

# YOUTH AS RESEARCHERS

## ON PEACE, CITIZEN SECURITY AND SAFETY

### • FACTSHEET •



*This factsheet is a knowledge product created through the UNESCO Youth as Researchers' pilot initiative on Peace and Citizen Security in the framework of the Amplifying Youth Voice and Action to address Citizen Security and Safety (AYVA) project coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme.*

*The Youth as Researchers (YAR) methodology was developed by the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre at the National University of Ireland, Galway and the UNESCO Chair in Community, Leadership, and Youth Development at the Pennsylvania State University, USA. The focus of the methodology is for young people to co-create knowledge production and enhance their capacities during the process. Youth are supported through training, mentoring and coordination. The focus of the methodology lies on acquiring important competencies including critical thinking and team building skills.*

*The findings presented are those of the Youth as Researchers participants. These are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organization.*

### **An investigation into the impact of the Zone of Special Operations on Human and Social Development in Denham Town, Kingston, Jamaica**

#### **Participants**

Odane Brooks, Cesone Clemmings, Anicia Francis, Ockera Moulton, Raniel Thompson, Lori-Ann Willis. The team of researchers reflected a composition of young university graduates from across multidiscipline.

#### **Project Description**

Crime remains a debilitating scourge upon development that challenges Jamaica's society. Within the aforementioned context, the security response from the state in the form of Zones of Special Operations (ZOSO) has been placed under the microscope. Significantly, this study is carried out as, predominantly, Jamaica's response to the crime phenomena has been through hard-policing approaches. However, with the introduction of ZOSO, there is somewhat a paradigm shift as manifested in the multipronged approach brought about by the Zones. Therefore, this study will provide essential data on how citizens in Denham Town, Kingston, perceive the ZOSO and ways in which the ZOSO currently can be improved to achieve sustained success. ZOSO, in principle, is built on a clear, hold, and build strategy that ultimately envisions that while apprehending criminals is of importance, building the social fabric of the community is equally important. In the previous dispensation, not much energy was put into the social component of the crime-fighting strategy and few attempts made to have a built-in social component to the crime response. In this regard, focusing on the social and human capital development impact of the case in Denham Town is an attempt to gauge how ZOSO adequately responds to the security and social dynamics imperatives.

