



# JAMAICA: MONTEGO BAY URBAN PROFILE



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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

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## FOREWORD



According to research published in UN-Habitat's<sup>1</sup> flagship report, *The State of the World's Cities 2010-2011*, all developing regions, including the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, will have more people living in urban than rural areas by the year 2030. With half the world's

population already living in urban areas, the challenges we face in the battle against urban poverty, our quest for cities without slums, for cities where women feel safer, for inclusive cities with power, water and sanitation, and affordable transport, for better planned cities, and for cleaner, greener cities is daunting.

But as this series shows, there are many interesting solutions and best practices to which we can turn. After all, the figures tell us that during the decade 2000 to 2010, a total of 227 million people in the developing countries moved out of slum conditions. In other words, governments, cities and partner institutions have collectively exceeded the slum target of the Millennium Development Goals twice over and ten years ahead of the agreed 2020 deadline.

Asia and the Pacific stood at the forefront of successful efforts to reach the slum target, with all governments in the region improving the lives of an estimated 172 million slum dwellers between 2000 and 2010.

In sub-Saharan Africa though, the total proportion of the urban population living in slums has decreased by only 5 per cent (or 17 million people). Ghana, Senegal, Uganda, and Rwanda were the most successful countries in the sub-region, reducing the proportions of slum dwellers by over one-fifth in the last decade.

Some 13 per cent of the progress made towards the global slum target occurred in Latin America and the Caribbean, where an estimated 30 million people have moved out of slum conditions since the year 2000.

Yet, UN-Habitat estimates confirm that the progress made on the slum target has not been sufficient to counter the demographic expansion in informal settlements in the developing world. In this sense, efforts to reduce the numbers of slum dwellers are neither satisfactory nor adequate.

As part of our drive to address this crisis, UN-Habitat is working with the European Commission and the Brussels-based Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group to support sustainable urban development. Given the urgent and diverse needs, we found it necessary to develop a tool for rapid assessment and strategic planning to guide immediate, mid and long-term interventions. And here we have it in the form of this series of publications.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is based on the policy dialogue between UN-Habitat, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission which dates back to the year 2002. When the three parties met at UN-Habitat headquarters in June 2009, more than 200 delegates from over 50 countries approved a resounding call on the international community to pay greater attention to these urbanization matters, and to extend the slum upgrading programme to all countries in the ACP Group.

It is worth recalling here how grateful we are that the European Commission's 9th European Development Fund for ACP countries provided EUR 4 million (USD 5.7 million at June 2011 rates) to enable UN-Habitat to conduct the programme which now serves 59 cities in 23 African countries, and more than 20 cities in six Pacific, and four Caribbean countries.

Indeed, since its inception in 2008, the slum upgrading programme has achieved the confidence of partners at city and country level in Africa, the Caribbean and in the Pacific. It is making a major contribution aimed at helping in urban poverty reduction efforts, as each report in this series shows."

I wish to express my gratitude to the European Commission and the ACP Secretariat for their commitment to this slum upgrading programme. I have every confidence that the results outlined in this profile, and others, will serve to guide the development of responses for capacity building and investments in the urban sector.

Further, I would like to thank each Country Team for their continued support to this process which is essential for the successful implementation of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joan Clos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Dr. Joan Clos**  
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

<sup>1</sup> UN-Habitat - United Nations Human Settlements Programme

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme is an accelerated and action-oriented urban assessment of needs and capacity-building gaps at the city level. The programme is supported by the European Commission's European Development Fund and it is being implemented in 59 cities of 23 African countries, 4 Pacific countries, 3 Caribbean countries, and 21 Pacific and Caribbean cities. The programme uses a structured approach where priority interventions are agreed upon through consultative processes. The programme methodology consists of three phases: (1) a rapid participatory urban profiling at national and local levels, focusing on governance, local economic development, land, gender, environment, slums and shelter, basic urban services, and waste management, and proposed interventions; (2) detailed priority proposals; and (3) project implementation.

The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme in Jamaica encompasses a national profile, as well as those for May Pen, Montego Bay and Old Harbour, each published as a separate report. This is the Montego Bay city report and it constitutes a general background; a synthesis of the five themes - governance, environment, slums and shelter, gender and HIV/AIDS, and urban safety; and priority project proposals.

