, it is within an academic area.
- 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. In addition, an increasing number of Mauritians is computer literate.
- Growth in the number of students undergoing tertiary education, 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. This augurs well for the National Library.
- Friendly countries, international agencies, mass media and a wide section of the public are favourable to the establishment of a National Library in Mauritius. Opportunities must therefore be tapped systematically.

## **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.
- The profession of librarianship is not yet fully recognised.
- Possibility of inadequate funds to enable the National Library to implement its strategic objectives.
- Shortage of professional librarians with certain specific skills at the national level.

## **GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

***1<sup>st</sup>. Provide a comprehensive collection of the country's literature.***

***Strategic Objective:***

- Ø 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.

**2<sup>nd</sup>. Conserve the collection as a national heritage in favorable conditions and environment for present and future generations.**

***Strategic Objective:***

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

**3<sup>rd</sup>. Act as a National Bibliographic Centre.**

***Strategic Objectives:***

- Ø Provide the necessary bibliographic tools that will make literature accessible, such as the National Bibliography and subject bibliography.
- Ø Record bibliographic data in a standardized form.
- Ø Develop and maintain bibliographic database relevant to the country.
- Ø Provide indexing and abstracting services.

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

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Ø Participate and assist in the planning of library services in the country.
- Ø Provide assistance in information handling techniques.
- Ø Conduct research on library techniques.
- Ø Provide services to the different relevant authorities.
- Ø Provide professional training.
- Ø Formulate national standard, for information handling techniques.

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

**Strategic Objectives:**

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

**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
Complete the transfer of Mauritian materials from the Archives Department & the Mauritius Institute	2000	Library Staff

Set legal deposit mechanism in motion. Advise printers and producers of their obligations in respect with legal deposit	Ongoing	Library Staff
Write Collection Development Policy Statement	2000	Management & Library Staff
Acquire relevant library materials from overseas	2001	Management
Acquire private collections, manuscripts and theses locally, which do not fall under legal deposit	Ongoing	Management
Collaborate with local booksellers and maintain standing orders with them	Ongoing	Management
Visit printers and producers as per Regulations on legal deposit	2000	Management & Library Staff

### **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	2001-2002	Government
Set up a bindery	2000	Management
Set up a microfilm laboratory	2001	Management
Microfilm newspapers	2001	Management
Establish a fumigation chamber	2002	Management
Train staff in preservation techniques – deacidifying and restoration of materials	As & when possible	To be determined
Photocopy/scan rare and slightly damaged documents	Ongoing	Management

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3**

*Act as a National Bibliographic Centre*

Provide the necessary bibliographic tools that will make literature accessible, such as the National Bibliography and subject bibliography.



TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Compile the National Bibliography (annual)	2001	Library Staff
Compile and up-date the National Union Catalogue	2000-2001	Library Staff
Compile subject bibliographies	2002	Library Staff

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3**

#### *Act as a National Bibliographic Centre*

Record bibliographic data in a standardized form.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Process library materials	Ongoing	Library Staff
Computerise/digitalise the Library Catalogue	2001	Library Staff or private firm
Introduce the cataloguing in publication system	2001	Management
Formulate standard for information handling techniques	2002	Management

### **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3**

#### *Act as a National Bibliographic Centre*

Develop and maintain bibliographic database relevant to the country.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Compile the 1 <sup>st</sup> National Bibliography (annual)	2001	Library Staff
Compile and up-date the National Union Catalogue	2001	Library Staff
Compile list of theses & dissertations	2001	Library Staff

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 3***Act as a National Bibliographic Centre*

Provide indexing and abstracting services.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Start indexing and abstracting of newspapers and periodicals	2001	Library Staff

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 4**

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

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

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Hold monthly meetings of Librarians of different libraries of Mauritius	Ongoing	Management
Develop common project, i.e, the compilation of the National Union Catalogue	2001	Management
Publish a directory of library & documentation centres in Mauritius	2000	Management

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 4**

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

Provide assistance in information handling techniques.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Provide consultancy	2002	Management
Formulate standard for information handling techniques	2002	Management

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 4**

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

Provide professional training.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
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Ask foreign experts to train library staff of the National Library	2000	Foreign countries/institutions
Train library staff abroad	As & when available	Foreign countries
Initiate an in-house training programme for library officers and library clerks of other libraries of Mauritius	2002	Management

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 5

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

Act as an organizing agency for national and international lending and exchange of library materials.

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Be affiliated to international organizations i.e IFLA, BIEF, etc	2000	Management
Provide resource sharing: as a national centre for national and international interlending	2001	Management
Promote international library co-operation	2000	Management
Enter into agreements with overseas libraries for the exchange of information, of bibliographic records and of staff	2000	Management
Attend regional, international conference/seminars on library and information matters	As and when held	Management
Liaise with other overseas libraries on all matters of national interest	2000	Management

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 5

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

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

TARGET	BY WHEN	BY WHOM
Computerise/digitalise the library catalogue	2001	Library Staff/or private firm
Promote local and international library co-operation	2000	Management
Develop working relationship with overseas libraries	2000	Management

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: 5

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

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

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
Promote international library co-operation	2000	Management
Develop working relationship with overseas libraries	2000	Management
Be affiliated to international organizations, i.e IFLA, BIEF, etc	2000	Management
Visit some National Libraries overseas in view of signing protocol d'accord for mutual benefit	2001	Management

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE**

To be recognized 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.

<b>TARGET</b>	<b>BY WHEN</b>	<b>BY WHOM</b>
Develop outreach tools – newsletters, brochures, pamphlets	2000	Library Staff
Update the website regularly	2000	Library Staff
Mount exhibitions at regular intervals	2000	Library Staff
Carry out public relation exercises	2000	Management
Elaborate publication programme (One publication per annum)	2000	Management

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*Design by Ministry of Arts & Culture.*