

BEST COMMUNITY COMPETITION AND PROGRAMME JAMAICA



REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2007

February 2008

BEST Community Competition and Programme
1 Devon Road
Kingston 6

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Complete list of appendix can be obtained by contacted the Jamaica Clearing House Mechanism
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INTRODUCTION

The BEST (Better Environments for Social Transformation) Community Competition and Programme is an Annual National Competition and Programme aimed at the sustainable development of communities and Jamaica. It encourages community self help activities in a variety of areas. It also seeks to establish partnerships between communities and those who have technical, professional, spiritual, educational and financial capabilities. The objective is to assist communities to better themselves spiritually, economically and socially and to work together to improve their social and physical infrastructure and to protect and restore the natural and built environment. The Best Community Competition and Programme was launched on the 30th of November, 2006, by His Excellency the Most Honourable Professor Sir Kenneth Hall, O.J., O.N., Governor General of Jamaica who is the Patron.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The main goals and objectives of the Competition and Programme are:

- To strengthen and improve local communities on a sustainable basis.
- To foster civic engagement, and self reliance, increased partnerships, participation, service to communities and voluntary contributions.
- To improve the lives of people by providing meaningful opportunities to serve and meet their most pressing needs as part of a community.
- To instill a sense of pride, better values, attitudes and self worth, to unite members in a common cause that would lead to the needed community actions, spiritual, educational, physical, social and economic development and pride in place and accomplishment.
- To strengthen the partnerships, the organizational networks and groups that can facilitate, coordinate and integrate sustainable community development.
- To link professional, technical, educational and religious persons and organizations and members of the business sector with communities to help with training, education, carrying out various activities and making available technical, financial and “in-kind” resources to them to achieve their goals.

FOCUS OF COMPETITION

To assist in achieving these goals, the Competition and Programme focused in 2007 on seven areas that were considered broad enough to encompass the wide and varied community based organizations and overlapping activities found throughout the country. The priority areas were the Built Environment, Natural Environment, Socio-economic, Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Preparedness, Education, Health and Waste Management and Heritage and Culture. It has been decided for future Competitions that Youth Development will be added as an eighth category. (Please see Appendix I - Fact Sheet on the Competition for more details.)

PATRON OF THE COMPETITION AND PROGRAMME

The Patron of the Competition and Programme is His Excellency the Most Honourable Professor Sir Kenneth O. Hall ON, OJ, Governor General of Jamaica. The Parish Patrons are the Custodes of the Parishes. They have been so appointed by the Governor General.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The National Best Community Foundation Ltd.

The members of the Foundation consists of a representative Board of Directors of the Foundation and the members the National Steering Committee, which comprise Public and Private Sectors representatives; NGOs; Professional, Educational and Religious Organizations; Individuals and Civil Society. (See Appendices II and III for lists of the members of the Board and the National Steering Committee.) The National Steering Committee organizes and manages the Competition and Programme, through a number of sub-committees and their “in field” Partners the Social Development Commission. (See Appendix IV for a list of the sub-committees.) The Board of Directors has overall management responsibility.

Regional management and coordination

It is proposed to continue the dialogue started with members of Parish Development Committees and/or other suitable regional groups to encourage them to assume responsibility for managing and dealing with some aspects of the Competition and Programme at the Parish level. At present all on-ground/in field management and coordination is undertaken by the National, Regional and Parish offices of the Social Development Commission.

The Social Development Commission

The SDC is represented at the National level and are partners in this Programme and Competition. It should be noted that the success experienced so far is due to a large extent to the hard work and efforts of the staff in the five Regions and in all the Parishes. They undertook a number of activities including those which are defined in this paragraph. The SDC determined which groups were legitimate Community Development Committees who could enter the competition. They worked with various individuals and groups to actually assist with the formation of Community Development Committees. They briefed the CDCs about the Competition, distributed, explained and assisted CDCs to fill out Application Forms. They helped the CDCs to identify projects and programmes to undertake and advised them on how and where they could source funds for their programmes. They guided the CDCs in identifying and developing the lists of their community assets. They worked with them to prepare the Community Profiles. They assisted in identifying judges for the Competition and briefing them. They organized judging schedules with judges and community representatives and accompanied judges when the judging took place. They collected and forwarded completed Application forms and judging forms to the National office. They assisted with issuing invitations to the winning CDCs to attend the Awards Ceremony and with the distribution of Certificates of Participation to all CDCs that entered the Competition. The Board and the National Steering Committee wish to thank the Management and staff of the SDC for their tremendous inputs, which helped to make the first year of the Competition a success.

