JAMAICA:
MONTEGO BAY URBAN PROFILE

DISCLAIMER

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UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME

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FOREWORD

According to research published in UN-Habitat's[1] 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.

Dr. Joan Clos
Executive Director, UN-Habitat

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1   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.

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.