



YEAR TWO

June 2023 - May 2024



Project STAR believes that, working together, we can transform Jamaica into a place where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to thrive.

Project STAR is an undertaking of the Social Transformation and Renewal (STAR) Foundation – a registered charity in Jamaica.



Project STAR is supported, in part, by financial contributions from our donors.

LEGACY



SIGNATURE



LEADING



PATRON



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We believe that with collective action across the society, we can realise a shared vision of Jamaica in which everyone is valued and has the opportunity to thrive.

HOW WE WORK

Collaboration and consultation are at the heart of our approach, which ensures that needs as well as solutions are identified and implemented by the communities themselves. In turn, Project STAR works with our partners - communities, government agencies, NGOs, CBOs and private sector entities and individuals at home and in the diaspora - to connect communities with the services and resources that were agreed during a process of consultation. We have created a rigorous process of feedback, review, learning and improvement so the projects which are undertaken remain relevant and can be owned by the community. Our deep-seated commitment to achieving substantive and sustained change at the community level is demonstrated by ongoing accountability and reporting.





Trust has been fostered and residents are actively taking ownership of numerous initiatives aimed at bringing about lasting change.

As we come to the close of another remarkable year, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude as I reflect on the incredible achievements of Project STAR. Our journey towards establishing STAR as a model public-private sector partnership for community change and transformation has made significant strides and our collective efforts are yielding tangible results.

One of our most noteworthy accomplishments has been the profound impact of our social and economic transformation initiatives across various communities. Trust has been fostered and residents are actively taking ownership of numerous initiatives aimed at bringing about lasting change. A prime example of this success is the Round Robin programme in Parade Gardens, which has had a transformative effect on economic sufficiency, peace-building, and community cohesion.

Our parenting clubs have emerged as powerful spaces of empowerment for parents, providing robust support systems for families. These clubs have been instrumental

in nurturing strong familial bonds and creating a foundation for sustained community development.

The establishment of Community Transformation Plans in Rose Gardens, Savanna-la-Mar and Parade Gardens, along with the ongoing progress in May Pen, marks a significant milestone for Project STAR. These plans, which are shaped by community members and supported by STAR, are a testament to our commitment to collaborative and sustainable development. They represent solutions that will be implemented and monitored by the respective Community Transformation Boards, ensuring that the impact is both profound and enduring.

As we thank Commissioner General Anderson on his stellar leadership and drive of STAR in its early years, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Dr Kevin Blake on his appointment as police commissioner and co-chair of the oversight board of STAR. I look forward to continuing to work with Commissioner Blake as

he helps to steer us towards even greater achievements.

A special commendation goes to Saffrey Brown, our project director, and her dedicated team. Their tireless efforts have built Project STAR from the ground up, impacting thousands of lives in the process. Their dedication and hard work are the backbone of our success.

We are immensely grateful to our over 40 corporate donors, whose generous multi-year commitments have amounted to nearly half a billion Jamaican dollars. Your support has been instrumental in driving our mission forward and transforming communities.

As we look ahead to the new year, I am filled with optimism and high expectations. Together, we will continue to build on our successes, foster resilience and create thriving communities across Jamaica.

Thank you all for your unwavering support and commitment to Project STAR.



The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) stands firmly as a co-founder and key partner in Project STAR, an initiative born from the visionary collaboration with the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica. This partnership is a testament to our unwavering commitment to tackling the deep-rooted challenges of crime and insecurity that have long plagued our communities.

Project STAR is not just another programme; it is a strategic movement towards genuine societal transformation. By addressing the root causes of violence and disorder, we aim to create safer, more resilient communities. This initiative represents a holistic approach to community safety, where law enforcement, public and private sectors, NGOs and community members work hand-in-hand to foster environments where every Jamaican can thrive.

In the face of adversity, the resilience and proactive spirit demonstrated by our communities have been nothing short of inspiring. From the heart of Parade Gardens to the spirit of Rose

Gardens, we have witnessed a remarkable embrace of change. These communities have shown that when citizens take ownership, lead initiatives, and commit to sustaining positive change, the results are profound and enduring.

Our policing philosophy is centred around people – ensuring their safety and enhancing their quality of life. The success stories emerging from Project STAR underscore the effectiveness of this philosophy. For instance, in January 2024, Superintendent Berisford Williams and his team facilitated critical dialogues within the community. These conversations, filled with raw emotion and honest reflection, birthed a collective resolve to pursue a better path. The subsequent community walk-throughs, sporting events, and ongoing Community Link-up series are tangible outcomes of this renewed commitment.

Project STAR has amplified our capacity to serve and protect. It has provided us with additional resources and avenues to support community-led initiatives, making our operational

strategies more robust and impactful. This initiative is a beacon of what can be achieved through determined partnership and shared vision. We call upon other entities, both locally and internationally, to join us in this transformative journey.

The steady progress and positive outcomes we have achieved so far are a clear indication of the potential that lies in collaborative efforts. Together, we can create a safer Jamaica, where crime and violence are no longer the narrative but rather the history we have overcome.

In conclusion, I commend the relentless efforts of everyone involved – the organisers, administrators, donors, supporters, and, most importantly, the community members. Your dedication and hard work are the bedrock of this initiative's success. Let us continue to forge ahead with the same vigour and unity, ensuring that the vision of a safer, more secure Jamaica becomes a reality for all.



OUR TOP SIX

1. Increased access to economic opportunities for 891 residents, with 18% being at-risk youth.

3. 693 residents, 41% of which are parents and children, have benefited from ongoing psycho-social support.

5. 59% increase in stakeholder collaboration and partnership resulting in broader participation.

2. 575 resident entrepreneurs and local businesses benefited from business development support.

4. Led by 1526 community members, 4 Community Transformation Action Plans (CTAPs) have been drafted and are ready for implementation.


6. Learnings have been applied to refine and improve the STAR community entry process and the STAR community transformation planning process.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2023-24



Now delivering all grades of marine fuel offshore and at anchorage in Jamaica.





STAR will continue to collaborate and partner with local and national stakeholders to bring about positive change so that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

The Social Transformation and Renewal Foundation (STAR), established in mid- 2022, continued to deliver the STAR project – a community-based social and economic transformation initiative and movement – in 2023-24, picking up on the gains made in Year 1, advancing programme delivery and activation across five (5) communities. This partnership between the private sector, Government of Jamaica (GOJ) and civil society, aligns with advancing the local and national development agenda for Jamaica utilizing data-driven, evidence-based and results-focused methodology for planning programmes and activities and tracking results and beneficiaries.

In Year 2 of project implementation, significant progress was made towards the targets set for the Project STAR initiative around:

- **Increasing participation and inclusion of residents in community planning.**
- **Using data-driven and evidenced based strategies in planning and targeted action**

- **Strengthening social cohesion and resilience for STAR communities**
- **Catalysing economic sufficiency through local economic pathways for development and,**
- **Improving strategies and responses to conflict within communities.**

This was evidenced by our approach to community transformation planning across all communities, while continuing STAR programmes, such as job placement, sports for social cohesion, and support for children, family and school-based activities, and the launch of the entrepreneurial and business development element of community transformation. Throughout the year, STAR emphasised community engagement and empowerment, leveraging partnerships with key stakeholders to address social and economic needs comprehensively.

The year saw significant community engagement which contributed to the formation of new structures, and efforts to address social and economic vulnerabilities, highlighting STAR's commitment to holistic

community development. Overall, the project saw gains in the areas of training, employment, business development, access to social services, formalising and training of CBOs, community transformation efforts and widespread participation of residents. STAR's strategic partnerships and community-focused initiatives yielded positive outcomes, showcasing a commitment to holistic community development. Ongoing capacity-building and collaboration remain essential for sustainable progress in community transformation.

