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GREEN SCHOOL

A NATIONAL CONVENTION TO SHOWCASE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN ADOPTING A MORE RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT



From left to right, Dr K. Coonjan, NPCC Executive Director, Dr V. Bunwaree, Minister of Education and Human Resources, Mr R. Mungur, NPCC Chairman and Mr A. Narassiah Marketing Manager State Informatics Ltd. launching the Green Game



Over the past two decades, Mauritius has been experiencing sustained economic growth with an increase in the standard of living and is now classified in the middle income economy. The consumption patterns of the population, specially the younger ones, have changed drastically compared to the eighties. Increased economic activities and the increase in economic wellbeing are reflected most vividly in the increased quantum of waste generation and its associated disposal load. The corollary to these changes has been the progressing environmental stress both in terms of resource demand and waste disposal in the environment.

Given that today's children represent tomorrow's citizens, it is imperative to groom them to be responsible towards the environment specially if the country wants to achieve sustainable growth and to attract high end tourists so as to promote and sustain tourism as a main economic pillar. The young generation has to take cognizance of the environmental impacts of their activities and act more conscientiously to improve their surroundings - both at school and in the community - in which they live. It can also be expected that children can even impact positively on the present generation through their sphere of influence at home and in the community and thus move towards a more sustainable future... ... continued on P8



The National Productivity and Competitiveness Council seized the opportunity of the National Green School Convention to launch the Green Game which aims at raising awareness of students on environment protection and sustainable consumption.

THE MUDA FREE WORKPLACE FOR A COMPETITIVE CORPORATE SECTOR

With the globalization of business, local companies have to bear the brunt of international competition. The recent international financial crisis has intensified global competition putting additional pressure on firms to create and sustain competitive advantage in order to stay afloat. One of the determinants of competitiveness is to increase the productivity level.

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EQUIP YOUR EMPLOYEES WITH THE RIGHT TOOLS TO PERFORM



NPCC is providing training on productivity tools, techniques, and methodologies you need to succeed. Several training programmes are scheduled between now and October. So, hurry up, invest in your training, enroll now by calling us on 467 7700 or emailing us at natpro@intnet.mu so that in the future you can reap the benefit of your investment and increase your organisation's performance!

Customer Care – Course code CC01
Date: 16-17 August 2010 (2 full days)
Time: 9.00 a.m.-16.00 p.m.
Course Fee: Rs 7,900

Team Building – Course code TB01
Date: 13-14 September 2010 (2 full days)
Time: 9.00 a.m.-16.00 p.m.
Course Fee: Rs 7,900

Green Productivity – Course code GP01
Date: 16-17 October 2010 (2 full days)
Time: 9.00 a.m.-16.00 p.m.
Course Fee: Rs 7,900

ALL COURSES ARE
MQA APPROVED

VIEWS & COMMENTS

Innov Ed 2010

"InnovEd 2010 was a nice learning curve for my students. It proved to be a very enriching process and I am very happy to be part of the award winning team. Competition was tough. Our team came up with something 'original' and 'innovative' but also at a very low cost."

Mr A. Hoolass, facilitator of the upper secondary category winning team

"InnovEd 2010 has been a great and unforgettable experience for us. Winning the award was really an achievement and we really proved to have honoured our school with this victory. Working on the InnovEd project helped us in several ways. It has increased our self-confidence and self-esteem. It has also helped us to develop a team spirit. We hope to keep this innovative process in the future to help us achieve higher goals."

Students of Swami Sivananda State Secondary School

"InnovEd 2010 really inspired us. We learnt to work together as a team and to cooperate. InnovEd was of great help as it enabled us to develop our imagination."

Students of Dr. Maurice Curé State Secondary School

"InnovEd 2010 was an enriching experience for me and my pupils. It has helped them develop critical thinking, creativity and problem solving skills. I believe that such an initiative should be encouraged."

