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Amplifying Youth Voice and Action for Citizen Safety and Security Technical Working Group Meeting Minutes April 13, 2022 @ 1pm

Attendance

Name	Organization
Johnoi Elliston	PSOJ
Georgette Bolton-Smith	PSOJ
Giuliana Neumann	UNESCO
Paula Isturiz-Cavero	UNESCO
Gracia Romeral Ortiz Quintilla	UNESCO
Kamesha Blake	PSOJ
Davoreen Gaynor	UNDP
Ashleigh Blythe	UNDP
Kerry-Ann Willis	UNDP
Sharona Napier	UNDP
Yanique Williams	MOEYI
Nicole West-Hayles	Knowledge Management Consultant
Zodian Smith-Henry	Knowledge Management Assistant

1. Call to Order

The final meeting of the technical working group for the AYVA project was called to order at 1:15pm, on April 13, 2022, by Ms. Davoreen Gaynor. Welcome was offered to the participants and introductions done of all members in attendance. Apologies were offered for Ms. Renee Scott from the Ministry of National Security, as well as Ms. Delores Wade and Sashion Thomas from the Planning Institute of Jamaica.

2. Project Review and Updates

Project overview and updates were provided by Ms. Davoreen Gaynor, Programmes Support Consultant.

- The pilot project falls under the Jamaica Multi Country Office's Social Integration and Governance Portfolio, which looks at safety and security.
- The project was developed to strengthen the capacity of youth in advocacy and community development, identify and address systematic and institutional barriers for



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youth participation and to enable youth to contribute to policy and decision-making processes.

- The project targets were met through three components
 - Research – led by the UNESCO team
 - Internships – aimed at building networking opportunities for youth. Initial target of 3 youth was surpassed, with 5 youth benefiting.
 - Microprojects – implemented by the 10 selected youth groups
- Of the project budget of US\$320,000, \$288,000 have been spent and all other funds committed, including payments to UNESCO.
- An initial call was made for youth groups to participate in the project and over 70 applications were received. A similar competitive process was taken to engage an organization to facilitate the on granting process.
- Three main thematic areas were identified for the 10 microprojects: Safety and inclusion, Mentorship and Entrepreneurship and Employment.
- The main results for each youth group were highlighted:

Thematic Area	Youth Group	MicroProject
Safety and Inclusion	Bully Proof Kids	Fencing for the Vaughansfield Primary School in rural St. James, as well as an anti-bullying and online safety campaign and workshop for the students and staff
	Every Mikkle Foundation	Provision of safety kits and fire safety training for staff and residents in three children’s homes
	National Police Youth Club	Training of over 40 police officers and youth members in sign language interpretation, as well as providing 2 police stations with tablets to assist in facilitating persons who have hearing or speech disabilities. The group has been able to secure additional funding to continue their project.
	Total Health Services	Developed a telemedicine platform and provided sensitization to members of the Greenwich community on how to access these services.
Mentorship	Called to Lead	Provision of grants and tablets to 35 students at the Alpha Boys Institute, promoting full reintegration
	Youth for Development Network/Jahmekya Project	Conducted a residential camp and engaged over 18 youth in art therapy to express and



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		manage conflicts through creative art, as an alternative dispute resolution method
	Youth Inspiring Positive Change	Conducted conflict management workshops for 30 young persons from the Tivoli Gardens community; training youth as peace ambassadors and mentors
Entrepreneurship and Employment	ISEEED Youth	Provided private security guard training to 32 youth most of whom have since been employed as security guards
	Norwood CDC	Developed a hydroponic farming system for 15 unattached youth, as well as digital literacy training and certification for 7 unattached youth in rural communities
	Young Men/Women of Purpose	Provision of entrepreneurship training, business coaching and development support, as well as grants to 10 young men in the communities of Greenville and Georges Valley.

