

Feeding the homeless, restaurant style

The reality of homeless and street people is not unique to Jamaica. In fact, there are millions of homeless persons located across the length and breadth of the globe. These people occupy the streets for various reasons; some have been ostracized by family members, while mental illness or abuse of drugs has led others to find homes and shelters outside of their comfort zones. While some receive care from governmental agencies, others are helped by occasional good Samaritans. Projects Abroad Jamaica recognized the need and plight of the homeless, and launched an Outreach Programme to care for these individuals in the towns of Mandeville and Montego Bay. This activity takes place quarterly, and is funded mainly by Projects Abroad with donations from other stakeholders. Last quarter, the outreach in Montego Bay took place in March where hot meals and personal care packages were provided to 84 street persons.

On Thursday, June 26, 2014, staff and volunteers of Projects Abroad Jamaica in Montego Bay, took to the streets to carry out their second outreach activity for the year. Clad in black pants, white shirts and black bow ties they de-

scribed a restaurant scene carrying trays to serve the homeless. The activity which started at 4:30pm saw a total of sixty (60) persons being served a hot meal, as well as personal care packages. The meal consisted of white rice, curried chicken, steamed vegetables with potato salad. Likewise the care packages included a wash rag, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, toilet paper and deodorant, some of which were donated by the Rotaract Club of Montego Bay.

OPEN COMMENDATION
Of course the unusual nature of this street feeding exercise, caught the attention of many on-lookers and passers-by. As the volunteers stopped to serve their recipients, many looked on in awe and, openly commended the efforts of these young people for showing that they were not above the homeless. Others were heard commenting that persons in situations like these are often forgotten and shunned by the society, and expressed that organizations like Projects Abroad Jamaica was setting an example, by showing the world the kind of love which is to be demonstrated to the homeless. The recipients too were caught by surprise and expressed their thanks for the treat they had received. The smile on their faces, the warmth in their eyes



Projects Abroad Jamaica volunteers taking food to their homeless clientele, properly attired in serving clothing.



A grateful homeless person being graciously served his meal by a smiling Projects Abroad Jamaica volunteer.



Another homeless person on being served, took a comfortable seat in order to more fully enjoy his meal.



This homeless person was thankful for his delicious meal and could hardly wait to gladly partake of the offering.

was evidence enough, that they were not only thankful but pleased at what had transpired.

An ecstatic recipient who upon receiving his meal exclaimed, "Mek mi siddung properly suh mi can eat like me inna restaurant." (Allow me to sit properly so I can eat as though I am in a restaurant). He shared his story and how he became home-

less. He had been involved in a boating accident where a jet ski hit him on the head causing damage to his mental health. He expressed that often times, people see them on the streets and immediately think that they are of unsound mind, not knowing

that many have been led to the streets because of unfortunate circumstances. He thanked the team for showing that they cared for people despite their circumstances.

The volunteers too, were elated to be part of something so meaning-

ful while working on their various projects. The five (5) volunteers from England, Germany, Norway, Belgium and Switzerland, thought that the initiative was very well organized and the 'waitress' depiction added a touch of spice to the presentation.

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