

Symposium of Best Practice in Social and Community Development

Wednesday, November 2, 2022

The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel

9:00 am – 5:00 pm

Planning Institute of Jamaica

Director General's Greetings

The pleasure is mine to bring greetings on behalf of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), this the seventh staging of the Annual Best Practice Symposium. The Symposium is hosted by the PIOJ through its Community Renewal Programme (CRP) in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Ministry of National Security (MNS), and the Social Development Commission (SDC). The theme that will guide our discourse today is “Towards Community Renewal: Coherence in Coordination”.

Each year, the symposium is used to highlight what are considered to be best practices in community development as we, as a country, seek to optimise the use of our limited resources, to address the multiplicity of challenges that face us, in our efforts to restore our volatile and vulnerable community spaces.

Two primary approaches are being pursued as mechanisms for highlighting and encouraging the use of Best Practices:

1. The first is exemplified in this annual symposium, where we call all stakeholders in community development, to focus on social and community interventions/investments that have worked, and how these can be replicated for maximum impact going forward.
2. The second, which the PIOJ is embracing, is to have an electronic platform, where best practices can be stored and retrieved as needed. This is an involved process that includes, inter alia, development and agreement on definitions of terminology; agreement on what should be regarded as a best practice; and ongoing dialogue among stakeholders with a view to unearthing and documenting best practices that should be highlighted across all collaborating entities, whether government or non-government.

For this year's symposium, the focus remains on coordination, a word that is clear in meaning but seems difficult to execute. However, we continue to believe in the vision, thereby maintaining our effort to help partners align their efforts in a coherent and effectively coordinated framework for delivering social interventions/investments in the renewal of our CRP communities.

So, as we highlight best practices, it is our hope that community development practitioners will replicate these practices to achieve the desired outcome – renewal of our underserved community spaces. Fulfilment of this vision of renewal will support the achievement of Vision 2030 Jamaica, to make “*Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business*”.

It will require us coming together, having frank but respectful discussions through which we identify challenges and impediments, and ensure action that will enable us to overcome these obstacles. We will each have to respond to the call for action around these collectively defined solutions. Can you see the vision? Seeing the vision involves us voluntarily coming together, Let us also be mindful of the existing coordinating mechanisms around which we should coalesce. These include the Citizen Security Plan (CSP), the Community Renewal Programme (CRP), which provides support to the CSP in coordinating activities within the community spaces, and the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), which is coordinating interventions among the Zones of Special Operation (ZOSO) communities.

I close by thanking our partners, IDB, JSIF, MNS, and SDC for their continued demonstration of what it means to live the vision of community development through improved coordination, harmonization and collaboration. Let us continue the collaboration to make “*Jamaica, the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business*”.