

Disability in Mauritius – pattern, trend and policy implications

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1. Introduction

With creditable achievements on health front resulting in sustained increases in expectation of life, the focus of government of Mauritius is to further improving the quality of life of the people. However, a major threat to the country is non communicable diseases (NCD) representing 75% of disease burden including diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, cancer, mental illness, diseases linked to tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse resulting in blindness, leg/arm amputation, paralysis and other disabilities.(Mauritius, 2002). The United Nations declared the years 1983 – 1992 as the decade of the disabled, the theme of the decade being “Full participation and Equality”. In this context, the Government started working for the integration of the disabled persons in the mainstream of society.

A prime consideration therefore has been the importance of relevant policy and programmes concerning the rehabilitation needs of and the equalisation of opportunity for persons with disabilities. Towards this aim, data on disability were collected at the 1990 and 2000 Housing and Population Censuses of Mauritius. The 2000 census followed the recommendations set out in the manual : Principles and Recommendations for Housing and Population Censuses – Revision 1 (UN,1998).

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The question asked at the 2000 Population Census was as follows:

“Does the person experience any disability (i.e., any limitation to perform a daily-life activity in a manner considered normal for a person of his/her age) because of a long-term physical/mental condition or health problem?”

if the person stated “Yes”, he was requested to insert as many disabilities as applicable as follows:

- MTION walking, running and other ambulation disabilities
- MANU manual activity disabilities such as fingering, gripping and holding
- EYE seeing disabilities even with glasses
- EAR hearing and listening disabilities even with hearing aid
- SPCH speaking and talking disabilities
- LEARN disturbance of ability to learn and acquire education
- BEH disturbances of behaviour, including antisocial behaviour, maladjustment and liability to self injury
- CARE inability to look after oneself with regard to personal care and hygiene, feeding, etc.
- OTHER other disabilities

At the 1990 census, persons answering ‘ yes ‘ to the question:

“Does the person have any long-term disabilities or handicaps which limit his/her participation in

individual and/or social activities which are considered normal for a person of his/her age?”

were requested to insert as many disabilities as applicable as follows:

- LF incomplete use of legs/feet
- AF incomplete use of arms/fingers
- EYE partial or total loss of sight even with glasses
- EAR partial or total loss of hearing
- SPCH partial or total loss of speech
- SLOW slow development/learning difficulties
- BEH behaviour problems/mental disability
- CFB loss of consciousness, fits, blackouts
- OTHER other disabilities

Although respondents were asked to list all disabilities that they had, only the first three disabilities were coded in the recent census. After examination of a sample of returns, it was found that most disabled persons fell in one of the 12 categories and 4 groups listed below.

I. MOBILITY		II. COMMUNICATION		III. DEVELOPMENT		IV. OTHER	
(MOB)		(COM)		(DEV)		(OTH)	
1	MTION	4	EYE	9	LEARN	12	OTHER
2	MANU	5	EAR	10	BEH		
3	MTION & MANU	6	EYE & EAR	11	CARE		
		7	SPCH				
		8	EAR & SPCH				

Classifications used at the 1990 and 2000 Censuses are not strictly comparable. The differences lie in the category “BEH”. Also, the category “CARE” was not in 1990 but there was a category “CFB”. The residual category “Other” therefore also differs. To allow

comparison between 1990 and 2000, some categories were grouped into the above 12 categories

2. Prevalence of disability

At the 2000 Population Census, there were 40,790 persons in the Republic of Mauritius who were reported as being disabled compared to 27,852 in 1990. This represents an increase of 46.5% in the number of disabled persons during the inter-censal period.

The 40,790 disabled persons reported a total of 51,064 disabilities - 25,475 by males and 25,589 by females (sex ratio 99.6) as shown in Table 1. On the average, a disabled female suffered from 1.3 disabilities against 1.2 disabilities for a disabled male. “Walking, running and other ambulation disabilities” was the most common disability with 12,017 cases. This was followed by “Seeing disabilities ” with 7,954 cases. These disabilities were also the two most common ones reported at the 1990 Census.

Table 1. Cases of disability by type- 1990 and 2000, Mauritius

Type of Disability	Number Of cases			
	2000		1990	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Walking, running and other Ambulation disabilities	6,427	5,590	4,100	3,012
Manual activity disabilities	2,100	1,745	2,109	1,425
Seeing disabilities	3,519	4,435	2,892	3,871
Hearing and listening disabilities	1,648	2,123	1,254	1,552
Speaking and talking disabilities	2,023	1,578	1,091	913
Disturbance of ability to learn	1,216	1,072	912	799
Disturbance of behaviour	3,116	2,518	3413	2755
Inability to look after oneself with regard to personal care and hygiene, feeding etc.	2,576	3,674	666*	658*
Other disabilities	2,850	2,854	1067	869
All Disabilities	25,475	25,589	17,504	15,854

*Note: In 1990 the category was “ loss of consciousness, fits and blackouts “.

Further analysis will consider number of disabled persons rather than number of cases of disabilities.

In 2000 among the disabled population enumerated there were 20,576 males and 20,214 females, giving a sex ratio (number of disabled males per 100 disabled females) of 101.8. Comparatively, there were 14,613 disabled males and 13,239 disabled females in 1990 with a sex ratio of 110.4, indicating that in both censuses there were more males than females among the disabled population. However, the decline in the sex ratio in 2000 denotes that female disabled population has been growing at a faster rate than the corresponding male population or that coverage (awareness) has improved more for females.

In 2000, the crude disability rate, defined as the number of disabled per 1,000 mid-year population, was 34.6 (35.2 for males and 34.0 for females). Corresponding figure for 1990 was 26.4 (27.7 for males and 25.0 for females). The higher prevalence rates observed at the last census may be due to a change in the age structure. This is removed by standardising the rates for year 2000 using the population of 1990 as standard. The rate was 30.6 for both sexes (31.6 for males and 29.7 for females). The results still point to higher prevalence in 2000 but at a lesser extent.

2.1 Spatial aspects

For effective planning, some idea of the geographical distribution of the disabled is required. Government has identified six health regions and it will be useful to have disability characteristics for these regions. Table 2 shows the disability rate by sex and broad age

groups in the six regions and the proportion of persons by broad disability type.

The highest rate for both sexes is in Port Louis region, but lowest for males is in Island of Rodrigues for males and in Grand Port & Savanne region for females. For males Mobility type disabilities predominate among males in regions 2, 3, 4 and 6 whereas Communication type disability dominates among males in Port Louis and Plaines Wilhems & Black River. Among females, excepting Rodrigues where Mobility type is highest, it is Communication type disabilities in all other regions. There are variations over age regarding the type of disability . Especially in young ages, Communication type dominates for both sexes in all regions. At ages 60 -74, Communication is dominant among both males and females in all regions, except in regions 2,3,4 and 6 among males and in region 6 among females where Mobility type is reported. At the oldest ages 75+, again Communication disability is reported in all regions and among both sexes except in Island of Rodrigues where it is Mobility among males and Development among females.

