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

## Monthly Report: February 2015



March 5, 2015

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# USAID/JAMAICA

# COMET II PROJECT

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organization
CDC	Community Development Committee
CEDAR	Communities Empowered for Disaster & Adaptive Resilience
COL	Culture of Lawfulness
COMET II	Community Empowerment and Transformation Project II
COP	Chief of Party
CRC	Community Resource Centres
CSSB	Community Safety and Security Branch
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
DTC	Drug Treatment Court
GCC	Global Climate Change
JCF	Jamaica Constabulary Force
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOCA	Major Organized Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCDA	National Council on Drug Abuse
NHW	Neighbourhood Watch Program
NIA	National Integrity Action
PIOJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PYC	Police Youth Clubs
RFA	Request for Application
RFP	Request for Proposal
SDC	Social Development Commission
SE	Social Enterprise Model
SRO	School Resource Officer
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
UFC	Unite for Change
USAID	United States Agency of International Development
UWI	University of the West Indies

## I. PROJECT SUMMARY

The COMET II Project saw an increase in activity during the month of February, in particular in those areas connected to the project's support to community fairs and related events. Of special note was the signing of a contract modification with USAID on February 13, 2015. This modification resulted in the release of request for proposals (RFPs) designed to further the development of social enterprise (SE) to be undertaken by Jamaican community based organizations (CBOs) and Community Development Committees (CDCs). Likewise, the contract modification allowed COMET II to issue an RFP for a preferred subcontractor to retrofit sea containers for the development of community resource centers (CRCs). The RFPs for the CRCs and social enterprise creation were released on February 22, 2015 with the social enterprise RFP due on March 27, 2015 and the CRC RFP due on April 10, 2015.

During this reporting month, the UWI and COMET II teams continued the roll out of the SE model to Forward Step and the Linstead, Stony Hill, and Kitson Town communities as part of the first 7 of the 50 social enterprises to be developed by COMET II Project. The RFP released by COMET II for the creation of social enterprises will result in the creation of remaining 43 social enterprises in Jamaica under this project contract.

The month of February also saw the announcement from USAID that COMET II could look at current options for CRCs in the form of existing buildings within the targeted communities. If these are found to be suitable and capable of meeting all stakeholder expectations, then upgrading of such facilities will be considered by COMET II as this may result in significant cost savings to the project.

A 'permission-to-build' has been obtained for the Gregory Park, Rockfort, and Four Paths sites. All five pilot communities (Cambridge, Rockfort, Stony Hill, Gregory Park, and Four Paths) have met with Michael Barnett, the COMET II STTA Local Engineer/ CRC Designer, and COMET II team members. These community consultations have resulted in the approval of the proposed CRC designs. Additionally, the building experts from the parish council have visited two of the five sites (Rockfort and Stony Hill). The next steps will require COMET II to present the drawings to each of the Parish Councils for its approval. With the combined efforts of the JCF, SDC, and PIOJ, COMET II expects that the permission-to-build letters for the other three communities will follow in short order.

February marked the last month of training for 20 youth who will be certified by NHCOM in Electrical and Welding Certification Level 2. They will graduate in March. Additional training continues for others in Welding Level I and Electrical Installation Level I. They will also be exposed to training in Recycling, Community Safety and Security, and Global Climate Change. Further contributions to this deliverable will come from the successful applicant in the latest RFA called "youth-led community safety and security social enterprise programs".

COMET II supported the internationally publicized Trench Town Annual Festival held on February 7, 2015. Through the sports of football and netball, close to 300 youth were engaged and over 500 community members visited the COMET II information booths disseminating global climate change and culture of lawfulness information.

In October, COMET II supported the CEDAR training by the JaREEACH project of 26 persons from COMET II and stakeholder agencies (SDC, PIOJ, Jamaica Red Cross, Parish Councils, JCF, Ministry of Health, and National Solid Waste Management Authority). A follow-up activity in adaptation planning has begun in Rae Town with six community meetings conducted to date. Another five meetings are

scheduled for Rae Town before moving on to the other communities, which include Stony Hill, Kitson Town, Brixton Hill and Cambridge. The CEDAR approach is made up of a series of 10-12 community meetings, which involves climate change sensitization, identification of hazards and vulnerability, and adaptation planning.

