



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

**Amplifying Youth Voice and Action for Citizen Safety and Security
Technical Working Group Meeting Minutes
February 3, 2022 @ 3pm**

Attendance

Name	Organization
Johnoi Elliston	PSOJ
Giuliana Neumann	UNESCO
Paula Isturiz-Cavero	UNESCO
Kamesha Blake	PSOJ
Davoreen Gaynor	UNDP
Ashleigh Blythe	UNDP
Kerry-Ann Willis	UNDP
Delores Wade	PIOJ
Sashion Thomas	PIOJ
Yanique Williams	MOEYI

1. Call to Order

The meeting of the technical working group for the AYVA project was called to order at 3:15pm, on February 3, 2022, by Ms. Ashleigh Blythe. Welcome was offered to the participants and commendation given to the team for the work done during the project period.

2. Project Updates

Project overview and updates were provided by Ms. Ashleigh Blythe, Project Associate for the Amplifying Youth Voice and Action Project.

- ❖ 2 Project Outputs were highlighted:
 - *Output 1* – the incubator program was successfully completed in which all youth groups had their capacity strengthened.
 - *Output 2* – The implementation phase was currently in its final stages.
- ❖ **Key Achievements:**
 - **Output 1:**
 - A) Implementation of Microprojects – Final payments are being made to vendors, however project activities for all 10 microprojects have been completed.



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- B) The onboarding of 5 interns was successful, which exceeded the project target of onboarding 3 interns. It was reported that their internship under the AYVA Project had been extended until January 2022, due to the exceptional work that had been done. Interns are currently volunteering to assist with close-out activities.
- As a part of the internship, 2 solutions were completed: the Youth Summit and a partnership with the MNS ‘We Transform’ initiative. A third solution was desired to be completed by the interns, however it was decided by the project team to forgo the final solution and utilize those funds to further assist some of the other program targets.
- B) The video profiles for the grantees have been successfully completed for all 10 groups and will be displayed at the closing ceremony.
- C) The Youth as Researchers activity has also begun and is being led by the UNESCO team. So far there has been great things reported about that process and further update will be provided by UNESCO during the meeting.
- **Output 2:**
 - A) On-granting mechanism still on going, as some youth groups are still paying vendors as previously mentioned. The institution is also still providing mentorship to the youth groups.
 - B) The Social media Consultant’s contract ended as of October 31, 2021, of which the results produced were satisfactory.
 - C) The procurement process for the Knowledge Management Consultant has been initiated. With the completion of the evaluations the consultancy is hoped to start in another two weeks as part of the closing activities.

3. Youth Group Updates

- All the microprojects are still ongoing and the microproject beneficiaries are still engaged.
- Some groups have been able to expand on their microprojects.
 - Community members have volunteered their services to be apart of the group initiatives
 - Some MPs are willing to invest in the youth groups.
- Mentorship continues with RISE and they are also being assisted with completing their final reports to be shared with the team.



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- The groups have been contacted to speak with the knowledge management consultant once onboarded.

4. Intern Solutions

Of the initial three solutions targeted, the interns were able to complete two:

- The Youth Summit on Crime and Violence - engaged not just youth by age, but the young at heart, as well as several of our state ministers
- Partnership with the MNS 'We Transform Youth Empowerment Program' - provided care packages to 233 youth from four correctional facilities and some ministry priority schools. The impact and appreciation shown was inspiring as due to COVID some have not been able to see their families.
 - 10 from the schools
 - 80 from Metcalfe
 - 25 from Hilltop
 - 66 from South Camp
 - 52 from the Rio Cobre

5. Youth as Researchers

The research component was designed to capture how involved young people are in policy making with relation to government programs. The methodology has been a flagship of the Social and Human Sciences program of UNESCO, which has already been implemented with 34 youth led groups from 70 different countries reaching over 10,000 young people worldwide, starting in 2020 with the onset of COVID-19. Partnership with the project is the first time the YAR initiative is being implemented in the Caribbean.

- The call for applications was launched in November
- 49 applications were received, of which 18 youth were selected based on evaluations of their motivation, future directions and previous research experience
- Three groups were created to focus on three main areas of research.
 - Policy design
 - Factors hindering youth participation in policy formation in relation to peace and security
 - Understanding CSO and private sector
 - CSO roles in crime reduction
 - Youth engagement in government programs



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- An investigation into the extent to which the zones of special operations implemented in Denham Town have been effective, or the youth perceptions on the effectiveness on crime and violence
- The methodology saw the participants trained in basic social science methods, using four modules prepared by the methodological consultant affiliated with a UNESCO chair. There was also an interactive workshop on unpacking youth peace and security concepts
- Two groups have already submitted and pitched their proposal to the ethics review to ensure data protection and the privacy of the researchers and informants
- The third group has experienced some dropouts that were late into the process and were unable to fully complete the social science training and develop their proposals. Additional participants are being recruited and Dr. Thorne, a member of the UNESCO chair, will provide additional oversight to this group during the research process.
- Data collection for the 2 advancing groups will begin in the upcoming week and the other group is hoped to begin the week of February 14th.
- Following the data collection, the youth groups will analyse the data and draft some knowledge products and possibly present their findings and reflections on the learning process to the technical working group and stakeholders from ministries or other interested CSOs.
- The suggestion was also made to consider how the youth as researchers may be engaged in a final closing event.