Specifically, in our second year, through collaboration and partnership, the economic pillar saw the launch of the entrepreneurship programme in Parade and Rose Gardens, and at the end of Y2 the programme was being implemented in all four STAR communities. An entrepreneurship component specifically focused on at-risk youth via a nano-grant programme was also rolled out in all STAR communities. During the period, the employment programme

We rise by lifting others.

PROUD SUPPORTER OF PROJECT STAR



underwent an internal assessment and reshaping process towards improved achievement of objectives and scalability.

Significant progress was made with the continued development and implementation of social programmes with a focus on community cohesion; building systems of engagement and support for different groups; community visioning, planning and prioritisation towards mobilising community-led action. Youth engagement was increased via the establishment or revitalisation of football and netball clubs, along with the formation of a Youth Council, and support of various summer programmes, alongside partners such as the JCF and SDC. The senior citizen community was actively engaged and assisted during the period. Special activities were hosted for seniors in December and on Labour Day and a Senior Citizens Club was established in Rose Gardens. The parenting programmes in Parade Gardens and Rose Gardens continued to build momentum and a parenting

club was launched in May Pen while parenting sessions continued in Savanna-la-Mar. Gains were also made in advancing community plans.

The community governance structure (Community Transformation Board, CTB) was established in May Pen along with the Community Intervention Team (CIT). Meanwhile, the existing CTBs and CITs within the other three STAR communities were strengthened through continued capacity-building in areas such as data analysis and evidence-based strategies.

The development of the Community Transformation Plans (CTPs) and Community Transformation Action Plans (CTAPs) was advanced in all four STAR communities, with two plans completed at the end of year two, and the remaining due for completion at the start of year three (Y3).

Some of the most noteworthy events which contributed significantly to community cohesion included an Ash Wednesday Street Football tournament in East Downtown Kingston (EDTK), Labour Day

activities, and events hosted and supported across all STAR communities during December (Unity Fest). Parade Gardens has also seen the establishment of a cross-cutting, non-traditional Round Robin, which has contributed to the local economy via income generation and peace-building activities, while providing an entertainment and recreational initiative.

STAR continued its engagement with the political directorate using a bipartisan approach. Additionally, existing partnerships with the government, private sector and civil society were strengthened, while new strategic and technical partnerships were forged or formalised. Collaboration continued with various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These partnerships focused on specific aspects of STAR programming as well as technical collaboration regarding methodology and information-sharing towards advocacy and improved community transformation with the technical stakeholder working group (TSWG). Facilitated by



the Community Renewal Programme (CRP) team of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, the TSWG comprises representatives from the Ministry of National Security (MNS), Citizens Security and Safety Branch (CSSB) of the JCF, the Citizen Security Secretariat (CSS), Social Development Commission (SDC), Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) and HEART/ NSTA TRUST. Notably, Y2 also led to the development of customised arrangements with key private sector entities to advance work in specific areas.

The National Campaign which was launched in May 2023, at the end of Year 1(Y1), concluded in November 2023 with Project STAR being listed on the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange (JSSE) on February 6, 2024. While the campaign did not achieve the fundraising target, it led to a tremendous increase in awareness of Project STAR and enhanced the Project's visibility. Fundraising efforts continued towards a blended financing approach with the majority of funding in Y2 secured via donations from the private sector. Support

was also received via in kind donations and contributions from a number of partners, and a successful grant application to the American Friends of Jamaica (AFJ) which will see shipping containers retrofitted in New Market Oval, Savanna-la-mar, to host meetings and a homework centre, as well as the creation of a multipurpose sport court and refurbishment the playing field.

The 5th Project STAR community of Salt Spring, St. James was selected and steps 1 and 2 (mapping and community research, and early engagements and activation planning, respectively) of the community entry strategy were undertaken late in Y2. The local team has begun planning and execution of community open days and programming.

STAR's project execution continues to utilise monitoring, learning and accountability as mechanisms for delivery and transparency, rather than solely as an end of programme assessment tool. The year provided many opportunities for ongoing



learning, analysis and assessment. Several reviews commenced during Y2 and the recommendations for improvements and adjustments are being implemented, such as with the employment programme and community transformation planning approach. Internally, the STAR governance structures, namely the Oversight Board, and the Management, Monitoring and Reporting Committee, MMR continued to provide oversight and management of the Project.

Two sub-committees of the MMR – legal and contracts, and finance – were established during Y2. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) continued to guide implementation including the community selection process and programme implementation and design.

The results for Year 2 have been positive, but are not without challenges and learning. STAR will continue to collaborate and partner with local and national stakeholders to bring about positive change so that everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Empowered People Develop Communities

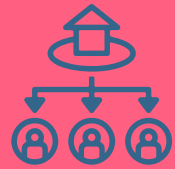
An empowered population will lead the development of their communities. That is why the Sandals Foundation and Sandals Resorts International stand committed to supporting the structures, strengthening the framework, and providing the training and certifications needed for our young people, artisans, creatives, and small business operators to build their respective capacities.

Together we can help each other fulfill our potential and transform.



Sandals
FOUNDATION

SNAPSHOT OF OUR WORK SINCE JULY 2022



5973
direct
beneficiaries



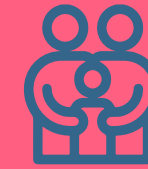
2554
residents consulted in
community planning
activities



258
activities and
meetings executed



127
beneficiaries of the
School Feeding
Programme



3
parenting groups
formed benefiting
82 families



42
local community groups
created/strengthened
or reactivated



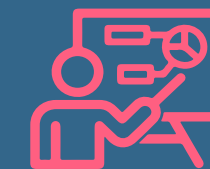
4
Community
Transformation
Boards operating



8
Community
Transformation Action
Plan prioritisation
sessions held



220
persons trained
in job readiness



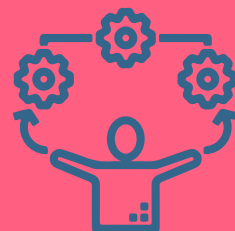
314
trained under the
local economic
development initiative



232
parents benefited
from STAR activities



61%
job placement rate



575
individuals impacted
by entrepreneurial
based support



COMMUNITIES ARE SHIFTING THEIR OWN NARRATIVES

Sharise Staines-Appleby, community services lead

If there was ever a time in our country when we need a mind-set change from negative to positive, the promotion of strong family values, and effective community-based governance, it's now! We at Project STAR are thrilled to be part of a process that has led to increased hope and enthusiasm being displayed by citizens; we have also been witness to improved, organised and representative local structures which have led to increased community-driven action, and social cohesion in STAR communities. There is also much evidence of improved access to opportunities for local economic development.

There is still much to be done. And so as we enter the Project's third year and our fifth community (Salt Spring), we commit to continue - through collaboration and partnerships - to build and strengthen community-based groups and institutions, in order for them to effectively prioritise and respond to their developmental needs, through the implementation of their transformation plans. This is critical for sustainable improvements at the community level. We know it will require improved skills, attitudes, problem-solving and management capabilities, and increased levels of advocacy and confidence to influence developmental decisions which may affect them. These vulnerable yet resilient communities are at the start of a journey to shift previous narratives and realities towards a thriving space where positive, sustained development can become their reality. We are happy to be on this journey with them.



SAVANNA-LA-MAR COMMUNITIES DRAFT TRANSFORMATION PLAN WITH PROJECT STAR

Residents and stakeholders from Savanna-la-Mar communities are hands-on as they take significant steps towards community improvement. They are in the final stages of drafting a comprehensive community transformation plan that will guide the efforts of Project STAR in their area.

Following a process of community wide consultation through open days, one-on-one discussions and focus group meetings, a group of around 30 individuals, including educators, entrepreneurs, parents, youth, and members of the Savanna-la-Mar Community Transformation Board (CTB), came together to formulate the Community Transformation Action Plan (CTAP) plan in April. These dedicated community members

participated in the final of a series of working sessions facilitated by Project STAR.

