



A Strategy Document
For Assessing
Government Land Settlements
(December 2002)



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sections

Section 1: Introduction & Background	1
Section 2: Vision, Objectives & Challenges	4
Section 3: Need for Assessment, Opportunities & Constraints	6
Section 4: Coverage of settlements & Project Strategy	9
Section 5: Stages of the Study & Outline of Components	11

Figures

Figure 1: Project Strategy	10
Figure 2: Stages of the Process	12

Appendices

Appendix 1: National Listing of Government Land Settlements	18
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SECTION 1: Introduction & Background

Government land settlements represent a land reform initiative by the Jamaican government during the 1930s with the view of providing lands to the poor and landless. The fundamental purpose of these settlements was to increase the social and economic opportunities of the poor and landless through agricultural development. Therefore, the general trend is for land settlements to be utilized for agricultural purposes. Albeit, there are some instances where some of the land settlements were designed solely for residential purposes, while other agricultural holdings included adjacent residential units. For land settlements that were geared totally towards agricultural production there are no restrictions to the use of the same holdings for the construction of a residential unit.

Since the majority of land settlements were designed for agricultural purposes the accompanied level of infrastructure was minimal. Hence the settlements were characterized by reduced road carriageway, limited paved road surface, limited or no drainage system, basic domestic water supply (e.g. standpipes and/or communal tanks) and absence of fire hydrants. Therefore, any increase in developmental activities (mainly residential) will induce additional pressures on the existing minimal infrastructure.

Alternatively, some land settlements based on their location relative to growth centres have been redeveloped in terms of improvements to the physical infrastructure. For example, Irwin in St. James represents a government land settlement that was established in the late 1940s. During this period the pricing of the lots were at five pounds per acre plus fifty pounds for a basic house unit. Due to the growth of Montego-Bay within a westward direction that coincides with the location of Irwin the desire for shelter within this location started at a rapid rate and hence the Public Works Division and the different line agencies started to improve the level of infrastructure. Consequently, the market value of the properties increases to the extent that in 1957 a half-acre lot obtain a price of forty pounds.

Generally, land use pressures have been causing serious implications for the planning system, particularly concerning the management of land use activities and the land delivery process. Specifically though, government land settlements that are located close to and within the growth direction of regional and sub-regional centres are experiencing extensive spatial reorganization due to new subdivisions and developmental activities. Therefore, a forward planning approach is required to first address the settlements that are currently facing severe land use pressures and then to identify potential sites that will need urgent attention in the near future.

The purpose of this report is to establish the intended scope and the strategy needed to assess government land settlements within the context of a modern planning framework.

Inevitably this report will provide a guide as to the structure of Government Land Settlement studies, objectives and challenges, key principles, the need for assessing government land settlements, spatial distribution of land settlements and stages of the plan preparation process.

Historical Background

In tracing the historical evolution of government land settlement there appears to be a linkage with slavery and emancipation. During slavery the largest and most fertile (Class 1&11) tract of lands (approximately 2000-3000 acres) were owned and occupied by the plantocracy. After emancipation the ruling class was reluctant in relinquishing ownership and control of these lands, therefore the creation of leasehold estates prevails with the addition of squatting.

In an attempt to provide economic and social opportunities a number of attempts were made to provide the landless and poor with lands primarily for agricultural purposes. Nothing substantially occurred until the institutional formation of the

Lands Department in 1938. The major weaknesses observed during the period leading up to the formation of the Lands Department was the selection process used for identifying the beneficiaries and the capability of the lands identified for land settlement purposes.

Due to the substandard achievements of the Land Settlement Programme leading up to 1937 the Moyne Commission was assigned with the responsibility of assessment the progress of the Programme. Their findings reveal that although there was a substantial increase in the number of land settlement sites and the number of beneficiaries, many of the purchasers had no interest in farming, in need of relief or land hungry would-be-farmers. Therefore, the selection process provides the main gateway for speculative investment in lands by individuals that were neither poor nor landless. This trend continued as the number of beneficiaries under the land settlement scheme increased. However, the problem of suitable selection remains a significant issue that must be addressed in order to enhance the practicality of the land settlement Programme.

