



# Cuso Chronicle



September 2013

## Diaspora Day in Mo'bay

In association with the Diaspora Youth Connect project, and as an extension of the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference, I was asked to plan and coordinate a series of events for conference delegates to attend and participate in while in Montego Bay.

Three events spanning Montego Bay were planned; these included a "Business Management 101" session in Flanker with Future Leaders from the UK, Nathaniel Peat and Khori Hyde, a bus tour of Granville lead by the Honourable Minister Sharon Folkes-Abraham and fellow community leaders, and lastly, a Career Mentorship session in Rose Heights facilitated by a future leader from the UK, Katrina Estien.

These events were very successful in engaging community youth and

adults in discussions about personal growth, future planning, and community development. They could not have been possible without the support of the Social Development Commission St. James staff, fellow Cuso volunteers, Doudou Kalala and Rhonda Belous, and sponsoring political representatives and community leaders from the various constituencies.

My experience in planning and coordinating these events was a rewarding one and one from which I grew a lot, professionally.

Coordinating and liaising between politicians, community-based organizations, volunteers, and other stakeholders proved a difficult task but one that was necessary for the overall success of the event.

As always, it can be tough to measure the impact of activities like this that

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## A Word from the Editors

Hello everyone, welcome to the latest edition of the Cuso Chronicle. In this issue, we look at volunteer experiences at recent conferences or events, from the Diaspora Day of Service, to the 5th Biennial Diaspora Conference to the CVSS Summer Games. We also have a story outlining value chains and how this is being incorporated into Cuso's approach in the LAC region. We would also like to say hello to the new volunteers: Sonia Thompson, Victor Lowe, Stephanie Pollard,

Joy-Anne Headley and Adwoa Onuora, and farewell to John Wilson, Erin MacLeod (who is now doing M&E for Cuso in Costa Rica), Nataleah Hunter-Young, Laura Evans, Anna Squire and Doudou Kalala. And welcome to Annabelle Haynes, who will be responsible for incorporating the value chain approach into Cuso's LAC strategy.

*- Kate Chappell and Suzanna Birchwood*

# What is a 'Value Chain?'

**Youth** are disproportionately affected by unemployment in Jamaica. Whereas the unemployment rate in Jamaica is currently 16.3%, the highest it has been in 16 years, the unemployment rate among youth, aged 14- 24, is currently 38.5%.

The Jamaican Government continues to be burdened with the fact that Jamaica's debt has been over 100% GDP for many years and currently stands at 130.4% of GDP (BOJ, 2012). This leaves very little room for social expenditure essential to improve quality of life and alleviate poverty.

Cuso Jamaica recognizes that for a sustained reduction in unemployment and poverty rates, the country requires inclusive, pro- poor growth, characterized by equity in economic participation and resource distribution. This warrants a more holistic approach economic development.

Cuso Jamaica will employ a Value Chains approach to economic development, to meaningfully involve youth, in productive industries. The programme design will account for Cuso's cross cutting themes such as Gender, Sustainability, Diaspora Relations and Persons with Disabilities. The development of the value chains programme will also assist Cuso Jamaica's expansion into rural Jamaica, enabling youth in these areas to benefit from Cuso partnerships and resources.

## What is a value chain?

As used in the private sector, a value chain is the full range of activities which are re-

quired to bring a product or service to market, through all phases of production to delivery to the final consumer. Value is added to the product or service at each step.

**Cuso Jamaica will employ a Value Chains approach to economic development, to meaningfully involve youth, in productive**

## The value chain approach

The value chain approach is a market- based approach, instrumental in linking the macro-economy to poverty reduction.

As a development tool the value chain approach is instrumental in helping explain inequalities in production and earnings by mapping the range of activities within the chain. The approach analyzes the firms in an industry market chain, from the input suppliers to the final buyers, as well as the relationship among all these participants. The methodology also accounts for factors influencing the performance of an industry, including end market requirements, social, regulatory and policy environments, coordination between firms and the effectiveness (and inclusiveness) of support services. As such, the approach not only identifies feasible solutions to technical constraints, but it

also focuses on the relationships and roles of actors in the chain, thereby necessitating an inclusive and participatory approach.

