



UWI

IGDS

INSTITUTE FOR GENDER &
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

MONA CAMPUS UNIT
JAMAICA

**Supporting
Increased
Learning
Opportunities for
Underperforming
boys (16-24 years)
in Jamaica.**

November 2023 - February 2024



Supporting Increased Learning Opportunities for Underperforming boys (16-24 years) in Jamaica:

November 2023-February 2024



COMMONWEALTH
of LEARNING

The Institute for Gender and Development
Studies (IGDS)
Mona Unit, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus,
Jamaica

Prepared by: Dr. Karen Carpenter
Assistant Researchers: Rayan Elliot, Keverney K.R
March 8, 2024

Acknowledgement
This project was funded by the Commonwealth of
Learning (COL)

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
METHODOLOGY	6
MAIN BODY	10
Desk Review	11
Discussion of Findings	11
Demographics and Education	12
Transferable skills	12
Role in the Family	13
Personal Achievement	13
Awareness of Educational Opportunities	13
Personal Achievement	14
COL Male Youth Statistics 1	15
Mothers of Male Youth Surveys	20
Demographics	20
Source of Income	20
Mother's influence on sons	20
Awareness of male child's performance	21
Performance in School	22
Awareness of educational programs	22
COL Male Youth Statistics 2	23

Table of Contents

Focus Group Sessions	26
Focus Group Youth	26
Focus Group Youth Questions	26
Institutional Staff Training and Data Coding	37
Challenges and Lessons Learnt	38
CONCLUSION	40
Phase 2 of the Project: Clearing House	41

1

Executive Summary



The Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS), Mona Unit (MU) supports the government in achieving Gender Justice - Pillar 5 of the 17 International Sustainable Development Goals. The MU delivers teaching while liaising with local and international development agencies to carry out essential research and advocacy for vulnerable communities. In 2022-2023 in collaboration with partners we completed: Improving Household Nutrition Security and Public Health in CARICOM (Food & Nutrition; Spotlight Initiative Pillar GBV Prevention HFLE Project; Essex Valley: Gender-Responsive Economic Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups in Agriculture and Organizational Strengthening Project; Health Connect Jamaica USAID/HIV Project.)



Youth represent the largest number of unemployed persons in Jamaica and male youth leave the system at higher rates and with lower educational achievements than females.

Project Overview

The current 16-week (project phase 1 of a three-phase project) funded by the Commonwealth of Learning Canada (COL) Supporting Increased Learning Opportunities for Underperforming boys (16-24 years) in Jamaica, seeks to increase participation of male youth (16-24 years) in educational/training opportunities. Youth represent the largest number of unemployed

persons in Jamaica and male youth leave the system at higher rates and with lower educational achievements than females. This Situational Analysis collected data through: i) a comprehensive desk review and SWOT analysis of agencies offering education/training opportunities for youth; ii) face-to-face interviews of 300 male youth and 150 unrelated

mothers of male youth, in and out of school, in the KMA and St Elizabeth areas; and two focus groups of 8 persons each, with male youth and unrelated mothers. **The study is significant because it assesses the knowledge gap in youth and mothers of male youth regarding available educational and training opportunities.**



Significance of the Study:
Assessing and addressing the knowledge gap in youth and unrelated mothers of available educational and training opportunities.

2

Methodology



The Study

This study is a Situational Analysis of the educational aspirations of selected Jamaican male youth (16-24 years) and the influence of mothers on the educational aspirations and choices made by male youth. The research seeks to uncover the gaps in participant awareness of government and other agency opportunities for post-secondary education and training. The target sample was 300 Jamaican male youth (16-24 years),

in and out of school, residing in the Kingston and Metropolitan Area (KMA) and St. Elizabeth. The youth were selected from intact groups in school, and by random selection through mall intercepts for out of school youth. One hundred and fifty (n=150) randomly selected unrelated mothers of male youth in urban and rural regions (KMA and St. Elizabeth) were included in the study. Sixteen (16) focus group participants from

both target populations were also included. The data was collected through 1) SWOT analysis of existing opportunities; 2) a survey of 300 male youth and 150 mothers of male youth, 3) focus groups of i) male youth and ii) unrelated mothers of male youth, in urban and rural Jamaica. The data was triangulated to highlight the key areas for the next steps in pairing male youth (16 - 24 years) with opportunities in the country.

A. Sampling

- I. In-school youth were interviewed in intact groups once they assented and provided proof of parental permission. Out-of-school respondents, (18+) youth and unrelated mothers were invited to participate through simple random sampling in Mall Intercepts. Focus Group participants were identified by a professional recruiter, who has training and experience in field research and is familiar with the local context of the demographic area.
- II. Sample sizes for interviews of male youth and unrelated mothers was calculated using Raosoft sample size calculator.

Data collection within schools was conducted at the times set by school administrators. Data was collected by the Principal Investigator, trained and qualified researchers and research assistants already employed at the IGDS Mona Unit.

B. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

1. Schools were randomly selected from a comprehensive list of secondary schools in Jamaica. The inclusion criteria was simply schools with male populations in the target age group, within the target demographic areas, whose Principals were willing to participate and whose parents of students gave their written consent. Students who had already answered the survey were not included in the Focus Groups.

C. Data Analysis

1. The results of the data analysis presented here represent the key findings of simple descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. More in depth analysis of all data sets including bivariate and correlational analyses, along with necessary chi-square, t-tests, and ANOVA (or non-parametric equivalents) are the subject of a longer journal article.

Background

Jamaican youth express aspirations of attaining professional and personal goals which require post-secondary education, despite this only 53.5% complete secondary education and

8.9% achieve tertiary education, with 18.6% achieving vocational training. A further 26.2% leave school before completing their education or training (Labour Market Transition of Young

Women and Men in Jamaica, n.d.). The main reason for dropouts among 45% of youth was the inability to finance their education.

Unemployment

In 2021, the youth unemployment rate increased by 0.6% in Jamaica from the previous year. Excluding youth in schools, the unemployment rate was 26.11% among 15 to 24-year-olds who are seeking employment. Some 36% of 14 to 24-year-olds in the labour force are unemployed (National Youth Policy 2017-30 Jamaica Popular Version-one-booklet, 2021).

