



European Union



GREETINGS BY

ELEANOR HENRY PROJECT MANAGER PRP

JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND

FOR

PRP Summer Camp and Youth Workshop Graduation

Women's Resource and Outreach Centre

47 Beechwood Avenue, Kingston 5

Wednesday, November 26, 2014

2 p.m

Salutations

- Rev. Dr the Honourable Ronald Thwaites Minister of Education
- Ambassador Paola Amadei Head European Union Delegation
- Dorothy Whyte Executive Director Women's Resource & Outreach Centre
- Lisa Herman-Davis Project Coordinator
- Facilitators and Participants
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon

I bring you greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors, Management and Staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) and particularly from the team of the Poverty Reduction Programme unit.

We are here to celebrate a very proud moment and to commemorate your achievements.

With the assistance of the Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP) and JSIF, we have planted a seed today that we hope you will water and nurture, so that it will become a mighty tree for all to see.

Some nineteen years ago, the Jamaica Social Investment Fund was established to ensure that resources for social and economic development are channeled towards the communities which need it most.

Over time, this approach has been refined, and we are now able to target subgroups which need special attention to their needs.

Our children is one such group, with our experience showing that interventions which are specially designed for the young can have a wider positive long term impact on the families now and the community itself over time.

The JSIF –implemented Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP) which is jointly funded by the European Union and the government of Jamaica has as one of its main aims the improvement of the conditions of children in the island's underserved communities.

Under this programme, millions of dollars have been spent on the upgrade of schools, with attention being turned in recent years to academic support and social development, as well.

In this area, the projects which have secured some of the best results are our youth workshops. This we have been able to achieve by joining effort with local non-governmental agencies such as the Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC) with whom we have partnered today.

We are gathered to celebrate with 19 young men and women and to examine the results of this year's project, under which the EU has provided counterpart funding for summer programme activities and training.

The total cost of the intervention was \$1.3 million, of which the communities involved provided worthy contribution of approximately \$151,000 in services and in kind.

Our Nineteen (19) graduates – 5 males and 14 females are aged between 9-25 years and live in the communities of Jones Town, Arnett Gardens, Waterhouse and Greenwich Town.

One important aim of the programme was to improve the educational and psychosocial skills among the participants thereby empowering them to become socially responsible in their respective communities.

They were also assisted with remedial education in the areas of Mathematics and English Language. This was geared at improving literacy and numeracy levels.

Additionally, they were provided access to group counseling to promote personal and social development.

All of this was done with the important aims of enhancing learning; improving behavior among the participants; and improving parenting skills of the young parents within the group.

Participants were also engaged in dispute resolution strategies including anger management and conflict resolution.

Previous youth workshops have yielded exceptional results with teachers reporting that students are more focused, and determined in school, student disruptiveness was reduced while slower students also showed improvements in the classroom.

We are expecting, with high hope, that the results for our graduates here will be the same.

I say to our graduates that this is only the beginning of your journey. Your determination is what will ensure that that you will continue and succeed.

For you, my final words are ***“Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never — in nothing, great or small, large or petty.***

These - the words of the famous British Prime Minister [Winston S. Churchill](#), I commend to you as you go back to your communities to show them that you have new skills with which you can change the world. Never give in. Never give up.

I wish you all that's good for the future.

I thank you.