Ms Priyadarshinee Djapermal, facilitator Henrietta Government School

"For Mauritius to move forward, pervasive innovative thinking must take place throughout our society. As I see it, to make this happen, we need to bring about a major shift in the mindset of our people – starting from teachers to Government leaders, children to parents, from corporate leaders to farmers, indeed in all Mauritians."

INNOVATION ON THE MOVE: YOUNG TALENTS SHOW THE WAY

Do you have problems with your measuring tape? Are you scared to be run over while crossing the road? Do you feel you could shorten the time to iron your clothes and thereby save energy? Do you need a new beach bag? Do you want to prevent your long sleeves from getting wet when washing your hands? InnovEd 2010 participants have solved all these problems and hundreds more with admirable creativity and ingenuity showcased during the 6th InnovEd National Convention.



To your assistance come the "3 in 1 tape", which is a measuring tape adjusted with a blade, a pen refill and a felt pen to save you the trouble of getting someone to hold the measuring tape while you are doing markings, the "passerelle roulante" which enables you to cross the road safely at the click of the button of the electronic "passerelle", the "easy ironing", which is a device that makes ironing easier, more economical and gives a double-sided ironing effect, the "All in one Beach Bag", which is a bag cum towel and the "sleevebrella", a bracelet worn at the wrist to protect your long sleeves.

Since February 2010, more than 5500 students from the Republic of Mauritius have chosen to put their academic, decision-making, communication, forecasting and productive thinking talents to fruitful application to come up with innovative ways to solve everyday's problems. 225 outstanding student innovators, who successfully cleared through the regional selections, gathered at the Octave Wiéhé

Auditorium, Réduit on 2nd June 2010 to convince a panel of 15 jurors about the uniqueness of their ideas.

Dr. K. Coonjan, the Executive Director of the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council reiterated the NPCC's role to promote innovation in the country through projects like InnovEd and underlined the need to groom a nation of innovators, to put the country on a path to sustainable – and smarter – growth. He stated: "For us to move forward, pervasive innovative thinking must take place throughout our society. As I see it, to make this happen, we need to bring about a major shift in the mindset of our people – starting from teachers to Government leaders, children to parents, from corporate leaders to farmers, indeed in all Mauritians. It may have to start with the redesigning of the Mauritian mind, which has remained largely conservative and passive. It is imperative that we start early, at the school level itself as we are doing now. We must make innovation and out-of-the-box thinking the expected outcome of our education system and its leadership vision."

The representative of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Mr. Dansinghani, pondered about the issue of constant innovation in teaching to nurture the creative and critical thinking abilities of students entrusted to the care of educators.

InnovEd, a joint project of the NPCC and the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, inspires students to be creative through application of problem solving techniques while developing their innovative potential. Launched in the month of February every year, the project kick-starts with the training of facilitators, whereby participating teachers are introduced to the methodology to be followed for the innovation process as well as different tools that can be used for the purpose. Teachers subsequently guide their students in the problem-solving process. Students then

identify a perceived problem, brainstorm on possible solutions, select and develop one solution and demonstrate their solution in the form of either a drawing, model or prototype. Schools proceed with a selection at their level, and the successful entrants go on to compete at the regional and national levels, where they set up their displays, models and innovator's workbook and answer questions posed by teams of volunteer jurors. The jurors include academicians, engineers, scientists and other professionals drawn from diverse strata of the Mauritian society, who assess the novelty of ideas through their documentation, execution and interview. 

InnovEd 2010 has been made possible through the collaboration and partnership of various stakeholders from the public and the private sectors including the Mauritius Commercial Bank Limited and the Connecticut Invention Convention.



PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Poste de Flacq Government School

TEAM MEMBERS

Hippolite Alexandro
Sookarah Tushaar
Soomary Tejashwinee
Soondun Tulasee
Sonaram Yeshma

PROJECT

“Passerelle roulante”



LOWER PRIMARY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Henrietta Govt School

PROJECT

“Sleeve brella”

TEAM MEMBERS

Alcindore Leon Luciano
Dairion Gaël Samuel
Isseerbeen Bhevin
Capdor Christabella
Rosun Meenti



UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Pandit C. Kistoe Aryan Vedic School

PROJECT

All in one Beach Bag

TEAM MEMBERS

Seetahul Praveer
Gooriah Deeja
Warsally Tasneen
AubeeLuck Manjari
Tecka Prashant



LIST OF WINNERS FOR INNOVED 2010



LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Dr. Maurice Curé SSS

PROJECT

New measuring tape

TEAM MEMBERS

Sorefan Shayma
Sohawon Hadjra



UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL CATEGORY

Swami Sivananda SSS

PROJECT

Easy ironing

TEAM MEMBERS

Arjoon Bhandhini
Rawjee Leenabye
Seedeehul Karouna
Seewoogoolam Mahendi
Huzarfuthy Pahlavee



VIEWS & COMMENTS

InnovEd 2010



“I feel very honoured to collaborate with NPCC for this edition of InnovEd as during the past four years I have been working for T.I.P.A., an association which, through interactive teaching methods and art education, promotes the cognitive, moral and social development of children from vulnerable groups. InnovEd has a lot of similarities with our project at T.I.P.A. as it encourages the development of creative skills, the ability to work in teams, the development of a critical mind and the ability to assess a problem through different angles to propose different solutions which are required for our children to face the rapidly changing environment in which they live nowadays.

The Jury has cast the idea of having an Innovation in Education for Teachers Competition to promote and recognize the creative and innovative educational practices to improve the value of teachers.”

Ms Angélique de la Hogue, Chairperson, National Jury



“Innovation makes the world tick. It is the spark of all human change, improvement and progress. In a world where only change is constant, the only way to predict the future is simply to invent it. In a country where our only resources are human, it is clear that innovation is the only way forward. Knowledge and innovation being two of its core values, the Mauritius Commercial Bank has been naturally attracted to InnovEd since the first edition. We are now strengthening our support: all the winning projects will be touring the country through exhibitions in our main branches. This initiative will place the innovators and their projects even more in the limelight while fostering a culture of innovation across Mauritius.”

Mr Gilbert Gnany, Group Chief Strategy Officer Mauritius Commercial Bank, sponsor of InnovEd 2010



ISAAC GETZ: 'INNOVATE TO CREATE A SELF-MOTIVATING ENVIRONMENT FOR EMPLOYEES TO CONTRIBUTE MORE...'

In the context of its tenth anniversary, the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council organized a lecture on the theme "Liberating Leadership" by Prof Isaac Getz of the ESCP Europe Business School, Paris Campus, at the Octave Wiéhé Auditorium on 15th March 2010. Prof Getz, who has co-authored 'Freedom, Inc.: The remarkable no-cost way to lead your business to higher productivity, profits and growth' shared his thinking

with us in this issue related to innovation and leadership. Excerpts follow:

Prof Getz, with your outstanding experience as an academic and researcher on topics related to innovation, management, corporate excellence, how would you define management innovation?

As opposed to the traditional management principles and practices of planning, coordinating and controlling, management innovation focuses on how we innovate in the way we manage. Management innovation should aim at the management processes so as to create an organizational environment where people basically are self-controlled and self-motivated, and where the former manager becomes the leader at the service of the employees.

Why is it that management innovation matters so much these days?

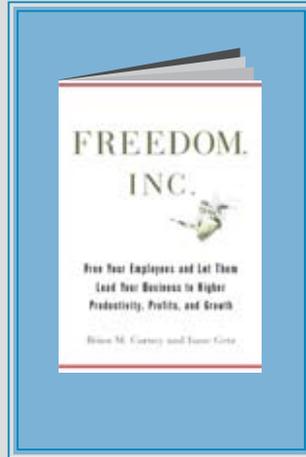
The way you manage or lead people is a critical issue because if you do it in the wrong traditional hierarchical way, commanding and in a controlled manner telling people how to do their job, there is high probability that you end up with demotivated and disengaged workforce who will come to work for the only purpose of making hours and exchanging it for money and this is not the way to build a competitive and highly performing world class company.