Geographic Areas

The urban Kingston and Metropolitan Area (KMA) is home to approximately 651,742 inhabitants of the island's 2.7+ million inhabitants. With a high concentration of the population in this area it is an important urban area to include in the target sample (<https://statinja.gov.jm/maps/kmacommunitiesandpopulation.html>). One rural parish that faces fluctuating levels of youth unemployment and is among those that are receiving special attention for youth in agriculture initiatives is St. Elizabeth with a population of 151,692. As the second largest parish and the breadbasket of the island, St. Elizabeth is a key site for investigating rural youth opportunities and obstacles.





3

Main Body





Desk Review

The project team carried out a deep search of the literature in the field on post-secondary opportunities provided in Jamaica along with elite interviews of officers of select institutions. A total of twenty-five (25) agencies were reviewed to determine the types of education and training offered; the requirements for entry; bursaries and scholarships. A comprehensive literature review of factors contributing to male youth

progressing to post-secondary education and obstacles that prevent this progress was compiled. Interviews with staff from various stakeholder and government agencies provided information to complete the entry requirements and criteria for each. The resulting desk review was submitted under item 1.1.1.

Through the review of literature, the

elite interviews and follow up with select agencies and government bodies, a comprehensive spreadsheet was compiled. The spreadsheet allows for the matching of male youth 16 - 24 years in urban and rural areas of Jamaica with institutions that offer post - secondary education and training opportunities.



Discussion of Findings

Male Youth Surveys

Face - to - face surveys were conducted with 300 male youth in the urban area of the Kingston and Metropolitan area (KMA) and rural St. Elizabeth. The youth are between the ages 16-24 years. Some were enrolled in school while others were already out of school. The purpose of the surveys was to discover what obstacles to and opportunities for educational achievement are faced by Jamaican male youth. The surveys were broken into six main segments: 1) demographics, 2) education, 3) transferable skills, 4) role in the family, 5) personal achievement, 6) awareness of educational opportunities.





Demographics and Education

The majority of male youth surveyed were in the 16 - 18 age group (64.88%), with close to two thirds (66.43%) being enrolled in secondary schools in Kingston and the remainder in secondary schools in St. Elizabeth. Most male youth reported that their school leaving age was 17 years, with 45% of them graduating while, 12.68% dropped out of secondary school.

Transferable Skills

Of the 300 male youth less than half (41.95%) were employed across the urban and rural areas. Of those who were employed, 22.5% worked in sales and shop jobs; 18.7% in agriculture and fisheries; 16.2% in skilled trades such as carpenters, bakers, chefs, masons, plumbers and electricians. Another 13.7% worked as unskilled labourers and the remainder worked in a variety of paraprofessional and artistic endeavours.

Role in the Family

More than two-thirds (67.8%) of the male youth surveyed reported having family responsibilities. With 58.2% of those being household responsibilities; 14.2% helped with caring for their siblings. Of the youth surveyed who did provide financially for their household, just under 60% of them contributed weekly while 27% contributed monthly to the finances. Those who were unemployed, 12.2%, were unable to contribute at all. Their contributions included buying food and groceries as well as paying utility bills. The reason for contributing for 17.4% of those who worked was to fulfil their roles as men in the household. Another 14.29% of male youth say they simply do what they can to help out their families.

Personal Achievement

Most of the male youth indicated that a lack of money is their major obstacle in advancing to post-secondary education. Whereas 22.51% of male youth said nothing is preventing them from advancing to post-secondary education. Another 10.33% said that lack of proper character is preventing them from advancing. Most of the male youth said that they need money to achieve their career goals (27.92%). Whereas 24.38% indicated that they need further education to achieve their goals. Another 9.89% indicated that they need motivation, encouragement, and support to achieve their career goals. Thirty - eight percent of the male youth state that they need more experience to achieve their career goals; whereas 22.05% said they need self-development.



Awareness of Educational Opportunities

Of the 25 institutions that offer post-secondary training and education, male youth said were most aware 33.44% of male youth said they were aware of the HEART NSTA Trust. Whereas 18.39% of male youth indicated that they have absolutely no awareness of the program. When asked about specific programmes that are advertised youth surveyed showed little awareness of the training and educational opportunities that are offered. Most of the male youth (60.21%) said that they have absolutely no awareness of the RADA Youth in Agriculture Program or NSTA Trust training program. Whereas 20.42% indicated that they have a little awareness of the program. Only 10.92% of male youth expressed having a great degree of awareness about the program. Most of the male youth 67.24% were completely unaware of the NUYP program. Whereas 16.21% of male youth indicate that they have a little degree of awareness, only 7.24% of them said that they possess a great degree of awareness of the program.



Most of the male youth indicated that a lack of money is their major obstacle in advancing to post-secondary education.



Most of the male youth said that their **family** generally **motivates** them to achieve **success**.

Personal Achievement

Respondents were asked what alternative careers they would consider if their first choice was not possible. Most reported a wide variety of alternative career options (21.71%). The second highest response from male youth was a vocational skill or trade (19.5%) and another (16.01%) responded that they don't have any alternative option to their present career goal. The youth were asked what they would do if they could achieve success in their lives. The majority said that, were there no limitations to their potential, they would choose to help vulnerable groups in society (30.94%). Most of the male youth (28.52%) said that their family generally motivates them to achieve success; while 18.21% of listed their mothers as their main motivators for success; and another 18.21% indicated that they were self-motivated.





COL MALE YOUTH STATISTICS



COMMONWEALTH
of LEARNING



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

AGE GROUPS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most male youth participants surveyed were between the **age group 16 - 18 years old (64.88%)**.



AREA OF RESIDENCE

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth participants surveyed are from **Kingston (49.46%)**, while the second highest number of male participants are from **St. Elizabeth (34.77%)**.



EDUCATION

HOW MANY OF THE PARTICIPANTS ARE CURRENTLY ATTENDING SECONDARY SCHOOL?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth surveyed are **currently enrolled in school (50.88%)**.



WHICH SECONDARY SCHOOLS DO THE PARTICIPANTS CURRENTLY ATTEND?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth surveyed are currently enrolled in a **secondary school in Kingston (66.43%)**, while **34.57%** of male youth are attending a **secondary school in St. Elizabeth**.



