

University of Malta

Cottonera Resource Centre

Director's Report

1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013

A. SYNOPSIS OF PROJECTS

1. ACCESS - MENTORING PROJECT

The aim of this project, carried out in collaboration with St. Margaret's College is to encourage and support academically promising students at secondary school level to further their education beyond compulsory schooling. This is done through providing students with the support of a mentor, a current University student who meets with them on a regular basis and further providing support for the parents through a monthly meeting. Participants for this project are selected by the counseling team at St. Margaret's College.

The project continued for its second year with the participation of 9 students (6 boys and 3 girls) from St. Margaret College. Seven university students participated as mentors under the Degree Plus scheme. Mentors participated in a training seminar and were supported and monitored throughout their experience. The mentees had one to one and/or group sessions with their mentors on a weekly basis between March and June. 2 of the 9 students joined this project this year and were nominated by the school counselors while for the others, this was a continuation of last year's project. Apart from individual sessions, the following group activities were organized:

- a scavenger hunt around Cospicua, Vittoriosa and Kalkara during the Easter holidays;
- attendance to KSU's LionKink show at the University of Malta;
- a visit to St Edward's College
- a visit to 'Happy Paws Animal Clinic' and
- an interview on a TV programme entitled 'Animal Diaries'.

Every month the College principal, Ms Mc Namara organized a parents' meeting in which the students' parents had the opportunity to meet up and discuss issues that concerned them all. There were five different sessions held which included:-

- Introductory meeting
- The students and the scholastic year
- Study skills
- Talk on kellimni.com
- Evaluation

An evaluation session with the mentors was held in June. During such session, the mentors discussed their experience in this project and their relationship with the mentees. All mentors described such experience as very positive where they managed to build a good relationship with the students. Some of the mentors also mentioned the improvements they noticed in the mentees. When discussing some limitations of this

project, the lack of commitment of some students (mentees) was mentioned. In fact, the idea of involving guidance teachers and school counselors was discussed in order to ensure more school support and parental involvement in this project. An informal barbeque was planned for the summer to close the year but due to lack of participation it was postponed to early October. Certificates will be given to participants during this gathering. Plans are underway to recruit mentors and students for the following scholastic year. It is planned that for the scholastic year 2013/2014, mentoring will commence in November after mid-term holidays.

2. SEC REVISION STUDY GROUPS

The Revision Study Groups project was organized in collaboration with KSU and took place between March and May 2013. Through this programme, students who applied for the SEC Exams, had the opportunity to work in groups and discuss shared fields of study. The tutors helped the students by working on past papers and clarified certain issues regarding the topic being studied. The need for this project was identified by young people who had participated in the discussions held in October as part of the events of Skopri l-Universita' fit-Tlett Ibliet.

The secondary schools of St. Margaret College were informed about this project and applications were distributed to all students who applied for the SEC exams. The total number of students who applied for the revision study groups amounted to 142 but eventually only 30 students attended regularly and consistently for the sessions. The hereunder table shows the school and the year class of the applicants who took part:

Form	No. of Students	School
4	2	Verdala Boys
	7	Zejtun School
5	5	Verdala Girls
	21	Verdala Boys
	107	Zejtun School

The tutors who participated in this project were all University students, mostly reading a degree in B.Ed. Mr John Gabaretta from KSU was responsible for recruiting volunteers and 19 University students participated in this project. The programme covered 8 different subject and a total of 26 sessions per week were held for a period of 10 weeks. The time duration of each session varied between 1 and 1.5 hours. The hereunder table depicts the number of sessions per subject and the number of tutors per subject. Towards the end of the programme, in May, two members of the MATSEC Board carried out a session for the students on common mistakes often found in Maltese and Maths SEC papers.

Subject	No. of Sessions	No. of Tutors
Biology	3	3
Chemistry	1	1
English	5	4
French	1	1
Maltese	5	3
Mathematics	7	3
Physics	3	3
Spanish	1	1

Tutors filled out a log for each session that they conducted outlining the activities carried out and reflections on the session. An evaluation session with the tutors was held on Wednesday 8th May 2013. The feedback collected was very positive and provided good insights on certain issues. In fact, all the tutors who were present for this session mentioned that they found it very useful as they had the opportunity to conduct practical sessions relevant to their studies. Moreover, they also mentioned certain issues which could help when implementing such a project in the future. These are:

- Lack of resources such as past papers and books,
- The students' turnover - Sometimes the students attended different groups from the ones they registered for, hence, in certain occasions, there were groups of approximately 15 students, while some tutors were left without students.
- Students' lack of commitment – Even if the amount of students who applied for the revision study groups amounted to 142, there were only 25 students (approx.) who were consistently present for the sessions.

