



GREETINGS BY

MRS. SCARLETTE GILLINGS

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND

Handing Over of Knollis Multi-purpose Building

Knollis, St. Catherine.

June 28, 2014.

Salutations

- The Most Hon. Portia Simpson Miller, ON, MP
Prime Minister of Jamaica
- Ms. Natalie Neita Headley— Member of Parliament—
North Central St. Catherine
- His Worship the Mayor Councillor Norman Scott
- Custos of St. Catherine—Cutos Sophia Azan
- Mr. Dean Simpson—Actg. Chairperson for the
Knollis Multi-purpose Management Committee
- Mr. Ripton McLean— Chairman President of the
Knollis Community Benevolent Society
- Residents of Knollis
- JSIF Staff
- The Police
- Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

I bring you very special greetings on behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund.

For some 18 years now, the Fund has been mandated by the Government of Jamaica to partner with community based organizations to deliver projects which promote sustainable development and which, additionally, foster public safety and peace.

With the financial support of our development partners the Government of Jamaica invests an average of \$3 billion annually – primarily in infrastructure projects which are aimed at meeting these important goals.

This is not a role we take lightly.

Indeed it is one which we also embrace with a spirit of satisfaction; the delivery of each integrated community space (multi-purpose center), each school, each market, each new feeder and access road which

allows farmers to deliver their produce to market, and each training intervention which prepares young people for a life-long learning.

The construction of the Knollis Multi-purpose Building is a project of the Inner City Basic Services Project (ICBSP) which is financed by the World Bank and GoJ and implemented by JSIF.

The other communities assisted under the ICBSP are Central Village (specifically, Big Lane, Little Lane, Andrews Lane & Detroit), Africa (March Pen), Lauriston, Shelter Rock (including Jones Avenue and Dempshire Pen) and Tawes Meadows, Federal Gardens (Trench Town), Jones Town (inc. Craig Town), Passmore Town (Greater Browns Town / Dunkirk), Whitfield Town, Bucknor and Flanker.

The ICBSP - I must explain - was a comprehensive intervention which sought to address the issues of lack of access to basic services within these 12 targeted communities in Kingston, St. Catherine, Clarendon and St. James.

As we are all aware the community of Knollis, was somewhat different from others communities targeted by the ICBSP. There are three

sections to the community - the formal landowners, the housing scheme, and the informal settlements. Knollis therefore presented JSIF with the challenge of creating a community space that could host activities to build community integration and cohesion among the approximately 1200 persons within 224 households. The aim is to develop this multi-purpose centre into a functional social enterprise that is financially autonomous and sustainable. Hence, this infrastructure was complemented by the formation of a management committee to manage the Centre, capacity- building and organisational strengthening interventions including business plan writing and business development training. Social programmes which will be pursued in this center, will no doubt assist in improving the community's access to benefits such as educational activities, recreation, skills development and training.

The completed building has a “foot-print” area of approximately 500square meters which includes the main hall, covered walkways around the main hall, commercial/workshop spaces, library, office, kitchen and male/female restrooms. External works include a biodigester system for sewage treatment and car parking space.

This center is one of our largest investment under the ICBSP to date and was completed at a cost of approximately J\$93 million. An additional investment of \$36.1 million was made in the improvement of road and drains, making an overall investment of \$133.6 million in the Knollis community. What is note-worthy also is the significant contribution made by the community in the amount of \$5.28 million in land and services.

Let me use this opportunity to thank two of our main partners, the Social Development Commission and the Department of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies who have undertaken capacity building strengthening activities for the Community Committee.

These two agencies will continue to support the on-going capacity building of the Centre Management Committee and the Knollis Benevolent Society will provide oversight as well as the JSIF.

We are pleased to note that the community is active and the leaders have given their commitment to be the custodians of the facility now that construction has been completed. Thanks to the president and members of the executive who with the support of their Member of Parliament have significantly contributed to this success. It has been a long journey. We may not have provided all that the community needed but we trust this is a start that will allow you to continue.

We trust that your dreams for improved and better community development through the efforts of the World Bank and the Government of Jamaica, through JSIF, will be realized as you proceed to put the center to use.

I thank you.