WHICH SECONDARY SCHOOLS DID THE PARTICIPANTS FORMERLY ATTEND?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth surveyed were formerly enrolled in a **secondary school in Kingston (66.43%)**. Whereas **28.78%** of **participants** were formerly enrolled in a **secondary school in St. Elizabeth**.

SCHOOL-LEAVING AGE

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth surveyed left school at **age 17 (38.64%)**.



REASON FOR LEAVING SCHOOL

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth surveyed left school because they **graduated (45.07%)**, whereas **12.68%** of participants indicated that they **dropped out of school**.



TRANSFERRABLE SKILLS

SOURCE OF INCOME

MAIN TAKEAWAYS



Most of the male youth surveyed are **unemployed (58.05%)**.

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the employed participants are employed as shop and **market sales workers (22.50%)**; the second highest number of male youth are employed as **Agricultural and Fisher Workers (18.75%)**.



TASKS OF CURRENT JOB

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth reiterated that they are **unemployed (30.53%)**.

Whereas, **16.32%** of the participants indicated that their job tasks primarily consist of **unskilled labour**. Another **14.21%** indicated that their job tasks consist of **shop and market sales oriented tasks**.

ROLE IN THE FAMILY

HOW DO YOU PROVIDE FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth reiterated that they are **unemployed (29.07%)** and do not provide for their households. Whereas **28.49%** of male youth use the money earned from their jobs to **buy food and groceries** for their households; and **20.95%** of male youth **pay utility bills** in their households.

WHY ARE YOU PROVIDING FOR YOUR FAMILY?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the participants reiterated that they are **unemployed (23.60%)** and do not provide for their households. Whereas **17.39%** of male youth say that the reason they provide for their families is to **fulfill their responsibilities as men**. Another **14.29%** of male youth say that they **simply do what they can to help out their families**.

CAREER ASPIRATIONS

OBSTACLES TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the participants indicated that **a lack of money (23.25%)** is their major obstacle in advancing to post-secondary education. Whereas **22.51%** of participants said **nothing** is preventing them from advancing to post-secondary education. Another **10.33%** said that **lack of proper character** is their major obstacle to post-secondary education.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO ACHIEVE YOUR CAREER GOALS?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that they need **money (27.92%)** to achieve their career goals. Whereas **24.38%** indicated that they need **further education**, and another **9.89%** indicated that they need **motivation/encouragement/support** to achieve their career goals.

OBSTACLES TO CAREER GOALS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth state that their **lack of experience (37.80%)** is preventing them from achieving their career goals. Whereas **22.05%** of male youth said their **lack of self-development** is preventing them from achieving their career goals.

AWARENESS OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

AWARENESS OF THE HEART TRUST NSTA TRAINING PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

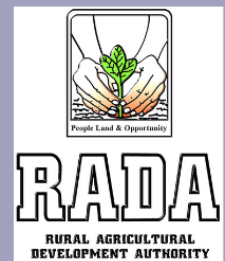
Most of the male youth said that they have a great **degree of awareness (33.44%)** about the HEART NSTA Trust training program. Whereas **18.39%** of male youth indicate that they have **absolutely no awareness** of the program.



AWARENESS OF THE RADA YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that they have **absolutely no degree of awareness (60.21%)** of the RADA Youth in Agriculture Program. Whereas **20.42%** of male youth indicate that they have a **little awareness of the program**. Only **10.92%** of male youth expressed having a **great degree of awareness** of the program.



AWARENESS OF THE NATIONAL UNATTACHED YOUTH PROGRAM (NUYP)

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that they have **absolutely no degree of awareness (67.24%)** of the NUYP program. Whereas **16.21%** of male youth indicate that they have a **little degree of awareness** and only **7.24%** of them said that they possess a **great degree of awareness** of the program.



AWARENESS OF THE ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that they have **absolutely no degree of awareness (67.24%)** about the NUYP program. Whereas **16.21%** of male youth indicate that they have a **little degree of awareness** and only **7.24%** of them said that they possess a **great degree of awareness** of the program.



PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS TO CAREER GOAL

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most male youth reported **anomalies/outliers (21.71%)** in response to their alternative career option. The second highest response is **vocational skill/trade (19.5%)** and **(16.01%)** responded that they **don't know of any alternative option** to their career goal.



CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that, were there no limitations to their potential, they would choose to **help vulnerable groups in society (30.94%)**.



PERCEPTIONS OF SUCCESS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth perceive their own success in terms of **possessing monetary and material wealth (18.66%)**, whereas **15.67%** of them perceive self-success in terms of **Self-fulfillment**; and **14.93%** of them define success in terms of **fulfilling their needs/desires/wants**.



MOTIVATORS FOR SUCCESS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the male youth said that their **family** in general motivates them to achieve success **(28.52%)**; while **18.21%** of them listed their **mothers** as their main motivators for success; and another **18.21%** indicated that their biggest motivator for success is **Self-intrinsic motivation**.





Mothers of Male Youth Surveys

Surveys were also carried out with one hundred and fifty (150) mothers of in school and out-of-school youth (OSY's). The mothers were not related to the youth respondents previously included here. The face- to face interviews

were conducted with urban and rural mothers of youth 16-24 years in Jamaica to understand the role mothers play in the educational aspirations and achievements of their sons. The Mothers Survey included questions on

1) demographic information, 2) source of income, 3) awareness of male child's performance, and 4) awareness of educational programs.

Demographics

Mothers reported the ages of their male children as ranging from 16 – 18 years (61.5%); 19 – 21 years (22.4%); 22- 24 years old (16.1%).

23% of the mothers reported receiving no financial support from the fathers of their sons.

