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

Quarterly Report: October – December 2013

January 2014

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INTRODUCTION

On December 2, 2013, USAID awarded Task Order AID-532-TO-14-00001 under the Rule of Law Indefinite Quantity Contract to Tetra Tech DPK for the implementation of the Community Empowerment and Transformation Project – Phase II (COMET II).

Tt DPK submitted a mobilization plan to USAID on December 4, 2013 following initial discussions with Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) Allan Bernard. Revisions were made to the mobilization plan based on the COR's feedback and the plan was approved on December 6, 2013. Tt DPK proposed a two phase mobilization plan: 1) an initial trip during December 9-20, 2013 to meet with USAID and initiate our administrative, financial, registration, and logistical processes, and 2) technical start-up during January 6 – February 6, 2014 with the technical team mobilization and commencement of annual work planning and Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) development.

The following sections summarize the main activities and results achieved during the first phase of the mobilization plan during the period December 6-20, 2013, which constitute all project activities during this quarterly reporting period.

I. TECHNICAL ACTIVITIES

Introductory Meeting with USAID, partner organizations and counterparts

On December 10, Tt DPK Home Office support personnel met with USAID/Jamaica Supervisory Program Officer Jeanette E. Vail and COR Allan Bernard to introduce COMET II COP Melanie Peyser and start discussions on technical expectations, clarify roles and responsibilities, and get recommendations on staffing, and office location. Thanks to the COR, Tt DPK visitors had the opportunity to tour the Mission's building and meet USAID personnel. Tt DPK participants included Director Robert Page Jr., Senior Technical Advisor Robert Dean, Senior Business and Contracts Manager Nidia Trujillo, and Senior Program Officer Sergio Zegarra.

Chief of Party (COP) Melanie Peyser and Senior Technical Advisor Robert Dean conducted introductory meetings with the following organizations and individuals to establish working and reporting relationships:

- University of Technology
- University of West Indies
- Youth Crime Watch
- EWA Communications
- Social Development Commission (SDC)
- Assistant Commissioner of Police (JCF), John McLean
- Professor Trevor Munroe, Executive Director, National Integrity Action (NIA)

COR Allan Bernard accompanied Tt DPK staff to all of these meetings with the exception of the meeting with EWA Communications.

Ms. Peyser, Mr. Dean, and Mr. Bernard provided brief overview of COMET II goals, objectives, and components. Additionally, Ms. Peyser explained the planned schedule for startup activities, workplanning, and stakeholder input into activities planning. Partner organizations and counterparts were invited to provide feedback and also discussed the current context for COMET II interventions, including for example, the current level of integration of community-based policing practices within the JCF; SDC community safety planning and community development programming with CDCs and CBOs in CRP communities, and NIA progress on public awareness campaigns and generation of commitment to transparency.

Introductory calls were also held with Cure Violence and YouthBuild, U.S. partner organizations.

Follow up with each partner organization and counterpart is underway.

Post-award Conference

Based on USAID and Tt DPK officials' availability, it was agreed to schedule the start date of the Post-Award Conference for January 8, 2014. Tt DPK shared a draft agenda for the conference, which received good feedback from the Mission.

Grants Manual

Director Robert Page Jr. hand-delivered a copy of the Grants Manual for USAID's review and approval at the December 10th meeting with the COR. An electronic copy of the manual was submitted to the COR and Acquisition Specialist Margot Francis on December 11. The COR completed his first review of the manual on December 13 and submitted it to the Acquisition Specialist for subsequent review. Tt DPK received USAID's feedback on the manual in January and is currently working on addressing all comments in a revised version to be submitted for USAID's final review and approval.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Senior Business and Contracts Manager Nidia Trujillo and Senior Program Officer Sergio Zegarra dedicated efforts to carry out administrative activities including researching the company registration and bank account processes, continuing recruitment efforts, and identifying potential office spaces.

Registration, Bank Account, and Meeting with other USAID projects

Ms. Trujillo and Mr. Zegarra met with local law firms and financial institutions to receive guidance on:

- Registration options and pros and cons for each
- Required filings to the Jamaican Tax Administration
- Analysis of US-Jamaica bilateral agreements and definition of coverage and exemptions extended to USG contractors implementing projects in-country
- Statutory and optional fringe benefits as required by Jamaican law
- Requirements and process for obtaining a work permit for COP Melanie Peyser
- Opening bank accounts for the project.

They also met with COPs of other USAID projects to introduce the project and get insights regarding fringe benefits, registration, banking, and overall operations. The visits included the following:

- PRIDE Project being implemented by Carana and led by expat COP Debra Wahlberg
- JaREECH Project being implemented by ACDI/VOCA and led by local COP Karyll Aitcheson.

The meetings were also an opportunity to establish a relationship with other sister projects and express the desire to have periodic "community of practice" meetings amongst the COPs. In conversation with JaREECH, they also identified a possible area of collaboration as the JaREECH project also does work in the Clarendon area with at-risk youth including summer camps and training of "Climate Change Action Agents".

Human Resources

Ms. Trujillo and Mr. Zegarra met with key personnel Civil Society Specialist Ian McKnight and Grants Manager Nardia Pessoa-White to confirm start dates and to provide further background

on their project roles. After finalizing the hiring package for local personnel, they issued offer letters to Civil Society Specialist Ian McKnight, Grants Manager Nardia Pessoa-White, Finance and Administration Manager Macrena Bennet, Administrative Assistant Ann Marie Carnegie, and Component 3 Alternative Sentencing & Youth Specialist Ruth Carey.

They also identified candidates for the following positions: Grants Assistant, Civil Society Coordinator, Component 2 Public Engagement Specialist, Component 4 Community Policing Coordinator, and Accountant. Per the COR's recommendations, Tt DPK did not publish an ad to recruit the project's five community coordinators but used Senior Technical Advisor Doug McCaffery's local network of contacts to identify suitable candidates. Three strong candidates were identified to fill these positions who have since interviewed with COP Melanie Peyser in January and were presented offers pending USAID's final approval.

Office Space

The project secured a 2,000 sq. ft. office space at the 2nd floor of the Courtleigh Corporate Center after scouting many properties and conducting extensive negotiations. In January, Tt DPK signed a 5-year lease at a negotiated \$3,650 per month rate and 3.5% annual increase that will cover rent and maintenance costs.