## The value chain approach in Jamaica

Cuso Jamaica is particularly interested in supporting the development of profitable industries through the inclusion and integration of marginalized youth into collaborative systems of production, optimizing the benefits for all actors.

Cuso Jamaica will:

1. Identify appropriate interventions and develop youth led value chains through research and analysis
2. Build the capacity of partners in using the value chains approach through knowledge sharing workshops
3. Support partner organizations in implementing the value chains approach through international volunteering
4. Engage the private sector to support value chains development for the benefit of youth

Through these sets of activities Cuso Jamaica will:

1. Strengthen small youth led enterprises
2. Bring small enterprises/ youth entrepreneurs into competitive industries and possibly the global economy
3. Make business support services work for youth
4. Encourage information sharing among firms
5. Promote the creation of economic opportunities for youth
6. Increase the overall competitiveness of youth led industries

- Annabelle Haynes, Cuso

## Patois for Cuso—The Letter C

**CHO** – very useful interjection to express slight-middling disapproval or disappointment. When someone cuts you off, takes too long in line in front of you or generally gets in your face, *cho* followed by a big *tsk* is the appropriate response.

ETYMOLOGICAL BONUS POINT: *Cho* is also children's slang in Russian for *shto*, which means *what*. When you say *cho* in Russia, and you're over 8 years old it generally means *WTF*.

**COOH' DEH** – Look at that!

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## MO'Bay Diaspora Day

As always, it can be tough to measure the impact of activities like this that engage people from a variety of organizations and communities (in this case, even spanning internationally). However, what stakeholders have remarked is the increased connections and strengthened relationships with diaspora members that have developed as a result of the Diaspora Day of Service.

The potential for what can grow from those strengthened relationships is exponential. Already, for example, we have experienced a diaspora member reconnecting with the community leader she met while participating in the Day of Service and requesting further information on a community project so that she can help engage support from her local group.



### JAMAICA DIASPORA CONFERENCE 2013

The results will be revealed in the months and years to come.

As far as the effect on the community, leaders and political representatives have remarked how pleased they were with the success of the events. Community youth and adults who participated in the sessions

during the Day of Service have mentioned how much they enjoyed the speakers and the sessions provided.

My hopes are that the youth participants were able to take away some concrete strategies about goal setting, leadership, and personal development.

Most of all, I hope that community leaders have expanded their reach through connections to diaspora members so that they may potentially involve the global Jamaican community in the development of their communities.

*- Nataleah Hunter-Young*

## A Night @ The NDTC

Cuso volunteers in Jamaica can attest to Jamaica's rich history of art, culture, music and dance. August is a significant period for Jamaicans as the country celebrates its Emancipation and Independence with its best cultural showcase, one of which is the opening of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica, (NDTC) annual season of dance.

Music and dance are integral parts of Jamaican life. As the saying goes, "a great way to experience Jamaica is to dance with us."

As volunteers discovering Jamaican culture, we spent the part of the holiday weekend at the 51<sup>st</sup> Season of Dance with the highly acclaimed NDTC at the Little Theatre.

The repertoire offered diverse and vibrant range of traditional and contemporary dance works and music.

Two new awesome dances by veteran choreographers are Jackie Guy's **Bankra** and Clive Thompson's **Malungu**. The word 'bankra', Guy said, refers in Jamaica to a large basket and is derived from a Ghanaian word. A reworking of a folk dance and created in three sections - Sunrise, Heritage and Celebration, the dance has music based on the traditional polyrhythmic drumming of Africa's Gold Coast. It portrays that Jamaican men can be good fathers, grandfathers and brothers and do support the women in their lives. Guy wants the work to help to raise the self-esteem of Jamaican youths.