In your last book "Freedom, Inc." you advocate more liberty to employees. Human nature being what it is, isn't there the risk that by being less coercive management ends with more problematic situations?

Human nature is defined by human needs, that is everybody wants to be treated intrinsically equal and every one wants to realize his growth potential. The pragmatic question is to create an environment where people take initiatives and how to make

all these initiatives coordinate so that the organization does not look like a chaotic place. In order to achieve that, the leader must share his vision, the destination of the company must be a common one, and he needs to build the organizational culture around certain amount of unwritten shared principles of behaviour.

How would one create that organizational culture and that environment where employees have the complete freedom and responsibility to take actions and initiatives that are best for their companies?



Leaders have to change their behaviour towards their employees: they should depart from that commanding attitude of giving orders to their subordinates but create instead an environment of trust and mutual respect where the vision of the enterprise is communicated, understood and cascaded down so that every employee too emotionally owns that vision. Leaders should empower their employees with the necessary knowledge through training to create an environment where the employee can grow and is able to deliver his full potential to contribute to the well-being of the organization. Bureaucracy has to be removed so that employees are free to self-direct themselves thereby creating an environment whereby unwritten rules, that people in a way will enforce among themselves, will emerge as well as values that the employees will implicitly serve; thus transforming the organization.

NPCC has been promoting participative management approach like 5S, kaizen and quality circles for productivity improvement. Given your experience as consultant to enterprises, how do you consider this approach?

I think it is a very useful approach for organizations to increasingly use continuous improvement philosophy that rely on people working in the organization as the drivers of productivity and quality. This approach provides employees with the opportunity to contribute to the advancement of their organization. NPCC is on the right track and now I believe that NPCC can move on to the next step which is to deal with the issue of leadership in organizations which is in fact the tacit resource of the organization on the one hand and on the other hand the main obstacle for all the people-based approaches to be fully utilized in the organization. 

NPCC NEW VENTURE: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS EMPOWERED IN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Thirteen women entrepreneurs were introduced to the basics of financial management through a course run by the NPCC once a week from 15th April to 10th June 2010. The objectives of this training course were to introduce women entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs to the importance of good financial management and control in business development through acquisition of knowledge in proper accounting systems; to enable them to identify and to understand key financial performance indicators and to calculate and interpret these indicators; to be able to appreciate the importance of good financial planning in the context of business development planning, with particular emphasis on cash flow forecasting; and to evaluate how changes in sales, pricing, and costs impact on profit.

The benefit of the course is palpable to the participants. In one case, one of the women entrepreneurs who operates a small snack in Rose-Hill stated that, through the knowledge acquired during the course, she managed to reduce the labour cost



of her business by 68%. She explained that she was hiring the services of two employees at the cost of Rs 5000 per month and that after a few training sessions, she decided to pay them only for the day they worked and the total cost was reduced to Rs 1600 per month; thus enabling her to save some money that she intends to invest into other training to assist in further business development.

For another entrepreneur who develops handicrafts, she could not understand the accounting process and know whether her business was profitable or not. By the end of the course, she was better equipped to understand her expenses and calculate more accurately her profits. Besides, she could also manage more efficiently her working capital by planning the level of inventory of products she purchased from her suppliers. 



THE MUDA FREE WORKPLACE FOR A COMPETITIVE CORPORATE SECTOR ... continued

Productivity can be addressed in several ways by:

- reducing and eliminating muda (non-value adding activities), muri (strain for machines and people), and mura (variations or inconsistencies in ways things are done) in the first instance
- reducing wastage in materials usage
- eliminating inefficient use of machines
- increasing employee morale and reducing absenteeism rate
- eliminating defects and rework
- avoiding delays on delivery targets

With the experience accumulated over several years of intervention in the government sector and private companies, the NPCC has devised the Muda Free Workplace programme to support both public and private companies aiming to improve their productivity and competitiveness; to improve their workplace practices based on best practices and world class manufacturing; and to establish constructive working relationship between management and employees. This intensive programme involves everyone in the organization to work together to make improvements that positively impact productivity.

