

CONSULTANCY AND CONTRACT



Mr S. K. Parahoo
Director

INTRODUCTION

During the year under review, the University Consultancy and Contract Research Centre (CCRC) was involved in over 125 consultancy and contract research works compared to some 100 projects in previous financial year. The CCRC taps its human resources from a pool of over 300 academics/researchers in all the Faculties and Centres of the University and, if the need arises, from external specialists, either local or overseas. It also accesses state-of-the-art facilities and equipment in various laboratories/ workshops.

Through the various consultancy and contract research projects undertaken in the year, the CCRC was able to satisfy the needs of industry and consolidated the links it had established with numerous local and foreign partners.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The organizational structure of CCRC is lean, with a core staff comprising a Director who reports to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research and Consultancy, an Administrative Assistant and a Confidential Secretary. It also recruits Research Assistants for specific projects. The lean organisational structure enables the CCRC to respond promptly to requests from industry.

CONSULTANCY & CONTRACT RESEARCH PROJECTS

The projects undertaken by CCRC were mainly from the public and private sectors in Mauritius. The Centre, however, also played a regional role by providing consultancy services in various countries in Africa. A sample of some of the multi-disciplinary projects as well as some training programmes undertaken is listed below.

Sample of Multi-Disciplinary Projects Undertaken

- 1 Regional Compost Network funded by UNOPS involving technology transfer and demonstration sites in Mauritius, South Africa, Kenya and Zimbabwe
- 1 Development of a National Children's Policy commissioned by UNICEF
- 1 Combating Domestic Violence commissioned by UNDP and UNIFEM
- 1 Gender and Development in Mauritius (UNDP)
- 1 Economic Feasibility and Market Study for a major Hypermarket and Shopping Project
- 1 Participation as expert in documentary film titled *Le des arbres vieillards* commissioned by Tele Images (France), and broadcast on International TV Channels

- 1 Project Evaluation for FAWE on FEMSA project (girls Science Education) in schools in African countries
- 1 Comprehensive Media Market Survey for an International client for an investment decision
- 1 Carte de filiere Horticole des fruits et legumes for a private consultancy firm
- 1 ST mission in the Technical assistance to NPPI-SD for an international consultancy firm

Sample of Training Programmes Undertaken

- 1 Cisco Certified Networking Associate Course (CCNA)-Semesters I & II
- 1 Training Course in Rodrigues on Water Demand Quality
- 1 Training programme for SOS Mothers
- 1 Management Development Programme For MACOSS - Batches I & II
- 1 S W E P Orientation Seminar

The following table shows the number of Type 1 consultancies (e.g studies and reports) and Type 3 Consultancies (e.g. Training Programmes) undertaken during the financial year 2002-2003 and their allocation to the different

FACULTY / CENTRE	TYPE 1 & TYPE 3 CONSULTANCIES			
	PROJECTS ALLOCATED		PROJECT VALUE	
	No	%	Rs	%
Faculty of Agriculture	6	13.0	580 900	13.4
Faculty of Engineering	14	30.4	378 995	8.7
Faculty of Law and Management	7	15.2	1 027 471	23
Faculty of Science	3	6.5	238 550	5.5
Faculty of Social Studies and Humanities	9	19.6	1 425 000	32.8
Centre for Information Technology & Systems	3	6.5	496 500	11.4
Virtual Centre for Innovative Learning Technologies	4	8.7	224 000	5.2
TOTAL	46*	100	4 371 416	100

Faculties.

Sectors	No of Projects					
	Type 1	%	Type 3	%	Total	%
Public	2	5.8	1	14.2	3	7.4
Parastatal	6	17.6	0	0	6	14.6
Private	21	61.8	0	0	21	51.2
International Orgs /NGOs/Others	5	14.8	6	85.8	11	26.8
TOTAL	34	100	7	100	41	100

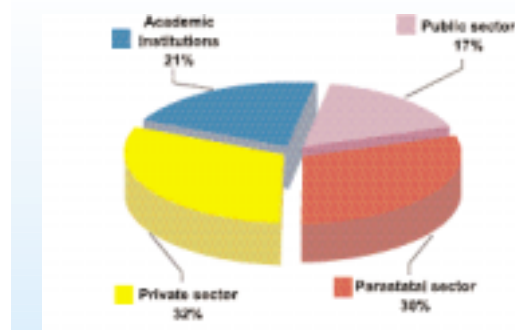
* Total number of projects actually amounts to 41 but as there are 5 consultancies involving more than one Faculty, the total becomes 46.

The distribution of the forty-one Type 1 and Type 3 projects commissioned in the year 2002/2003 across sectors of the economy is shown in the table below. As in the past years, the private sector has engaged university expertise most often with a total of 21 projects out of 41. This is indicative of a close University-Industry Linkage.

STUDENT WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME (SWE P)

In 2002-2003 the Student Work Experience Programme (SWE P) 2003 was in its 5th edition. The objective of the programme is to bridge the gap between academic training and the world of work through a structured attachment to enterprises. Over 600 University students registered for the programme and nearly 400 requests for student placements were received from 140 organisations. SWE P 2003 was launched in May 2003. The actual placement started on 2 June 2003 and spread over a 7-week period.

The distribution of SWE P students across types of placement organizations is illustrated in the figure below.



The participating students comprised approximately 71% females and 29% males.

Orientation Seminar for SWE P students

An orientation Seminar was held in May 2003 to better prepare the students for the work placement. Dr K R Issur (FSSH) intervened on Selecting and Preparing Students for placement. This was followed by a presentation by Mrs B Vilbro-Finette, Human Resource Coordinator at ESSO (Mtius) Ltd on "Expectations of Employers from New Recruits". Mr S K Parahoo and Mrs A Nivault then intervened respectively on the themes, Work experience during academic training - a valuable opportunity for students, and La communication au sein des entreprises.