Project STAR is also actively working with the community in the restoration of the St Mary's Fishing Village. Four new clubs have been established across three of Project STAR's targeted communities: the Cooke Street Benevolence Society and the St. Mary's Fisher-folks group, both located in Cooke Street; the Seaton Crescent Community Club in Seaton Crescent; and the Dester United Community Club in New Market Oval. A parent club was also established. The formation of these community clubs aims to construct a robust foundation for sustainable local development, benefiting both current and future generations by fostering ownership and self-reliance post-STAR involvement.

“One of the most fulfilling aspects of my work is addressing the previous governance structures that existed across STAR’S targeted communities. I am proud that the corner reasoning sessions and consultations with residents have empowered them to form various groups to drive their own initiatives within their communities.” - Semone Griffiths

**Semone Griffiths,
community project officer,
Savanna-la-Mar**

“As a Community Project Officer, I find immense satisfaction in being a catalyst for positive transformation within our community. The opportunity to work closely with diverse groups, understand their unique needs, and collaboratively develop sustainable solutions is truly fulfilling. The sense of accomplishment that comes from witnessing empowered community members, optimised resources, and successfully implemented projects is unmatched. Whether it’s organising clean-up campaigns, facilitating educational workshops, motivating youths to get involved in our job readiness training programme, seizing entrepreneurial opportunities or spearheading infrastructure improvements, every effort contributes to building stronger, more resilient communities. Each day presents new challenges and opportunities to engage with diverse groups, collaborate with passionate volunteers, and forge meaningful partnerships with local stakeholders. This dynamic environment constantly inspires creativity and innovation in problem-solving, ensuring that our projects are not only effective but also sustainable in the long term.

**Santane Little Foster, a
teacher and entrepreneur
in New Market,
Savanna-la-Mar**

“What I am hoping for is better communities where the crime rate will go down and where the children will be stress-free, trauma-free and comfortable going outside and playing and going to school.”

PROJECT STAR IS POSITIVELY IMPACTING COMMUNITIES IN EAST DOWNTOWN KINGSTON

Project STAR is making significant strides in communities across Jamaica, fostering sustainable change and uplifting lives through a series of impactful initiatives.

One of our recent achievements includes a partnership with the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), through a series of round robin events designed to encourage community members to socialise, cross borders, and reignite the nightlife. For a community under the Zone of Special Operations (ZOSO), this is particularly significant.

These initiatives have not only provided a safe space for social interaction but have also helped to rebuild trust and foster unity among residents.

In the area of education, the Homework Programme in Parade Gardens has made a substantial difference for children in the community. Through targeted learning support and enrichment activities, these children have shown remarkable improvements in their literacy rates and overall development.

Senior Citizens Clubs have also been established, a group often overlooked in development efforts. Beyond assisting them in obtaining vital documents, Project STAR has created a space where they can enjoy life, share experiences, and feel valued. This aspect of the work underscores commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that all members of the community benefit from our initiatives.

“The round robin has opened the eyes of a lot of the young people within the community to the fact that violence is not really the answer.” - Andre Barnaby



Myshka Allen, community project officer, EDTK

“As a project officer at Project STAR I have witnessed profound impacts within the communities we serve, and it fills me with pride to be part of this transformative journey in Jamaica. Our approach is not just about implementing projects but also about fostering sustainable change that positively impacts people’s lives.

“The work is demanding, requiring dedication and resilience. Yet, the impact we create fuels our passion and motivates us to strive for even greater outcomes. Together with our partners and volunteers, we are building stronger, more resilient communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.”

Andre Barnaby, a resident of a nearby community

“The round robin has opened the eyes of a lot of the young people within the community to the fact that violence is not really the answer. So, they have realised that resolution and dialogue to resolve conflicts should be the approach.”



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS YIELD POSITIVE RESULTS IN TREADLIGHT, RACETRACK AND HAVANA HEIGHTS IN CLARENDON

Community development initiatives have garnered a receptive response from the residents of Treadlight, Racetrack and Havana Heights, communities within May Pen, Clarendon. Despite their cultural differences, the communities have shown significant progress in their development efforts, thanks to targeted programmes facilitated by Project STAR.

Treadlight has experienced a surge in activities coordinated by the Community Development Committee (CDC) and Project STAR. Since the implementation of development programmes, Treadlight has benefited from both technical expertise and financial support. This assistance has bolstered their local programmes, facilitating enhanced community support and engagement. Technical training and financial aid

have been crucial in elevating the community's development activities, leading to a marked improvement in their organisational capabilities.

Meanwhile, Havana Heights has made strides with the launch of an active parenting club. The training sessions provided to parents have significantly improved family dynamics, particularly the relationships between parents and their children. The parenting club has become a cornerstone of the community, fostering better communication and understanding within families.

For Racetrack, with the support of the CDC their activities have heightened, meaning they have benefited from technical experience and some financial support for both of their programmes.



Romel Gordon, community project officer, May Pen West

"I was born in Clarendon, and I have known these communities for many years. For me personally, major reductions in crime and violence are the major successes. Crime and violence have been the major issues in these communities, but since Project STAR and other organisations entered these communities, it has significantly improved."

Sheroni Lewin-Lawrence, community member from Treadlight

"I think Project STAR is a good initiative. It includes everyone. It has programmes for everybody, it incorporates the whole family. I love the process that is put in place from the planning to the execution of the initiatives that they implement, such as the job readiness and parenting programmes."



COMMUNITIES LAUNCH PARENTING CLUBS TO STRENGTHEN FAMILY STRUCTURES IN KINGSTON AND CLARENDON

Poor parenting methods has repeatedly been cited as a priority area for our target communities. Recognising the vital role of strong family foundations in fostering community well-being, Project STAR has been working with communities to build sustainable and workable solutions. In Rose Garden and Parade Gardens in East Downtown Kingston, as well as in May Pen, Clarendon, parenting clubs have been

established to empower families with the skills and knowledge needed to create nurturing and stable home environments.

The parenting clubs offer a variety of programmes, including workshops on effective parenting techniques, conflict resolution, and child development. Additionally, they provide a platform for parents to share their experiences and learn from each other, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.



Tanecia Cole, president of the Rose Garden Parenting Club

“The parenting club is important to us as it facilitates parents coming together as a group. We are able to sit and relate the types of problems we are experiencing and seek guidance and assistance from outside resources. Even having a social worker to assist parents in better guiding their kids is invaluable.”

OUR MENU OF INTERVENTIONS IN PRACTICE

Project STAR's work in communities is partly informed by, what we call, our menu of interventions. This is a series of tried and tested programmes that have been shown to positively impact different kinds of groups such as the elderly, youth, parents and families, children etc.

One such intervention is our Reasoning Sessions, informal yet structured sessions in which the STAR team meets residents where they're at and learn about the issues that concern them.

May Pen community project officer, Romel Gordon, encapsulates the purpose of the reasonings, **"Whenever you see a Project STAR team come through the space, whatever the problem that you are facing, we hope for you to tell us."**



Carreras Limited: A commitment to transformation through Project STAR

As Carreras Limited proudly celebrates its partnership with Project STAR, we reflect on two transformative years filled with hope, growth, and community empowerment. Project STAR stands as a beacon of change and progress in our beloved Jamaica, and Carreras is pleased to support this initiative to foster positive change in communities across the island.

Our partnership with Project STAR has not only underscored Carreras' commitment to social responsibility and sustainable growth, but also deepened our belief in the power of collective action. One of the most heartening aspects of Project STAR has been witnessing the tangible impacts on individual lives. In partnership with Project STAR, we help to provide tools,

opportunities, and hope for a brighter future.

Economic transformation has been a cornerstone of Project STAR's efforts. Through partnerships with training institutions and the private sector, opportunities are being provided for individuals to realise their potential and provide for their families. Community development projects have also seen remarkable success and Carreras is proud to be a part of this journey as a catalyst for lasting change.