The approach consists of, with the agreement of the management, setting up a cross-functional team that will lead the Muda Free Workplace interventions.

These interventions are applied systematically in 7 steps, starting with:

1. identification of the most important problems to be tackled based on facts, figures and observations on the shopfloor
2. agreement on targets to be set
3. understanding of factors that are causing the problems
4. finding best solutions among possible alternatives
5. implementation of solutions
6. monitoring and evaluation of results
7. standardisation when under control



It is expected that at the end of the programme, the organization should reach a stage where the boss

- encourages and empowers his employees to carry out their ideas
- appreciates and gives recognition to such efforts
- develops trust with the employees
- plays a leading role in stimulating other improvements and
- creates a momentum for continuing improvement. 

Companies wishing to implement the Muda Free Workplace programme are welcome to contact us at natpro@intnet.mu or by phone on 467 7700.

Muda Free Workplace Programme – A 7-Steps Approach

CATs

Civic Action Teams

thinking & acting together to boost civic responsibility

RODRIGUES: TRAIN THE TRAINER IN ACTION

Rodrigues now benefits from a pool of trainers for the CATs project. A train-the-trainer course was held from 25th to 27th March 2010 by the NPCC with the support of the Commission of Education, at the Human Resource Centre of Malabar.

Six primary and two secondary school teachers attended the course. The objective was to equip participants with the knowledge and techniques required for trainers for the Civic Action Team project. For the 2010 convention, each one of them will apply the knowledge and skills so acquired in their respective schools.

Following the participation of Mangues Government School in the first CATs Convention for the education sector in 2001, the NPCC has conducted training for students and teachers in Rodrigues in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Primary and secondary schools were then selected to participate in the National CATs Conventions held in Mauritius.

As from this year the training of teachers and students will now become the responsibility of the trainers. They will also have to guide and coach participating schools as and when required once the project is started. The trainers will also assist in the organisation of regional conventions in Rodrigues as well as train the jurors for these conventions under the support and supervision of the NPCC.

For Danie Lisette of Terre Rouge Government School (formerly a facilitator at Batatran Government School) "CATs is a good project for the schools as the tools used are beneficial to both pupils and teachers. There is a need to sensitise more teachers and heads of schools in Rodrigues to participate in the project". Rose Delima Speville, of Port Mathurin Government School, on her part acknowledges that "The tools can be used in their personal life, to improve their teaching and to develop other competencies in their students. It is a very challenging project and it is also a challenge for us to become good trainers. We would like to set up several CATs at Port Mathurin Government School." 



JAPAN PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE AND NPCC COLLABORATION CONTINUES



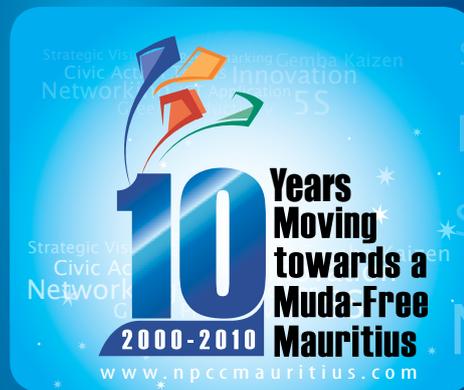
Prof. Minoru Tokita discussing with employee on the shopfloor during evaluation visit

Following the visit of an evaluation team composed of Prof. Minoru Tokita and Ms. Mariko Kamiuchi last February, the Japan Productivity Centre (JPC) has expressed their interest to continue collaborating with the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) to further develop model companies in Mauritius using Japanese productivity improvement tools. During their visit, the evidence of the improvement made by the three companies participating in the project as well as the positive mindset demonstrated by the shop-floor employees who no longer fear to share responsibility for the changes to improve their workplace and to come up with new ideas have been appreciated by the Japanese consultants and showed that the implementation of Japanese tools like kaizen and 5S are gradually picking up in local enterprises.



