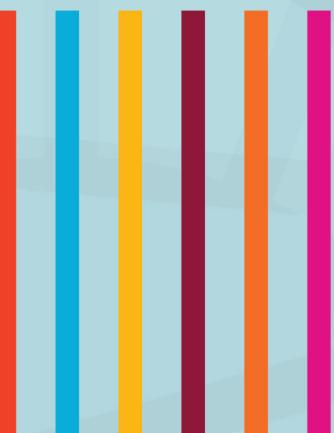
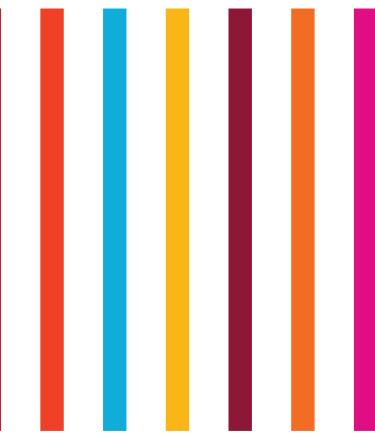




Government of Jamaica



VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT ON THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAAA	Addis Ababa Action Agenda
ALEX	Agri-linkages Exchange
ALUP	Agricultural Land Utilization Policy
API	Agricultural Productivity Index
APSE	Alternative Pathways to Secondary Education
ARV	Antiretroviral
ATEAM	Agriculture Trade Enforcement Advisory Mechanism
A-TIP	Anti-Trafficking in Person
BBP	Bamboo Bioproducts Project
CAP	Career Advancement Programme
CAPRI	Caribbean Policy Research Institute
CARE	COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CARTAC	Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre
CCD	Climate Change Division
CCPA	Cockpit Country Protected Area
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDC	Community Development Committees
CLEAR II	Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labour
CLMIS	Contraceptive Logistic Management Information System
COPE	Community Outreach through Partnership for Empowerment
CPFSA	Child Protection and Family Services Agency
CRAs	Credit Rating Agencies
CRP	Community Renewal Programme
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CSMs	Manual, undertake Carbon Stock Assessments
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CXC	Caribbean Examination Council
DRM	Domestic Resource Mobilisation
DRS	Deposit Refund Scheme
DSSI	Debt Service Suspension initiative
ECC	Early Childhood Commission
ECHO	Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes
ECIs	Early Childhood Institutions
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EFJ	Environmental Foundation of Jamaica
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment

EMS	Environment Management Systems
EU	European Union
EVADP	Essex Valley Agriculture Development Project
FACE	Fund to Alleviate COVID-19 Economics
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FFDI	Financing for Development Initiative
FY	Financial Year
GAC	Gender Advisory Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF SGP	Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme
GKMA	Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area
GMO	Genetically Modified Organisms
GNAT	Grade Nine Achievement Test
GOILP	Grade One Individual Learning Profile
GOJ	Government of Jamaica
GSAT	Grade Six Achievement Test
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
HSDE	High School Diploma Equivalency
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDPs	International Development Partners
IHR	International Health Regulations
ILO	International Labour Organization
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUU	Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
JADEP	Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme
JAMIS	Jamaica Agricultural Marketing Information System
JAMPRO	Jamaica Promotions Corporation
JBDC	Jamaica Business Development Corporation
JFLL	Jamaica Foundation for Lifelong Learning
JISD	Jamaica Invasive Species Database
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
JNVCS	Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey

JPIC	Jamaica Productivity Centre
JSLC	Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions
KSMC	Kingston, and St Andrew Municipal Corporation
LAMP	Land Administration Management Programme
LFMC	Local Forest Management Committee
LIAT	Logistic Indicators Assessment Tool
LSF	Liquidity and Sustainability Facility
LUCA	Land Use/Cover Change Assessment
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MEGJC	Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation
MGCI	Mountain Green Cover Index
MHAP	Mental Health Action Plan
MHS	Mental Health Services
MHU	Mental Health Unit
MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MOAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MOEYI	Ministry of Education and Youth
MOH EOC	Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre
MOHW	Ministry of Health & Wellness
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPI	mpi Poverty Index
MRPA	The Mason River Protected Area
MSM	Men who have sex with men (MSM)
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
MTF	Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework
NAP	National Action Plan
NBI	National Broadband Initiative
NBSAP	The National Strategy and Action Plan for Biological Diversity in Jamaica 2016-2021
NCDA	National Council on Drug Abuse
NCDS	Non-Communicable Diseases
NCEL	National College for Educational Leadership
NCTFJ	National Conservation Trust Fund of Jamaica
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NDP	National Development Plan
NWSP	National Water Sector Policy
NEET	Number of youth not in employment, education or training
NEPA	National Environmental and Planning Agency
NFEL	National Forest Emission Level
NFI	National Forest Inventory

NFIS	National Financial Inclusion Strategy
NFPB	National Family Planning Board
NGOs	Non-government organizations
NHI	National Health Insurance
NHM	Natural History Museum
NHP	National HIV Programme
NIC	National Irrigation Commission
NIDS	National Identification System
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
NIYCFN	National Infant and Young Child Feeding Network
NOC	National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee
NJEP	National Junior Environment Programme
NPACV	National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence
NPGE	National Policy for Gender Equality
NPHL	National Public Health Laboratory
NPP/NPRP	National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme
NPRPC	National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee
NPSC	National Parenting Support Commission
NRA	National Risk Assessment
NRCA	Natural Resource Conservation Authority
NRP	National Reporting Platform
NRSC	National Road Safety Council
NRW	Non-revenue water
NSC	National Standards Curriculum
NSLC	National School Leaving Certificate
NSNP	National School Nutrition Policy
NSNS	National School Nutrition Standards
NSO	National Statistics Office
NSPC	National Social Protection Committee
NSU	National Surveillance Unit
NSWMA	National Solid Waste Management Authority
NWC	National Water Commission
NYS	National Youth Service
OAS/CICAD	Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODA	Official Development Assistance (ODA)
ODPEM	Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
OUC	Other Urban Centres

PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
PEP	Primary Exit Profile
PHEOC	Public Health Emergencies of International Concern
PHSM	Public Health & Social Measures
PIP	Production Incentive Programme
PLHIV	Persons Living with HIV
POE	Points of Entry
PPP4NCDs	Public-Private Partnership for non-communicable diseases
PRASC	Programme for Regional Advancement of Statistics in CARICOM
PROMAC	Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality
PSC	Pedestrian Safety Committee
PWD	Persons with disability
RA	Rural Areas
RADA	Rural Agricultural Development Authority
RHAs	Regional Health Authorities
RLI	Red List Index
RST	Resilience and Sustainability Trust
RVA	Real Value Added
SALISES	Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies
SBIRT	Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SFCA	Special Fishery Conservation Areas
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SI	Spotlight Initiative
SIDS	Small Island Developing State
SIDs	Small Island Developing States
SLB	Students' Loan Bureau
SP	Social Protection
SPAD	Southern Plains Agricultural Development Project
SPA	Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
SPS	Social Protection Strategy
SRC	Scientific Research Council
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
STATIN	Statistical Institute of Jamaica
SWAG	Student Watershed Action Group
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
TWG	Thematic Working Groups
UDC	Urban Development Corporation

UHWI	University Hospital of the West Indies
UN ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UNSTATS	United Nations Statistics Division
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WBOs	Women Business Owners
WCF	Women's Centre Foundation of Jamaica
WES	Women's Entrepreneurship Support
WFP	World Food Programme
WIQI	Water IQ Initiative
WMU	Watershed Management Units
WRA	Water Resource Authority
WTO	World Trade Organization
YICs	Youth Innovation Centers
ZOSOs	Zones of Special Operations

OPENING STATEMENT



Jamaica welcomes the opportunity

to present its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum in July 2022.

As with the first VNR presentation, Jamaica is currently in the process of preparing the country's Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF). This time for the period 2021–2024, which continues to serve as the guiding framework for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030).

The initiation of the process towards presenting a second VNR as the world navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, provided an opportunity to measure progress on the 17 SDGs, ascertain the impact of the pandemic on pivotal sectors, and explore partnerships to drive recovery in key areas to advance Agenda 2030.

As one of the 45 countries to present their VNRs in 2022, Jamaica will seek to highlight not only its success, challenges, lessons learnt and opportunities in implementation of the SDGs, but will also provide strategic focus on the vulnerabilities and risks relating to external and economic shocks, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through national and international partnerships, Jamaica has been making gains since the first VNR, conducted in 2018, in social, environmental and economic indicators.

Up to the onset of the pandemic, the country's trajectory remained positive with a stable macroeconomic and social environment, actions to address environmental concerns and challenges, and proactive global cooperation.

COVID-19 has demonstrated how quickly the development path can be challenged, by highlighting socio-economic vulnerabilities and structural challenges to achieving development targets. Within the health sector, the direct impact was observed in the delivery of health care. While pre-existing social and infrastructural issues related to accessing information and communications technology services have also exacerbated disparities in education and productivity of workers.

Despite these challenges, Jamaica remains committed to advancing national development and implementing the SDGs.

Our recovery efforts to date, have reflected the ethos that sustained recovery rests on improving the individual resilience of every Jamaican citizen. The long-term response recognises the importance of ensuring that Vision 2030 Jamaica, continues to prioritise human capital development and social protection in shifting economic and business practices and social responsibility efforts, as economic recovery is pursued. This approach seeks to ensure that post COVID-19 societal shifts do not result in slippage or deviations from the pursuit of development, that is multi-dimensionally sustainable and inclusive.

Jamaica's commitment to Vision 2030 and the SDGs, has provided a framework for response to crises such as COVID-19; the relevance of our long-term goals and overarching strategic framework for development has been reinforced. However, actions in the medium to long term to realize our goals and maintain that path, require strategic review and revision, including revisiting our development targets up to 2030, and the period/schedule for achieving planned outcomes and our national development goals.

It is in this context that we embrace the opportunity to present a second VNR to evaluate Agenda 2030 implementation progress to date, and chart the path towards recovery, fuelled by inclusive national development, which leaves no one behind.


The Most Honourable Andrew Holness, ON, PC, MP
Prime Minister
Jamaica

HIGHLIGHTS

The Government and people of Jamaica remain steadfast in their commitment to the principles of sustainable development which has resulted in growth amidst environmental, economic, and most recently, public health challenges. This commitment to development influenced the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, and subsequently, integration of the goals into the country's existing long-term national development plan (NDP), *Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan*.

The second Voluntary National Review (VNR) for Jamaica is prepared in the context of the greatest public health challenge the country and the world has faced occasioned by the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, resulting in a 9.9 per cent decline in GDP at the end of 2020 and an 11.2 per cent decline in government revenues for the 2020/2021 financial year.¹ The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) implemented swift actions to address the fallout from the Pandemic, to promote recovery in the economy and in critical sectors such as education, and address the social costs to the most vulnerable via the largest fiscal stimulus – the GOJ's ongoing COVID-19 Allocation of Resources for Employees Programme (CARE). The programme provided social and economic support through special grants and sub programmes to approximately 440 000 persons, valued at \$20 billion/US\$129 million.²

This report demonstrates continuity in action and purpose to implement the SDGs within the framework of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and broadly considers the imperatives of the Decade of Action and Delivery for the SDGs, as the country pursues the achievement of the SDGs by the year 2030. Its scope reflects these imperatives through a multi-stakeholder approach that informed the review of progress against the goals since the 2018 VNR and examines critical entry points in localization and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to catalyse recovery and progress towards attaining the goals.

Institutional Framework

Building institutional capacity has supported action to drive progress on the goals and address gaps through a highly participatory and consultative framework. The framework supports implementation, monitoring and evaluation including strengthening data capacities, particularly through actions to develop the National Statistics System (NSS). These actions respond to an assessment of Jamaica's readiness for the implementation of the SDGs conducted by Jamaica's Supreme Audit Institution, the Auditor General's Department, in 2018, in the context of the country's first VNR. The chief recommendations of the Audit were:

- Delegating responsibility for coordinating implementation to a specific entity
- Strengthening agency participation in the institutional framework
- Developing a funding strategy for SDG implementation.
- Strengthening of the Monitoring and Evaluation framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* (NDP) and the SDGs

¹ Government of Jamaica. 2021. Fiscal Policy Paper 2021/2022.

² ibid

In response, respective agencies applied appropriate measures in all areas resulting in:

- Cabinet Decision No. 6/12 dated March 2019, confirming the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) as the coordinating entity and National Focal Point for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica
- Strengthened participation of agencies on the National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NOC) which has responsibility for oversight of the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs
- Improvement in the level of alignment between *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs to full/partial alignment of over 98.6 per cent, and with Cabinet's approval of the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF), which is the mechanism for implementing the SDGs and the directive to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to align their plans to the NDP
- Further development and strengthening of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs, inclusive of a monitoring and evaluation system and data dashboard.