3. Knowledge Management Results

- The knowledge management consultant was provided the opportunity to speak with the 10 youth groups, as well as RISE Life Management
- According to the TOR requirements, the Knowledge Management Consultant was expected to engage youth led organizations and relevant partners to identify, document and support dissemination of lessons learned arising from the implementation of the project.
 - Three domains were to be examined: the project design, the incubator approach and the partnerships established
 - Three deliverables were expected: a lessons learned and best practices report, recommendations for upscaling and a most significant change story/case study
- Consultation interviews and group discussion sessions were held between the period March 5 – 29, 2022, via face to face, telephone calls, WhatsApp, Zoom and the Google meet platforms based on availability and convenience for stakeholders.
- A semi structured questioning tool was used to guide the conversations and the findings are also supported by desk review from numerous documents
- The greatest challenges identified were time management and communication management and were not from any deficiencies in the design of the project.
- The delay in transfer of funds posed several challenges for both the youth groups and the responsible party.



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- Some of the recommendations given are already being actioned by the UNDP team based on the feedback received during their consultation session
- The overall project design was effective and allowed for creation of youth interventions and opportunities.

Area Explored	Findings/Challenges	Recommendations
<p style="text-align: center;">Microproject Implementation</p>	<p>The utilization of youth as project coordinators and managers was highly appreciated as they felt understood and connected.</p>	
	<p>The use of the responsible party was welcomed, as the youth felt it helped with mentorship, accountability and transparency, and for them to be formalized.</p>	
	<p>Youth groups became accustomed to dealing with the UNDP, which resulted in a feeling of annexation and/or uncertainty about the role of the responsible party once onboarded.</p>	<p>Engage responsible party at the beginning of the project and effectively communicate their role to the youth groups</p> <p>Responsible Party could have provided insight during the selection process and assisted with microproject planning.</p>
	<p>There was some discontent among youth groups with regards to the inconsistent management of funds by the responsible party.</p>	<p>Standardize the management of funds for youth groups as opposed to varying management styles for each group (self-managed vs. organization managed etc.)</p>
	<p>The youth groups believed there was some miscommunication regarding the financing mechanism to be used throughout the project and the procurement process was believed to be too onerous</p>	
	<p>The thorough documentation process by the responsible party helped raise groups' standards</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Incubator Approach</p>	<p>This approach was appreciated by the youth groups as it helped build their capacity and served as a refresher for those who were familiar with the topic areas</p>	



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	Some youth groups believe the incubator sessions were too compact (3hrs per session)	Sessions could be broken into multiple sessions. Online, self-paced learning sessions could be hosted for interested groups and serve as a prerequisite for application.
	Selection of working youth and students caused fatigue during incubator period	Engage youth during summer period when there is greater availability
Partnerships	Very good mix of partnership with wealth of information to pass to youth groups	Additional partnerships and/or extension services could be established to make provisions for government agencies to support youth groups on matters outside the scope of immediate project team and responsible party.
Project Design/General	The delay in funds transfer affected participation of youth who were otherwise engaged in school/work activities	Select a responsible party with the financial capacity to up front expenses on behalf of the UNDP until the funds are made available, especially for the time sensitive projects. There could be creation of a supply chain, where goods and services can be procured and credited until funds are available.
	Youths expressed wanting to have more control over their project (some decisions were made on their behalf by the responsible party)	Provide greater clarity regarding what was expected between the responsible party and the youth groups. Establish clear lines/protocols for communication and a complaint and feedback mechanism.
	Youth groups wanted to engage more with the UNDP team	Reconsider the need for and responsibilities of a responsible party
		More effective and timely communication between youth



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		groups and UNDP/Responsible Party throughout project
		Establish a single exchange rate for use throughout project period

