

ROGERS: INFLUENCING AN ISLAND STATE TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY

As a pioneer group advocating for the environment, Rogers launched a national campaign to inspire the shaping of a sustainable Mauritius.

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Rogers

In March 2018, Mauritius celebrated its 50th independence anniversary in style. For the occasion, we reflected as a nation on past achievements and on the sharing of our common destiny. We realized that the best way to mark this milestone was to tackle climate change problems head on.

Building on its 10-year engagement in the protection of coastal ecosystems, and in connection with its Sustainable Development Strategy, Rogers decided that, as part of the Independence celebrations, it would embark on a multi-support campaign to seek engagement and responsibility from all citizens, including its employees, to make Mauritius a sustainable island.

From this reflection stemmed the “Hip Hip Hip No Waste” campaign to encourage Mauritians to tackle wastage on a daily basis and live by the “Three R” principle: reduce, reuse, recycle. The campaign prompted the “50 eco-moves for the future” call for action — even though we may have a fairly negligible impact on global changes, we are nonetheless conscious that we should “be the change that [we] want to see in the world” (Mahatma Gandhi). In short, there is no small, menial or insignificant gesture when it comes to behavior change. It is

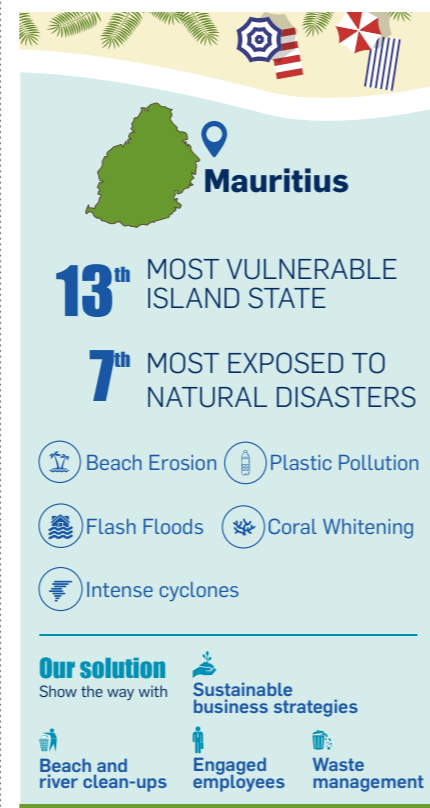
the sum of all citizens’ actions that helps create synergies, builds momentum, and makes a substantive difference in societal development.

Rogers’ initiative is due to last till the end of 2018. Making use of print advertising, social media posts, and even a large banner that stretched down one façade of the Head Office building exterior, the campaign saw the filming of a video clip involving employees of the Rogers Head Office. The power of Facebook and its social media consorts was widely used to report on the different initiatives and provide a broad call to action.

Rogers’ subsidiaries organized multiple cleanup sessions across the island to raise awareness on personal and public levels. Veranda Resorts and Heritage Resorts acted by offering to their neighboring communities the opportunity to make use of a bulky trash bin to get rid of their old equipment and furniture. This type of trash is not collected by the local authorities.

Velogic, our logistics flagship, recycled its castoff pallets into beds for needy families affected by the recent flash floods in Mauritius. Bagatelle Mall, the island’s leading shopping center, organ-

ized a Green Market, thus providing green exhibitors and non-profit associations with an exceptional showcase. Our “Ocean Basket” seafood franchise coined a “Last Straw” policy, whereby it banned from its restaurants all straws in



an effort to curb sea pollution — these items being, with plastic bags and bottles, the leading ocean pollutants.

Rogers Corporate Office also planned a “good-for-your-health, great-for-the-environment” event in our capital, Port Louis, which has the highest concentration of day workers. It was the place of highest impact to witness a hundred or so “ploggers” running on the sidewalks at peak traffic hours plucking discarded trash. Inspired by Swedish citizens on Facebook, this idea of combining a healthy activity such as jogging with the act of picking up trash (“plogging”) was highly symbolic, in that it helped employees and members of the public alike to sharpen their perceptions of social responsibility and ethical living.

Along the same train of thought, a special interactive landing page was added

to the Rogers Group website featuring information about the “50 eco-moves for tomorrow” to inspire Mauritians to reflect on the effective use of natural resources and on the different ways to impact environmental protection. Every gesture weighs in the balance: Repairing a leaking tap, mending old equipment instead of discarding it, sorting and recycling waste, encouraging eco-driving practices. Moreover, the list of “eco-moves” is far from restrictive: Each individual has the means to take the future into their own hands through decisive action. Change, by all means, begins with oneself. Setting the example through constructive action and a pedagogical approach is not a new avenue for Rogers. Through its Foundation, the group aims to stimulate and inspire youth and adults alike by offering financial support and logistics to environmental projects brought to its attention.

Last but not least, to influence national policy, Rogers’ CEO, Philippe Espitalier-Noël, presides over the Business Mauritius Commission on Sustainability and Inclusive Growth. Business Mauritius is the coordinating body and the voice of the business community on the island. This engagement truly reflects our commitment to corporate citizenship and is an indication that ours is a voice to be reckoned with in the local community when it comes to promoting sustainable and inclusive practices. The six sub-committees that were established — focusing on “carbon emission and alternative energy production,” “smart agriculture,” “inclusive economic development,” “lagoon and coastal beach preservation,” “sustainable cities and communities,” and “waste and waste management” — mobilize Mauritian enterprises to ensure the winds of change blow. ■