Next Steps from 2018 VNR

The first VNR, identified six areas as next steps which are key to accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Since 2018, significant steps have been taken in these areas:

- i. **Full and effective implementation of national priorities, outlined in the MTF 2018–2021 to address the challenges—social, economic, environment and governance:** The 2018–2021 MTF was the first to integrate the SDGs within the plan implementation framework, and reflected 91.0 per cent alignment of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The level of full/partial alignment has since increased to over 98.6 per cent. The 2021 report on progress notes gains made across all four goals of the NDP with some 2018 targets being achieved.
- ii. **Strengthen the National Statistics System:** Following a review of the NSS, recommendations were made for the amendment of the Statistics Act and strengthening the capacity of data producers within MDAs.
- iii. **Improve the monitoring and evaluation framework:** A European Union (EU) funded programme involving the training of MDAs to support a coordinated system of monitoring national development, commenced in 2020. The M&E framework for the NDP and the SDGs were strengthened, and an online platform for the monitoring of the SDGs and *Vision 2030 Jamaica* developed with funding from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- iv. **Explore mechanisms and strategies for financing:** Development financing has been a core area of focus of the GOJ and its partners. Efforts to strengthen the domestic financing framework has included the implementation of a Results-Based Budgeting Programme to inform more targeted financing of national development. In addition, public expenditure reviews have been conducted to improve efficiencies in spending in key sectors, as well as the development of innovative financing mechanisms to support domestic resource mobilization.
- v. **Improve policy coherence and build capacity:** The *Vision 2030 Jamaica* framework, and the MTF which integrates the SDGs, forms the overarching policy framework that promotes both vertical and horizontal policy coherence. Through this framework, there is ongoing strengthening of local level planning and monitoring in alignment with the NDP and the SDGs, through the Local Sustainable Development planning framework and process, as well as its monitoring and evaluation processes.

- vi. **Ongoing SDGs Communication:** Objective 4 of the Advancing the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through *Vision 2030 Jamaica* project included execution of a communication and engagement initiative dubbed 'Parish Talks' held across the island to build the capacity of local authorities to align with *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs, and to engage with local citizens in each parish to raise awareness of the SDGs. There is need to strengthen communication through the full implementation of the Communication and Advocacy Roadmap developed as part of the 2018 VNR.

2020 Targets

Twenty-one global targets for the SDGs were earmarked to be achieved by the end of 2020. Of that number, 12 were related to environment and the other 9 to the social and economic sectors. Of these, 18 are applicable to Jamaica as a developing country.³ Summary Table 1 reviews progress made towards those targets at the national level based on data availability:

TABLE 1: SELECT 2020 TARGETS FOR JAMAICA

Target	Description	Indicator	2015	2020
3.6	Halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	Death rate due to road traffic injuries per 100 000	14.04	15.8
8.6	Reduce the proportion of youth not engaged in employment, education or training	Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training	28.0 per cent	n/a
8.b	Develop and operationalise a global strategy for youth employment	Existence of a developed and operationalised national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy	Youth Policy Green Paper	Cabinet Approved National Youth Policy (2017)
9.c¹	Proportion of population covered by a mobile network	Proportion of population covered by at least a 3G mobile network	90.0 per cent	99.0 per cent
14.5	Conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information	Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas	9.7 per cent	15.0 per cent
15.8	Introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species	National Invasive Alien Species Strategy and Action Plan (2014 – 2020)	Ballast Water Management Act (2019)

Note: n/a denotes data not available for the period

³ Excluded targets include 4.b, 13.a, 17.i1.

Achievements and Challenges



- 1 NO POVERTY** Decline in poverty prevalence to 11% in 2019 from 19.3% in 2017
Disparity in the performance of rural vs urban poverty trends
- 2 ZERO HUNGER** Decline in food poverty prevalence to 4% in 2019 from 5.4% in 2017
Impact of external factors on food production
- 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING** Decline in infant mortality rate from 16.7 per 1 000 in 2014 to 15.2 per 1 000 in 2019
Inadequate financing service for delivery and wellness programmes
- 4 QUALITY EDUCATION** High enrolment levels from early childhood up to grade 11
Estimated learning loss at 1.3 years in learning adjusted years of schooling due to COVID-19
- 5 GENDER EQUALITY** Improvements in gender parity, ranked 44th globally in 2018 and 40th in 2021
Underrepresentation of males in tertiary education and training programmes
- 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION** Establishment of the Integrated Water Resource Management Plan
Rising energy costs and threat of more frequent droughts due to climate change
- 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY** 13% of electricity generated from renewable sources in 2021, up from 12.1% in 2018
Disparity in the access to safe electricity by region and consumption group
- 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH** 35% reduction in youth unemployment between 2015 and 2019
Vulnerability to external shocks impacting growth
- 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE** Development of the National Broadband Initiative
Low innovation and productivity in the productive sectors
- 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES** Approval of regulation for the Disabilities Act (2014)
Stagnating gini coefficient at 0.3671 in 2019, down from 0.3782 in 2017
- 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES** Increase in value of residential mortgages between 2018 and 2020
Gaps in localising at the community level for realising the goals
- 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION** Launch of the Jamaica Standard ISO 14005:2017 and guidelines
Unavailability of data to monitor progress
- 13 CLIMATE ACTION** Revised Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement in 2020
High average annual damages from storms, rains and droughts
- 14 LIFE BELOW WATER** Increase in protected marine areas to 15%
Decline in marine water quality, coral reef index and mangroves
- 15 LIFE ON LAND** Increase in total protected forest area to 28.8%
Competing land use priorities
- 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS** Launch of the National Plan of Action for Integrated Response to Children and Violence
High levels of violent crime impacting on social services and the economy
- 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS** Reduction in debt to GDP ratio from 135.3% in 2013 to 94.6% in 2019
Access to concessional financing for Middle Income Countries

Leaving No One Behind

The first VNR was informed by a technical study on leaving no one behind which identified categories of persons who were most at risk of being left behind and the vulnerabilities and risks that contribute to their status. Since this review, there have been several policies, legislative instruments and programmes to respond to the prevalence of poverty and address vulnerabilities, and inequalities, targeting persons at risk of being left behind. Additional support mechanisms were introduced as a response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Latest data trends have indicated a general decline in poverty, food poverty prevalence and income inequality up to 2019, signaling a decline in disproportionate distribution of wealth and improvements in socio-economic conditions. As at 2019, (latest available data) national poverty prevalence was 11.0 per cent. This represents an 8.3 percentage points decline compared with the prevalence in 2017 (19.3 per cent), the National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPRP) baseline year reported in the previous VNR.

Emerging Challenges

Notwithstanding the impact of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the country's development is consistently challenged by systemic issues and challenges. Jamaica is a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), and with this designation experiences vulnerabilities related to the openness of the economy and reliance on imports, historically high debt burden and a geographic location that renders the country susceptible to natural disasters. In addition, the physical and digital infrastructure deficit made more evident by the COVID-19 pandemic, has impacted industries such as manufacturing, transport, and agriculture, education, health, and housing. The Pandemic has also exacerbated existing exogenous shocks with price volatility of imported goods leading to domestic inflation above the target range of 4-6 per cent. Climate change and the impact of hydro meteorological events continue to threaten the sustainability of development gains. In addition, there is need to build social capital to empower citizens to assume ownership of the development process.

Next Steps

Reporting on progress of the SDGs identified key areas for acceleration and recovery of development gains and includes, *inter alia*:

- Launch the monitoring and evaluation system for reporting on development indicators
- Fully implement the MTF 2021–2024 to advance the SDGs
- Strengthen the National Statistical System
- Leverage corporate social responsibility to further support private sector participation in national development and as a financier of SDG initiatives at the local level
- Strengthen the means of implementation through increased localisation of the goals and *Vision 2030 Jamaica*
- Cultivate international partnerships for technical cooperation and advocate for addressing requirements for concessionary financing, cognizant of the vulnerability of small states
- Strengthen communication and stakeholder mobilisation locally and nationally

INTRODUCTION

Jamaica's Second VNR of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs was conducted over the period 2021-2022, as the world experienced the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic, which began in 2020, demanded the implementation of strict measures to limit interaction and slow the spread of the disease. This resulted in the closure of schools, places of business and other institutions, and significantly curtailed movement of the population through the implementation of curfews. The containment measures impacted all sectors and threatened to reverse development gains made to advance *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The VNR was initiated to measure progress on the 17 SDGs since the first review conducted in 2018, the impact of the pandemic on pivotal sectors, and to explore partnerships to drive recovery and development in key areas to advance the SDGs.

The transition between planning cycles for *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, enabled evaluation of the performance on the first MTF 2018–2021, that integrated the SDGs into plan implementation. The Performance Report of the MTF demonstrated progress on the integrated development planning framework, and the process of implementing the SDGs through *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. The MTF 2021-2024, reflecting priorities from an over 98.6 per cent alignment with the SDGs to the NDP will inform the priorities to be pursued over the next three years to advance progress on the SDGs. This current MTF will be implemented in the context of a strengthened financing framework, though, *inter alia*, the implementation of a results-based budgeting programme for Jamaica. This will enable more targeted and efficient allocation of government expenditure to achieve the national priorities and the SDGs.

In recognition of the Decade of Action and Delivery for the SDGs launched by the Secretary General at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2019, the VNR aims to comprehensively review the process of implementation, recognizing the centrality of stakeholder action at all levels. The engagement of key partners has therefore informed the process and the preparation of the report, reflecting stakeholder action, challenges and the imperatives to drive action at the local and national levels.

As a SIDS, Jamaica has inherent vulnerabilities that must be managed and mitigated to build resilience and sustain growth. These vulnerabilities are in part the result of the country's geographic location as well as susceptibility to external economic shocks.

Reflection on the structural issues and emerging challenges that have impacted growth and progress on attaining national development objectives enabled an assessment of the challenges and constraints and provided data and information to inform action.

This document, which represents the outcome of the review process, conforms to the common reporting guidelines provided by the Secretary General of the United Nations, and the Handbook for the Preparation of Voluntary National Reviews. It includes the main VNR report that analyses progress on the 17 SDG goals, as well as discusses critical issues in implementation and monitoring the SDGs in Jamaica. Annexed to this main report, are three thematic reports on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, SDG localization and Corporate Social Responsibility.

Jamaica's 2022 VNR reflects the commitment of the GOJ to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The VNR remains a key element of the monitoring and evaluation processes, guided by the institutional framework—the National SDGs Core Group, National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee and the Thematic Working Groups of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. It will inform the priorities to be pursued over the medium-term, to be evaluated in subsequent reviews.

METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OF THE REVIEW

Monitoring and Review Process

The follow up and review of the SDGs in Jamaica continues to be guided by the institutional framework for the SDGs. The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee (NOC) provides oversight to monitoring the implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica. Together with the National SDGs Core Group which is comprised of the national statistics office that has oversight for the monitoring of the SDG indicator framework, the national focal point with responsibility for coordination and the chief foreign policy body, the NOC directs the process of review, defining its scope, thematic focus and parameters. Ministries, Departments and Agencies provided data and information and participated in the process of review and validation. A Technical Review Panel comprising the focal points for the SDGs, academia and international partners guided the development and completion of the report.

Reporting on Progress

Assessment of progress against the targets for each of the 17 goals was informed by official data and statistics published by the national statistics office and other agencies, consistent with the established sources of data to monitor the previously identified relevant indicators for Jamaica. This includes national surveys and administrative data from Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The period of transition between the 2018–2021 MTF and the 2021–2024 MTF for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* provided key data inputs from the performance report of the first MTF that reflected integration of the SDGs into plan implementation, and the priorities to drive progress over the medium-term. Published data and studies from academia, independent researchers, International Development Partners (IDPs) have also been applied, particularly in discussing progress on the goals and targets and in assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sources include the World Bank, United Nations Statistical Division (UNSTATS), United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI) and the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES).

The limitations in data availability for reporting are largely quantitative data to update the SDG indicator framework. The National Census—a primary source of data, and other national level surveys—has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other factors.

Participatory Approaches

Consistent and systematic engagement of stakeholders is indispensable to promoting ownership and action on the SDGs. Following the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, the process of localization included broad stakeholder engagement to promote awareness and adoption of the SDGs among all sectors of society. The process of engagement is facilitated through consultations to define the priorities of each implementation cycle for the NDP and the SDGs, and participation in monitoring and evaluation processes, primarily data gathering and feedback from key stakeholders, the outcomes of which inform the priorities for implementation. Methods of engagement include the institutional framework for the SDGs and ongoing broad stakeholder consultations to gather data and information to inform the report.

A stakeholder engagement plan guided the process of consultation and included engagement of government partners, private sector, academia, and civil society. For this VNR, over 600 participants were engaged through meetings and conferences, a community engagement series targeting civil society representatives and service providers, as well as through two round tables on civil society and private sector participation in implementing the SDGs. An online questionnaire was also administered to service providers and community-based organisation representatives.

