



INVESTING IN PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

PROGRESS REPORT



Foreword

This first progress report focuses on people and the communities in which they live. The most important investment which produces the best returns will be those made in our people, particularly our youth.

The Bahamas must foster an environment that ensures the growth of upstanding, fully productive citizens of a Bahamas not only for the near term, but for the foreseeable future.

A future where we are all able to fully embrace what is rightfully ours along with all those attendant responsibilities. A future where we have the capacity and the capability to realize the fullest potential of our dreams.

Our country must equip future Bahamians with the tools for proper self-determination.

This progress report, **Investing in People and Communities**, highlights some of this Government's major accomplishments in Education, Environment, Health, the Over-the-Hill Initiative and Land Reform.

The report is also available for your reference and information at opmbahamas.com and social media platforms.

The Most Hon. Dr. Hubert A. Minnis
Prime Minister

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Transforming Education	03
Over-the-Hill Rejuvenation	04
Technology & Investing in Youth	06
Transforming the Landfill & Reducing Carbon Footprint	07
Protecting Our Environment	08
Conservation	09
Health	10
Land Reform	11

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Universal Preschool Education

In September 2018, the Ministry of Education launched the Universal Pre-Primary initiative which has increased by 800 students, the number of 3-4 year olds enrolled in an approved Ministry of Education pre-primary curriculum. The Ministry will partner with approved preschools through a voucher program for 500 to 1,000 spots annually. Vouchers are worth **\$2,000 per year for tuition and learning supplies**.

The Ministry has also partnered with 44 approved private preschools in New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco and Andros to ensure this increased enrollment.

One million dollars has been set aside through the Small Business Development Centre and The Bahamas Entrepreneurial Venture Fund for the development of preschools. This funding will support equity and loans of up to \$150,000.

Access is also being given to Crown Land for the development of preschools particularly in the Family Islands. Building materials will be duty free.



Bahamas Government Tertiary Education Grant Program: increasing access to free tuition

Qualifying Bahamian students are now able to attend the University of The Bahamas and BTVI free of charge.

Additionally a **\$500 monthly allowance** is being granted to Family Island students attending **UB & BTVI**.

These two initiatives translate into an investment in education and training of \$21 million for the academic year 2019 – 2020.

IMPROVED GLAT SCORES

The Lower Primary School Literacy effort has been launched to increase the percentage of students achieving A-D in Language Arts in the Grade Level Assessment Test, (GLAT). Scores have improved by 5% from 2018-2019.



Since June 2017, the National Training Agency has trained **1,640 vulnerable young Bahamians** in basic life and technical skills. The core focus of the agency is on youth between the **ages of 16 and 30** who are unemployed and unprepared for the workforce.



1056⁺ BENEFIT

From the UB grant alone, 1,056 students have benefited from the program since September of 2019 representing an increase of 57% percent in scholarship enrollment.



Bahamas
Technical & Vocational Institute

EDUCATION INITIATIVES AT BTVI

The Information and Communications Technology Program for high school students in New Providence and Grand Bahama has been established at the BTVI. The program, now in its second year, is a technology immersion program offered over two summers and one academic year for students entering Grade 10. It provides six different international certifications, affording students the opportunity to enter directly into the workforce with ICT certifications, or into university, upon graduation from the 12th Grade.

Under contract from the Ministry of National Security, the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute, as part of the Citizen Security and Justice Program, is providing workforce skills training for inmates re-entering society following their periods of incarceration.



OVER-THE-HILL REJUVENATION

As part of the Government's vision to improve the Over-the-Hill community, work has begun to transform and restore the area to a time when it was rich in culture and history and the family was at the center of work, community and business life. The vision for the community seeks to achieve its goals through a multi-pronged strategy focusing on smart technology; youth and the elderly; rejuvenation; social empowerment; green technology; and economic empowerment.

The strategy has the following areas of focus:

The reduction of crime

- A working collaboration between the police and members of the community to bring incidences of crime down to a minimum

Promotion of a cleaner environment

- Continuous clean up initiatives which promote healthier communities are ongoing. Abandoned buildings are being demolished to make way for cleaner living surroundings and to reduce crime. Derelict vehicles have also been removed.

- Drainages and stand pumps have been repaired.

Fostering Community Development

- Parks in the area are being upgraded and restored, and outfitted with Wi-Fi.

- To encourage both ownership and development of land and homes in the Over-the-Hill community, a Small Business Development Centre (SBDC) has been opened at the Edmund Moxey Youth and Community Centre to provide counseling on all aspects of the establishment and continuity of small businesses including management, operations, marketing, personnel and assistance with start-up funding. More than 30 entrepreneurs have benefitted and gone on to establish businesses in the areas of trucking, beauty products, courier services, landscaping and graphic design.