As we mark the end of the second year of Project STAR, Carreras Limited reaffirms its dedication. We believe that true transformation is a journey, not a destination. The progress we have witnessed thus far is merely the beginning.

Our continued support for Project STAR is driven by the belief that every individual deserves the opportunity to thrive, and every community has the potential to renew itself.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who have been part of this journey - the volunteers, the community leaders, and every individual who has embraced the spirit of transformation. Together, we are not just changing lives, we are building a legacy of hope, resilience, and renewal for Jamaica.



Carreras' Imega Breese McNab with members of the STAR team on Labour Day 2024

Social interventions reduce violence: the evidence

When the World Health Organization declared violence preventable in 2002, it marked a significant shift in the global understanding of violence. With the advancement of research on violence, studies began to reveal that addressing the root causes of violence could significantly reduce violent incidents. The Social-Ecological model summarises these root causes beyond individual traits associated with violence (e.g. exposure to violent discipline as a child), to relationships (e.g. exposure to parental conflict in the home), community characteristics (e.g. lower social cohesion) and societal factors (e.g. income inequality). The model illustrated that the majority of violent behaviour was not random or inevitable; it was learned behaviour and a symptom of failing social structures. In response, social interventions aim to develop human capital through reducing the risk factors of violence and mobilising protective factors through job training and creation, life skills development, parenting initiatives, access to therapy and conflict resolution initiatives among other interventions.

Evidence around the world has shown both effective and promising results of the impact of social interventions on violence reduction. As summarised in a 2017 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) study, several social interventions have been backed by meta-evaluations – the highest level of evidence there

is – as being effective in reducing violence: life skills programmes, parenting initiatives, cognitive behavioural therapy, restorative justice programmes, and social norms programmes among other promising interventions. Early childhood social interventions aim to modify children’s social skills, emotional regulation, and exposure to violence in order to impact future violent behaviour. A 2023 meta-analysis of 346 Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) across 22 countries showed that behavioural interventions directed at parents successfully reduced violent parenting behaviours towards children with benefits lasting up to two years. Locally, the Jamaica Home Visit Programme, which was delivered to parents by community health workers, demonstrated dramatic benefits in the children of the intervention group: adults 22 years after intervention had 67% lower odds of serious violent behaviour compared to the control group. Even teachers were found to modify violent behaviour towards children when trained using the Irie Classroom Toolbox, a Jamaican violence-prevention teacher-training programme. In a single, blind cluster RCT, incidents of violence against children by teachers were significantly reduced both immediately post-intervention and at 1-year follow-up.

Life skills development is another key social intervention in early childhood. Wilson and Lipsey pooled the results of 249 studies

investigating the impact of social, emotional and life skills and found that these programmes reduced violence-related outcomes on average by 25%-33%. Jamaica’s very own Child Resiliency Programme (CRP), an after-school programme for high-risk children in primary school with severe behavioural problems prioritises the use of life skills training and other mechanisms. Evaluation of the CRP showed reduced aggression and fighting, improved literacy and even increased resilient attitudes in the children. Social interventions not only benefit individual violent behaviour, but also interrupt serious community violence. In Trinidad & Tobago, the IDB and Arizona State University evaluated a local violence prevention programme designed to address homicides, shootings and assaults in 16 communities in Eastern Port of Spain. Project REASON involved detecting and interrupting potentially violent conflicts through mediation, treating those at highest risk for involvement in violence with wraparound support such as job training or referrals or mental health treatment and public education events to promote group/community norm changes. Extensive quasi-experimental evaluation showed a 45% reduction in violent crime rate and a 39% reduction in gunshot wound admissions to the nearest hospital.

What Jamaican communities need now is coordinated, multi-level and evidence-based social investment

for sustained violence reduction. It is in this context that Project STAR (Social Transformation and Renewal) started working in communities in 2022. Importantly, Project STAR seeks to address the root causes of crime and violence at multiple levels in a whole of society approach by focusing on the improvement of key social indicators and the overall improvement of social outcomes for communities. Recognising that each community is different, STAR’s model involves in-depth consultation with the communities themselves to identify, agree and coordinate the action and strategies. STAR uses data and evidence-based solutions to drive change at the community level.

In summary, both local and international studies support the effectiveness of social interventions in reducing violence. In Jamaica, while there are several ongoing promising social interventions, many have yet to undergo rigorous evaluation to communicate their impact. What communities need now is long-term, sustained and evidence-based social investment. These social interventions must also be complemented by strengthened laws, effective law enforcement, economic growth and policy reforms. Solutions solely targeting violence producers and not the contributory socio-economic conditions will do little to stem the ongoing cycle of violence in Jamaica.





COMMUNITY-LED
ACTION/ PARTNERSHIP
FOR DEVELOPMENT



SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE



LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (LED)

THEMATIC AREA 1: COMMUNITY-LED ACTION/ PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

Key Results



1526 residents involved in community planning



59 organisational stakeholders involved in project delivery activities



5 communities entered



42 local community groups created/ strengthened or reactivated



93 community-led initiatives

COMMUNITY LED + COMMUNITY DRIVEN ACTION TO ADVANCE TRANSFORMATION

As a foundational aspect of Project STAR, finding ways to nurture and support community ownership of their own transformation is the engine that pushes the visioning, planning, implementing, actualising and sustainability of the STAR model. As such, the Project STAR team magnified and deepened this work in 2023-24, with important strides being made in key areas of our community entry process, specifically steps 6-8, which speak to the formation of community leadership structures through the Community Transformation Boards (CTBs), community visioning and planning, gaining community consensus on transformation plans and beginning to implement them.

Ultimately, well-defined and accountable community leadership structures are essential for the positive functioning of the community as a whole. They can lead the way in creating their community's own frameworks for development, accountability, ownership and the achievement of their goals; they know how to access and advocate for what their community needs. In time, they will gain credibility and the trust of the community, which ensures sustainability and builds community cohesion.

Project STAR activated its community entry process to set in motion community-led action. This included strengthening and getting buy-in from existing community groups, the formation and strengthening of CTBs to drive transformation and regularising activities between STAR, the Community police teams and the Social Development Commission (SDC).

Indeed, the number of community-led activities increased during the year, which indicates a growing interest and willingness among residents to participate. Additionally, CTB meetings were held to plan community activities and strengthen governance frameworks. The establishment of a CTB in Savanna-la-Mar and engagements in May Pen signify progress in community organisation. The Community Intervention Teams (CITs) were active, collaborating with stakeholders to support initiatives and peace-building efforts.



KEY PROGRAMMES + ACTIONS

The STAR team worked to trigger community led action by empowering residents and local community groups, as well as fostering partnerships for development. Despite being at different stages of transformation readiness, each target community has shown significant improvement and growth in the number of sustainable community structures. Rose Gardens, Parade Gardens, May Pen West and Savanna-la-Mar have all drafted their Community Transformation Action Plans (CTAPs) and will be implementing their plans starting in June.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS



Completion or near completion of Rose Gardens, Parade Gardens, May Pen West and Savanna-la-Mar CTAPs



42 local community groups created/strengthened or reactivated

- 21 in EDTK
- 13 in SAV
- 8 in MPW



Active involvement of CTBs and CITs in advancing transformation efforts has led to:



93 community-led activities driven by the CTBs and other local groups

- 50 in EDTK
- 29 in SAV and
- 14 in May Pen West



44 CTB meetings held planning community activities, community planning prioritisation process, strengthening the governance framework for the CTBs and discussing strategies for cohesion and community transformation



8 community prioritisation sessions in EDTK, SAV + MPW towards the Creation of draft CTAPs



THEMATIC SNAPSHOT: COMMUNITY-LED ACTION/ PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

YEAR TWO

STAR was able to make substantial gains from Year One, both in terms of the number of target communities entered, and in regards to the number of residents engaged for activities associated with community planning.



