

NEWSLETTER

ISSN 1694 - 0229 March 2008 Vol. 7 No. 1



Initiating our youth to Productivity Tools



Hon. Dharam Gokhool, Minister of Education and Human Resources, launched the 2008 edition of InnovEd and CATs on the 15th January at the Queen Elizabeth College in the presence of heads of pre-primary, primary and secondary schools. Both InnovEd and CATs are projects conceived by NPCC for the education sector to impart to our youth the necessary problem solving and creativity skills required to succeed in life. The first one is in its fourth edition while the second one will this year see its 7th edition.

In his welcoming speech, Dr Krishnalall Coonjan, the Executive Director of the NPCC, pointed out that it becomes difficult "to make" a man at the age of 35 or 40 when he is approaching his middle age as it has been observed that it is very difficult to change the mindset at that age. Thereby, the significance of "Catching Them Young" as advocated by NPCC since at the time of childhood, when the mind is young and still impressionable, innovation and quality can

better be transcribed and a life-long commitment to excellence can be engraved upon in the best possible manner.

InnovEd and CATs projects fit in the wider perspective of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources to introduce a series of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities that would support the curriculum goals so as to attain the overall development of the students during their school life.

Right from its inception in May 2000, the NPCC has been promoting Civic Action Teams, which use quality circles techniques, as a productivity tool to improve the country's productivity culture. Since then, this tool has been adopted by many in and out-of-school youth, women, social workers, community leaders, and NGOs as a problem solving technique that brings innovative solutions to their day-to-day problems.

On the other hand, innovation is being

increasingly recognized as one of the main drivers of productivity that can ensure a country's future economic competitiveness and social wellbeing. It becomes therefore imperative that the citizens develop fully their creative potential. Through InnovEd, students from the pre-primary up to upper secondary levels have the opportunity to acquire the creativity skills, and to foster team spirit and self-confidence that enable to unleash their potential through innovative projects.

Through the training of facilitators for both projects that has been undergoing since February, the response has been very positive and a high level of participation is expected.

Japanese know-how for successful Mauritian Model Companies

The Japan Productivity Centre for Socio-Economic Development with the collaboration of four member countries of PAPA (Pan-African Productivity Association), including Mauritius, has embarked on a project to develop model companies, using the Japanese approach of productivity improvement, to be used for show-casing. The project also aims, through the training of national productivity organizations staff to the Japanese productivity improvement methods, to contribute to the capacity building / development of national productivity organizations in the provision of practical services to their respective local companies of both the private and the public sectors.

Following a fact finding research study by JPC-SED and NPCC in August last year to identify appropriate companies, five companies have been selected for the implementation of the project. They are Laiterie de Curepipe Ltd., CIM Leasing Ltd., Precigraph Ltd., Food and Allied Industries Ltd., and Mauritius Post Ltd.

Two Japanese Consultants, namely Messrs. Toshitsugu Nakai & Koichi Hiratsuka, were in Mauritius between 18th and 25th February 2008 to provide expert technical guidance on the intervention areas at the different workplaces. During their stay, together with NPCC staff, they discussed with the management of the selected companies and their kaizen champions on the appropriate strategies that have to be implemented to improve the efficiency of their company's operations.



15th World Productivity Congress: Leadership through Productivity in a Global Economy

Hosted by Productivity South Africa, the World Productivity Congress, the biennial event of the World Confederation of Productivity Science, will be staged for the very first time on the African Continent, at Sun City, South Africa from 22nd to 24th September 2008.

The forum will provide a unique opportunity for leading businessmen, industrialists, scholars, administrators, and productivity experts worldwide and from different sectors to deliberate, discuss and debate on productivity challenges.

For more information and bookings:
Tel: +27 (0) 11 848 5300, Fax: +27 (0) 11 848 5555,
Email: wcps@productivitysa.co.za, visit
<http://www.congress15.co.za/pebble.asp?relid=84678>

MODEL COMPANIES Kaizen



Heading towards model companies



CIM Leasing Ltd



Food and Allied Ltd



Laiterie de Curepipe Ltd



Mauritius Post Ltd



Précigraph Ltd

Social Entrepreneurship: A means to empower unemployed women

The Special Programme for Unemployed Women, the implementing arm of the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council for the Empowerment Programme, proceeded with the launching of a few projects whereby the beneficiaries, unemployed women regrouped into small enterprises, have been able to set up their business.

The launching ceremony was held in presence of Hon. Rama Sithanen, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development on 6th March at the Rajiv Gandhi Science Center as a forewarning to the celebrations of the International Woman's Day to reinforce the need for women, specially the more vulnerable ones, to rally together to have the support of the Empowerment Programme. The Minister pointed out that the best way to fight against poverty is to create employment for women as the problem is more acute among women.

The newly approved projects aim at providing direct employment to some 270 women in various sectors namely:


The setting up of a food processing unit to provide foodstuffs to supermarkets. This small enterprise which was reduced to ashes two years ago will, through a cooperative society, provide work for six women, including two retrenched workers from Floreal Knitwear Ltd. This project will also give market access to other products made by women and will enable women to undergo training within the enterprise.

The setting up of a Part Time Job service for unemployed women residing in the Western region of the island. Through this project, unemployed women will be trained as cook, maid, baby sitter, gardener, etc. so that they can take up job opportunities whenever these arise in those sectors in the Western region.