- Additionally, the Over-the-Hill community has been designated an Economic Empowerment Zone which allows residents of the area to benefit from concessions to upgrade their businesses and their properties.



Alvin Moss Park

\$1M

IN CONCESSIONS

In the Economic Empowerment Zone, more than 32 applicants have been approved and have been able to take advantage of concessions in business licensing fees, stamp and real property tax in the amount of just over \$1 million.

REPAIRED

90

DRAINAGES

112

STANDPIPES

45

COMPUTERS

are being distributed to organizations, schools and churches in the community

HIRED

42

ENVIRONMENT MONITORS

in partnership with Ministry of Labour's 'Labor on the Blocks Program'



14K TONS
WASTE
REMOVED



312
DERELICT
VEHICLES
REMOVED

30

REGULARLY
MAINTAINED
ABANDONED
BUILDINGS

OVER-THE-HILL **CLEAN-UP** **IN NUMBERS**

76%

RESIDENT'S
CLEANLINESS
SATISFACTION



HIRED

300

LOCAL
LABORERS

117

LOCAL
CONTRACTORS

TECHNOLOGY

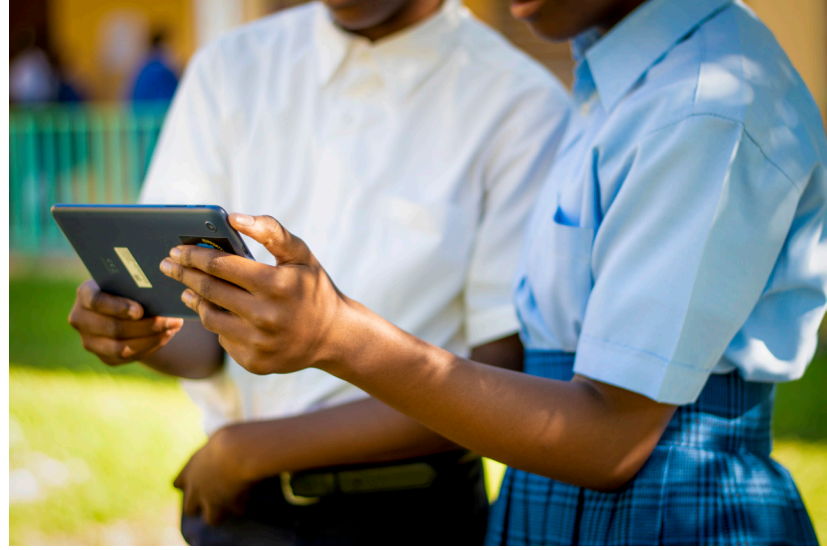
FOR ALL LEVELS OF LEARNING

Whispercast Management System

In an effort to improve test scores, teachers and aides have been trained in the use of technology devices and the Whispercast Management system. This will allow opportunities for hands on discovery, play, creative expression, and outdoor physical activity.

One Network Project

As part of the 'One Network Project', a \$17 million technology upgrade, infrastructural improvements have been made at many schools to accommodate the increased demand for Wi-Fi and internet connectivity and to develop 21st century learning skills. These upgrades have been introduced in the school system leading to tech smart campuses throughout the entire country.



Tablet pilot program established at Anatol Rodgers High School

DEVICES DISTRIBUTED THROUGHOUT SCHOOLS


2725
TABLETS


123
LAPTOPS


133
PROJECTORS



2019 Youth in Parliament

INVESTING IN YOUTH

GRANT OF
\$840K

One hundred and twenty young entrepreneurs from New Providence, Eleuthera, Exuma, Abaco and Andros have been successfully trained as part of the Be Inspired youth entrepreneurship program. The government has allocated \$840,000 for grants to those under 35 years of age for start-up micro businesses.



NEW SCHOOLS

New schools were completed in San Salvador and Rum Cay last year. Five schools have been expanded - A F Adderley Jr. High, C H Reeves Jr. High, Eva Hilton Primary and North Eleuthera High and Claridge Primary to include new classrooms, art rooms, computer and science labs.



307

YOUTH TRAINED

Three hundred and seven young people successfully completed the Fresh Start program in 2019. Ninety percent of them have found permanent employment as a result of the training and internship opportunities received from the program.

