



The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development has embarked on a drive to modernize the operational capacity and infrastructure of the Poor Relief Department across the country's Thirteen (13) Municipal Corporations.

Portfolio Minister, Honourable Desmond McKenzie, says the rebranding will improve brand identity and result in a greater appreciation for the poor relief services.

“We will also be rebranding our Infirmaries and modernizing them, to ensure high-quality service to the less fortunate,

as part of a major overhaul of the current Poor Relief system. That whole process will be facilitated by the Human Services Bill 2018, which is now before Parliament,” he explains.

“Through the Human Services Bill, the Infirmaries will be renamed as Adult Residential Care Facilities.”

The Poor Relief Department is the social welfare arm of the Local Authorities that provides assistance to destitute persons. An infirmary is operated by each respective Local Authority except in the case of the Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation that runs the Vineyard Town Golden Age Home.

The Infirmaries and golden age home cater to individuals who are destitute and in need of institutional care. There is also outdoor poor relief services specifically for persons living in their homes but are in need of financial support and other services such as medical comfort, assistance for school children and burial assistance.

“The professional capacity of poor relief officers is being improved through the Human Services Training Programme where Fifteen (15) officers are now enrolled, as the second cohort of the programme and additional officers will also be brought into the system,” states Minister McKenzie. “More patient care assistants are being employed to improve the quality of care.”

The modernization push will also see the Board of Supervision abolished as an agency, which functioned as the decision-making arm for poor relief services. It will be replaced with a Human Services Division that will operate within the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development.

“The Human Services Division will be responsible for strengthening the administration of social welfare and leading the implementation of this modern approach to poor relief across Jamaica,” adds Minister McKenzie.

The Poor Relief Departments are being retooled, and in some instances undergo renovations to its physical spaces of operation. The retooling exercise is being financed by a draw-down of \$24 million from the Equalization Fund.

Modernization push for Poor Relief Operations Cont'd

“This modern approach includes equipping the Poor Relief Departments with computers, printers and tablets, as we move to thoroughly digitize operational efficiency.”

To date, Minister McKenzie has handed over tablets to the Poor Relief Officers and Councillors at seven (7) Municipal Corporations namely Clarendon, St. Mary, Westmoreland, St. James, Portland, St. Ann and Hanover.

PARISH UPDATE

Much needs to be done - St. Catherine Infirmary



Maintaining an uncontaminated and sterilized environment at the St. Catherine Infirmary is the aim of the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation and every step has so far been taken to ensuring that this objective is supported and sustained.

Several months ago, extensive rehabilitative and refurbishing works have been carried out and the new look is a sight for sore eyes. In fact, a new building to host social cases from the Spanish Town hospital is presently being erected. The Ministry of Health through the National Health Fund has been instrumental in this project.



Much more, however, needs to be done in other areas; and this has been the main matter under discussion when the Poor Relief Committee meets at its monthly sittings, in recent months.

In light of this, a tour of the premises was scheduled and conducted on Friday, May 25. The purpose of the tour was to look at other needs.

The findings were essentially in the section that has not yet been refurbished. This section is divided into three parts. There was dire need for beds, and clearly refurbishing and renovating on the whole interior of the building, to include the kitchenette, bathroom facility, staff locker, windows, doors etcetera. Termites' infestation and areas that are breeding ground for rats was also a cause for concern.

Representation from the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation included Chairman and Mayor of Spanish Town, Councillor Norman Scott, Chief Executive Officer Director of Administration, Inspector of Poor Assistant Matron and Councillors Lloyd Grant and Neil Powell.

The Board of Supervision representative was also present, as this Board has a vested interest with the care that is given to wards of the state.

The management of the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation has given assurance that these and other matters concerning the Infirmary will be dealt with in phases, as

soon as funds are available.

Get Ready! The 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Season is upon Us



With the 2018 Atlantic Hurricane season just days away, the Disaster Unit of the **St. Catherine Municipal Corporation**, on May 29, 2018 conducted a joint inspection at the three (3) road closure gates in the Bog Walk Gorge, St. Catherine.