Source of Income

The majority of mothers said their relationship status was: single (48%); in common law unions (22.7%); married (21.3%); and widowed (8%). Sixty-nine percent (69%) were employed while 30.7% were unemployed. Sources of income for mothers included employment as service, sales and shop workers (30.8%); self-employment as street and market vendors (19%); and unskilled, elementary workers (12.5%); 10.6% were paraprofessionals and a further 13.5% reported being

professionals, senior officials and technical staff. The remaining mothers (13.4%) were employed as clerks, in agriculture and fisheries, craft workers, plant and machine operators or did not specify an occupation. Fifty percent (50%) of the mothers were earning less than \$40,000 JMD/month, with 26.8% of those earning less than \$19,960 JMD/month. The remainder (31.3%) earned between \$39,920 JMD - \$79,841 JMD/month, with 15.9% reporting that they earned above

\$79,841 JMD/month. Twenty-three percent (23%) of the mothers reported receiving no financial support from the fathers of their sons; 25.4% reported they sometimes received financial assistance; while 29.5% reported receiving frequent financial assistance from the fathers of their sons; and a further 22.1% reported receiving very frequent financial assistance from the fathers of their sons.

Mother's influence on sons

A majority of mothers (69.2%) reported that the influence they had on their sons was through providing guidance; while 16.4% said they modelled the appropriate behaviour for their sons.

41% of mothers said they sought help from the school and other educational institutions when their sons started underachieving

Awareness of male child's performance

Mothers were asked to share their expectations of their male children. Over forty-five percent (45.6%) said they wanted their sons to have a specific career, while 24.5% said they wanted them to be successful. Mothers' expectations of their sons mostly centred around household duties, self-care and grooming and yard chores (74%). Other expectations outside the home included attaining social, civic and religious values (33.1%).

Mothers reported helping their sons to meet their expectations for them by investing in their social, emotional and financial well-being (52.8%). Forty-one (41.1%) provided guidance for their sons to help them meet their expectations. When asked how their sons fathers helped in this regard, 31.3% said that the fathers were always involved and 28.6% said the were sometimes involved while 20.4% said they were never involved. Sixty-

two percent (62.4%) of mothers said they had consistently been involved in their sons' lives and 14.2% said they were more involved in their sons' lives since primary school. Forty-one percent (41.5%) of mothers said they sought help from the school and other educational institutions when their sons started underachieving; 29.6% said they did not seek help; 18.5% said they sought help from family, friends, community and church.



Performance in School

In response to the subject in school that their son was best at, 25.2% of mothers said Mathematics, 16.8% science subjects, 10.5% vocational and technical skills. Mothers reported that the skills their sons were best at included: trade, technical and vocational (27.1%); arts, music, craft (17.3%), while 18.8% were outliers who fell outside the skills categories mentioned by the others. Conversely, when asked which subjects their sons are poor at, 36.6% of mothers said:

languages; 23.9% said Mathematics; 16.4% said science subjects. More than half of the mothers said their sons started underperforming in secondary school (55.1%). We asked mothers how much time they felt their sons spent on electronic devices and most (39.5%) reported 1-4 hours; 25.6% said no time; only 16.3% said virtually all day. When specific devices were included such as smart phones, 32.1% said virtually all day; and the same percentage said 5-8 hours; while 21.9% said 1-4 hours.

Forty-one percent (41.2%) of mothers reported that their sons spent no time on laptops; 30.9% said 1-4 hours and 11.8% said 5 - 8 hours. Sons' television viewing was reported by 34.7% of mothers as 1-4 hours; 33.7% of mothers reported - no time; 10.5% said 5-8 hours. With regard to video games, 47% of mothers said their sons did not play video games at all; 25.8% said 1 - 4 hours; 10.6% said 5 - 8 hours.

Awareness of Educational Programs

Mothers' awareness of the existing twenty-five (25) educational and vocational programmes was explored. Just over sixty percent (60+%) of mothers said they were very aware of existing programmes; twenty percent (20%) said they were moderately aware; and fourteen percent (14%) were a

little aware of the opportunities. Sixty-two percent (62%) of mothers said they were not aware of the RADA Youth in Agriculture Programme; just over sixty-four percent (64.4%) of mothers were also unaware of the National Unattached Youth Programme (NUYP); further a surprising seventy-seven

percent (77%) of mothers were unaware of the Adult Continuing Education Programme. Presented with the wide range of opportunities available for youth, mothers were generally unaware of most of these programmes.





COL MOTHERS OF MALE YOUTH STATISTICS



COMMONWEALTH
of LEARNING



SOURCE OF INCOME

MOTHER'S INCOME

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**59.71%**) are earning less than **\$20,000 Jamaican dollars per month.**



FATHER'S CONTRIBUTION

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**30%**) said they receive financial assistance from their sons' father(s) **frequently.**



CONTRIBUTION FROM FAMILY OVERSEAS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**44%**) said that they **Never** receive funds from their **family overseas** while **43%** of mothers received funds **sometimes.**



INCOME FROM EMPLOYMENT

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**71%**) said they receive money from their **employment most frequently**



HUSBAND'S CONTRIBUTION

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**54.05%**) said they **never receive** financial assistance from their **husbands.**



OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Aside from their main employment, most of the mothers surveyed (**36.84%**) said they received money from anomaly/outlier sources of income.



PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

HOW MOTHERS HELP THEIR SONS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**52.78%**) said they help their **sons by investing in their education financially, socially and emotionally**

FREQUENCY OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN RAISING FEMALE CHILD

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**41%**) reported that the father of their female child is **always involved in raising the child.**



HOW MOTHERS HELP THEIR DAUGHTERS TO MEET EXPECTATIONS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**52%**) help their **daughters by investing in their education financially, socially and emotionally**

MOTHER INVOLVEMENT IN RAISING THE MALE CHILD

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**62.41%**) were involved in raising their male child **consistently throughout the child's life.**



FREQUENCY OF FATHER INVOLVEMENT IN RAISING MALE CHILD

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**31.29%**) reported that the father of their male child is **always involved in raising the child.**



AWARENESS OF MALE CHILD'S PERFORMANCE

WHAT SUBJECT IS YOUR MALE CHILD DOING THE BEST IN?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**25%**) stated that **Mathematics** is the subject which their son is doing best in.



