

PROJECT STATUS REPORT

JANUARY 2017 - JUNE 2017

SECTION 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

PROJECT NAME: New Employment Opportunities for youth in Jamaica (NEO JAMAICA)

Project Number: JA-M1036 - Project Num.: ATN/ME-15283-JA

Purpose:

The expected results are to broaden the quality and relevance of training programs and employment systems for vulnerable young people in the country.

Country Admin

JAMAICA

Country Beneficiary

JAMAICA

Executing Agency:

Youth Upliftment Through Employment

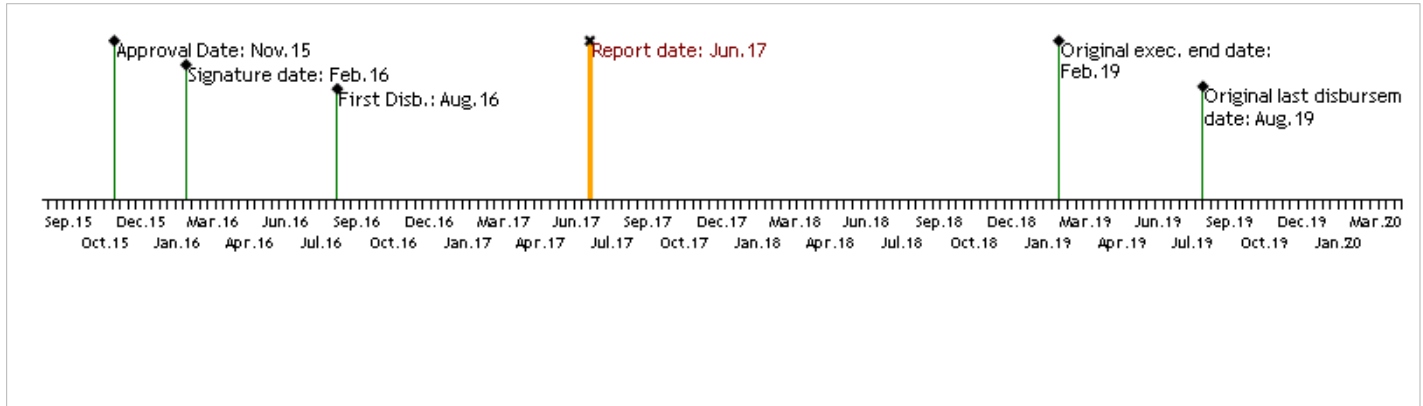
Design Team Leader:

ELENA HEREDERO RODRIGUEZ

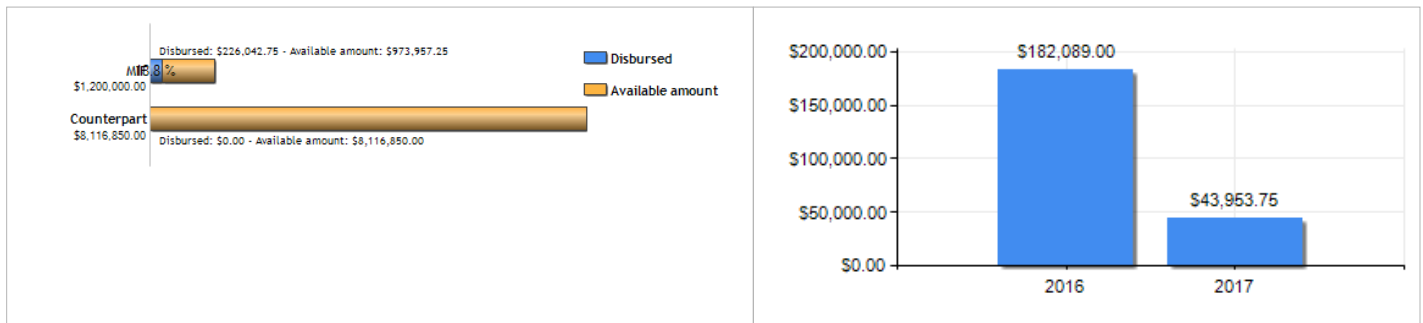
Supervision Team Leader:

