



GREETINGS BY

MRS. SCARLETTE GILLINGS

MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE JAMAICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND

Signing of Contracts

Ministry of Education

Friday July 25, 2014

10:00am

Salutations

- **Rev. The Hon. Ronald Thwaites, MP**

Minister of Education

- **Mr. Mike Henry Member of Parliament Central Clarendon**
- **Mr. Richard Parchment – St. Elizabeth South Eastern**
- **Dr. Horace Chang – St. James North Western**
- **Ms. Marisa Dalrymple-Philibert – Trelawny Southern**
- **Mrs. Elaine Foster Allen Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education and JSIF Board Member**
- **Contractors**
- **Community Members**
- **JSIF Mangers and Staff**

I bring you very special greetings on behalf of the Board, Management and Staff of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund. It is a pleasure to be at the Ministry of Education today for this signing, as it speaks to our strong partnership.

I think an occasion such as this gives us a good opportunity to remind you of the JSIF mandate. JSIF was established over seventeen (17) years ago by the Government of Jamaica to channel and mobilize resources to community- based socio economic infrastructure and social services projects. Through a national partnership between central and local government, JSIF addresses the immediate demands of communities in a manner that is quick, efficient, effective, transparent and non-partisan.

From its inception, the JSIF has worked very closely with the Ministry of Education. Indeed, up to December 2013, JSIF has invested in 544 schools, 277 of which are early childhood facilities. This represents approximately 5 billion to expand, rehabilitate and equip these

institutions of learning for our very young. While education represents the Sector that we support the most (approximately 45%) In carrying out this mandate, the JSIF has garnered the financial support of development partners and the Government of Jamaica investing \$1.5 billion annually – primarily in infrastructure projects which are aimed at promoting sustainable development and which, additionally, foster public safety and peace.

We are guided by Vision 2030, under national goal 1 which outlines that Jamaicans should be empowered to achieve their fullest potential through world class education and training. It is in this regard, many of our programmes have been designed to empower the very young as well as young people who fall within the school leaving cohort.

The particular partnership which we will highlight today is that with the Caribbean Development Bank which, through its Community Investment Project (CIP) aims to improve infrastructure in education, health and transportation in targeted, rural communities throughout

Jamaica.

The contracts signed here today collectively value JMD \$160 million and will address the expansion and rehabilitation to nine schools, all of which are located in our rural parishes. The investments here speak to the priority being placed on rural development by the Government of Jamaica through investments in rural education. We are reminded that with more than 60% of the poor residing in rural areas, investments in education in these parts will represent sure returns in the future.

Importantly also is the support to enhance special needs facilities, as is the case with the May Pen School. Education for the most vulnerable is urgent priorities.

The contracts being signed here are:

- Clarence Brimm Basic School (**expansion and rehabilitation**)
valued at \$29, 569,979.95
- Dutch Hill Basic School(**expansion and rehabilitation)**
\$ 21,476,068.80

- Ulster Spring Basic School(**construction of a new School**) \$ 28,894,284.00
- Raymoth Notice Basic School (**expansion and rehabilitation**) \$ 14,726,599.00
- Austin Primary School 17,594,399.18, (**rehabilitation**)
- Bethlehem All Age Infant School \$11,180,562.75 (**rehabilitation**)
- Aberdeen Primary and Junior High School \$19,913,594.06(**Rehabilitation**)
- Glendevon Primary and Junior High School \$9,747,402.00.
(**Rehabilitation**)
- May Pen School of Special Education for Children with Intellectual Disabilities \$41,690,687.80 (**Design and Construction of Classroom block**)

The works across the schools include the construction of new sanitary facilities to replace pit latrines or upgraded sewerage facilities, expansion of classrooms and extensive renovation of the school

buildings and in one case a new construction. Other infrastructural works included upgrading of play areas and electrical works. In the case of basic schools we have also targeted the introduction of age appropriate facilities and furniture.

The focus has been on early childhood education because the Ministry of Education has repeatedly stressed that the quality of education children receive in their earliest years is critical to their overall attitude towards learning. Since inception JSIF has undertaken 277 basic and infant school related sub projects benefitting over twenty nine (29) thousand students, teachers and staff. These sub projects included construction, rehabilitation, provision of equipment, fencing and capacity building for school administrators and staff.

I cannot end without recognizing our partners at the Ministry of Education, the Hon. Minister, the Permanent Secretary, and their Technical teams; from inception JSIF and the MOE has worked in

tandem to support development in education. The partnership has indeed been a fruitful one.

I also wish to acknowledge the teachers, community members, parents, members of the school boards for their continued efforts.

To the Contractors, thank you for your participation in this process, as always we look forward to your good work, on budget and on time has to be the order of the day.

I'm sure we all look forward to the completion of these works in another couple months from now.

I thank you.