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| **ROTARY CLUB OF KINGSTON’S MAJOR PROJECT 2012/13** |
| BACK2LIFE |
| *Breaking the Cycle of Crime in Jamaica by Reducing the Rate of Recidivism in Among Male Juveniles* |
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**PROJECT SUMMARY (EXTRACTS)**

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**BACKGROUND**

In Jamaica, children who have committed criminal offences such as larceny, possession of offensive weapons and possession of drugs or even more minor offences and come before the Children’s Court are likely to be sent to a Juvenile Correctional Centre and incarcerated in a manner similar to adult offenders. Such an environment is a training ground for pursuing a life of crime and the incidence of recidivism from such institutions is unacceptably high. The Rotary Club of Kingston (the Club) has determined to implement a project (**BACK2LIFE)** to try and break the trend and reduce the recidivism rate among male juveniles.

The Club has chosen to base its project at the Rio Cobre Correctional Centre (Centre), located in Tredegar Park, St Catherine where whilst there exist academic, vocational training and behaviour modification programmes, most of these programmes are grossly under-resourced. Also the deficiencies in other aspects of the wards lives such as abandonment and rejection by family and friends are recognized by the Centre but cannot be remedied through the existing system.

**THE PROJECT**

The approach to the **BACK2LIFE** project is based on the generally accepted consensus that the two main factors which increase a young person’s likelihood of engaging in at-risk behaviour is the feeling of a lack of connectedness (to school, parents and society in general) and the fact that Jamaican youth begin to engage in violent behaviour at an early age (10 to 15 years old) and that the lives of many young men in Jamaica who engage in criminal behaviour are shaped, in part, by the absence of active male parenting and positive male role models.

Mentorship and life skills development are recognized as the best methods to positively influence the attitudes and behaviours of at-risk youth and accordingly the **BACK2LIFE** project proposes to focus on mentorship programmes supported by training in life skills and providing life coaching to the wards. The overall goal of the **BACK2LIFE** programme is to equip the wards with the skills, knowledge and support that will help them to manage their lives while at the facility and after they leave to reduce or preferably eliminate the chance of reoffending.

The programme is sectioned into eight elements:

**Public Awareness/Discourse**

It is intended that this element will comprise an ***Introductory film -*** a short documentary expounding on the need for the **BACK2LIFE** project, a ***Public Awareness Forum*** to invoke public discussion on the issues surrounding the project and the ***Project Implementation Film*** which will document the life of the programme.

**Mentorship**

The strengthening of relationships between men and boys is at the core of the **BACK2LIFE** project which will be accomplished through the mentorship system. Male mentors will serve as teachers and coaches for the wards—offering guidance and support in visualizing and achieving their academic, career and personal goals over a period of at least two years.

**Life Skills Development**

The current life skills curriculum, which is in use, will be modified by the Club’s project partner **Children First Agency (CFA), a** non-governmental organization, to ensure relevance to the wards’ needs. The modifications will include life skills such as conflict resolution, anger management and coping.

**Life Coaching-Planning**

The life planning exercise will be facilitated by trained Life Coaches who will guide and support the wards in developing three-year life plans for achieving academic, professional and personal goals. The life plan will be developed and implemented while the wards are at the Centre and serve as a critical road map for them when they leave the Centre.

**Family Relationships**

It is recognized that not all wards will have supportive family structures. Facilitated workshops will be offered to all those who will support the wards including families or “like families” in addition to wards being provided with coping skills.

**Monitoring**

A detailed report entitled “The Success of **BACK2LIFE** and the Way Forward” will be prepared reflecting the results of a tracking and monitoring process implemented from the project’s commencement. **Measures of Success**

The outcome evaluation process will measure achieved outcomes against intake data such as wards’ completed questionnaires, and reports of correctional officers, life skills facilitators, family members and so on, and various indicators will be used to provide measures for the success of the programmes.

**Sustainability**

The BACK2LIFE project is a legacy project of the Rotary Club of Kingston i.e., the Club will stand committed to working with the wards while in the correctional centre; and during the initial twelve months will formalize and document the basis for the programme going forward. As the project evolves, it is anticipated that various agencies both NGO and governmental will become involved and the process developed. The project will be sustained by the support both public and personal, that the project's own success will engender. The club will hand over the project fully only when its members are satisfied as to the competence and commitment of any NGO entity that assumes it in whole or in part.

**PROJECT COST**

**T**he estimated total project cost is **J$27,830,000** of which **J$9,500,000** is the minimum estimated as counterpart funding, leaving some **J$15,330,000** to be raised via donors, corporate sponsors, Rotary Foundation, other Rotary Clubs worldwide and the Club’s fundraising efforts.