

REMARKS BY
MR. OMAR SWEENEY
MANAGING DIRECTOR
JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND
FOR
HANDING OVER CEREMONY

- FOR
- FLANKER VIETNAM SQUARE-CENTRAL AVENUE
DRAINAGE
 - FLANKER PELE DRIVE DRAINAGE AND ROAD
CONSTRUCTION
 - FLANKER STORM WATER DRAINAGE-SEA OUTLET

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 5, 2015

AT

FLANKER COMMUNITY CENTRE
ST. JAMES

SALUTATIONS:

- ✓ Chairman, Mr. David Smalling- Community Member
- ✓ Dr. Horace Chang- Member of Parliament
- ✓ **Mr. Jesús Orus Baguena**- Head of Cooperation, Delegation of European Union
- ✓ **Ms. Marckada Williams/ Kuneute Woolery**
 - Representative from FLANCODAC Benevolent Society
- ✓ **Your Worship Mayor Glendon Harris**
- ✓ **Pastor Desmond Brackett**- Grace Temple Assembly of God
- ✓ Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon and greetings on behalf of the management and staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund.

So much of what we do at the Jamaica Social Investment Fund is focussed on improving access to services in underserved communities; and the improvement of roads and drainage are a significant part of this focus. The community of Flanker has been a significant beneficiary. In fact the Government of Jamaica in partnership with International Development Partners including the EU has invested approximately JMD 300 million over the past six (6) years. These investments were needed by the community for its development and we are pleased that as a community the infrastructure in Flanker has been transformed.

Today is an important day for the community of Flanker and we must recognize the members of the community, the development Committee, political representatives, the Parish Council, the EU and the JSIF team for the contributions made in getting us to this point.

Today we proudly hand over to the community the:

- ✓ Pele Drive Drainage and Road Construction
- ✓ Storm water Drainage-Sea Outlet and
- ✓ Vietnam Square-Central Avenue Drainage.

Together these three sub-projects represent an infrastructure investment of JA\$ 108 million, and was implemented under the European Union's Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP).

The European Union continues to be the largest donor of grant funds to the JSIF; and their support is critical to the work of the JSIF across communities.

These three projects sought to address the perennial flooding issues that plagued the Flanker community after heavy rainfall. The expanded drains can now manage the large volumes of water, and has increased its capacity to collect and transfer larger volumes of storm water while allowing for the trapping of all debris and disposing of water to the sea outlet.

The construction of the cobblestone road in the square not only assist with the drainage solution but also creates a wearing surface that makes the area more accessible by vehicular traffic.

Critical to these projects was the provision of maintenance training.

The Flanker community participated in the May 11 to May 15th, 2015 staging of the Disaster Preparedness and Maintenance Training conducted by the JSIF/PRP. The five nominated maintenance committee members were engaged in training sessions conducted by agencies such as:

- Jamaica Social Investment Fund (Proper Environmental Practices, Budgeting and Fundraising, Maintenance Planning, Facilities Management,
- The Jamaica Fire Brigade (Fire Prevention and Techniques in combating fires),
- The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (Disaster Preparedness and Risk Management), as well as,
- The Parish Council (Road and Drains Maintenance).

At the end of the four day training period the committee created a maintenance plan outlining the scheduled maintenance activities for the three (3) newly constructed roads and drainage systems within the Flanker community. They also received a

maintenance kit from the PRP to assist in the maintenance efforts.

Maintenance activities are on-going and the committee members continue to receive monitoring support from the PRP. The JSIF will hand-over these pieces of infrastructure to its' colleagues at the Parish Council who will have maintenance responsibility. However; it is of utmost importance that the community play their part in this maintenance. The persons trained must not only ensure that routine maintenance occurs or that the Parish Council is prompted to carry out maintenance; but they must encourage their fellow community members to act responsibly and to participate in keeping drains and roadways clean.

Infrastructure is the basic requirement of economic development. In fact, the only other major development component (outside of financial capital) which may trump infrastructure is the availability of adequate human capital.

While it does not directly produce goods and services it facilitates production in primary, secondary and tertiary economic activities by creating external economies.

It is an admitted fact that the level of economic development in any country directly depends on the development of its infrastructure.

In fact, inflows of foreign capital to any country are directly dependent to a great extent on the sufficiency and quality of the country's infrastructure.

On behalf of the management and staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), let me thank all our partners on these three important projects, and implore the members of the community to own them, and take pride in them while ensuring their continued maintenance.

Thank you all.

November 2, 2015

