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J\$8 million upgrade and income generating project for Boy's Home

The Goodwin Park Hostel in Kingston will benefit from much needed infrastructural rehabilitation under the European Union's Poverty Reduction Programme (PRP II). The home which houses male wards of the state between ages 10 and 18 is part of the possibility programme which was established in 2001 to address the physical, social and emotional needs of at risk youth, particularly street boys.

Just over J\$5.2 million is being provided for the rehabilitation of the hostel under PRP II, while the community will provide the remaining resources which amounts to J\$2.6 million in kind, bringing the total of J\$8 million. The upgrades which will include renovation of the kitchen, installation of mesh screens to the windows and doors, tiling, construction of a store room, repairs to the roof and renovation of the dormitory will allow the home to increase its housing capacity to 28, up from the nine boys presently boarding there. The home will also benefit from the creation of two income generating projects with the construction of an ornamental fish tank, a chicken coup and slaughter house. The works are scheduled for completion in four months.

The Goodwin Park Boys Hostel Rehabilitation Project is one of a total of sixty-two (62) small infrastructure projects which have received or are in the early stages of receiving support under the Poverty Reduction Programme. Other support to socio-economic infrastructure projects includes local roads, community centres, and police stations, homes for the aged, water and sanitation systems.

The EU's Head of Operations in Jamaica Jesús Orús Báguena emphasised that the EU was particularly pleased to be involved with projects such as these which focus on assisting the most vulnerable. ***"Jamaica like many developing countries in the Caribbean, have found that the youth population comprise a component of boys, who may be considered at risk of not achieving their full potential, without the formulation and implementation of specialized support programmes such as the Possibility Programme. This is why the European Union works in collaboration with the Government of Jamaica to provide support to projects such as this The Poverty Reduction Programme includes a special emphasis on initiatives aimed at facilitating the positive development of vulnerable male youth aged 14 -24."***

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