



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Innovation

CHANGING PARADIGMS



JANUARY 2016 - NUMBER 01
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
#INN04DEV



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Published by United Nations Development Programme
Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

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Graphic Design

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Photographs

UNDP
Barbados & OECS, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, RBLAC

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Innovation

CHANGING PARADIGMS

Increasingly, we are seeing how innovation is becoming an important aspect in international development and for UNDP. In Latin America and the Caribbean, our innovation efforts are aimed at improving what we do by finding new ways to address complex regional development challenges.

UNDP's Innovation Facility was launched in June 2014 with the Government of Denmark as its founding donor. The Innovation Facility provides technical support to explore novel approaches and development interventions, encourages sharing knowledge and experiences to promote learning across countries and regions, and provides catalytic seed funding.

As part of the launch phase in August 2014, the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean carried out a regional call to identify innovative initiatives. We wanted to provide the space for Country Offices to take risks and the opportunity to explore new ideas with end-users and partners, to quickly prototype and co-design agile and flexible solutions for better development results.

30 proposals were received and 6 were selected, earning financial as well as methodological support for their implementation. In the following pages, we share the process, methodology and results of this first cohort of initiatives, as we positively see the growth and uptake of innovation in the region. Employing methods such as human-centered design, design-thinking, and innovation labs, amongst others, these initiatives have strived to bring together citizens and governments in a different manner, to engage new partners, and to work jointly to address challenges in the domains of civic participation, citizen security, energy efficiency and local development.

As UNDP moves forward with the Post-2015 agenda, towards helping attain the Sustainable Development Goals, we are also given the opportunity to re-think the way we are addressing pressing issues in our region. Innovation, then, is not an end by itself, but rather it refers to the tools, approaches and methods that can allow us to better design and implement projects in a changing development landscape, to collaborate with counterparts and partners, and ultimately to identify and scale more effective ways to increase resilience, foster inclusion and promote sustainable development.

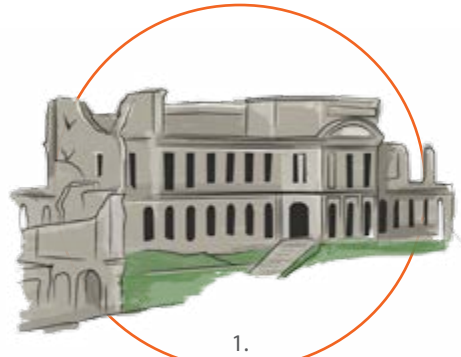
Jessica Faieta

UN Assistant Secretary-General
UNDP Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean

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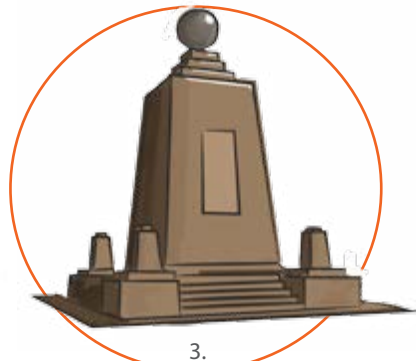
We hope to inspire and encourage colleagues to view innovation as an approach for better problem-solving, and as way to continuously improve how we respond to development challenges.



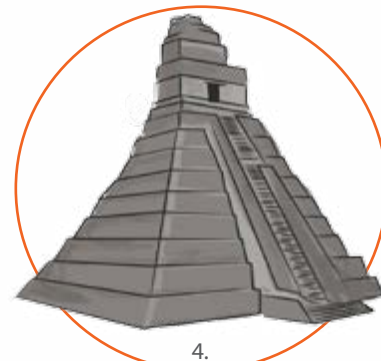
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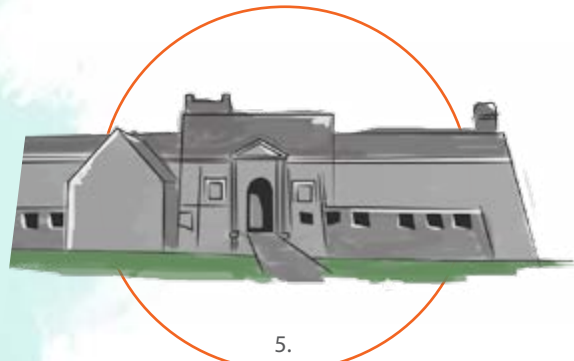
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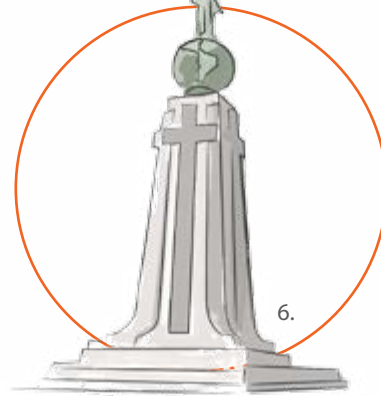
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HAITI