## BACKGROUND

Montego Bay is the most urban setting in St. James. An early map of Jamaica has Montego Bay listed as "Bahia de Manteca" or "Lard Bay," so called because of the lard making industry made possible by the hunting of wild boars which populated the surrounding hills.

Montego Bay was a sugar and banana town but the sugar factories were closed and bananas are now shipped out from Kingston and Port Antonio.

Montego Bay is Jamaica's second largest city. According to the Planning Institute of Jamaica, Montego Bay is also among the top five fastest growing urban centres in the country. The growth is spurred by tourism, which is the major foreign exchange earner for the parish of St. James. The high number of tourist attractions and resorts in Montego Bay provide employment for hundreds of Jamaicans. Over 80 per cent of the entire parish is dependent on tourism.

From the early 1970s, researchers noticed the "strong spatial variations in income and wealth [which] characterize the city", (Eyre, 1972). Potter and Evans also noted the rapid growth in squatter settlements which were mushrooming within close proximity to the centre of Montego Bay, a phenomenon today. Three of these communities will be characterized in the later sections of this report.

## ADMINISTRATION

The St. James Parish Council is responsible for the management of the area. It is also in charge of urban governance and land management. See "Table 1" below for parish council divisions in St. James. Montego Bay covers the entire North-western Division comprising of six constituencies.

### ST. JAMES

The mandate of the St. James Parish Council is to promote sustainable social, physical and environmental development and to facilitate the economic and financial viability of the Parish and the Council. The Council works to facilitate the orderly development of land through ensuring that the public adheres to all development regulations. The Planning Unit and the Roads and Works Department are the primary executing units for parish council planning related matters.

TABLE 1. DEPARTMENTS OF THE MUNICIPALITY

DEPARTMENT	ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY
Secretary Manager	The Secretary Manager's office is responsible for the overall coordination and management of the Parish Council.
Administration	The Parish's Administration Department provides information on making job applications at the Council.
Commercial Services	Access Council's commercial services including cemeteries. Services licenses and car parks.
Roads and Works	Builds and maintains parish roads, bridges, minor water supplies, and more.
Finance	Funding and expenditure at the Parish Council.
Poor Relief Planning	Services offered to the poor and indigent, including the infirmary.
Disaster Relief	Planning and Disaster Relief Departments.
Community Relations	News and events, community, organizations, citizen rights links, and route taxi listing.

## URBAN SERVICES

In previous years, parish councils were responsible for more services than they are today. However, the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development is conducting a reform process. This is aimed at “transforming thirteen marginalized Local Authorities into institutions with the requisite capacity and resources to provide the range of functions and services for which they are legally responsible.” (Source: Ministry of Local Government and Community Development. 2006)

Below is a list of the responsibilities and capabilities of parish councils.

- Commercial Services – cemeteries, licences, markets, animal pounds, public lavatories, and municipal car parks
- Planning – electrification, street lights, communication services, subdivision approvals, and street naming and numbering
- Roads and Works – manholes, water supply and maintenance of roads, bridges and drains
- Building permits and inspections
- Disaster Planning and Management
- Public Health and Sanitation – landscaping, provision of health services and solid waste management

Please note that entities and services which are not the responsibility of parish councils, among others, include: policing services, fire fighting, provision of education, construction and maintenance of major roads, and major water supplies.

## MUNICIPAL BUDGETING AND FINANCE

Local governments regularly prepare two types of budget; one recurrent and the other capital. As part of the St. James Parish Council’s drive to involve residents, the recurrent budget process includes input from members of the public from a series of meetings conducted each November.