WHAT SUBJECT IS YOUR MALE CHILD DOING POORLY IN?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**36.57%**) stated that their son is doing poorly in **Languages such as English, Spanish, French and English Literature.**



AT WHAT AGE DID YOU NOTICE YOUR CHILD STARTED TO UNDERPERFORM IN SCHOOL?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**55%**) noticed that their sons started to **perform poorly in secondary school**



DOES YOUR MALE CHILD HAVE A SKILL THAT HE IS VERY GOOD AT?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**27.07%**) stated that their son is very good at **Trade/Technical/vocational skills**



MOTHERS SEEKING HELP

DID YOU SEEK OUT ANY
HELP FOR YOUR SON
WHEN YOU NOTICED THAT
HE WAS
UNDERPERFORMING?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed
(**39.53%**) stated that their
sons spend **1-4 hours per day**
on the tablet.

DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE
INFLUENCE ON YOUR MALE
CHILD DECISIONS?

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed
(**65.28%**) stated that they agree
that they **do indeed have**
influence over their sons'
decisions

WAYS IN WHICH MOTHERS
INFLUENCE THEIR SONS'
DECISIONS

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed
(**69.23%**) said that they
influence their sons' child
decisions by **providing**
guidance/advice.

AWARENESS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

AWARENESS OF THE HEART TRUST NSTA TRAINING PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed
(**60.67%**) stated that they have a
great degree of awareness about the
Heart NSTA Trust.



AWARENESS OF THE RADA YOUTH IN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**62%**) stated
that they have **absolutely no awareness of**
the RADA Youth in Agriculture Program.



AWARENESS OF THE NATIONAL UNATTACHED YOUTH PROGRAM (NUYP)

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**64%**) stated that
they have **absolutely no awareness of the**
National Unattached Youth Program.



AWARENESS OF THE ADULT CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

MAIN TAKEAWAYS

Most of the mothers surveyed (**77%**) stated
that they have **absolutely no awareness of**
the Adult Continuing Education Program

ADULT AND
CONTINUING
EDUCATION



Focus Group Sessions

Two separate Focus Group sessions – 1 with in and out of school youth 16-24 years old and another with unrelated

mothers of male youth. Participants were selected through snowballing techniques within the urban and rural

communities of Kingston and the Metropolitan Area (KMA) and St. Elizabeth, respectively.

Focus Group Youth

The demographic composition of focus group participants:

- The Male Youth Focus Group session was conducted with one moderator and 8 male youth. All male youth participants were between the ages 16 – 24 years old. Two (2) of the participants were from rural communities in St. Elizabeth, while the other six (6) resided in urban communities in the Kingston and Metropolitan Area (KMA). Two (2) of the participants were employed and not attending school, while the other six (6) were all attending post-secondary educational institutions (UWI, UTECH, Northern Caribbean University, JAGAS). The moderator was matched for sex and posed questions to the male youth participants to ascertain their challenges in advancing to post-secondary education as well as achieving their career goals.



Q1. What would make you stay in school longer?

Participants indicated: clothes (uniform) to wear to school; money for transportation and lunch, as well as money to purchase school supplies (one participant specified tools, because he was pursuing an automotive repair skills program); and support from family/household unit.

Q2. What are the challenges/obstacles to furthering your education?

Most participants indicated that the major obstacles/challenges to them furthering their education beyond the secondary level were: a lack of money to afford tuition ; funds for daily transportation and nutrition; lack of family support; and having to work while attending school.

Q3. What are the major influences on your academic performance?

When asked what or who influenced their academic performance, most participants responded that: family members were the main motivators; peer groups; community members; and the attitudes that teachers exhibited towards them and their work. One participant indicated that his mother in particular, was his greatest motivator of his academic performance.

Q4. If you were to stay in school longer, would your household suffer or be affected?

One participant indicated that this would not negatively affect their households since they do not currently contribute to the household finances. While one participant indicated that if he were to pursue further education, his family would be negatively impacted because of the additional burden of assisting to finance his education.

Q5. When you were growing up, what did you want to be?

The responses ranged from doctor (oncologist), pilot, soldier, fireman, electrical engineer, and car salesman. The moderator then asked what the participants what motivated them towards these career choices, to which most of them indicated a deep-seated childhood passion for the respective careers, and one participant indicated that the loss of loved ones to illness inspired him to pursue a career in medicine.

Motivators and Obstacles to Career Goals

Q6. What helped or hindered you from achieving those career goals that you have while growing up?

- Most participants responded that a lack of money to support their career pursuits; a lack of motivation from family; a negative community environment; and failing to excel in school, were their main obstacles.
- Whereas one participant said they had no challenges, but their maturity made them change their perspective and thus reconsidered their career goal.
- Most of the participants also indicated that financial support to pursue their career goals would be a major push factor for them, and one participant indicated that receiving an employment opportunity in his desired career field has motivated him to further his ambitions.

Q7. If you have the opportunity for your program and your boarding expenses to be totally covered, would you go back to school?

One participant indicated that this would not negatively affect their households since they do not currently contribute to the household finances. While one participant indicated that if he were to pursue further education, his family would be negatively impacted because of the additional burden of assisting to finance his education.

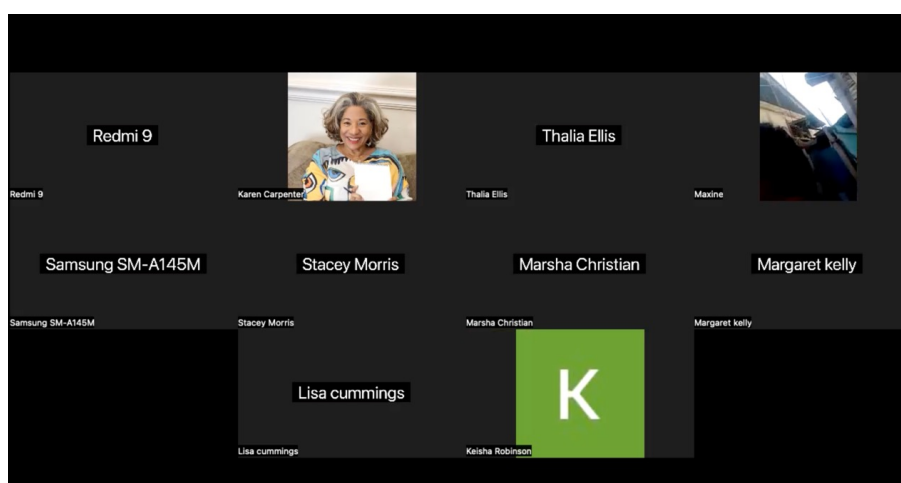
Awareness of opportunities and programs

Q8. Are you aware of any such opportunity or program to assist in financing your education?