WAYNE BEECHER

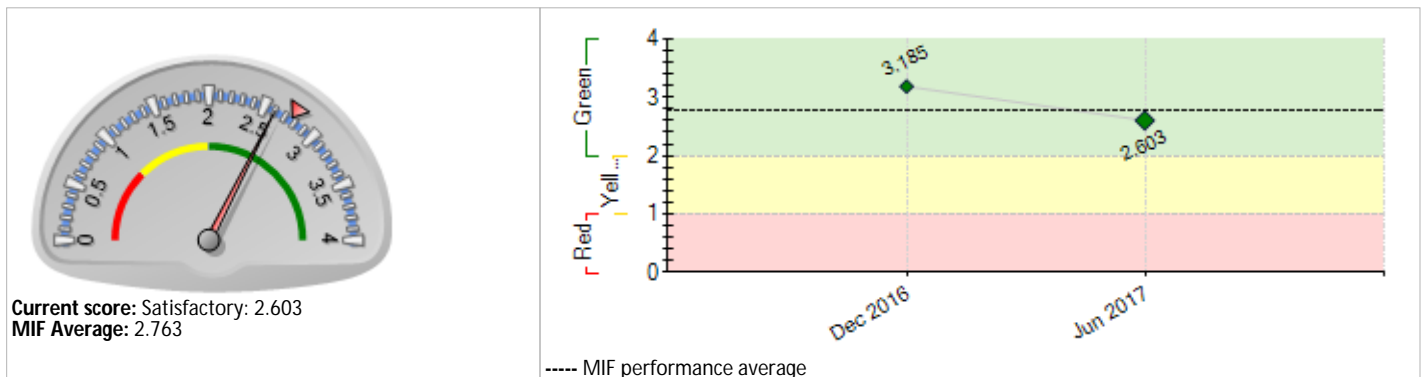
PROJECT CYCLE



FUNDS

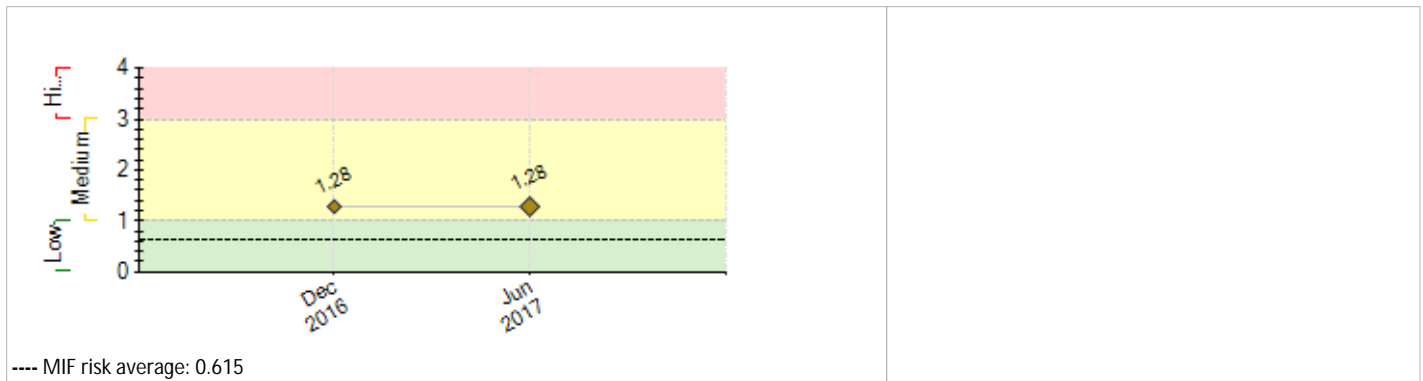


PERFORMANCE SCORE



EXTERNAL RISKS

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY		Risk
Financial Management:	Low	Low
Procurement:	Low	Low
Technical Capacity:	Low	Low