SECTION 2.0: Vision, Objectives & Challenges

Base on the problems experienced with government land settlements and the additional pressures placed on the planning system it is only prudent to ensure that there is a long-term vision for Jamaica where government land settlements are concerned. The vision envisage at the time of the establishment of the government land settlement programme was for every individual, particularly the poor and landless, regardless of their sex, race or creed having equal opportunity to access the land market and thereby securing land ownership.

The resulting objectives from the defined vision are as follows:

- To provide social and economic opportunities for the poor and landless
- Assist in the provision of shelter for the poor, disenfranchised and landless.
- To increase national food security
- To increase the number of cultivate parcels of land
- A reduction in the incidences of spontaneous residential development.
- To safeguard against the transferal of good agricultural lands to other land uses activities.

The initiative adapted by the Jamaican government is not unusual but in fact coincides with international practices whereby lands are sold and transferred to the poor and landless. This land reform process can take different format, such as land reconsolidation as practiced in Eastern Central Europe (e.g. Slovakia), land redistribution and restitution of rights (Hungary).

A number of challenges will emerge as we apply the tool of spatial planning towards accomplishing the objectives. These challenges will not only arise because of different individual needs, but also by addressing competing and conflicting land use demands within different economic spheres and environmental systems, and also in ensuring that sustainable development

principles are applied. The key challenges that the Government Land Settlement studies will need to address are:

- To ensure that agricultural lands remain in production rather than being splintered for residential purposes. With the structure of the Jamaican economy being based on a free market system, globalisation and structural adjustment measures, farmers are experiencing difficulties to break even with the cost of production, moreover to realize any profits.
- To sensitize the beneficiaries of government settlements of the intended purpose of land settlements, policies regarding the use and transferal of lands designated as government land settlements.
- To increase the level of public participation in the decision making process regarding land use zoning and policy formulations for the respective settlement.
- The safeguarding of agricultural holdings within land settlements from fragmentation.
- To ensure that the studies are prepared on a timely basis so as to form the basis of managing the development of land settlements rather than responding to the problems recreated by these settlements.

Section 3.0: Need for Assessment, Opportunities & Constraints

There is an increasing demand for lands to satisfy the need for shelter. As a result lands in different locality have been subdivided and developed for residential purposes. Most of these lands are located within government land settlements that are not facilitated with adequate infrastructure to accommodate increase densities. Therefore, the National Environment & Planning Agency need to ensure that planning and development studies are provided that will guide future development.

There are many individuals who were not the original beneficiaries of government land settlements and as such are not knowledgeable of the purposes of land settlements. Some of these individuals are now engaged into sales arrangements for various portions of the holdings classified as government land settlements. The assessment of government land settlement will provide the community with a land use zoning strategy, strategic policy directions and will facilitate public participation as a route to educate and inform community members as to the nature and purpose of government land settlements.

There is even a greater need for the assessment of government land settlements that are located within or close to growth centres; these settlements are normally under severe stress. To address the situation the normal tendency is to provide reactive measures of correcting illegal and sometimes non-conforming land use activities. In an effort to avoid this tendency there need to be a spatial description and identification of all land settlements in Jamaica, which will also determining the prioritization of the settlements that need immediate attention, *(See National Spatial Planning & Research Branch Operation Plan 2001-2002)*.

There are a number of applications pertaining to government land settlements that are lagging within the approval system that are waiting for a decision. Apart from the technical requirements there is also the administrative burden of

tracking these applications, which utilize a considerable amount of resource time. If proper studies are conducted that encourage ministerial/agency consultation then making a decision on the application will take a significantly reduced time and allow for better utilization of resources.