Management of the three companies sharing their experience at seminar organized by NPCC

The companies expressed that participating in the project was a very enriching experience towards achieving better performance. Between July 2009 and February 2010, the NPCC / JPC team of consultants visited the companies several times during which the companies were able to identify their areas of inefficiencies and to analyse their problems in a logical and systematic way using problem solving techniques which they were not familiar with prior to intervention. Teamwork was promoted bringing a positive change in organizational behaviour whereby teams now accept the targets that have to be achieved as challenges that have to be met. Through the project, companies realized that to remain in business and stay competitive, they have to reduce their lead time, reduce costs, continuously improve the quality of their products, become more eco-friendly and constantly re-engineer their processes to meet their customer and market changing demands. 



2000-2010: TEN YEARS MOVING TOWARDS A MUDA FREE MAURITIUS

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the setting up of the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council. What a long way covered since the Productivity Consultative Week “Maryé Piké Nou Avansé” where different stakeholders of the Mauritian society brainstormed together to identify the path of the productivity movement in Mauritius and the launching of the national Muda Free Mauritius campaign at the State House.

If a country wants to emerge as a leader in productivity and quality, its people starting from its youth have to be shaped with the right mindset, commitment and personality development so that quality consciousness becomes a second nature. Through the promotion of Civic Action Teams, using quality circles techniques, NPCC wishes to empower the citizens, the young ones in schools that represent the future of the nation as well as the grown-ups in the community. The aim is to develop a productivity culture from a young age that will gradually blossom to enable Mauritius become a more productive nation.

Innovation is fundamental to economic growth, job creation, productivity growth and competitiveness. Conscious of its role as a think-tank and a catalyst, the NPCC, over the past ten years, played a crucial role in promoting and developing a culture of innovation at different levels and in all sectors of the economy. Several initiatives were undertaken: A Journée de Reflexion on “Innovate or Evaporate: harnessing innovation for making Mauritius more competitive”, the National Innovation Summit, the Workshop on Development of an Innovation Policy and Strategy Framework for Mauritius, InnovEd – Innovation for the Education Sector, Innovators Mauritius Award, and the “Competitiveness Foresight” which was to identify the future orientations for Mauritius.

To be able to innovate, the citizen has to be information savvy. The Mauritian citizen has to be able to use information and communication technology to satisfy his information needs and to create knowledge that will open up new avenues for him to become less dependent on government subsidies. The Computer Proficiency Programme and ELIT (English Language using IT), two tools advocated by the NPCC, have enabled more than 40,000 Mauritians become IT literate and consequently develop their entrepreneurship skills.

The modern consumer society has put a lot of pressure on natural resources to the extent that the state of the environment is at risk threatening the quality of life of the people. Green Productivity, a concept developed by the Asian Productivity Organisation, attempts to answer society's needs for a better quality of life by increasing productivity through environmentally sound manufacturing practices and management activities. Given the nature of our country, a small tourist island with limited natural resources, the NPCC has called for the implementation of Green Productivity practices in industries and in schools - through the Green Schools Project - to raise awareness to issues of waste and emission prevention, energy conservation, pollution control and environmental management systems.

In its endeavour to assist the corporate sector to become world class, the NPCC has introduced the Gemba kaizen concept through the elimination of muda, non-value adding activities, and the application of 5S and other productivity improvement tools. The civil service was not left apart as it benefited from the Muda Free Public Service Programme implemented in thirty-six government ministries and departments.

To sustain what has already been achieved to develop a productivity culture in Mauritius, there is no denying that a lot still remains to be done and every citizen has to contribute his part as productivity is a journey without a finishing line. 

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

"I am here to discuss a business not a project..."

Don't believe me! It's your business, it's your idea, if you have something we will help you translate it into business"

This was the opening statement of Dr. K. Balasubramanian, Education Specialist for the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), during his visit to Mauritius in May 2010 to a group of female single headed households, mostly widows with family responsibilities for at least two to three children. They each have a kitchen garden and grow a variety of vegetables for their own consumption and partly to be sold out to the inhabitants of their locality.