- 1526 residents involved in community planning
- 427 residents in EDTK (Parade and Rose Gardens)
 - 345 residents in SAV
 - 754 residents in May Pen West



- 16 activities and sessions towards community transformation planning:
- 8 prioritisation sessions, 2 per community
 - 4 planning sessions with CITs
 - 4 validation sessions - two in Rose Gardens and two in Savanna-la-Mar

Focus was given to mobilising residents for participation in community planning sessions. We worked to activate community-led action by empowering residents and local community groups with the skills to identify development challenges using data; we engaged with Community Transformation Boards (CTBs) and other CBOs throughout the process. Through this collaborative, ongoing effort, Community Transformation Action Plans are being created.

Within the life cycle of Project STAR, **finalising and validating Community Transformation Plans is a significant milestone that speaks to communities being fully engaged in the process of designing their own transformation strategies**, and on the cusp of starting to implement them. Through months of discussion and strategic planning sessions, facilitated by Project STAR and guided by each Community Transformation Board (CTB) as well as committed, passionate residents, by the end of the reporting year, all four communities are well on their way towards the validation phase of the STAR Community Planning Process Workflow (see pg 46).



SNAPSHOTS OF LABOUR DAY 2024



Rose Gardens
It was all hands on deck to bring life back to the Rose Gardens Community Centre in East Downtown Kingston. On Labour Day, members of the community came out to clean the street, paint, clear away rubble and refurbish the once popular centre. The hope is that, over time, it will become the central hub of the community once again.

200+ residents participated



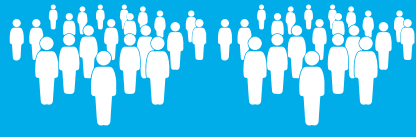
Parade Gardens
At the LIFEYARD mural project on Fleet Street in East Downtown Kingston, young people came out to contribute to the larger refurbishment project that is just getting underway. They worked to clear rubble away from the space and started repainting some of the murals.

40+ residents participated



MAY PEN
May Pen residents took up the gauntlet of making a difference by contributing their time and effort to upgrading sites within their community. Residents of Treadlight, Havana Heights and Racetrack got involved with building a community kitchen, putting in a perimeter fence at the Angle of Fame Early Childhood Institution, and painting the Havana Heights Community Centre.

65+ residents participated



SAVANNA-LA-MAR
In Savanna-la-Mar, community members joined forces to do improvement works on Lyttle's Star Achievers, and on the Seaton Crescent Playing Field.



As the first communities entered at the beginning of Project STAR, the two communities of East Downtown Kingston (Parade Gardens and Rose Gardens) are the most advanced in regards to our community entry process – they were at stage 6 at the end of Year 1, and are now at stage 8, as their Community Transformation Action Plans (CTAPs) are close to completion. Both CTBs facilitated the planning sessions, with 71 residents participating in the Rose Gardens sessions and 82 residents being active in the Parade Gardens sessions.

Rose Gardens residents participate in a validation session for their Community Transformation Plan

THEMATIC AREA 2: SOCIAL COHESION AND RESILIENCE

KEY RESULTS



4828 residents accessed STAR-led and -supported programmes



232 residents supported through STAR family and children programmes



350 residents participated in sporting activities



25 parenting sessions held



3 parenting groups created in 3 communities with 82 families benefiting

Social protection and inclusion

Prioritising the wellbeing of all citizens is a hallmark of a caring society, one which recognises and acts on its duty of care. However, one of the big issues that people in vulnerable and volatile communities face is that they are, to some extent, excluded from enjoying the benefits of the society as a result of socio-economic barriers. Under the Project STAR model, Social Protection and Inclusion speaks to activating initiatives and programmes that reduce vulnerabilities in our target communities, paving the way for the kind of inclusion that all Jamaicans should expect. We work to reduce barriers by improving access to vital services, psychosocial support through counselling, sports, youth development, educational and school-based support, family-based and parenting support, and supporting community-based organisations – through capacity-building efforts – in achieving sustainability. We also focus on the extent to which the vulnerable become more socially included as well as engaging in other actions to build social cohesion and inclusion, strengthen social protection and ensure access to services for all, and school-based support for children, youth and families.

Over the period June 2023 – May 2024 we sought to address vulnerabilities among different demographic groups by implementing programming in social protection across all four STAR communities. This included the roll out of the homework programme, the school feeding programme and the senior citizens support initiative. We also focused on increasing linkages to critical support services and access to social protection, including psychosocial support and parenting support. Additionally, we worked to facilitate sports and community activities to foster cohesion, build trust between residents and authorities, provide psychosocial support and generate pathways for youth inclusion.

Through creating activities such as health, job and social fairs, we were able to build on the partnerships created in our first year with government agencies and ministries – including HEART/ NSTA TRUST, Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS), PATH, Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA), National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSC) – which allowed for greater community access to vital social and health services and programmes. Partnerships were established with relevant government offices to enhance access to social programmes and health services.

The sports programme played a crucial role in fostering community engagement and cohesion; there were efforts to improve participation through youth engagement, needs assessments, and the provision of equipment to facilitate sporting activities and games. Despite challenges such as ongoing violence in some areas, the sports initiatives contributed to the sustainability of community revitalisation efforts.



**SOCIAL PROTECTION + ACCESS TO SERVICES
(SOCIAL + ENVIRONMENT + INFRASTRUCTURE)**

Social protection and access to services under STAR has been strategically designed to address issues around vulnerabilities among the poor, elderly, children and at-risk youth, through increasing access to critical social and health initiatives and support based on poor socioeconomic indicators in the communities. Over the period, STAR supported and coordinated five health and social fairs across the four communities. This resulted in 373 residents accessing health and social support services and vital documentation. Similarly, several targeted groups have been created to help improve access to critical services whilst providing support systems and safe spaces for the vulnerable.

HIGHLIGHTS



Support in accessing vital documentation and programming in Parade Gardens and Rose Gardens

- 242 residents gained access to social protection services
- 146 residents accessed services such as receiving birth certificates + signing up for training programmes
- 38 new applicants accessed the PATH programme, of which 26 have matriculated and are in receipt of benefits
- 23 birth certificates were distributed to fire-bombing victims through the Registrar General's Department (RGD).



Establishment of Senior Citizens Club in Rose Gardens

- 1 senior citizens club established
- 26 members
- 9 meetings have been held
- Ongoing support received from churches, parenting organisations, the NCSC, and the MLSS's PATH Office
- 31 people have registered for National Senior Citizens ID

Sessions with stakeholders have resulted in increased knowledge of benefits and social assistance available to seniors allowing them to become members of the NCSC and sign up for the Social Pension Programme.



Providing access to social and health support through fairs and stakeholder engagement in Savanna-la-Mar

- 120 residents gained access to Social protection services such as medical and health services



Social protection and an increase in access to services in May Pen (W)

- Engaging local stakeholders in forming partnerships for the delivery of services
- Key partnership established with Child Protection and Family Services Agency to help with children and family support with a focus on protecting the vulnerable - children
- Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) hosted a Food Handlers Permit workshop which resulted in 44 persons receiving permits

Actions for social cohesion + inclusion

Through the sports programme, we aimed to bring youth together and re-engage residents – particularly youth groups, police youth clubs (PYCs), and sports clubs – in community activities. Additionally, sport continues to provide a valuable pathway for streaming residents into STAR programming such as our Job Readiness or Entrepreneurship Programmes.

Needs assessments were conducted for various sporting groups to determine strategies for increasing participation. Increased participation in activities such as street football, dominoes and netball tournaments was supported and sustained with the provision of equipment and supplies alongside capacity-building for local sporting groups.

Weekly sporting activities in Parade Gardens and Rose Gardens have continued to be popular among participants. Although violence in July and August 2023 prevented some games from going ahead, participants have since relocated their weekly games to more central locations, such as schools, to ensure their continuation. Two new sports clubs – one football club in **Parade Gardens** and the **Rose Gardens** Netball Strikers have been playing weekly and have developed mission statements which prove their commitment to improve the cohesion of the community.



