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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO JUVENILE COURT PROJECT

QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT:

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1. Introduction

During the period April 1 to June 30, 2017, work continued on the Juvenile Court Project. The project was originally scheduled to conclude on April 21, 2017, however in light of a number of delays, many of which were beyond the control of the Judiciary, UNDP and the Project Team, a no-cost extension was granted by USAID for the period April 22 to July 21, 2017. During this period, work continued across project outputs. It was an important period for advancing work on the South Court building, for ensuring that the legislative framework was in place to facilitate operationalization of the Courts, and for the development of training plans. It was a critical period for obtaining the necessary Cabinet approvals to proceed with acquisition of the North Court building, staffing for the Courts, the Trinidad and Tobago Table of Equivalencies of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes's International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes (hereafter "Table of Equivalencies"), the Trinidad and Tobago Multi-Agency Protocols Addressing Children in Conflict with the Law (hereafter "Multi-Agency Protocols") and the Trinidad and Tobago Inter-Agency Protocols for Addressing Students in Conflict with the Law (hereafter "Inter-Agency Protocols"). The JCP Office was also relocated from rented premises funded by the project to the building rented by the Judiciary of Trinidad and Tobago to house the North Court. Preparations commenced for the launch of the aforementioned Table of Equivalencies and the Protocols. Details of project activities are presented in the sections which follow.

2. Project Status

2.1 Component One: The Children Court

During this quarter, the following activities were executed:

- **South Court Building:** Refurbishment works continued inclusive of painting, tiling, electrical work, concrete works in basement, woodwork. The tendering and bid evaluation process continued and contracts were awarded for:
 - supply of joinery craftsman works for the fabrication and erection of Fixed Furniture Works at the South Court Building;
 - supply of wall tiles;
 - tiling contractor;
 - kitchen cabinets and solid surface countertops; and
 - the supply of clear Georgian wired glass.
- **North Court Building:** Architectural drawings were drafted as well as preliminary scopes of work prepared in the first phase of work on the North Court. It is to be noted that the drawing and scopes of work could only be undertaken when the building was acquired and there was access to the building and to its related construction documents and layout plans. The first phase of work involved coring, plumbing and partitioning of the floor space for which scopes of work were prioritized.
- **Court Case Management System (CCMS):** There was further development of the CCMS which informs the workflow process for the Children Court. Work continued with:

- ✓ identification of codes and data fields to be added to the system;
 - ✓ review of the software manuals and commencement of their design; and
 - ✓ collaboration with the consultant programmer to add various functionalities to the system.
- **Capacity-building and Training:** Preparations for the training of Court staff and juvenile justice actors (e.g. Programme operators, Office of Director of Public Prosecutions) continued. Training for staff will commence when they are on-boarded in September, 2017. The training topics include the following:
 - ✓ Positive youth development;
 - ✓ Constructive approaches to treating with children;
 - ✓ Children Court Rules;
 - ✓ Judges' Rules for Children;
 - ✓ Family and Children Division Act and Amendments;
 - ✓ For the Record (FTR) log notes;
 - ✓ Digital Voice Transcription;
 - ✓ International Conventions in Juvenile Justice;
 - ✓ Multi-Agency and Inter-Agency Protocols addressing children in conflict with the law;
 - ✓ Understanding children (child offenders, child victims, child witnesses);
 - ✓ Communication in children matters (Interviewing children, parents and guardians of offenders, family engagements);
 - ✓ Use of the risk assessment tool;
 - ✓ The role of the different actors in the new child justice system;
 - ✓ Supervisory management;
 - ✓ Managing people;
 - ✓ Managing conflict;
 - ✓ Understanding auxiliary programmes: and
 - ✓ Understanding evidence-based practices.

Some of the training is being put into computerized modules and staff will do these on individual schedules when on-boarded and it will take place on a phased basis. Judicial Officers training will start on September 1, 2017 and will include joint reading of certain pieces of legislation and various Rules. This ties in to discussions to be held in closed sessions on the exercise of discretion.

- **Reports for review:** The first draft of two reports concerning trends in juvenile crime statistics (lists findings and performs analysis on crime and social statistical data) and macro level statistical procedures (makes recommendations on data that can be collected by juvenile justice agencies) were produced for review by the various stakeholder agencies in the juvenile justice system.
- **Assessment reports for Level 2 (Community/Pro-Social) Programmes:** These were completed and shared with Programme Operators.