Table 2. Resident population by health region, type of disability, age and sex, 2000

Region, Sex and Age	Total	Not Disabled	Total Disabled	Disability Rate per 100 pop.	Percentage by type of disability			
					MOB	COM	DEV	OTH
<u>MALE</u>								
Region 1: PORT LOUIS								
All ages.	63,458	60,836	2,591	4.1	30.2	31.6	23.7	14.5
0 – 14	16,677	16,463	211	1.3	18.0	44.1	21.8	16.1
15 – 44	31,626	30,679	924	2.9	26.2	20.2	35.4	18.2
45 – 59	40,777	39,212	1,539	3.8	30.9	22.5	29.2	17.4
60 – 74	4,649	4,113	534	11.5	36.5	39.1	12.9	11.4
75+	1,344	1,038	306	22.8	24.2	55.9	15.7	4.2
Region 2: PAMPLEMOUSSES & RIVIERE REMPART								
All ages	109,649	105,802	3,808	3.5	35.2	28.9	24.2	11.6

0 - 14	28,746	28,458	282	1.0	27.3	36.2	22.7	13.8
15 - 44	57,667	56,342	1,298	2.3	30.2	24.4	31.3	14.1
45 - 59	16,145	15,109	1,033	6.4	41.9	25.1	17.6	15.4
60 - 74	5,557	4,807	749	13.5	39.1	33.0	21.0	6.9
75+	1,529	1,084	445	29.1	33.0	39.3	25.6	2.0
Region 3: MOKA & FLACQ								
All ages	100,824	97,478	3,320	3.3	34.6	29.9	23.1	12.5
0 - 14	26,304	26,044	259	1.0	27.0	33.2	26.6	13.1
15 - 44	53,776	52,516	1,239	2.3	27.4	24.3	34.1	14.3
45 - 59	14,171	13,304	864	6.1	43.2	23.0	17.4	16.4
60 - 74	5,176	4,547	628	12.1	42.2	38.9	12.3	6.7
75+	1,395	1,065	330	23.7	30.6	49.1	14.5	5.8
Region 4: GRAND PORT & SAVANNE								
All ages	85,798	83,018	2,744	3.2	35.8	26.4	26.9	10.9
0 - 14	22,524	22,277	246	1.1	30.1	32.5	28.5	8.9
15-44	45,294	44,275	989	2.2	27.3	20.0	39.6	13.0
45 - 59	11,647	10,957	686	5.9	43.9	22.9	17.9	15.3
60 - 74	5,003	4,497	505	10.1	45.3	31.1	16.8	6.7
75+	1,326	1,009	317	23.9	33.8	42.0	21.1	3.2
Region 5: PLAINES WILHEMS & BLACK RIVER								
All ages	206,327	198,553	7,571	3.7	30.0	30.4	25.8	13.9
0 - 14	50,276	49,639	618	1.2	18.4	35.6	30.4	15.5
15 - 44	103,780	101,051	2,580	2.5	24.5	23.2	36.5	15.8
45 - 59	33,017	31,124	1,875	5.7	36.5	24.6	22.8	16.1
60 - 74	15,094	13,514	1,570	10.4	35.6	37.7	14.8	11.9
75+	4,141	3,211	924	22.3	29.9	46.3	17.6	6.2
Region 6 : ISLAND OF RODRIGUES								
All ages	17,700	17,148	542	3.1	39.3	31.7	27.1	1.8
0 - 14	5,578	5,481	97	1.7	27.8	44.3	23.7	4.1
15 - 44	8,768	8,566	197	2.2	33.0	29.4	37.1	0.5
45 - 59	2,020	1,953	66	3.3	48.5	22.7	25.8	3.0
60 - 74	1,071	963	108	10.1	52.8	30.6	13.9	2.8
75+	259	183	74	28.6	43.2	31.1	25.7	0.0

FEMALE

Region 1: PORT LOUIS								
All ages	64,397	61,681	2,695	4.2	25.3	35.6	22.7	16.4
0 - 14	16,071	15,902	167	1.0	15.6	40.7	22.8	21.0
15 -44	30,545	29,915	618	2.0	15.9	28.3	34.8	21.0
45 - 59	9,874	9,266	605	6.1	27.4	27.8	22.0	22.8
60 - 74	5,688	5,009	676	11.9	29.7	42.2	14.9	13.2
75+	2,204	1,578	625	28.4	30.6	41.8	19.8	7.8
Region 2: PAMPLEMOUSSES & RIVIERE REMPART								
All ages	111,457	107,853	3,578	3.2	28.3	33.6	25.4	12.8
0 -14	120,544	116,846	3,671	3.0	27.9	33.8	25.5	12.8
15 -44	58,068	57,173	884	1.5	24.2	27.0	31.2	17.5
45 - 59	16,294	15,327	962	5.9	33.6	25.5	23.3	17.7
60 - 74	6,591	5,800	787	11.9	30.5	41.7	17.9	9.9
75+	2,493	1,757	735	29.5	26.3	40.8	29.8	3.1
Region 3: MOKA & FLACQ								
All ages	101,494	98,219	3,265	3.2	27.8	34.4	25.5	12.3

0 - 14	25,803	25,600	203	0.8	22.7	41.4	25.1	10.8
15 - 44	51,930	51,023	903	1.7	22.8	24.5	37.3	15.4
45 - 59	14,812	13,991	816	5.5	33.1	27.1	20.6	19.2
60 - 74	6,522	5,814	707	10.8	33.1	43.3	15.6	8.1
75+	2,419	1,786	633	26.2	24.2	45.7	25.9	4.3
Region 4: GRAND PORT & SAVANNE								
All ages	87,223	84,609	2,605	3.0	27.8	31.4	27.8	13.1
0 - 14	22,053	21,891	160	0.7	21.9	41.9	27.5	8.8
15 - 44	43,847	43,133	710	1.6	19.3	27.5	36.5	16.8
45 - 59	12,652	12,014	635	5.0	36.7	20.0	22.2	21.1
60 - 74	6,381	5,813	568	8.9	31.9	39.4	20.1	8.6
75+	2,277	1,746	531	23.3	25.8	38.4	31.3	4.5
Region 5: PLAINES WILHEMS & BLACK RIVER								
All ages	212,442	204,659	7,463	3.5	26.0	34.8	26.8	12.4
0 - 14	49,626	49,222	389	0.8	17.0	43.2	27.2	12.6
15 - 44	104,411	102,432	1,702	1.6	19.0	28.1	36.8	16.1
45 - 59	33,640	32,003	1,628	4.8	28.3	29.3	24.6	17.8
60 - 74	17,622	15,886	1,725	9.8	30.6	38.3	19.5	11.5
75+	7,114	5,094	2,013	28.3	27.8	40.4	26.1	5.7
Region 6 : ISLAND OF RODRIGUES								
All ages	18,079	17,471	608	3.4	39.8	29.3	28.9	2.0
0 - 14	5,571	5,481	90	1.6	27.8	42.2	25.6	4.4
15 - 44	8,932	8,769	163	1.8	34.4	34.4	28.8	2.5
45-59	1,938	1,850	88	4.5	46.6	25.0	26.1	2.3
60 - 74	1,205	1,083	122	10.1	55.7	22.1	21.3	0.8
75+	432	287	145	33.6	35.9	24.1	39.3	0.7

Considering the districts, the largest number of disabled were found in the district of Plaines Wilhems and the lowest in Black River in 2000. Comparison of the disability rates by district however shows that the district of Port Louis had the highest prevalence with a disability rate (DR) of 41.3 per 1000 population . Black River had the lowest rate. Rodrigues also had comparatively lower rate.