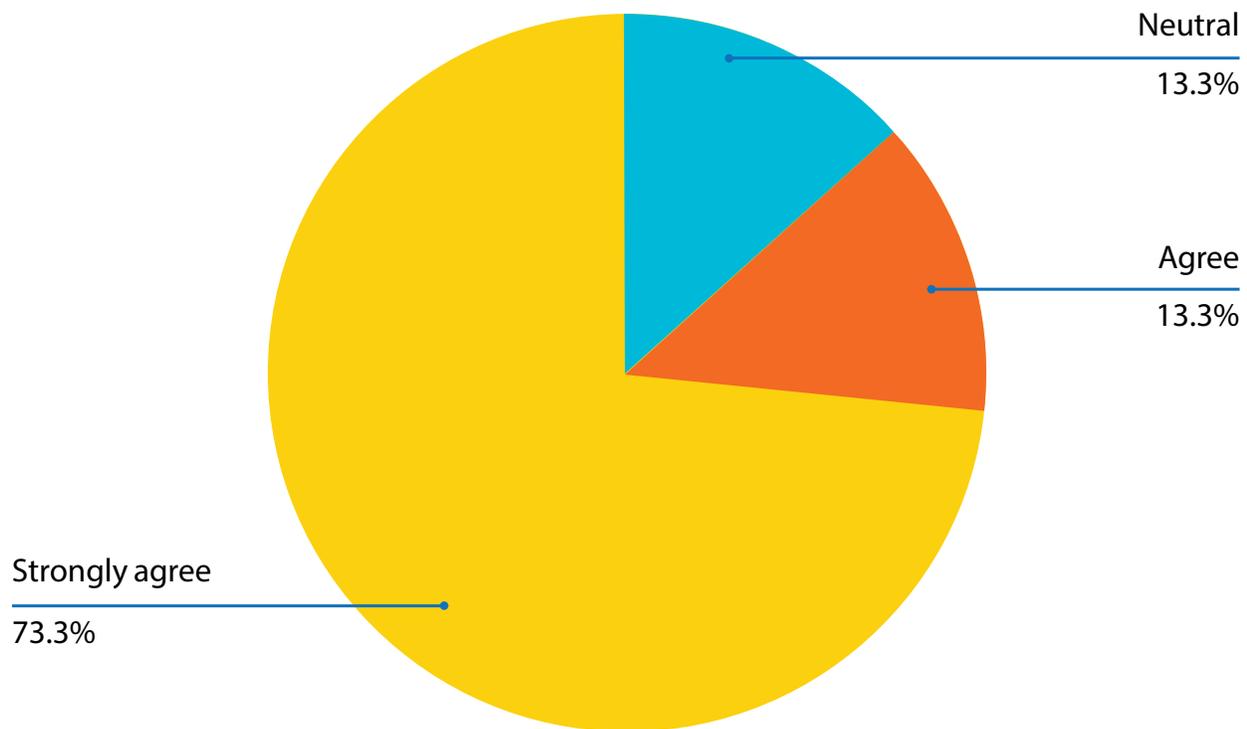
#### **Project Methodology**

The research team set out to launch an investigation into the extent to which the ZOSO implemented in the Denham Town community has effectively addressed crime and violence in the said community from a social interventionist standpoint.

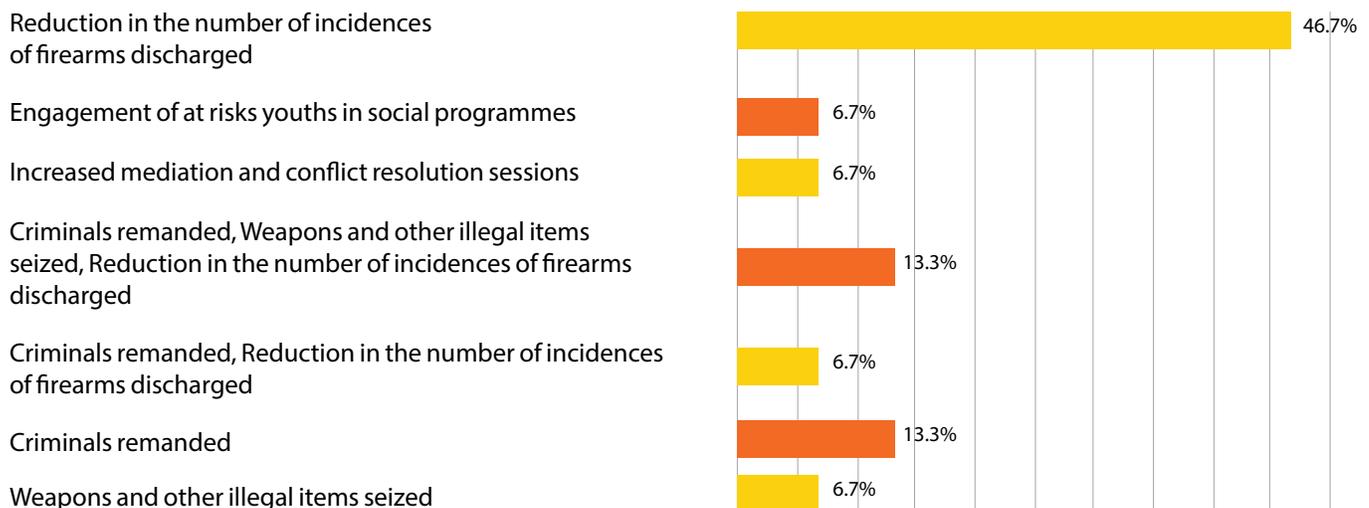
The sample size and participate rate for the study was low and therefore, should not be interpreted as representative of the views of all residents in Denham Town.

Data collection was done using a questionnaire shared through social media inviting responses from persons living in Denham Town. The data collection lasted from February 15-25, 2022. The geographical borders of Denham Town were identified by aerial photography using Google Earth. The research team received a total of 15 responses. Microsoft Word and Excel were used to collate data. The methodological approach utilized in the study was referred to and approved by the UNESCO Youth as Researchers Ethics Board. There was strict adherence to the provisions agreed to in undertaking the research.

## Support for ZOSO implementation in Denham Town



## Perception of Positive Impact from ZOSO implementation in Denham Town



## Recommendations

### Provision of more platform and engagement opportunities for youth engagement

The research demonstrates that respondents have a vested interest in the peace, safety and security of their communities. In this regard, young people must be engaged through different modalities to gauge their views on best approaches to tackle crime and violence.

### Conducting further youth-led research study of Zones of Special Operations

This will facilitate more data-driven decisions about improving strategies to reduce violence and enhance human and social capital within violence-torn communities. This study should cover a larger sample and widen the geographic area to include other ZOSO areas. Integrating youth in knowledge development builds ownership and identity with the solutions being derived and implemented.

### Expansion of social intervention programs through M&E framework

A key finding from the research suggests concerns about the sustainability of the security intervention currently underway in Denham Town. Therefore, there is an urgent need for capacity development and expansion of the current community intervention programs within the community of Denham Town.

