



Speaking Notes

For

Mr. Omar Sweeney

Managing Director,

Jamaica Social Investment Fund

At

Handing Over of the Epworth Feeder
Road

On April 21, 2023

Salutation

Master of Ceremonies,

The Most Honourable, Andrew Holness, ON, CD, Prime Minister of Jamaica

Custos Rotulorum for the Parish of St. Ann, The Honourable, Norma Walters.

His Worship, The Mayor of St. Ann's Bay, Sydney Stewart.

Member of Parliament for South-East St. Ann, Ms. Lisa Hanna

Chairman of the Board for JSIF, Dr. Wayne Henry, CD, JP

President of the Epworth Community Development Committee, Mr. Raymond Grant

Other members of the Epworth Community.

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen, ALL

Good morning,

The Jamaica Social Investment Fund is pleased to be the implementing agency for this far-reaching project. The impact of this rehabilitated infrastructure is clear. Years ago, the Epworth Road was in a dyer state, and through the power of the community's voice, today we are gathered to officially hand-over this road that is of much value to you, the residents of this community.

The funding for this project was made possible through the Basic Needs Trust Fund 9, one of the projects that the JSIF implements, which is funded by the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The CDB has provided financial support for several projects for many years, which have greatly impacted several sectors in Jamaica.

The Programme is now in its 10th cycle in Jamaica, and boasts numerous achievements, with one of its greatest, undoubtedly being the provision of funding for this Epworth Road project, which saw the rehabilitation of 3.1 kilometres of road and drainage.

Overall JSIF has completed works on some 199 roads across the island (all parishes according to the stats), 12 of which were completed under the BNTF in its various cycles. These roads were completed in 9 parishes. All this was made possible through the dedicated funded which has come through the CDB throughout the years in the various cycles of the project.

One of the areas in which the CDB's BNTF has made a significant impact is that of education. Under the BNTF Programme, several schools have been rehabilitated and additional classroom blocks built, in an effort to aid in the government's mandate to transition from the shift system, to full day school.

A core objective of the project is to improve rural life, by providing opportunities through infrastructural development for residents in rural townships and districts. This will allow for a better quality of life.

The efforts under the project extended further, with the community receiving roadside maintenance training and tools such as:

Machetes, Wheel-borrows, Shovels, Brooms and Rakes, to aid with the upkeep of the roadway, which is of great importance.

This effort to stress maintenance is not by chance, as under projects implemented by the JSIF, we not only strive to give the community we serve the infrastructure, but we also help them to take care of it so that, future generations will also benefit from this legacy.

With community participation and buy-in being at the centre of every project, it is important to note that this project at Epworth, like all other projects implemented by the JSIF, includes a community contribution. Here in Epworth, the community made this effort a success through the contribution of the location for a site office, providing meals for the workers throughout the life span of the initiative as well as coordinating employment for the project, among other things...all valued at a little over 4 million Jamaican dollars.

It is clear, the level of community advocacy and involvement extended among you, the residents of Epworth, to get to this day when you now will benefit from a new road. You are coming from

far, from the days when accessing transportation from Epworth to even the closest community was an arduous task. Now new life has come to the community; markets have opened for farmers who can now traverse easily.

This new improvement that you lobbied long and hard for, must be maintained and the only way to do this is to use the equipment and skills gained to ensure the maintenance of this very important infrastructure.

I encourage you as a community to continue to value the infrastructure and continue to maintain it, so that it may serve you well, for years to come.

Thank You.