Regulations governing face-to-face gatherings due to the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated alternative approaches to stakeholder engagement and data collection exercises for the 2022 VNR. Virtual meetings and events engaged partners in government, private sector, and civil society. The engagement plan guiding sensitisation and data collection used a lateral approach to identifying target groups clustered by potential contribution to the development of the VNR. Key informant interviews were conducted to inform the development of thematic reports on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on critical sectors, to assess progress on localization and corporate social responsibility. Whilst largely focused on consultations, the engagement plan included a public awareness component, which was aimed at disseminating information on the SDGs broadly, as well as targeted engagements around the roles of key stakeholders. The primary methods employed were radio advertisement, presentations, virtual conferences and dissemination of the Progress Report on the SDGs 2019/2020.

Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of stakeholders engaged for the VNR 2022, from a range of target groups.

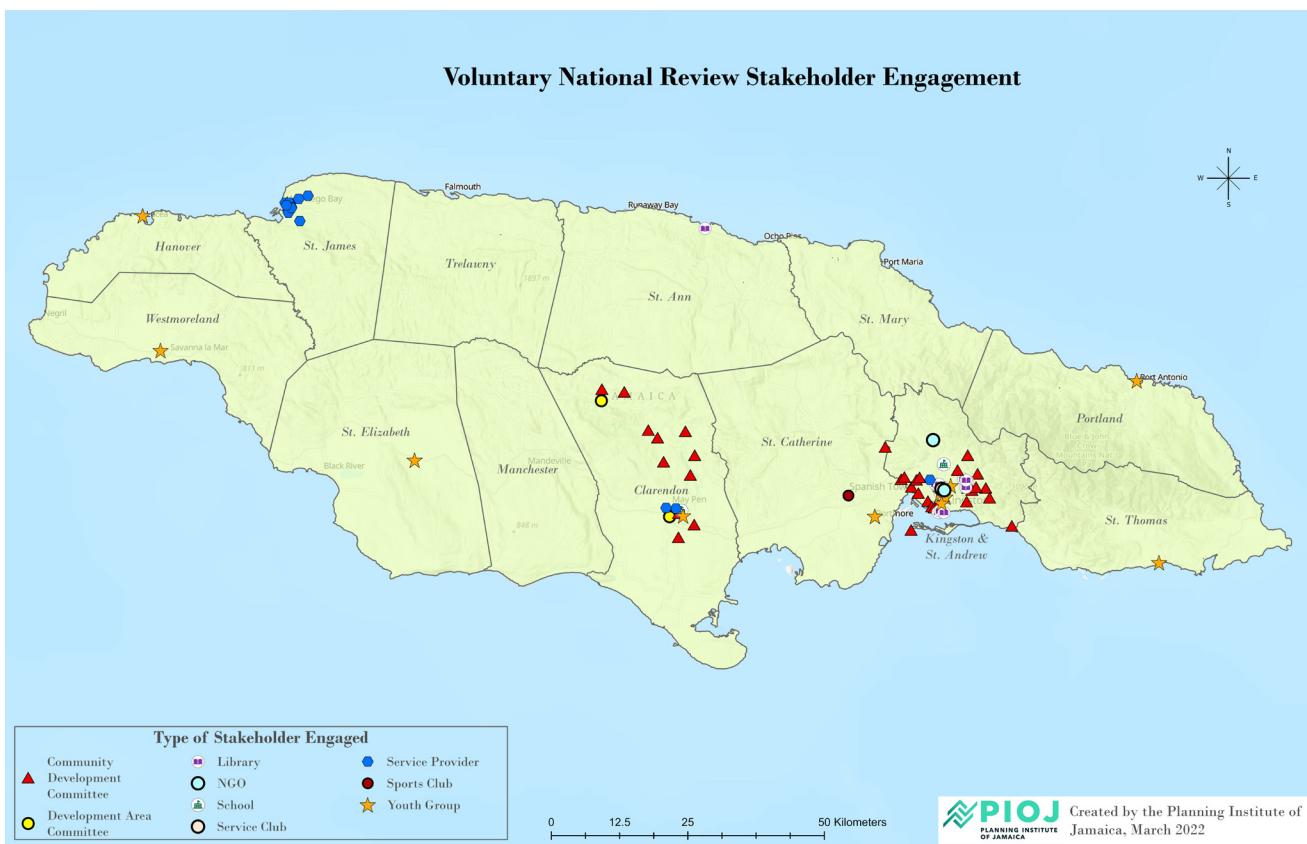


FIGURE 2: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FOR THE VNR 2022

POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Ownership

Jamaica embraced the Post-2015 Development Agenda as a key stakeholder in global partnership and commitment to long-term development. The approach to negotiating and prioritizing the SDGs was guided by the existing Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, the country's established long-term development plan which has the whole-of-society approach embedded. Since adoption, the implementation of the SDGs benefited from institutional strengthening, broad based stakeholder consultation, and local and international partnerships.

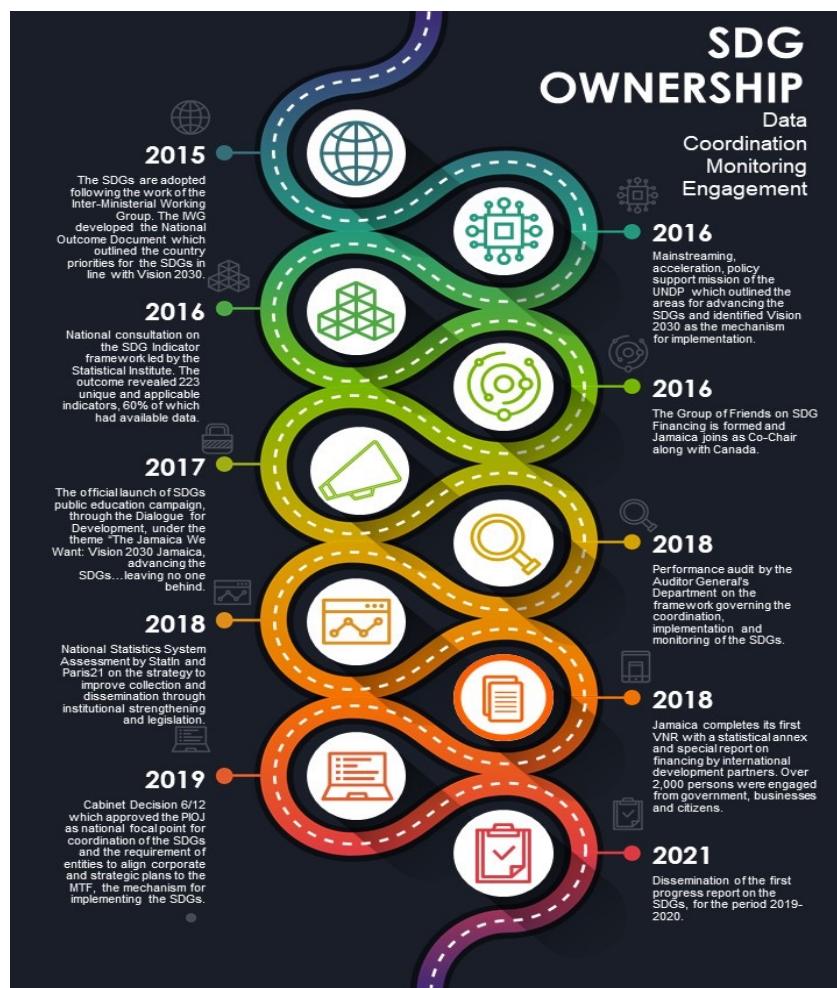


FIGURE 3 TIMELINE OF SDG OWNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Integration Into The National Planning Framework

Adoption and Alignment

Vision 2030 Jamaica has had a close relationship with the SDGs since efforts to officially land the process within the GOJ participatory national development framework, commenced in 2014. The development framework of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* was utilized to formulate Jamaica's position on the SDGs and to determine coherence and synergies with the wider Post-2015 Development Agenda. Jamaica's "National Outcome Document: Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals" presented the results of a stakeholder-driven process that was underpinned by an assessment of the alignment between the proposed 17 SDGs and 169 targets and Jamaica's national development agenda centred on *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. The outcomes of the process to establish Jamaica's position on the SDGs demonstrated a high level of alignment between *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. This was confirmed in 2016 when a Rapid Impact Assessment (RIA) conducted by the UNDP to inform the development of Jamaica's Road Map for implementing the SDGs identified a 91.3 per cent alignment between Jamaica's development agenda centred on *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The process to develop the Road Map was based on a partnership between the PIOJ and the UNDP, with the UNDP utilizing the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) approach.

The Road Map was approved by Cabinet in June 2017. It identified *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and its implementation framework as the vehicle for SDG implementation in Jamaica. The Road Map also recommended strategies to be employed in strengthening efficiencies and effectiveness in the implementation of the NDP and accelerating progress towards Jamaica's national goals and shared global goals for 2030. It also articulated and recommended strategies for advancing key tenets of the Means of Implementation articulated in the 2030 Agenda and which were also closely aligned with the tenets of the implementation framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. Development financing, institutional strengthening and localization, communications and advocacy were among the areas addressed. Jamaica demonstrated commitment to the Means of Implementation through Cabinet approval to finance the SDGs and establish an institutional framework to drive its implementation, including its localization and communications.

The implementation of the SDGs through *Vision 2030 Jamaica* has been facilitated through the alignment of the SDGs with the goals and outcomes of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and alignment of the performance measurement framework of the SDGs (targets and indicators) with the medium-term strategic priorities of MTFs. It includes the integration of the SDGs within the focal areas of institutional and partnership frameworks, mechanisms and arrangements and the expansion and strengthening of these to support regional and global partnerships in advancing the SDGs.

The integration of the SDGs in the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* was utilized as the foundation for preparing Jamaica's first VNR report in 2018. The MTF 2015-2018, which was approved by Cabinet in September 2015 showed the alignment of the SDGs with the four (4) National Goals and 15 National Outcomes of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. In 2016, monitoring of the SDGs was integrated in the Term of Reference (TOR) for the multi-stakeholder Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) which support participatory monitoring of the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. *Vision 2030 Jamaica* is implemented through stakeholders aligning their planning and programming with the successive 3-year MTF. Hence, stakeholders in aligning to MTF 2015-2018 showed alignment with the SDGs. This created a framework for stakeholder engagement in reporting on the SDGs through reporting on their implementation of the MTF and associated development performance. Accordingly, Jamaica's 2018 VNR showed what Jamaica was doing to integrate the SDGs in its national development planning framework based on a whole-of-society approach. The report also showed national

development performance towards the national and global goals, achievements and gaps and plans for the way forward.

National Development Planning Framework – Vision 2030 Jamaica Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) and Sector Plans

The NDP presents a summary of all tenets of the development framework for advancing the achievement of the national vision, goals, and outcomes. It allows for an appreciation of the integration of the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of development as well as the governance, management, and communication arrangements for Plan implementation. Due to the integration of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs in the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, "A Road Map for SDG Implementation in Jamaica" (2017) serves as a complementary document to the National Development Plan.

The way forward in implementing Jamaica's national development agenda, post-2018, was charted in MTF 2018-2021. The MTF 2018-2021 expanded on the alignment of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs presented in MTF 2015-2018 by going beyond the alignment of the National Goals and Outcomes with the SDGs. It also showed the alignment of the SDGs targets with the National and Sector Strategies, which translate policy into programmable actions and allow implementation at all levels to be aligned with the MTF, and consequently Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. The MTF also serves as a central mechanism in the frameworks and tools for continuous improvement in the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. Accordingly, in developing MTF 2018-2021, there was focus on addressing gaps in alignment between *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs, which were identified in the 2016 RIA. The alignment with the "Planet" oriented SDGs was advanced through focus on areas of environmental development where gaps in alignment were most evident. This included integrating more defined articulation of efforts towards advancing environmental sustainability and sustainable consumption and production. Strategic prioritization and programming geared towards advancing the blue, green, orange, and purple economies and promoting circularity in the economy was also demonstrated. There was also focus on increasing the articulation and recognition of "Partnerships" in the strategic framework for development presented in the MTF. Upon completing MTF 2018-2021, it was determined that the alignment between the SDGs had increased to over 95.0 per cent, up at least 3.7 per cent over the 91.3 per cent alignment recorded in 2016.