Nevertheless, given that the number of disabled is also affected by the age structure, standardised disability rates (SDR) are used to compare disability prevalence among districts. The SDR per 1,000 population given in Table 3, using the total population as the standard, shows that highest rate is still in the district of Port Louis (SDR of 38.8) but Savanne had the lowest. Interestingly, Rodrigues indicates higher rate (34.9) than even Island of Mauritius (34.5),

perhaps because of higher prevalence among females. Age-sex structure therefore seems to play important role in differentials in disability. In 1990 also Port Louis had the highest rate but Rodrigues showed lowest rate, may be because of under reporting. The high rate in the capital, Port Louis could be because of better facilities or more awareness.

Table 3 – Disabled population by district and sex – 1990 and 2000

District	1990			2000			SDR per 1000
	Number of disabled		DR per 1000	Number of disabled		DR per 1000	
	Male	Female		Male	Female		
Port Louis	2,129	2,128	32	2,591	2,695	41.3	38.8
Pamplemousses	1,434	984	23.8	2,061	1,880	32.2	35.4
R.du Rempart	1,216	951	25	1,747	1,698	34.8	37.7
Flacq	1,453	1,328	24.7	2,101	1,990	32.3	35.2
Grand Port	1,304	1,188	25.8	1,693	1,630	31.2	32.6
Savanne	957	772	28.4	1,051	975	30.5	31
Plaines Wilhems	4,407	4,337	27.2	6,582	6,635	36.9	33.5
Moka	762	705	22.5	1,219	1,275	33	34.6
Black River	568	474	23.8	989	828	30	33.1
Island of Mauritius	14,230	12,867	26.5	20,034	19,606	34.7	34.5
Rodrigues	383	372	22.1	542	608	32.1	34.9
Mauritius	14,613	13,239	26.4	20,576	20,214	34.6	34.6

2.2. Disability by type

The type of disability prevalent is important for designing preventive and protective action programs. According to Table 4, some types of disability have a greater incidence on the population than others. The most common disability reported in 2000 was “Walking, running and other ambulation disabilities” with 9,144 persons representing 22.4% of all disabled persons. This was followed by “Seeing disabilities” reported by 6,670 persons or 16.4% of the disabled.

These two disabilities were also predominant in 1990. It should be mentioned that those suffering from “Ambulation and manual activity disabilities” decreased from 1,689 in 1990 to 803 in 2000. This may be due to the fact that many of those suffering from this type of disability may have reported as suffering from “Inability to look after oneself, with regard to personal care and hygiene, feeding etc.”- a category which was introduced at Census 2000 with a reported about 4,000 persons.

Table 4. Type of disability by sex, 1990 and 2000

DISABILITY	1990		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Walking, running and other ambulation disabilities (MTION)	3034	2239	4996	4148
Manual activity disabilities (MANU)	813	463	1321	974
Ambulation and manual activity disabilities (MTION & MANU)	972	717	417	386
Seeing disabilities (EYE)	2476	3237	2977	3693
Hearing and listening disabilities (EAR)	712	885	887	1146
Seeing, hearing and listening disabilities (EYE & EAR)	206	333	322	533
Speaking and talking disabilities (SPCH)	631	514	1523	1107
Hearing and listening and speaking and talking disabilities (EAR ^ SPCH)	253	233	403	398
Disturbance of ability to learn (LEARN)	767	641	813	689
Disturbances of behaviour (BEH)	3144*	2569*	2755	2150
Inability to look after oneself with regard to personal care and hygiene ,feeding etc (CARE)	577*	572*	1571	2412
Other	1028	836	2591	2578
TOTAL	14613	13239	20576	20214

Note: In 1990 categories were : Mental and Fits respectively

Summarizing table 4 into broader meaningful categories, table 5 shows that both in 1990 and 2000, “MOB” was more frequent

among the males and accounted for around a third of disabled male population compared to slightly more than a quarter for the female disabled population. Conversely, “ COM” was most frequent among the females accounting for more than a third compared to less than a third for the male. The pattern by sex could be due to age structure.

Table 5.Disabled population by broad group of type of disability and sex- 1990 and 2000

Broad type of Disability category	1990				2000			
	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Male	Percent	Female	Percent
Mobility (MOB)	4819	33	3419	25.8	6734	32.7	5508	27.2
Communication (COM)	4278	29.3	5202	39.3	6112	29.7	6877	34
Development (DEV)	4488	30.7	3762	28.6	5139	25	5251	26
Other (OTH)	1028	7.0	836	6.3	2591	12.6	2578	12.8
All	14613	100	13239	100	20576	100	20214	100

2.3. Disability by age and sex

Table 6 indicates that the disabled population was relatively older than the overall population. About two thirds of the disabled persons were aged 45 years and over compared to less than a quarter for the overall population. The median age of the disabled population works out to 53.0 years compared to 29.2 for the total population. Furthermore, the female disabled population was relatively older than its male counterpart, the median age of the female disabled being 57.4 years against 48.7 for the male. It is to be noted that in 2000, nearly half of the total female disabled were aged 60 years and over.

Between 1990 and 2000, the increase in number of disabled was more among females and at ages 35 and above.

Table 6. Percentage age distribution of the disabled population and of the total population by sex: 2000

Age group	Disabled Population, (percentage)		Total Population,(percentage)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
0 – 14	8.3	6	25.7	24.7
15 – 44	35.1	24.7	51.5	50
45 – 59	25	23.4	14.8	15
60 – 74	19.9	22.7	6.3	7.4
75 +	11.6	23.2	1.7	2.8
All Ages (Number)	20,576	20,214	583,756	595,092

Table 7 shows that the likelihood of having a disability increases with age . In 2000, among children aged 0 to 14 years, 10 out of 1,000 had some form of disability. In the age groups 15 to 39 years it was around 20, at ages 40-59 it increased to around 60 , further increased to around 100 at ages 60-74 and was more than 200 at ages 75 and over. Prevalence of disability was higher among males than among females at all age groups except at very old ages, because of much larger proportions of oldest old among females. Similar patterns were noted at the 1990 Census. Also, the likelihood of having a disability was higher in 2000 than in 1990. This is true for all age groups irrespective of sex.

Table 7. Number of disabled population and disability rate (DR per 1000) by sex: 1990 and 2000

Age	2000				1990			
	Male	DR	Female	DR	Male	DR	Female	DR
0 – 4	277	5.8	231	5	203	4,2	161	3.4
5 – 9	656	12.4	448	8.6	484	9.2	406	8
10 - 14.	780	15.8	539	11.2	763	13.4	530	9,5
15 - 19.	833	16.1	592	11.7	733	14.9	541	11.3
20 - 24.	901	16.3	597	10.7	947	18.1	593	11.8
25 - 29.	915	19.6	582	12.4	1059	19.7	733	14.1
30 - 34.	1,255	25.1	814	16.4	989	20.7	709	15.5
35 - 39.	1,702	33	1,159	23	999	24.2	744	18.6

40 - 44.	1,621	35.4	1,236	27.7	888	29.5	861	28.4
45 - 49.	1,797	45.9	1,499	38.6	1,039	47.4	835	36/6
50 - 54.	1,675	60.3	1,619	55.5	981	53.1	785	40.1
55 - 59.	1,667	86.7	1,616	76	1,127	71.8	815	49.5
60 - 64.	1,413	92.3	1,396	78.4	1,180	80	1,000	62.2
65 - 69.	1,264	107.5	1,413	100.9	1,128	99.8	1,063	82.1
70 - 74	1,417	149.3	1,776	145.5	857	132.3	1,034	125.1
75+	2,396	239.7	4,682	276.4	1,236	199.6	2,429	210.3
All ages	20,576	35.2	20,214	34	14,612	27.2	13,239	25

A summary measure of mortality and disability is disability free life and duration of disability.