Management and Secretariat functions.

These were carried out by members of staff of the Cabinet Office, the members of the National Steering Committee with assistance from the various Government agencies such as SDC, NEPA, CPTC, JIS, RADA, the Ministry of Tourism, etc. and the representatives of the Private Sector such as Digicel, Red Stripe, Jamaica National Building Society, the ICWI Foundation and others. Assistance was also provided by the several sub-committees of the National Steering Committee, which include public and private sector representatives, who undertook to carry out various functions. Examples include, the Organizing Committees for the launch of the Competition and Programme, the Awards Ceremony, Public Education and Public relations, organizing Radio and Television interviews and appearances, preparing and printing of logos, brochures, fact sheets, application forms, posters and other material, preparing notes and minutes of meetings, preparing Judging guidelines and judging forms and printing same, inputting on Computers information and data from the Judging forms, collating, checking work done and determining the winners of the Competition.

The success of the Competition depended heavily therefore on a tremendous amount of voluntary effort. This is much appreciated and will be further encouraged in an effort to keep costs down, and to encourage the spirit of generosity, of giving and sharing for the betterment of the country and the residents. The Office of the Cabinet is especially thanked by the Board and Steering Committee for providing management, the day to day operational and secretarial assistance, office accommodation, overhead expenses, equipment and materials.

There is however an urgent need to formalize a small secretariat comprising a programme manager and a secretary, to ensure that the work of the Foundation continues. It is hoped that the furniture, materials and equipment presently used for the programme will continue to be available. Office accommodation will also be needed.

SPONSORS

The Sponsors of the Competition and Programme in 2007 were private and public sector individuals and organizations, funding institutions, NGOs, educational and religious institutions, professional associations and others who are supporting the Competition in a variety of ways. More companies, groups and individuals are being invited to become sponsors by helping Community Development Committees financially, with training, in-kind help, mentoring/counseling, professional inputs, job-creation and other types of assistance. The major sponsor for the Competition is Digicel. (See Appendix V for a list of the donors of prizes, trophies and plaques and GPS units for SDC Parish staff winners; Appendix VI for Contributors to other Activities and Events and Appendix VII for the Donors to the Awards Ceremony).

It is not realistic to attempt to document the myriad of persons, organisations, professionals, religious leaders, educators, NGOs, Service clubs, Foundations, financial and other private sector companies and organisations that assisted the Community development Committees that entered the Competition. The Board of the Foundation and the National Steering Committee wish to thank them for their support to the CDCs and urge them to continue and to increase their support and encourage others to do likewise. The CDCs need all the assistance that they can get.

APPLICATIONS

The Social Development Commission has defined, as a part of the Local Government Reform Programme 786 Community Development Committees in Jamaica. Any of these CDCs can participate in the Competition. Applications to enter the first year's competition closed in mid-February, 2007. 180 Community Development Committees, comprising 1111 Districts, applied to enter the Competition. Some of these decided not to be involved in the judging because they felt they had not accomplished enough. Appendix VIII shows the distribution of the Community Development Committees by Parish and the number of CDCs who entered the competition. Appendix IX shows the population of each parish. All communities who entered the last Competition were encouraged and will be encouraged this year to approach businesses and public sector organizations and funding institutions such as the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, the Tourism Enhancement Fund, private sector entities, the CHASE Fund, the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica and Private Sector Foundations, professionals and technicians, to assist them with grant funding, or other forms of assistance, including in-kind, technical and professional help for various types of projects, programmes and for training and education.

FUNDING AND OTHER ASSISTANCE

The organizers of the Competition and Programme sought to obtain prizes, plaques and trophies, professional and technical assistance to the Secretariat as well as the assistance mentioned above to the Community Development Committees. Over 200 volunteer judges were recruited for the first Competition and depending on the number of CDCs that enter this year the amount of volunteer judges would have to increase.

Approximately (\$16m) sixteen million dollars will be given in prizes, trophies and plaques, which was won in the 2007 competition. The Digicel Foundation was by far the largest sponsor having donated (\$10m) ten million of the sixteen. This \$10m donation will be given for 10 years by Digicel to the Competition. CDCs are expected to utilize prize money for further development/enhancement of the people of the community or the community itself.

ENDOWMENT/TRUST FUND

It is proposed to establish an Endowment/Trust Fund to ensure the continuation of the Competition and Programme and so that it can eventually be self supporting in most areas. The target is (\$500,000,000.00) five hundred million dollars. Contributions are welcomed as well as ideas about how to achieve this objective.