An assessment undertaken at the end of 2021, showed that a total of 140 SDG targets were country-relevant to the strategic priorities pursued under MTF 2018-2021. Alignment was defined as "efforts towards achieving country adaptations of SDG targets demonstrated in policy, strategy, plans and programmes. Of the 140 SDG targets, 138 were clearly aligned to policies, plans and programmes that were being advanced. The two targets deemed not aligned, formed part of an area that has been lagging on the global stage with changing imperatives and areas lacking consensus within global dialogue and negotiations. Therefore, as of December 2021, Jamaica reported a partial and/or full alignment of 98.6 per cent between *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. It is to be noted that a total of 115 targets were deemed relevant based on the 2016 RIA undertaken by the UNDP. For SDGs 12-15 that most directly address the environment, based on the assessment, under MTF 2018-2021, there was 100 per cent full and/or partial alignment. Jamaica continues in its efforts towards achieving the national and global goals relating to protecting the "Planet" and sustainably adding value to planetary resources towards greater "Prosperity" and "Peace" for all "People".

Driven by evidence, the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* will involve review and revisions in response to lessons learned and innovations. The focus remains on the 2030 Agenda and staying true to the principles of sustainability, equity, inclusion, and multi-dimensional justice on the path to the goals. The strategies and how they are operationalized will be determined by what is best within resources, capacity, and context to achieve the goals. The alignment between *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs under MTF 2018-2021 will be maintained and strengthened under MTF 2021-2024.

MTF 2021-2024 has further built on lessons learned and extends presentation of the national results framework to include sector level outcomes and outputs. This has resulted in a mapping of national and sector strategies to development results that are closer to the level of programming. This is geared towards better enabling stakeholders to align programme results, strategies, and action frameworks to that of *Vision 2030/Jamaica* and the SDGs. Also, the sector strategies translate policy imperatives for the medium term into programmable actions. Therefore, the approach utilized in MTF 2021-2014 is geared towards improving policy implementation and capacity for policy monitoring and evaluation towards defining lessons learned and good practice at the policy level for policy strengthening and replication. It is to be noted that the enhanced development planning model utilized in 2021-2024 is part of an iterative process of development which forms part of the strategic review and process to strengthen the implementation framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs.

The national development plan framework of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* includes 31 Sector Plans presented in 28 separate documents. Within the implementation framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, an integration of the evidence, the Sector Plans and policy is to form the foundation and core of the information that feeds into each successive MTF. Each Sector Plan is aligned with one or more of the 15 National Outcomes. The Sector Plans include the assessments that informed definitions of the development context and quantitative and qualitative baselines at the start of planning in 2007 as well as the national results and strategy frameworks and main actions for the 21-year period of implementation of the NDP. Sector Plans also include the M&E frameworks for the respective sectors as defined up to 2009. However, lessons learned have been instructive in demonstrating need for review, and greater build-out and synthesis of the M&E frameworks presented in the Sector Plans. Also, whilst Theories of Change (ToC) are inherent tenets of the strategic plans for development of the sectors, a clear articulation of the ToCs is required for strengthening the strategy and M&E frameworks. The integration of the SDGs in the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* also necessitates review of the Sector Plans, which preceded the SDGs.

Strengthening of the Implementation Framework for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs

The lessons learned from Jamaica's 2018 VNR have been interrogated and translated in efforts towards strengthening the implementation framework around *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. Jamaica treats the SDGs as the translation of its national goals into a commonly understood and shared global language. Hence, lessons learned for the SDGs are lessons learned for *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. The recommendations from a 2018 Audit of Jamaica's Readiness to Implement the SDGs led by the country's Auditor General's Department have also informed the objectives and priorities in enhancing the country's capacity to implement *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs. The main recommendations were:

- Address gaps in the alignment of the country's development agenda and the SDGs, particularly in the area of the environment
- Strengthen and formalize institutional arrangements and present them for approval by the legislative branch
- Improve capacity for results-based M&E of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs through strengthening national evidence and results- based management systems, and coordination of the country's data and statistical system and the quality of data and statistics
- Strengthen the framework and operationalization of financing for the SDGs

Subsequently, the main gaps were largely addressed and where gaps remained, processes were underway to remedy same. The AG's Department reported that there was full alignment between the MTF 2018-2021 and the SDGs as the gaps identified in the Road Map had been satisfactorily addressed. The PIOJ had commenced a process to strengthen capacity for policy-driven strategic planning, results-based M&E, and performance-based budgeting as part of an activity of review and update. The Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) has been engaging in ongoing efforts to establish a coordinated NSS as well as strengthen its capacity for producing statistics for monitoring of the SDGs. STATIN, however, noted resource constraints which had created lags in implementation and the achievement of results.

In 2019, the PIOJ commenced a process to strengthen the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the integration of the SDGs in the implementation process. These efforts have been goal-oriented, policy, and evidence- driven and results-based. The main areas of focus include:

- Strengthening the MTF
- Strengthening the evidence and results-based management (RBM) systems, including the Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Plan for *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and integration of the SDGs, and development of an online monitoring platform and accompanying mobile application
- Updating the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* Sector Plans
- Developing a Cost Estimation Framework for the MTF and costing the MTF.

Phase one (1) of this process, includes a Strategic Review. The preparatory activities for the Strategic Review commenced in 2019, including setting strategic objectives and conducting preliminary research and analysis. The strategic objectives were expanded in 2020 to include consideration for the short-, medium- and long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on Jamaica's development. The Strategic Review seeks to respond to pertinent questions on how *Vision 2030 Jamaica* should be implemented in the decade ending 2030. This includes the integration of the SDGs in the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, towards optimizing the development results achieved and informing the way forward beyond 2030.

The Strategic Review is an evidence-based means of identifying what *Vision 2030 Jamaica* should look like and function in the decade up to 2030, based on lessons learned, emerging national development planning tools, global best practice, and our national appetite and capacity for development. It will inform the strengthening of national capacity in advancing the achievement of the 4 National Goals and 15 National Outcomes and the aligned SDGs. It is intended to support the strengthening of the strategic development planning framework under *Vision 2030 Jamaica* as well as policy coherence. This includes the processes for defining the medium-term policy-based priorities for development programming and implementation, which are presented in each (MTF). It will strengthen capacity for resourcing national development, including financing through Medium-Term Results-Based Budgeting (MTRBB). Institutionalization and governance, including coordination and the partnership framework are also main areas of focus. The alignment between local sustainable development planning (parish and communities) with *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs as well as inclusiveness in how development priorities are identified, implemented, and monitored and evaluated, will also be examined. An assessment of the Communications Strategy will also form part of the review.

Localization

Localization of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and the SDGs refers to the process of transferring and translating the integrated National Development Plan (NDP) and SDGs into planning, programming, and local cultures that impact the lives of

Jamaicans within their everyday spaces such as homes, communities, schools, and local institutions. Specifically, this includes the translation of policy imperatives through the strategy framework of the NDP into sectoral, local, and other plans geared towards the delivery of transformational public and private goods and services for improving people's lives. Localization also involves the inclusion of the citizenry as change agents and empowering and enabling them to equitably access and capitalize on the benefits of development towards achieving their fullest potential and the quality of life desired. The institutionalization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs within local frameworks for creating meaning, (sense-making) and managing change is critical to their ownership and integration into planning and programming. Within this context, localization is a central tenet of the implementation framework for the NDP and requires investments in building stakeholder capacity for ownership, participation, and alignment of their values and plans.

It is noteworthy that development planning around localization is not limited to planning that takes place at the local level of parish and communities. It involves the translation of macro-level policies into policies geared towards the particular needs of actors, institutions, and spaces at the meso and micro levels. Also, local development planning does not speak only to geography and spatial concerns. It addresses the range of development needs of citizens based on knowledge and understanding of the development situation and context, culture and capacity, systems and institutions that create the development profile for the locale. Local development planning is geared towards addressing the unique needs of a locale in a way that can be integrated and internalized within the local culture towards achieving equitable development outcomes across the various locales in a country, in representations of national development results. Localization represents the integration of differentiated planning and crafting of development results towards the achievement of shared national goals. In accordance with the national vision, all parishes, communities, homes, and other institutions should be places "...of choice to live, work, raise families and do business". Accordingly, all tenets of the NDP and SDGs are being localized in Jamaica.⁴

Financing for Development

Development financing for the implementation of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* has been structured and operationalized within a broad descriptive framework. With Cabinet approving "A Road Map for SDG Implementation in Jamaica" and the financing of the SDGs as part of a package in 2017, this approach to development financing has also encompassed financing of the SDGs in Jamaica.

In the plan development stage of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, it was deemed impractical to identify the total cost of implementation for the 21 years since inception in 2009. This was in part attributable to the implementation framework that was centred on using the MTF as a policy framework for development actors to align their planning to Vision 2030 Jamaica. There have been a range of sources of financing, including the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) budget, which has been the largest source of measurable development financing, and private sector investments, civil society projects, international development partners (IDPs) loans and grants, and the diaspora. Hence, it would be challenging to quantify all the contributions. The anticipated changes in not only costs but strategic programming over 21-years, also posed challenges to developing an accurate cost estimate for implementing *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. Therefore, the framework for the financing of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* has been primarily characterized by a de-centralized approach that is more about labelling development-oriented expenditure as the cost to implement *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. Within this context, the sum total of budgetary allocations and expenditure across all partners/actors in development has been viewed as the budget/

⁴ See Thematic Report on SDG Localization annexed to this Report

financing of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs.

In 2019, the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MOFPS) commenced a phased rolled out of MTRBB across government. *Vision 2030 Jamaica* serves as the strategic long-term national development plan framework for MTRBB. This has served to reaffirm the importance of aligning strategic/corporate and operational planning of MDAs to *Vision 2030 Jamaica*. However, the requirements for alignment have also revealed gaps in the results-based planning, implementation, and M&E Frameworks of *Vision 2030/Jamaica*. MTRBB requires clear alignment of strategic policy-driven programming with results-based costing and budgetary allocation, expenditure, and results to determine budgetary effectiveness in supporting the achievement of national development goals. Accordingly, the provision of cost estimates for development strategies and programmes and aligning costs with outcomes would support the MTRBB process.

To date, national budgetary allocations and expenditure have been treated as indicative of the costs to implement the MTF. This poses challenges for meeting the objectives of MTRBB within the context of an alignment with *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and specifically, the MTF. The assessment of the efficiency and effectiveness of budgetary allocations must be made against an estimate of the sum of required costed resource requirements for the medium-term strategies to advance the 15 National Outcomes.

It has therefore been determined that a critical tenet of the identification of national development financing needs is the costing of the MTF, which will demonstrate the financial allocation necessary to advance each prioritized strategy and policy imperative in the medium term towards the achievement of medium- and long- term national goals and the SDGs.

Under MTF 2018-2021, Jamaica commenced assessments of its financing framework for development which included exploring the development of a Cost Estimation Framework for the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework and costing MTF 2021-2024. In early 2020, a process to establish the framework for costing the MTF commenced. However, the COVID-19 pandemic influenced a slowing of the activity owing to shifting priorities. Research and consultations with international development partners demonstrated that Jamaica was pursuing a fairly novel process. Generally, the evidence showed that the costing of MTFs for development to promote greater alignment of resource allocation with potential impact and implementation capacity has largely been limited to theoretical exercises or broad policy cost estimates. In seeking to cost the MTF, the country was expanding beyond that widely understood concept of a Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and was veering into the novel space of costing a national policy framework for development with specified considerations for sustainability, resilience, and growth.

Jamaica continues in its efforts to develop a Cost Estimation Framework and cost the MTF with plans to complete it in the medium term and cost MTF 2024-2027. The framework and specifications are being developed by the GoJ and assessments of technical support needs are underway.

It is noteworthy that the costing of the MTF must reflect fiscal management and other economic management policy. A key tenet of sustainable development is to ensure that the national development strategy adopted does not predispose a country to economic vulnerability and undermine its economic stability, resilience, and capacity to growth. Hence, the estimated opportunity cost of pursuing a strategy as well as its potential return on investment, including cross-sectoral implications and transformational impact are important considerations in determining the results and associated actions to be prioritized in the medium term and the proportion of national resources to be allocated towards their delivery. The costed resource requirements must be determined/estimated prior to budgetary allocation to allow for allocation based on national and then sectoral priorities and for responding to identified cross-sectoral linkages in priorities. The cost estimation framework must be informed by an assumption that actual development performance mapped to

expenditure is a function of the effectiveness of planning and implementation mechanisms.

Therefore, the Cost Estimation Framework should guide the financing of policy and programming priorities informed by evidence signalling that they are the most strategic entry points and catalytic policy bundles for accelerating integrated social, economic, and environmental development. It should inform the development of a MTF that reflects alignment of development financing with the results chain from the programme to national outcome levels and the associated actions.

Institutional Mechanisms

The institutional mechanism is comprised of three branches:

- The National Sustainable Development Goals Core Group, with membership from the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)
- The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee, a multi-stakeholder group with membership from civil society, interest groups, academia, ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs)
- The Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) of Vision 2030 Jamaica, multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder bodies, which collectively represent the key institutional arrangement for monitoring and evaluation of the NDP.