Table 8 shows that whereas life expectation in 1990 was 65.6 for males and 73.4 for females, in 2000 there was increase for both sexes to 68.2 for males and 75.3 for females. Taking into consideration the prevailing disability rates, disability free expectations came to 62.8 for male and 70.1 for females in 1990 and 64.7 for male and 70.9 for female in 2000. Thus, there seem to be disability life of about 2.8 years for male and 3.3 years for females on an average at birth in 1990. In 2000. corresponding figures are 3.5 years for males and 4.4 years for females. Though mortality conditions improved, the increased disability of recent period more than wiped off the gain.

Table 8. Disability free life table, by sex: 1990 and 2000

Age	1990						2000					
	Male			Female			Male			Female		
	e_x	eD_x	DFL_x	e_x	eD_x	DFL_x	e_x	eD_x	DFL_x	e_x	eD_x	DFL_x
0	65.6	2.7	62.9	73.4	3.3	70.1	68.2	3.5	64.7	75.3	4.4	70.9
1 - 4	66.1	2.7	62.4	73.7	3.3	70.4	68.4	3.5	64.9	75.5	4.4	71.1
5 - 9	62.3	2.7	59.6	69.9	3.3	66.6	64.6	3.5	61.1	71.4	4.4	67.0
10 - 14	57.4	2.7	54.7	65.0	3.2	61.8	59.7	3.4	55.3	66.5	4.3	62.2
15-19	52.5	2.6	49.9	60.1	3.2	56.9	54.8	3.4	51.4	61.6	4.3	57.3
20-24	47.7	2.6	45.1	55.3	3.1	52.2	50.0	3.3	46.7	56.7	4.2	52.5
25-29	42.9	2.5	40.4	50.6	3.1	47.5	45.3	3.2	42.1	51.8	4.2	47.6
30-34	38.3	2.4	35.9	45.8	3	42.8	40.6	3.2	37.4	47.1	4.1	43.0
35-39	33.8	2.3	31.5	41.0	3	38.0	36.0	3.1	32.9	42.3	4.1	38.2
30-44	29.4	2.3	27.1	36.3	2.9	33.4	31.5	3	28.2	37.5	4	33.5
45-49	25.3	2.2	23.1	31.7	2.8	28.9	27.3	2.9	24.4	32.9	3.9	29.0
50-54	21.4	2.0	18.4	27.3	2.7	24.6	23.3	2.7	20.6	28.4	3.8	24.6
55-59	18.0	1.9	16.1	23.1	2.6	20.5	19.6	2.6	17.0	24.2	3.6	20.6

60-64	14.8	1.8	13.0	19.1	2.4	16.7	16.1	2.4	13.7	20.3	3.4	16.9
65-69	12.0	1.7	10.3	15.4	2.3	13.1	13.2	2.2	11.0	16.6	3.2	13.4
70-74	9.6	1.6	8.0	12.2	2.2	10.0	10.6	2.1	8.5	13.3	3.1	10.2
75+	7.5	1.5	6.0	9.6	2	7.6	8.4	2	6.4	10.5	2.9	7.6

e_x = expectation of life at age $x, x+5$, eD_x = disability life at age $x-x+5$, DFL_x = disability free life at age $x-x+5$

2.4.Type of disability by age and sex

In Table 9, prevalence of disability at Census 2000 has been calculated by broad type of disabilities, age group and sex. Among males of all ages, “ MOB” was the most prevalent, while among females, “COM” predominated (both with rate of 11.5 per 1,000 population). “ DEV “ type disabilities prevailed almost equally among males and females but at lower intensity than “ MOB “ and “ COM “ .

However, disability pattern changed with age. Thus, among both sexes for the very young (0-14 years) and oldest (75 years and above) “ COM “ was most prevalent, while among those aged 15 – 44 years “ DEV” dominated. Disabilities prevailing most in ages 45 to 74 years was “ MOB “ for males but for females it was “ MOB “ at ages 45 – 59 and “ COM “ at 60-74. It seems that males face more “ mobility “ related issues and females encounter “ communication “ problems.

Table 9. Disability prevalence (per 1000) by age group, sex and broad category of disability: 2000

Age	Male					Female				
	MOB	COM	DEV	OTH	Total	MOB	COM	DEV	OTH	Total
0 – 14	2.7	4.2	3.1	1.5	11.4	1.6	3.5	2.1	1.1	8.3
15 – 44	6.5	5.5	8.5	3.5	24	3.5	4.6	5.9	2.8	16.7
45 – 59	23.9	14.5	11.9	9.4	59.7	16.7	14.1	12.2	10	53.1
60 – 74	43.7	40.5	17.4	10.4	112	33	41.6	18.8	10.7	104.2

75 +	73.7	109.3	45.9	10.8	239.7	75.9	112.3	74.1	14.1	276.4
All ages	11.5	10.5	8.8	4.4	35.2	9.3	11.5	8.8	4.3	33.9

3. Social Characteristics

3.1. Disabled persons by living arrangements

Disabled populations in institution

Of the 40,790 persons with disabilities, 96.5% (39,361) were living in private households and only 3.4% (1,380 persons) were living in institutions . Thus, in the country, the family still caters for most of the disabled, despite break up of families and reduction in family size.

However, among the disabled population in institutions a higher proportion were females - some 58.7% compared to 49.3% in private households. They were also older – about 52.4% were aged 60 years and over compared to about 38.1% in private households. Only 2.0% of the institutional population were aged less than 15 years. More than 50% of the disabled population living in institutions were single compared to about 35.1% for the total disabled population . Some 17.0% were widowed.

Disabled persons in private households

Among those residing in private households, just over 50% were males. A breakdown by age group shows that 7.4% of the disabled in private households were less than 15 years, 30.2% were in the age group 15 to 44 years, and 38.1% were aged 60 years and over.

In 2000, there were 2,266 disabled persons living alone compared to 1,537 in 1990. Furthermore, some 639 two-member households and 91 three-member households comprised disabled members only. The corresponding figures for year 1990 were 368 and 42 respectively. Thus around 3000 households in 2000 were composed of disabled persons only, as compared to about 2000 households in 1990. Even though, number of disabled persons in institutions is small, the wholly disabled person households may have some problems which need looking into.

About 34,000 or 11.5% of all households enumerated in 2000 had one or more disabled members against 23,600 or 10.0% in 1990. The proportion of households with disabled persons decreased from 12.3% for one-member households to 7.9 % for four-member households; the proportion then steadily increased to a maximum of 25.3% for households of size ten and above.

Small households (1-2 members) had around 13% of their members disabled. It decreased to 10% for middle sized households (3-4 members), then it steadily increased to reach 33 % in households with 10 or more members.