BUS LIDÉ: ROVING INNOVATION LAB FROM IDEAS TO BUSINESS

LIDÉ is the acronym for **Laboratoire d'Innovation et de Développement Économique** in French (Laboratory for Innovation and Economic Development) and means idea in Creole.

Overview

According to the **2013 MDG National Report**, 24.7% of the Haitian population lives in extreme poverty, 63% in moderate poverty. While over 90% of small businesses are informal, youth unemployment rates in urban zones almost reaches 60%.

What was the problem?

Youth unemployment is one of the main problems in Port-au-Prince especially in very vulnerable neighborhoods such as Fort National. Lack of access to traineeship and business services are a constant constraint for entrepreneurs. Transportation and lack of basic infrastructures make daily tasks a challenge, and represent a significant restriction for people that seek employment.

What did we do?

We decided to bring innovation to Fort National through LIDÉ Bus, a roving facility offering business management trainings for youth in particularly vulnerable neighborhoods, in order to enable them to launch their own start-ups. The community was sensitized on the importance of small businesses as an economic and dynamic catalyzer of the neighborhood and as an efficient way of empowering people. The first step consisted of training the selected entrepreneurs; the successful start-up projects then received support for their implementation.

"The initiative has made it possible to listen to people... who have always been systematically excluded. In this sense, the process is more important than the result, because in the process, qualities have been built that cannot be bought, such as dignity, self-esteem and values."

Rita Sciarra,
Head of Poverty Reduction Unit,
UNDP Haiti.

Business proposals included: organic chocolates, electronics and computer services, a library, and the production of perfumes from native Haitian plants.

300
entrepreneurs
reached,
40 received
funding

What did we achieve?

1. 300 young entrepreneurs enrolled in the LIDÉ program. The LIDÉ bus served as a communications mean to inform and sensitize the community of Fort National about the project.
2. 80 entrepreneurs selected to receive further training: 100 hours of business and self-esteem courses.
3. After evaluation on their business-plan and a 4 minute live-pitch, 40 were selected to receive funding.
4. During one year, the 40 entrepreneurs will receive financial and technical support as well as coaching while starting their businesses.

5. One data collection application was developed by university programmers through a hackathon to monitor the activities of the entrepreneurs and to allow them to stay in touch with their coaches.

Who did we partner with?

- **The Ministry of Trade and Industry:** The government counterpart for employment and business initiatives in Haiti.
- **Kotelam:** Microfinance institution that offered the bank accounts and the daily management of the microgrants.
- **Fondation Etre Aysien:** Training institution provided inspirational and technical courses.
- **SURTAB:** Haitian Telecommunications company that provided technology material (tablets) and motivational inputs to entrepreneurs.
- **Haitian University of Informatics (ESIH):** Developed the monitor application.



What did we learn?

— 1 —
Innovation is not about technology, it is about the opportunities that one is able to identify in his/her own environment. By living in the community, young entrepreneurs have the best insights of the needs of their community and how to respond to them.

— 2 —
It would not have been possible to implement such a project in Fort National without building a close relationship with the population. In fact, in the context of **UNDP 16/6 PROJECT**, community platforms were set up, enabling trust towards UNDP's work and strengthening our collaboration.

— 3 —
Constant communication and sensitization of the community about the projects, its constraints and its objectives is crucial.

— 4 —
People we work with encounter few opportunities to change their situation: giving them the choice and the inspiration to change their community by achieving the idea they have can be life changing.

