



RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

Foreword



The very active Hurricane Season of 2004 reminded us once again of our vulnerability as a region to natural hazards. Of course, many of the disasters in the region are manmade – landslides resulting from continuing deforestation of watershed areas, the pollution of our rivers and harbours from oil spills and biological/chemical waste, and the deterioration of the ozone layer through poisonous chemical emissions into the atmosphere. Faced with more regular and frequent incidences of these environmental adversities, Caribbean Governments remain focussed on the creation of conditions that will foster sustainable regional development.

To this end, our academic staff here at Mona are devoted to research that is transformative and solution-oriented. Although the research projects that receive support under the Mona Research Fellowship and New Initiative Funding Programmes are quite varied in nature - encompassing the fields of medicine, agro-industry, education, the environment, socioeconomics and the political economy - the underlining motive remains the same: to improve the wellbeing of the Caribbean people. In keeping with the theme for Research Day 2005, *Natural Hazards, Disasters and Sustainable Development*, our research activity features related topics such as seasonal rainfall forecasting, air pollution modelling, groundwater studies and the preservation of near-extinct animal species, as the abstracts in this publication attest.

It goes without saying that sustainable development is dependent not only on control of the environment but also on the management of human and financial resources in relation to the delivery of health care, education and social welfare services. Accordingly, the publication showcases articles on the research undertaken on maternal health, mental health, and lifestyle diseases. Many of the abstracts highlight the work involved in the search for possible disease-treatment drugs derived from natural products of the land and sea. There are also articles on the strategies devised to improve students' learning outcomes in schools as well as informing us about the challenges facing our region's youth.



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Given the recognition that sustainable development will be dependent on the flow of these resources, research funded under the programme also examines remittance flows to the region, underscoring the urgency for proper channelling of these resources into sustainable developmental projects. Provision of credit to the agricultural sector - one of the key economic sectors in the regional economy - and exploitation of new and previously underutilized resources such as butterfly farming, are examined for creative and innovative approaches to their enhancement and development. Not to ignore also the impact of social and political factors on development, many of the abstracts presented here highlight the work being undertaken in respect of the important issues of migration, local government reform, crime control, among other concerns.

The Campus' research activity underscores the University's commitment to research that addresses the real-life challenges of the community and the region, with a view to generating new knowledge that will influence public policy and guide appropriate corporate solutions. In this regard, the Research Fellowship and New Initiative Fund Programmes are merely illustrative of the University's larger overall thrust towards directing scarce resources into research activity for practical application to everyday life. I hope that the publication *Research for Development, 2005* succeeds in conveying to our stakeholders in the public and private spheres the urgent imperative to support this activity that is without question critical to national and regional sustainable development.

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