All the University students who participated in this programme were awarded a certificate of participation by KSU and Cottonera Resource Centre during the Kokka Night Ceremony held on the 12th of May.

3. OPEN SPACES

'Open Spaces' is a Youth in Action project which developed from one of the discussions which was held in November 2012 during 'Skopri l-Universita' fit-Tlett Ibliet'. Four young people with the support of St. Margaret's College ZTK Youth Club and the Cottonera Resource Centre submitted an application in February 2013 and were awarded funds to carry out this project.

'Open Spaces' focused on the lack of spaces where young people can spend their free time in Cottonera, Kalkara and Zabbar areas. It aimed to create awareness amongst young people, NGO's, local councils, and politicians about the lack of public spaces available to youth due to privatization of public spaces or derelict spaces.

The project mainly consisted of an 8-week summer programme in July and August where around 40 young people from the Cottonera area attended workshops in St. Margaret College and CRC to learn how to use different media to raise awareness about the lack of appropriate open spaces for young people. Workshops in photography, videography, dancing, arts and drama were carried out. Participants also helped to embellish the ground floor area that houses the youth club. A flash mob was carried out in Valletta and the youngsters further produced a documentary, a drama production and an art exhibition. An event was organized on the 5th September to display these products. Another presentation night is further being planned for the 25th October as part of ‘Discover University’ week where civil society representatives will be invited to attend and participate in a discussion at Cottonera Resource Centre on the issue as a continuation of last year’s discussion.

Participants in this project will further carry out the flashmob and display the documentary and art exhibition at the Discover University Family Day on campus on the 11th November 2013.

The project is being co-financed by the Youth in Action under the Youth Initiative scheme. St Margaret’s College as the main supporting organization were handling the funds. The role of the Cottonera Resource Centre consisted in supporting the planning, organization and facilitation of workshops and events.

4. KIDS ON CAMPUS

13 students were chosen and successfully participated in Kids on Campus summer school 2013. The hereunder table illustrates the number of students and the localities from which they derived.

Kids on Campus - 2013

Cospicua	4
Kalkara	2
Senglea	4
Vittoriosa	2
Total	12

A parents’ meeting was held at the Cottonera Resource Centre in May 2013 with the participation of the CRC Director and Ms Jacqueline Sant, the coordinator of Kids on Campus. A brief overview of the summer school and the objectives of the project were explained during this meeting. A nominal fee of 20 Euro was paid for each participating child. Transport was also sponsored by the University of Malta.

As part of the idea of promoting the Cottonera to children from Kids on Campus, CRC collaborated with a local NGO to offer workshops at Kids on Campus on painting using salt and sand, a local traditional craft. Following discussions, Kids on Campus further organized an outing to Rinella Fort as part of their programme.

5. DARSU – ORAL HEALTH AND DENTAL HYGIENE SESSIONS

This project was carried out in collaboration with the Faculty of Dentistry. Two rooms at CRC were set up to act as an education workshop and a mobile dental clinic. A number of dental students together with their lecturers attended CRC in July and August 2013 to carry out educational talks, practical sessions and a dental check-up for children and young people in the Cottonera area. A total of 175 children attending various summer schools took part in nine 3-hour sessions within the area as depicted below:

Session	School / Group	No. of Participants
1	Zejtun School	10
2	Zabbar Skola Sajf	40
3	Senglea Skola Sajf	10
4	Zabbar Skola Sajf	30
5	Centru Tbexbix	10
6	Zabbar Skola Sajf	20
7	Xghajra Skola Sajf	9
8	Klabb 3 - 16	20
9	Klabb 3 - 16	25

Furthermore, a number of students who are studying Biology at school were invited to attend the sessions and ‘shadow’ the dental students.

6. SUMMER REVISION GROUPS

During this summer around 40 students were nominated by the College principal to attend summer revision groups covering the main subjects. These students had 3 sessions per week (1hr each session) for Mathematics, English and Maltese for seven consecutive weeks. Volunteers were recruited to carry out the sessions and consisted of University students, teachers from the community and University graduates. A total of 18 children attended these sessions regularly.

