



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

Helping Young Women and Men Identify and Fulfil their Purpose through Capacity Development, Entrepreneurship and Career Mentoring

Region	Latin America and the Caribbean
Award Scheme	Dubai International Award
Start Year	2017
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Young Women/Men of Purpose is a registered NGO which has been providing face-to-face career mentorship and guidance, personal development and entrepreneurship training and support to young women and men between the ages 13 and 32 years in Jamaica.

Background and Objective

Entrepreneurship is necessary to help to improve the quality of life of citizens within developing countries and reduce brain drain. Entrepreneurship has not been a part of the Education Curriculum in Jamaica resulting in youths not being exposed to the principles, thus not seen as a legitimate career path.

Actions and Implementation

For the first phase of the programme, we experienced administrative setbacks which required us to restructure our implementation plan. Originally, we perceived that at least four volunteers would attend each training session and assist the Project Manager with the administrative duties. However, due to the unforeseen inflexibility in the schedule of the volunteers, half of our project team was forced to carry out the activities for the project. To resolve this issue, a project assistant was hired to provide direct support for the project manager and we capitalized on the strengths of the available volunteers. Another problem we faced during the implementation of the project was that we were greatly affected by price increase of items in our budget, due to the high inflation rate in our country and the devaluation of the Jamaican dollar. Regarding inflation, we decided to restructure the time frame for each activity in our project. Instead of conducting eight months of business training, participants benefited from two weeks intensive business training which minimized the cost of meals during training. The remaining time was utilized for mentorship, coaching, tutorials, business plan development and business pitches. A problem that remains to be solved is the shortage of seed funding to assist young entrepreneurs with initial setup and launch of their businesses. While we were able to assist 14 entrepreneurs with seed funding, a great majority of young entrepreneurs in Jamaica face this problem. Young people, both male and females participated in the initiative as beneficiaries of training, mentoring and some received seed funding to start/develop their businesses. The community was engaged in the project and had the opportunity to interact with the entrepreneurs and view/purchase their goods and services. Local government as well as other stakeholders endorsed the programme and participated in several of the events held. The mayor of Mandeville as well as other town leaders have expressed a deeper interest and appreciation for youth entrepreneurship as result of the impacts of the Youth Entrepreneurship Project. Several methods were used for monitoring and evaluating the project including: short quizzes and assessments after the business management and entrepreneurship training; participants completed several surveys which provided feedback about the project and how they are benefiting. Focus group discussions were also conducted. Upon completion of the project follow-up was done with the beneficiaries to gather information about how their business has grown since the project.

Outcomes and Impacts

Young Women/Men of Purpose (YWOP/YMOP) has been recognized as one of the most successful and sustainable youth-led NGOs in Jamaica. We have managed to secure additional funding from local and international organizations to execute other youth and community initiatives. While a majority of our



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special projects have target women at risk and promotes social inclusion and gender equality, we ensure that males are adequately served within the organization. All programmes executed by the organization include an element of economic empowerment, where beneficiaries are able to identify and use their skills to generate income for themselves and their families. Cultural norms are considered during the development and implementation of programmes. International standards and best-practices used in other cultures are also examined and where possible transferred or integrated. Environmental sustainability is highlighted during training on Social Enterprises. Several participants were operating businesses that were contributing to the preservation of the environment. Awareness was created and others encouraged to adapt more environmentally friendly practices where possible. Contributions were made to contribute to government legislation for youth development and entrepreneurship development through consultation forums arranged by the government and private sector bodies.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

The YEP Initiative has benefited from the best practices of others as the programme adapted the format of successful entrepreneurship and incubation programmes in Europe. The project has strong potential for replication in other parts of the country, region and globally due to the project structure and the global development issue that the project sought to address which is that of poverty alleviation through entrepreneurship education. The project was administered using both the theoretical and practical methodologies. This included, intensive business management and entrepreneurship training followed by coaching and mentorship to develop the entrepreneur's business plan/model, prepare for pitching and guidance to launch and execute business. We have seen where other organizations have used similar models and adapted some of our best practices to implement similar programmes. We have received numerous invitations to replicate the programme in other parishes within Jamaica. While the project itself has not yet been replicated (due to lack of funding), the organization has since been able to extend our core programme offerings to include entrepreneurship training and support to young people within the parish of Manchester. Additionally we are now development our own Social Enterprise to expand our reach and ensure our own financial sustainability.

Innovative Initiative

The organization has learnt several lessons from the beneficiaries of the project, stakeholders and even among our internal team: It is important to be open-minded and flexible (within boundaries) when implementing an initiative. Even though the project plan was developed along with a good logic framework/action plan, we had to do basic restructuring of the programme to better suit the needs of the beneficiaries while still remaining suitable for us the implementing organization and our partners/stakeholders. When preparing a project or organization budget, always take into consideration factors such as inflation and currency devaluation (in the case of the Jamaican dollar) so the integrity of the project will not be compromised by lack of necessary resources. Regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted throughout the implementation of the project and not just at the end. This will help to make necessary adjustments to improve the quality and impact of the project for beneficiaries. YWOP/YMOP has taken these lessons into consideration and have used them to create and acquire funding and partnership for other initiatives and it has also improved the structure and level of impact that the organization has been creating within Jamaica.

Resources devoted to delivery

No. Title Source Author Publication Title Volume Number Date Page Number 1 Youth advocates Empower Budding Entrepreneurs <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20150221/youth-advocates-empower-budding-entrepreneurs> Tamara Bailey - Gleaner Writer Youth advocates Empower Budding Entrepreneurs 0000 Saturday 21, 2015 0000 Edit 2 An enduring JCDC community project http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/An-enduring-JCDC-community-project_17332082 Alicia Sutherland An enduring JCDC community project 17332082 Monday August 11, 2014 0000 Edit 3 Spurring business! http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/Spurring-business-_15877265 Alicia Sutherland Spurring business! UN Habitat start-up grants make a difference 15877265 Monday January 27, 2014 0000 Edit 4 The Capacity of NGOs to Become Sustainable by Creating Social Enterprises Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development, Published by American Research Institute for Policy Development Lanisia Rhoden The Capacity of NGOs to Become Sustainable by Creating Social Enterprises ISSN: 2333 - 6374 (Print), 2333 - 6382 (Online) June 2014, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 0 1 - 36

Conclusion

The local municipality endorsed the project and representatives participated in several of our project events. Contributions were made to contribute to government legislation for youth development and entrepreneurship development through consultation forums arranged by the government and private sector bodies.