- **Survey instruments:** were created to gauge staff feedback on the governance structure of the Family and Children Division (FCD).
- **Staffing:** A review and discussion of a compensation study was conducted with Judiciary to inform the terms and conditions for unique positions within the FCD. Engagement with the Chief Personnel Officer continued with respect to the terms and conditions for the staff of the FCD. The recruitment and selection plan was updated, the recruitment application forms were created for non-statutory positions, the advertisement of the positions were created and the FCD Recruitment Secretariat was formed.
- **Launch of the Table of Equivalencies and Protocols:** During the reporting period, preparations commenced for the launch on July 10, 2017 of the Table of Equivalencies, the Multi-Agency Protocols and the Inter-Agency Protocols. Signatories to the Protocols were confirmed, the invitation list was finalised, arrangements made for the launch at the Hall of Justice of Trinidad and Tobago and the issuance of invitations commenced.

2.2 Component Two: Peer Resolution

During this quarter, the following activities were executed:

- A Peer Resolution (PR) Youth Volunteer Facebook group was created to disseminate information about PR as a means of maintaining the engagement of the youth volunteers. Thirty-one volunteers joined the group up to the reporting date and gained access to content via social media. All content posted to the Facebook group was also sent to youth and adult volunteers and youth volunteer parents, via email, to account for those who do not have Facebook accounts.
- Content was developed to be placed on the PR Youth Volunteer Facebook group (content was posted 1-2 times per week).
- The PR Component Assistant appeared on a 30-minute TV Interview with a PR Youth Volunteer speaking about the PR programme and youth experience.
- The PR volunteer lists were reviewed and finalised for transference to the PR Centre Unit of the Children Court. The selection was done by the Judiciary using its criteria for volunteers.
- Letters of acceptance and non-acceptance along with signed certificates of completion for adult PR volunteers (Trinidad) were prepared for dissemination.
- PR adult and youth volunteer agreements and release forms were developed.

2.3 Component Three: Public Education and Sensitisation

During this quarter, the following activities were executed:

- three social media advertisement sets were executed building awareness of the project, Children Court, the Table of Equivalencies and the Multi-Agency and Inter Protocols;
- fifteen (15) video shorts (Children and Conversations videos series) were produced explaining the genesis and philosophy of the Children Court and encouraging conversation about issues connected to it;

- social media content was created comprising three (3) photo albums, seven (7) social media graphics and one (1) infographic;
- school outreach was conducted at a Government Primary School (Raghunanan Road) and a secondary school (Mount Hope Secondary); and
- four e-letter updates were disseminated to the JCP mailing list.

2.4 National Center for State Courts (NCSC)

The National Center for State Courts (NCSC) continued to provide technical assistance to the JCP on various activities, inclusive of court operations, diversions programmes, youth court (Peer Resolution Centers), Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Human Resources (HR).

On Component 1 (Output 2): HR Structure – The HR plan for the Family and Children Division (FCD) was awaiting Cabinet approval up to June. Once Cabinet approval was received and the Recruitment and Selection Plan for the Children Court and the Family and Children Court Division (FCD) Headquarters was approved by the Judiciary, activities commenced with the processing of applications for the statutory positions.

On Component 1 (Output 2): During this period, work continued on the development of the Court Case Management Software (CCMS). As the software develops, it is expected that end user testing access will be granted so as to work through processes and screens for use and functionality for the Children Court. The software developed so far is simple to use and is well documented for further development by the Judiciary in Trinidad and Tobago with the potential for expansion into Judiciaries in the region. The software will be delivered in phases as a plan is to be done for its development to the end of 2017. Discussions continued on the training of the transcriptionists for the Court and the best approach to candidate selection and procurement of required equipment, software, and services.

On Component 1 (Output 6) – NCSC Consultant Ray Wahl received and reviewed copies of about 20 Level 2 programme assessment reports. During the review process, Ray Wahl realized that some of the programmes could fit within the Level 1 paradigm. After discussions with the project team and the JCP assessors, it was agreed that allowing these programs to function as Level 1 programs would corrupt the original process utilized to select Level 1 programs. In June, the training agendas for two separate groups were finalized. The two groups are the Level 1 Auxiliary Programs and the Stakeholder/Children’s Court group. The agendas were reviewed not only by the Juvenile Court Project (JCP) and the Judiciary. Two PowerPoint presentations were developed for the training sessions, as well as three group exercises. The goals of the training are to review evidence based practices, what the current research says about the characteristics of programmes that reduce recidivism, and how to translate those into programme development and delivery. Additionally, exercises have been designed to understand criminogenic needs, and programme monitoring and evaluation.