7. UNIVERSITY OF THE 3RD AGE

The CRC in collaboration with U3E is organizing two courses in October 2013 for persons over 60 years of age from the Cottonera and inner harbor region. These courses are going to be sponsored by the

Parliamentary Secretariat for the Rights of Persons with Disability and Active Ageing. The first two courses will be given by Rev. Dr Rene' Camilleri and Tony Terribile on Church and State in Malta and Chapels and Niches in Cottonera, respectively. Marketing of this project and recruitment was underway between July – September 2013 and included a press release, appearance on radio and TV programmes, collaboration with local councils and parish churches as well as distribution of posters and leaflets. Thus far 20 participants have applied for these courses.

8. WHEN ART MEETS ACTING - RELOAD

WAMA Reloads is a continuation of a St. Margaret's College project, WAMA. The CRC joined as partners in supporting the College in this project for the upcoming scholastic year. The project consists in after school workshops for secondary school students in performing arts, art and the local tradition of salt painting. The project is partially funded by the '*Premju tal-President għall-Kreattività*' and will commence in November 2013.

B. SEMINARS AND EVENTS

1. SKOPRI L-UNIVERSITA FIT-TLETT IBLIET

This event was a prequel to Discover University 2012 and was organized in collaboration with Communications Office and the University Structures Committee. It served as an opportunity to introduce the Centre and housed in a large tent, it implemented a number of activities on three different days in Senglea, Cospicua and Vittoriosa respectively. Some of these activities included traditional games, debates, lectures, students' advisory services and theatre workshop which all aimed to bring students from these areas closer to University life and culture. The event was featured in an article in the Times of Malta on 5/11/2012 and in 'Think' – Issue 4.

2. LAUNCH EVENT OF COTTONERA RESOURCE CENTRE

The Cottonera Resource Centre premises were launched on the 22nd January 2013 by the Hon. Minister Dolores Cristina. Academics, various civil society organisations and participants in the mentoring project attended the launch. The launch was featured in various local media.

3. SERIES OF PUBLIC LECTURES

A series of public lectures were held at the Centre which included different topics related to Cottonera. The table hereunder shows the different talks held between March & May 2013. Each lecture was well attended with approximately 30 to 40 participants in each lecture. Two of these lectures were recorded by Campus FM and can be found as podcasts on the Campus FM website.

Date	Title	Speaker	Location
1 st March	The National Identity of Maltese Children ¹	Dr. Carmen Fyfe	Cottonera Resource Centre
12 th April	Francesco Vella (1793-1868) An Unsung Protagonist of Maltese Language Development	Prof. Arnold Cassola	Cottonera Resource Centre
10 th May	"18 th Century Cottonera: a vibrant 'Smart City' open to the world."	Prof. Carmel Vassallo	Cottonera Resource Centre
24 th May	The dome painting by Giuseppe Cali in the chapel of the Crucifix in the Cospicua Collegiate Parish Church: History and conservation challenges	Ms. Roberta DeAngelis Marquis De Piro	Oratory of Our Lady of Sorrows, Cospicua Collegiate Parish Church

4. SEMINAR ON IDENTITY AND RACISM

On 1st March, in collaboration with the Department of Psychology, Dr Carmen Fyfe carried out a workshop on racism with the participation of local young people attending the ZTK Youth Club as well as a number of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers from Somalia who reside at Dar il-Liedna Fgura. The session ended with an informal get together.

5. WORKSHOP: IR-ROTA, IL-LIEVA U AKTAR....

On 5th March, Dr. Ing. Mario Farrugia carried out a workshop for students attending the SPA programme and the Verdala Boys' school at the Cottonera Resource Centre. A number of students had the opportunity to bring their own bikes to school for this practical session on mechanics.

6. AKUSTIKA CONCERT

As part of the Evenings on Campus activities, on the 2nd August the musical group Akustika performed at the Cottonera Resource Centre. Entrance was free, but a donation towards RIDT was encouraged. The event was featured on various local media.