SECTION 2: PERFORMANCE

Summary of project performance since inception

- The milestones completed thus far include: (i) conditions precedent to first disbursement; (ii) organizing a taskforce to analyze the youth ecosystem fragmentation; (iii) developing 3 technical proposals; and (iv) the development of a communication strategy.
- The merger of HEART, the National Youth Service and the Jamaica Foundation for Life Long Learning has caused delays in the training of the professionals. In addition, HEART indicated that the study to provide HEART with improvement proposals is superfluous as they already undertake similar exercises and decided not to proceed with the activity. Actions already taken included engaging the Ministry of Education on a regular basis to gain understanding of the merger process, and maintain buy-in of top officials.
- The most important risks included the merger of NYS and HEART and the start of competing initiatives out of the Office of the Prime Minister. The action to taken to mitigate risks is to highlight the relevance of NEO by disseminating recommendations developed by the taskforce and to develop strong connections with similar initiatives.
- The project is moderately likely to achieve its final objectives as all centers are now completing self-assessments and developing improvement plans.
- Executing Unit's efforts to the end of the project include: (i) evaluating 11 training centers; (ii) training professionals and; (iii) registering and training 8,000 young people.

Comments from the Supervision Team Leader
 Agree with the Executing Agency comments

Summary of project performance in the last six months

- The main achievements for this semester include: (i) developing technical proposal related to institutional framework for youth employability, a common metric system and recommendations for public policy; and (ii) the development of a communication strategy.
- There are no significant delays however, the merger of HEART, the National Youth Service and the Jamaica Foundation for Life Long Learning has caused delays in the training of the professionals. Actions taken to reduce them included engaging the Ministry of Education on a regular basis to gain understanding of the merger process, and maintain buy-in of top officials.
- Executing Unit's efforts for the next semester includes: (i) evaluating 11 training centers; and (ii) training up to 90 professionals.

Comments from the Supervision Team Leader
 Agree with the Executing Agency comments
 With the introduction of competing initiatives from the Government of Jamaica (HOPE , LEGS, etc...), the ability of executing partner to raise the counterpart funding committed could be at risk. The main partnering government agencies (HEART, NYS...) attention seems to have shifted away from NEO towards their own initiatives.

SECTION 3: INDICATORS AND MILESTONES

Indicators		Baseline	Intermediate 1	Intermediate 2	Intermediate 3	Planned	Achieved	Status
Goal: The desired impact of NEO Jamaica is to increase job placement opportunities for poor, vulnerable and low-income	I.1	NEO graduates placed in jobs	0			3200	0	
	I.2	NEO graduates placed in jobs remained in their jobs for at least two (2) months after the program	0			2400	0	
						Feb 2019		
I.3	NEO graduates that continue studying or go back to schools.	0				1280	0	

Jamaican young people ages 17 to 29	I.4	NEO graduates who are working, have an income higher than or equal to the national minimum wage.	0				Feb 2019	2400	0	
							Feb 2019			
	I.5	Satisfied employers with NEO graduates	0					80	0	
							Feb 2019			
	I.6	NEO graduates obtained formal employment	0					1600	0	
							Feb 2019			

Purpose: • The expected results are to broaden the quality and relevance of training programs and employment systems for vulnerable young people in the country.	R.1	Companies offering internships and jobs opportunities to NEO youth.	0					100	0	
							Feb 2019			
	R.2	Number of NEO graduates of training offered by NEO	0					6400	0	
							Feb 2019			
	R.3	Number of youth that have access to training, vocational orientation and job placement (enrolled) because of the program	0					10000	0	
							Feb 2019			
	R.4	Job service providers evaluated and strengthened by NEO increase the quality of their services, on average, in one of the NEO Dimensions	0					9	0	
							Feb 2019			
	R.5	Participant institutions increase their services and access to youth	0					9	0	
							Feb 2019			

