Jamaica seeks to ID expats for Gov't Database

Jamaica plans to   compile a database of information pertaining to 3 million Jamaican   expatriates so that the government can tap into their skills and expertise   when needed, an official said.

The project will be a boost to   the island's development, Donald Robinson, minister of state in the Foreign   Affairs Ministry, said in a statement Friday.

"We know absolutely nothing   about them, where they live, what their occupations are or their age   groups," he said. "So, it is critical that we find a scientific way   to start to get the information."

Jamaicans living in Britain, Canada   and the U.S. will be   targeted with help from local registrar officials in Jamaica.

Expatriates listed in the   database will have access to government ministries and agencies, allowing   them to make bids on local contracts and possibly receive a discount on   travel to Jamaica,   Robinson said.

The database will be established   with help from the United Nations Development Program and a $270,000 grant   from the European Union, Robinson said. It will be developed at the Jamaica   Diaspora Institute of The University of The West Indies in Mona, Jamaica.

Robinson said that the government expects the database to be up and running by the end of this year.