Opportunities & Constraints

With the increasing attention of modernizing the planning framework to involve deeper local involvement the opportunity exist for community members to play an integral role within the preparation of land settlement studies. Although this opportunity provides for wider participation and involvement in making social and economic decisions pertaining to the community there is concern that the completion of the plan will take a longer period of time, particularly in resolving different individual needs and concerns.

The idea behind Local Government Reform is to allow the local authorities (Parish Council) full autonomy over decisions concerning their geographical boundaries, particularly regarding development control matters. The provision of land settlement studies will equip these authorities with the required guidelines and standards for assessing development proposals.

The involvement of the Social Development Commission working within the area will assist with the data collection process and the engagement of the community towards the public participatory process. There is the saying that “too many cooks spoil the broth”, but in this case the inclusion of the different stakeholders to the process will reduce the reliance of the public purse and enhance the concept of social capital and sweat equity that have oftentimes being missing ingredients of the planning and development process.

The dawn of information technology provides the opportunity of representing spatial data in an electronic format for a large audience to view simultaneously and also for the manipulation and analysis of geographical data with the use of

Geographic Information System. However, the format of existing data within various line agencies and ministries transform this opportunity into a constraint when the data is stored in different and unrecognized formats that inhibit spatial congruence.

The major constraint envision for the successful completion of government land settlement studies as a forward planning approach to curtail illegal and non-conforming land use activity is the timing of the preparation of the plans to respond to local demands for lands for residential purposes, particularly within or close to growth centres. This constraint is notable and evident when both central and local governments planning authorities are operating with marginal resources. To address this constraint it is clear that the government need to show greater interest in ensuring that orderly and sustainable development occur by directing the appropriate funding to this public good.

The conversion of map-based data to digital format is one of the major constraints to the preparation of government land settlement studies. This is because large format scanning service is not available at NEPA and also because the map-based product is not the property of NEPA but that of the Estate Management Unit of National Land Agency. Nevertheless, loan arrangements need to be established with the Estate Management Unit for the use of the land settlement maps along with the use of a large format scanner, preferable from a government agency, (*See Operation Plan 2001-2002*).

