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New project to provide support for civil society organisations

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Director General, Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Dr Wayne Henry (centre), listens to Mission Director, United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Jamaica, Maura Barry-Boyle (right). Occasion was the official launch of the Local Partner Development (LPD) project at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel in Kingston on May 25. At left is LPD Chief of Party, Morana Smodlaka Krajnovic. (Photo: JIS)

KINGSTON, Jamaica (JIS) — The institutional capacity of selected local civil society organisations (CSOs) and other partners is expected to be strengthened over the next five years, under a new initiative of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Jamaica. Dubbed the Local Partner Development (LPD) project, the initiative will provide extensive capacity-building services for Jamaica's civil society sector, in partnership with key Government partners.

This intervention is expected to improve the sustainability of these organisations, which will also include social enterprises (SEs), non-Governmental organisations (NGOs), intermediate service organisations (ISOs), and community-based organisations (CBOs). It will also enhance their ability to advocate for improvements in their enabling environments, and support community-based crime and violence-prevention initiatives.

The project was officially launched during a ceremony at the Terra Nova All-Suite Hotel in Kingston on May 25. Welcoming the initiative, Director General, Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), Dr Wayne Henry, said it is a more effective partnership between Government and civil society.

“The partnership will see Government and citizens working together to address economic growth through the provision of employment opportunities, business development support, diverse engagement across CSOs, government entities and the private sector,” he said.

Henry further noted that the Government recognises the importance of non-State actors in delivering services, some of whom provide services in tandem with Government agencies on the ground. The director general said he is pleased that the LPD project will address the issue of sustainability, which is one of the main challenges facing many civil society organisations.

The LPD will systematically strengthen the institutional capacity of these organisations, so that they can survive with minimal Government intervention,” he said.

In her remarks, USAID/Jamaica’s Mission Director, Maura Barry-Boyle, said the programme is “representing an exciting opportunity for the USAID to ensure that our Jamaican partners have the capacity to implement our shared vision of a secure and prosperous Jamaica”. She noted that the new activity will ensure that the USAID continues to play a role in boosting the capability of local partner organisations to ensure that Jamaicans are safe and secure.

“The work we intend to do with these partners will result in a stronger, more resilient group of local partners who are able to better achieve and sustain their organisational objectives and support more effective local-led efforts to address citizens’ security concerns,” she said.

In the meantime, LPD Chief of Party, Morana Smodlaka Krajnovic, who will be managing the project in Jamaica, said it is crucial, “because we believe and we see how local partner development can affect Jamaican society, from Government levels to the individual levels in each community”.

“The programme, from the start, has been designed by looking into the holistic approach, understanding that safety and security in Jamaican communities cannot happen without economic stability, without citizens fully understanding and being fully committed and taking ownership of those security and safety initiatives,” she said.

Under the LPD project, civil society partners will have innovative ways of generating income; will be supported by a conducive policy environment; and will work together to find solutions to the country’s toughest crime and violence challenges.

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