The inspection was to ensure that all is well with the gates for the upcoming hurricane season, beginning June 01 to November 30.

The Jamaica Fire Brigade, Jamaica Constabulary Force, National Works Agency, Officers from

the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation and members of the community were represented at the site visit.

Even though it is said that a more normal Atlantic season is expected in 2018, with five to nine hurricanes in total, the St. Catherine Municipal Corporation urges citizens to *prepare*; this means, making a plan to stock up on supplies in case of emergency.

[Manchester Municipal Corporation](#)

Water Shop Opened in Marlie Hill (South Manchester)



Hon. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government & Community Development, Councillor Iceval Brown, Grove Town Division and Mayor Donavon Mitchell participate in the ribbon cutting exercise.

The official opening of the Marlie Hill Water Shop located in South Manchester was held on Monday, May 14, 2018. The main speaker was Minister of Local Government & Community Development, Honourable Desmond McKenzie.

Minister McKenzie says that the establishment of water shops is one of the means of addressing the chronic water shortage in the southern section of the island which usually suffers from severe drought conditions.

The next water shop for the parish will be constructed in the Bellefield Division Central Manchester.

Kingston and St. Andrew Municipal Corporation



On Sunday, May 6, the KSAMC held a Child Month Service in memory of our nation's children who have died under tragic or violent circumstances.

The service was in keeping with the Corporation's annual plans of coordinating and executing activities for Child Month which was celebrated under the theme, "A.F.F.I.R.M. ME!" A.F.F.I.R.M is an acronym for "Acknowledge me, (Be) a Friend Me, Favour Me, Influence me positively, Respect Me, and Motivate Me" and emerged out of calls by the nation's children for adults to recognise and validate their worth.



In 2008, the Secret Gardens Monument and Park was erect in memory of our children who have died under violent/tragic circumstances. The monument currently has **758** names up to 2015. On a profound level, we truly hope that these ceremonies will someday no longer be necessary as our nation will one day develop to be so respectful of the priceless value of our God-given children whose special lives and souls can never be replaced.

We appreciate the visionary leadership of His Worship the Mayor of Kingston, Senator Delroy Williams to afford Junior Councillors to lead this year's activities.

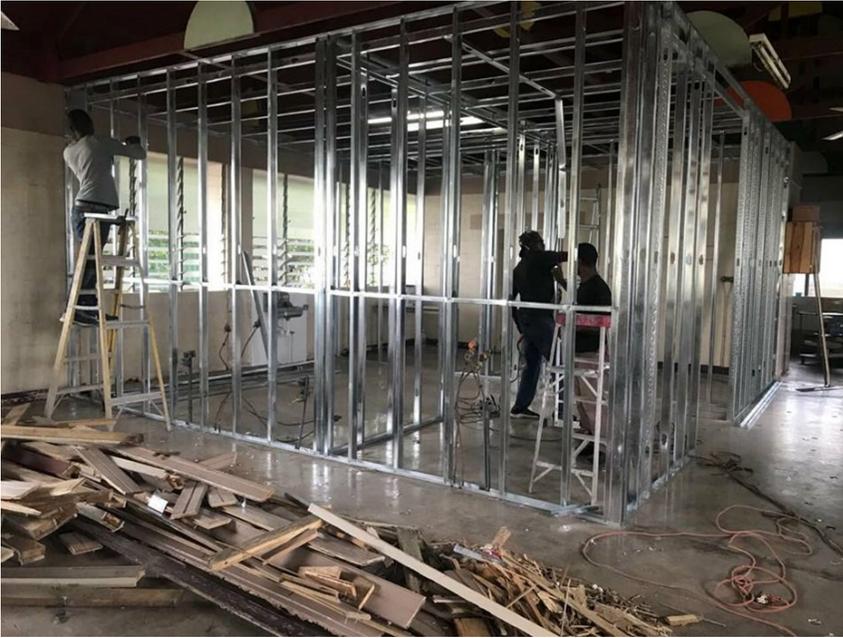
We would like to thank the JCF, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information and Minister of Local Government for their contribution and for their daily struggles on behalf of the protection and safety of our nation's children.