DOCUMENTS FOR COMMUNITIES

Work has started on the preparation of a number of documents which will be made available to communities entering the Competition and SDC staff who are assisting with the programme.

These documents will provide information on the following:

- i. Grant funding institutions to which communities can apply for assistance to carry out their Programmes and Projects.

- ii. How to prepare project profiles and project proposals.
- iii. Establishing and keeping accounts for community activity
- iv. A Community development manual
- v. A data base which will provide a list of persons, companies, organizations who are willing to give various types of assistance to communities. Data will include training offers, direct assistance to communities in a number of areas; loan of heavy duty equipment for clean up and other activities, etc.

Work has started on (i), (ii) and (v). An existing community development manual that was previously prepared for another programme will be examined to see to what extent it can be adapted to be utilized for this Programme

AREAS OF COMPETITION

The first year's competition was in seven areas and many of the communities entered in all areas. These included the Built Environment, the Natural Environment, Socio-economic, Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Preparedness, Education, Health and Waste Management and Heritage and Culture. (See Fact Sheet at Appendix I for details.) In addition to the first, second and third prizes in each Parish and at the National level, special area prizes were also given in six areas at the Parish level and one prize each in the six areas at the National level. The areas for special prizes were Best Kept Community facilities; Most Beautiful Community; Best Kept Educational Institution; Best Community Spirit and Self Reliance; Most Improved Agricultural practices and Best Cultural and Heritage Programme. A new Fact Sheet on the Competition for 2008 has been prepared and is attached for information. It sets out the goals and objectives of the Competition and the areas in which the communities can compete. There has been overwhelming requests that Youth Development be added to the seven areas of the Competition and this has been done. The new Competition and Programme now therefore cover eight areas.

CLOSE OF FIRST COMPETITION

The closing date to complete activities for the first year's competition was the 23rd May, Labour Day. It had been decided earlier that since the time for the Competition was less than one year that it would be treated as a pilot year in order to refine the Competition and Programme. A number of the donors also wished to ascertain whether there would be interest in the Competition. It was also determined at an early stage by the National Steering Committee and the communities informed, that all relevant activities, projects/programmes, undertaken within the two years prior to the start of the competition, by a community or any of its members/member groups would be included when the competition was being judged.

JUDGES AND JUDGING

The sub-committee established by the National Steering Committee prepared with the assistance of several specialized groups the judging criteria, the judging guidelines and the judging forms. The forms were computerized and set up so that once the data from the sets of completed forms for each community were entered, the computations would be done automatically by the computer.

The orientation/ training sessions for judges and SDC staff were held in six locations across the island. The coffee breaks and lunches were complimentary. The lunches were provided by Juici Patties / CMK Bakery. Additionally Coffee Breaks were provided by Astra Country Inn in one region and by members of the Steering Committee in Portland. The venues were also made available free of charge and thanks for this must go to the SDC, the UDC, Astra Country Inn and the Spring Village Development Foundation. The Judging Form is included as Appendix X for information. The opportunity was taken during the briefing sessions to thank the SDC staff, who have been coordinating activities in the field and without whose interest, assistance and participation the Competition and Programme would not be possible. Judges who volunteered their time etc to assist with the judging of the Competition at no cost were also thanked.

Over 200 volunteer judges and SDC officers from the Regional and Parish offices were briefed. This was done by the Chairperson of the National Steering Committee and the Chairperson of the Judging Committee Mrs. Gina Sanguinetti Phillips. In areas where some judges were unable to attend the arranged briefing Sessions they were given the judging guidelines and were briefed by SDC staff members. A number of CDCs who felt that they had not accomplished all that they would like to, decided that they did not want to remain in the competition.

The judging of the Competition started in the Parishes in June and it was expected that this would be completed by the middle of August 2007. Unfortunately there were serious delays due to violence in some communities, mainly Kingston and St. Andrew, the General elections and Hurricane Dean. Parish judging was completed by end of October. One hundred and thirty two (132) communities – urban and rural, scattered far and wide throughout the 13 parishes (Kingston & St. Andrew being considered 1 “Parish”) were judged during the period June 15 to the end of October.

At the Parish level, teams of up to 3 judges visited communities, accompanied by the Social Development Commission officers responsible for that area. They were given Community profiles, application forms etc. and guided through the community by community representatives who explained the initiatives undertaken by the residents. The judges were also encouraged to speak with persons from the area. Each judge completed a detailed scoring form, developed by the Judging Committee and approved by the National Steering Committee. The forms were submitted it to the SDC officer for transmission to the Programme secretariat.

