

Community Impact



RIGHT TO LEFT: Pamela Francis -CEO/UWTT, Candice Clarke Salloum Manager /Sustainability and External Affairs/BG Trinidad & Tobago, Inca Mohamed, Consulting Philanthropic Advisor/JB Fernandes Memorial Trust 1, Ian Benjamin -Chairman /UWTT, Shazard Mohammed, Manager, Market Intelligence and Segments /Republic Bank Limited, Gisele Marfleet/Chairman Scotia Bank Trinidad & Tobago Foundation, Michelle Adams /Community Impact Project Coordinator

In May 2015, UWTT achieved a key milestone in the development of a Collective Impact Strategy by moving from design to implementation with the launch of the inaugural Fifth Company Community Impact Project. Fifth Company Village is a community located on the Moruga Road and in the Princes Town Regional Corporation. As of the 2011 census, the village recorded a population of 1,454 with 390 households and 382 children below the age of 15. Fifth Company has one private pre-school, two public primary schools, and one public secondary school. It is one of the poorest communities in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Collective Impact Strategy, to address the level of school dropouts, is the result of nearly 3 years of deep introspection by the UWTT Board on how to improve the relevance of the organisation's work to the growing array and complexity of social needs in Trinidad and

Tobago, as we transition from developing to developed country status.

By global standards, our country is not poor, yet despite growing levels of giving by Individuals, Corporate Partners and Government – our design phase research showed that UWTT was not alone in the feeling that we could do better, and that we need to do better to ensure no one is left behind in this transition. Whereas for many, giving is still about feeling good to help someone and work of NGOs is about charity – for some, they want to know that the money that they give is being spent well – on the right things and in the right way - so the onus is on UWTT to explore ways on how to achieve more, and demonstrate such for the money being spent.

The JB Fernandes Memorial Trust funded the core research during 2013-2015, and local funding partners joined us in the interest of both sharing learning from their own experience and learning more as we go forward with improving our capacity to harness the energy and impact from collective working. To the end of 2015, local corporate partners who provided and pledged their support into implementation included (alphabetical order) Anfield Services, British Gas (now Shell), JB Fernandes Memorial Trust, Republic Bank, Scotia Bank Foundation and Southern Sales and Services.

In setting the criteria to select the community with whom we would work to develop the model of collective impact, we decided that it was important there be limited current activity by Civil Society so as not to distort the results. This essentially led us to working in rural communities vis a vis the 'hot spots'. Further, it is shown that given limited resources that the highest social return on investment would be to focus on early interventions such as readiness for school and early literacy.

The purpose of the Fifth Company CI Project is to improve student success in the primary schools in the community. It is envisioned by achieving these objectives that the number of children from Fifth Company attending and graduating from secondary school will increase over time, thereby improving their capacity for better parenting, to secure better incomes and over time break the cycle of poverty in Fifth Company. This assumes that people stay in Fifth Company after graduating – in keeping with that, we feel that it is important that long term success will be measured by an increasing number of students who attend and graduate from the local secondary school, Cowen Hamilton. All students currently attending Cowen Hamilton are from outside the Village.

Implementation has started with the parenting programme, led by Toco Foundation with support from Parenting TT and Red Cross and the early literacy programme, led by UNESCO. Achievements in 2015 which cover the first 8 months of implementation of the Fifth Company Project, included:

- **Setting up Project office in Fifth Company,**
- **12 Parenting Agents selected and trained,**
- **57 families volunteering to be part of the Project based on criteria agreed with the Village Council,**

- **Leading for Literacy Now! Programme started with the Fifth Company Baptist Primary School,**
- **awareness raised in the Village of the objectives of the Project.**

The Leading for Literacy Programme, is separately funded by Republic Bank, and implemented by UNESCO in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the National Library and Information System Authority (NALIS) and the Franciscan Institute. 2015 results included leadership training for the Principal, early literacy training for Infants 1 and 2 and parenting support using the Common Sense Parenting approach for the parents of the School. The programme runs for one academic year for the school with assigned facilitators supporting the school with a continuous process of assessment and follow up. St Gregory's AC School will be included in the subsequent rounds of the Programme.

Food and necessary consumables are now provided to the families through the Foundation for the Enrichment and Enhancement (FEEL) Distribution Programme, and the TSTT Foundation distributed Christmas hampers. A full programme of in home parenting support, started in December 2015, will continue for at least one year for all families and for a further 2 years for those families considered in need of that level of intensive support. The remaining 3 Components covering teacher training for special education needs; out of school time programme; and capacity building of local community based organisations, including the Village Council, will be started in 2016. UWTT continues to develop its capacity as the backbone organisation to include mobilising resources, providing overall project coordination, monitoring and evaluation and advocacy.