The burden on members of household increased when household size increased. Whereas the average size of households with no disabled members was 4.0 in 2000, it increased, but relatively slowly to 5.5 in households with 3 or more members , implying that whereas one disabled member households had 3.3 non disabled, it reduced steadily to less than 2.5 among households with 3+ disabled. In 1990, corresponding figures were more favourable with 3.9 non disabled members among households with one disabled members to more than 3 non disabled members in large households,

implying that there is reduction of almost one non disabled member per household in recent period.

Table 10. Disabled resident population in private households by size of household: 1990 and 2000

Household size	Total		Households with indicated number of disabled			
	Households	Disabled population	0	1	2	3+
	2000					
All households.	296,294	39,361	262,307	29,373	3,987	627
1 person hh.	18,484	2,266	16,218	2,266	0	0
2 persons . hh	39,184	5,407	34,416	4,129	639	0
3 persons . hh	59,082	6,346	53,560	4,789	642	91
4 persons . hh	86,512	7,844	79,672	5,992	713	135
5 + persons hh	93,032	17,498	78,441	12,197	1,993	401
Average hh size	4	4.4	4	4.3	4.7	5.5
	1990					
All households.	236,110	27,177	212,523	20,589	2,534	463
1 person. Hh.	12,336	1,537	10,799	1,537	0	0
2 persons .hh	25,092	2,998	22,462	2,262	368	0
3 persons .hh.	39,673	3,247	36,838	2,465	328	42
4 persons .hh	55,797	4,185	52,143	3,215	358	81
5 + persons hh	103,212	15,210	90,281	11,121	1,480	340
Average hh size	4.5	5	4.4	4.9	5.3	6.4

An average household headed by disabled member had slightly more than half a member under age 15 with male headed households showing a much higher number of 2/3 of a member and female headed ones having only around a third of a youngster member. Households with male heads younger than 35 or older than 45 had lower number of youngsters , but among female headed households there was a decreasing trend of youngsters. In other words, female heads are older and have less number of youngsters also.

Table 11. Households headed by disabled persons by age of head, by sex and number of members under age 15: 2000

Number of members under 15	Total	Age in years				
		20-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Both sexes						
All households.	14,758	546	1,824	3,197	3,353	5,834
Total members under 15	8405	647	2333	1954	1456	2015
Average no. of members under 15	0.57	1.18	1.28	0.61	0.43	0.35
Male heads						
All households.	10,447	483	1,542	2,472	2,438	3,508
Total members under 15	6861	581	2135	1639	1086	1420
Average no. of members under 15	0.66	1.2	1.38	0.66	0.45	0.4
Female heads						
All households.	4,311	63	282	725	915	2,326
Total members under 15	1544	66	198	315	370	595
Average no. of members under 15	0.36	1.05	0.7	0.43	0.4	0.26

3.3. Relationship with other members of household

Out of 39,361 disabled persons living in private households, 14,747 (10,437 males and 4,310 females) were reported as heads of households in 2000, giving headship rates of 37.5% (52.3% for male and 22.2% for female). This is a slight increase from 1990 of 35.1 for both sexes - 49.2 for male and 21.5 for female.

Female disabled heads of households were relatively older than their male counterparts. Thus, in 2000, the mean age of disabled heads was 57.8 years for males and 65.1 years for females; the corresponding figures for year 1990 were 56.6 and 61.6 years respectively. Furthermore, disabled heads are relatively much older than other heads of households, the mean age of all heads being only 46.0 years for the males and 56.2 years for the females.

Table 12 shows the relationship of the disabled with the head of household. Headship rate increased slightly for both sexes between 1990 and 2000 and was around 50% among males and slightly above 20% for females. Proportion of spouses remained similar between 1990 and 2000 and was naturally very much higher among females, reaching more than a fifth. There was fall in proportion of

children mostly comprising single children. Parents indicated a desirable trend of an increase, especially female.

Table 12. Percentage distribution of disabled population in private households by relationship to head and sex: 1990 and 2000

Relationship to head	1990		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Head	49.1	21.5	52.3	22.2
Spouse	1.6	20.3	1.5	22.5
Children	33.8	27.9	30.1	21.3
Spouse of child	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
Grand child	1.5	1.2	1.7	1.1
Parent of head	3.2	12.4	4.7	15.9
Other relative	9.9	15.5	9.1	16.3
Total number	14344	12833	19956	19405

It is worth noting that the proportion of parent of head among disabled was much higher than among the overall population (2.0%) at Census 2000. As regards children, the proportion decreased by about 5 percent points between 1990 and 2000 reflecting the general decline in fertility. Naturally, female heads are older, but among spouses, males are older, as expected. There are also sizeable number of other relatives, especially older females.

Table 13. Disabled population by relationship to head, age and sex.

Relationship to Head of household	Age in years					
	Total	Under 15	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Head	14,747	-	40	2328	6545	5,830
Male	10,437	-	35	1988	4905	3,505
Female	4,310	-	5	340	1640	2,325
Spouse of head	4,672	-	59	1122	2391	1,100
Male	306	-	1	47	158	100
Female	4,366	-	58	1075	2233	1,000
Unmarried child. . . .	9,174	2,485	2374	3558	746	8
Male	5,450	1,472	1466	2167	342	2
Female	3,724	1,013	908	1391	404	6

Ever married child . .	974	1	62	660	238	13
Male	567	-	23	421	119	4
Female	407	1	39	239	119	9
Spouse of child.	130	-	27	62	29	12
Male	56	-	5	25	19	7
Female	74	-	22	37	10	5
Grand-child.	565	339	151	64	5	6
Male	337	197	94	45	0	1
Female	228	142	57	19	5	5
Parent of head	4,016	-	6	7	607	3,396
Male	935	-	-	2	114	819
Female	3,081	-	6	5	493	2,577
Other relative	4,973	75	165	1204	1634	1,888
Male	1,813	30	94	656	646	385
Female	3,160	45	71	548	988	1,503

3.2 Marital characteristics

Among the 36,412 disabled aged 20 years and over enumerated in 2000, 9,970 were single, 15,606 were married, 8,763 were widowed and 1,973 were divorced/separated; representing respectively 27.4%, 42.9%, 24.1%, and 5.4%. Disaggregated figures by sex show that the proportion of married among males (56.9%) was much higher than the corresponding proportion among the females (29.2%) while the proportion of widowed was much higher among females, that is 40.3%, compared to only 7.5% among the males. This may be due to: (1) there is a higher proportion of elderly among disabled women, (2) male mortality is higher than female and (3) husbands are older than wives. The proportions of single was higher in 1990 (30.7%) .However, for all other marital categories, there was increase in 2000.

When comparison is made with the overall population of the corresponding age group, we find that the proportion of single or never married persons, especially among females, was higher for the disabled than for the overall population. There was only a 10% difference for males as against a 70% difference for females. One possible reason may be that disabled persons have a lower propensity/opportunity to get married because of their disabilities which may also be most acute for females.