Community Food Service to children of a ZEP school at Cascavelle whereby through direct and indirect employment, women with the collaboration of many partners, among which the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Fondation Médiine Horizons, Innodis, Maurilait and La Pirogue Hotel, will cultivate vegetables and provide food to children of underprivileged social classes.

After School Hours Education Care Centre where twenty youth group leaders will, after school hours on weekdays and weekends, help children of working parents from underprivileged social classes who experience difficulties in their studies with the necessary pedagogical support.

Production of aromatic and endemic plants to be sold to hotels and restaurants of the south of the island.


Training of women in non-traditional sectors such as electricity, woodworking, woodcarving, plumbing, etc. so that they can afterwards group together and become entrepreneurs. 




Snapshots of Activities

Local Government Institutions to Promote ELIT



Further to the positive response received from the first batch of women that followed the ELIT (English Literacy using IT) course at the Municipality of Vacoas-Phoenix last year, requests have been flowing in to organize the course in different municipalities. Presently, more than fifty women are following the ELIT course at the Municipality of Curepipe, Municipality of Quatre-Bornes and Municipality of Vacoas-Phoenix. 

Circular Migration Programme

Under the Circular Migration Programme of the International Organisation for Migration, whereby Mauritian nationals have been recruited to work on a two-year initial contract basis in pork and poultry processing units in Canada, sixteen persons among the first batch of those selected to go and work for the Maple Leaf Foods in Canada have followed the ELIT course to enhance their level of English literacy and were awarded their certificate on 7th March 2008 before their departure to Canada. 

“ I think education is power. I think that being able to communicate with people is power. One of my main goals on the planet is to encourage people to empower themselves. ”

Oprah Winfrey





Snapshots of Activities

[Continued]

Muda Free Public Service

In line with the Muda Free Public Service programme which is being run in collaboration with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms, NPCC conducted a training workshop for officials of the Civil Status Office from 23rd to 25th January 2008. The training focused on the application of 5S to improve management of the Store Department and on process improvement to ensure service effectiveness in the delivery of certificate extracts and in the Printing Section.

Another workshop was also organized for the medical staff of the Subramania Bharati Eye Hospital between 19th and 21st March 2008 to enhance the health services offered.



Applying 1st S (Seri) (above) and 2nd S (Seiton) (below) at the Civil Status Office 



National Productivity and Competitiveness Council
4th Floor, Alexander House,
Cybercity Ebène, Réduit.
Republic of Mauritius
Tel: (230) 467 7700 - Fax: (230) 467 3838
Email: natpro@intnet.mu
Website: www.npccmauritius.com

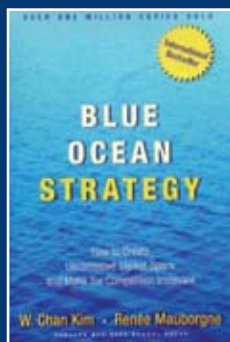
Recent Additions to the Knowledge Centre

HAMEL, Gary ; PRAHALAD, C.K.: Competing for the future. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 1994. 379p., ill. ISBN: 0875847161

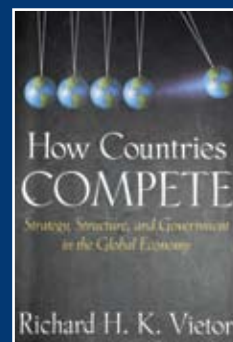


New competitive realities have ruptured industry boundaries, overthrown much of standard management practice, and rendered conventional models of strategy and growth obsolete. In this book, the authors develop a coherent model for how today's executives can identify and accomplish no less than heroic goals in tomorrow's marketplace. Their masterful blueprint addresses how executives can ease the tension between competing today and clearing a path toward leadership in the future.

KIM, W. Chan ; MAUBORGNE, Renée: Blue ocean strategy: how to create uncontested market space and make the competition irrelevant. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 2005. 255p., ill., ref. ISBN: 1591396190



VICTOR, Richard H.K.: How countries compete: strategy, structure, and government in the global economy. Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 2007. 311p., ill., ref. ISBN: 1422110355



The Science with Africa Conference took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3-7 March on the theme of Science, Technology and Innovation.

700 hundred scientists, technologists and innovators participated.

This conference acknowledged that ICTs constitute a solid foundation for harnessing science technology and innovation for development. They support research activities that deal with data capturing, storage and dissemination.

Consequently, the application of ICTs facilitates access to knowledge and the creation of networked communities and business enterprises. Unfortunately, the low level of ICT penetration, absence of national and sub-regional innovation systems due to lack of affordable infrastructure, inappropriate legal and regulatory environment to support market competition and participation of all stakeholders (e.g., the widely dispersed rural community and the disenfranchised groups) constitute the main challenges that most African countries face. The lack of technological innovation to support growth of SMEs limits their contribution to national economies in Africa.

Suggested Actions:

- Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) should continue its assistance to African countries and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) for the development, implementation and monitoring of national, sub-regional harmonised ICT policies. Greater emphasis should be put on reinforcing implementation mechanisms and on meeting the needs of rural communities, youth and women.
- African countries should develop ICT and Innovation policy and strategies.
- African countries should establish enabling environment for partnership for knowledge sharing and networking.
- African Union, in collaboration with its partners should support the implementation of the African Regional Action Plan on Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE). 