- Recurrent/operations budget – the operations budget is revenue and expenditure for the coming year, covering administration costs (salaries),
- The capital budget – the 3-year long range plan of all capital expenditures during the following three years, including the acquisition of land, construction of buildings, construction of roads and minor water supplies, and purchase of major equipment. The

capital budget shows how the expenditure are to be financed and any resulting operation costs/savings expected:

**TABLE 2. RECURRENT BUDGET PROCESS**

MONTH	ACTIVITY
September	The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development puts out a budget call to all parish councils. All chief officers prepare a detailed estimate of the requirements of their respective departments for the forthcoming financial year by the 1st day of October.
October	The director of finance analyses expenditure patterns in the previous year, then prepares a draft budget for the next year which takes into consideration the inflation rate. The mayor and secretary/ manager reviews the draft budget.
November	Recurrent budget meetings are held with the public. Community members are provided with an opportunity to receive clarification or provide feedback to the parish council. The Finance Committee reviews and approves draft budget. The budget is submitted to the Ministry by 1 December.
December	The Ministry considers submissions from all parishes in the national budget debate.
January to May	By May, the Ministry delivers the final budget with amendments to the parishes. This Ministry-approved version becomes the working budget for the parish.  Finance Department. Capital budget process.
August	The superintendent of roads and works, being the chief technical officer of the council, prepares the capital requirements of the parish for the forthcoming financial year by 31 August.
October	The budget is reviewed by the mayor and secretary/manager and approved by the Finance and Administration Committee.
November	The budget is submitted to the Ministry along with the recurrent budget for final approval.



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## HOUSING

Unlike many planned urban centres, Montego Bay's development has been random. Attention was not given to physical or social planning until the late 1960s.

Several wealthy families own most of the land in Montego Bay. Their control of the land influenced the land use pattern and by extension, the growth and development of the city. Most rich families live on the outskirts of the city (a 10-15 minute drive away) while the poor live in the city. In most planned cities, the upper class lives in close proximity to the urban centre. The Central Business District is the hub of activity in Montego Bay. The occupants of residential areas vary in social status.

## PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

Poor sanitation and waste disposal (both solid and human waste) characterizes most of the city's informal settlements. As a safeguard against the outbreak of diseases related to improper disposal of waste, interventions are ongoing in some of the communities included in this study. One such intervention is the Rapid Impact Health and Environment Project that the Ministry of National Security is undertaking under its Citizens Security and Justice Programme.

## ECONOMIC SITUATION

Parochial Revenue Funds (funds raised from the proceeds of property tax receipts and motor vehicle licenses) are allocated specifically for public cleansing and garbage disposal, street lighting, fire services, parks, and street beautification. Recently, the national Government passed a legislative amendment allowing these funds to go to "any other service or programmes authorized by the minister after consultation with the relevant parish". Receipts from the motor vehicle licences also go towards road maintenance.

- **Property Tax receipts**

Each council receives 90 per cent of the property tax receipts. The remaining 10 per cent is placed in an equalization fund.

- **Motor Vehicle License Fees**

One-third of the fees collected from motor vehicle licences go to the Ministry of Finance for general revenue, while the rest is remitted to the Ministry of Local Government. The remaining fees are sent out to all the parish councils, based on the number of kilometres of road in each parish. This plan is an attempt to distribute funds fairly to each parish, as some may have many roads but fewer registered drivers. St. James collects more funds from licenses due to the size of the parish and the fewer roads sited there. In addition, many drivers, including those from surrounding parishes, are registered in Montego Bay. Thus, some of these funds are redistributed to other larger, less populated parishes.

About 20 per cent of the two-thirds are reserved for the Parish Infrastructure Development Programme. This is an international loan programme whose funds are spent on infrastructure, and which requires a financial contribution from the national Government.

## EQUALIZATION FUND

The purpose of the Equalization Fund is to provide budgetary (capital) support to the parish councils. Comprised of 10 per cent of the property tax receipts, funds are distributed according to parish needs, through the Department of Local Government.

## GOVERNMENT GRANTS

The central Government provides General Assistance Grants and Specific Grants to cover various council expenses.

### 1. General Assistance Grants

These funds go towards services for retiring benefits, executive direction and administration, political directorate, and roads and technical services.

### 2. Specific Grants

These are grants that cover the exact amount of service costs. Poor relief (indoor and outdoor) and minor water supplies fall under this category.

## SELF-FINANCING SERVICES

These are services that are expected to finance themselves and to provide general revenue for the council. All such services are contained within the Commercial Services Unit. These are markets, cemeteries, abattoir, transport, and car parks.

## RECURRENT BUDGET

The operations budget is revenue and expenditure for the coming year, covering administration costs (salaries).