Thanks to all our partners, sponsors and other stakeholders for your participation and contribution towards the success of the event.

KSAMC's focus on the Bustamante Hospital for Children's Isolation Ward for Labour Day 2018

The Kingston and St Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC) undertook improvements to the Glen Owen Isolation Ward at the Bustamante Hospital for Children on May 23 for its 2018 Labour Day project.

The Glen Owen Isolation Ward project was one of several initiatives led by the KSAMC on Labour Day, after being made aware of the lack of proper amenities and structure at the facility.



The Glen Owen Ward currently lacked the necessary infrastructure to be an isolation ward in the true sense. As a consequence, the KSAMC intends to fully isolate one section which generally handles serious cases that would require treatment in a contained environment by installing air conditioned units as well as replacing windows and doors and providing a secure entrance to the Ward.

To date, the KSAMC has replaced existing wooden structure that was infested with termites with steel frames and concrete walls and has also installed three (3) brand new air-conditioning units at the isolation ward. The installation of the units will better allow the hospital to control the airflow within the ward, which before depended on opening windows for ventilation.

KSAMC's Junior Council Labour Day Project

KSAMC Junior Councillors participated in a beautification exercise at the Breezy Castle Roundabout (Flag Circle) in downtown Kingston on Labour Day. The project featured Junior Councillors creating a 200m track to promote exercise and a healthy lifestyle, installing park benches to encourage outside socialization, and a perimeter shrub to improve the scenery. These features will enhance the aesthetic of the environs and encourage citizens to utilize the space for daily recreational activities.

Beautification efforts are on going.



Clarendon Municipal Corporation

The High Commissioner of India Mr. M. Sevala Naik visited the Clarendon Municipal Corporation on June 06, 2018.

This is in an effort to forge a partnership and twinning of the town of May Pen with a city in India to promote best practices of both countries.

The partnership was as a result of a previous invitation extended to His Worship the Mayor to attend a Conference of PIO Parliamentarian at Pravasi, Bharatiya, Kendra, New Delhi, India on January 09, 2018.



Left: Mayor Winston Maragh and The High Commissioner of India Mr. M. Sevala Naik



Councillor Carlene Benjamin presenting a gift to Your Excellence M. Sevala Naik



St. Elizabeth Municipal Corporation

Over 60 labour day projects were registered in St. Elizabeth, for 2018 national labour day celebration under the theme, "Ramp it up, fix it up". Ramps were constructed at health centres and educational institutions across the parish.



The parish project was the Holland Basic school, at Holland Village, in the Lacovia Division in North West, St. Elizabeth,

Management and staff from the NWC came out in large numbers at the Parish project.

St. Thomas Municipal Corporation

His worship the Mayor, Councillor Michael Hue, at the Prospect Blue and white Housing scheme on one of his many Labour Day Tour.



St. Ann Municipal Corporation Drop-In Centre for the Homeless Opens in Ocho Rios (Article from the Jamaica Observer)



A drop-in centre was opened in Buckfield, Ocho Rios, in St. Ann on May 11, 2018 by Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Hon. Desmond McKenzie.

The Minister said homeless persons have been taking up valuable space at the island's hospitals, oftentimes at the expense of patients in dire need of medical care, and for this reason, drop-in centres for the homeless and mentally ill are being established.

"There are a number of hospitals where you will find persons who have now become permanent residents. Many of them have been abandoned by family members and, of course, we can't just turn them out. The creation of drop-in centres will definitely help to ease the pressure off the hospitals, making more beds available for patients," Mr. McKenzie said.

He noted that the Buckfield centre will give the less fortunate an opportunity to have a place "to shower and change clothes", in addition to getting cooked meals.

