

KEYNOTE ADDRESS



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MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, INVESTMENT
&
COMMERCE

**CLOSE OUT EVENT FOR COLLABORATE TO
PROSPER PROJECT**

**JAMAICA EXPORTERS' ASSOCIATION
1 WINCHESTER ROAD**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 30, 2014 @ 10:00 AM

Salutations

- Dr. Beverley Morgan- Head of The Competitiveness Company,
- Dr. Andre Gordon- Chairman of The Competitiveness Company,
- Dr. Garvin Bellamy, Senior Veterinary Officer, Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries
- Ms. Denise Herbol, USAID Mission Director,
- Members of the media,
- Ladies and gentlemen ... good morning

Today, I address you with a sense of pride about the achievements of the Collaborate to Prosper project. The project and its implementation, is a true testament to the benefits of partnership and the important role that micro enterprises can play in developing Jamaica's economy. I must commend USAID and the Competitiveness Company for making the project a success.

As Minister of Industry, Investment and Commerce, I am personally aware that micro enterprises are a major creator of employment and wealth creation. It is for this reason that we have placed entrepreneurship and the development of micro, small and

medium enterprises (MSMEs) at the forefront of the country's central growth agenda.

The Collaborate to Prosper Project, being a micro enterprise development project, fits within this broader framework. During the life span of the project, ordinary Jamaicans benefited by being provided with tools to alleviate poverty, upgrade their operations, improve their profitability, and produce for export.

Very importantly, as this project closes out, it has set a framework which can be used for scaling up on a sustainable basis. We could refer, in particular, to areas such as ornamental fish production in the inner city communities, specialty crops in rural communities, and in developing innovative products that can be commercialized. It is my understanding that all targets set under the project have been exceeded, with the exception of the export of ornamental fish.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is up to the beneficiaries to now continue the success achieved under the Collaborate to Prosper project. We have already seen, for example, the significant potential through the planting of high value specialty crops such as lemon grass, lychee, moringa trees, mint and rosemary, all of which will bring benefits now, and in the long term.

Recent legislative and administrative changes have been made to encourage the build out of infrastructure as we move towards the logistics centered economy. These changes will facilitate the expansion of our import capabilities through internal logistics, airports and seaports which will allow micro industries such as ornamental fishing to be incorporated into the global supply chain.

Ladies and gentlemen, the government of Jamaica is committed to developing Jamaica's micro industries as evidenced by its inclusion in the government's central growth strategy and the entrepreneurship and MSME policy.

Let me use this opportunity to focus briefly on ornamental fishing from an investment and industry perspective. Similar to the Competitiveness Company, what we want to see in Jamaica is a profitable and sustainable ornamental fish export industry. I should mention that I have pledged a donation of \$500, 000 to The Competitiveness Company to support the start- up and strengthening of ornamental fish operations within my own constituency. It is expected that this effort will contribute towards micro enterprise development not just in my constituency but by extension the country.

The ornamental fish sector plays a vital part in the international fish trade, contributing positively to rural development in many

developing countries, with a positive impact throughout the value-chain.

So, what is holding us back? What is preventing us from developing a vibrant and sustainable ornamental fish export industry, given our strategic location and ideal climate plus innovative and inventive individuals, some of them in my own constituency who have been longtime participants in this industry?

Consistency of Supply

First, we need a consistent supply of competitively priced ornamental fish. This means developing a cadre of breeders with sufficient capacity to stock the farms, and low input costs, including the cost of energy.

Central Export Facility

Secondly, as suggested by the Competitiveness Company, the sector needs a central export facility that can consolidate the production of the ornamental fish sector and provide the quality control, volume and packing efficiency required for large scale commercial exporting. This would allow the ornamental fish farmers to breed and grow fish on a continuous basis.

Quality Management

Of course, we need to address other issues such as management of disease and traceability, which involves providing a transparent and credible system for managing quality, preventing disease, and tracing origin.

Bureaucracy

Equally important, we must have appropriate regulations and minimal bureaucracy in the export and import process, to enable efficient order processing and exporting. **I should note in this regard that exporters of ornamental fish will no longer require a license for export.**

Single Trade Electronic Window

Against this background, there have been initiatives over the years to deal with bureaucracy. Ministries, Departments and Agencies of government have been computerized and some offer services online to varying degree. What is lacking is a comprehensive integration of the disparate systems. This has

resulted in importers/exporters still needing to visit multiple entities to complete the approval process.

Absent in the initiatives was end-to-end review of the business process for approval of permits/licenses, encompassing all of the relevant entities. Inefficiency, resulting from duplication of effort and processes that have no value therefore, exist. This is why we are moving towards a Single Trade Electronic Window (STEW).

A Single Trade Electronic Window facility allows parties involved in trade and transport to lodge standardized information and documents with a single entry point to fulfill all import, export, and transit-related regulatory requirements. If information is electronic, then individual data elements should only be submitted once.

Major components of a comprehensive single window for trade are a Port Community System (PCS), a Customs Management System (CMS) such as ASYCUDA (Automated System for Customs Data) World and trade facilitation system of the MDAs that regulate trade. The Trade Board, working with the Jamaica Customs Agency and the Port Authority of Jamaica under the auspices of the Cabinet Office, has advanced significantly, the planned implementation of the Single Trade Electronic Window.

National Trade Information Network

In addition, it has become increasingly important to have trustworthy and efficient trade-related data collection to guide domestic and regional policies. Information on trade related data could greatly assist in planning for both manufacturers and exporters. It is, therefore, vital that Jamaica engages in this type of trade related research that will enable better export and import planning and most importantly, create an information hub for potential exporters or individuals who want to invest domestically to create a business.

Within this context, the Trade Board has identified some immediate imperatives, which include “staying focused” on trends and trade preferences internationally to more appropriately guide both importers and exporters in their bid to drive trade.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the heart of all of these developments, is the recognition that each and every sector involved in trade in Jamaica is engaged in a single integrated activity for the common purpose of ensuring our national prosperity. The Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce is focused on building the logistics centred economy which is the end game of all that we are discussing here today!

Linking Jamaica to the global supply chain will drive efficiency, productivity, competitiveness and wealth creation. Of these we are certain!

As indicated, the Collaborate to Prosper project has resulted in increased productivity, increased self-employment, improved technical capacity of the farmers involved with the project, as well as increased incomes, and an improved enabling environment. We must now build on the work that has already been done.

Again, I commend the Competitiveness Company, USAID, and all the participants in the project for their contribution to making Jamaica a good place to invest, a better to live and the best place to raise families. I thank you!!