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USAID/JAMAICA COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND TRANSFORMATION PROJECT - PHASE II (COMET II)

Monthly Report: January 2014

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INTRODUCTION

Beginning January 6, 2014, Tetra Tech DPK (Tt DPK) initiated the second phase of its two-phase mobilization plan for the Community Empowerment and Transformation Project – Phase II (COMET II) that was approved by USAID on December 6, 2013. With a focus on the technical start-up of the COMET II project, a Tt DPK technical team mobilized to commence the annual work planning and Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) development, to attend the post-award conference with USAID, and to continue introductory and follow-up meetings with partners and counterparts.

The start-up team, working alongside new COMET II staff that began in January, also continued the administrative, financial, and logistical processes required for successful project implementation.

The following sections summarize the main activities and results achieved during the first phase of the mobilization plan during January 2014.

I. TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

- **Post-Award Conference:** On January 8, representatives from USAID and the Tt DPK Home Office attended the Post-Award Conference. The conference provided the opportunity for USAID and Tt DPK to discuss:
 - General contract information; including function and authority of US Government personnel, overview of the award, submittal dates for deliverables, Contractor’s Performance Report, the Financial Management Officer’s guidance on financial aspects of the contract, and prior approval requirements
 - Specific award information and implementation issues; including procurement and source/nationality requirements; marking, publications, and branding; tax exemptions and procedures; environmental considerations; the impact evaluation; the Leahy vetting process; and security clearance for USG personnel
 - Specific technical office agenda items; including mobilization status, coordination with counterparts, and coordination with other donors and implementing partners
 - Specific Contractor agenda items; including meetings with USAID, deliverable submissions; and budget flexibility.
- **Workplanning sessions:** From January 13-17, COMET II and Tt DPK Home Office staff participated in a workshop intended to promote teambuilding and to continue development and refinement of the first COMET II Annual Work Plan. During one half-day session, proposed subcontractors were invited to solicit their feedback on the preliminary draft of the work plan. The sessions concluded with the COMET II staff presenting the preliminary results of the workplanning sessions to USAID representatives. The COMET II Draft First Annual Work Plan and PMP will be submitted to USAID on February 10.
- **Grants Manual:** Tt DPK received consolidated comments and feedback from USAID on the COMET II Grants Manual on January 9. Tt DPK addressed all of USAID comments and submitted a revised version of the Grants Manual to USAID for final approval on January 30.
- **Intervention Communities:** The following list of proposed communities was provided by USAID and discussed during the work planning sessions.

Kingston	St. Andrew	St. Catherine	Clarendon	St. James
D’Aguillar Town/Rennock Lodge	Bull Bay/Seven Miles	Linstead	Osbourne Store	Barrett Town
Johnson Town	Bay Shore	Bog Walk	Race Course	Lilliput
Norman Gardens	Kintyre	Old Harbour	Brixton Hill	Bogue

Rae Town	Stony Hill	Kitson Town	Four Paths	Mount Carey
Springfield	Gordon Town	Gregory Park	Chapelton	Cambridge
Alternate				
Parade Gardens	Swallowfield	Braeton	Palmers Cross	Orange
Rollington Town	Vineyard Town	Waterford	Lionel Town	Adelphi
		Naggo Head	Hayes	

Discussions to agree on the final list of communities are still under way.

- **Introductory meetings with counterparts:** During January, COMET II staff conducted introductory meetings with the following counterparts to establish working and reporting relationships. Many meetings included representatives from USAID:
 - Commissioner of the Jamaican Constabulary Force
 - Social Development Commission
 - Ministry of National Security
 - Ministry of Land, Water, Environment and Climate Change; Environment and Climate Change Division
 - Ministry of Youth and Culture.
- **Introductory and/or follow-up meetings and calls with potential partners:** During January, COMET II staff met with or held phone calls with the following organizations
 - National Integrity Action (NIA): COMET II staff met with NIA to discuss synergies between COMET II and NIA activities and identify areas of potential cooperation
 - Jamaican Association of Social Workers
 - EWA Communications
 - University of West Indies, including the Institute for Sustainable Development, Center for Disaster Risk Reduction, and Department of Environmental Management
 - University of Technology, including the School for the Built Environment
 - YouthBuild
 - Cure Violence.
- **Follow-up with stakeholders:** On January 8, COMET II and Tt DPK Home Office staff met the below stakeholders invited by USAID to the Stakeholder Meeting and subsequently followed up with each:
 - Agency for Inner-city Renewal
 - Dispute Resolution Foundation
 - Competitiveness Company
 - PMI (Kingston).
- **Impact Evaluation:** During January, COMET II staff continued to coordinate with USAID and Social Impact regarding the impact evaluation.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Tt DPK Home Office personnel and COMET II staff dedicated efforts to carry out the following administrative activities:

- **Selection of local law firm:** COMET II has contracted a local law firm to:
 - Conduct analysis of registration options and the pro and cons of each
 - Provide required documentation to open a project bank account

- Provide written guidance on the requirements to obtain a work permit/visa for expatriate staff.
- **Human resources:**
 - As noted in a communication to USAID (No. HO-2014-001) on January 29, Tt DPK has started an intensive recruitment process to identify the most suitable Chief of Party candidates to replace Melanie Peyser. Tt DPK will submit candidates for USAID's consideration the first week of February. In the meantime, Tt DPK home office personnel will be coordinating tasks with COMET II staff as well as the COR to ensure that the project continues to move forward.
 - The following COMET II staff began work with the project in January: Civil Society Specialist Ian McKnight, Finance and Administration Manager Macrena Bennett, and Administrative Assistant Ann Marie Carnegie. Grants Manager Nardia Pessoa will start in February.
 - Tt DPK has also identified candidates for the following positions and submitted approval requests to USAID: Component 2 Public Engagement Specialist Jennifer Grant; Global Climate Change Coordinator Kwame Emmanuel; Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist Shamair Henry; and Community Coordinators Christine Whitely (Kingston), Samantha Harvey (St. Andrew), and Stacy Ann Gavin (St. Catherine). Tt DPK has also identified potential candidates to occupy the following positions Community Policing Coordinator (Donaree Muirhead), Civil Society Coordinator (Andrea King or Jhana Harris), Community Coordinator – St. James (Dax Pessoa), Community Coordinator – Clarendon (Romel Gordon), Grants Analyst (Roxanne Wanliss)- Tt DPK is conducting final negotiations with these candidates.
- **Office space and procurements:** COMET II signed a lease for a 2,000 sq. ft. office space on the second floor of the Courtleigh Corporate Center for \$3,650 per month with a 3.5% annual increase that will cover rent and maintenance costs. To prepare the office for an early February move-in, the COMET II operational staff has been busy at work surveying potential vendors for furniture, computer equipment, and internet/phone services. We expect these procurements to be completed by the end of February/beginning of March.