Table 14. Proportion of disabled population by marital status and sex : 1990 and 2000

Marital status	1990				2000			
	Disabled population		Total population		Disabled population		Total population	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single	32.6	28.5	39.4	26.3	30.3	24.5	26.9	14.7
Married	54.8	28.2	57.3	57.6	56.9	29.2	68.6	65.9
Widowed	6.8	37.6	1.8	12.5	7.5	40.3	2	14.7
Divorced/separated	4.5	5.6	1.5	3.6	4.8	6	2.3	4.2

Table 15. Proportion of disabled population by marital status and type of disability by sex: 2000

Marital status	Type of disability							
	MOB		COM		DEV		OTH	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Single	25.9	24.5	33.9	28.1	63.9	43	37.3	30.2
Married	62.5	31.3	54.7	25.2	25.2	19.2	54.7	34
Widowed	7	39	8.8	43.2	5.4	31.2	3.2	26.2
Divorced/separated	4.7	5.2	2.5	3.4	5.6	6.6	4.7	9.6

Whereas “ MOB “ and “ COM “ are foremost among the married males , “ DEV” is most prevalent among single men. The highest proportion among all types of disabilities is shown by widowed females. Mostly the pattern reflects the peculiar age structure of the groups . Table 16 shows the age-sex distribution by marital status and clearly indicates that males are predominantly married and comparatively younger whereas females are mostly widowed, divorced/ separated and are much older. Also Mobility was a significant issue for single, married, widowed and older divorced men, “ DEV “ showed up among the single and younger divorced men. Among women, “ COM “ was dominant among widows, “

DEV “ was among young single and old divorcees and “ DEV “ was shown among older single and younger divorcees.

Table 16. Percent of disabled population by age, sex and marital status by of type of disability: 2000

Age	Male					Female				
	SIN GLE									
	Total	MOB%	COM%	DEV%	OTH%	Total	MOB%	COM%	DEV%	OTH%
All ages.	8,005	22	26	40	12	6,300	21	31	36	12
under 35	4,956	22	30	36	12	3,127	18	37	33	12
35-59	2,546	21	18	48	13	1,326	23	23	40	14
60+	501	24	25	44	8	678	30	31	32	7
MARRIED										
All ages.	10,238	41	33	12	14	5,392	32	32	19	17
under 35	572	39	23	17	19	537	23	27	26	24
35-59	3,843	45	27	11	18	1,995	33	29	17	21
60+	4,504	38	42	12	8	537	33	38	19	10
WIDOWED										
All ages.	1,363	34	40	20	6	7,412	29	40	22	9
under 35	4	25	25	25	25	20	25	15	30	39
35-59	119	46	16	20	18	914	32	30	18	20
60+	1,238	33	42	20	5	6,360	28	42	23	7
DIVORCED & SEPARATED										
All ages.	871	36	18	32	14	1,107	26	21	31	22
under 35	75	28	8	51	13	116	16	16	43	24
35-59	572	35	16	34	14	756	27	16	33	24
60+	222	43	26	22	9	234	27	42	18	13

3.4 School attendance

There has been a general improvement in the school participation of the disabled during the inter-censal period and it was more perceptible for females. Thus, the proportion of disabled females aged 2 years and over who never attended school decreased by about 5 percent points between 1990 and 2000. Correspondingly, the proportion of those who attended in the past increased. On the other hand, for males, there was only slight increase in proportion who are attending and those who attended in the past with corresponding decline in the never attended group.

Thus, the proportion of males currently attending school and those who attended school in the past were significantly higher than those of females. While the proportion of disabled females who never attended school was almost twice as high as the males, indicating the persistence of gender disparity in school participation of the disabled.

Disabled persons are less likely to attend school than the non-disabled persons. Comparison with overall population shows that disabled persons had a currently attending school rate in both 2000 and 1990 of only a fifth of those for overall population. Moreover, there was enormous gap in the proportion of those never attended school between disabled and overall population and gender gap was also more pronounced. These observations may be explained to some extent by the fact that the disabled population was relatively older than the overall population, but may be more due to accessibility or availability of opportunities.

Table 17. Percentage distribution of the resident population aged 2 years and over by school attendance and sex and disability status: 1990 and 2000

School attendance	1990				2000			
	Disabled population		Total population		Disabled population		Total population	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Now	5.9	5	26.1	25	6.7	4.6	26	24.8
Past	64.7	46.3	65.3	58	68.6	50.8	67.8	62.8
Never	28.2	48	8.5	16.9	23.5	43.3	6	12.3

3.5 – Level of education

Table 18 shows the distribution of the disabled and the overall population aged 5 years and over by educational attainment. Broadly, there has been an improvement in the educational attainment of both the disabled males and females during the period 1990 – 2000.

The proportion of disabled with no education and with only primary level of education has decreased with some corresponding improvement in secondary and tertiary level education. Thus, the proportion of disabled persons with no education and with only primary level of education, excluding those with Certificate of Primary Education (CPE), decreased from 78.3% for male and 86.8 % for female in 1990 to 71.1% and 82.6% respectively for males and females in 2000. However it was way above that for the overall population with only 46.6% among males and 52.9 among females . During the same period, holders of CPE increased by about 20% for both sexes but was more for males than females, and was comparable with overall population. Secondary level of education increased for both sexes by about 50% but was only half the level of overall population among males and a quarter among females.

A study of the educational attainment by sex reveals that disabled females are more disadvantaged than their male counterparts. About half of the females had no formal education compared to a quarter for the males. At all levels of education males were ahead of females.

Marked differences are observed between the educational attainment of the disabled and that of the overall population. The proportion of disabled with no formal education (34.2%) was significantly higher than that of the overall population (8.7%). The proportion of the overall population with secondary level of education was about 3 times that for the disabled while the proportion of SC and HSC certificate holders for the overall population was about four times higher than for the disabled.

Table 18. Percentage distribution of resident (disabled and overall) population aged 5 years and above by educational attainment and sex: 1990 and 2000

Level of educational	1990	2000	
	Disabled population	Disabled	Total population

Attainment			population			
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Nil and pre primary	28.8	48.8	24.1	44.4	5.3	12.1
Std I-VI but not passed CPE	49.5	38	47	38.2	41.3	40.8
Passed CPE	4.1	2.8	4.9	3.5	4.5	4.6
Primary	53.6	40.8	51.9	41.7	45.8	45.4
Forms I - but not passed SC	10.2	6.2	14.6	8.1	28.6	25.5
Passed SC or HSC	4.5	2.3	6.4	3.2	17.3	15.5
Secondary	14.7	8.5	21	11.3	45.9	41.4
University degree or equivalent	0.6	0.1	0.6	0,2	2.5	1.1

4 – ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Physical and/or mental conditions of the population of disabled amplified by lower educational/training qualifications may impose serious restrictions on the quantity and types of jobs that they are able or perceived able to perform and made available and hence may have an impact on their level and variety of activity.

4.1 Activity status

At the 2000 Population Census, there were 40,790 persons with disabilities, among whom 38,614 were aged 12 years and over. Only 4,751 were economically active representing 12.3% of the disabled population of whom 11.5% also were unemployed. (Table 19).

Table 19. Disabled population aged 12 years and above by current activity status and sex: 1990 and 2000

Activity status	1990		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Economically Active	3198	923	3523	1228
Employed	2972	873	3133	1070
Unemployed	226	50	390	158
Economically inactive	10239	11447	15397	17561
Household duties	184	5053	205	6531
Studies	313	208	486	329
Disability	6465	5100	9754	8690
Retired	3150	953	4816	1730

Disaggregated figures by sex show that the proportion of active among the disabled males, even though low compared with overall population, was almost three times higher than that of disabled females (18.2% for male versus 6.4% for female). Almost a tenth of the active males and females were unemployed. These were slightly higher in 1990 but the same disparity existed.

