



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Monday, June 24, 2024



Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Country Representative, Dr. Jaidev Singh, Chief Technical Director in the Ministry of National Security, Shauna Trowers and Principal of the Mountain View Primary School, Michelle Robinson look on as student of Mavisville Preparatory, Jace Jean takes a shot at the opening of a one day basketball showcase today (June 24). The event was held at the Mountain View Primary School in Kingston and organised under the Ministry's Shoot Hoops Not Guns Initiative.

Shoot Hoops Not Guns Initiative Continues to Score

The 'Shoot Hoops Not Guns Initiative' continues to score at the primary school level as the Ministry of National Security utilises music, sports and technology to target violence prevention in schools and communities.

Minister of State in the Ministry of National Security, the Hon. Juliet Cuthbert-Flynn says that the continued investment in the initiative further highlights the **“Government’s commitment to exploring social investment avenues that are fun, engaging and relevant to at-risk children and communities”**.



@MNSGOVJM

The State Minister was speaking at the opening of a one day basketball showcase under the Shoop Hoops Not Guns Initiative held at the Mountain View Primary School in Kingston today (June 24).

The one-day-event engaged students from Mountain View, Dupont, Whitfield Town and Norman Gardens Primary Schools as well as Mavisville Preparatory School.

She shared that through these events the Ministry aims to support at-risk students by providing multifaceted training in robotics, animation and basketball.

“It is designed to command the attention of students and positively transform their lives while steering them away from a life of crime,” the Minister expressed.

With the implementation of the initiative, the overarching goal of the Government is to create a positive impact on communities and schools, while fostering a safer and more constructive environment for the youth.

As the Government continues to invest in crime prevention initiatives that engage students and communities in a more hands-on and meaningful way, Minister Cuthbert-Flynn noted the importance of this approach.

She shared that **“often times we have to take off the suits and dresses and get involved in the activities that are operating on the ground for us to better understand the jarring socio-economic challenges within these communities”**.

Since 2023, over one hundred and ninety students have been engaged under the ‘Shoot Hoops Not Guns’ initiative which was implemented by the Ministry of National Security (MNS) in partnership with the Jamaica Basketball Association (JaBA) and the University of Technology (UTECH).

The initiative, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), at a cost of twenty-two million, five hundred thousand dollars (JMD\$22.5M), forms part of a multifaceted approach taken by the government to tackle crime and violence in schools and communities, where the Zones of Special Operations (ZOSO) have been established.

The Shoop Hoops Not Guns Initiative is set to run until February 2025.