## CAPITAL BUDGET

The capital budget is the long-range plan of all capital expenditures during the following five years, including acquisition of land, construction of buildings, construction of roads and minor water supplies, and purchase of major equipment.

The capital budget shows how the expenditures are to be financed and any resulting operation cost/savings expected.

## CASE STUDY

### Tourism Enhancement Fund

The Tourism Enhancement Act became law on 22 December 2004. This Act provides the legal basis for the Ministry of Tourism to establish a mechanism for the collection of a small fee from incoming airline and cruise passengers to be placed into a dedicated fund for the sole purpose of implementing the recommendations emanating from the Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development, 2002.

Specifically, the Act allows for:

- A Tourism Enhancement Fee of USD 10 to be charged to incoming airline passengers and USD 2 to be charged to cruise passengers,
- The money collected to be paid into a dedicated Tourism Enhancement Fund established as a body corporate falling under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry and Tourism.

The Board of Directors with 13 members was approved by Cabinet on 31 January 2005.

The Tourism Enhancement Act is expected to provide a pool of dedicated funds to improve the tourism product. The broad areas of interest include resort development, as well as product development and beautification. Specific projects targeted for funding are required to satisfy such criteria as having the capacity to be self-sustaining, boosting economic prosperity, increasing competitiveness of the tourism product, promoting resort development, and focusing on heritage and culture.

## BACKGROUND

### INTRODUCTION

#### Urban Profiling

The Montego Bay Urban Profiling consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions; focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at local and national levels.

The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders. These stakeholders include local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, and academics. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction. Urban profiling is being implemented in 30 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

### METHODOLOGY

**The Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme** consists of three phases:

**Phase one** concerns the rapid profiling of urban conditions at national and local levels. The capital city, a medium-sized city and a small town are selected and studied to provide a representative sample in each country. The analysis focuses on governance, urban safety, slums and shelter, gender and HIV/AIDS, and environment.

Information is collected through standard interviews and discussions with institutions and key informants in order to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the national and local urban set-ups. The findings are presented and refined during city and national consultation workshops and consensus is reached regarding priority interventions. National and city reports synthesize the information collected and outline ways forward to reduce urban poverty through holistic approaches.

**Phase two** builds on the priorities identified through pre-feasibility studies and develops detailed capacity-building and capital investment projects.

**Phase three** implements the projects developed during the two earlier phases, with an emphasis on skills development, institutional strengthening and replication.

This report presents the outcomes of **Phase One** at the local level in Montego Bay

### URBAN PROFILING IN MONTEGO BAY

The urban profiling in Montego Bay is one of four similar exercises conducted in Jamaica; the other urban profiling centres are May Pen, Old Harbour and nationally.

### REPORT STRUCTURE

This report consists of:

1. a general background of the urban sector in Montego Bay, based on the findings of the Montego Bay Assessment Report, a desk study and interviews.
2. A synthetic assessment of the following main thematic areas: governance, urban safety, slums and shelter, gender and HIV/AIDS, and environment, in terms of the institutional set-up, regulatory framework, resource mobilization and performance. This second section also highlights agreed priorities and includes a list of identified projects.
3. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis and an outline of priority project proposals for each theme. The proposals include beneficiaries, partners, estimated costs, objectives, activities and outputs.

## GOVERNANCE

In 2001, the St. James Parish Council voted to establish the Montego Bay City Council. The City Council is chaired by a councillor chosen by members of the City Council. With the achievement of full municipality status, the Council's chairman will be the directly-elected mayor. During the initial formulation period, the City Council will function as a committee of the Council. The Council also includes members of civil society.

Councillors have a duty to represent the citizenry of their electoral division, of which there are 17, and also to serve the entire Parish. Once elected, a councillor is free to make his or her own decisions and to vote as he or she thinks best, but has the moral duty to consider the wishes and needs of the electorate. All councillors are subject to a code of conduct outlining a declaration of policy and purpose; and prohibited conduct including conflicts of interest and acceptance of gifts and hospitality. Various Acts, including the Corruption (Prevention) Act and the Parish Councils Act, provide guidelines under which Council members are to operate.

### PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The local government should be the authority closest and most accessible to the public. The St. James Parish Council initiated a website aimed to help the public locate and negotiate their services and information. This Council is pursuing an open and accountable local government process, and encourages the entire public to participate.