Among the inactive population, the main cause of inactivity was disability accounting for about two thirds for males and near half for females. The next most important reason of inactivity among the males was “retirement” reported by around less than a third, while among the females it was “household duties” with more than a third. Only a tenth of the inactive females reported “retirement” as the reason for their inactivity perhaps because very few were in employment assuring retirement benefits.

4.3 Level of activity

Comparison with the 1990 Census results shows that the activity rate of the disabled, already rather low, has further regressed from 25.5 for male and 7.4 for female in 1990 to 18.2 for male and 6.4 for female in 2000. Also the proportion of employed among the actives dropped from 93.3% in 1990 to 88.5% in 2000. Conversely, the proportion of the inactive has increased from 83.2% in 1990 to 85.7% in 2000.

When compared with the overall population, we find that activity rates among the disabled population were quite low – only a fourth for male and around a seventh for females of that for the total population. The standardized rates using the 2000 population as standard show some improvements, but still indicate a much lower level of activity among the disabled (Table 20).

Table 20. Activity rate (%) of overall and disabled population by sex, 1990 and 2000

Group	2000		1990	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Activity rate of overall population	73.9	36.4	74.9	32.2
Activity rate of disabled population	19.2	6.4	25.5	7.4
Standardised rate	21.5	9.3		

Figure 1 shows the activity rates of the disabled population and the overall population by age group and sex. The level of activity was highest, around 30%, for the disabled males at age 45 to 49 years while it peaked at only about 14% for the disabled females at age 20 to 24 years. For the overall population, the activity rate peaked at 97% for the males aged between 30 to 34 years while for females, the rate was highest for the age group 25 to 29 years when it reached a level of 51%. Relatively, activity rate for the disabled, is high at ages 30-49, but still it is only less than a third for male and a fourth for the female overall population. Among the inactive, disability was reason among the majority and the rate was highest between ages 30-49 for both sexes. The next reason for males was retirement with highest observed at older ages, whereas for females household duties contributed most of the inactive showing highest rate at age 50-69. This was even larger than the rate for the inactive due to disability. It seems that women even though disabled, continue to do household duties – perhaps necessitated by cultural, economic and social patterns. Table 21 gives further details.

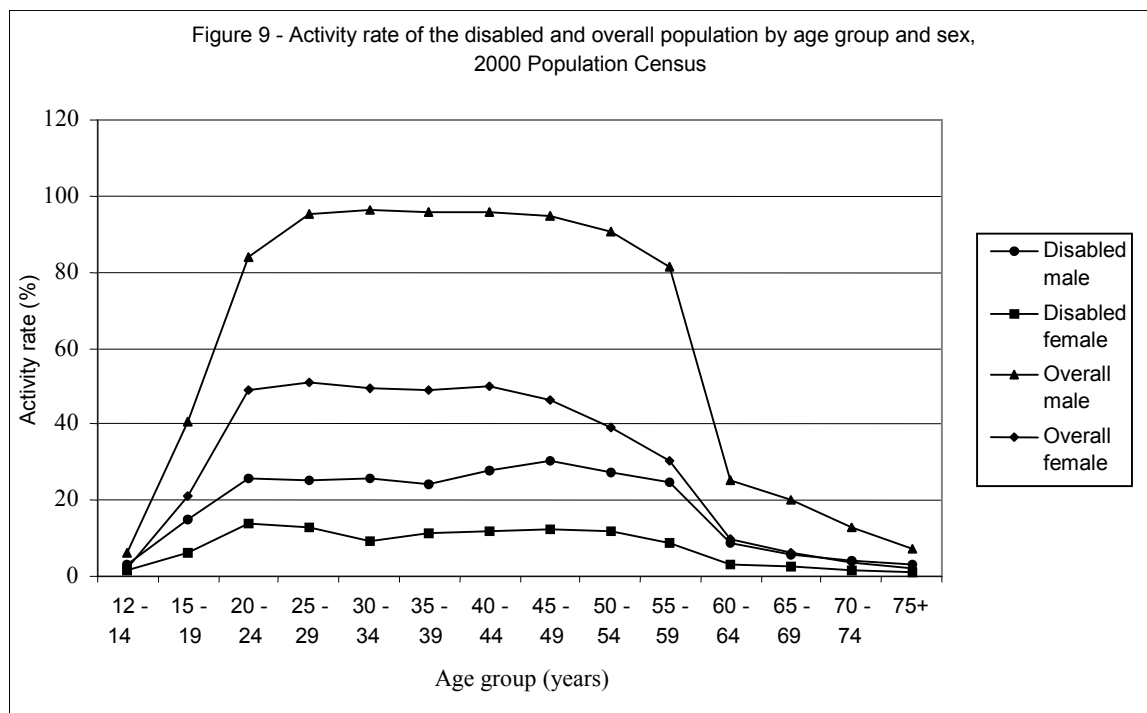


Table 21. Active and inactive by age group and sex, 2000

Age	Male									
	Total	Active	Employed	Unemployed	Activity%	Inactive	hh duties	Study	Disability	Retired
12 – 29	3117	601	420	181	19.3	2481	40	445	1940	2
30 – 49	6,375	1728	1571	157	27.1	4492	58	17	4270	94
50 – 69	6,019	1065	1019	46	17.7	4802	55	17	2770	1953
70 +	3,813	129	123	6	3.4	3622	52	7	774	2767
Age	Female									
	Total	Active	Employed	Unemployed	Activity%	Inactive	hh duties	Study	Disability	Retired
12 – 29	2080	199	135	64	9.6	1858	327	300	1216	0
30 – 49	4708	537	470	67	11.4	4060	1188	9	2830	15
50 – 69	6044	415	392	23	6.9	5490	2391	9	2482	551
70 +	6458	77	73	4	1.2	6273	2625	11	2162	1164

4.4 Activity status by type of disability

Table 22 shows the percentage distribution of the disabled population aged 12 years and above by current activity status and type of disability. The economically inactive predominates among all types of disability but was highest among “ DEV “ type of disability with about 87% of disabled. They were less likely to be employed.

Table 22. Percentage distribution of disabled population aged 12 years and above by current activity and type of disability: 2000

Current activity status	Type of disability			
	MOB	COM	DEV	OTH
Economically active	12.9	15.3	5.9	16.6
Employed	11.7	14	4.5	14.3
Unemployed	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.3
Inactive	86.9	84.3	87.2	82.9

Table 23. Households of disabled persons by number of active and unemployed persons and household size.

Number Active	Number of households	Number of Persons	Average per household	Number of Unemployed	Number of Households	Number of Persons	Average per household
0	4850	9831	2.03	0	12747	43514	3.41
1	4608	15915	3.45	1	1563	7014	4.49
2	3028	13777	4.55	2	358	1937	5.41
3	1440	7851	5.45	3	67	431	6.43

4 +	831	5821	7.00	4+	23	177	7.70
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In addition to individual economic and social burdens on account of disability, there is yet another strain on the disabled coming through household responsibilities. For instance, almost a third of households of disabled persons do not have an economically active member and even with 1 or more active member, the burden is still quite heavy as can be noted from table 23 . Correspondingly , the unemployed category is also quite substantial and doesn't seem to abate proportionately even when household size increases.