EDTK sports average weekly participation of 45 young men and 15 young women



In **Savanna-la-Mar** and **May Pen (W)** where the programme was relatively new, sports was utilised to build trust and foster community cohesion, with a focus on strengthening existing sports groups and providing access to social and health support services. Good sporting infrastructure in May Pen facilitated the activation of sporting initiatives to promote social cohesion in the community.

In Savanna-la-Mar we worked to strengthen existing sports groups, organise weekly community sporting events, and enhance access to social and health support. Once again, STAR provided sporting gear and refreshments to encourage participation.



- Savanna-la-Mar residents hosted an inaugural community sports day competition, supported by the STAR team. The SDC and JCF also collaborated
 - 4 local communities participated
 - 40 young males were engaged

- Two new sports clubs were established
 - 33 members

- 95 individuals participate in weekly sporting activities (on average)
 - Savanna-la-Mar Netball Team meets every Sunday
 - 15 + females aged 12 to 35 participate
 - Football activities occur at least four days a week on Seaton Crescent and Cooke Street
 - 80 males aged 12 to 40 participate

- STAR organised a Peace Day community social event in Harmony Town
 - Approximately 100 residents across different age groups participated

- With the support of experts from the Domestic Violence Intervention Centre, STAR facilitated a domestic violence intervention capacity-building session, jointly organised by the JCF and the Cooke Street Benevolence Society (CBO). The session emphasised the significance of women's proactive involvement in combating domestic violence within their community.
 - 30 residents benefited

In **May Pen West**, STAR leveraged existing sporting infrastructure to facilitate community cohesion initiatives. We hosted reasoning sessions and social service events to engage residents and foster a sense of unity.



- 25 young men aged 13-29 participated in a reasoning session



- The Treadlight community organised a domino tournament, supported by Project STAR, to address priority community issues and enhance community spirit.
- Two teams of eight players each participated
- 40 residents attended to support the teams



- A weekly football night league continues to attract 120-180 community members of all ages



- A women's empowerment capacity development workshop was conducted, with 33 women participating. The workshop provided motivational messages, business development tips, and life skill techniques, catering to women in various roles, including business owners, mothers, heads of households, and the elderly.

Involvement in sports

Sporting activities have helped to increase community cohesion; each event offering residents a chance to come together to cheer on their favourite players, and enjoy time together. The STAR team, aiming to foster sustainable transformation, has collaborated with existing football clubs in STAR communities to enhance their development by bolstering club status, improving management teams, facilitating coaches' certification, and providing financial support.



- 100 sporting activities and sessions across the 4 STAR communities
 - 48 in EDTK
 - 33 in SAV
 - 19 in May Pen



- On Peace Day, 33 youths from various PYCs supported Project STAR and the Violence Prevention Alliance (VPA) in organising a social service fair and football competition



SNAPSHOTS: SPORTS IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strengthening youth groups through youth engagement

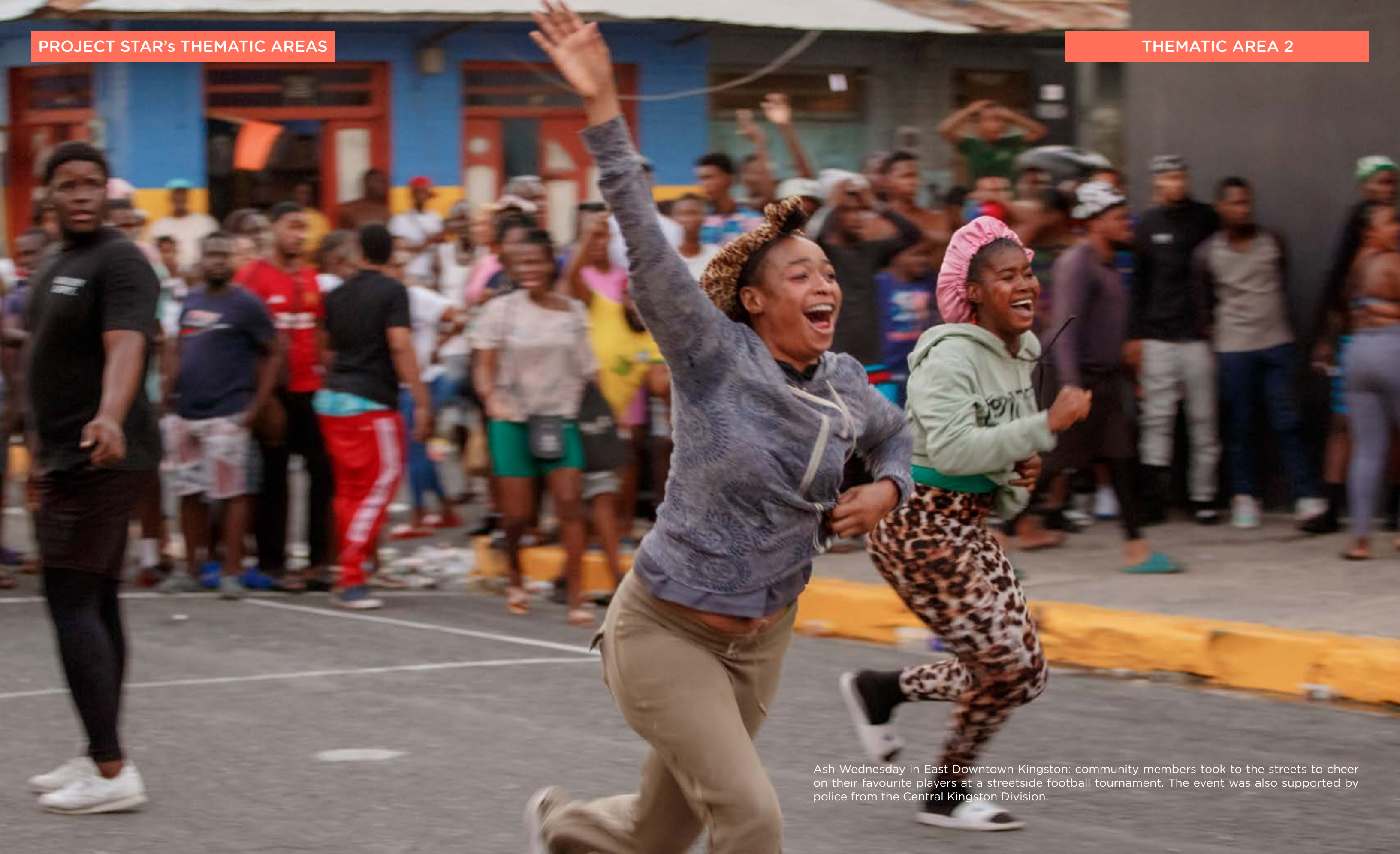
In March and early April 2024, Project STAR collaborated with Emprezz Golding's organisation, Talk Up Yout, to facilitate a three-week youth capacity-building programme. With eight youth participants (aged 14-19) - four each from East Downtown Kingston and May Pen - the weekly sessions covered four main topics: understanding self-worth and positive self-talk, effective communication and social skills, resilience and coping strategies, stress management and empowerment, and planning for the future. This training was targeted at youth leaders and youth group leadership who would utilise the skills learnt to strengthen their local groups.

JCF + STAR
Along with the social interaction that comes from playing sports together, sports has also become an important relationship-building bridge between community members, Project STAR and the JCF. The team continued to engage youth groups and Police Youth Clubs (PYCs) and worked alongside the police to support and host sporting events in the all STAR communities. There have been seven JCF + STAR collaborative activities over the period with a focus on youth and community engagement.

The PYC situated on Gold Street in Parade Gardens, alongside the May Pen communities (excluding Havana Heights), have had increased levels of activity. In Savanna-la-Mar, the sole PYC caters to all surrounding communities.