Component 1: Coordination of the youth employability ecosystem Weight: 1% Classification: Satisfactory	C1.11	Taskforce organized to analyse the fragmentation of the youth ecosystem in the country.	0					1	1	Finished
							Feb 2018		Sep 2016	
	C1.12	Technical proposals related to institutional framework for youth employability, a common metric system and recommendations for public policy developed	0					1	1	Finished
							Feb 2019		Dec 2016	
	C1.13	Strengthening workshops organized for the NEO Jamaica Alliance	0	1	2			4		Delayed
				Feb 2017	Feb 2018			Feb 2019		
	C1.14	Institutions M&E capacity strengthened	0					5		
							Feb 2019			

Component 2: Implementation of a more effective vocational training programs system Weight: 79% Classification: Unsatisfactory	C2.11	Systematized documents from the demand-supply alignment process developed to provide HEART with improvement proposals to assure training provided are labour market driven.	0					1		
							Feb 2018			
	C2.12	Job training centres evaluated in accordance with the NEO quality standards guide and having them develop their comprehensive improvement plans	0					4		Delayed
							Feb 2017			
	C2.13	Teachers trained in best practices in teaching methods for youth	0					40		
							Feb 2018			
	C2.14	Professionals trained in Passport to Success: Life Skills program (PTS)	0					40		
						Feb 2018				
	C2.15	Professionals trained in best practices in career counselling	0					10		
							Feb 2018			
	C2.16	Youth enrolled and trained in job-training courses	0	2000				8000		
				Feb 2018				Feb 2019		
	C2.17	Youth placed in internships opportunities, mentorship programs, apprenticeships or on the job training	0	500				4000		
				Feb 2018				Feb 2019		

Component 3: Strengthening of youth employment services Weight: 17% Classification: Unsatisfactory	C3.11	Job placement and Vocational Orientation centres evaluated in accordance with the NEO quality standards guide and having them develop their comprehensive improvement plans	0					7		Delayed
							Feb 2017			
	C3.12	Professionals trained in best job placement practices	0					30		
							Feb 2018			
	C3.13	Professionals trained in best practices in career counselling	0					10		
							Feb 2018			
	C3.14	Government's employment digital portal to offer information adapted to poor and vulnerable youth strengthened	0					1		
							Feb 2019			
	C3.15	Youth attended in vocational orientation centres, employment centres and offered information through the platform and the job fairs.	0	500				2000		
				Feb 2018				Feb 2019		
	C3.16	Employers using the platform and offering job opportunities	0					100		
							Feb 2019			

Component 4: Knowledge management and strategic communication Weight: 3% Classification: Unsatisfactory	C4.11	Communication strategy developed	0					1	1	Finished
							Feb 2017		Dec 2016	
	C4.12	Public institutions have access to the knowledge products of the project	0					5		
							Jan 2019			
	C4.13	Private institutions have access to the knowledge products of the project	0					5		
						Jan 2019				
	C4.14	Academia/ education institutions have access to the knowledge products of the project	0					5		
							Jan 2019			
	C4.15	NGOs institutions have access to the knowledge products of the project	0					5		
							Jan 2019			

Milestones	Planned	Due Date	Achieved	Date of achievement	Status	
M0	Conditions Prior	5	Jun 2016	5	Jun 2016	Achieved
M1	Technical proposal drafted	1	Mar 2017	1	Jan 2017	Achieved
M2	Job training centers evaluated	4	Aug 2017			
M3	Teachers, facilitators, and supervisors trained	40	Dec 2017			
M4	Seven employment centers evaluated	7	Feb 2018			
M5	100 employers mobilized	100	May 2018			
M6	Draft strategic communication and dissemination plan developed	1	Jul 2018	1	Mar 2017	Achieved
M7	Knowledge products conveyed to 20 interested institutions related to youth employment.	1	Dec 2018			
M8	Knowledge products conveyed to 20 interested institutions related to youth employment.	1	Dec 2018			

CRITICAL ISSUES THAT HAVE AFFECTED PERFORMANCE
[X] Community/political opposition
[X] National political changes
[X] Lack of resources for the counterpart