6. Project Challenges

- Delay in the start of the Knowledge Management Consultancy
 - Initially identified consultant was not successful in the evaluation process and the application had to be reopened
 - Selected consultant is expected to begin within the upcoming weeks and created products will be shared with the respective agencies.

7. Project Risks

- The removal of the Youth Minister
 - This is anticipated to affect the sustainability of projects, however the team committed to collaborating to reduce this possibility.
- Apathy amongst project participants
 - Participants are concerned about what will happen after project closure

8. Sustainability Plan

- It was recommended to continue to garner interest in the microprojects, both at the community and national levels.



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- The project beneficiaries have created partnerships and fostered synergies within the communities, so consideration may be given as to how this may be continued, and the projects integrated into the social fabric of the communities
- Stakeholder mapping was also suggested to ensure community integration
- Stakeholders and partners were encouraged to foster or maintain the knowledgeable ecosystem of young people that exists within the island.
 - This includes the increase of knowledge and self-efficacy of the young people to ensure they do have the tools to lead on the design and implementation of activities in their communities
- Provision of platforms, such as the annual Youth Summit, to showcase the talent of our youth and to encourage other young people to play their part in addressing citizen safety and security.
- Creation of greater collaborative efforts with some national ministries to ensure a more effective approach to including youth in decision making
- Establishing Public-Private partnerships as part of companies' visibility plans
 - Requests for funding and/or resources to bolster project impacts and training of youth ecosystem
- Strengthening of linkages to facilitate scaling of microprojects in other parishes and create viable income alternatives
 - The local economic development programme by the Municipal Corporations was recommended as a target support organization to establish an arrangement through which they commit to assisting future groups and projects with small funding and/or monitoring.
 - It was stated that there are some parishes with a safety and security committee, which may also be linked to disaster committees, which may be approached to include youth voices. PIOJ to offer assistance with making contact
- Strategic youth involvement through the creation of an ecosystem of stakeholders who can support the youth and their projects, from ideation stage to income generation stage.

9. Next Steps

- Onboarding of Knowledge Management Consultant
- Project Close-out Ceremony
- Stakeholder lessons learnt forum

10. Close-Out Ceremony

- Tentative date is March 10th (1pm-3pm)
- Venue TBD



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- The event will be of hybrid modality with limited persons in the physical space, observing COVID protocols
- Invitations are being finalized and ‘save the dates’ to be sent out to members of the TWG within the upcoming week
- Agenda to include testimonials from the interns, the beneficiaries, youth groups and researchers
 - Emphasis will be placed on highlighting the beneficiaries and how they have benefitted from the microprojects implemented by their peers
 - The youth researchers will be allowed to present their findings
- Youth groups to be awarded for their success in the project
- Members of the TWG were advised that they would be asked to bring greetings on behalf of their organization

11. Additional Questions and Comments

- Ms Delores Wade queried how the results of the youth researchers and the microprojects would be sustained after the project and what conversations need to be had within relevant agencies to support them. Ms. Wade also informed the TWG of a potential partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Ministry of Education to build youth associations and encourage entrepreneurship. Miss Yanique Williams from the Ministry of Youth was encouraged to seek additional information.
 - Ms Kerry-Ann Willis supported her in adding that youth groups may be connected with national programmes and other relevant organizations such as RADA and the Jamaica Business Development Corporation. She also emphasized the importance of collaboration between agencies in implementing youth projects.
 - She also highlighted that the project has strengthened their capacities to foster and maintain these relationships, as much of the sustainability lies not only with the partner agencies, but with the youth groups and their ability to scale their activities.
- Ms. Sashion Thomas queried how the Youth researchers’ initiative will be packaged and shared with other youth, as well as tied into the design and discussions being had at the ministry levels to ensure sustainability and traceability.
 - She emphasized the importance of youth engagement and being able to continue this engagement across the development stages and track how the youth have been impacted.
- Mrs. Paula Isturiz Cavero informed the team of a high-level policy conference, specifically focused on youth as researchers, being held by UNESCO in mid-March, to which the Minister of Education was invited.



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

- The conference will focus on how we build on the knowledge being generated by the Youth as Researchers projects and sharing about the methodology to facilitate duplication
- Ms. Wade also requested that the PIOJ be a part of this event.
- Ms. Davoreen Gaynor formally informed the team that the Knowledge Management Consultant would be onboarded soon, with the sole responsibility of capturing the lessons learnt and recommendations based on the projects implementation and results, which may assist in future policy revisions. She also thanked Ms. Thomas for her passion and recommended a partnership between the Ministry of Youth and PIOJ to implement a mapping system that could trace the engagement and impact of youth across the island.
- Ms. Wade encouraged the team to ensure that the Ministry of Education has this initiative and others under their purview to identify where the synergies and best practices are likely to be realized.
- Ms. Yanique Williams expressed her willingness to provide technical support for the youth projects being implemented, however higher-level discussions and engagement had to be routed through the Minister and Permanent Secretary.
- It was noted that some consideration may be given to removing the bias around gender specific jobs, as well as removing the dissonance between the rural and urban communities and accessibility of resources and opportunities to young people in these communities
- Ms. Thomas highlighted the importance of creating a clear sustainability document/frame that can be shared with stakeholders to ensure continuation of project results, and can be used to inform the current process that the Ministry of Education is engaging

12. Adjournment

The call to adjourn the meeting was made at 4:33 pm by Ms. Blythe. The motioned was moved by Ms. Willis and seconded by Ms. Thomas.

DocuSigned by:

07C49BA3041C4A1...