

Operation COSHARE Dissemination Workshop
Sri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Tower, Ebène
Speech of the Executive Director of the NPCC, Mr. Ashit Gungah
21 October 2022

Mrs. Ahmed, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Industrial Development,
Dr. Coffi, Country Office Director for Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles, International Labour Organisation,
The Chairman and Council members of the NPCC,
Mr. Gopee, Chairman of the Tourism Authority,
Representatives of enterprises,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon

Greetings to you all. A special welcome to Dr. Coffi for making the effort to travel over to Mauritius for this dissemination workshop.

Ladies and gentleman, you will agree that Covid-19 brought major upheavals at global level that compelled us to look into new directions to sustain productivity growth.

The pandemic burst upon us many challenges for which we were unprepared. We had to face it with little knowledge and no experience. All economic sectors experienced major disruptions. The rules had changed. Employee and customer behaviours had changed. Above all, the tourism industry, which is the main economic pillar of our country, was the most affected.

It is in this context that Operation COSHARE was developed as a national project with the technical assistance of the International Labour Organisation. The objective was to support a reopening of borders so as to give priority to the health and safety of workers,

travellers, host communities and at the same time help the tourism sector to safely resume operations.

In the build-up of the project, we had focussed meetings with stakeholders including the Tourism Authority, Airports of Mauritius Limited, l'Association des Hoteliers et Restaurateurs de l'Île Maurice and l'Association des hôtels de charme amongst others. These meetings allowed us to gain a deep insight of the situation, which enabled us to devise programmes adaptable to the needs of the sector.

Ladies and gentlemen, Operation COSHARE was implemented in two phases between September 2021 and June 2022.

First, operators in the tourism value chain were sensitised on the importance of sanitary protocols. A total of 2023 enterprises were motivated to put in place safety measures for the prevention of the spread of Covid-19. Employees from 1342 enterprises were formally trained to implement appropriate health protocols at the workplace with a view to protect everyone from any risk of infection.

The second phase which focused on Resource Efficiency and Cleaner Production aimed at improving resilience of enterprises in the sector. Emphasis was laid on improvements such as waste elimination including food waste and avoidance of single-use plastics. This not only helped in redefining the ways business is conducted in the tourism sector, but also showed us how we can protect the environment while at the same time improving productivity and competitiveness.

It is worth noting that 21 enterprises implemented resource efficiency and cleaner production projects. These comprised hotels, guest houses, restaurants and other tourist accommodations.

Today, we can say with great satisfaction that Operation COSHARE has produced highly positive and impactful results.

It has also demonstrated how all stakeholders can concert their effort to bring a strong and positive impact and transformation whenever we are faced with challenges.

Ladies and gentlemen, Operation COSHARE would not have been possible without the unflinching support and collaboration of our partners. Our warmest thanks go to the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Authority for their collaboration.

We have a special word of appreciation for the International Labour Organisation and the Partnership for Action on Green Economy for their assistance.

We would also like to thank all stakeholders and most importantly all the operators in the tourism value chain who have believed in Operation COSHARE and collaborated to the success of the project. Last but not least, I would like to thank all our trainers who have delivered training and created awareness on health protocols during a period which was still marked by the health risks and challenges.

It is a fact that productivity is vital to the success of a country. The effort should come from each and every citizen. This is why the strategic plan of the NPCC lays strong emphasis on the development of a productivity mind-set.

The NPCC has once again proven itself as an organisation that contributes enormously to the advancement of the country. We will continue supporting different sectors of the economy to build resilience and remain competitive.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are again living through a dangerous period of overlapping crises such as disruptions in supply chain, geopolitical tensions, food price and energy shocks, among others. The recession is accelerating and reducing the income of households around the world, especially the poor.

To respond to these challenges, the NPCC has been proactive in devising a number of national projects that aim at not only instilling a new wave of productivity in enterprises but also strengthening the resilience of industries. This includes the Enterprise Go Digital project launched in March this year with a view to improve productivity and strengthen the resilience of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Moreover, the National Productivity and Quality Convention has been revamped into the National Productivity and Quality Excellence Award to provide participating enterprises a comprehensive diagnosis of their current situation in several areas. They would thus be in a better position to craft strategies for continuous improvement, which is a key factor to enhance productivity and quality.

But ladies and gentleman, we will only be successful if all stakeholders to the productivity movement put hands together to achieve a shared vision of a highly productive, innovative and competitive Mauritius.

Let me end by quoting American inventor and entrepreneur, Thomas Edison. I quote: "If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves." End of quote.

Thank you for your attention.