

# PROTOTYPE FEEDBACK

## SAFER COMMUNITIES PROGRAMME: EMPLOYMENT DESK

**Description of prototype:**

FFP engaged a group of Jamaican private sector entities to sensitize them on the link between unemployment and violence. The goal was to encourage companies to think about the many ways they can help to reduce youth violence including providing mentorships, internships, short and long-term employment; supporting businesses in communities with high levels of violence and funding complementary youth development, community development and violence reduction programmes. Young people from the participating communities were able to share their challenges in securing employment with business owners and senior managers from Jamaican companies. Employers were able to better understand the role and needs of community-based Organizations serving disadvantaged youth.

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| <p><b>The Good?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>What did people value the most?</b><br/> <i>All parties valued having a central agency willing to be the bridge between the private sector and the communities. Young people explained that they are discriminated against because of their addresses so having a central agency vouch for them would enhance their prospects. Businesses explained that they are often fearful of hiring workers from communities with high levels of violence and were not familiar with the CBOs. The CBOs in turn felt they lacked the connections and network to effectively secure employment placements and so appreciated FFP's role in connecting them to businesses. All parties also valued that the employment programme is part of a larger set of initiatives that support the holistic needs of young people.</i></p> </li> <li> <p><b>What got them excited?</b><br/> <i>The simplicity and practicality of the idea was particularly exciting. The private sector was interested in the</i></p> </li> </ul> | <p><b>The Bad?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>What failed?</b><br/> <i>As FFP does not have funds in place for an employment desk, immediate follow up on placements was not possible. It would have been more productive to be able to immediately place even a small cohort of participants.</i></p> </li> <li> <p><b>Were there suggestions for improvement?</b><br/> <i>It was suggested that additional support be provided for entrepreneurs within the target communities. Another suggestion was to pay closer attention to the interests and abilities of the participants rather than rolling out packaged skills training.</i></p> </li> <li> <p><b>What needs further investigation?</b><br/> <i>Additional community mapping needs to be done to identify employment opportunities within the target communities and to define what services businesses within these communities can provide to the private sector. Further mapping also</i></p> </li> </ul> |
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| <p>evidence-based approach to understanding the link between unemployment and violence, but the ability to put a solution in place quickly was the most encouraging. Young people were also excited about having an opportunity to prove themselves without being limited by the stigma of their neighbourhoods. There was also a lot of interest in the prioritization of placement over training. In many communities, hundreds of young people have participated in skills training programmes that have not led to jobs. This has unintentionally created skepticism around the value of training that has deterred participants from signing up. Community members also valued the opportunity to get unskilled or low-skilled young people into jobs, reducing the likelihood of their getting into crime and violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What convinced them about the idea?</b><br/>The idea was developed directly in response to feedback FFP has received from young people, community members and private sector partners so each party can see its needs and concerns addressed.</li> </ul> | <p>needs to be done to define the employment opportunities available in the growth sectors targeted by FHI 360 (a major USAID-funded collective impact programme) and NEO (a World Bank funded programme aiming to place 10,000 Jamaican young people in work over the next 5 years). Both interventions include sectors where employment requires only primary and secondary education, and have expressed interest in collaborating with FFP and partners to ensure opportunities are made available to young people in the target communities along with support to help them overcome any additional barriers to making the most of them.</p> |
| <p><b>The Unexpected?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Did anything happen that you did not expect?</b><br/>Feedback from the private sector was much stronger than we anticipated. We also did not expect that young people would appreciate having an opportunity to share their thoughts with the private sector as much as they did. For many of them the event itself was a development opportunity as they had not previously had the chance to address such a gathering. We also did not expect that the process of placements would be so labor-intensive.</li> </ul>   | <p><b>What Next?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Based on what you learned how will you change your idea?</b><br/>We will flesh out the idea of entrepreneurship support and identify additional partners to work with in this area. We will also add more placement officers to the employment desk.</li> <li>• <b>What will you test next?</b><br/>We will test integrating employment/entrepreneurship with a nutrition-based social enterprise in one community: working with a team to build a business to provide food to the participants in our programme.</li> </ul>   |