

**LAUNCHING OF A PROGRAMME FOR THE CAPACITY BUILDING
OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS TEACHERS**

**ON SATURDAY 27 MAY 2023 AT 11 00 HRS
AT POLYTECHNICS MAURITIUS LTD, POWDER MILL STREET PAMPLEMOUSSES**

**Led by
THE SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AUTHORITY (SENA)**

***UNDER THE AEGIS OF*
THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, TERTIARY EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

***IN COLLABORATION WITH*
THE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION (HEC)
AND
POLYTECHNICS MAURITIUS LTD**



CEMCA

Speech of Dr B Shadrach, Director, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia (CEMCA), New Delhi, India

Her Excellency Honourable Shrimati Kobita Jugnauth, the first lady of Mauritius, also the special Patron of Special Educators of the beautiful nation; Honorable Mrs Leela Devi Dookum Luchoomun, GCSK, the Vice Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology; my dear colleagues, Professor Romeela Mohee of Higher Education Commission, Mr Matabadul of Mauritius Polytechnic, Director Authelsingh of Special Education Needs Authority, and the officials of the Ministry, and the special educators of Mauritius:

My salutation to each one of you from the Commonwealth of Learning, an organisation that you are steering as one of the 56 Commonwealth nations, and as an active member. Mauritius is an important nation for us for two reasons: First, it is one of the very active small island nations; and secondly, a very progressive nation with multiple key organisations in the field of education and skill development in the continent of Africa. We find a special delight in working with the various government agencies of Mauritius, especially with the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology. It was great meeting the Hon'ble Minister in Calgary at the Pan Commonwealth Forum in September last year. Hon'ble Minister, you have been spearheading numerous programmes to see your citizens gain quality education and be engaged in skilling, reskilling, and upskilling. One such activity is today's launch of providing lifelong learning opportunities to Educators under the Special Education Needs Authority, led by Mr Authelsingh, together with the Higher Education Commission, led by Professor Mohee.

When I was leading the Skills Online portfolio at the Commonwealth of Learning in Vancouver, Professor Mohee was literally my neighbor in the office, and we always got to talk to one another after 5pm. And, she is one of those people who believes in micro credentials, needs based byte-sized learning opportunities and short-term skilling efforts, especially for busy professionals. She would often marvel at the quick solutions available with some of these private eLearning providers, who I was engaging with then – the likes of Coursera, Udemy, Google, Udacity, LinkedIn Learning, etc. We at the Commonwealth of Learning, brought these tens and thousands of employment-oriented short-term courses at a fraction of cost to our citizens and the professionals of Commonwealth nations. We skilled over 150,000 people during the Pandemic and a significant number since then.

It is indeed our privilege at COL to work closely with the HEC and SENA to identify the skill gaps and the needs of your special educators and bridging those gaps and needs through short-term skilling that we are going to offer from the 1st of June 2023. By the end of this calendar year, we believe that Mauritius will be equipped with 400 highly skilled special educators who can embrace inclusiveness, diversity, and equity in education. In this effort, Her Excellency Smt Jugnauth's role as the Patron is very noteworthy. For the population of your nation, having 400 special educators well trained and equipped is going to be a landmark achievement. I do not think many nations, large or small, have thought about skilling Special Educators in the way you have thought about. The courses are around Inclusive education, disability inclusion, diversity inclusion, teaching children with visual impairment, severe to profound intellectual disability, managing ADHD, autism, learning difficulties and concussion in school.

A big congratulations to each one of you, especially to Her Excellency and to the Honorable Minister supported by the entire teams at SENA and HEC. We, at the Commonwealth of Learning, are happy to collaborate with you. Thank you!