Communities came together to celebrate International Peace Day
• 160 males (aged 14-52) participated



Ash Wednesday in East Downtown Kingston: community members took to the streets to cheer on their favourite players at a streetside football tournament. The event was also supported by police from the Central Kingston Division.

Mainstreaming access to therapeutic services + support

Project STAR continued to take a holistic approach to transforming the lives of residents in our target communities. We have strengthened and continued partnerships with the Victims Services Division (VSD) at the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Grace and Staff Foundation, and have engaged services from Victims Service Support and Restorative Justice Centers to increase access to psychosocial care as we maintain overall focus on behaviour change. Our partnerships and commitment are to ensure that residents with challenges are supported in their holistic development.

During our second year, the team referred 14 people for counselling with Grace and Staff and VSD. Mainstreaming access to therapeutic services and support in Savanna-la-Mar and May Pen (W) has not yet been activated. Discussions with the Ministry of Justice are underway to improve access to services provided through the MoJ.



Children + family-based support

In terms of Children and family-based support, we activated a series of initiatives and activities around parenting support including the official launch of the School Feeding Programme and the launch of the summer and after-school care initiatives. Across the STAR communities, we have provided support to 217 residents in programming under the children and family-based support initiatives. STAR has also supported one-off activities such as summer school activities and children's treats.



- 4 schools in Savanna-la-Mar + MPW benefited from children's treats
 - 600+ students and teachers participated
- 6 summer camps were supported by Project STAR
 - 238 children participated

In East Downtown Kingston, the Parenting Programme, School Feeding Programme and summer and after-school educational initiatives were advanced over the period. In Rose Gardens and Parade Gardens, the parenting groups continued to operate, providing support for parents and caregivers in the community. A key collaboration with Joy Town Foundation has emerged, as they worked through the parenting groups to deliver sessions on building and sustaining relationships, coping with stress and co-parenting.



- 22 parenting sessions conducted
 - 45 residents (38 females and 7 males)
 - 238 children participated



The School Feeding Programme

The School Feeding Programme (SFP) progressed to the second phase of implementation in East Downtown Kingston. The programme continues to be supported by Rainforest and Musson Group and has provided lunches at 4 Early Childhood Institutions (ECIs) across Rose Gardens and Parade Gardens.



- 30,800 lunches have been served
- The average rate of school attendance has increased from 68% in September to 88% at the end of April

After school support initiative

The homework programme was launched in Parade Gardens. It forms part of the pilot launch of the programme and benefits 27 students (11 males and 16 females) from grades 1-3 on an ongoing basis. Since its inception, numerous children in the community have participated, which indicates that there is a need for more after school programmes for children. We also attract and accommodate an average of 13 from outside of the target group.



Activating parenting initiatives in Savanna-la-Mar

In Savanna-la-Mar, the STAR team has been working to deliver programmes and initiatives that support parents and children through parenting forums, youth activities and summer programmes. This has contributed to parents from targeted communities learning parenting skills to promote positive outcomes for their children and families.



- 42 children and 37 parents benefitted from partnerships with Lyttle Star Achievers Early Childhood Institution and the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC)

Establishing parenting initiatives and school-based support in May Pen

Providing parents with access to parenting support workshops and training programmes to enhance parenting practices and child resiliency have been the focus of our related efforts in May Pen. The team hosted a **Better Parenting Practices workshop**, attended by 37 parents (7 male and 30 female), to raise awareness regarding proper parenting techniques. Additionally, the attendees expressed their intention to formalise themselves into parenting clubs for ongoing support, resulting in the formation of the **Havana Heights Parenting Club**.

In the **Child Resiliency Programme** training course, which focused on peace-building, resiliency, and wellness, participants came from various Community Development Committees (CDCs) such as Racetrack CDC, Pennant Wood CDC, Treadlight CDC, and Havana Heights CDC. The interactive nature of the presentation captured the participants' attention, fostering engagement and learning.

Four youth from May Pen (W) were actively involved in a personal development workshop. After receiving training in various developmental areas, they are expected to contribute their support and input to initiatives within the community, and become integral contributors to the STAR programme.

THEMATIC AREA 3: LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

KEY RESULTS



313 people trained in Y2



TRAINING NUMBERS

- 7 editions of the Job Readiness Training Programme held
- 122 residents were trained in job readiness



385 trained in total



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT + ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- 97 residents trained in business development



123 people obtained employment



EMPLOYMENT

- 29 STAR Employers
- 64% of those placed have retained jobs for (more than) > 6 months



21 entrepreneurial-based support activities + events



575 individuals impacted by entrepreneurial-based support

- 183 in EDTK
- 152 in SAV
- 240 in MPW

Local economic development under the Project STAR model refers to strategies and initiatives aimed at enhancing economic growth and prosperity at the community level. We employ a multifaceted approach which encompasses several modes, including increasing employability and employment opportunities; fostering entrepreneurship; making strategic investments in the community, and promoting financial inclusion. Similarly, we take a holistic approach to economic development that incorporates job creation, entrepreneurship support, skills development, and financial inclusion, with the goal of enhancing the economic well-being and prosperity of STAR communities.

Access to quality employment + training

This strategic area progressed by **increasing employment** and employability. This was done through the provision of opportunities to enhance the skills and readiness of individuals to participate in the workforce. It included initiatives such as providing access to quality employment opportunities, offering training programmes to improve skills, and addressing both the demand and supply sides of the job market. Working both sides of job demand and supply, included implementing strategies to address both the demand for labour and the supply of workers by focusing on the preparedness of individuals in terms of both hard skills (technical competencies) and soft skills (communication, teamwork, etc.). This involved providing support, orientation, and retention programmes to help individuals secure and retain employment.

The Employment Programme was rolled out across all four STAR communities in Year 2. The strategy of engagement around the Employment Programme consists of screening individuals from communities to determine level of readiness and then matriculating successful candidates into a 2-week job readiness programme in collaboration with the HEART/NSTA TRUST and other partners. The **Job Readiness Training Programme** prepares

individuals for success in the workplace through workshops and activities covering essential skills and aims to enhance participants' employability and confidence, ultimately increasing job opportunities and fostering personal and professional growth within the community.

The pilot phase of the Employment and Training Programme underwent a process review, which resulted in the restructuring of the programme and hiring additional team members to strengthen the operations of the programme.

Training

In Y2, the Project STAR team was able to create and leverage various partnerships to strengthen the training programme, including partnerships and MOUs with the HEART NSTA/ Trust, and the D&G Foundation. In addition, we worked with a variety of private sector companies - including Scotia Bank, JMMB, Sandals Group, ICON, Spanish Jamaica Foundation amongst others - to provide a 'mock-interview' component of the Job Readiness Programme thereby expanding the training to incorporate financial inclusion, development of soft skills, workplace conduct and interview preparation.



Snapshot: Job Readiness Training Programme

- 220 residents trained Y1 + Y2
 - EDTK 133
 - Savanna-la-Mar 57
 - May Pen West 30
- 122 residents trained Y2

We had set ourselves the Y2 target of training 100 residents in each community. However, given the three-month pause we initiated for internal operational restructuring of the pilot programme, we are satisfied that the programme is now scalable and has yielded more efficient and effective implementation since the afore-mentioned improvements.

Forklift training

Our partnership with the D&G Foundation has led to a Forklift Training Programme aimed at capacitating at-risk youth in the skill.



- Two cohorts trained (EDTK + May Pen)
- 15 young men certified

Sex distribution of those trained in job readiness



- Males 38%
- females 62%

EMPLOYMENT: PLACEMENT AND LABOUR PIPELINE

STAR's collaborative approach towards increasing employment of community members progressed by strengthening partnerships with potential and current employers, and developing an employment pipeline for organisations. This approach has allowed for placement of residents based on their interests, skill level and job availability. We have built out an employment pipeline in four communities, which involves residents working across all sectors including the food service industry, tourism, construction, BPOs, manufacturing, banking and finance.