Other initiatives include:

- The broadcasting of monthly Council meetings.
- Establishment of a toll-free number 1-888-666-8346 for callers seeking information, and to express concerns, or make recommendations and suggestions regarding matters pertaining to Council.
- An annual series of Community Forums in all divisions. Members of the public are invited to these meetings attended by councillors, the mayor and senior staff from all departments.
- Development of the Parish website.
- Production of a series of brochures outlining general and departmental Parish Council services.
- The St. James Parish Council also encourages joint meetings with the citizens associations, Community Development Committees and non-governmental organizations in order to be better informed on what is happening in the community.

- The proposed Montego Bay City Council is a part of local government reform. This body aims to deal with urban concerns and will function as a standing committee of Council until the achievement of full municipal status.
- The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development is reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the parish council system.

### CASE STUDY

#### **Department of Local Government Receives European Union Grant for Six Traditional Banana Growing Parishes**

The Department of Local Government, in collaboration with the St. James Parish Council, has successfully applied for and received USD 1.9 million for six local authorities, under the European Union Banana Support Programme

The grant was sought to support the project titled "The Rural Economic and Social Infrastructure Support Project for Jamaica". Communities in the six traditional banana growing parishes of Portland, St. Thomas, St. Mary, St. James, Clarendon, and St. Catherine, will benefit directly from the project. Each council, in conjunction with the affected communities, will identify and design projects which will be implemented at the local level. The projects will deal with some of the economic fallout resulting from the discontinuation of the European Union's preferential banana agreement with Jamaica.

Each parish council will be the main driving force behind the attainment of the agreed goals and objectives of the programme. Councils will ensure that their staff representatives are nominated for the planned training and development activities, implementing day-to-day activities, allocating predetermined resources as budgeted, supporting the Project Management Unit in ensuring that the European Union and Government of Jamaica procurement policies are adhered to, and providing technical support to the final beneficiaries.



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### CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

The Rural Economic and Social Infrastructure Support Project for Jamaica will attend to a number of issues including:

- The lack of local level institutional capacity development which includes project support, implementation and oversight, parish council and local sustainable development planning, and community-based organizations/representative groups.
- The inability to afford usually expensive capital-intensive targeted engineering works.
- Construction and rehabilitation of community economic infrastructure and facilities for sustainable Livelihood Social and Economic Reintegration Support programmes.
- Community-based organizations' inability to implement targeted economic enhancement sub-projects.
- Some of the stipulations of the grant agreement are that all projects must be completed within 18 months. In addition, the St. James Parish Council is required to provide the European Union with interim reports (as well as a final report) providing a full account of all aspects of the action's implementation.

The agreement was signed by the secretary/manager of the St. James Parish Council and the European Union representative, with endorsement by the Planning Institute of Jamaica on 23 December 2008. A formal signing ceremony took place on 11 March 2009 at the Wexford Hotel in Montego Bay (Office of the Prime Minister).

### ONGOING PROJECT

The Parish Infrastructure Development Project funded by the Inter-American Development Bank and the Government of Jamaica, in 2004/05.

The original loan commitment of USD 50 million from the International Development Bank to the Parish Infrastructure Development Project facilitated the extension of the programme to September 2006. This allowed for the use of uncommitted resources for the implementation of policy reform at the national level, institutional strengthening at the ministry level and capacity-building at the local level.

# URBAN SAFETY

## THE DRUGS FOR GUN LINK IN MONTEGO BAY

One of the associations made between informal settlements and urban safety is that the informal settlements are havens for criminal elements. In Montego Bay, the inaccessibility of some of the informal settlements makes it difficult to provide security in and around these areas.

The potential hotspots identified by the St. James Police High Command include communities such as Norwood, Salt Spring, Quarry, Bottom Pen, Blood Lane, Canterbury, and Green Pond. Jointly, they accounted for over 80 per cent of the 600 murders committed in St. James over the past five years.

## THE INFAMOUS "BATTLE OF CANTERBURY"

In October 2003, armed thugs engaged security forces in an eight-hour shootout. Security officials recovered several firearms; they tied the weapons to the drug trade. (Source: Guns and drugs ... the Montego Bay link published: Western Bureau Sunday | April 9, 2006).

