

Residents of five communities in downtown Kingston now have access to proper bathroom facilities, following the official handing over of 100 sanitation units on September 27.

The communities include: Central Kingston, Tivoli Gardens, Denham Town, Hanna Town and Fletcher's Land.

Valued at approximately \$109 million, the units were financed by the PetroCaribe Development Fund, through its grant facility which is partly aimed at improving the welfare of vulnerable groups.

Construction of the 100 units began in November last year and falls under the PetroCaribe Sanitation Project-Phase II. The scope of work included installation of toilets, face basins, laundry basins, electrical fixtures and fittings and the connection of households to existing sewer systems.

Selection of beneficiaries was based on premises that had no toilets or had sub-standard sanitation units; households that have at least two young children aged 0-6 years; households that have elderly persons and disabled persons; and yards with average household size of over four persons.

Addressing the handing over ceremony at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in downtown Kingston, Managing Director of the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), Scarlett Gillings, emphasised that good sanitation is critical to good health, and is a critical component of improving the lives of the residents.

“The improvement of sanitation in Kingston is contributing to sustainable urban development - one of the guiding principles of the Vision 2030 for Jamaica; and also a fundamental objective of the PetroCaribe Development Fund - fostering an improved standard of living,” she said.

Ms. Gillings informed that a select group of community members will participate in a maintenance and hygiene training course, that will equip them with the necessary skills to care for the new facilities.

“A group of young persons will be selected to receive training in plumbing skills. This will not only provide them with a marketable skill, but also provide each community with designated persons to assist in the maintenance of the units,” she added.

For his part, Client Relations Manager of the PetroCaribe Development Fund, Everton Spencer, said the project seeks to improve the quality of life for the community members, while positioning them to be productive citizens.

He reminded the citizens that they have a responsibility to ensure that the units are maintained.

The units were constructed using the community based contracting methodology, implemented by the Jamaica Social Investment Fund on behalf of the PetroCaribe Development Fund. The Rotary Club of Downtown Kingston provided technical support services for this project, through their partnership with the five project communities.

Of the total project cost, the community sponsoring bodies made a contribution in kind or cash of 13.53 per cent or \$12,184,400.00. PetroCaribe Development Fund provided \$97,410,385.00.

The JSIF first started to invest in sanitation projects through the rehabilitation in schools, completing 375 such facilities which have benefited over 122,473 individuals since inception. This was done at a cost of over \$2.5 billion from the government of Jamaica and other international funding partners.

The PetroCaribe Development Fund has also provided financing for construction of 58 sanitation units in the communities of Jones Town and Rose Town. The total beneficiaries from both projects amount to 2,191.