In continuing assistance to MOCA, a meeting was held with MOCA on February 12, 2015 and plans finalized for COMET II to assist in its Communication and Public Outreach strategy. The budgets are being finalized and work has started with the Communications Unit on its brochures and other paraphernalia. At the same time discussions were held to finalize follow-up activities driven by the ICA-developed handbook that will be spearheaded by the JCF. Training support and training workshops have been identified in collaboration with the Component 4 Coordinator. The budgets and work plans are being finalized and a follow up meeting has been set for March 11.

In furtherance of Component 3, Alternative Programs for At-Risk Youth, COMET II conducted discussions in February on the provision of technical support to the Drug Treatment Court (DTC). COMET II has made some significant progress in its support plan to the DTC program. An MOU to be signed between the Ministry of Justice of Jamaica and USAID has been drafted and is currently being reviewed. The project expects to release an RFA in March for a preferred service provider to support DTC participants in areas such as skills and trades, numeracy and literacy, and assisting in the areas of identifying life skill opportunities. While it is the project's intention to work with the counselors starting with Phase II of the program, the National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA) has expressed concerns about the introduction of another organization working in this field. NCDA reckons that they are the only qualified group/organization to work with drug related issues in Jamaica. COMET II intends to continue with the program for the foreseeable future, and if working within the context of Phase II becomes unmanageable, the project will switch to the original intention of working with a separate set of participants, primarily those who are the graduates of the program.

This reporting period saw the COMET II's grants program evaluating several grant applications resulting from request for applications (RFAs) 8, 9, 10, and 11. The deadline date for the RFA 008/COMP3/2015 was February 11, 2015 and a total of eight organizations submitted proposals for the community based school suspension program. Of the eight, only one did not completely satisfy the eligibility requirements and seven proposals are currently being evaluated by the REC. The REC team is expected to submit a consensus on March 5, 2015 to the grants team after which pre-award survey assessments will commence. Several more RFA's are to be issued in March for which RFAs are currently being drafted.

Technical and financial support was provided to the planning of the Safe Schools Peace Day Concert to be held on March 3, 2015. This activity will provide a "safe space" for students to interact with their peers, police, and stakeholders. Entertainment is used as the main messaging tool. COMET II will also use the opportunity to disseminate GCC material and other project related information.

COMET II continued to provide assistance to the PYC National Council to strengthen its governance framework. COMET II supported the National Leadership Seminar for executive members from all 14 parishes. Tania Chambers, COMET II's Governance Specialist, conducted a presentation at this activity. Over the next three months the PYC National Council will participate in an intensive participatory process aimed at reviewing and refining its structure, governance, programs, and operations. Since the approval from USAID for the engagement of Ms. Chambers in early February 2015, the project has been able to resume its work of governance capacity building of the NGOs and CBOs. Ms. Chambers had meetings with Fathers United for Change, RAYDE Youth Club, the Police

Youth Club, Forward Step, and the Neighborhood Watch. Follow-up and registration process for the CBOs and NGOs are expected to continue during the next reporting period.

## **2. ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS**

On the administration front, the process for choosing a replacement for the Chief of Party (COP) position continues and is being managed by Tetra Tech DPK and USAID. Tt DPK had initially submitted its choice of three candidates to USAID on January 30, 2015. However, USAID requested Tt DPK to look into more options with candidates with strong grasp of the local context. Tt DPK plans to submit its COP replacement plan to USAID prior to the due date of March 4, 2015.

## **3. THREATS AND MITIGATION**

There are no changes to the Risk Matrix at this time.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Please find attached the February 2015 Monthly Activity Status Report which provides a status update and the percent completed for each COMET II activity. The status reports utilizes “traffic light indicators” to give a visual overview of the current risk associated with the completion of each activity. As noted above, this tracker is based on current expectations of COMET II activities for Year Two and is updated following the revision of the Work Plan and PMP in February.