## INFORMAL DEVELOPMENTS ... A HAVEN FOR SOCIAL ILLS

For many, the current crime problem now plaguing Montego Bay had its genesis with the emergence of informal communities in and around Montego Bay - some 19 of them primarily located in the north west area of St. James constituency. The pioneers of these informal settlements are believed to be honest people who came to Montego Bay seeking jobs as the tourism trade began to expand in the early 1980s. However, limited housing solutions forced their movement inland where they could "capture" land.

## POOR INFRASTRUCTURE

As the unplanned developments expanded and became more congested, some areas gradually became dens of inequity as the absence of proper infrastructure - roads, proper housing, street lights and other amenities - opened the door to social ills such as the theft of electricity and water.



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These unplanned communities were primarily made up of dirt tracks and homes without proper addresses and hidden by zinc fences. With the security forces unable to police these communities properly, they became attractive to criminals.

Based on The Gleaner's (a Kingston daily) investigations, most of the criminal gangs that have emerged in St. James over the last six years began in these informal settlements.

St. James Police statistics show that 80 per cent of the murders committed in and around Montego Bay are the work of criminal gangs operating out of inner city areas. Since the Parish broke the 100-murder mark for the first time in 2003 with 106 murders, the annual figures read as follows:

TABLE 3: ANNUAL MURDER RATE IN MONTEGO BAY

YEAR	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
MURDERS	106	129	139	178	187	216	240	41 to date

Produced from data adapted from Gleaner Forum. Montego Bay: Breeding ground for crime. April 8, 2010

## SLUMS AND SHELTER



### “SQUATTING” AND LAND TENURE SYSTEM

Shanty towns and other types of informal shelter are a common occurrence in the city of Montego Bay. Authorities have found relocating these communities politically impossible. These communities represent a large proportion of urban residents, particularly since most governments have failed to offer an alternative (Ferguson, 1996).

In Jamaica, squatting represents the main means of informal sector land development; guiding principle for squatting is to maximize the chances of remaining on the land once it is “captured”.

### THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

Squatters use many strategies to stay on captured land. In considering where to squat, they select land from which eviction seems less likely. Once they occupy a piece of land, they must continue, physically, to hold it. Often, squatters construct a temporary dwelling from second-hand materials, sometimes overnight. They then get a friend or relative to live in this temporary dwelling and use it as the shell with which to begin construction of a more permanent structure.

Squatters negotiate with landowners and lobby politicians to remain on the “captured” land or to exchange their current site for another. If the land has

been laid out for a government developed subdivision - as have parts of Norwood and Rosemount in Montego Bay - they typically build within the pegs to avoid destruction of their houses (which might lie in the future roadway of an upgrading scheme) and to avoid problems with land titling. Once residents obtain improvements from Government or reach an agreement with a private landowner, the community becomes more permanent. This picture of urban squatting in Jamaica emerged from many interviews for this study. It is also reflected in Gordon, Diane (1990), Rural Housing Policy in Jamaica: Dimensions in Rural Development and Planning, Masters Thesis, University of Guelph, School of Rural Planning and Development, Guelph, Canada, 238 pages.

There are 71 informal settlements in Montego Bay, according to the Rapid Assessment of Squatting in Jamaica Report by the Ministry of Water and Housing. For this study, the focus was on Canterbury, North Gully and Perry Street.

Land ownership is an issue as there is a mix of private and public land on which people settle illegally. The Government is unable to meet the growing demand for low-income housing. The private sector, however, is focused on ensuring profit and does not see the provision of low-income housing as profitable. Hence the continued demand for housing.

## INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

### Community and Infrastructure Development

The Roads and Works Department is the engineering division of the St. James Parish Council. The department's main function is to facilitate the efficient delivery of services in relation to the formal development and maintenance of:

- Parochial infrastructure, such as roads and bridges,
- Public amenities, which include public sanitary conveniences, abattoirs, markets, and cemeteries,
- Minor water supply operations,
- Car parks and municipal buildings.

Additionally, an important goal of the planning department within parish councils is to provide orderly development within the parish. Random and haphazard development does not take into consideration the health and security of a community. Rules and regulations are critical to ensure that communities have access to water, electricity and sewerage facilities. Roads need to be laid out so that traffic is properly controlled, and buildings must be able to withstand earthquakes and other natural disasters.