The project has actively engaged and liaised with employers to facilitate access to interview opportunities across the island, employer check-ins (to monitor participants), and overall onboarding, to ensure the STAR approach is followed. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to enhancing the effectiveness of our programme and fostering meaningful connections with employers.



• 59 potential employers engaged



• 29 employers have been onboarded and are STAR employers



• 88 new residents have been placed in employment (Y2)



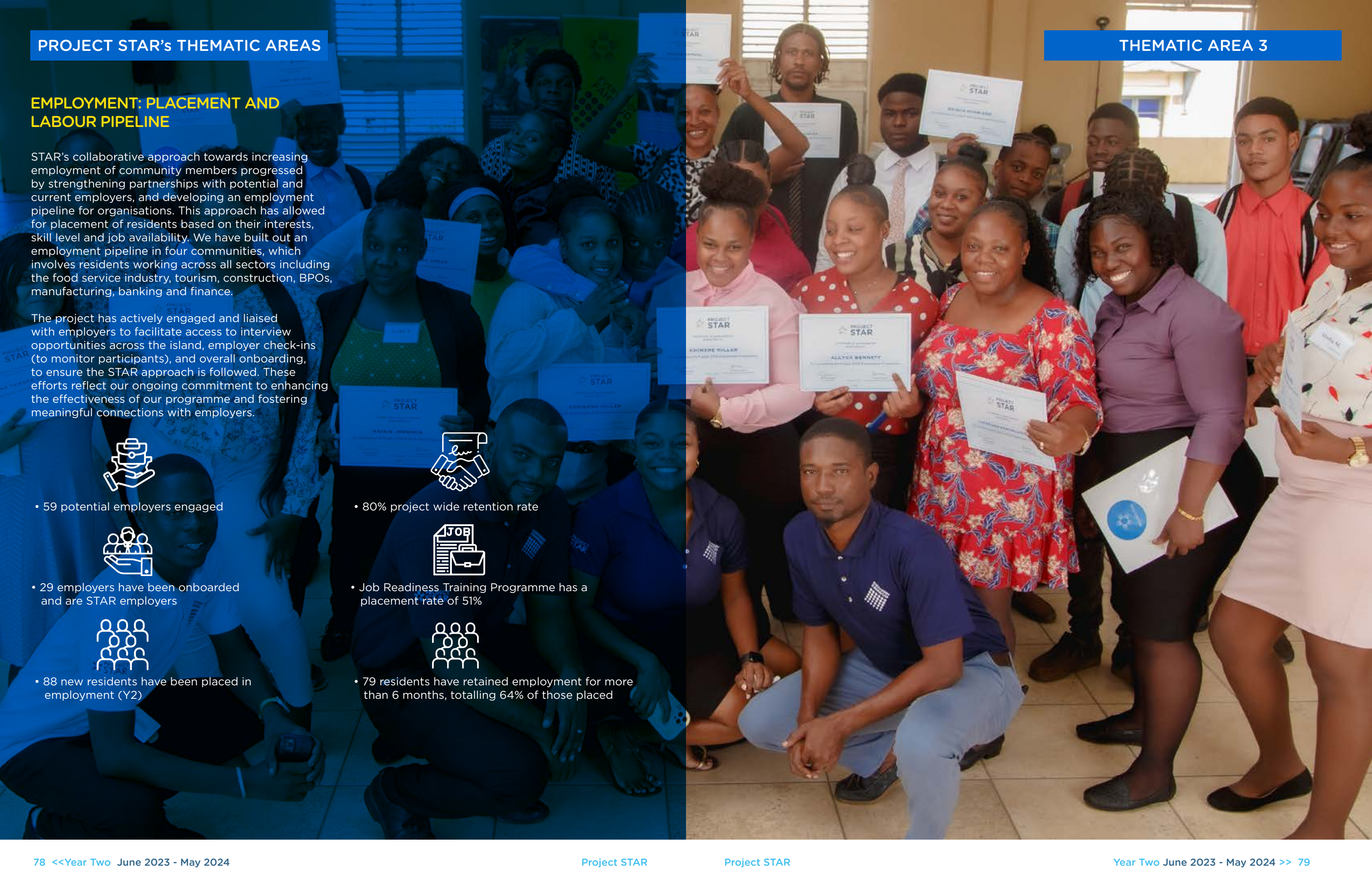
• 80% project wide retention rate



• Job Readiness Training Programme has a placement rate of 51%



• 79 residents have retained employment for more than 6 months, totalling 64% of those placed



Enabling entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship under STAR speaks to providing opportunities through initiatives focused on creating an environment conducive to entrepreneurship and business development. The strategy for Y2 consisted of developing profiles and pipelines for potential entrepreneurs; facilitating access to resources, support services and training; fostering an enabling business environment.

Over the period there has been a full rollout of the entrepreneurship programme across all four STAR communities. The objective for the year was to execute various initiatives to provide services towards sensitising business owners with business development opportunities and various services for formalisation, targeting at-risk youth who are interested in entrepreneurship through the provision of training opportunities and strengthening local business through the HEART /NSTA Trust Business Development Support Programme.

This strategy has led to:



- 575 individuals across the STAR communities impacted by entrepreneurial support.



- 21 entrepreneurial based support initiatives conducted
 - 10 in Parade and Rose Gardens
 - 6 in SAV
 - 5 in May Pen West.



- 97 residents have been trained
 - 63 residents trained in entrepreneurship and business development including 34 at risk youth

Entrepreneurship and business development training

The training element of the Business Development and Entrepreneurship programme commenced in Y2. This initiative has included establishing partnerships with key organisations such as the HEART Trust/NSTA, VPA and other MDAs responsible for business development. This has resulted in the roll out of 2 programmes targeting residents and entrepreneurs in the STAR communities- the HEART Trust/ NSTA Business development training programme and the at-risk youth micro-entrepreneurship programme – targeting at risk youth.

The HEART/NSTA TRUST and STAR business development programme was launched in EDTK. The first group consisted

of 28 business owners. In May Pen, 35 residents are currently enrolled and are completing classes towards sitting exams. This programme has benefitted 63 residents and businesses and will contribute to the growth of these small businesses and local economic development across communities.

At-Risk Nano Enterprise Training Programme

The Project STAR Nano-Enterprise Training Programme for At-Risk Youth seeks to provide an economic pathway for high-risk youth in STAR communities. Participants are, ideally, adaptable, flexible, resilient and have an entrepreneurial mindset, willing to learn and grow in their businesses. 34 at-risk youth have received training in micro-entrepreneurship.

Financial Inclusion

Financial Inclusion under STAR is cross cutting and is featured in much of the STAR programming. This is integrated in Job Readiness and Training sessions, training in business development and entrepreneurship and partnerships with Stocks on the Rocks (SOTR) and JN Fund Managers. Our partnership with SOTR continued over the period with 79 residents benefiting from financial inclusion sessions and access in SAV and May Pen. The sessions were geared towards increasing the participants' knowledge of financial management and the use of financial tools and services to build wealth for personal and business opportunities. 31 participants, including small

and microbusiness operators from Treadlight, Racetrack, and Havana Heights took part in the May Pen session, while 48 participants and business operators took part in SAV.

Next steps

Despite only commencing in quarter 2 of year 2, the entrepreneurship and business development element of Project start has been able to impact approximately 600 residents across four communities. This has been accomplished in the form of sensitisation sessions, training and business formalisation efforts. This aligns significantly to the community needs expressed by residents as a significant number of residents had indicated that they needed support in business development.

The programme has had significant impact on communities like revitalising the entertainment scene in EDTK through facilitating round robins in collaboration with the JCF. By maintaining peace, communities can obtain permits for income-generating social activities previously hindered by violence.

STAR will continue to work with communities to identify community wide economic opportunities, such as the round robins implemented in Parade Gardens. Other key economic initiatives to be activated will be those identified through the Community Transformation Action Plans, and are all community informed, community led, and community owned.



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