"We are going to try our best to get beds inside these centres, as we are not going to turn anybody away who wants somewhere to sleep... certainly not under my watch," the Minister assured.

"The expansion of national facilities that will provide care and comfort to our homeless citizens is an important aspect of the work of this Administration. From this building will emerge the services that will deliver relief and a sense of dignity to the homeless people of this parish," the Minister said.

Minister McKenzie noted that efforts are being fast-tracked to get other drop-in centres up and running, adding that the private sector has been playing an important role in the process. He further revealed that drop-in centres in Hanover, St Mary and St Elizabeth should be ready later this year.

A drop-in-centre is a service agency for either the mentally ill, homeless people, drug addicts or other groups. It is a place where they can go to obtain food and other services. It is also a



friendly environment for people who are struggling with mental health symptoms to recover. Minister McKenzie said the Ministry will be giving the centre at Buckfield a monthly subvention of \$150,000 to assist with operations.

"I am also advising the Mayor and his team at the St. Ann Municipality to purchase a vehicle to transport homeless persons to the facility... go and look for them and bring them here," he urged.

RAMP IT UP FIX IT UP



Senator Ruel Reid, looking on Minister of Labour and Social Security, Honourable Shahine Robinson and Mayor of St. Ann's Bay Cllr. Micheal Belnavis at the National Project.

St. Ann Municipal Corporation carried out parish Labour Day activities at the Free Hill Primary and Infant School.

As part of activities planned across the Island for National Labour Day, celebrated Wednesday May 23, 2018, the St. Ann Municipal Corporation carried out major improvement work on the old Principal's Cottage at the Free Hill Primary School in the Bamboo Division.

In keeping with the theme and thrust of Labour Day activities across the island work undertaken included: Stripping and painting of walls, replacing of roof, cutting of overgrown vegetation, white washing of walls where necessary among other things. Residents in and around the Free Hill Community supported the effort and helped in making the days planned activities a success. Minister of Education, Senator Rue Reid, His Worship the Mayor Councillor Michael Belnavis, Deputy Mayor of St. Ann's Bay and Councillor for the Bamboo Division, Sydney Stewart, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the St. Ann Municipal Corporation, Mr. Rovel Morris and other senior officers of the Corporation were also on hand to support the initiative. It is expected that the cottage when completed will be used as a skills training centre for the community.

The parish also hosted one of the two national projects at the St. Ann's Bay Infant School. Councillors within their various divisions also led Labour Day efforts.



Different phases of parish project.

From left: Senator Ruel Reid, Mrs. Esther Wauchope (Principal Free Hill Primary) Deputy Mayor Cllr. Sydney Stewart, Mrs. Hilary McBayne (SDC Parish Manager) and Acting Chief Executive Officer Mr. Rovel Morris.

ST. MARY MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Ground Breaking for Construction of the new Port Maria Market



In photo (left to right) vendor/butcher, Andrew Smith, Dutch Construction Ltd., Dr. Morais Guy M.P. Central St. Mary, Hon. Desmond McKenzie, Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Mayor of Port Maria Councillor Richard Creary, Custos Rotulorum for St. Mary, Hon. Errol Johnson and Germaine Smiley, Councillor Port Maria Division.



The St. Mary Municipal Corporation collaborated with the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development to officially break ground for construction of the new Port Maria Market. When completed, this modern infrastructure will be the first of its kind across the English Speaking Caribbean and will accommodate approximately 55 shop/stall spaces at the completion of phase 1.

Minister of Local Government and Community Development, Honourable Desmond McKenzie speaking at the Ground Breaking Ceremony warned Vendors that once the facility has been completed there will be a zero tolerance approach to street vending.

For Mayor of Port Maria, Councillor Richard Creary the ground breaking exercise was what he called ‘a very proud moment for him and for the Citizens’ of St. Mary’.

Phase one (1) of the project (construction of the ground floor) will cost approximately 56 million dollars and construction will be undertaken by Dutch Construction Ltd. It is slated for completion April 2019.

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Thank you for your continued support