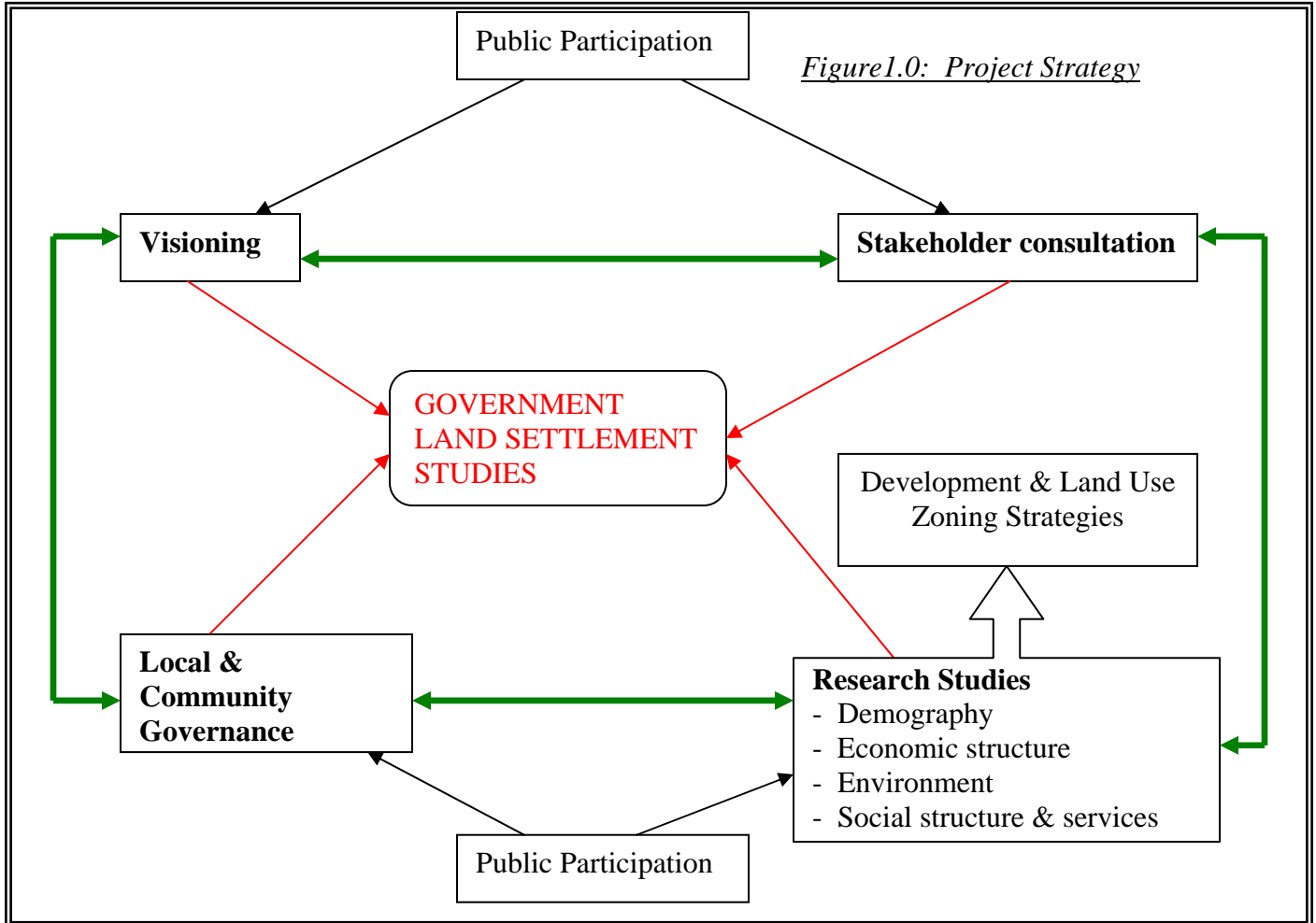
SECTION 4.0: Coverage of Settlements & Project Strategy

The location of Government Land Settlement is not localised to a single geographical area or region, but actually its spatial distribution represents a national occurrence where there are approximately three hundred and twenty four land settlements (324) throughout Jamaica with an average of approximately twenty-three settlements (23) per parish, (See Appendix 1).

The approximate beneficiaries from the initial development of these land settlements amounts to 48,600 settlers (using an average of 150 lots per settlement). However, this figure has increased and will continue to increase because some units within various settlements have been further subdivided into smaller lots. Meanwhile, there are new land settlements being developed by the Commissioner of Lands. Consequently, there are new beneficiaries to the land settlement schemes, including: homeowners, commercial and industrial operators etc. The ultimate insight is the diversification of the land settlements.

Project Strategy

The nature of the government land settlement studies require intense community involvement from the visioning exercise to the completion and implementation of the final plan. The final plan must take into account sustainable development issues such as the provision of portable water, health care services, disaster and drainage, sources of employment, local and community governance and community cohesiveness. Therefore an integrated approach is required that examine the social, environmental and the economic fitting within the spatial structure of the community through research based procedures. The most fundamental strategies that will be developed are development and land use zoning strategies that addresses the utilization of lands augmented by development policies and standards, (See Figure 1).



The project strategy diagram illustrates the four major tiers that are required for the preparation of government land settlement studies: visioning, stakeholder consultation, research studies and local & community governance. The graphical illustration indicates that these four tiers need to be integrated and public participation really forms the major link to information inflow into the main tiers for determining the areas of priorities.

