



The National Housing Trust (NHT) is establishing a core group of small and medium sized contractors to build more housing solutions for Jamaicans.

Chairman of the Trust, Easton Douglas, says this is critical as the agency strives to improve its ability to satisfy the current demand of 400,000 units, and also ensure high construction standards.

The NHT already has 16 such contractors ready, and is awaiting certification from the National Contracts Committee, and the Office of the Contractor General.

“What we are now trying to do, is build capacity. Developers have to be competent...you can’t have developers and contractors who don’t know how to connect to a sewerage system, the difference between a septic tank and gully basin, and the difference between water pipes and sewage pipes,” the Chairman said.

Mr. Douglas was speaking at the weekly Jamaica House press briefing, held at the Office of the Prime Minister on February 21.

He pointed out that having this core of contractors will speed up the building of solutions, as they will be able to concentrate on smaller developments, while larger contractors work on larger housing solutions.

Mr. Douglas said that it is with a view to shoring up this kind of capacity that the NHT has contributed \$10 million to the Youth Upliftment Through Employment (YUTE) programme, to train young persons in construction.

The Chairman explained that the estimated housing need of 400,000 include new units to: replace decayed ones; reduce or eliminate squatting; and address inner-city housing.