

Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller broke ground on Wednesday, February 6 in Springfield, Clarendon for the construction of 88 houses to accommodate 209 persons currently living in barracks.

This is part of the Barracks Relocation Project being funded by the European Union to the tune of \$161 million.

“Today represents yet another step towards the positive transformation of Jamaica and the transformation of the lives of an important group of Jamaican workers. The building of modern housing, infrastructure and amenities for sugar workers is one of the most satisfying and heart-warming programmes I have presided over, in my entire political career,” the Prime Minister said.

According to the Prime Minister both rural and urban housing development must be approached in accordance with the principles of planned development which means that communities built should also have access to recreational and social facilities.

“This is why another \$50 million dollars is being invested in critical social projects, including improvement of school and clinic facilities. We are currently spending some \$20 million to improve the Toll Gate Sport Complex and also preparing to put to tender the comprehensive improvement of the Waterwell Sports Complex in Race Course,” she said.

Mrs. Simpson Miller acknowledged that cane production is a seasonal activity and as such during the out-of-crop-season, life is particularly difficult for many families dependent of sugar cane. In response, the Government is working towards an economic transformation of Southern Clarendon through strategic investments in agriculture. This includes an investment of \$65 million to rehabilitate the irrigation system in the Vernamfield area, and the development of two agro-parks in Spring Plains at a cost of \$145 million and Ebony Park at \$114 million.

“The agro-parks development initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries is a key element of my government’s growth inducement strategy in the medium term,” said the Prime Minister.

Under the Barracks Relocation Project, a total of 385 houses will be provided for sugar workers across the island including Masemure and Bahram in Westmoreland, Spicy Hill in Trelawny and Stokes Hall and Hampton Court in St. Thomas.

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