**Malungu** is a romantic tragedy choreographed by celebrated choreographer Clive Thompson. It is based on the life of the renowned Jamaican trombonist and composer Don Drummond.



Malungu is the name given to Drummond by his girlfriend, the exotic dancer Margarita, whom he killed during a period of insanity.

This is just one of the many spectacular performances of NDTC - crème de la crème that keeps Jamaica's dance tradition alive. It has been an entertaining and uplifting.

If you have discriminating taste for dance and want to know more about NDTC shows, visit their website, [ndtcjamaica.com](http://ndtcjamaica.com)

*-Vicki del Prado*

## SPECIAL: Cuso's Diaspora Youth Connect

The Honourable Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller warmly welcomed home conference delegates from across the globe at the gala opening ceremonies of the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference.

Cuso representatives were thrilled beyond measure that the Prime Minister gave mention to the Diaspora Youth Connect (DYC) as she said, "The Diaspora Youth Connect is a much needed programme in Jamaica today.

"The Jamaican Diaspora has been very benevolent in its scope and skill and must continue to assume new shapes with an expansive imagination," the Prime Minister continued, "there's room and space for all to participate. I hope you will grasp opportunities in business and social projects that will increase our outreach to youth, the boundless energy of our youth," she continued.



Attending were Cuso volunteers, Doudou Kalala, Rhonda Belous, (both pictured above) and Nataleah Hunter-Young, who worked at the MarketPlace booth in the exhibition hall for the week.

*Con'td on page 4 Cuso Staff*

## Four to Watch For —Diaspora Youth Connect

**Chantalee Lunan** is a young entrepreneur from Trench Town who designs ornamental fish tanks. Chantalee is also a bee-keeper, and hydroponic farmer.



**Travis White** is a jeweler and craft merchant from Montego Bay. He set up a table at the Diaspora conference, as did...

**Amanda McIntosh**, one of our youngest entrepreneurs, who will be opening a salon in Montego Bay in 2014.

*Opportunity is not given to everyone, some would say. But an opportunity given to a man/woman can affect a multitude.*

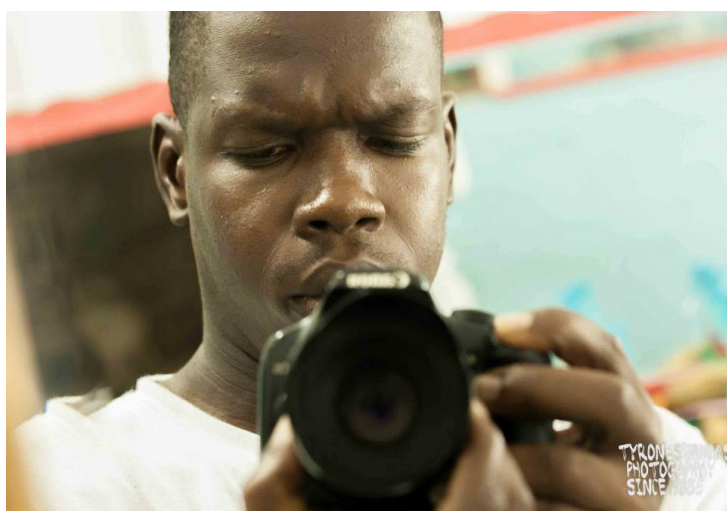
*Being at the diaspora enabled me to see, feel and even touch the hope of becoming all that I can be by meeting various persons who found an interest in me.*

*This is hope that no amount of money can buy. That's my experience in a nutshell. Thank you all that contributed to that experience.*

## Four to Watch For —Diaspora Youth Connect

**Tyrone Simms**, our NYC youth photographer is from Parade Gardens. Tyrone captured the essence of the conference with effortless ease, blending into this international conference like a pro.