SECTION 4: RISKS

MOST IMPORTANT RISKS AFFECTING FUTURE PERFORMANCE

	Level	Mitigation action	Responsible
1. Risks associated with project sustainability. Public-private partnerships are an essential part of the initiative, but with changeovers of institutional authorities, especially at public sector agencies, there is a risk that the members of the partnership will lose interest and stop being involved or making contributions over time.	Medium	To mitigate this risk, the NEO Jamaica partnership has prepared a governance agreement describing the responsibilities of the members and ensuring their participation. Additional responses are planned, such as: (i) spreading responsibilities between the public and private sectors, to ensure a certain level of implementation of activities; (ii) lobbying the incoming and outgoing authorities in sector groups and public authorities, informing them of the benefits and results of the initiative; and (iii) making the initiatives part of the government's long-run development plans that normally involve different sectors and civil society actors. Furthermore, project Component 1 provides for strengthening the NEO Jamaica partnership through specialized workshops on working in partnership, dispute settlement, and the standardization of processes, to mitigate the risks of dissolution.	Project Coordinator
2. Sector risks. Another risk is the inability to assemble a significant number of companies in the selected sectors willing to contribute by offering internships or employment opportunities coupled with the risk of the economy slowing down or not growing.	Medium	To mitigate this risk, the NEO Jamaica partnership, YUTE, and the MIF intend to use their network of contacts to reach out to these companies. Specifically, project Component 3 provide for making contacts with businesses for this purpose. Another way of getting companies involved will be through the communication campaign described in Component 4.	Project Coordinator
3. Macroeconomic risks. As it was mentioned in the justification section, the central problem of high youth unemployment is aggravated by a context of low job creation.	Medium	To mitigate this risk the team has identified certain sectors where there is a positive outlook for new jobs in the short to medium term, such as business process outsourcing, logistics, tourism, agro-processing, and animation (see paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6). Nonetheless, these sectors may be adjusted during execution in order to be responsive to local demands of the economy.	Project Coordinator

PROJECT RISK LEVEL: Medium **TOTAL NUMBER OF RISKS:** 3 **IN EFFECT RISKS:** 3 **NOT IN EFFECT RISKS:** 0 **MITIGATED RISKS:** 0

SECTION 5: SUSTAINABILITY

Likelihood of project sustainability after project completion: LP - Low Probability

CRITICAL ISSUES THAT MAY AFFECT PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

Issue	Comments
[X] Relevant actor's opposition or lack of interest to continue with the project's activities or services	Competing government initiatives has shift interest away from the NEO project

Actions related to sustainability which have been taken in the reporting period:

The key action related to sustainability is to disseminate the findings of the technical proposals via the media to instigate a national discussion on the relevance of NEO and steps needed to be taken to improve coordination within the youth employability ecosystem and improving vocational training.

SECTION 6: PRACTICAL LESSONS

	Relative to Risk	Author
1. Housing, Opportunities, Production and Employment (HOPE) is an initiative out of the the Office of the Prime Minister that seeks to streamline youth employability and training programs. HOPE seeks to train 15,000 a year youth ages 16-24 with HEART as the main engine to deliver training programs. In order for NEO to remain relevant, it is important to align itself to this initiative.		Bryce, Barrington
2. Selected members of the Alliance lack ownership as they do not see a direct benefit to themselves or to the organization. The Project was not designed to provide benefit to partner organizations. Members who lack ownership, refuse to put in extra effort to complete tasks on time. This is particularly evident in attendance to meetings.	Sustainability	Bryce, Barrington
3. The PSC consists of 10 members. A 2011 study by Bain Capital reported in The Nonprofit Times asserts that the optimal board size for effective decision-making is seven people. According to Bain, "every person added after that decreases decision-making ability by 10 percent." So for boards with the median of 17 people, Bain would put their decision-making ability at zero." Therefore, it would be feasible to keep the PSC at the same size, and according to the governance framework, invite member partners to meetings for technical reasons. These members will not have a vote in the decision-making of the PSC.	Sustainability	Bryce, Barrington