

Shrum on Science

NACI was privileged to host Professor Wesley Shrum from Louisiana State University on 18 July 2003. He spoke about *Science and Summits* with the gist of his presentation being on Science and Globalisation - the interconnection between Science and Technology Studies, Information and Communication Technology, and Development/Reagency.

Shrum maintained that the usage of information and communication technology (ICT) to increase collaboration in research subsequently increases productivity. Internet reduces problems of collaboration, he said. Access to e-mail reduces research problems. Even though internet reduces problems of collaboration and research problems, in Kerala, Kenya and Ghana, collaboration does not lead to any general increase in productivity. Difficulties are structured more by social context than by the collaborative process itself. Education in developed countries makes little difference to the range of external professional networks. Those involved in the knowledge production process seem not to take advantage of the information and communication technology.

On World Summits, he maintained that such summits are only a declaration of principles and plan of action, which are not necessarily followed by projects. He is for the idea of World Summit on the Information Society. This must involve governments, private sector and civil society. The role of science in the information society must be debated. The past, present and future of science in the information society and the future of Africa, Latin America and Asia in the information society must constitute the gist of the debate.