

National Poverty Reduction Programme

Capacity-Building Workshop

March 25–26, 2021

Remarks

Wayne Henry, PhD, JP

Director General

Planning Institute of Jamaica

- Chairman of the National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC), Mr Easton Williams,
- Special Guest Presenter, Ms Melisa March
- Members of the NPRPC, Working Groups and Special Committees,
- Students from the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies (SALISES)
- NPRP Implementing Partners
- PIOJ colleagues
- Ladies and Gentlemen...Good morning all!

It brings me great pleasure to greet you this morning, on the second day of this two-day capacity-building workshop for key stakeholders of the National Poverty Reduction Programme. From all indications, the workshop is proceeding well, and there is a lot of food for thought as we all seek to strengthen our resolve and efforts to ensure greater levels of efficiency, reach and outcomes for poverty reduction. It is therefore quite fitting that the theme of this workshop is centred around **“Advancing Poverty Reduction through Collaboration, Partnership, and Monitoring and Evaluation”**. The need for stronger collaboration and partnership is one of the critical reasons why a National Poverty Reduction Programme exists. It is one of the key pillars of a concerted effort by the Government of Jamaica to implement important strategies and actions in a systematic manner that involves all players. This is in keeping with the National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty

Reduction Programme (2017). Similarly, Monitoring and Evaluation is the important element that will tell us whether we are doing the right things and if we are doing them right. Without M&E we will be unable to identify what we need to build and improve on.

Let me assure you that Social Protection and Poverty Reduction continue to be priority areas of the Government and reinforce that any effort to achieve developed county status and economic growth, must be inclusive. The past year has seen challenges in various forms, particularly the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, that have threatened to erode gains made in many areas including poverty reduction and improving quality of life of the most vulnerable. Notwithstanding, we must continue efforts to identify those in need, connect them to well-needed resources and opportunities, while building their capacities to ensure the cycle of poverty is broken. The NPRP is a model of a multi-dimensional approach to poverty reduction, which involves:

1. Addressing extreme poverty and basic needs
2. Economic empowerment and human capital development
3. Psychosocial, cultural, and normative advancement
4. Basic community infrastructure, and
5. Institutional strengthening.

The range of programmes and interventions covered are quite comprehensive, and the role of your entities (both government and non-government partners) in this process is fundamental.

As we conclude the first Medium-term Programme under the NPRP, I would like to commend everyone who has been a part of the process of dialogue, partnership building and implementation. Your input has not gone unnoticed and is evidenced in the lives that have been improved as a result. As head of the organization that has responsibility for coordinating this very important programme, I am pleased to see the progress made to date but recognize the need to develop further synergies as we commence implementation of a new three-year Medium-term Programme cycle in April 2021. It is for this reason that this workshop is very timely and important.

Building capacity often requires many types of resources: financial, human, and infrastructure to name a few. While these are necessary, let us not underestimate the importance of capacity building through a common vision, and employ strong determination to explore avenues to strengthen collaboration, partnership, and Monitoring & Evaluation. The PIOJ looks forward to collaborating with you all in the new programme cycle. Please accept best wishes for a very productive and beneficial workshop! Continue to observe the protocols and keep safe, God Bless you all.

Thank you.

PRCU, PIOJ

March 22, 2021