Montego Bay is one of the fastest growing cities in the Caribbean, and these issues have never been more vital to the well-being of the community. Working in conjunction with the National Environment and Planning Agency, the Montego Bay Parish Council strives to shape the city in the healthiest way possible.

### REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Legislation guiding the Planning Unit and the Physical Planning and Environment Committee include:

- The Building Act
- Parochial Markets Act
- Building Codes
- The Places of Amusement Act
- Control of Advertisement Regulations
- The Pound Act
- Development Order
- Preservation of Trees Regulations
- The Land Surveyors Act
- The Public Cemetery Management Act

- The Litter Act
- The Public Health Act
- The Local Improvements Act
- The Registration of Titles Act
- National Land Policy
- The Town and Communities Act
- National Physical Plan
- The Town and Country Planning Act
- The Natural Resource Conservation Act
- The Town Nuisances Prevention Act
- The Parish Council Act
- The Water Supply Act
- The Parish Councils Building Act

Through these legislations, the local authority is able to enforce law and order, collect much needed revenue and ensure the protection of lives and property. Unfortunately, the local authority lacks the manpower to enforce these legislations effectively.

## PERFORMANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### STATISTICS

Parish councils and the Ministry of Local Government are working to reduce the time taken for processing subdivision applications. As Table 4 below shows, since 1997, the time taken to process applications has dropped by 65 per cent.

TABLE 4: AVERAGE TIME TAKEN TO PROCESS A SUBDIVISION

YEAR	TIME (DAYS)	SHORTEST TIME	LONGEST TIME
2000	382	252	529
1999	637	205	928
1998	681	208	1078
1997	1107	202	1590

## GENDER AND HIV/AIDS

In Jamaica, 12,520 persons were reported with HIV/AIDS between January 1982 and December 2007. About 27,000 men and women were estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS by December 2008, accounting for an adult prevalence rate of about 1.5 per cent. There has been no significant change in this figure for the past decade. However, there are population groups where the epidemic is concentrated.

Despite a slowed HIV/AIDS prevalence rate and a high HIV/AIDS prevention knowledge level, exposure to risk

during sex remains a challenge particularly among the workforce. In Jamaica, reported HIV/AIDS prevalence is highest in tourism/resort areas such as St. Ann and St. James and large urban centres such as Kingston. HIV/AIDS transmission is predominantly through heterosexual contact and people living with HIV/AIDS have been reported in all occupational groups and social classes. Transmission is driven by behaviour, economics, socio-cultural attitudes and limited access to relevant social services: (Source: HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy 2008 - Cabinet Office)

TABLE 5: JAMAICA HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC UPDATE 2004

### SUMMARY OF AIDS CASES BY PARISH IN JAMAICA (BY DATE OF REPORTING) 1982 – JUNE 2004

PARISH	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	RATE PER 100000 POPULATION
Kingston and St. Andrews	3 594	547.4
St. Thomas	157	168.3
Portland	149	182.8
St. Mary	254	225.2
St. Ann	512	300.6
Trelawny	209	283.6
St. James	1368	766.7
Hanover	206	306.1
Westmoreland	395	279.5
St. Elizabeth	187	126.7
Manchester	215	112.8
Clarendon	310	128.0
St. Catherine	1090	224.2
Parish Not Known	19	0.0
Overseas Address	10	0.0

# ENVIRONMENT

## DISASTER AND URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Activities associated with disaster management are dealt with at the parish level through a Parish Disaster Committee, which operates out of the St. James Parish Council's office. The Parish employs a coordinator for all activities geared towards awareness, prevention and response. The coordinator works with the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management. This agency has the responsibility of coordinating the national response to disasters.

## MAJOR HAZARDS AFFECTING THE PARISH

The major hazards affecting the Parish are flooding, soil erosion, landslides, earthquakes, hurricanes, storm surges, and droughts.

## INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

The Parish Disaster Committee is responsible for formulating a parish plan for local emergencies, in keeping with the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management guidelines. The committee forges links with response agencies, community groups

and community-based organizations. The St. James Parish Disaster Committee meets on the second Monday of each month and is chaired by the mayor or his designate.