When the parish-level judging was complete, the parish winners were selected based on the judges’ scores. In each parish, a first, second and third place winner was selected as well as winners of 6 special prizes in the following areas:

- Best kept community facilities
- Most beautiful community
- Best kept educational Institution
- Most improved agricultural practices
- Best Community Spirit and Self Reliance
- Best cultural and heritage programme

The national judging should have taken place during the last two weeks of August. Since the Parish judging was not finalized in some Parishes, the National judging started in the third week of October. Up to three judges of different disciplines visited each of the communities which

placed first in the Parish Competition. No judge was allowed to judge his/her own community. An additional twenty prominent persons volunteered to undertake the judging at the national level. The parish winners were then put forward for national judging – to determine the winners at the national level. Using the same procedure as the parish-level judging, teams of national judges then visited the parish winners in order to determine the national first, second and third place awards. The national special area prizes were selected based on their scores from the parish-level judging. The list of national judges is provided in Appendix XI.

It is proposed to develop from the persons who agreed to be judges for the first year of the Competition, a permanent roster of judges to assist with future competitions if they are willing to do so. This roster will be kept and maintained by the SDC, in the Parishes with copies in the National Office. Additional persons to act as judges are being sought to add to the lists.

The Board of the Foundation, the National Steering Committee and its sub committee – the Judging Committee would like to publicly thank all of the judges who volunteered their time and who worked together to ensure that the communities were visited and judged fairly. Over 200 judges from the private sector, NGOs and government agencies served as judges at the parish level and approximately 15 at the national level. The Committee is indebted to all judges and hope that they will consider serving again next year.

The Best Community Competition Steering Committee must also thank the Social Development Commission Regional Directors, Parish Managers, Governance Managers and other officers for their hard work, organization and patience. It is impossible to thank them sufficiently for ensuring not only that the judging took place but that the communities were empowered to enter the competition in the first place. A very special thank you also to Mrs. Gina Sanguinetti Phillips, who with her kind, pleasant, knowledgeable (including computer expertise) and determined personality ensured that the judging was done fairly and efficiently and with the highest level of integrity.

It is important to give an indication of the impressions of communities. Over and over, among the winning communities, the phrases “volunteerism,” “self reliance,” “participation,” “motivated leadership,” and “initiative” were mentioned.

It is those communities who demonstrated active participation by a wide range of community members who did well, some of whom did extremely well with limited resources.

More than one judge thanked members of the Committee for inviting them to become involved in this programme and enabling them to learn about some of the good things that are happening in this country – things that very often do not get recognition.

AWARDS TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES

A total of one hundred and twenty-six (126) prizes, plaques and/or trophies and certificates were awarded to winning CDCs for the last year’s competition. First, second and third prizes of \$2,000,000, \$500,000 and \$250,000 each and trophies were awarded at the National level. Six Special Area Prizes of \$200,000 each and plaques were also awarded at the National level. Each

Parish received first, second and third prizes of \$300,000, \$200,000 and \$100,000 each and six special area prizes of \$50,000 each. All these CDCs also got Certificates and a plaque to keep for one year on which their names are inscribed. Congratulations to all the Community Development Committees who entered the programme and won in the inaugural year. All CDCs are required to utilize the prizes won for the further development of their communities

The spirit demonstrated by communities throughout Jamaica during this competition has been heartening and has given the Foundation and the National Steering Committee the encouragement required to continue with this national community competition and programme. The list of the winners of National Awards- Prizes, plaques and/ or trophies and their donors are provided in Appendix XII and the list of the winners of Parish Award prizes, plaques and their donors are provided in Appendix XIII. All communities who entered the Competition were awarded Certificates of Participation. Winning communities were also given Certificates for them to keep. Special thanks to all donors of prizes, trophies and plaques. Without these donors the competition would not be possible.

All donors are being encouraged to continue their sponsorship. The major sponsor of the Competition Digicel has already given than commitment of \$10,000,000 for this year's competition. A sum of some \$17,000,000 is needed for the prizes being offered. Donors are being encouraged where possible to visit the CDCs that won their prizes for last year and to also establish a relationship with them if feasible. There are so many areas where assistance is needed. It is hoped that companies and their staff and individuals will adopt or at least agree to help CDCs in the many areas in which they need that help.