Tyrone also covered the Day of Service, where members of the diaspora were invited to participate in community events such as Flanker, Granville, Rose Heights (underprivileged communities in and around Montego Bay). Tyrone's pictures, including those from the Granville Event from the Granville event can be found on his Facebook page.



*My name is Tyrone Simms and I attended the conference from June 17-19*

*It was an amazing experience for me for several reasons. Firstly, my eyes were widely opened to the wide breadth of information that I did not know about my own country. I got a firsthand view how far and wide the Jamaican influence is and the many ways in which persons and organizations can contribute to the development of the country.*

*As a volunteer for Cuso and the Jamaica Diaspora Institute under the Diaspora Youth Connect as a photographer, it gave me well-needed experience in covering such an important event. From the community tours with dignitaries such as Sharon Folkes-Abrahams, MP, I got to expand my network, with both local and overseas potential business partners. This has added a big step forward to my dream of becoming the top photographer/production company owner. I am extremely grateful. My thanks and regards.*



**Cuso staff** **Tarik** Perkins and Onyka Barrett also attended for the first two days of the conference.

Tarik introduced the NYC, where after many delegates lined up to speak privately to him about this Cuso project.

We accomplished much during our time at this conference. Collectively, we gained traction for the project through exposure and new connections

Two of our youth were able to attend thanks to the sponsorship of the **Canadian Women's Club (CWC)**.

Overall, members of the Jamaican Diaspora gave credence to one of Bob Marley's most famous quotations, as they repeatedly stated their intention as they visited us in our conference booth ... "it is my desire to give back."

We are encouraged and excited about the plethora of connections made and the commitment of the Diaspora.

With the support of four new Diaspora/Cuso volunteers here, on the ground in Kingston and Montego Bay, we are gearing up to take the NYC to the next level of

success, which is to bring the future of Jamaica our previous entrepreneurs' dreams, to reality.

**- Rhonda Belous**

**CUSO**  
International  
Volunteers for the World

## CUSO CHRONICLE

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*The Cuso Chronicle is a quarterly publication designed to engage current, past and potential Cuso volunteers in Jamaica, and shed light on the breadth and scope of Cuso volunteers' activities across Jamaica.*

*The editors welcome submissions of between 100-500 words, and photographs.*

# Feel The Uniting Spirit of Sport

What has 1000 underprivileged kids, 1200 *rice an' peas* lunches and 200 volunteers in matching Canada/CVSS t-shirts?

That's right. This year's **Council of Voluntary Social Services (CVSS) Summer Games**, which took place on Saturday July 13 at Mona Bowl on the UWI campus.

The Games are designed to give young people from at-risk neighbourhoods an opportunity, sometime their only opportunity, to participate in organized sports – at no cost – over the summer. Another factor that makes the Games unique is the integrated and active participation of physically and mentally disabled athletes in all events.

The CVSS is an umbrella voluntary social service organisation that helps its 100 members deliver vital services across the Island by offering training, sharing best practices and delivering programmes.

This year thanks to the support of Cuso and its volunteers, the Games received more than 31 sponsors who paid for everything from transportation for participants, to medals, and meals for all.

Of note, the **Canadian High Commissioner** enthusiastically supported the Games both by providing T-shirts and by taking an active part in handing out awards on game day.

Props to Cuso reps Kate Chappell and Doudou Kalala, who took pictures, and to Carol Forcier, Rhonda Belous, Erin Macleod and Vicki del Prado who also contributed. A special thank you to Charles Ghattuba, Cuso's man at the VSU, who showed up at 6am and served porridge breakfast to 1,000 young people.

There were a total of 75 track and field events, football, netball and basketball, as well as cheerleading, and a tug of war competition for the finale. RISE Life, Spring Village, Good News, Boys Brigade and Joy Town and Majesty Gardens were among the teams that fielded winners.

*- Suzanna Birchwood*



Deaf Sports Jamaica in tug of war



Sack race heaven, CVSS Summer Games  
Mona Bowl, University of the West Indies