

 <p>Jamaica Social Investment Fund</p>	 <p>THE ENVIRONMENT SUSTAINABILITY OUR RESPONSIBILITY</p>	 <p>Ministry of Gender Affairs GENDER EQUALITY CERTIFIED</p>
<p>JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND</p>		
<p>CONTEXT OF THE JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND</p> <p>EMS-I-DOC-CONTEXT-ddmmyyyy</p>		

The Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) is a limited liability company incorporated under the Companies Act of Jamaica. It was established in 1996 as a component of the Government of Jamaica's (GoJ's) national poverty alleviation strategy. The Fund was designed primarily to channel resources to small-scaled community-based socio-economic infrastructure and social services projects with a view to improve the lives, livelihood and living conditions of the less fortunate across the entire Jamaica. These projects include but not limited to road rehabilitation; zinc fence removal and substitution; school rehabilitation, expansion or construction; construction of water and sanitation facilities; implementation of solid waste management programmes and projects; construction or rehabilitation of drainage systems; electricity regularization; construction of agro-processing facilities; implementation of community based tourism enterprises; and construction of community multi-purpose centres and sports facilities.

The implementation of these projects include activities which may have significant or minor environmental impacts, including:

- Deterioration of air, surface water and groundwater quality;
- Change in land use and land degradation;
- Noise pollution;
- Depletion of natural resources;
- Habitat destruction and loss of biodiversity;
- Improper disposal of solid and hazardous waste;

- Deforestation; and
- Occupational health and safety issues

Considering these potentially negative impacts, the JSIF thought it would be prudent to develop and adopt an environmentally sustainable approach to implementing its projects. Consequently, the decision was taken to develop and implement an environmental management system (EMS) with the goal to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts at its core. To this end, the JSIF continually inject resources into the EMS through funding from donor agencies and the Government of Jamaica. Additional programme inputs include the employment and retention of highly skilled personnel including environmentalists, legal and technical experts, and corporate specialist; continually train staff and stakeholders including ancillary workers, contractors and consultants; procurement of goods and services from environmentally reputable dealers; purchase of sustainable products; and work within the legal framework of applicable local laws and within the environmental guidelines and established needs of our funding partners and other stakeholders.

In spite of these inputs, there are a number of factors, internal and external, natural and manmade that can limit achievement of the EMS objective which is to reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. These factors include lack of financial support from donor agencies; shift in focus of top management or change of management; poor supervision and monitoring of staff; change in behavior and attitude of contractor and consultants or breach of contract; poor buy-in of project beneficiaries; inadequate local regulatory framework; staff turnover; community violence; and sabotage. Earthquake, droughts, landslide, flooding, storms and hurricanes, sea level rise and storm surges are some of the natural hazards that could impact on the organization's ability to meet environmental targets and outcomes.

Therefore, the JSIF will always assess and consider the key inputs and risks which could directly influence the organization's ability to completely fulfill its mandate and achieve the goals and objectives of the environmental management system when implementing projects. Climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction are cross cutting issues that are factored in the design and implementation of project interventions with a view to protect the poor and vulnerable, the segment of society we mainly serve. The JSIF will continually make assessment of its project impacts on the local environment and even on a wider scale; as well as the impact of the environment on the projects being implemented. These factors will continue to inform the strategy of the JSIF for managing its environmental risks and for leveraging opportunities geared at enhancing the local and global environment and to build a sustainable and resilient society. The JSIF will keep an open line of communication with our interested parties with a view to obtain suggestions and guidance for continual improvement of the EMS.