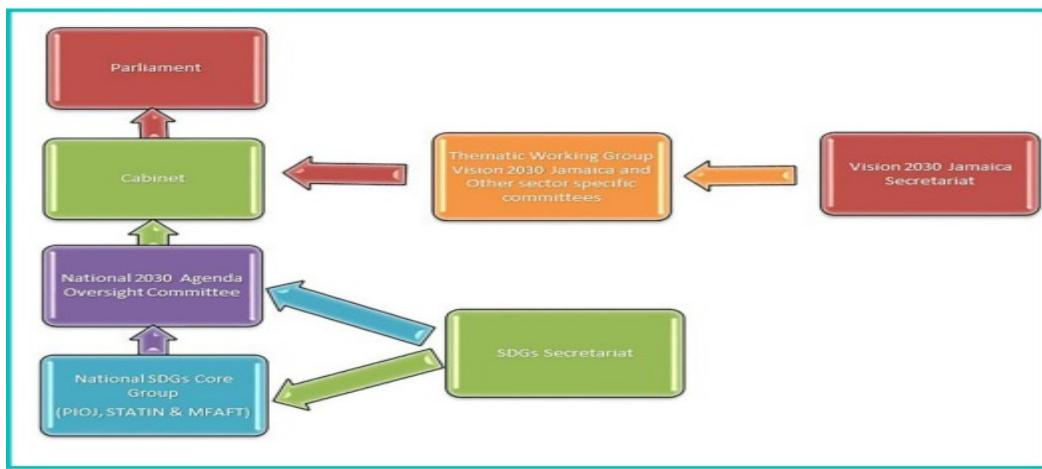


FIGURE 4: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Institutional Strengthening

Prior to the 2018 VNR, the formalization of the governance and institutional arrangements for the SDGs was advanced with Cabinet's approval in 2017 of a two-tiered coordination and governance arrangement comprising a Core Group and a multi-sectoral National Oversight Committee (NOC). This accompanied the approval of A Road Map for SDG Implementation in Jamaica. The SDGs Core Group was formed in 2014 to lead Jamaica's landing of the SDGs and through stakeholder consultations, develop the country's national position on the SDGs prior to their adoption. It evolved to serve as the main stakeholder-driven mechanism for coordination of SDG Implementation, and covers planning, results-based performance monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and external cooperation management represented by the PIOJ; data and statistics and SDG indicator development and statistical monitoring represented by the National

Statistical Office (NSO), the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN); and international relations, global representation and negotiations represented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT). The NOC was established in 2017 to provide higher level multi-sectoral governance support to the coordination and implementation of the SDGs in Jamaica – particularly the work of the Core Group. It has multi-stakeholder representation from the public and private sectors, academia, local development actors and groupings such as the youth and persons with disabilities (PwDs).

Post VNR, the institutionalization of the SDGs was further strengthened when in 2019, Cabinet approved the PIOJ as Focal Point for the SDGs, tasking the Institute with the primary responsibility for the implementation of the goals. The PIOJ's official appointment as Focal Point formalized the role it adopted in 2014 when it led the landing of the SDGs; the crafting of Jamaica's position on developing the 2030 Agenda; and integrated the SDGs in the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica in September 2015. For Jamaica, "SDGs Implementation" refers to the integration of the goals, principles, and other tenets of the 2030 Agenda in the national development planning framework. Therefore, the PIOJ's role as Focal Point for the SDGs allows for a high level of coherence and synergy in integrating the SDGs in national development planning as the PIOJ led the development and launch of *Vision 2030 Jamaica* in 2009 and serves as Focal Point for coordinating the Plan's implementation.

The PIOJ subsequently sought to build institutional capacity for "Action" under the SDGs. The role of the *Vision 2030 Jamaica* Secretariat in integrating the SDGs in the implementation of the NDP has been more clearly defined in the Work Programme of the Unit and the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the team. The Secretariat is advancing a programme of institutional and process strengthening with the integration of the SDGs a central feature of the Terms of Reference (TOR), key performance indicators and success criteria. The PIOJ has also formally established a Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Secretariat to work in complementarity with the Vision 2030 Jamaica Secretariat. The SDGs Secretariat gives focus to managing the stakeholder-driven institutional arrangements geared towards supporting the implementation of the SDGs – SDGs Core Groups and National Oversight Committee (NOC) – and monitoring implementation of the SDGs and reporting.

A key lesson that has been learnt in managing the institutional framework is the value of consistent engagement of stakeholders to maintain buy-in in the process, expand and deepen participation and action, and prioritize the 2030 Agenda among all stakeholder categories. The application of evidence-based approaches to engagement enables capacity building and provides a basis for forging and strengthening partnerships. It is therefore necessary to periodically evaluate the institutional framework and systems to maintain relevance and to expand the scope of their participation.

Systematic Issues And Transformative Actions

Structural issues span the social, environmental and economic spheres, influencing key development outcomes such as economic growth, and stymies performance on key development targets. The 2018 VNR identified these factors—weather related shocks, crime, inefficient plants and equipment, human capital development, weak linkages, access to finance, cost of energy, high debt-to-GDP ratio, and business environment—as directly constraining growth. These issues were shown to affect all areas of sustainable development.

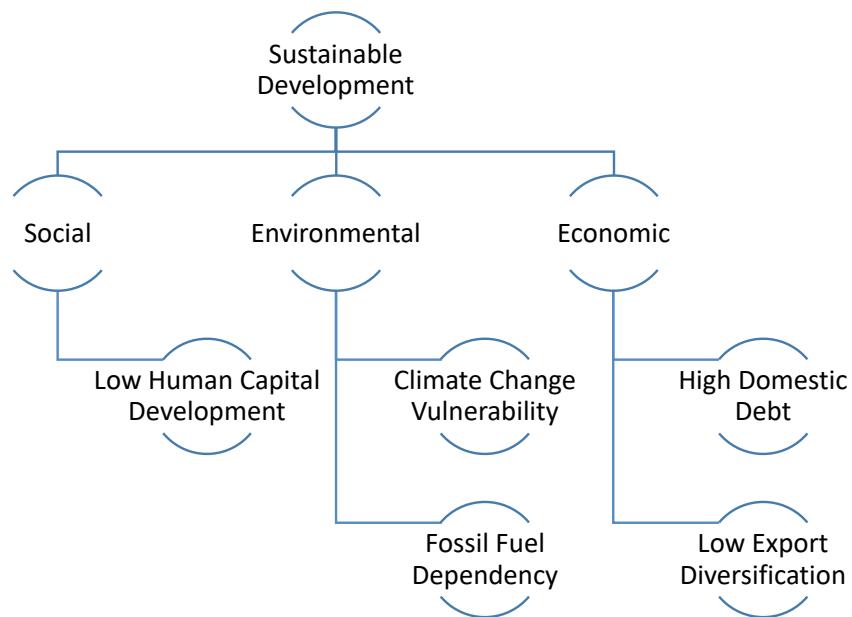


FIGURE 5 CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Economic

Using the interconnectedness of the SDGs framework as a lens for analysis, the issues of one dimension invariably has implications for other outcomes, for example, a key economic challenge which affects the effectiveness of government spending on social and environmental protection is the resources available after debt payments. Payments on interest and amortization annually to domestic and external debt, amount to greater than \$280 billion on average during the period under review. Declines in revenue for the 2020/2021 financial year pushed total debt service to 50.0 per cent of revenues and grants, an increase of 8.3 per cent from 2018/2019.

To address the debt constraints, the GOJ continued to pursue a debt management strategy that sought to reduce the exchange rate, interest rate and refinancing risks by developing the domestic debt market and issuing fixed interest rate instruments at longer maturity. These strategies and the GOJ's fiscal stance that is guided by GOJ's fiscal rules (to achieve a debt to GDP ratio of 60.0 per cent or below by the fiscal year 2027/28) are expected to strengthen Jamaica's macroeconomic environment, which is necessary for sustained growth. To increase transparency and provide the public with independent information on the soundness and sustainability of Jamaica's fiscal position and policy, an Independent Fiscal Commission Act was passed in 2021 to establish an Independent Fiscal Commission.

Jamaica's success in reducing its Debt to GDP ratio over the last decade can be largely attributed to strong bi-partisan commitment to fiscal responsibility and the inclusive partnership framework led by an Economic Programme Monitoring Team, who with support from the IMF, managed the successful implementation of the Economic Reform Programme. To promote inclusion and citizen engagement, an Economic Programme Oversight Committee (EPOC) was also established, comprising members from the private sector, public sector and civil society, who monitored and reported updates to the public.

The negative implications of a relatively high level of concentration in Jamaica's export basket, particularly Tourism, were highlighted in 2020 when COVID-19 and the Public Health & Social Measures induced the largest recorded decline in real

GDP. Services exports declined by 51.7 per cent relative to 2019 on account of the closure of hotels and attractions for most of 2020.⁵ In goods exports, the falloff of 24.3 per cent was offset by gains in other categories of agricultural produce (10.3 per cent), food beverages and tobacco (3.9 per cent) while mining products declined by 55.0 per cent relative to 2019.⁶

Inadequate diversification and complexity in Jamaica's production capacity has contributed to anaemic growth over the last 4 decades, however improvements in the basket of goods are seen in the share of agricultural and processed foods. To aid in the diversification of Jamaica's economic base, a National Investment Policy is being crafted (white paper stage) to guide the creation of an enabling environment to facilitate private investment. A National Business Portal was also launched in 2020 to facilitate several business-to-government transactions virtually and provide information and guidance on government requirements to start a business and acquire land among other things.

Environmental

As a small island developing state, Jamaica's location makes it highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change and the associated challenges, such as sea-level rise. The issue is compounded given the vulnerability of key sectors such as Fisheries, Agriculture and Tourism to climate change. The impact of droughts, flooding and related events have affected industries and livelihoods. Over the review period, damages from weather systems totalled \$7.2 billion, largely on account of the passage of tropical storms Zeta and Eta in 2020. Three lives were lost between 2018 and 2020 from these and other climate related events.

To mitigate against the impact of climate change, the GOJ continued to strengthen its policy and regulatory framework (Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica [updated]), developing tools and improving the quality of data to inform decisions and building resilience in the natural and built environment. Disaster risk financing was strengthened with the issuing of a catastrophe bond through the World Bank by GOJ to secure US\$185 million in financial protection for the period 2021–2023 in the event of major storms that meet certain criteria.

The geographic location and history of natural disasters have highlighted the importance of building resilience to climate change. The drive to make evidence-based decisions through the development of climate risk assessment tools such as the National Risk Information Platform is expected to pay dividends in the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies. The prioritization of disaster risk financing to mitigate the adverse impact on the fiscal accounts was also one of the best practices in building economic resilience.

Issues related to energy production and consumption spread across the development agenda, through pollutants from fossil fuels, high energy costs impacting industry competitiveness and price volatility in key consumer goods. Petroleum based fuel sources accounted for 85.8 per cent of fuel consumption in 2020, with the use of LNG and renewables being targeted to diversify the energy mix. With the completion of the government's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), additional capacity for electricity generation have been targeted. The IRP outlines 32.0 per cent of generation and net load in 2030 from renewables and up to 49.0 per cent by 2037. The targeted renewable mix includes solar, wind, hydroelectric, waste to energy and biomass.

⁵ Bank of Jamaica Balance of Payments

⁶ Statistical Institute of Jamaica International Merchandise Trade

Social

With approximately three out of every five persons in the employed labour force not passing an academic examination or receiving any formal training up to 2019, the pace and inclusivity of growth will be hindered.⁷ This problem partly reflects the fact that approximately three out of four persons who are informally employed (excluding agriculture), did not pass any academic exam compared with approximately one in every three persons in the formal sector in 2019.⁸ This highlights the important link between education outcomes and decent work. Despite high levels of enrolment up to Grade 11 in schools, the achievement levels have been disproportionate. These challenges affect the earning potential, labour productivity, quality of life and multidimensional poverty. The challenge of upskilling the labour force will be further compounded by the learning loss or learning adjusted years as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. A report on the Reform of Education in Jamaica was completed by the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission in 2021. The report focused on eight areas, which include Governance, Teaching, Curriculum and Teacher Training; Infrastructure and Technology; and Technical & Vocational Education and Training. Recommendations were posited for all eight areas to address the issues in education and training, and can potentially address the impact of COVID-19.

The report further highlighted that a 2004 Task Force on Education made valuable recommendations, some of which were implemented, such as building institutional capacity under the guidance of the Education System Transformation Program, while others were not implemented and others were not as impactful as initially envisioned. It was recommended that a similar system to EPOC be implemented in the education sector to increase transparency and monitoring of the implementation of the education reform initiatives.

Way Forward

As we work towards achieving targets in social, economic and environmental dimensions, trade-offs are inherent where budgetary constraints exist, especially within the context of relatively high debt servicing costs and high debt levels. This underscores the importance of public-private partnership in achieving targets under the SDGs and the privatization/divestment of key GOJ assets to inject new capital in critical sectors, for example, energy. Increased transparency and accountability are also expected to play an important role in the efficient and effective implementation of projects. In this regard, a Public Investment Map, a web-enabled platform, was developed to provide information on public investment and also allows beneficiaries and other citizens to interact and provide updates on activities by posting to the platform.

LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

The concept of leaving no one behind is outlined in principle two of the six guiding principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework⁹. It is representative of "the unequivocal commitment of all UN Member States to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potential of individuals and humanity as a whole. LNOB not only entails reaching the poorest of the poor, but requires combating discrimination and rising inequalities within and amongst countries, and their root causes."¹⁰

⁷ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. Jamaica Labour Force Survey: Annual Review 2020

⁸ Ibid

⁹ United Nations Sustainable Development Group. 2021. "Leave No one Behind" Accessed November 15, 2021. <https://unsdg.un.org/2030-agenda/universal-values/leave-no-one-behind>

¹⁰ ibid

Jamaica's Voluntary National Review (VNR) Report 2018 was informed by a thematic report on Leaving No One Behind. The report identified categories of persons who were most at risk of being left behind and the vulnerabilities and risks that contribute to their status. The report also identified the imperatives for leaving no one behind to include timely disaggregated data on populations at risk of being left behind, adequate provision and equitable distribution of resources, effective governance and political prioritization of marginalized groups, and a normative shift to promote and sustain progressive attitudes and actions by all stakeholders, including policymakers working with marginalized groups.

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) has, since the 2018 review, advanced several policies, legislative instruments and programmes to respond to the prevalence of poverty and address vulnerabilities, and inequalities, targeting persons at risk of being left behind. These have been further augmented by policies targeting the impact of COVID-19. A representative institutional framework supports the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of these instruments to maintain relevance and responsiveness to the emerging challenges.

Social Protection

The Decade for Action and Delivery of the SDGs commenced in 2020 with an unexpected and unprecedented global public health crisis. In the context of mitigative and proactive approaches to disasters, the scale of the still-unfolding crisis was uncharacteristic and all-enveloping, creating powerful negative impacts across societies and economies. Within the previous two years, Jamaica had given serious consideration to shock-responsive and adaptive social protection systems and had initiated further dialogue, action, and commitment of resources to strengthen state responses to these eventualities. For Jamaica to maintain gains previously made in arresting poverty risks and broader social protection insecurities, significant shifts had to be made in budget allocations, human resource deployments and administrative procedures. In the main, the country sustained existing social programmes and even expanded the temporary reach of some initiatives to unregistered beneficiaries, while also establishing new modalities to accommodate safety and accentuate the delivery of services. Admittedly, emerging vulnerabilities created by the pandemic resulted in increased demand for social welfare and highlighted gaps in access for some categories of persons.

A monumental advancement in strategically establishing an improved foundation for the delivery of social benefits was the passage of the National Identification System Act in Parliament in November 2021. This had been preceded by extensive stakeholder and public consultations and debates. Such a system has the potential for accommodating and facilitating the identification of the most vulnerable persons in need of social services and welfare benefits. The social protection system could benefit from sub-registers such as social registries, which can be used to streamline and quickly facilitate service delivery to clients. Notably, a Social Pensions Programme targeting persons 75 years and older who are without income support; was introduced and began providing transfers in July 2021. The policy environment was also strengthened with the approval of the new National Policy for Senior Citizens in November 2021. Notably, the coming into effect of the Disabilities Act on February 14, 2022, is also a critical step in buttressing the legislative framework for the protection of the social and economic rights of people with disabilities in Jamaica.

In terms of redistributive approaches to benefit individuals and families most in need, Government policies have continued to focus on universal healthcare support and a range of contributory social security and payroll taxes. In principle, programmes including the National Insurance Scheme, National Health Fund, National Housing Trust, Education Tax and statutory deductions to the Human Employment and Resource Training/National Service Training Agency (HEART/NSTA) Trust are intended to provide both direct benefits and cross-subsidies to beneficiaries such as pensions, shelter solutions, health subsidies and education services. However, studies have estimated that there is

regressiveness in some provisions, favouring the formal sector employees and those with higher wages, and resulting in less income support at the lower end of the income distribution. Universal health coverage has been estimated to be the most redistributive policy currently, through the various supports provided in the public health sector. The provisions have continued to assist thousands of families.

The concept of Leaving No one Behind in the sphere of social protection takes full account of the risks and vulnerabilities faced by different groups and individuals in respect of income security and its implications. Having previously established some important dimensions that promotes development for all, the country has continued to seek avenues for greater inclusion in the social and economic dynamics of achieving SDG and national goals. For the most part, the threats to shared development gains include poverty, income insecurity, disparity in access to education, social exclusion and unemployment. These issues perpetuate gaps in outcomes and achievements, widening disparities and exacerbating social tensions. These were reinforced in the ongoing pandemic experience; however, there were significant strides that were being made in several dimensions, with thousands of citizens anticipated to benefit.

Status Report

Throughout the reporting period, new strategies and actions geared towards the advancement of this framework were introduced and existing strategies enhanced. The implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Programme in April 2018 proved to be a key step in the synchronization of poverty-related programmes for the effective mobilization of available resources and capacities toward poverty reduction. Embodying the government's commitment to eradicate extreme (food) poverty by 2022 and reduce the national poverty prevalence to below 10.0 per cent by 2030, the programme has seen significant achievements in its bid to improve access to social services, increase economic empowerment and human capital development, address psychosocial and cultural barriers to poverty reduction outcomes and implement basic community infrastructure while targeting the most vulnerable.

Latest data trends have indicated a general decline in poverty, food poverty prevalence and income inequality up to 2019, signaling a decline in disproportionate distribution of wealth and improvements in socio-economic conditions. As of 2019 (latest available data), national poverty prevalence was 11.0 per cent compared with 12.6 per cent in the previous year. This represents an 8.3 percentage points decline when compared with the prevalence in 2017 (19.3 per cent), the NPRP baseline year. The overall adult equivalent poverty line for 2019 was \$203 177.00. As at 2019, the overall adult equivalent food poverty line was \$132 652.00. Food poverty prevalence stood at 4.0 per cent, compared with 3.5 per cent in 2018 and 5.4 per cent in 2017. In 2018, the food poverty prevalence in the GKMA declined below 3.0 percent¹¹ and further declined in 2019. This signaled the commencement of the eradication of food poverty in the GKMA if sustained. Importantly, the Child Poverty Rate also evinced significant reduction over the data series, moving from 24.5 per cent in 2017, to 15.7 per cent in 2018 and down to 13.3 per cent in 2019. Similarly, of all elderly 60 years and older 9.4 per cent were in poverty in 2019, compared with 14.2 per cent in 2017 and 11.2 per cent in 2018.¹²

The prevalence data for poor individuals by age, while depicting important reductions across all categories in the series, reinforce the risks created by the intergenerational perpetuation of poverty. The weight of the younger age groups is impacting the national average, between early childhood and young adulthood. These age groups are more likely to have inherited poverty. The challenge of addressing sustainable reductions in poverty, therefore, continues to require

¹¹ 3% or below is being used to determine eradication, as per World Bank definition.

¹² Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions

multiple levels of investment in human capital, empowerment and resilience of livelihoods at the household level.

While the recent trajectory of the poverty prevalence indicators demonstrates a positive movement toward the achievements of the programme Goals, the impact of the COVID-19 public health crisis is anticipated to negatively impact poverty reduction targets. The pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing inequalities and disproportionately affected the poorest and most vulnerable. The informal sector, which often acts as a production base for vulnerable groups such as non-wage earners, self-employed, family farmers, street vendors and other groups has been significantly impacted. The decline in key development sectors has resulted in loss and lack of livelihoods.

Despite these challenges, the GOJ has commendably mobilized several response efforts to alleviate these effects, chief of which was the establishment of the COVID-19 Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme. Existing partnerships were also strengthened while numerous new private-public partnerships were and continue to be forged primarily in areas of telecommunications, the provision and distribution of food and other consumer items, ICT support and capacity building. In keeping with this, the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) spearheaded the PSOJ COVID-19 Jamaica Response Fund, a private, public and social sector partnership aimed at mobilizing resources to strengthen social safety nets and assist citizens in immediate need.

The CARE Programme was rapidly deployed with the vital social mission of providing support to the most vulnerable to cushion the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic¹³. The programme has assisted in the form of cash transfers largely targeted to **unemployed persons, informally employed, small businesses, hospitality sector workers, students, farmers, fishermen, Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH) beneficiaries and the homeless and indigent**. Table 2 shows details of CARE Programme categories and beneficiaries¹⁴.

TABLE 2: CATEGORIES OF BENEFITS UNDER THE CARE ELEMENT OF THE SERVE JAMAICA PROGRAMME

Categories of Benefits under the CARE Element of the Serve Jamaica Programme	Description
Supporting Employees with Trans-fer of Cash (SET Cash)	Provides temporary cash transfers to individuals where it can be verified that they lost their employment on or after March 10, 2020
General Grant	Available to barbers, hairdressers, beauty therapists, cosmetologists, market vendors, taxi and bus operators (i.e., PPV licensees) and other occupations registered with a Municipality, TPDCO, or Transport Authority.
The Compassionate Grant	Open to any unemployed Jamaican, informally employed, elderly, or who is a student over the age of 18 provided they are not otherwise receiving a cash benefit under the CARE Programme except the COVID-19 PATH Grant.
The PATH Grant	Provides \$1.1 billion in additional funding to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to provide a Covid-19 PATH Grant to PATH beneficiaries.

13 Ministry of Finance and the Public Service. 2020. "Message from the Care Programme Re: Compassionate Grant." Accessed November 17, 2020. <https://mof.gov.jm/mof-media/media-centre/press/2642-message-from-the-care-programme-re-compassionate-grant.html>

14 Ministry of Finance and the Public Service. 2020. "CARE Programme". Accessed September 1, 2020. <https://www.wecare.gov.jm/>

TABLE 2: CATEGORIES OF BENEFITS UNDER THE CARE ELEMENT OF THE SERVE JAMAICA PROGRAMME

Categories of Benefits under the CARE Element of the Serve Jamaica Programme	Description
Business Employee Support and Transfer of Cash (BEST Cash) Programme	Designed to encourage businesses in the tourism sector to remain connected with their employees by providing temporary cash transfers to those that do, based on the number of workers they keep employed.
Small Business Programme	Provides a one-time grant of \$100,000 to all small businesses that filed tax returns for 2019 inclusive of payroll returns evidencing that the small business has employees.
The Tourism Grant	Businesses operating in the tourism sector, inclusive of hotels, attractions and tours, which are registered with the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo) will be eligible to apply for a COVID-19 Tourism Grant from a pool of \$1.2 billion made available by the CARE Programme.
Student Loan Relief	Provides a deferral of student loan principal and interest payments for 3 months (until July 2020) for loans outstanding to the Student Loan Bureau (SLB).
Other Grants	<p>Farmers and Fishermen The elderly not on the PATH programme, the infirmed, the homeless, and people on the streets will receive support through an allocation of \$150 million to the Poor Relief Fund. \$189 million allocation to the Constituency Development Fund available through your Member of Parliament.</p>
<p>The elderly not on the PATH programme, the infirmed, the homeless, and people on the streets will receive support through an allocation of \$150 million to the Poor Relief Fund.</p>	

Psychosocial support throughout the period continued to be provided to **youth and families** through mentorship, mental health and sexual and reproductive health services. Parenting and youth development workshops and substance abuse treatment and prevention interventions were also delivered. The COVID-19 era has been marked by increased demand for psychosocial support. Integrated measures have seen several helplines established by the Ministry of Health and Wellness and other healthcare agencies to provide counselling support for those impacted. Critical advancements have been made in the NPRP relating to the provision of support to children and youth through partner agencies. The design of a psychosocial pilot programme targeting mindset change has also been initiated to influence positive behaviour changes in instances where such behaviours have been found to perpetuate the inter-generational cycle of poverty.

Agricultural and entrepreneurship support and skills training continued to be provided, including for **persons with disabilities, youth, and residents of poor and vulnerable communities**. These programmes were significantly impacted by COVID-19 due to a disruption in livelihood and face-to-face training and educational delivery. However, while online learning posed many challenges for beneficiaries with limited or no access to the internet or electronic devices, there were efforts to partner with the private sector and other entities to address these gaps. There were also innovative approaches to the promotion and marketing of small businesses and agricultural support. Vulnerable farmers were also supported in their bid to procure civil registration documents to facilitate greater access to support and resources.

The pandemic has highlighted some critical areas for focus to bridge social protection gaps and decrease inequalities. Among these, as demonstrated by the current challenges of the education sector, is the need for Government provision of a basic infrastructural framework to ensure sustained access to the internet. This is the foundation upon which further partnerships can be pursued with telecommunications entities for investments in rural and other underserved communities.