Activities of the Parish Disaster Committee include:

- Public information, education and training through meetings, workshops, seminars, and mass media programmes on disaster-related issues. People may visit the Parish Council's office for documentation to be used for awareness, training and research programmes,
- Hazard management programmes,
- Identification of high-risk areas,
- Hazard mitigation strategies and programmes,
- Formulation and monitoring of emergency plans and policies,
- Compilation of reports following major incidents,
- Management of Parish Shelters and Zonal/Community Programmes.

TABLE 6: EARTHQUAKES AND TREMORS IN JAMAICA 1907 AND 2005

1907	Jan-14	IX	Kingston, Port Royal	1,000 dead; fire burnt over 56 acres; most buildings collapsed; water mains broken; landslides and slumps; localized tsunami; statues rotated; near total destruction of damage - estimated 2 million pounds sterling in damage
1914	Aug-03	VII	Eastern Jamaica	Buildings cracked; stores broken into
1943	Jul-15	VII	St. Elizabeth	Landslides; many homeless; damage of merchandise in shops
1957	Mar-01	VIII	Montego Bay, St. James and felt island-wide	Four dead; landslides; bridges damaged; rotation of spires and monuments; utility poles and lines broken; goods in shops damaged
1993	Jan-13	VII	Kingston and St. Andrew. Also felt island-wide	Two dead; goods in shops damaged; heavy furniture shifted; water splashed out of containers and pools; non-structural damage
2005	Jun-12	VII	Central Jamaica – most strongly felt in Aeon Town and Top Alston in Clarendon, Silent Hill, Manchester, Waita- Bit, Lemon Walk, and Trelawny	Moderate to heavy structural damage on most vulnerable structures; some people had to be dug out of collapsed dwellings; minor injuries from falling objects

Source: University of the West Indies, Mona: Earthquake Unit.



During times of emergencies, the Parish Disaster Committee is responsible for activating, operating and deactivating the Emergency Operations Centre. This includes:

- Coordinating the activities of the relevant operational agencies,
- Supporting the operational agencies by facilitating access to available resources,
- Providing communication resources,
- Handling requests for assistance/relief,
- Monitoring the emergency event and assessing the physical impact of the disaster.

### RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

The critical facilities exposed to hazards are; hospitals, petroleum facilities, public utilities, airports and sea ports, agricultural facilities, tourism facilities, waterways, roads, bridges, police stations, factories (agricultural, chemical, industrial, and informatics), and housing.

These critical facilities are often severely damaged during hazards. This results in overseas support and assistance due to the extent of the damages. (Source: Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management. "Draft National Hazard Mitigation Policy.")

At the local level in times of disaster, the municipality mobilizes and utilizes resources from private entities within the parish and affected districts.

### CAPACITY-BUILDING

#### POPULATION AT RISK AND TYPE

The population mostly at risk is invariably infants, young children and the elderly. These individuals depend on others to provide care. Persons who live in low-lying areas are prone to flooding, whenever heavy rainfall occurs, the rainwater settles on the land and is unable to runoff, thus cause flooding. Individuals living in floodplains are susceptible to flooding whenever the river floods its banks. The poor are unable to afford "hurricane proof" housing and invariably the roofs are blown off during hurricanes.

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## **MONTEGO BAY URBAN PROFILE**

The Montego Bay Urban Profiling consists of an accelerated, action-oriented assessment of urban conditions, focusing on priority needs, capacity gaps, and existing institutional responses at local and national levels. The purpose of the study is to develop urban poverty reduction policies at local, national, and regional levels, through an assessment of needs and response mechanisms, and as a contribution to the wider-ranging implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. The study is based on analysis of existing data and a series of interviews with all relevant urban stakeholders, including local communities and institutions, civil society, the private sector, development partners, academics, and others. The consultation typically results in a collective agreement on priorities and their development into proposed capacity-building and other projects that are all aimed at urban poverty reduction. The urban profiling is being implemented in 30 ACP (Africa, Caribbean and Pacific) countries, offering an opportunity for comparative regional analysis. Once completed, this series of studies will provide a framework for central and local authorities and urban actors, as well as donors and external support agencies.

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