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## **“A NEW PATH”: PROMOTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT AND PRODUCTIVE ALTERNATIVES FOR JUVENILE REMANDEES AND OFFENDERS IN JAMAICA**

CONTRACTOR(S)/GRANTEE(S): **ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES**

DURATION: SEPTEMBER 2014- DECEMBER 2019

TOTAL PROJECTED INVESTMENT: \$4,436,542

FUNDING SOURCE: CBSI

The lack of citizen security is one of the main challenges faced by the countries in Latin America and in the Caribbean. To this end, juvenile delinquency is a major factor contributing to the high levels of violence experienced in the region. Youth are disproportionately represented in the incidence of crime, both as victims and as perpetrators. From 1996 to 2005, youth 25 years or younger were responsible for 52% of arrests for total major crimes in the Caribbean (CARICOM – Tackling youth violence and crime in the Caribbean). Jamaica, particularly, has the highest number of youth convicted of crime in the region (Caribbean Human Development Report 2012).

“A New Path” seeks to improve the lives of children and juveniles in conflict with the law, increasing their chances of successfully reintegrating back into society. This initiative works with remandees and offenders across Jamaica inside the juvenile facilities and outside, in the communities, once they are released

The priority is to prepare youth in correctional facilities across Jamaica with marketable technical and life skills by providing individualized psychosocial attention, and educational and vocational training to enable their successful reintegration into society.

The project also supports the track of the releasees in accessing educational, vocational, and internship/employment opportunities, while providing comprehensive case management for six to twelve months after release. Each releasee is assigned a case manager that works with an individual reintegration plan, based on risk factors and the potential of the youth, to enable the successful economic and social integration of the youth. For that, the project establishes partnerships with companies and organizations to offer job and apprenticeships for the youth. It also fosters entrepreneurship, through training and the offer of seed capital for the youth to establish their businesses.

Successes to date:

- More than 2,410 youth have received assistance through the project
- 1,440 girls and boys successfully completed and received certification in a range of educational and vocational training, such as work readiness, life skills, classical music, yoga, animation, and aquaponics
- More than 250 releasees and at-risk youth participated in the three editions of the Pitch It!: Learning and Investing in Your Future: 133 received extensive training in entrepreneurship during a one-week residence program, 62 of whom were awarded micro-grants to start their own business
- 30 youth and their families trained in agriculture and awarded seed capital to implement their micro-farms
- More than 100 releasees received job opportunities and apprenticeships through the project
- Training-of-Trainers of Department of Correctional Services (DCS) staff: More than 160 officers and staff trained on strategies and tools to deal with challenging behavior and to implement reintegration courses
- Case management framework, including standardized forms, for juvenile facilities developed and approved by the DCS
- Implementation of the paper-based version of the case management system in the juvenile facilities
- Construction of an outdoor sports court and renovation of space to accommodate classrooms in South Camp
- Renovation of classrooms in Rio Cobre
- Preliminary data indicates a reentry rate (recidivism) of 4.62% in the juvenile centers for the beneficiaries of the project

- Staff has reported a reduced number of conflicts inside the facilities and a more conducive environment to the growing and learning of the youth