



**GREETINGS BY**

**PASTOR MICHEAL HARVEY BOARD MEMBER JSIF**

**JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND**

**FOR**

**Opening Ceremony BOOT CAMP FOR COMMUNITY BASED TOURISM  
ENTREPRISES (CBTEs)**

**JUNE 25**

**In**

**Montego Bay at the Sunset Beach Resort and Spa**

## Salutations

- Dennis Hickey Executive Director Tourism Product Development Company
- Representatives from the Ministry of Tourism
- Representatives from the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association
- Dr. Susan Otukon Executive Director Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust
- Participants from the Community Based Tourism Enterprises
- JSIF Staff
- Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF).

Community-based tourism has become a fast growing economic sector globally. Indeed, the World Tourism Organisation, UNWTO, has identified “experiential” tourism – which encompasses ecotourism, nature, heritage, cultural, soft adventure tourism, rural and community tourism - as among the sectors expected to grow most quickly during the coming two decades.

Experiential tourism involves active participation by travellers in experience and promotes activities that draw people outdoors, and into cultures and communities. In this

sense it is very personal and individual. Essentially, experiential tourists seek memorable experiences.

Locally, Jamaica has some of the world's most beautiful natural settings and a rich history and culture that make us uniquely poised to take full advantage of this growing trend in community tourism.

In Response, the Jamaica Social investment Fund (JSIF) in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism has developed the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) to improve market access tourism product and service providers.

As at the end of March 2015, the REDI provided funding for the development of the Community Tourism Policy and Strategy. Secondly, investments made in community tourism enterprises and product development and marketing initiatives are being undertaken in conjunction with the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo)

and the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB). Past and planned investments exceed JMD \$200,000,000 in over 20 community enterprises across the island.

Through the REDI programme – JSIF has invested in community tourism sites whose development give full meaning to the concept of sustainable tourism.

Among these are the Rastafari Indigenous Village in Porto Bello St. James which recently received its license from the Jamaica Tourist Board.

Others are the Cockpit Country Adventure Tours (CCAT) is owned and operated by the Southern Trelawny Environmental Agency (STEA); the Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM), Lionel Town, Clarendon; the Jamaica Conservation Development Trust, Mavis Bank, St. Thomas, St. Andrew, Portland; the Charles Town Maroon Council, Charles Town, Buff Bay Valley, Portland; the

Treasure Beach Women's Group ('The Treasure Hunt' Gift Shop) ; and Breds, the Treasure Beach Foundation (Treasure Beach Farm Tour).

Today, these eight projects will participate in a workshop for Community Based Tourism Enterprises (CBTEs) which runs from June 25 to 28. Executed under REDI, this boot camp is part of REDI's programme to improve market access for tourism product and service providers.

Training is aimed at helping CBTEs with specific 'market ready' requirements and helping them identify and close their current gaps in preparation for formal introduction to the travel trade.

Short term objectives include promotion of responsible and community-based tourism so that locals can enjoy increased socio-economic benefits and improved environment.

For these eight sites, investments have been made, or are on the cards for sustainable development of tourism products and services.

For the Rastafari Indigenous Village (RIV) which comprises a community working at farming and craft making JSIF has invested J\$18.7 million in infrastructure improvement and training.

The JSIF board has approved J\$13 million for the procurement of solar and water purification systems, for the procurement of bunk beds and soft furnishings for the cabins and for appropriate industry training and marketing for the Bowden Pen Farmers' Association which owns Ambassabeth (Lion House) Cabins located near the border of St. Thomas and Portland.

For the Cockpit Country Adventure Tours (CCAT) is owned and operated by the Southern Trelawny Environmental Agency (STEA), an NGO with the primary objective of the conservation of the cockpit country and its communities, JSIF has invested J\$15.5 million in trail rehabilitation, safety equipment, in infrastructure improvement, training and marketing.

The Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM), in Lionel Town, Clarendon is proposing to establish guided boat tours of the wetlands and cays in the Salt River area with a JSIF investment of J\$13million.

In Mavis Bank, St. Thomas, ST. Andrew, Portland, the Jamaica Conservation Development Trust, offers eco/hiking/adventure tours in the famed Blue and John Crow Mountains of Jamaica. JSIF is being requested to



invest approximately J\$22.75 million in well needed infrastructure.

JSIF's investment will also have positive spin offs for other JCDDT CBTE stakeholders such as the Charles Town Maroon Council where to date, an investment of J\$17.46 million has facilitated upgrading of the museum, an office/information centre, gift shop and sanitary facilities.

For the Treasure Beach Women's Group ('The Treasure Hunt' Gift Shop) which sells unique hand-made Jamaican craft items, the vision is to support and contribute to the development of local artists and artisans. Also in the Treasure Beach area, Treasure Beach the Farm Tour is proposed as an integrated agro/culinary tour, offering tourists visits to commercial farms, education on farming techniques used by rural Jamaican farmers, sampling local

agricultural produce and food, and a picnic lunch on the final stop.

Traditional 'beach and site-seeing tourism' has been a boon to Jamaica's economy; however, community tourism enables us to offer our visitors another facet of Jamaican life.

The benefits to communities and the nation as a whole, from having a vibrant community tourism offering are numerous.

REDI has also funded the development of a community tourism policy which is in-keeping with our mission to foster sustainable tourism development and fuel growth in local economies.

In this boot camp, participants will receive tools to map, cost and price their core business; and develop a basic template to provide monthly reporting and evaluate their

business activities on a daily, weekly and monthly basis and train key operatives in their use.

Training also aims to expose CBTEs to local and international tour operators who can facilitate their business.

As new generations of travellers seek more meaningful experiences, let us continue to make the investments which will make their visit a worthwhile one.

I thank you.