AWARDS TO SDC PARISH STAFF

Special prizes of five (5) Global Positioning Systems units, donated by Spatial Innovision were awarded to the SDC staff of five Parishes. They won these prizes for being the Parishes which had the most applications when compared to the number of CDC's in the Parish. A list of the winners can be seen at Appendix XIII. The company, Spatial Innovisions has also offered to train the SDC staff of the Parishes to use the equipment. A number of CDC members will also receive this training. It is expected that the units will be used to help geo-reference and map the assets of the various communities. These data can be used among other things to help the CDC's to plan projects and to guide efforts aimed at disaster preparedness, hazard mitigation and protection of the environment. The data would also be useful as part of the country's Geographic Information Data sets that can be used for local sustainable development planning and guiding decisions for the improvement of the development approval process. The Land Information Council of Jamaica will also give guidance to the SDC staff with this matter.

AWARDS CEREMONY

The Awards Ceremony was held on 15th November 2007 at the Stella Maris Pastoral Center (Church Hall) at 10:30am. It should be noted that November was Community Development Month. Thanks to the members of the church who were able to organise the use of the Hall at very short notice and at a concessionary rate. His Excellency, the Most Honourable Professor Sir Kenneth Hall, O.J.,O.N., Governor General and Patron of the Best Community Competition

and Programme was unavoidably unable to attend. He however sent the Patron's message which was read. The Governor General Plaques awarded to the National Winner and the First prize Parish winners were also presented on his behalf. Special appreciation to The Hon. Bruce Golding, Prime Minister, who attended the ceremony and gave an excellent and well received keynote address.

A special Awards Ceremony Committee was established to organize this event, with as usual "no available funds." A magnificent job was done by this committee chaired by the indefatigable Mrs. Beverly Burnett of Jamaica National Building Society. Thanks to the event planners and the decorators. Thanks to Mrs. Angela Patterson for so ably chairing the event. Great appreciation must be expressed for the excellent entertainment that was provided by a stellar group of artists at no cost. The members of the UWI Tourism Society who came to the ceremony and generously donated their time to assist in any way possible were truly wonderful representatives of the younger generation.

Thanks to the members of the political directorate, the senior government officials and the senior representatives of the many private sector companies who took time to attend and to recognise the community representatives for their fine contributions to society. There were a number of well received informative booths, one from The Jamaica Building Society who kindly offered financial advice to CDCs re-opening accounts etc and one from Red Stripe encouraging persons to 'Drink Responsibly'. The exhibition that was on display of the work of communities was a tribute to both the CDCs and the hard work of SDC staff. Refreshments were kindly donated by a number of persons/companies for the representatives from the many CDCs who came from across Jamaica and the specially invited guests. A list of persons and organizations which assisted in making this event the success that it was is at Appendix VII. Thanks to them all for their time, their contributions and their generosity and to the committee for a job well done. The Board of the Foundation and the National Steering Committee wish to specially recognise and thank the many representatives of the several Community Development Committees who took the time to attend the Awards Ceremony. Many of them expressed their appreciation to members of the Steering Committee for organising the Competition and Programme in which they had taken part and for which many of them felt would over time have a great impact on the Jamaican society.

Consideration is being given to a recommendation that the Awards Ceremony for the Parishes be held at a Parish or County level and the National Award in Kingston. This is to be discussed when meetings are held with Parish representatives to regionalize the Competition and Programme.

NEXT COMPETITION

The new Competition will take place from the beginning of December 2007 to 31st December 2008. Judging will take place from January to March 2009 at the Parish and National levels. Prizes will be awarded in April 2009. The Fact Sheet for next year's Competition and the Application Form were revised. An eighth category - Youth Development has been added to the Competition and this information has been incorporated in the new Fact Sheet and Application Form, which are being distributed.

FUNDING PRIZES AND TROPHIES

A number of Companies and Government related agencies made funds available for the first year's Competition. This was approximately \$16,000,000 worth of prizes, plaques and trophies. Special recognition must be given to Digcel Foundation who made \$10m available for prizes, trophies and plaques. Letters requesting those who have not made a commitment of funds or prizes for more than one year, to commit for at least five years, are being prepared. This is intended to be continued support of the Competition and Programme as long as it is achieving its goals and objectives. First, second and third prizes were awarded at the Parish and National levels. A number of Special Area prizes will also awarded at Parish and National levels. Trophies or plaques and certificates were awarded to all winners. Certificates of Participation were given to every CDC who entered the Competition

USES OF PRIZE MONEY

Prize money that was won by the various communities will be made available after the winning communities present a plan on how they intend to use the money to the SDC and the National Steering Committee for approval. Prize money granted in special categories is to be used by the winning communities on community projects specifically in those categories. Communities must be registered and have an official bank account. One of the National Steering Committee members, the Jamaica National Building Society promised to assist CDCs to open their accounts and have in fact already begun to do so.

SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES

A number of organizations and persons have agreed to support the communities by providing training, education, help to prepare project proposals and other forms of assistance. All offers are being compiled so that they can be forwarded to the staff of the Social Development Commission and communities taking part in the competition and programme. Additional support is being sought, from skilled persons, professionals, technical, etc. Arrangements are being made where possible to partner individuals and organizations with Community Development Committees.

COMMUNITIES AS LEGAL ENTITIES

All CDCs are being encouraged to form themselves into legal entities and to open Bank Accounts in order to receive Prize money or money that they obtain from other sources. It is however quite expensive and time-consuming to become a legal entity. Government is therefore being requested to consider an easier way in which CDCs can become legal entities.

COMMUNITIES AS TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

It is proposed that the communities that win prizes in the Competition at both the Parish and National levels would be advertised as Communities to visit by both local persons and visitors. This is in fact done in Ireland where there is a National Tidy Towns Competition. It is also proposed that some of these communities will take part in the International Institute for Peace

through Tourism (IIPT) International Community Tourism Conference and Communities Trade Show which will take place in Jamaica on June 20-27, 2008.

The Countrystyle Community Tourism Network has offered to assist communities on matters pertaining to Community Tourism

EVALUATION

An evaluation workshop was held on January 15, 2008 in order to review the first year of the programme and make recommendations for improving the programme for future years. The workshop was facilitated by Mr. Trevor Spence and examined the areas: management; goals & objectives; sensitization process; Applications process; assistance to communities; judging; awards ceremony; media coverage; prizes; and funding. The following recommendations were made:

- There should be increased focus on fund raising activities
- Add scholarships and certification and training as prizes and as part of the process
- Greater focus should be placed on ongoing sensitization of stakeholders
- Increase attention paid to orientation and selection of judges
- Secure greater buy-in from funders/donors
- Simplify process to access funding
- Seek budgeted funds from Government annually
- Integrate technology into management and implementation
- Ensure greater involvement of PDCs
- Ensure greater media coverage
- Decentralize the programme, giving greater responsibility to parish-based organisations
- Pursue a sustainable management structure

CONCLUSION

The National Best Community Competition and Programme has enjoyed what could be seen as a successful first year. This is because enough people felt that they should help with the implementation of a dream, of an idea the aim of which is the sustainable development of communities, the country and its people. This dream will become reality if as many persons as possible are encouraged to seek to make it happen through partnerships, volunteerism, a generosity of mind, spirit, financial and other types of assistance required to make the changes necessary. Only then will the society begin to heal and improve spiritually, mentally, socially, economically and physically while ensuring the sustainability of the build and natural environment for the generations to come.

Thanks to all those who assisted with the Competition and Programme in so many different ways. This include individuals; companies; educational, religious and professional organisations; donors of trophies, plaques and prizes; the Gleaner Company, the Jamaica Observer and other Media Houses who helped with publicity; the Social Development Commission; the Office of the Cabinet, The Office of the Prime Minister, the CPTC, the JIS, the National Environment and Planning Agency and the many other government organisations, the Board of the Best

Community Foundation and the members of the National Steering Committee. All these and others are helping to make the Dream a reality. Will you?

February 2008

Jacqueline daCosta

Chair, National Steering Committee

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Best Community Awards Ceremony

November 15, 2007
Stella Maris Church Hall



National 3rd place winner receives trophy Mr. Ardi Soggy (left) from the community of Beaufort Spring Westmoreland, accepts his trophy from Mr. Chris Miller of the Tourism Enhancement Fund.



National 1st Place winner accepts trophy Mr. Roosevelt Lawrence, (left) Chairman of the Glengoffe Community Development Committee accepts the winning trophy from Digital CEO, Mr. David Hall.



National 2nd Place winner accepts trophy Mr. Richard Fullerton (left) of the Sturge Town community in St. Ann, accepts his 2nd place trophy from Mr. Uweallye Bailey of Jamaica National Building Society.



Welcome Mr. Prime Minister Uweallye Bailey (L-R) and Jacqueline de Caeste (right) welcome Prime Minister Hon. Bruce Golding to the awards ceremony. Minister Robert Montague (back row).