SECTION 5.0: Stages of the Study & Outline of components

To address the various challenges, visions and objectives a five-step process is recommended with the associated level of participation, (See Figure 2.0). These stages are as outlined:

1. Stage One: Scope & Strategy Report
2. Stage Two: Stakeholder Consultation
3. Detailed Research & Analysis
4. Land Use Zoning & Development Strategies
5. Completed Document including policies & strategies and local and community governance structure.

Stage One: Scope & Strategy Report

This stage describes the approach that will be used to prepare the government land settlement studies, the level of public participation and consultation. Also, the components of the studies are identified. The expected timeframe for the completion of this stage is June 2002.

Stage Two: Stakeholder Consultation

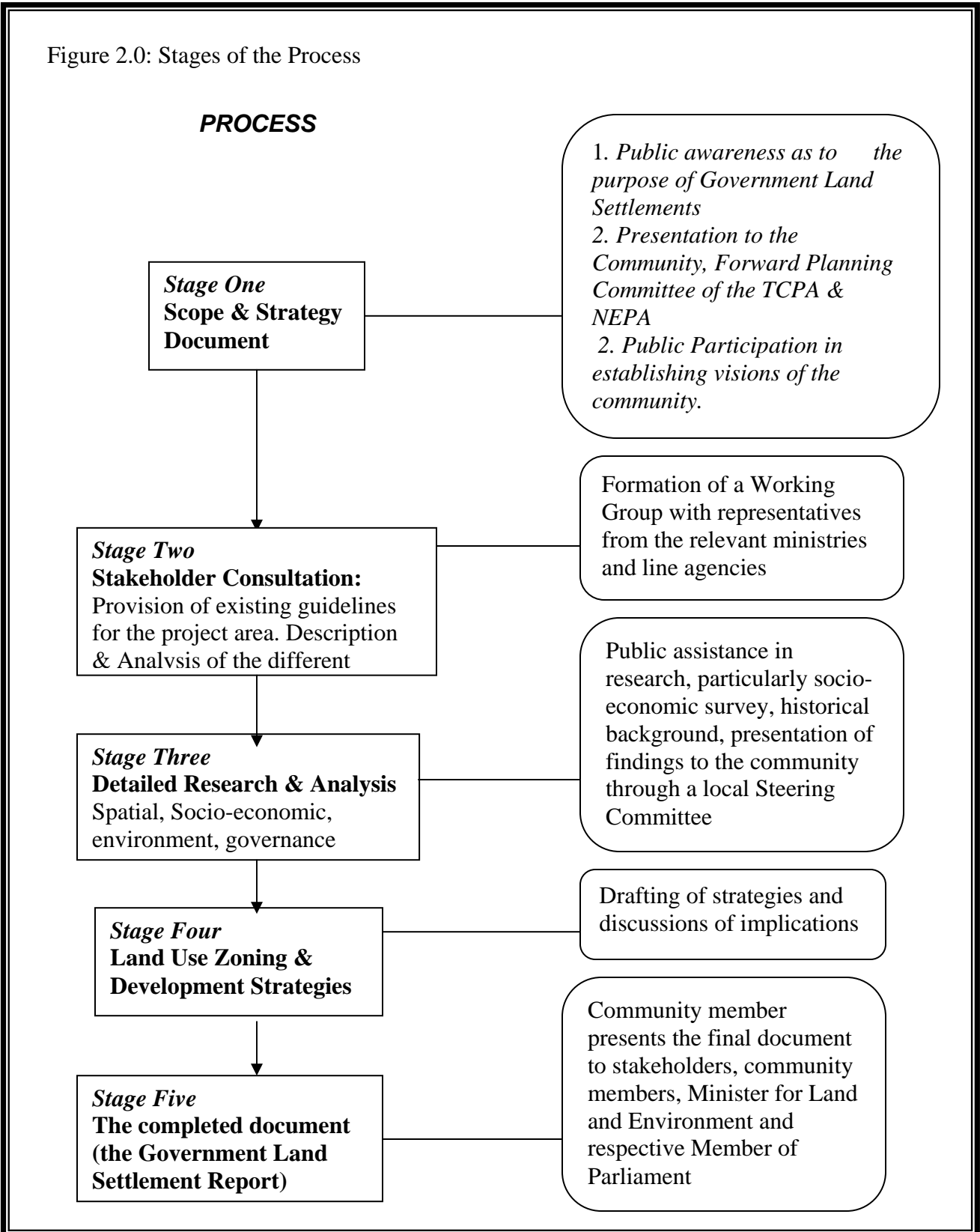
There are a number of stakeholders from both central and local government level that need to contribute to the successful completion of the study, including, the National Land Agency (Estate Management Unit), Water Resources Authority, National Water Commission, Social Development Commission, Local Authorities (Parish Councils) and Ministry of Land & Environment.

