



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Position:	Project Officer
Project Name:	Rural Youth Employment (RUYE) Project
Location:	Jamaica – parishes of St Ann, St Thomas, Manchester and Trelawny
Employment Type:	Contract
Duration of Project:	Two years
Duration of Contract:	12 months (renewable based on performance and availability of funds)

Background

An estimated 9.9 per cent of Jamaica's 2.7 million population lived below the poverty line in 2007¹, with the incidence of poverty consistently highest in rural areas. Recent global crises – food, fuel and financial – threaten to stymie efforts to reduce poverty and exacerbate other social and economic challenges. Unemployment is increasing, particularly in areas that depend directly and indirectly on traditional export industries - sugar, bananas and bauxite/alumina in addition to tourism. The result is a decline in the availability of jobs in the formal sector. Besides the traditional pockets of unemployment and poverty, there will be new pockets in the communities that have traditionally benefited from the export industries, with expected knock-on effects on crime and violence, two of the greatest challenges facing Jamaica. This is particularly worrying given the involvement of youth, particularly boys and young men as main perpetrators and victims.

The youth cohort, 15-24, represents approximately 19 per cent of the population and by extension, forms a large segment of the labour force. It is however becoming increasingly difficult for the youth to access and take advantage of employment and income generating opportunities where they exist, due in part to issues of unemployability. At the time of school leaving, many youth become “unattached” with no direct link to any other system. A significant number of young people leave school without sufficient qualifications. In addition, others have been exposed to some level of vocational training but have not been adequately trained in entrepreneurship and how to earn income from the application of these skills. Low literacy skills are among the critical inadequacies among a large number of school leavers. It has prevented them from availing themselves of training opportunities at satisfying industry and from accessing even low skilled jobs.

This project presents an opportunity to support income-earning prospects for young males directly and carries the probability of quantifiable change in a relatively short time. It allows for the possibilities of profitable enterprise based on the engagement of these youths in productive wealth-creating activities rather than on membership in gangs and other antisocial behaviour. Marrying the country's natural endowments with a trained and capacitated cadre of youth will

¹ ESSJ 2007



position Jamaica to lower its youth and rural unemployment rate as well as increase GDP by boosting agriculture productivity.

Main purpose of the job:

To solicit support for and contribute to the creation of viable agricultural and agro-processing wealth-creating activities with targeted involvement of attached or unattached, disenfranchised youths within selected rural Parishes.

Duties and Responsibilities

The Project Officer will provide project management and technical support to the Project Manager as required by the needs of the individual project or the Project Manager. Some specific tasks of the Project Officer include the following:

1. Assist in and support the identification of potential beneficiaries and poverty alleviating opportunities
2. Assist in and support the preparation and submission of Annual Work Plans guided by baseline and field information and in collaboration with stakeholders for approval by the Project Board
3. Provide project monitoring and management support to Project Manager in the implementation of Work Plans / Business Plans
4. Completing and submitting on a timely basis, weekly itineraries and monthly reports detailing project activities performed against targets and highlighting projects' output respectively
5. Assist in developing and strengthening of relations for enhanced collaboration, cohesion among key stakeholders (Ministries, Departments and Agencies) in the rural economy through constant dialogue and Parish Technical Working Group (PTWG) meetings
6. Participate in the selection and evaluation process of input and service suppliers where necessary
7. Prepare minutes and agenda of meetings
8. Such other tasks as may reasonably be required by the Project Manager

Required Qualification, Skills and Experience

- Educated to degree level or equivalent (Agriculture or Agricultural Engineering, Business Management)
- Knowledge of/and working experience of the rural economy including agri-business and agro-processing
- Experience in implementing socio-economic developmental project(s)
- Experience in producing clear, concise reports, and presentations
- Proven IT skills - MS Office Suite (including MS Project & MS Power point)



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- Proven skills in bid writing, negotiating and generation of new business
 - Excellent communication, written and oral, and well developed interpersonal skills
 - Understanding of marketing and analytical skills
 - Knowledge of features of sustainable agriculture
 - Experience of working within an externally funded project or collaboration activity