There is also a need for increased human resources and capacity building among public institutions to support rapid

response and adaptation to provide services to a larger number of poor and vulnerable groups seeking assistance. The support of International Development Partners (IDPs) is also critical for funding to increase human resource capacity in technical areas where there is an identifiable need. Similarly, there is also an indication that there needs to be greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in strategies and actions implemented across sectors, accompanied by relevant policy instruments. COVID-19 has reiterated the need to expedite Jamaica's digital transformation; therefore, strategies to do so should be devised with consideration of the implications on persons with disabilities. Furthermore, an assessment of the ICT infrastructure which will be needed to facilitate greater inclusion in the health and education sectors for persons with disabilities should be pursued.

Contributory provisions such as the National Insurance Scheme (NIS) pension programmes, and health insurance remained in effect for thousands of **workers and pension beneficiaries**, and are largely tapped into by the formal economic sectors. Over the review period, significant changes were made to the insurable wage ceiling for NIS and phasing in of higher pensionable ages for women and men continued. These changes are expected to strengthen the viability of the Fund supporting the NIS, while ongoing efforts continued to be made to encourage registration through public education thrusts. The 2019 JSLC estimated that 62.8 per cent of persons 18 years and older were registered on the NIS; however, the incidence of registration was 48.8 per cent in Quintile 1 and 52.7 per cent in Quintile 2, compared with 75.8 per cent in Quintile 5. This continued to reflect significant disparity across socioeconomic status, likely to be the result of levels of informality in employment at the lower quintiles.

Although the survey faces limitations in estimating the registration, it is the best and only proxy for identifying socioeconomic differences. Across the review period, registration on NIS as measured by the survey of persons over the age of 18 showed increases from 48.2 per cent in 2017 to 62.8 per cent in 2019. In the lowest quintile, the proportion of registered persons is also growing; 28.0 per cent in 2017 to 48.8 per cent in 2019 for Quintile 1. The significant improvements follow ongoing public education and social marketing by the ministry and improved employment levels in the formal sector. The MLSS paid over 128 000 clients various types of pension benefits in 2019, including for old age, disability, employment injury and survivor's pensions. During the pandemic, the ministry allowed early encashment of some benefit transfers, to reduce the need for physical movement, while the use of direct deposit accounts was further reinforced for receipt of pensions and cash transfers. Under the COVID-related cash transfer support, NIS pensioners, as well as clients of the new Social Pensions programme, received additional cash grants in December 2021.

Advances in social assistance programmes for **poor and vulnerable families** focused on improvements to delivery systems and networks, including community initiatives that provided information and services on the ground. The MLSS extended the Community Engagement Series following its launch in 2017, bringing information and services to over 100 communities by the end of 2019. Exit strategies to empower welfare households were utilized during the period, including ongoing case management, apprenticeship programmes and job placements, post-secondary scholarships and training, and entrepreneurial grants for small businesses. Clientele included both rural and urban residents, youth, women and students. Between 2018 and 2020, approximately 1 500 beneficiaries were assisted with skills training through the national training agency, under the Steps-to-Work Programme aligned with PATH.

The Board of Supervision of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development maintained provisions and programmes for **indigent and homeless** persons over the period. Shelter care, medical support and cash transfers were among the accommodations budgeted for under the Poor Relief Act. An average annual client base numbering 20 000 was served through residential institutions and Outdoor programmes. Major policy efforts in the period were the advancement of the draft Homelessness Policy, and the new Human Services Act., both anticipated to modernize the legislative framework for better service to needy persons. During the pandemic, the BOS instituted additional

measures to meet the expanded needs, including feeding programmes, night shelters, drop-in centres, care packages and cash transfers. The demand for residential care services overall continued to be limited by available accommodation in the parish-based facilities, even while efforts to expand remained underway in some locations. The Disaster Risk Management Act in effect during the pandemic also restricted the intake of new cases, leading to over 400 applicants waiting by February 2022, inclusive of social cases abandoned in hospitals.

Advances were made to strengthen the acknowledgment of rights for **persons with disabilities** and to establish protocols for social inclusion, following the enactment of the Disabilities Act 2014. Work was completed on three Codes of Practice (Education and Training, Healthcare Facilities and Employment), with another on Public Transportation initiated in 2021. The Regulations for the Act were passed in Parliament in October 2021. The supportive legislation will impact the lives and social and economic prospects of thousands of persons with disabilities. Outside of the legislative framework, much remains to be done to lessen inequities faced by children and youth with disabilities, and to expand the opportunities for education and training and meaningful employment. Social inclusion through communication such as sign language has improved in public media but is not mainstreamed in the local sphere. Significant barriers to the personal development and economic wellbeing of many persons with disabilities remain, and these include educational attainment beyond secondary levels, inability to sustainably attach to the labour market, discriminatory practices, and weak social capital.

During the pandemic, the JCPD, working with partner entities and private sector support, emphasized communicating with the Deaf; providing food and sanitation packages; advocating for and facilitating routine health services (non-COVID related); supporting online learning, and other IEC interventions. Through the Digicel Foundation, several hundred tablets were provided to students with disabilities, while the Ministry of Health and Wellness facilitated ongoing health services. Public education messages on how to support persons with disabilities were also crafted and disseminated. The COVID-19 experience has highlighted that many persons with disabilities are not registered with JCPD and are unbanked as well.

The revised National Policy for **Senior Citizens** was approved in the Houses of Parliament in October 2021, after a policy process involving extensive public consultation and research. The Policy will provide a framework for state and non-state interventions in support of social protection, social participation, safety and security, and active and productive ageing. Over 300 000 persons 60 years and older stand to benefit from the improved policy environment, which promotes a whole-of-society approach towards ageing and development.

Two specific efforts to include **small farmers and fishers, as well as domestic workers** were also advanced through initiatives from the GOJ and the financial sector. The first involves efforts to introduce greater formality into their economic existence, with technical support from the ILO. Another intervention was initiated by the local insurance industry in 2021, with the introduction of contributory health and life insurance products for registered small farmers and fisher-folk, in association with GOJ entities. A significant move was made in late 2020 to elicit the support of the ILO in a wide-ranging feasibility study on unemployment insurance for Jamaican workers. Notable advancement for the informal sector was the passage of a Micro-Credit Act in January 2021. This will provide a regulatory framework for microcredit institutions which should facilitate greater transparency and accountability in the provision of credit to small entrepreneurs. Current proposals for amendments to the Insurance Act could also pave the way for micro insurance products for this sector. The development of a legislative framework for micro insurance forms part of a broader national agenda to promote financial inclusion. This would incorporate insurance products designed to target lower-income populations such as Micro Small and Medium Enterprises. Informal commercial traders and small-scale farmers, who are usually excluded from traditional financial services and thus have limited or no means of coping with risks. The process for creating the legal and regulatory basis for micro insurance has been initiated.

Leaving No one Behind in Decent Work and Economic Growth

The GOJ is working to ensure inclusive economic growth that results in opportunities for decent work for all Jamaicans. Initiatives targeting the most vulnerable such as Jamaica's youth and persons with disabilities, women and the unemployed, who are at risk of being left behind, aim to ensure equal access to the labour market. Through the continued efforts of active labour market programmes such as the national Labour Market Information System (LMIS) and the introduction of a public works programme under the Social and Economic Recovery and Vaccine (SERVE) Programme (expected to create jobs for some 2 000 youth), active participation in the labour market was promoted to leave no one behind. In 2021, the GOJ allocated \$3.0 billion through the Development Bank of Jamaica SERVE Programme to assist MSMEs in the recovery from COVID-19 and increase their use of digital technology. Productivity-driven growth, however, remained a challenge over the review period. To strengthen the productivity policy environment, a Concept Note for a National Policy on Productivity was drafted during the period. The policy would reaffirm productivity as the main driver of economic growth by developing a framework that guides how to treat productivity matters impacted by human capital attainment, innovation, the future of work and public-private engagement. The GOJ also continues to explore various ways of reducing unemployment, increasing formalization and creating effective social protection measures to safeguard the rights and dignity of Jamaican workers. The most recent efforts include a partnership between the GOJ and the International Labour Organisation in executing a Feasibility Study for Unemployment Insurance in Jamaica. The year-long study began in May 2021. Instituting unemployment insurance would complete the country's Social Protection (SP) floor. Additionally, the now in effect Disabilities Act (2014) and Regulations are expected to create additional opportunities for persons with disabilities and minimize discrimination in areas such as recruitment and training.

Leaving No one Behind in Guaranteeing Good Health and Wellbeing

The Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) has collaborated with other ministries, departments, agencies and non-governmental organizations to ensure the safekeeping of the most vulnerable groups within Jamaican society. For women, the MoHW has closely collaborated with the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Women's Centre of Jamaica to assist women impacted by domestic violence. There are two crisis centres on the island, with the most recent one constructed in Montego Bay through the Spotlight Initiative. The centres provide opportunities for continuing education to women who wish to pursue secondary education post-pregnancy. The MoHW has also set up the Teen Hubs to provide psychological, educational and other services to those in need. Finally, the adolescent clinic, held on specific days at all public health facilities caters to the needs of adolescents only.

The National HIV programme remains committed to achieving the 2030 SDGs and providing optimal delivery of health services to persons living with HIV (PLHIV). This includes:

- Revision of policy documents for HIV
- Ongoing access to prevention and risk reduction services
- Diagnostic testing for HIV and Syphilis
- Universal free access to health care, with continued monitoring of disease status and outcome
- Increasing access to HIV services through integrated access points
- Provision of stigma-free spaces, through improvements to treatment sites, and stigma and discrimination training to medical and non-medical staff

- Enhanced package of care for key and vulnerable populations
- Robust prevention of mother to child transmission PMTCT programme with the provision of replacement feeds for HIV exposed infants
- Revision of treatment guidelines in keeping with the WHO recommendations
- Capacity building of healthcare workers in the management of HIV
- Advocacy for PLHIV in collaboration with non-governmental and civil society organizations
- Provision and maintenance of uninterrupted supplies of antiretroviral therapy for greater than four (4) years.

Through these strategies, the National HIV Programme continues to progress towards the achievement of the SDGs for good health and wellbeing.

Leaving No one Behind in Guaranteeing Quality Education

High enrolment rates continued to be a characteristic at the lower level (3 years to 16 years) of the education system while reduced rates remain a feature of the upper level (17 years to 24 years). Despite the high enrolment rate, children from rural areas and lower quintiles are less likely to attend school. One of the main factors that contributed to poor attendance among these vulnerable groups is financial constraints. In response to this, the rural school bus system was introduced, as well as the expansion of the school feeding programme in schools to support vulnerable students.

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted a myriad of gaps within the sector. This was evident in the level of unpreparedness across the sector for the shift to online teaching and learning; the inequities in access to online school; and the learning loss experienced that threatens previous gains in educational outcomes. Despite this, the GOJ responded with support to teachers and students for remote learning through inter alia, the provision of computers and tablets, improvements in internet access points and teacher training to improve digital skills. As a result of the pandemic, over 120 000 students were absent or disengaged from an online school. In response, the Ministry of Education, Youth & Information launched the *Yard to Yard Find the Child Initiative* in 2021 to identify, locate and re-engage students. In addition to this initiative, the Government has embarked on several other initiatives aimed at addressing the learning loss brought on by the pandemic. These initiatives include the provision of \$1.0 billion for the employment of temporary teachers to assist students to recover from learning loss as part of the Extra Lessons Programme, the reopening of schools for face-to-face teaching and learning, and the hosting of summer school. The government is committed to ensuring that students most at risk of being left behind are provided with the required support.

Leaving No One Behind an Imperative for Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

The continued implementation of intervention programmes has provided an opportunity for residents in at-risk communities to participate in programmes designed to improve their quality of life. These interventions include skills and educational training, income generation activities, parental support programmes, capacity building of community governance structures and infrastructural development. While there have been several beneficiaries of these programmes, the needs of the target communities far outweigh the available resources. For example, youth involvement in crime is still too high; however, for the numbers to decline, more persons in this group need to be able to access employment, however, there is a need to increase the number of youths with certification, thus providing

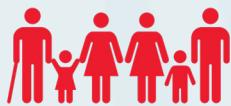
them with the required qualifications to seek employment. Increasing both the number of skills and educational training programmes and the number of young persons who can access these programmes is imperative. There are also communities in need of major infrastructural works such as housing development/improvement, road work, drainage, and provision of electricity supply and water to improve the quality of life of residents.