Most participants were aware of the HEART TRUST NTA program and three (3) indicated The Excelsior Community College, but generally their awareness of available programs was low. The moderator then introduced them to the twenty-five (25) programs and opportunities identified in the SWOT Analysis. The respondents indicated some familiarity with some of the programs such as the PATH program and the National Youth Service Program.

Focus Group Mothers

Most participants responded that they were aware of the HEART TRUST NTA program and three (3) indicated The Excelsior Community College, but generally their awareness of available programs was low. The moderator then introduced them to the twenty-five (25) programs and opportunities identified in the SWOT Analysis. The respondents indicated some familiarity with some of the programs such as the PATH program and the National Youth Service Program.



Q1. How many sons do you have and how long have they lived with you?

The mothers had sons that ranged in ages from 16 years to over 24 years old. The largest family unit contained four boys. Mothers reported that their sons had lived with them for all their lives. A few of the mothers also had daughters.

Q2. What is your relationship like with your son?

Most mothers reported having good relationships with their sons; and only one mother said her relationship with her sons was problematic because she constantly had to keep them off the streets and out of trouble because they live in a volatile area.



“Yes, bikaaz somtaimz chuu wi liv in di geto, yu afi a taak tu dem uova - kom aaf a di ruod. It me kyu worid. Mii. Ai no nuo bout enibadi bot it mek mi fiil worid.”

- (mother of male youth)



"My relationship with my children, it's very problematic, because sometimes, because we live in the inner city, you have to talk to them repeatedly and tell them, "Come indoors". It worries me. I don't know how anybody else feels, but it makes me worry."

- (mother of male youth)

Q3. What is your occupation?

The mothers responded with a range of occupations including: an office attendant, warehouse merchandiser, seasonal cook, nail technician, auxiliary worker at a secondary school, and three mothers indicated that they were currently unemployed.

Q4. What would you say your goals are for your son?



"Wel mai guol fo ma chiljren iz fa beta in life; fa dem tu luk forder in laif, yu andasatan."

- (mother of male youth)



"My goal is for my children to do better in life, to have more achievements in life, do you get me?"

- (mother of male youth)

The mothers' expressed aspirations and ambitions for their sons which included educational, career, relationship, and general goals. Some mothers also expressed their hopes for their son's achieving self-fulfilment and self-realisation goals. Most of the mothers responded that their ambitions for their sons is to achieve social mobility and improve their situations in life, beyond the mothers' own current situations. In particular, the mothers indicated that they wish for their sons to achieve a better form of employment than their own, and not have to experience the same struggles as the mothers themselves. Only one mother in particular expressed a specific career choice for her son, i.e., to be a soldier, because she was supporting his personal career goal.

Q5. Do you think your son and daughter require different things to assist them in getting ahead in life/meeting their goals?

“

"There are two different set of, ther are two sets of, yuuda se di boiz an di gorlz ar tuu difrent set"... "Wen a se tuu difrent set di boiz av difrent niidz fram di gorlz."

- (mother of male youth)

“

"There are two different sets of ...you would say that boys and girls are different . When you see that they are different, they have different, boys have different needs from girls."

- (mother of male youth)

Most of the mothers agreed that there is a clear distinction between the needs for male and female children in supporting their goals and ambitions. Two mothers indicated that their daughters are generally more focused and have a clearer sense of their ambitions than their sons. One of these mothers noted that her daughter had indicated her ambition of furthering her education to the tertiary level, while her son was at the time unclear about his educational ambitions. Finally, most of the mothers agreed that since girls mature faster than boys, their daughters exhibited a greater degree of responsibility and awareness of their ambitions, whereas their sons needed more encouragement.

Q6. Of the children that you have, all of your children, is there one child that you are prouder of?

“

"Yes, my son in Canada. I love him to death."

- (mother of male youth)

One mother answered that she was prouder of her son because of his focus, determination and success. The focus group discussion then segued into the mothers' discussion of the traits/characteristics which they would like to see in their children. Among these traits mentioned were focus, ambition, and the determination to get ahead in life.

Q7. Is there something that you think is getting in the way of any of your children? Is there an obstacle, something that's stopping them from achieving their goals or your goals for them?



"The only thing I just want is an opportunity for my son because I just want him to be focused."

- (mother of male youth)

Most mothers who responded to this question indicated that a lack of opportunity was curtailing their sons' achievements, or rather that the presence of opportunities (unspecified) would bolster them towards achieving their goals, or the mothers' goals for them. One mother also indicated that the absence of a father in her son's life, coupled with the negative influence of his community, were also obstacles to her son's progress.

Q8. What would help her male child get ahead versus your female child? Since you have one of each. What is it that they need each of them to get ahead?

One mother in particular, indicated that her son would benefit from having a role model in his life. This mother indicated that despite being younger, her daughter was far more focused, ambitious and disciplined than her son, and that he could learn by "taking a page from her book".



"OK, a wudn se he could be a role model. I think he should take a page out of her book bikaa she dohn keep frren she dohn go to road and she more focus as the yonga one."

- (mother of male youth)



"Ok, I wouldn't say he [my son] could be a role model. I think he should take a page out of her [my daughter's] book, because she does not have any friends and she does not go out a lot, and she is more focused as the younger one."

- (mother of male youth)

Another mother stressed the importance of having both parents present in the children's lives as this was fundamental for the development for both female and male children. This participant also indicated that both children need love from their parents as well as the support of Church in order to foster their development.



"I think they need love. You see, from the parents love each other and show respect and I think both of them going to church together because whatever we are doing, we have to put God first."

- (mother of male youth)

Q9. If you're male child was to stay in school longer, how would it affect your household in terms of money?

Most mothers indicated that supporting their sons to stay in school longer would be an additional burden to them, however, they would certainly bear the expenses because they believe that the investment in their sons' education is worthwhile. Most of the mothers agree that education is the key to their children's success.



"The money is not there. But you know, the parents will find it. Well, if they stay in school I will try to find."