¹ This lecture was held in collaboration with the Department of Psychology

7. OTHER EVENTS THAT CRC PARTICIPATED IN:

4 th December 2012	MCA Roadshow	CRC had a stand at Tuesday market for PR activities
12 th May 2013	KSU Kokka Night	Public speech on CRC and presentation of certificates to students who participated in Revision project.
15 – 17 th May 2013	St. Margaret’s College Pool Marathon	CRC facilitated a workshop during the marathon and attended the various activities
17 th May 2013	SOTO Project, Institute of Tourism, Travel and Culture	CRC Chairperson attended a meeting on this project that aims to broaden access to tourism for persons experiencing poverty
18 th May 2013	V 18 Expo	CRC had a stand for PR activities which enabled networking with entities involved in promotion of cultural events
30 th May 2013	Visit to St Edward’s College	CRC together with the principal of St Margaret’s College and students from the Mentoring project visited the premises of St Edward’s College and met with the headmaster of the school
4 th June 2013	Birgu Local Council – Seminar for Voluntary organisations	CRC participated in this seminar to explore avenues for networking with voluntary organisations in Vittoriosa
10 th June 2013	Consultation Seminar – Kummissjoni Nazzjonali għall-Anzjanita’ Attiva	Participation in seminar and promotion of activities at CRC with various participants including local councils

3 rd September 2013	MFSS Public consultation meeting	Participation in this meeting.
14 th September 2013	Twembjent – Centre for Faith and Justice	CRC had a stand for PR activities and information

C. COLLABORATION WITH THIRD PARTIES

Since this was the first operating year of the Cottonera Resource Centre, it was deemed important to establish a collaborative relationship with a number of entities that work in the area. Meetings were held with various stakeholders including NGOs, private companies, researchers and policy makers to facilitate networking, explore areas of collaboration and further promote regeneration of the Cottonera area. Such meetings led to various discussions and plans for events, projects and possible sponsorships. The following is a list of meetings that were held:

	Date	Organisation	Representative Person	Objective of Meeting
1	22.10.2012	KPAZ	Ms Lorraine Aquilina	Youth groups' involvement in Skopri I-Universita' and exploring possible collaboration with CRC
2	24.10.2012	IRM Co.	Ms Anna Spiteri	Youth groups' involvement in Skopri I-Universita' and exploring possible collaboration with CRC
3	26.10.2012	Vittoriosa Drama Group	Mr Roderick Castillo Mr Christian Raggio	Drama group's involvement in Skopri I-Universita and exploring possible collaboration with CRC
4	28.11.2012	MEUSAC		Information on EU funds
5	09.01.2013	Birgu Local Council	Mr John Boxall - Mayor	To exchange information and explore avenues of collaboration
6	09.01.2013	Bormla Local Council	Ms Alison Zerafa	To exchange information and explore avenues of collaboration
7	16.01.2013	Isla Local Council	Mayor	To exchange information and explore avenues of collaboration

8	04.02.2013 17.04.2013	Din Mhix Tazza	Ms Nathalie Grima Ms Sara Falconi Dr Virginia Monteforte	To organize a collaborative event with participants from this research project
9	06.02.2013	ACCESS Community Team	Ms Claire Gafa Mr Jean Paul Zammit	To exchange information on activities and projects
10	08.02.2013	Midsea Books Ltd.	Mr Edwin Catania	To ask for book sponsorships for CRC and local libraries
11	18.02.2013	Millers Distributors Ltd		To collect donated books
12	20.02.2013	Volunteer	Ms Lorna Schembri	To discuss collaboration with Kalkara Local Council regarding ICT courses
13	20.02.2013	Kalkara Parish	Rev. Anton Galea Scannura	To discuss possibility of community courses including Helping skills for church volunteers and a music appreciation course for choir
14	22.02.2013	Merlin Library		To collect donated books
15	25.02.2013	Social worker – researcher	Mr Patrick Harvey	To discuss Mr Harvey’s dissertation about issue of stigma in Cottonera
16	27.02.2013	Ekoskola	Mr Johann Gatt	To explore avenues for collaboration on environmental projects
17	01.03.2013	Cospicua Parish	Rev Reuben Micallef	To exchange information and explore avenues of collaboration
18	05.03.2013	EUPA	Mr Karl Engerer	To explore possible ideas for EU projects
19	05.03.2013	Centre for faith and Justice	Fr. Edgar Busuttil	To explore collaboration on a conference on faith and the environment
20	07.03.2013	Smart City	Ms Anamaria Pantea	To exchange information and explore avenues of collaboration
21	02.04.2013	Deloitte	Ms Cathy Peric	To provide information on CRC and possibility of

				sponsoring books/projects/volunteers
22	03.04.2013	Weave Consulting	Ms Roberta Lepre Ms Roberta Avellino	To provide information on CRC and discuss possible collaboration on EU project
23	12.04.2013	Researcher	Ms Christine Cutajar	To explore collaboration on project on artisan crafts
24	17.04.2013	Vittoriosa Primary School	Ms Spiteri	To explore collaboration on a summer project for primary school students
25	22.04.2013	V 18	Mr Karsten Xuereb	To explore possibility of participation in V18 activities
26	05.06.2013	Project promoter	Ms Petra Zacheva	To explore ideas for EU projects
27	20.06.2013	St Edward's College St. Margaret's College	Mr Psaila - Headmaster	To explore ideas for collaboration between the three entities
28	11.08.2013	Ministry of Family	Mr Roger Mamo	To explore ideas for a project to alleviate poverty in Cottonera

