



More than 120 vendors are set to benefit from newly refurbished facilities at the Redemption Market in Downtown Kingston, when it re-opens in time for Christmas.

Renovation of the market facilities began last month, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Kingston and St. Andrew Corporation (KSAC), the Digicel Foundation and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which is sponsoring the project at a cost of US\$500,000; and the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) that created the design and drawing.

Mayor of Kingston, Senator Angela Brown-Burke, addressing a joint press briefing at the KSAC on September 6th, said renovation of the market fits well into the larger plan for the redevelopment of downtown Kingston.

“This will make a difference, not only to the shopping experience downtown, but to the overall experience downtown, and it fits nicely too with the overall redevelopment of downtown. It is always good to put on show, that we are not doing these as isolated activities, but as part of a bigger plan,” she said.



The Mayor pointed out that many of the over 120 spaces have already been allotted. She explained that the market was previously being used for paid storage by some vendors, who will be allotted spaces. She noted too, that some persons who are now selling illegally on the streets, have already come in to the KSAC to register for a space in the market.

Redemption Market, once a produce market, is being repurposed as a haberdashery. The refurbished facility will have improved stalls, water, roofing, sanitation and waste management. A quick tour of the market showed that work is well underway and several of the stalls are being constructed.

Chairperson of the Digicel Foundation, Lisa Lewis, whose company spearheaded the project, said the company is committed to the rejuvenation of downtown Kingston. She explained that the renovation initiative, “is in keeping with our determination to see downtown Kingston reclaim its status as the primary hub in the capital.”

“One of main areas of focus of the Digicel Foundation is community empowerment. Projects like the Redemption Market are thus very much in keeping with the objectives of the Foundation,” Ms. Lewis added.

In the meantime, Mission Director of USAID, Denise Herbol, said that in partnering with Digicel and the KSAC, the agency is hoping to bring the market back to life to serve the city and once more be a hub for growth in downtown Kingston.

“There is so much potential for the growth of business in downtown Kingston and the USAID is committed to assisting with this process. We believe this transformation will create economic opportunities for the vendors, as well as other service providers within the combined market district. The market will generate employment and produce income opportunities for the surrounding communities,” Mrs. Herbol said.