— 5 —
Long term follow-up on projects is key for sustainable impact: training young entrepreneurs opens them to new opportunities that will require more resources. The online coaching platform is one way to monitor these needs and adapt our follow-up during implementation.

— 6 —
The hackathon organized to develop the monitoring application brought together ESIH students and the local community, strengthening solidarity among young people from different social backgrounds.

Interested in this initiative?

- Read a **BLOG** from the former Country Director, Sophie de Caen (French).
- Read the story of a young entrepreneur, Alexandra **HERE** (French).
- Have a look at the Bus launch on **EXPOSURE**.
- Have a look at a summary of the project on **EXPOSURE**.
- Check out this **VIDEO**.
- Read the rest of Rita's blog **HERE**.

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Methodology:

- Hackathon
- App
- Innovation Lab

Who did



SHARING SOME TOOLS:

UNDP Field **GUIDE** to Exploring Innovation

DIY **TOOLKIT**

Social Innovation Camp **TOOLKIT**

Nesta's **GUIDE** for Prototyping

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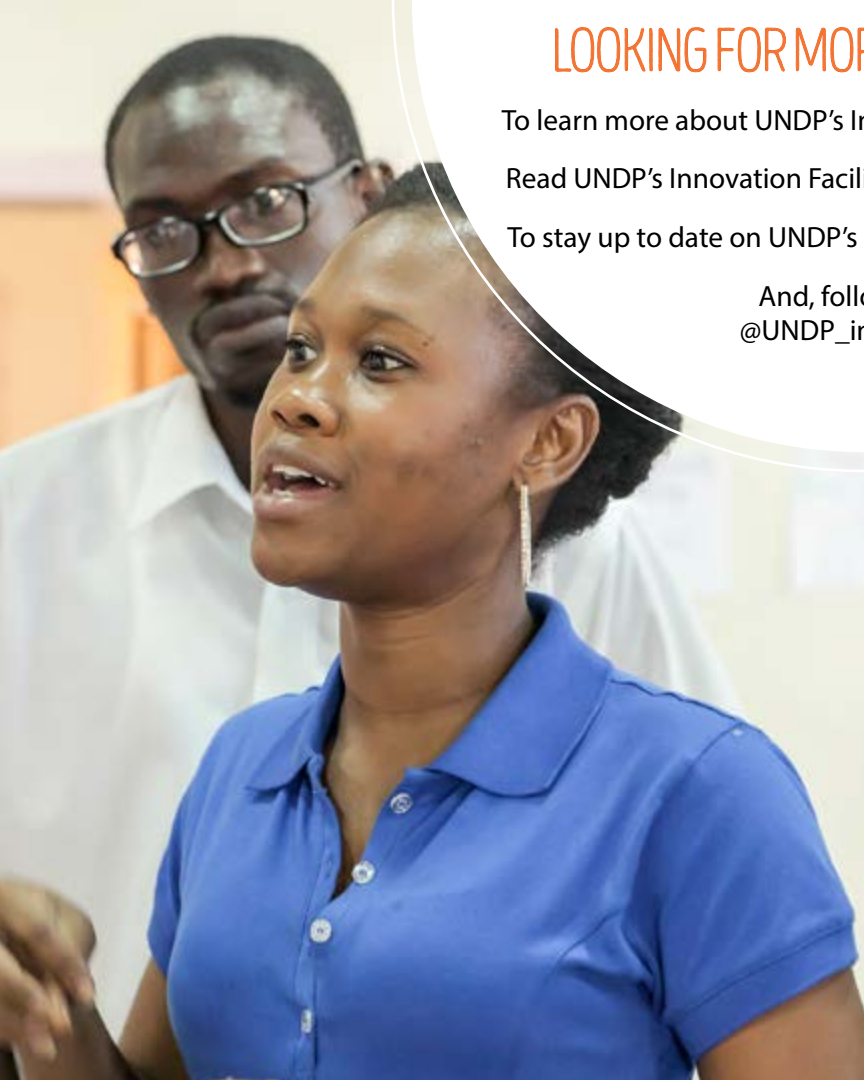
LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?

To learn more about UNDP's Innovation Facility **CLICK HERE**

Read UNDP's Innovation Facility Annual Review 2014 **HERE**

To stay up to date on UNDP's innovation work **CLICK HERE**

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