- (mother of male youth)

Q10. If you were to get school fee and boarding for your male child or male children, would you encourage them to stay in school?

All mothers unanimously agreed that if presented with the opportunity to have their children's tuition and boarding covered by someone else then they would certainly encourage their children to stay in school longer.



"If I get the help to send my child back to school, that would be great sending him back because at least he will be independent human being, after draining whatever he gets from school and education will even make him calm and more focused."

- (mother of male youth)

However, some mothers expressed concerned about the possibility of their male children squandering the opportunity of a fully funded education because of their own poor characters.

“

"Yu av pierents out dier uu getin elp fram ada piipl weda frenz aar famili aar watsoeva, sen dier boiz tu skuul an di boiz dem stil nat duwin notin in skuul"

- (mother of male youth)

“

"There are parents who are getting help from others, whether it is from friends or family members, or some other source, to send their boys to school, and the boys are still not performing well in school."

- (mother of male youth)



Q11. Do any of you know of any opportunities where your boy child could get their boarding and their school fee paid for anybody?

Most of the mothers indicate that they had absolutely no awareness of any opportunity which would cover the boarding and tuition fees for their male children. However, one mother in particular noted that there are avenues through which parents can ascertain information about these opportunities and that the onus was on parents to actively seek out these opportunities for the sake of their children.

“

"You have University. You have Utech. You have schools where they bord iin. in. iivn ina di konchrisaid yu kyan sorch an fain kaaz wans yu waahn di bes ino."

- (mother of male youth)

“

"There is the University [of the West Indies]. There is the University of Technology. There are schools where they have boarding for students, even in the rural areas. You can search and find them, because once you want the best, you know."

- (mother of male youth)

Q12. Awareness of programs and opportunities for male youth.

The moderator listed a number of available opportunities and programs for increased learning and skills training for male youth and asked the mothers to indicate their degree of awareness of these programs/opportunities.

HEART TRUST NTA - Most mothers were aware of the HEART TRUST NTA program, and one mother indicated that her son was currently enrolled in said program.

“

"Yes, because my son is in HEART now."

- (mother of male youth)

CASE - Most mothers indicated a lack of awareness of the CASE.



"I don't know what they really do."

- (mother of male youth)

NCTVET - Most mothers indicated a lack of awareness of the NCTVET.



"I don't know what they really do."

- (mother of male youth)

Positive Youth Development - Most mothers indicated a lack of awareness of the Positive Youth Development.

Planning Institute of Jamaica - One mother indicated that while she was aware of the existence of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, she was unaware that it provided educational/training opportunities to youth.



"I know about the Planning Institute. I didn't know that they offered any assistance."

- (mother of male youth)

RISE Program - Most mothers indicated a lack of awareness of the RISE Program.

Q13. Have any of you ever investigated what qualifications your child needs to benefit?

Mothers were asked if they had made any steps to investigate the criteria for entry into the programmes or the benefits they offered. The mothers unanimously answered no.



"I dunno what they are looking for."

- (mother of male youth)

The Moderator then presented the mothers with a list of educational and skills training opportunities and programs available to youth including the benefits which they provide as well as the requirements for enrollment. To help build their awareness and offer them alternatives for their children.

Q14. Is it your male child or your female child you'd like to take up any of these opportunities?

Most mothers indicated that they would like their male children to take up these opportunities whereas one mother said she would like both her male and female children to take advantage of these opportunities/programs.

- Male child.



"I would like both of them to take it up."

- (mother of male youth)

Q15. Do you think you can influence your male children to pursue further education?

An overwhelming majority of the mothers indicated that they do in fact believe that they have an influence on their male children. However, one mother expressed concern that while she continues to invest effort in her son, she does not believe her efforts have been very successful, and she believes that her son would defer to a male figure.



"Yes ai tingk ai av an influuwens an im bikaaz it az bin mi an im fram eva sins."

- (mother of male youth)



"To be honest, I have tried, and I've done all that I can but...all the time, not sometimes, I think a boy need a male in their lives."

- (mother of male youth)

The focus group lasted one hour. Mothers were thanked and the discussion ended.



Institutional Staff Training and Data Coding

Research findings were analysed by the staff team through first reviewing the quantitative data and categorizing these into thematic codes and labels. These were compared across the data set to determine if the survey data from the male youth and the mothers contain similarities and differences to the same issues. The focus group data was then included to triangulate responses across quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The common themes from all four data sets include: male youth (16-24 years) in Jamaica

report wanting to achieve high academic and professional goals but say they lack financial resources to accomplish these. The second most important motivator for the youth who were interviewed was family support. A small percentage of youth (18.21%) listed their mothers as their main motivators for success. Mothers themselves felt they influenced their sons by providing guidance (69.2%) and being a good role model (16.4%). Finally, neither male youth nor unrelated mothers of male youth, had

a very high awareness of the twenty-five (25) available opportunities. Staff were trained in the analysis of the data and the drawing of inferences from same. The research team workshopped the possible conclusions and next steps. The team also reviewed the results from all activities to inform the possible second and third phases of the Supporting Increased Learning Opportunities for Underperforming boys (16-24 years) in Jamaica, project.