Speakers meet and greet (L-R) Uweallye Bailey, Prime Minister, Hon. Robert Montague, Hon. Uweallye Bailey, Digital Foundation, David Hall, Digital.



Members of the Bankers Hill Community smile proudly as they accept their trophy for four special area prizes at the awards night. Mrs. Sophia Campbell (right) from St. James, makes the presentation.



All parish winners proudly display their Governor General trophies.



National 1st Place winner accepts trophy Mr. Roosevelt Lawrence, (left) Chairman of the Glengoffe Community Development Committee accepts the winning trophy from Digital CEO, Mr. David Hall.



Members of Parliament, Hon. Bruce Golding (right), representing leader of the opposition, Hon. the member of Parliament Robert Montague, Hon. Uweallye Bailey, Hon. Sophia Campbell (left) and David Hall, CEO of Digital.

NEWS ON THE WINNERS

The Glengoffe Community copped the top prize of \$2 million compliments of Digital for being the BEST Community nationally. Second place winners, Sturge Town, won \$500,000 provided by Jamaica National Building Society and the community of Beaufort Spring in Westmoreland won \$250,000 provided by the Tourism Enhancement Fund.

There were also national prizes in six special areas. The community of Bankers Hill in Trelawny won four of those special prizes at the national level winning a total of \$200,000. The special areas were: Best Kept Community Facilities, Most Beautiful Community, Best Kept Educational Institution, and Most Improved

Agricultural Practice, Goodwill in St. James was the national prize in the area of Best Community Spirit and Self reliance.

PARISH WINNERS WERE:

Clarendon	Langvill Park
Hanover	Mount Felo
Kingston & St. Andrew	Brandon Hill
Manchester	Hartley
Portland	Fairy Hill
St. Ann	Sturge Town
St. Catherine	Glengoffe
St. Elizabeth	Parotie
St. James	Goodwill
St. Mary	Woodside
St. Thomas	Bath
Trelawny	Bankers Hill
Westmoreland	Beaufort Spring

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ANNUAL AWARDS/PRIZES

These will be awarded at Parish and National levels and will be monetary, trophies, plaques and/or certificates. Special area prizes will be awarded at National and Parish Levels. Donations of Prizes and Trophies, which may be branded, are welcomed

SPONSORS

Private and public sector individuals and organizations, funding institutions, NGOs, educational and religious institutions, professional associations and others are supporting the Competition in a variety of ways. More companies, groups and individuals are being invited to become sponsors by helping financially, with training and other types of assistance to communities.

WHO CAN ENTER

Any of the 786 Community Development Committees in Jamaica as identified by the Social Development Commission can participate.

These communities are encouraged to approach private sector businesses and public sector organizations, funding institutions such as the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, the Tourism Enhancement Fund, the CHASE Fund, the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica and Private Sector Foundations, professionals and technicians to assist them with grant funding, or other forms of assistance, including in kind, technical and professional help for various types of projects, programmes and for training and education.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE REQUIRED

Prizes and trophies, financial, in kind, training, mentoring/counseling and other professional and technical assistance to the National Organisers, Parish organizations and to the various communities taking part in the Competition and Programme. Volunteer judges are also needed.

TRUST FUND

A Trust Fund will be established to ensure the continuation of the programme.

Target \$500,000,000.00. Contributions are welcomed, as well as ideas about achieving this objective.

APPLICATIONS: OPEN- November 2007, **CLOSES-** January 31, 2008

COMPETITION CLOSES: December 31, 2008.

JUDGING: January –March 2009 at Parish and then National level

AWARD CEREMONY: April 2009

For further information please contact

Mrs. Jacqueline daCosta, Chairperson, Telephone: 968-1358, cell 819-3594

Fax: 929-8459; email: jdacosta@cwjamaica.com

Mrs. Sherine Francis, SDC, Telephone: 342-2443, Fax: 938-1492

Email : walkersherine2001@yahoo.com

Or the nearest Social Development Commission Office

Major General Robert Neish, Digicel Foundation, Telephone: 511-5179,

Fax: 920-0948. email: robert.neish@digicelgroup.com

BEST COMMUNITY

COMPETITION and PROGRAMME

FACT SHEET



The BEST Community Competition is an Annual National Competition and Programme. It is aimed at encouraging community self help activities. It seeks to establish partnerships between communities and those who have technical, professional, spiritual, educational and financial capabilities. The objective is to assist communities in achieving sustainable development of their members, their communities and Jamaica.