Under a 10-year agreement led by a Bahamian company, the New Providence Ecology Park is making strides toward transforming the former Nassau Dump into a world-class park and model of environmental leadership. The site has been raised to international standards in the area of solid waste management, significant recycling of the waste stream and the containment of environmental and health hazards. Fires at the site have been extinguished and the risk of future fires greatly reduced.

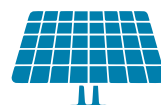
- Buffer spaces have been created between the site and residential communities.
- Tires are now being shredded for recycling purposes including roads in the park. Organic materials, including cardboard and green waste, are shredded and turned back to soil.
- Proper roadways are in place and there is now a functional drop off point at the entrance of the site that is free and open seven days a week.
- Garbage is now compacted and covered daily.
- Residential waste collection is now conducted twice weekly in New Providence resulting in better waste management and a decrease in infestation of flies and rodents.
- Overflowing septic waste has been rerouted and contained.
- 24-hour security patrols and traffic controls have been put in place.
- The park is now clean and organized.

TRANSFORMING THE NEW PROVIDENCE LANDFILL TO ECOLOGY PARK

BEFORE



NOW



REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

A solar car park, funded by United Arab Emirates (UAE)-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund (CREF) is now open at the Thomas A. Robinson National Track and Field Stadium. The 925 kW solar system will reduce dependency on fossil fuels by an estimated 310,000 litres per year, saving BPL around \$350,000 and offsetting 856 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually.

Anatol Rodgers High is one of the first public schools being supplemented with solar panels. In 2019 it was outfitted with a 250 kW solar system. In addition, \$900,000 has been received from the Italian Government to retrofit the T.G. Glover Primary School which includes the installation of a 136.2 kW photovoltaic battery back-up system, the construction of a greenhouse for a pilot horticultural study and recycling program.



CLIFTON PIER

BULKHEAD & DOCK CONSTRUCTION

Described as the industrial park for southwestern New Providence, the area has and continues to house facilities for the storage of gasoline, diesel fuel and aviation fuel. Originally constructed in the 1960s, the Clifton Pier Power Station was in need of remediation and repair, due to oil leaks which threatened to compromise the marine environment in that area.

The dock at Clifton Pier was severely damaged during the passage of Hurricane Matthew in 2016, leaving it in poor condition. It has now been repaired to allow for safer berthing for barge shipments, to allow BPL staff access to workboats for maintenance purposes and for public use

The new dock can accommodate ro/ro vessels.

An Oil Recovery system has also been constructed in the area behind the sheet piled wall. An Oil Separation system has also been constructed in areas of Cooling Water Outfalls.

1500^{ft} BULKHEAD

A new 1,500-foot bulkhead sheet piled wall has been constructed to replace the floating boom system originally deployed around the face of the bluff in the area of the BPL power station. This new wall will now prevent the flow of oil into the marine environment



NEW ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LAWS

Ministry of Environment Act, 2019

This act establishes the Environmental Administration Fund and the Environmental Trust Fund.

- The Administration Fund will allow for the receipt of funds for environmental maintenance and protection, from various sources such as from Parliament, through the collection of fines and taxes or a bond issue.
- The Trust Fund which will be managed by the government in partnership with a Board of Trustees and will give the Government access to funds requiring independent board oversight for approvals, in keeping with the requirements laid out by international donors.

Environmental Planning and Protection Act, 2019

- Establishes the Department of Environmental Planning and Protection, provides for the prevention or control of pollution and regulates environmental activities, administration, conservation and sustainable use of the environment.
- Provides for the protection of natural resources (coral reefs, ozone layer), allows for pollution control (pollutant management and monitoring) and provides for the management of hazardous wastes and prohibits hazardous pollutants.



NEW ENVIRONMENTAL COURT

The Prosecutions Unit under the Department of Environmental Health has been established to serve as an advocate for the environment and to prosecute environment law violations.



BAN OF SINGLE USE PLASTICS

Government is phasing out the use of single-use plastics and Styrofoam, including bags, cups, plastic straws and plastic utensils. Additionally, the release of balloons into the air has also been banned.



CONSERVATION



43

NEW MARINE AREAS

43 new marine areas have been identified for protection, over 8.1 million acres to ensure that The Bahamas fulfills its goal of protecting 20 percent of the marine environment by 2020.

CONCH PRESERVATION

An agreement has been signed with the Inter-American Development Bank to advance conch conservation efforts in The Bahamas.

32.7 K ACRES OF PINE FOREST

The Blue Hole Conservation Forest, comprising 32,774 acres of crown land pine forest in South Abaco was designated and approved by the Commonwealth Society of the United Kingdom as part of the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy.