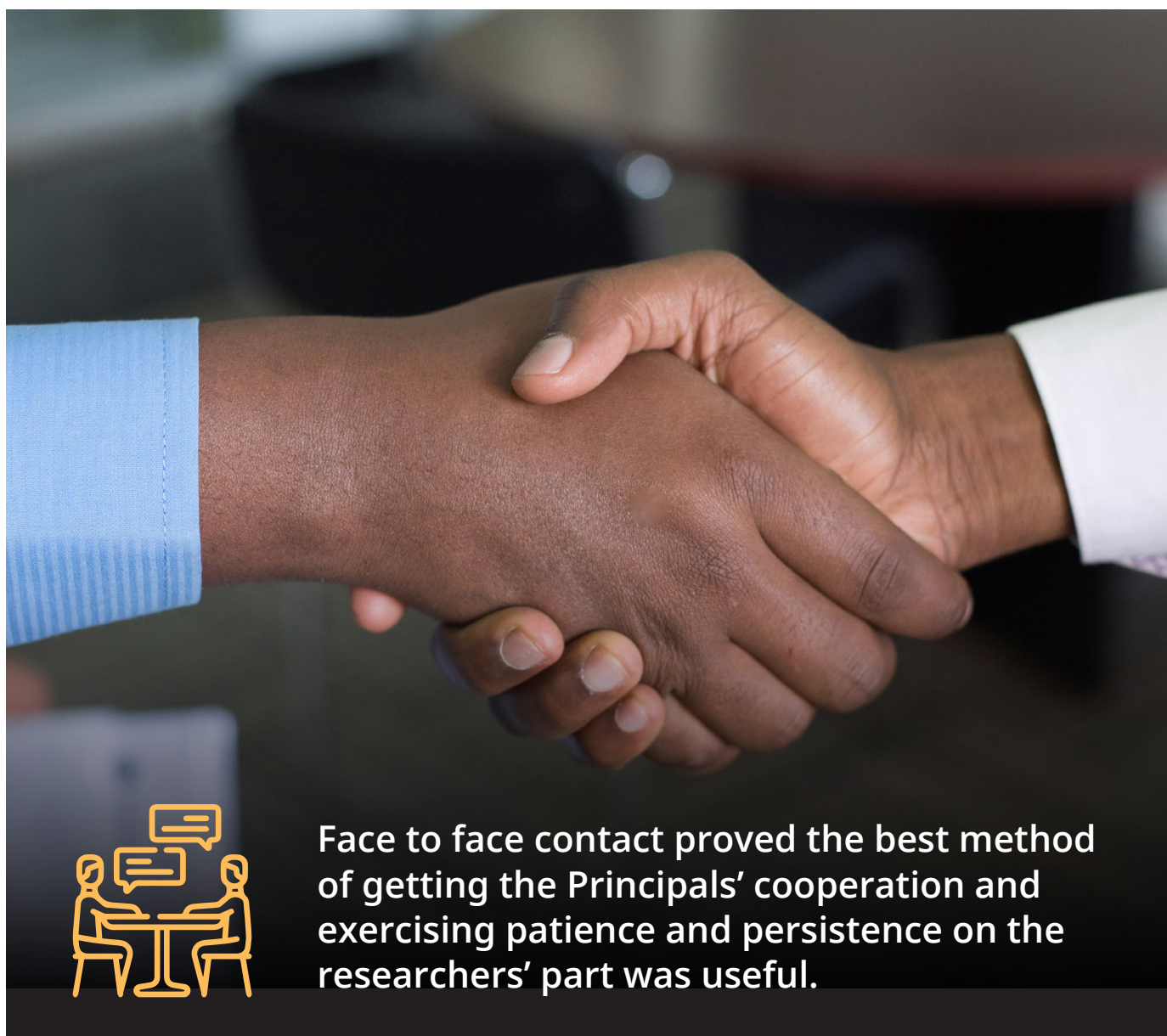


Challenges and Lessons Learnt

The main challenges encountered in Phase 1 of the project had to do with coordinating and encouraging Principals of schools to get information to and from parents. For those youth under 18 years permissions and

parental consent was necessary and schools had competing agendas that often meant researchers had to delay data collection. These are unavoidable, however we found that where a member of the team was able to visit

the school in person, this improved the response rate. Face to face contact proved the best method of getting the Principals' cooperation and exercising patience and persistence on the researchers' part was useful.



Face to face contact proved the best method of getting the Principals' cooperation and exercising patience and persistence on the researchers' part was useful.



4

Conclusion



The Supporting Increased Learning Opportunities for Underperforming boys (16-24 years) in Jamaica project was very successful as it provided data that was previously unknown with regard to the ambitions, motivations and obstacles encountered by Jamaican youth in meeting their career

goals. A novel approach in this study, was the inclusion of mothers and their perspectives on their sons' educational advancement. The relationship between mothers and sons as a factor in boys underachievement was previously untested, but has appeared in previous literature (Gayle and Bryan 2019). This project has provided some useful

answers to the questions of what boys and their mothers see as success and what information they need to achieve this. Having completed this phase gives us a strong foundation for approaching phase two of the project and assist the youth to take practical steps to furthering their education.



Phase 2 of the Project: Clearing House

Notwithstanding the challenges experienced in the field, with Phase 1 of the project, the Situational Analysis provides a good jumping off point for the next phase. One of the main obstacles mentioned by both youth and mothers is finances. This indicates that participants are unaware of funding opportunities. This was confirmed by their responses to knowledge about the various institutions. We also saw that while male youth expressed a desire to further their education and achieve high academic and professional goals, almost half of the male youth population did not complete secondary school or have the

prerequisite educational qualifications. Mothers also pointed to the fact that their female children were more likely to apply themselves academically than their male children. At the same time male children struggled with the need to contribute to the household while attending school. Finally, mothers expressed the view that finding out about the available opportunities was a burden left up to them. Better means of communicating the opportunities, matching those opportunities to the youth and helping youth set realistic and affordable educational goals early in secondary school, would yield better results. For underachieving

male youth in Jamaica to make the best use of the educational avenues they will need a bridge between their existing knowledge and the existing opportunities. Currently, no agency exists that provides that service to parents and their children. Each educational/training agency operates independently without a clear channel of communication among themselves and the parents of these youth. The IGDS Mona Unit through its current research proposes that Phase 2 of the project provide this service through a Clearing House.

- Procedures:**
1. Needs Assessment: Assess youths skill sets and pre-requisites
 2. Career counselling: interviewing
 3. Match them to relevant institutions and opportunities

The mothers of male youth in Phase 1 of the project showed great enthusiasm for receiving more assistance and information that would move their sons' education and training forward. The overall goal of Phase 2 of the project is to match Jamaican male youth (16-24 yrs.) to available training and educational opportunities. The objectives are specifically to:

1. Interview 100 male youth, mothers and stakeholders in KMA and St. Elizabeth;
2. Uncover available opportunities for the coming academic year;
3. Provide guidance for youth and their mothers in selecting key opportunities for education/training;
4. Match 2/3 of the total cohort to available opportunities;
5. Provide a sustainable model that can be transferred to the Ministry of Youth.



UWI

IGDS

INSTITUTE FOR GENDER &
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

MONA CAMPUS UNIT
JAMAICA