

## NGOs get grant funding from USAID



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**KINGSTON, Jamaica, Friday July 1, 2011** – Six local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are to receive some US\$5 million in grant funding to carry out micro-enterprise, agricultural and climate change projects under the United States Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Development

Grants Programme (DGP).

Five of those groups are: the Competitiveness Company; Environmental Health Foundation; INMED Partnership for Children; Jamaica Cocoa Farmers Association; and Local Initiative Facility for the Environment. Negotiations for the remaining project is expected to be finalised between now and September.

Being introduced in Jamaica for the first time, the DGP is designed to build NGO capacity in developing countries across the world.

It was implemented by USAID Administrator, Rajiv Shah in 2008, as part of his vision for the agency to make a greater impact in its host countries.

“Whereas in many countries we use US firms and US organisations to implement our programmes, his vision...is that we should be working more directly with our host governments and more directly with local NGOs so that the impact...from our programmes are sustainable over the longer-term and stay here in Jamaica after we are gone, and so this programme is one of the flagships of that effort,” explained USAID Mission Director, Karen Hilliard.

She said the recipients were chosen as they were “front runners” in their proposals for funding. She said they had the most innovative ideas and demonstrated the capacity to carry them through, and had a proven track record of internal governance to manage the grants appropriately.

Hilliard said that included in the grant funding is provision for the entities to “develop their accounting systems, their personnel systems, all of their management systems, so that when they finish with these grants, they’ll be very competitive to get funding not only from domestic donors but also from other international development partners.”

Meanwhile, she said USAID is looking at proposals for the next cycle of grants. She said the agency has been overwhelmed by the response to the call for applications.

“We got more than 80 concept papers so the competition is fierce and we are getting the best of the best here,” she said.

“We are hoping that this is just the beginning of a vibrant programme, working with local non-governmental organisations.”

United States Ambassador to Jamaica Pamela Bridgewater commended the groups for undertaking several “exciting projects” and further pledged the US’ commitment to strengthening partnerships and to further support local organizations.