

Speaking Notes

For

Omar Sweeney

Managing Director, Jamaica Social  
Investment Fund

At

Handing Over and Groundbreaking for  
the Marlie Mount Primary and Infant School

On January 14, 2021

At

Marlie Mount Primary and Infant School,  
Marlie Acres. Old Harbour,  
St. Catherine

## **Salutation**

Master of Ceremonies, Ms. Kerian Morant, Vice Principal of the Marlie Mount Primary and Infant School.

Honourable Fayval Williams, Minister of Education, Youth and Information.

Honourable Everald Warmington, Member of Parliament for South West, St. Catherine.

His Worship the Mayor of Spanish Town, Councillor, Norman Scott.

Custos Rotulorum, St. Catherine, Reverend Jeffrey McKenzie.

Vice Chairman of the School Board, Mrs. Claris Brown

Principal of the Marlie Mount Primary and Infant School, Mr. Calvin Harris.

Members of my own JSIF Team.

Good Afternoon.

In this trying time for education, today's Handing over and groundbreaking ceremony seeks to remind us that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.

As we battle a pandemic and the Ministry of Education seeks to ensure that it can increase access to teaching and learning for students, we at the Jamaica Social Investment Fund are happy that we could aid through the Basic Need Trust Fund 9<sup>th</sup> cycle, which is funded by the Caribbean Development Bank, in improving the Marlie Mount Primary and Infant school so that in the future more spacious facilities are available to students and teaching and learning can take place in a comfortable environment.

With the school now on the cusp of reopening for face-to-face classes, this expansion is very timely as the school administration can now see how it will be better able to facilitate social distancing in an effective manner.

Through this project 1 618 students and 79 staff members will benefit.

Today we hand over 10 new classrooms and a brand-new sanitation block, it is expected that this will in the long run reduce the overcrowding and see the end of the shift system at the school, thus increasing the overall teacher student contact hours at the school.

Over the years the Marlie Mount Primary School plant has become inadequate to serve students and staff due to chronic overcrowding.

The school was originally built to accommodate 600 students an expanding population has resulted in space constraints, as that number has more than doubled.

We look forward to the end of the pandemic and for students to be able to take full advantage of this new classroom block which will usher in the end of the shift system at the school.

But, as we continue to fight Covid 19 the addition of the new block is also very essential as now face to face classes can start in the coming weeks will proper protocols of spacing observed.

In addition to handing over the new block we are also here to break ground for an improved Infant Department at the school, where 4 new classrooms will be built and a linkway will be constructive. Additionally, a chain link fence will be erected that will separate the infant department from the upper school.

Rehabilitative work will also be done on the walls and roof of the existing building.

So, you see the project that has been completed at the school and will be handed over will not only aid in improving the school in the long run but will aid in its transmission to face to face learning in a safe environment.

We also look forward to the completion of the infant department that will benefit some 289 young ones who will after its completion be able to learn in a more comfortable and suitable environment.