Visit of S S Gungah to Rodrigues

In July 2002, Mr S S Gungah, Administrative Assistant at the CCRC, undertook a two-day visit to Rodrigues to address issues in connection with the programme and to meet representatives of the placement organisations and the 18 University SWE P 2002 students. The employers were very satisfied with the performance of the students and had expressed their wish to support future programmes.

Employers Feedback Evaluation Report

Employers Programme Evaluation Questionnaires were mailed to all participating firms in SWE P 2002 and a response rate of 70% was received. An Employers' Evaluation report was prepared on the basis of feedback. The results showed that the overall performance of the students was very good. 95% of employers who responded were prepared to continue participating in future programmes.

SUBMISSION FOR FUNDING UNDER INTERNATIONAL GRANTS

Mississippi Consortium For International Development (MCID) - Howard University (HU) - University Of Mauritius (UoM) - Education For Development And Democracy Initiative (EDDI)

The University of Mauritius submitted a bid for funding to EDDI (Education for Development and Democracy Initiative) along with two US Partners, the MCID (Mississippi Consortium for International Development) and Howard University. The proposal of the University was based on ICT enhancement in Mauritius, in line with the

importance attached to ICT as an emerging sector of the economy. A needs assessment of current IT programs and courses offered at UoM as well as its IT infrastructure was carried out in June/July 2002 by Dr John Trimble, from Howard University and Mr Rod Dennø, from MCID.

One recommendation made by the US assessment team, was the enhancement of IT infrastructure. The Faculty of Engineering prepared detailed specifications for computer and other network equipment to enable the setting up of a 70 PC laboratory to enhance the ability of UoM to meet its demand for training in IT. This was discussed and finalised during Dr A Mack's visit in December 2002, and incorporated in a sub-contract agreement between MCID and UoM for purchase of equipment for a total value of US \$ 60 870.

As part of faculty exchanges under the partnership, Prof V Y Hookoomsing, Prof H C S Rughooputh, Mr S K Parahoo and Mr A Rosunee visited Howard University and Jackson State University.

Development Marketplace Project 2003

The University of Mauritius in collaboration with AMSCO office in Mauritius, submitted a first proposal in May 2003 to Development Marketplace 2003 Global Competition, a project of the World Bank. The project was entitled Training in ICT for Women and consisted of a training programme in Information and Communication Technology and Functional Literacy targeted to a total of some 1000 trainees including female college drop-outs and women entrepreneurs in Mauritius. The objective of the project was to make the girls more employable and to help the women entrepreneurs to use IT as a tool to assist them in managing their businesses more efficiently. The Development Marketplace team will make a first assessment of the project. After a first assessment by the Development Marketplace Team in July 2003, the project proposal was among the 186 proposals, out of 2700, to be selected for the final rounds in December 2003.

PRESENTATION/DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS

Public Talk on Maroon Archaeology

In connection with the ongoing Contract Research Project entitled Maroon Slave Archaeological Investigation Project in the Republic of Mauritius commissioned by the National Heritage Trust Fund, Dr Karim Sadr, Specialist in Neolithic Archaeology from the Archaeology Division of the University of Witwatersand, South Africa, came to Mauritius for a one-week mission from the 15th to 21st September 2002 to provide expert advice to the team working on the project. He delivered a public talk on the Relevance of Archaeology: Comparative Perspectives on Neolithic & Maroon Societies on Friday 20th September 2002 at the University.

Presentation on Start-Ups

Mr S K Parahoo, Director CCRC, made a presentation of Consultancy & Contract Research facilities at UoM to start-ups at the launching of the Incubator Centre on 17th October 2002 at the National Computer Board, Port-Louis.

Presentation of Unionisation Report to TUTF

The CCRC made a presentation of the final report for a contract research project entitled "Low rate of unionisation in Mauritius" commissioned by the Trade Union Trust Fund (TUTF) in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation, at Gold Crest Hotel on 10th December 2002. Mr S Kalasopatan, the team leader, made a presentation of the report to the members of the TUTF.

Presentation of CSEC Report Findings

In April 2003, Prof V Y Hookoomsing gave a presentation of the findings on the contract research project on "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Mauritius" at the University of Mauritius. International and local representatives of UNICEF, and from the Ministry of Women Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare were present.

CONFERENCES/MEETINGS ATTENDED AND VISITS UNDERTAKEN

Mr S K Parahoo

1. Attended the National Consultative Meeting for Needs Assessment and Priority Setting in Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Biotechnology in Mauritius held on 8th and 9th August 2002 at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Mauritius.
2. Participated in the Awareness Workshop on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) organized by the Mauritius Research Council on 28th & 29th August 2002 at Radisson Hotel.
3. Attended the International Conference on Technology-based Incubators organized by the Small and Medium Industries Development Organisation (SMIDO), on 25th and 26th February 2003 at Grand Bay International Conference Centre.
4. Participated in the Annual Global Partnership Conference of United Negro College Fund Special Programs in the USA from 5th to 15th March 2003 where he jointly with Dr Ally Mack presented the annual report of activities carried out in Mauritius. He also had meetings with research managers at Howard University, University of Maryland, and Jackson State University.
5. Attended the Corporate Workshop - BPO Services: Success, Opportunities and Challenges for Mauritius organised by Business Parks of Mauritius Limited at Maritim Hotel on 4th April 2003.