



## PRESS RELEASE

# JSIF-REDI Project Boosts Community Tourism Standards and Capacity – Minister Bartlett

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KINGSTON — Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett, says economic and social development in rural Jamaica has been boosted by the Community-based Tourism programme of the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF).

Speaking at the Symposium to close out the REDI project at the Mona Visitor's Lodge and Conference Centre at the University of the West Indies, in Kingston, on July 27, Minister Bartlett said that the Community Tourism Enterprises (CTEs) which received assistance under REDI realized an improvement in their ability to meet local and international standards. They have enhanced their business operations, infrastructure and organizational capacity and thereby improved their access to the tourism markets.

The CTEs which have received support from REDI are Rastafari Indigenous Village (Rastafari Africa Hall Benevolent Society), Irwin St. James Cockpit Country Adventure Tours Southern Trelawny Environmental Agency (STEA), Albert Town Trelawny Ambassabeth/Bowden Pen Farmers Association, Bowden Pen, St. Thomas, Portland Gap Recreation Area Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCDDT), Portland Gap, St. Andrew, the Salt River Birding & Boat Tours Caribbean Coastal Area Management Foundation (CCAM), Salt River Clarendon, Charles Town Maroon Council, Charles Town Portland, Treasure Beach Women's Group, Treasure Beach, St. Elizabeth.

Since 2010, JSIF has worked with the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo) and the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) to assist these community tourism enterprises through the REDI. The project is funded by the Government of Jamaica and the World Bank, through a US\$15 million loan.

Minister Bartlett launched the new Jamaica Community Tourism Toolkit at the REDI Symposium. The Toolkit is comprised of two parts 1) a Handbook containing comprehensive information about running a sustainable and profitable community tourism business and 2) a Guide on the steps for obtaining a Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) license.

Minister Bartlett noted the REDI tourism project has many other accomplishments including the National Community Tourism Policy & Strategy adopted by Parliament in 2015, J\$250 million invested in infrastructure development and equipping, capacity building for the CTEs, the creation of the globally competitive Jamaica Community Experiences brand, the development of

an associated three year marketing plan and marketing collateral materials, the launch of National Community Tourism Portal [www.MoreToJamaica.com](http://www.MoreToJamaica.com), the production of four thematic videos and seven additional videos highlighting each CTE featuring community tourism as well as the development of two banks of 400 high quality photo images.

In his remarks, JSIF's Managing Director Omar Sweeney thanked the funding partners the Government of Jamaica and the World Bank as well as the Ministry of Tourism, the Tourism Product Development Company and the Jamaica Tourist board for the partnership.

**Photo 1:** Jamaica Social Investment Fund Board Member, Omar Frith presents the *'Handbook for Community Tourism Enterprises'* to Minister of Tourism, Hon. Edmund Bartlett at the Official Launch of the National Community Tourism Toolkit. The Toolkit and its accompanying *'Guide to Obtaining a Jamaica Tourist Board License'* are together a comprehensive guide regarding what it takes to run a successful and sustainable Community Tourism Business from concept to JTB licensing and ongoing marketing and management

**Photo 2:** Tourism Minister, Hon. Edmund Bartlett addresses audience at the JSIF-REDI Symposium, held at the Mona Visitors Lodge and Conference Centre at UWI, in Kingston, on July 27, 2017. The symposium marks the culmination of the REDI Project implemented over the last seven years.

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