BEST (Better Environments for Social Transformation)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COMPETITION AND PROGRAMME

The main goals and objectives of the competition and programme are:

To strengthen and improve local communities on a sustainable basis.

To foster civic engagement, self reliance, increased partnerships, participation, service to communities and voluntary contributions.

To improve the lives of people by providing meaningful opportunities to serve and meet their most pressing needs as part of a community.

To instill a sense of pride, better values, attitudes and self worth and to unite members in a common cause that would lead to needed community actions, spiritual, educational, physical, social and economic development and pride in place and accomplishment.

To strengthen the partnerships, the organizational networks and groups that can facilitate, coordinate and integrate sustainable community development.

To link professional, technical, educational and religious persons and organizations and members of the public and business sectors with communities to help with training, education, carrying out various activities and making available technical, financial and "in-kind" resources to them to achieve their goals.

FOCUS OF THE COMPETITION AND PROGRAMME

To assist in achieving these goals, the Competition and Programme will focus on eight areas that are considered broad enough to encompass the wide and varied community based organizations and overlapping activities found throughout the country. These priority areas and the examples of possible projects and programmes are listed below. Communities may add to the examples under the various headings.

1. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Improvement and maintenance of physical structures including public buildings. Landscaping, beautification of roadways, sidewalks, road verges, traffic islands, roundabouts and public areas. Development, management and maintenance of community centres, urban parks, urban and picnic forests, play areas and sports fields, courts and complexes. Training and Education

2. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Improved agricultural practices, erosion control, better use of pesticides and fertilizers in agricultural and non agricultural areas. Management and improvement of beaches including fishing beaches, national parks, protected and recreational areas and Green spaces. Forest, tree planting and maintenance programmes. Training and Education.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC

Leadership development, active and dynamic community group and other types of voluntary groups including NGOs. Violence prevention, dispute/conflict resolution, relationship building, community tourism, volunteerism and self reliance. Outreach activities and initiatives developed for the elderly and youths.

Organization of community economic spaces and centers. Renewable energy initiatives and energy saving programmes. Skills training and job creation activities Training and Education.

4. HAZARD MITIGATION AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Community plans and activities in disaster management, awareness, preparation and response. Preparation, management and care of shelters. Fire and earthquake drills and simulations exercises and early warning systems. First aid and CPR training. Hazard mitigation projects: in homes, tree pruning, gully maintenance, drain cleaning, farming practices, solid waste management. Producing and providing relevant disaster information. Training and education.

5. EDUCATION

Organisation of Innovative non-syllabus youth development programmes. School construction, repairs, refurbishing and beautification activities. Obtaining furniture, materials and equipment. Parents/teachers involvement.

6. HEALTH AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Improvements with sanitation, sewage and waste disposal. Garbage collection/clean up events. Waste management, composting, recycling, placement of drums and skips for garbage collection. Improving health facilities, pest control, disease control and water use. Training and Education.

7. HERITAGE AND CULTURE

Preservation, promotion and re-furbishing of historical/heritage buildings, sites and monuments. Development of memory banks of unwritten narratives and unsung heroes. Training for/initiation of community enterprises producing indigenous art, craft, agro- and culinary products and heritage based souvenirs and memorabilia. Cultural projects/programmes/promotions showcasing community performing arts. Training and Education.

8. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Special programs geared towards youth and young adults, including; youth clubs, Homework Centers, youth economic enterprises, environmental awareness and action programmes, Heritage stores, youth camping, popular education programmes, cultural and educational entertainment activities, personal development programs, career and motivational programs. Outreach activities for the youth at risk, dispute resolution and conflict management programs, corner league competitions, youth and children sports/funds days. Training and education.

Applicants are encouraged to participate in ALL CATEGORIES of the competition and to choose from areas listed, the ones in which they will undertake activities. Other relevant activities may also be undertaken.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The National BEST Community Foundation and its members which comprise the

public & private sectors, NGOs, Professional, Educational and Religious Organizations and Civil Society, organize and manage the Competition and Programme. Parish Development Committees or other suitable regional groups are being encouraged to manage the Competition and Programme at Parish level, with on-ground coordination being undertaken by the Regional and Parish offices of the Social Development Commission.

PATRON

**His Excellency the Most Honourable Professor Kenneth O. Hall ON,OJ.,
Governor General of Jamaica.**

PARISH PATRONS

Custodes of the Parishes