3. Programme Management

During the period April to June, 2017, UNDP continued to work on multiple fronts to ensure that the progress on project implementation was sustained. With respect to building works, meetings of the Bid Evaluation and Procurement Committees were held on a weekly basis as part of the process for the issue

of works contracts. Three negotiation meetings with potential contractors were held to confirm that the products and services they would provide were consistent with what was required for the Court building. Consultations with the Quantity Surveyor and Engineer contracted by UNDP for quality assurance were also held during the bid evaluation process and for project monitoring. Throughout the process, communication was sustained through meetings, telephone calls and emails.

Financial analysis was conducted on a monthly basis to monitor, review and ensure proper fund management. Contracts were also monitored for performance and were supported by site visits by the UNDP Engineer to assess the progress of the work. The identification of timelines and scheduling, and the implication of possible delays, for example with painting and laying tiles, informed the Procurement process in terms of prioritizing.

The Ninth Meeting of the Project Board was held on April 27, 2017, during which discussions were held on the status of the project and the timeframe required for completion of building works. As is customary, UNDP co-ordinated the logistics in preparation for the meeting. During the meeting, the JCP Project Manager provided a status report on the work of the project which included a summary of work completed and the proposals for the transfer of knowledge to Judiciary staff and justice actors - the "Training Wheels" phase of the project. It was noted that Cabinet approval was pending on the staffing for the Court but that the JCP team continued to be engaged with the relevant authorities in respect of the development of the compensation plan for staff. The meeting was informed that earlier that same day, approval had been received from Cabinet for the acquisition of the North Court Building and for the adoption for use in Trinidad and Tobago of the Table of Equivalencies and the Multi-Agency and Inter-Agency Protocols.

Extensive discussions were held on the timeframe required for the completion of both Court buildings, additional funding which could expedite completion of the North Court building and the importance to the Judiciary and the Children Court of the "Training Wheels" phase of the project. Due note was taken of the impact on the project of delays which were outside of the control of the Judiciary, UNDP, and the Project Team. The budget issues with which the Government of Trinidad and Tobago was grappling, delays in acquisition of Court buildings as a result of the pace of the relevant Government authorities, and the period of time it took to receive Cabinet decisions were also noted. Arising from the discussions, a decision was taken that a project extension document would be prepared and submitted to USAID for consideration for additional funding and extension of the time for project completion.

UNDP co-ordinated the relocation of the JCP Office from premises funded by the project to the North Court building, Judiciary premises. This required arrangements for a moving company, transfer of utility services, meetings with the Judiciary for integration of the JCP Office into its Information and Communication network, furniture installation and set up, and preparation of the rented premises for return to the landlord. A significant amount of planning and co-ordination was required to ensure that the move was completed at the end of May and that the impact on project work was minimised. The move went smoothly however in the transfer of the computer equipment some raw public education material was lost and efforts were made to recover same. The relocation resulted in an estimated 66% reduction of operation cost (US\$6000) per month.

A Project Monitoring visit was held on June 6-7, 2017 by USAID. The USAID team visited both Court facilities and held meetings with the Chief Justice of Trinidad and Tobago and UNDP representatives. Discussions were held on the timeframe for completion of the works, the opening of the Courts, the project extension and the Launch of the Table of Equivalencies and Protocols scheduled for July 2017.

The extension document was subsequently prepared by UNDP for submission to USAID. This involved a complete financial review and co-ordinating with the Judiciary and the Project Team for finalization of projected activities and the related budget.

4. Implementation Challenges

The following challenges impacted the completion of some activities under the project in this period:

- With respect to the North Court building, there was a delay in Cabinet approval for the leasing of the North facility which arose from the need to have comparative data on the cost of facility rentals, particularly, given the financial situation of Trinidad and Tobago. During the period of consideration by the Cabinet there was sustained championing by the Judiciary, UNDP and the JCP Team and continuous communication and advocacy. The JCP Team made presentations to the Cabinet on the project, the North Court building and staffing issues. Approval was received for the North Court building in April, 2017 and for staffing of more than 200 hundred positions in June, 2017.
- The conversion of the basement of the Fyzabad facility for use by the Court was the subject of extended discussions among the Judiciary, the landlord and Project Team. In the reporting period, significant progress was made towards the conversion of the space to be used for staff facilities, and for children in conflict with the law, the Police, and Peer Resolution staff. There were some initial delays but work progressed significantly by the end of the reporting period.
- There have been delays in final recommendations on auxiliary programme providers for Trinidad and Tobago as programme providers have not been timely in their response to submit information. The delay on the part of programme providers arises largely from the fact that they need time to upgrade, amend and expand their programmes to meet the requirements of the new Children Court system. This upgrade is part of the transition to the Children Court system. The project team has remained in continuous contact with the providers allowing for flexibility in the provision of information, most of which is not normally contemplated by programme operators (e.g. disaster recovery plans). *Note that these programme providers are in addition to the five programmes which will be operated internally by court facilitators.* The team worked with programme operators individually and training was provided on evidenced-based programmes.
- The certification of adult Peer Resolution volunteers has been delayed by the vetting process which has not yet been concluded. The vetting process is overseen by the Judiciary Security department as part of the process of integrating the PR programme into the Judiciary court operations. Discussions have continued with the Judiciary on this issue and the exercise was expected to be completed in August, 2017.

- There was a brief break in project activities owing to the relocation of the project office which involved shut-down of operations in one location and set-up in the North Court building. Arrangements were made to ensure that there was no break in the online presence of the project and access by telephone. There was a short delay in the re-establishment of the Information and Communication Technology platform for the office which arose on the part of the service provider. As is usual with the relocation of offices, there was a brief interruption in some project activities but these were resumed with the usual high intensity after the move.

5. Risks

The risks were as follows:

- A Cabinet delay in approval of funding for Judiciary portions of outfitting for the North Building would delay opening of the Court. Mitigating measures: The Judiciary continued to liaise with the Executive to help sustain momentum and undertook to seek to identify funds from within its budget allocation to meet expenses related to establishment of the North Court. UNDP continued to be an active advocate for the Project with the Executive.
- An inability to attract persons with the appropriate fit for a start-up court environment can impact the effective operations of the Court. Mitigating measure: Should this occur, senior persons onboarded within the FCD would have to closely monitor and mentor staff until appropriate staff is found. In addition, the use of United Nations Volunteers from mature judicial environments could be explored.
- Knowledge transfer could be negatively impacted by the non-confirmation of project extension. Mitigating measure: it was agreed that a comprehensive project extension document would be prepared and submitted to USAID. UNDP committed to support the process related to the project extension to be request made to USAID.

6. Next Steps: (Disaggregated by activities)

In the next quarter, July to September, 2017, the following activities are proposed:

- **South Court Building:**
 - ✓ Continue with building works to completion - painting, tiling, electrical work, basement works, woodwork;
 - ✓ Work alongside the Judiciary in scheduling its work in respect of Information and Communication Technology, security and locking systems, and furniture;
 - ✓ Identification of finishing work to be undertaken for completion of the Court Building.
- **North Court Building:** Finalise scopes of work and commence with the procurement process for the work which is to be finalized in consultation with the Judiciary. The building works will not be as extensive as in the case of the South Court in light of the fact the North Court building is a larger facility and would not require as much re-constructive

work to accommodate all the required court spaces (the conversion of the basement for office space and the changes required to accommodate the Judges and Children's elevators, for example, would not be required in the North Building). The building works will include partitioning, painting, plumbing, block works, joinery, painting, some electrical work.

- **CCMS:** Continue the review and end-user testing of the CCMS and ready software manuals for use by end-users.
- **Workflow processes:** Complete major workflow processes for the Children Court for implementation.
- **Assessment reports for Level 2 (Community/Pro-Social) Programmes** – undertake assessment of completed feedback reports for Level 2 programmes.
- **Capacity building and Training:** Facilitate training of Court staff and juvenile justice actors in areas to be finalised. The training will be On-the-job training and mentoring in a learning environment. As a consequence, there will be no fixed training schedule.
- **Peer Resolution:** Host a Court-annexed PR hearing (actual, not mock).
- **Public education:** Complete content for the Children Court website and continue the public education and communications activities around the Children Court.

7. Conclusion

Project team members have been working across Components to lead and/or assist with completing activities within stipulated timeframes and continue to work after hours and weekends to meet deadlines. UNDP continues to work closely with the Judiciary and the Project Team for delivery on all Components.