



## “A New Path”: Promoting a Healthy Environment and Productive Alternatives for Juvenile Remandees and Offenders in Jamaica

### CONTEXT

- The Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS) have highlighted the need to “strengthen and establish policies and programs for the modernization of the prison systems in the Member States, as well as to the design of sustainable social reintegration models, especially for young people” (Consensus of Santo Domingo on Public Security, adopted during the Second Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Public Security in the Americas – MISPA II).
- As such, the OAS has provided technical assistance to Member States for the continuous improvement of prison management and the development of policies to reintegrate detainees. Among other initiatives, the OAS has carried out an evaluation of the prison systems of seven countries in the Americas, including Jamaica. Based on the results of the evaluation, the OAS has developed a methodology to monitor and evaluate programs of reintegration: “Reducing Criminal Recidivism: Standardized Methodology for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Reintegration Projects and Programs Aimed at Reducing Recidivism”.
- Considering the challenges to the successful reintegration of juvenile offenders in Jamaica (such as the stigma among potential employers upon integration into a society whose youth unemployment rate is among the highest in the region at 30.3%), the OAS has been supporting the Department of Correctional Services through the implementation of “A New Path”: Promoting a Healthy Environment and Productive Alternatives for Juvenile Remandees and Offenders in the four juvenile facilities of Jamaica, with support from United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

### OBJECTIVE

Contribute to reduce recidivism and, ultimately, crime and violence in Jamaica by improving the quality of, and access to, reintegration services, technical training, and individualized psychosocial/emotional services for juvenile detainees in Jamaica.

### STRATEGIC PARTNERS

“A New Path” is implemented in collaboration with the Trust for the Americas, a non-profit organization affiliated to the OAS, which promotes public and private sector participation in social and economic development projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. This project is made possible by the support of the American People through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

In addition, OAS has partnered with Ministry of National Security and the Department of Correctional Services of Jamaica; the Government of Chile, through the National Services of Minors, and of Canada, through Correctional Services Canada, and NGOs in Jamaica to enhance the reintegration services delivered to youth in conflict with the law.



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## STRUCTURE

### Track 1 – Rehabilitation Activities at Juvenile Correctional Centers

Promotes healthier environments and prepares youth for their release through the following actions:

Building and enhancing local capacity to deal with youth in conflict with the law:

- Capacity building for local partner organizations
- Training of Trainers of DCS staff to implement vocational, educational and recreational activities
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive electronic case management and follow-up system in juvenile facilities of the Department of Correctional Services of Jamaica (DCS)

Implementation of activities to the youth placed at correctional centers:

- Life Skills Program
- Remedial training
- Vocational activities (home economics, tourist target skills, animation)
- Behavior change through creative and alternative classes (e.g. music, sports, arts & craft)
- Psychological support

### Track 2 – Post-Release Follow-Up of youth released from Juvenile Correctional Centers

Provide immediate support to prior juvenile remandees and offenders upon their release, focusing on social reintegration and economic inclusion

- Assignment of a post-release case manager to provide individual follow-up for each juvenile releasee for six to twelve months after his/her release
- Participating youth are engaged in economic or education opportunities through the program, including apprenticeships, internships, mentorship, role modelling, and subsequent education courses
- Pitch It!: Learning and Investing in Your Future: Training of releasees in entrepreneurship and provision of micro-grants to serve as capital seed to the best entrepreneurial ideas





## MAIN RESULTS

- More than 950 youth have received assistance through the project
- 385 girls and boys received educational and vocational training, including certification for completing courses at South Camp, Metcalfe, and post-release
- Training-of-Trainers of DCS staff: 106 officers and staff trained on strategies and tools to deal with challenging behaviour and to implement reintegration courses
- Follow-up of 580 releasees from South Camp and Metcalfe by case managers across the country, providing youth guidance and assistance in their reintegration process
- More than 60 releasees from South Camp and Metcalfe received job opportunities and apprenticeships through the project
- 111 releasees and at-risk youth participated in the Pitch It!: Learning and Investing in Your Future: 51 received extensive training in entrepreneurship during a one-week residence programme, 21 of which were awarded micro-grants to start their own business
- Weekly counseling section for the girls at South Camp
- Membership strategy with private sector and civil society to offer job placements and apprenticeships for the releasees 16+ years old
- Case management framework, including standardized forms, for juvenile facilities developed and approved by the Department of Correctional Services