Various meetings were also held with academics and other support staff at the University of Malta with the aim of collaborating with different faculties, institutes and centres on projects and events. The following meetings were held for this purpose:

	Date	Faculty/Institute/Centre	Representative Person	Possible collaboration:
1	3.10.2012	Faculty of ICT	Prof Gordon Pace	Gaming project Graphical projection of historical sites
2	3.10.2012 08.07.2013	U3E	Prof Joe Troisi	U3E courses in Cottonera
3	4.10.2012	Faculty of Law	Dr Simone Borg	Participation in Skopri l-Universita'
4	16.10.2012	Faculty for the Built Environment	Prof. Jo Anne Cassar	Research seminars Public lectures

5	17.10.2012	Faculty of Law	Dr Ruth Farrugia	Advocacy skills course Child Rights' Centre
6	19.10.2012	Faculty for Social Well being	Dr Jacqueline Azzopardi	Crime Victimisation Survey Internet Safety project
7	24.10.2012	Euro Mediterranean Centre for educational research	Prof. Ronald Sultana	Research on working class students at University
8	25.10.2012	Faculty of Education	Prof Carmel Borg	Participation in Skopri l-Universita' Project with Bormla Local Council for children disengaged from education in Bormla
9	30.01.2013	Student Advisory Services	Mr Albert Debono	Student Advisory Services at CRC by appointment Possible courses for adults and young people
10	22.02.2013 20.03.2013	School for Performing Arts	Prof. Butterworth and students	Dance projects in the community
11	25.02.2013	UoM Library	Mr Kevin Ellul	Library system for CRC
12	27.02.2013	Kids on Campus	Ms Jackie Sant	Sponsoring children from Cottonera to Kids on Campus Outings for Kids on Campus participants in Cottonera
13	27.03.2013 09.05.2013	Faculty of Dentistry	Prof. Nikolai Attard	Dental sessions and education on oral hygiene in Cottonera
14	25.04.2013	Centre for Mediterranean Institute	Prof. John Chircop	Oral history research project in Cottonera

D.OTHER ACTIVITIES

- The CRC has agreed with ACCESS Community Services to house a weekly Women's Group in one of the classrooms at CRC. This group has been meeting weekly since March 2013. They will be participating in Discover University Family Day 2013 through a craft display.
- Between March and June 2013, three third year students currently reading for a BA (Hons) in Social Policy carried out a proactive evaluation study as part of their academic studies under supervision of a lecturer and the CRC Director, to explore the needs and wants of the community vis a vis the Cottonera Resource Centre. They administered questionnaires with the public at various locations and carried out a number of individual semi-structured interviews with representatives from civil society in Cottonera. They are to present a report of their study by the end of the year.
- Staff from the Student Advisory Services have been attending the Cottonera Resource Centre to offer career guidance on an appointment basis.
- The Cottonera Resource Centre has been collaborating with the Communications Office to carry out activities for Discover University 2013. The following activities are being planned:
 - As part of the Family Day organized on campus on the 11th November, the following organisations will be participating:
 1. Cospicua Heritage Society - Lecture on Abram Gatt
 2. Domus Piju IX - Demonstration of local tradition of paintings using salt and sand
 3. St. Margaret College – Exhibition by Design and Technology students
 4. Women's Club Qawsalla – Craft Exhibition
 5. Open Spaces participants – Flashmob, Arts Exhibition, Display of documentary
 - A discussion will be held on 25th October with the participation of local councils, academics and the general public on possible ways to increase access and availability of open spaces for young people in Cottonera area.
 - Academics from various faculties, institutes and centres will be invited to attend secondary schools of St. Margaret's College to deliver lectures on various subjects and talk about careers in their respective areas.

Ms Andreana Dibben

CRC, Director

3rd October 2013
