



JAMAICA

EMPOWERED ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING PROGRAM

From October 2018 to April 2019, SRUC tailored and implemented the Empowered Entrepreneur Training Program (EETP) in Kingston, Jamaica, to train and certify community residents to deliver a program of business-skills, agency-based empowerment, and leadership development to local entrepreneurs. The EETP improved the entrepreneurs' economic and personal autonomy, illustrated how regularized electricity could be used for entrepreneurship, and gave the utility an opportunity to better connect with its customers.

WORK ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

As a follow-on to the [readyboard demonstration project](#) in Majesty Garden, in which USAID helped provide safe, legal electricity access to residents in substandard housing, SRUC facilitated a trainer certification program that allowed trainers to deliver a business and empowerment training program (i.e. the Empowered Entrepreneur Training Program) in Kingston. Designed by Winrock International, the International Center for Research on Women Advisors (ICRW-A), Johns Hopkins University (JHU), and Visionaria Network, the EETP is a training on business skills, leadership, and agency-based

empowerment, all of which aim to enhance the internal ability to make decisions and take actions. SRUC worked together with Jamaica’s private electric utility company, Jamaica Public Service Co Ltd (JPS) and the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), to tailor the EETP to the Jamaican context and then deliver it in Majesty Gardens with the goal of helping residents afford new electricity access and improve their quality of life.

CHALLENGE

Despite newly acquired safe and legal electricity access, most of the low-income, urban consumers in Majesty Garden still struggled to afford basic electricity services. To address this problem, JPS needed to help those new customers afford service and improve its relationship with the community over the long term. As such, the utility needed a defined program and structured means to help the Majesty Garden residents sustainably increase their incomes and improve their quality of life. This, in turn, would help promote continued usage of legal electricity and payment for electricity service.



Empowerment Entrepreneur Training Program Attendees

APPROACH

SRUC, in collaboration with its subcontractors, worked with JPS and JSIF to tailor the EETP, which was originally created to help entrepreneurs selling off-grid energy products, for the residents in Majesty Gardens to help them improve their leadership skills and ability to grow their business and, subsequently, their income. First, the SRUC team customized the curriculum, materials, metrics, and other components of the EETP for this application; second, the SRUC team trained a set of trainers on the EETP curriculum; third, those trainers implemented the EETP curriculum with selected entrepreneurs in Majesty Gardens; and fourth, USAID provided ongoing support to the trainers and monitored progress of the entrepreneurs in growing their businesses.

PHASE I: EMPOWERED ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING PROGRAM PREPARATION

- Worked with JPS, JSIF, and other relevant Jamaican national agencies to explain the EETP, its goals, objectives, and typical outputs; understand how it could be best applied in this context and structured the implementation and its timeline.
- Identified, recruited, and selected appropriate trainers to participate in the certification program and outlined criteria for individuals from Majesty Gardens to participate in the training.
- Modified the existing curriculum based on target individuals, local context, and project goals and engaged stakeholders to create a rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan.

PHASE II: EMPOWERED ENTREPRENEUR TRAINING PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

- Conducted an in-person five-day training-of-the-trainers process on the three components of the Empowered Entrepreneur Training Handbook (business, empowerment, leadership) as well as the human-centered design plan.

- Provided the trainers with a practicum plan that included weekly homework assignments to solidify key concepts from the training on how to facilitate the EETP.
- Conducted focused coaching calls with the trainers that provided additional in-depth support to trainers as they internalized concepts and prepared for how they would implement their EETP training with selected entrepreneurs.
- Provided support materials (i.e. draft agendas for the training, supporting materials, guidance) and surveys tools, which were to be administered by certified trainers on first day one of their community trainings (and again six months post-training) to assess changes in the entrepreneurs' knowledge.

PHASE III: TRAINING ROLL OUT IN MAJESTY GARDENS

- These certified trainers then delivered the EETP to 51 entrepreneurial community members (37 women and 14 men) of Majesty Gardens over a five-week period.
- Participants considered to have 'completed' the training had to attend at least four out of the five sessions. Over 80% of the entrepreneurs (41 trainees) who completed the training attended all five sessions.
- These sessions led by the trainers included detailed discussions on psychology, business management and administration, empowerment, conflict resolution, setting and reaching goals, among other topics.
- Planned a Building your Business Expo for the entrepreneurs as a culmination of the EETP, featuring public and private Jamaica organizations that could help the entrepreneurs formalize, market, and expand their businesses. The entrepreneurs that successfully completed the program were recognized by JPS and USAID during the Expo.

PHASE IV: POST-TRAINING MONITORING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Phase IV will be implemented under another USAID program – the Advancing Gender in the Environment (AGENT) program – with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). It will include:

- Collecting and analyzing the EETP surveys to demonstrate changes in entrepreneur progress related to business, economic/personal well-being or leadership outcomes, and assess the training's impact on entrepreneur's' electricity consumption and payment.
- Provide follow-up support to certified trainers and community participants using Interactive Voice Response to deliver key refresher messages in topics determined most critical.

KEY RESULTS

- Twenty-six trainers received the in-person Empowered Entrepreneur Training-of-Trainers training, exceeding the target of 15 and creating a group of certified EETP trainers in Kingston.
- The top 11 trainers selected by USAID, JPS, and JSIF to carry out the EETP with the recruited Majesty Garden community entrepreneurs.
- Fifty – one Majesty Gardens community entrepreneurs (37 women and 14 men) successfully completed the EETP delivered by the certified trainers with less than 10 percent attrition rate over the five-week training period.
- A one day “Build Your Business Expo” that brought 17 local agencies to offer needed services to the trained entrepreneurs and other interested parties. Services spanned financial

“The program has shown me how to grow my business by keeping records and making sure my customers stay happy and keep coming back” - Maureen Fowler

institutions/credit unions, food handler certifications, business registration, and continued education.

- Commitments from JSIF and other Jamaican organization to help the certified trainers host another EETP for entrepreneurs in other communities similar to Majesty Gardens.

M&E INDICATORS

- Number of people trained in technical energy fields supported by USG assistance – **75 people (60 Female, 15 Male) with the Train-the-Trainers and the entrepreneurs who completed the EETP led by those Trainers.** (Standard Indicator: EG.7.3-2)

COOPERATING PARTNERS

SRUC worked closely with the USAID Office of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment to implement this Work Assignment. The final M&E phase will come under one of that Office’s mechanisms – the Advancing Gender in the Environment (AGENT) program in coordination with its implementing partner, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). SRUC coordinated closely with USAID/Jamaica, which represented the Task Order at the Open Resource Day.

FOLLOW ON WORK

A number of Jamaican entities involved with this rollout of the EETP program have expressed interest in carrying out similar training in other low-income areas. JSIF, with the support of JPS and Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), has committed to train another 60 entrepreneurs with the EETP curriculum, using the trainers certified during Phase II.