Stage Three: Detailed Research & Analysis

The strategic approach that will be adapted for the preparation of government land settlement studies is an integrated approach that examines the social structure, economic opportunities and environmental implications towards development within a spatial structure. A demography analysis, as expected will be required but this need to be collected as primary data because of the boundary overlaps with the STATIN data collection methodology and the project

boundaries. Simultaneously, other social and economic data will be collected to further guide the studies.

Figure 2.0: Stages of the Process



Stage Four: Land Use Zoning & Development Strategies

To guide the future use of lands within the different settlements a land use zoning strategy will be developed for community (one will be posted at the community center), parish council and NEPA to guide the development approval process. Ultimately, the parish council according to the proposal of local government reform initiatives will mainly use the land use zoning strategy.

Stage Five: Completed Document

At this stage the study will be completed indicating the visions, policies, land use zoning strategies and development standards and guidelines for directing the future development of the settlement.

Outline of the Components

In keeping with project strategy and the intended purpose of this study the proposed outline of the land settlement study is as outlined:

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- Rationale of the Plan
- Sustainable Development Objectives of the Plan
- Economic Development
- Social and Community Development
- Environmental development
- Vision
- Constraints to Development

2.0 REGIONAL SETTING

- Historical Background
- Location

3.0 ENVIRONMENT

- Environmental Profile
- Geology
- Hydrology
- Land Capability

4.0 DEMOGRAPHY

- Population Size
- Age Structure
- Sex Ratio
- Dependency Ratio
- Density
- Population Change
- Population Projection
- Settlement Pattern

5.0 SOCIAL FACILITIES

- Housing
- Growth of Housing Stock
- Overcrowding
- Number of Rooms Occupied by households
- Average Household Size
- Subdivision Activity
- Age of Housing Stock
- Type of Housing Units Built

- Type of Construction material used
- Household Access to basic services (water, toilet facilities, electricity, fuel, etc)
- Public sector housing
- Housing need projection
- Health services
- Status of health facilities
- Education (primary, secondary/high, tertiary, vocational)
- School age population
- Cemetery
- Recreational facilities
- Solid waste disposal and management
- Other community facilities

6.0 UTILITIES AND TRANSPORT

- Electricity
- Telephone
- Water
- Transportation
- Public transportation
- Drainage

7.0 ECONOMIC BASE

- Economic Activity
- Economic Sectors
- Labour Force

- Unemployed Labour Force
- Employment by Industry Group

8.0 LAND USE AND LAND USE ZONING

- Existing land Use
- Proposed Land Use
- Agriculture land use planning
- Land requirement (housing, social services, etc)

10.0 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- Policies
- Financing of land settlement schemes
- Institutional, legal and regulatory framework
- Security of tenure (land reform measures)
- Standards for Development
- Mechanisms for participatory planning
- Physical development strategy
- Urban Information Systems (Land Information Systems, Geographic Information Systems, etc)

11.0 IMPLEMENTATION

- Management Framework
- Proposed institutional framework
- Projects and Programmes
- Financial sustainability