Under the COL Life Long Learning (L3) Programme, they have been introduced to clustering and networking through various sessions to allow their venture become economically viable. "There is always a need for learning and that people can learn anywhere and at any time and age without necessarily attending schools, colleges or universities." explained Dr. Krishnalall Coonjan, the Executive Director of the NPCC. He further mentioned that new materials will have to be developed to give a chance to these people to do new business in a new way. The dream of these women is to become self-sustaining and to develop their business out of an opportunity they are looking for.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) strongly believes that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) can be achieved by using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) together with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). This assumption is based on the principle that a massive expansion of learning is a requirement for addressing the Millennium Development Goals. They however, concede that learning needs are so massive that conventional face-to-face instruction cannot address the scale of the challenge and that there are not enough teachers and agricultural extension workers to address the needs of the primary sector. COL emphasises that Open and Distance Learning coupled with the use of technology are a right mixture to expand learning and achieve poverty reduction as developments in information and communication technology (ICT) have given a new dimension to Open and Distance Learning and it is now easier to reach the unreached in a spatial-temporal context and to facilitate self-directed learning among farmers, landless labourers and various marginalized sections of the rural and urban communities. COL also believes that if such learning takes place in the context of the entire social and economic value chain of the rural society, the issues of unemployment and poverty could be effectively addressed.

Through Lifelong Learning (L3), the project in Mauritius aims at enabling fishermen and women entrepreneurs in rural communities to acquire additional knowledge through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) and ICT, and with the help of extension officers to develop value-added products, encourage more sustainable use of natural resources, strengthen their ability to face globalization, and ensure food and livelihood security. This concept necessitates the participation of various stakeholders like learning institutions, extension agencies, banks and farming communities for a "win-win situation" where no partner will be contributing selflessly. The strategy as Dr. Balasubramanian puts it "is to enable people with low formal education level to be successful in the development of their business and to make them produce individually but to market collectively to benefit from large scale production accompanied by a self-directed learning process, that is the L3, through the mobile phone as a vehicle for transmitting learning." 



NGOs DRIVING THE ELIT COURSE WITH SUPPORT FROM NPCC

SOS Poverty, Briquetterie Rising Star Women Association and Association Socio-Culturelle de Tranquebar are three Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that are partnering with the NPCC to empower women in different regions through the ELIT (English Language using IT) course. The ELIT programme being driven by these NGOs create a stronger social capital as women of the same region constantly meet and share with each other relevant issues that relates to their empowerment. With the assistance of their facilitator, these participants have achieved a high level of self confidence that has increased their motivation to improve their competencies for better living.

For the NPCC, working with any NGO starts with an agreement for its qualified members to follow the train the trainer's course for ELIT. After the training of trainers, prospective candidates of the region are motivated to register for the ELIT course, which is delivered at the seat of the NGO, thus making it more accessible to a wider number of women.

Through sponsorships and other funding tapped through different sources, SOS Poverty has successfully trained thirty-four women who were awarded their certificate on 27th March 2010. Fifteen more women followed the course between February and May. SOS Poverty is now planning to integrate the ELIT course as a starting point for other training programme for women such as food production and garment making.

Similarly, the Association Socio-Culturelle de Tranquebar sought funding from the European Union / Decentralised Cooperation Programme to implement the ELIT programme in their region. Ten members of the association have been trained as trainers to deliver the ELIT course. These freshly trained trainers will be called upon to train women in the region of Tranquebar and will be awarded the certificate of ELIT trainer.

Mrs Tessa Matouka, member of the Briquetterie Rising Star Women Association, who followed the ELIT Train the Trainer course conducted by NPCC, volunteered to train members of her association along with other women living in that region. The collaboration of the Ministry of Women Rights, Child Development & Family Welfare was sought to get access to internet facilities at the Abercrombie Women Centre. To overcome the problem of lack of access to computers, some of the women brought their own laptops thus providing the opportunity for others to share the computer – a prerequisite of the course. 