Another indicator of the problem is given in table 24 where we note that small households have negligible proportion of active members and even though large households may have 1 or 2 active persons, the increment is not proportionate to increase in household size. On an average a household has 2 or more dependents.

Table 24 Households by size and average number of active and unemployed persons: 2000

Number of economically active persons by household size	Total	Size of household (number of usual residents)				Number of members
		1	2	3	4+	
All households	14,758	2,263	2,806	2,556	7,133	53355
Households with:						
0 active person.	4,850	2,018	1,633	587	612	9831
1 active person.	4,608	245	1,030	1,298	2,036	15981
2 active persons	3,028	0	143	598	2287	13777
3 active persons	1,440	0	0	73	1367	7881
4 +active persons	832	0	0	0	832	5885
Total active persons	18870	245	1316	2713	14596	
Average no. of active persons	1.3	0.1	0.5	1.1	2.2	
Number of unemployed persons	2514	22	141	352	1999	
Average no.of unemployed persons	0.17	0.01	0.05	0.14	0.28	

4.5 Employment by industry and occupation

In 2000, there were 4203 disabled persons in employment- 3133 male and 1070 female. Table 25 gives the employed persons by major industry and occupation groups and sex for 1990 and 2000.

The four major industry and occupation groups considered are:

INDUSTRY GROUPS

- AGRI** Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing, mining and quarrying
- MANU** Manufacturing, electricity, gas, water and construction
- TRAD** Whole sale and retail trade, restaurants, hotels, transport, storage and communication
- SERV** Finance, insurance, real estate, business services, community, social and personal services

OCCUPATION GROUPS

- PROF** Legislators, senior officials, managers, professionals, technical and associate professionals
- CLER** Clerks, service workers, shop and market sales workers,
- SKIL** Skilled agricultural and fishery workers, craft and machine operators and assemblers
- ELEM** Elementary occupations

Table 25. Employed disabled persons aged 12 years and over by industry/occupation by sex, 1990 and 2000

<u>INDUSTRY</u>	1990				2000			
	Male	Percent	Female	Percent	Male	Percent	Female	Percent
AGRI	551	18.6	152	17.6	512	16.4	164	15.5
MANU	1195	40.3	364	42.1	1062	33.9	375	35.4
TRAD	581	19.6	75	8.7	760	24.3	169	16.0
SERV	636	21.5	274	31.7	795	25.4	350	33.1
<u>OCCUPATION</u>								
PROF	343	11.6	67	7.8	292	9.3	119	11.2
CLER	313	10.6	101	11.7	582	18.6	219	20.7
SKIL	1356	45.8	336	38.9	1315	42.0	293	27.7
ELEM	951	32.1	360	41.7	939	30.0	426	40.4

The employed disabled of both sexes were mainly working in “MANU”, group industries followed by “SERV” categories. Whereas there was a fall in “MANU” in the inter censal period, a corresponding increase was noted among “SERV” group.

As regards occupation, whereas “ SKIL “ group was predominant among males, it was “ELEM” which showed largest for females for both periods, however for both groups there was a decrease over time .

Thus it seems that even though generally the disabled are in lower paying/ position jobs, yet males do have an advantage over females in types of jobs available and this may reflect their training and other skills opportunities and acquisitions.

5. Policy implications and recommendations

Increasing disability by age coupled with the fact of an ageing population will result in a dramatic increase in disabled population- a good majority would be females. This will necessitate increasing resources to be allocated for rehabilitation.

Even though institutional population of disabled is still small, about half are aged 60 years and over and predominately female.

Also there are increasingly many households comprising only of disabled persons who have high propensity to depend on kinship groups. With the break up of the extended family system, they are more vulnerable. The future of this category of disabled persons is at stake and more and more may turn to institutional help. Also, among households with at least one disabled person, more than one sixth of such households are very small, which means that these people have little family support. Effort towards amelioration of this category is required. While better services should be provided in these institutions, special income support to carers should be encouraged to prevent these people from moving away from their homes.

The social bondage and security of marriage seems less attainable for the disabled which may be due to other reasons also like economic and educational. This barrier seems more acute for females. Special efforts to assist such individuals may be called for.

The disabled population, especially females also face several problems in respect of education, employment and family support. The National Development Plan 1992-94 took cognizance of the special requirements and needs of the disabled and stated that in

light of the objective of integrating the disabled in society and in providing them with equal opportunities in terms of education, employment and other facilities, needed changes will be effected:

Two pieces of legislation, namely the Trust Fund for Disabled Persons Act and the Employment of Disabled Persons Act, were passed in Parliament in November 1988. Their respective objectives were (i) “to set up training centers and sheltered workshops for, developing and providing appropriate training to, disabled persons with a view to enabling them to secure employment or to work on their own account” and (ii) “to provide for the employment of disabled persons or in the alternative, a contribution to a Trust Fund from employers”. Another piece of legislation, the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act, which reinforced the existing ones, was passed in 1996, which stipulated, *inter alia* that the work force of all employers having 35 employees or more should include 3% of disabled persons. Moreover with the amendment of the Building Act, 1999 a number of buildings have been retrofitted to increase accessibility to disabled persons. Furthermore, the African Union of which Mauritius is a member proclaimed the year 1999 – 2009 as the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities. The aim is to bring about full participation, equality and empowerment of people with disabilities. In this context, the Government took the decision in November 2000 to set up a National Committee under the aegis of the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons (NCRD) to work out and monitor programmes for the decade.

The Government, through the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity & Senior Citizen Welfare and Reform Institutions in conformity with the United Nations Standards Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for persons with disabilities has worked towards the empowerment of the disabled. In this respect, several institutions within the Ministry – the Rehabilitation Unit, the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons (

NCRD) and the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board, were set up.

Fewer disabled persons tend to attend school and even among them many abandon education at primary level. At Census 2000, only two thirds of the disabled persons were currently attending or attended school in the past compared to more than 90 percent of the overall population. Activity rate of the disabled population also was less than a quarter of that for the total population.

Training and Employment is a key to successful integration of disabled persons in the social and economic development. Government and Non-Governmental Organisations should encourage the participation of people with disabilities in education and economic activity to enable them to play fully their role in society. Attempts should therefore be made so that they could enrol and pursue their studies and acquire academic / vocational / skill training to improve employment opportunities.

The “ Trust Fund for Disabled Persons “ is also helping them in providing vocational training so that they could be integrated in the working environment. The legislation “ The Employment of Disabled Persons Act 1988 “ is a further step in this direction. Various awards are also being given so as to encourage the disabled to pursue their studies further and also to employers to encourage them to employ more disabled persons.

Males show higher disability rate than females and the most frequent type of disability is “ ambulatory “. Greater exposure to accidents and injuries on the worksite and road plus the higher incidence of diabetes resulting in amputation is responsible. This is true to a lesser extent for females also. Action programmes to create awareness about diet, exercise and general life style seems called for. Census data shows that leg and arm disability is the most common type of disability. The main reasons could be accidents and injuries at work and the consequences of diabetes. Thus, actions

must be taken for a safe workplace and for the provision for education on proper dieting for a healthy life.

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