- Public private partnership

12.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE PLAN

- Sustainability Indicators
- Requirements for plan monitoring

Appendix 1: National Listing of Government Land Settlements¹

Parish	Settlement
Hanover	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blenheim 2. Blue Hole and Albion 3. Burnt Ground 4. Cacoon Castle 5. Cauldwell 6. Content 7. Copse 8. Cousin's Cove 9. Craven Estates 10. Easton 11. Glasgow 12. Government Morass Land 13. Great Valley 14. Haughton Court 15. Haze lymph Prop 16. Kenilworth 17. Knockalva 18. New Found River 19. New Miles 20. Santoy 21. Shettlewood 22. Spring Valley
St. Andrew	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bell Air 2. Belvedere 3. Cane River Pen 4. Clifton Mount 5. Flamstead 6. Georgia Estate 7. Golden Spring 8. Joppa 9. Knowsley and Westminister 10. Marverley Mountain

¹ There are seven land settlements that are not yet attached to the listings.

Parish	Settlement
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Mayland and Cherry Gardens 12. Middleton 13. Mona Estate 14. Mount Dakins 15. Mount Ossa and Hall Green 16. New Gardens (Shewing Road) 17. Papine Estate 18. Rosemount 19. Salisbury 20. Temple Hall 21. Worcester Park and Montpelier
St. Elizabeth	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bartons Land Settlement 2. Biscany 3. Bogue 4. Breadnut Valley 5. Brucefield 6. Bulters 7. Cabbage Valley 8. Crooks Bottom 9. Duff House 10. Elim 11. Fullerswood 12. Fullerswood and Salt Spring 13. Goshen 14. Hounslow and Bay Filly 15. Lacovia called Holland Mountain 16. Luana Pen 17. Lucky Valley and Stephen's Run 18. Malver Chase 19. Mount Olivet 20. Oxford 21. Retirement 22. Santa Cruz Park 23. Spring Vale 24. Unity and Ginger Ground 25. Vineyard 26. White Hall

Parish	Settlement
	27. Y. S Falls known as Crawle 28. Yardley Chase
Trelawny	1. Allsides 2. Bounty Hall 3. Braco and Lancaster Estate 4. Broadleaf Water now Stettin 5. Brompton Bryan 6. Clermont 7. Dromily-Bunker Hill and Hampton Mountain 8. Garredu 9. Greenvale 10. Greenwich 11. Hague 12. Hyde and Gibraltar 13. Litchfield 14. Middlemost 15. Reserve Pen 16. Richmond Pen 17. Troy 18. Unity
Manchester	1. Alvie 2. Berkshire 3. Brockley 4. Chudleigh 5. Cocoa Walk 6. Dunnsville 7. Enfield Plantation 8. Fairview and Cottage 9. George North 10. Greenvale 11. Hopeton Pen 12. Lyndhurst 13. Melrose 14. New Forest 15. Ramble Manchester 16. Reid Piece known as Battersea Pen

Parish	Settlement
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Somerset 18. Spur Tree 19. St. Ruan Castle Elim and the Springs 20. Wickar
St. Ann	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adstock 2. Armadale Land Settlement 3. Beverley 4. Bradfield-Crescent Park 5. Cardiff Hall 6. Cave Valley 7. Cuffie Ridge 8. Eltham 9. Greenock 10. New Ground 11. Queenhythe 12. Rural Retreat 13. Seville Estate 14. Thatchfield 15. Tobolski 16. Windsor Estate 17. Woodstock 18. York Castle
St. James	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Belfont 2. Boscobel 3. Chesterfield 4. Content 5. Ducketts 6. Eden 7. Equity and York 8. Garlands 9. Georges Valley 10. Guilsbro 11. Horseguard and Mount Lebanon 12. Irwin Estate 13. Mafoota 14. Miranda Hill and Seaview 15. Mocho

Parish	Settlement
	16. Montpelier 17. New Canaan 18. Roehampton 19. Seven River 20. Shaw Castle 21. Stevenage 22. Tangle River 23. Windsor Lodge