- The TWG was given the opportunity to share their views on the project regarding their partnership, what went well and their recommendations for improvement.
 - The request was made to have the key recommendations shared with the TWG
 - It was recommended that the lessons learned and recommendations be clustered and analyzed, and the key principles of meaningful youth engagement shared to advise the alignment of the implementation of the UN youth strategy 2030 and provide UN entities a very clear road map on how to improve the way young people are meaningfully engaged.
 - The MOEYI expressed an interest for having been engaged earlier in the project and also have a clear idea of their role in the project, apart from sitting on the committee. They expressed a desire to have been further engaged on the ground and interacting with the youth groups.
 - Timing of requests to members of the TWG was also expressed as a challenge during implementation as requests often conflicted with other organizational events and/or obligations
 - The feasibility of a fixed exchange rate throughout the project was queried and clarity provided regarding the inability of UNDP to control the exchange rate. However, it was recommended that a conversation be had with the youth in advance to advise of the fluctuations that will occur in the figures.
 - It was also recommended that focus be given to the framework of how this project contributes to Jamaica's youth strategy and 2030 strategy.
 - It was expressed that this pilot project was a learning curve for the members and internal assessments is required to strengthen boost multisectoral collaboration.
 - The project team was also commended for their transparency and clarity of information shared with the TWG during meetings
 - The partnership between the UNDP and UNESCO was also expressed as being successful with regards to the exchange of knowledge and the ability to operate as 'one UN' throughout the project which may positively impact the ability deliver more projects that have more impact.

4. Youth as Researchers Results



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Throughout the project UNESCO offered continuous coaching, mentorship and follow up which was considered really critical elements to the success of the project.

- 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
 - 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 main goal of the YAR methodology was not to produce the research findings, however emphasis was placed on positively enhancing capacities (teamwork or empathy and acquiring critical thinking skills).
- Research reports were developed on the topics, outlining findings and recommendations, which was shared at the closing ceremony.
- One of the main lessons learned is that the YAR pilot in Jamaica gives great insight into the possibilities of having youth cocreate knowledge production and participate in larger UN projects to enhance meaningful youth engagement and delivery of the youth 2030 strategy.
- The cocreation approach was expressed as the key to generating ownership among young people and allowing them to feel that they are not just beneficiaries, but they are also agents of change. This may inspire persons to continue their engagement within their communities.
- Johnoi share some key findings from his research topic “Identifying factors hindering youth participation in policy formation with relation to peace, citizen safety and security in Jamaica”
 - 101 respondents were interviewed over a two-week period
 - Majority of respondents were female (over 71.3%)
 - 54.7% of respondents reported never having participated in any policy making process as it relates to citizen peace, safety and security
 - Secondary literature suggests that females are marginalized during the policy making process in Jamaica, as reflected in Parliament.
 - Tokensim was also a concern as youth believe policies being put in place are not reflective of their opinions, due to youth members on various committees not being allowed to express themselves
 - A focus group revealed a mistrust in CSO interventions due to prior negative experiences or lack of implementation from these organizations



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- Responses were received from 13 parishes, with 54.5% of respondents being from the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA) which includes Kingston and St Andrew and St Catherine. This reveals a need to include youth from the rural areas in the policy making process.
- The group believes in investing in school programs that will teach youth about advocacy and youth involvement and the importance of raising their voice.
- One limitation of the study was the inability to reach youth from the community of persons with disabilities, homeless youth and unattached youth living in rural and vulnerable communities
- It was shared that the youth researchers were engaged in training sessions to familiarize them in areas of research and ethics
- The UNESCO team expressed their availability for any questions or interviews regarding the lessons learned, final reports or the knowledge management aspects of the project and expressed thanks for their involvement in this aspect of the project.

5. Project Closure and Adjournment

Commendations were given to all partners, especially UNESCO, who partnered with the project from its inception and committed to providing exceptional support to the youth groups and project team.

The contact information for the Knowledge Management Consultant was also shared with the team in the event anyone had additional information to share.

The call to officially close the Amplifying Youth Voices and Action project and adjourn the final meeting of the Technical Working Group was made at 2:20pm by Ms. Blythe. The motion was moved by Paula Isturiz Cavero and seconded by Johnoi Elliston.

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