Demonstrating its commitment to ensuring that our natural resources are managed in a responsible manner in order that future Bahamians may benefit, the Government, as responsible environmental stewards, has undertaken several initiatives to achieve this. It has continued its 10,000 fruit tree campaign to plant an additional 10,000 fruit trees across the country by the end of 2019. Other conservation achievements include protection of marine areas, conch conservation efforts and the designation of Crown Land to the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy.



1.3 M

CORAL EMBRYOS

The Government has also launched The Bahamas Coral Innovation Hub with the Cape Eleuthera Institute and Perry Institute for Marine Science in order to advance and deploy coral conservation science and to scale up coral restoration, using groundbreaking techniques. Further, approximately 1.3 million coral embryos have been created by collecting spawn from reef-building and endangered coral species in The Bahamas using cutting-edge coral reproduction techniques.



SEEDBANK

The Government has signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with Kew Gardens of the United Kingdom to establish a seed bank in The Bahamas for conservation of native plant seeds as part of the Global Tree Seed Bank.

FAMILY ISLANDS 9 CLINICS REPAIRED

Governor's Harbour and Lower Bogue,
Eleuthera; Mastic Point and Red Bays,
Andros; Orange Creek, Cat Island; Deadman's
Cay and Simms', Long Island (Phase 1); Fox
Town and Cooper's Town, Abaco
(pre-Hurricane Dorian).

NEW HIRES (2018/2019)

13 DOCTORS
12 REGISTERED NURSES
15 TRAINED CLINICAL NURSES
2 PHARMACISTS
1 LAB SUPERVISOR
1 LAB TECHNOLOGIST

SIGNED CONTRACT
\$3.6 M
RENOVATION FOR
A & E

INVESTMENT FOR
WELLNESS PROGRAM
\$1.7 M
up 18% over 2018

UPGRADES

- PMH Dialysis Unit upgraded
- Radiology services digitized, facilitating telemedicine
- X-ray Rooms at PMH Radiology Department improved, allowing doctors to view images remotely via the internet
- Phase 1 of significant roof repairs to Princess Margaret Hospital
- Remedial works of former Corey Newbold Ward at PMH completed, renamed "Medical/Surgical II West"
- The Launch of Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS) has improved access to 21st century care across The Bahamas.



HEALTH



SUGARY DRINKS BANNED

from all Government schools and
public healthcare facilities



NEW CT SCANNERS

New CT Scanner for Rand Memorial Hospital
(pre-Hurricane Dorian)

New 64-slice CT scan machine for PMH,
allowing for recommission of Diagnostic Unit



3 AMBULANCES FOR LONG ISLAND, EXUMA & ABACO



GENERATORS

New generators purchased for community clinics:
Fleming St., Elizabeth Estates and Flamingo Gardens,
NP; Bimini; Landrail Point, Crooked Island.

Two (2) new generators purchased for National
Immunization Storage Facility in New Providence to
ensure vaccines are never compromised.

Generators installed for the first time at Old Bight
Clinic and Orange Creek Clinic.



LAND REFORM

MAKING HOME OWNERSHIP AFFORDABLE

The Government has committed to a land reform program that seeks to ensure affordable home ownership and access to land for an increased number of Bahamians.

Under this initiative, the Access to Affordable Homes Act, 2018 makes affordable homes more accessible through exemptions on building materials for those building on designated service lots in government subdivisions. This will allow homeowners to design and construct their own homes at a lower cost.

One of the new government subdivisions includes the Sunset Close Subdivision in which the first 10 ready-to-build service lots have been sold. Lots have also been made available in the Carmichael Subdivision and the Lionel Davis Subdivision in New Providence. The necessary infrastructure – water, electricity and sewerage – will be put in place in order to further ease the burden of home ownership.

This service lots initiative has also been launched in the Family Islands with the Central Pines Subdivision in Abaco, and Bahamia West in Grand Bahama.

In ensuring greater access to home ownership in Spring City, Abaco, eligible Bahamians have been given keys to their homes.

17
CROWN
DEEDS
GRANTED
IN INAGUA

285
APPLICANTS
QUALIFIED
AND APPROVED
by the Ministry of Environment and
Housing for purchase of the 365 available
lots in the Carmichael Village Subdivision

LAND WEALTH FOR A NEW GENERATION

Stamp tax (VAT) has been eliminated on the transfer or sale of land to an immediate family member to relieve the financial burden of such transactions and pass on wealth from one generation to the next.

“ Access to land and the opportunity to own land is one of the greatest ways to generate and to build wealth across generations. ”

The Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis, Prime Minister - June 2019



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