Mrs Matouka conducting a training session at the Abercrombie Women Centre

NPCC'S EFFORTS TO ADDRESS PRODUCTIVITY AND COMPETITIVENESS IN AFRICA RECOGNISED

The first conference of the Pan African Competitiveness Forum (PACF) witnessed the birth of the forum in Addis Ababa, in April 2008, establishing its mission, objective and activities as well as the expansion of PACF member base.

The 2nd Annual Conference of the Pan African Competitiveness Forum on the theme Cluster Initiatives for African Economic Development and Sustainability was held in Ghana from 15th to 17th February 2010. NPCC was represented by Dr Krishnalall Coonjan, the Executive Director, who presented a paper on "Clusters and Business Networks: Initiatives to build Competitiveness of SMMEs – a NPCC Perspective". At the first Plenary Session of the conference, Dr. Coonjan was also called upon to speak on "Productivity and African Economic Development" together with Mr Alberto Pezzi, Chairman of The Competitiveness Institute, Mrs Lena Trojer, Director of Scandinavian Institute for Competitiveness and Development and spokesperson of Swedish International Development Agency, and Mr Ayup Eloashidi of the African Union.

On enhancing productivity and competitiveness in Africa, the conference noted inter-alia:

- the urge of African countries to grasp the opportunity provided by cluster based approaches as providing platforms for addressing productivity issues at firm/farm level, national, regional and continental levels
- to urge countries to systematically address factors affecting productivity in Africa singularly and collectively
- to underscore the need for African governments to translate the political resolutions and decisions at continental and regional levels into concrete economic actions at segments of society to enhance the continent's competitiveness.
- networking and capacity building among clusters in the continent should be encouraged
- that African governments should mainstream cluster-based development into their respective economic development policies



Dr Krishnalall Coonjan, receiving award from Hon. Ama Benyina-Doe, Central Regional Minister

In recognition for their continued support to consolidate PACF as an African continental organisation addressing productivity and competitiveness involving 13 African countries already, Mr Thomas Winther, Mrs Lena Trojer, Dr. Barnabas Mawoongwe, Mr Alberto Pezzi and Dr. Krishnalall Coonjan were rewarded during the General Assembly meeting in Ghana. Moreover, Dr Coonjan was elected member of the PACF Advisory Council for 2010-2012. 

GREEN SCHOOL

A NATIONAL CONVENTION TO SHOWCASE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE IN ADOPTING A MORE RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT ... continued



Soil preparation efforts effected by students of Mahatma Gandhi Secondary School Flacq

... The Green School Project, initiated by the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council with the collaboration of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources and the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, aims at initiating and implementing efforts to reduce the school's ecological footprints, improve the school environment and involve the whole community to think about and initiate solutions to the environmental problems

now faced. Concretely, the project provides a framework that reflects both on improvement in the physical environment of the school, like water and sanitation facilities, garbage management, energy conservation, and also on the attitudes and actions of all those who are part of the school education system – the students, the teachers, the parents, the administrative staff and the school management.

Out of the initial sixty schools that expressed interest in the project, ten were finally retained, after a first selection and an audit to assess the implementation of their project at their respective school level, to present their project at the first National Green School Convention held on Wednesday 9th June 2010 at the Octave Wiéhé Auditorium, Réduit. Two projects were rewarded; one for 2009 and one for 2010. The Royal College Port Louis which, since 2009, has been working on their multi-fold project consisting of setting up an endemic garden, waste segregation and recycling, and mural painting received the best project award for 2009. For 2010, it was the Mahatma Gandhi Secondary School Flacq which was rewarded for their project on "Promoting a green culture at school". This project looked at reducing the high energy consumption at school, introducing waste composting to tackle the litter problem, setting up of a school garden to grow organic vegetables, and sensitising the students on environmental awareness throughout the curriculum. 



Waste segregation at Royal College Port Louis



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