
Food for the Poor Donates Basic School to St. Ann District

The Steerfield District in the parish of St. Ann is the beneficiary of the tenth basic school to be completed by Food for the Poor (FFP) under its Jamaica 50 Programme.

The new Steerfield Basic School, which replaces the facility that operated from the community centre, was officially opened and handed over to the community on Wednesday, May 15. It boasts three classrooms, a kitchen, office, sick bay, verandah and bathroom facilities for the 30 students and two teachers on staff. Addressing the official opening ceremony, Minister of Youth and Culture, Hon. Lisa Hanna, who has portfolio responsibility for the Government's Jamaica 50 activities, said she is appreciative of the efforts of FFP towards the development of early childhood education. "That is something that is well needed and we really appreciate you taking up the mantle," she stated. The Minister, who is also Member of Parliament for St. Ann South Eastern, where the school is located, pledged a computer for the basic school "to make sure that the students have access to a computer in moving forward." She said that the gift forms part of an ongoing project to provide residents with access to free information communication technology (ICT) courses. She also promised to paint the community centre on Labour Day, May 23, as a first step in refurbishing the facility. Executive Director for FFP Jamaica, Jacqueline Johnson, in her address, pointed out that the charity has a proud history of significant support to the education system. "Apart from the Jamaica 50 Programme, since 2006, we have built 51 basic schools across the island. Our charity has also supplied many schools with furniture. In addition, we donate cash grants to needy students on an ongoing basis," she informed. Ms. Johnson expressed appreciation to all the FFP donors and partners, who have been assisting with its Jamaica 50 Programme, making special mention of the Levitz Family Foundation in the United States, which donated the Steerfield Basic School. FFP, through its Jamaica 50 Programme, plans to build or upgrade 50 early childhood institutions across the island over a 50-month period, in observance of Jamaica's 50th year of Independence celebrated in 2012.