



GREETINGS BY

MRS. SCARLETTE GILLINGS

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND

FOR

The Sawyers Primary School Sanitation Upgrading & Expansion

**AT
SAWYERS, TRELAWNY**

WEDNESDAY APRIL 10, 2013

Salutations:

- **Mrs. Marisa Dalrymple Phillibert,
M.P, Trelawny Southern**
- **Dr. Pauline Foster *Councillor* for the Ulster Spring
Division**
- **Representative for Social Development Commission**
- **Mrs. Shelly-Ann Griffiths Principal of Sawyers Primary
School**
- **Teachers and Students**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**
- **Media**

Good Morning,

That we are here today in the Parish of Trelawny to hand over yet another upgraded school is testimony to the wind of change sweeping the region.

The parish is one of a number of targeted parish for infrastructural and social development by the Government of Jamaica with challenges of unemployment and low academic attainment being major issues of concern.

Education as a vehicle for development is a critical pillar in ensuring sustainable growth and development for the parish.

Only two weeks ago , the JSIF signed a \$32 million contract for the construction of the Albert Town Infant School.

That project – similar to this one - is being undertaken by JSIF through its Community Investment Project, funded through a loan to the government of Jamaica by the Caribbean Development Bank.

Today, we are taking another significant step forward with the official handing over of upgraded facilities at the Sawyers Primary and Junior high school.

Since the school's inception in 1948, students have been using pit latrines. There has been a general lack of proper sanitary facilities. Additionally aspects of the building were in need of upgrading.

Whilst a proper building now exists there were no cupboards in place, no sink, inadequate stove and no freezer. The absence of the cupboards prevents the proper storage of dry food items, the absence of the sink reduces the proper washing of hands and food during preparation and the absence of a freezer limits the process of cold storage, which is critical in food preparation.

Additionally, the absence of fencing at the school limited the ability to keep the children in a controlled environment.

These weaknesses had clear implications for the health of the students and the schools ability to provide world class education and training.

With children enrolled as young as 7 years old, the exposure to unsanitary facilities, and broken infrastructure was grave. . Another vulnerable group are children from poor families (particularly those on PATH), who are dependent on the schools nutrition programme for a balanced meal.

It is to be noted that the Ministry of Education endorses the move away from the use of pit toilets within schools, as it contravenes the Millennium Development Goal 7: Indicator 61 which addresses the improvement of sanitation systems.

The Jamaica Teachers Association is also a strong advocate for this move as well.

The project was approved under the Community Investment Project (CIP), which is implemented through a USD 12.085 million loan to the Government of Jamaica and focusses primarily on the provision of basic infrastructure in the health, education and transportation sectors in rural Jamaica.

According to the PIOJ Poverty Map of 2008, Sawyers, based on the Consumption-Based approach of wealth ranking, has between 42% and 68% of its citizens living below the poverty level. JSIF as part of its Poverty Alleviation mandate targets communities with more than 22 % of the household living below the poverty line. JSIF was thus compelled to make an investment of this nature in your community.

The scope of works undertaken were:

- The construction of a new sanitation block to house four (4) W.C. units for girls and three (3) for boys.
- The installation of cupboards and shelves in the existing kitchen.
- Installation of bookshelves in the existing storage area to convert it into a reading room.
- Renovation of the existing school building (changing the roof, installation of partitions, black boards, windows and doors).

- The construction of a 129m long perimeter fence (2.1m) complete with toe wall (150 x 200) mm.
- 2 (1000 gallon) tanks for school
- Provision of 1 electric water pump (1hp) to lift harvested water to tanks.

The total project cost was J\$23,174,820.00 with the amount requested from JSIF being J\$22,284,781.00. The community through showed strong will and appreciation to the cause, and were successful in making in kind community contribution of \$890,000 , which was 4.4 per cent of the project cost.

The beneficiaries which hail from the communities of Sawyers (proper), Mahogany Hall, Burke and Cottage, now can boast a modern school facility which will have a significant impact on the 106 students and 6 teachers .

JSIF also provided provided Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) training to the beneficiaries, to ensure better sanitation procedures and maintenance training so that you will be able to keep your school well maintained from many year.

We are very pleased at the high level of community involvement in this project, as for us it demonstrate a high level of community spirit. . We also commend the community for your unrelenting efforts, to address other issues within the school I specifically comment you on some self-help projects that the school has engaged including: Changing wooden floors to concrete; replacing of damaged windows, and the tiling of the teacher`s bathroom.

Indeed, the School was well maintained which was an encouragement for an additional investment. Your efforts at self-sufficiency was well noted, and we took note of your farm which I understand provides almost all the food for the kitchen. You have our best wishes in the use of these facilities.

We look forward to a continued partnership with our local communities in the development process.