The government's Community Renewal Programme (CRP), the implementation of which is coordinated and monitored by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) through the CRP Secretariat, seeks to provide an effective and efficient platform for coordinating and monitoring initiatives, in volatile and vulnerable communities, that facilitate social transformation and economic development, strengthened governance, improved safety and access to justice in targeted communities. During FY2020/2021, the CRP continued the implementation of its Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP); and in this regard, the Secretariat provided funding support for key initiatives in target communities. These include the Inter-Agency Network (IAN) Youth Development Programme (\$2 500 000), 360 Recycle Project - Climate-Smart Food Security (\$1 500 000), the Rose Town Block Making Project (\$330 000), Civil Society Boost Initiative II (\$2 500 000) and the Wilton Gardens Train Park (\$300 000). Through its mobilization efforts, the CRP also secured US\$595 000 and \$750 000 from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and National Housing Trust, respectively, to support key development initiatives in CRP communities. These initiatives served to address the loss of livelihoods as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to build the capacity of community residents to pivot and 'seek' out new economic opportunities



PROGRESS ON GOALS & TARGETS

**1 NO
POVERTY**



GOAL 1

End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere

Context

Reducing the prevalence of poverty and eradicating extreme poverty is a policy priority of the Government of Jamaica (GOJ). The National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPP/NPRP) 2017 is a responsive instrument to implement and evaluate measures to address poverty and vulnerability. The NPP/NPRP has two goals:

Goal 1: Eradicate¹⁵ extreme (food) poverty by 2022;

Goal 2: Reduce the prevalence of poverty significantly below 10.0 per cent by 2030.

The NPP/NPRP is a mechanism to identify, streamline and coordinate programmes for the poor and vulnerable in keeping with nationally agreed strategies, targets, and goals. The coordinated approach is essential for improving targeting, reach, access to services and service delivery, while building and expanding partnerships, and strengthening collaboration and communication.

The NPP/NPRP is aligned with the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy (SPS) 2014. The SPS uses the rights-based and life-cycle approaches to achieving income security for all. As noted in the SPS, the interconnectivity between the Social Protection, which helps to safeguard the living standards of individuals, and other variables (e.g., economic, psychological, cultural and political) is significant. This integration is also taken into consideration in the development of the National Poverty Reduction Programme, which seeks to address poverty through five distinct programme areas: Addressing Extreme Poverty and Basic Needs; Economic Empowerment and Human Capital Development; Psychosocial, Cultural and Normative Advancement; Basic Community Infrastructure; and Institutional Strengthening. As of 2021, approximately 80 programmes — delivered primarily by GOJ ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), and partnering non-government entities — continued implementation under the NPRP.

Jamaica is currently exploring the development of a multidimensional poverty index (MPI), which is a measure that considers several deprivations and is designed to address the heterogeneous nature of poverty. The index would be a useful and necessary complement to the monetary poverty measurement, by including deprivations related to health, education, sanitation and others. Currently, Jamaica uses a consumption-based monetary measure to estimate an absolute poverty rate. Consistent with global trends, a non-income measure of poverty will be established to further aid in the assessment of multiple deprivations, facilitating human development through improved programme targeting. The

¹⁵ Eradication of poverty as defined by the World Bank – absolute poverty levels below 3.0 per cent. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview#1>

MPI will adopt a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods as it will seek to identify specific deprivations that are relevant to Jamaicans living in poverty. The methodology to develop the MPI will incorporate focus group sessions to allow for community-level inputs in identifying the relevant deprivations faced by the citizens of the country. This will be complemented by, technical computations, and broad-based technical consultation to arrive at the best MPI outcome. The government is being supported by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank and other partnerships.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning poverty.

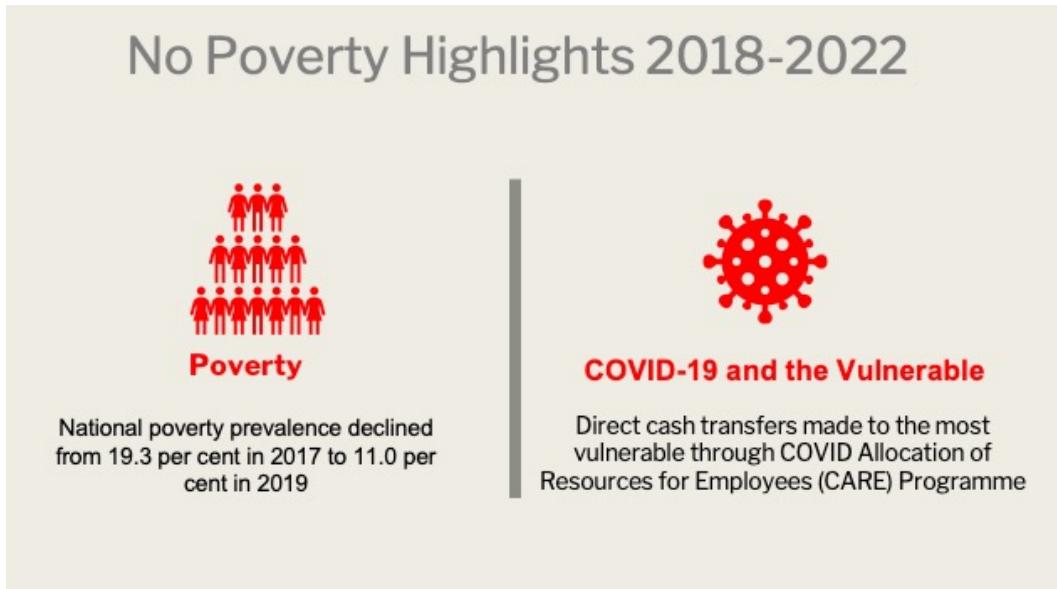


FIGURE 6: HIGHLIGHTS, NO POVERTY 2018-2022

Discussion

Target 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.90 a day

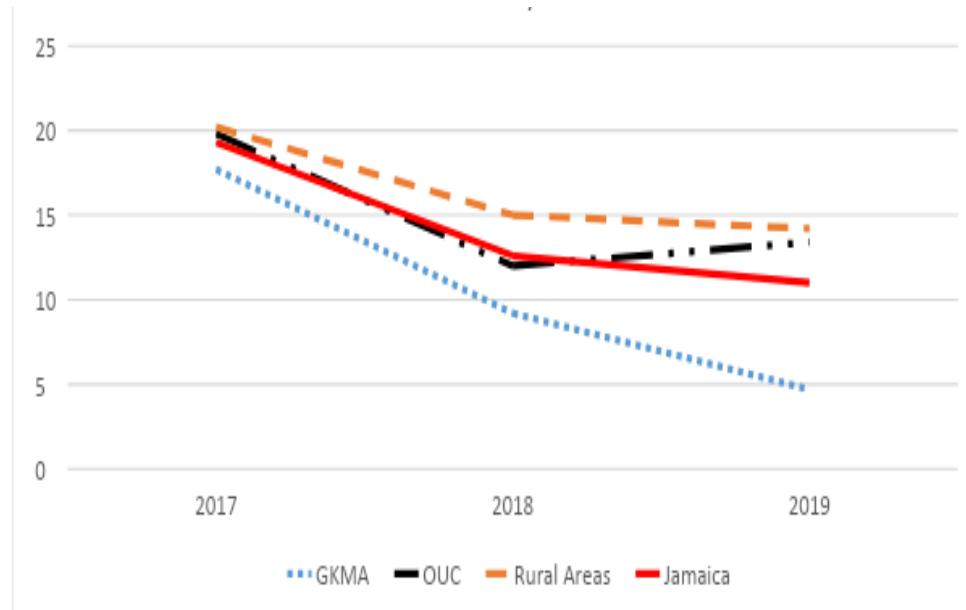
There is coherence between the national priorities for poverty reduction and achieving the SDGs given that the goals of Jamaica's National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction programme are aligned with SDGs Goals 1 and 2.

TABLE 3: POVERTY PREVALENCE BY REGION, 2017 – 2019 (PER CENT)

	Poverty			Food Poverty		
	2017r	2018	2019	2017r	2018	2019
Region						
Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA)	17.7	9.2	4.7	5.5	2.9	0.4
Other Urban Centres (OUC)	19.8	12.0	13.4	4.8	3.9	3.5
Rural Areas	20.2	15.0	14.2	5.6	3.7	6.7
Jamaica	19.3	12.6	11.0	5.4	3.5	4.0

r – Revised
Per cent estimates are weighted
Discrepancies may be due to rounding.
Source: Compiled by PIOJ with data supplied by STATIN

Since 2017 (the baseline year of the NPPR), poverty prevalence indicators have trended in a positive direction towards the achievements of the NPP/NPPR Goals, with a general decline in poverty while the comparative regional data show the highest poverty prevalence rates in rural areas. The latest available data on poverty (2019) revealed that 11.0 per cent of the Jamaican population was living in poverty—a 1.6 percentage point decline from 2018, and an 8.3 percentage point decline from 2017. Rural Areas (RA) recorded the highest poverty prevalence figures in 2019—at 14.2 per cent; followed by Other Urban Centres (OUC) at 13.4 per cent and the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA) at 4.7 per cent (Table 3).

FIGURE 7: POVERTY PREVALENCE BY REGION, 2017-2019 (PER CENT)
Source: Jamaica Survey Living Conditions

The decline in poverty can be attributed to the improvement in the Jamaican economy. In 2019, there was a 0.9 per cent¹⁶ growth in the country's real gross domestic product (GDP)—representing the 7th consecutive year of growth. This performance was supported by continued stability in the macroeconomic environment.¹⁷ There was also growth in key industries such as Agriculture, Hotel & Restaurants and the Wholesale & Retail Trade. Agriculture, which accounted for 7.1 per cent of real GDP in 2019 and is one of the most significant industries in Rural Areas, expanded by 0.4 per cent.¹⁸ The Hotels & Restaurants industry recorded growth in output of 4.9 per cent, the highest recorded for 2019, and accounted for 6.2 per cent of real GDP.¹⁹ This out-turn largely reflected an increase in the number of tourists from Jamaica's main source markets.²⁰ The largest industry group, Wholesale & Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicles & Equipment, accounted for 17.2 per cent of overall real GDP and recorded growth of 1.1 per cent.²¹ Other improvements included an increase in remittance flows to US\$ 2 405.6 million compared with US\$ 2 345.8 million in 2018—an increase of US\$ 59.8 million.²² Remittance inflows are a possible social safety net for the poor, hence an increase in remittance inflows may increase household consumption, leading to a reduction in poverty. Jamaica's unemployment rate for 2019 declined compared with 2018; 7.2 per cent relative to 8.7 per cent.²³

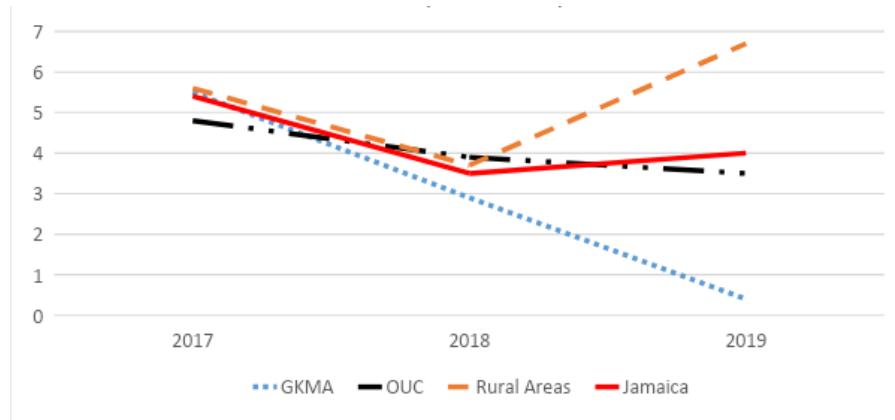


FIGURE 8: FOOD POVERTY PREVALENCE BY REGION, 2017-2019 (PER CENT)

Source: Jamaica Survey Living Conditions

In 2017, the food poverty rate (Figure 7) stood at 5.4 per cent when compared with 3.5 per cent in 2018 and 4.0 per cent in 2019. Rural Areas recorded the highest food poverty rates in 2017 (5.6 per cent) and similarly in 2019 at 6.7 per cent. In 2018 the food poverty prevalence in GKMA declined below 3.0 percent and continued to decline in 2019.²⁴

¹⁶ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. 2019. National Income and Product Accounts. Kingston: STATIN

¹⁷ Planning Institute of Jamaica. 2019. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2019. Kingston: PIOJ

¹⁸ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. 2019. National Income and Product Accounts. Kingston: STATIN

¹⁹ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. 2019. National Income and Product Accounts. Kingston: STATIN

²⁰ Planning Institute of Jamaica. 2020. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2019. Kingston: PIOJ

²¹ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. 2019. National Income and Product Accounts. Kingston: STATIN

²² http://www.boj.org.jm/uploads/pdf/rem_updates/rem_updates_jan2021.pdf

²³ Statistical Institute of Jamaica. 2020. The Jamaica Labour Force Survey Annual Review 2019. Kingston: STATIN.

²⁴ Based on changes to sampling and weighting methodologies the current poverty series is available from 2017; future revision of prior year estimates by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica are anticipated for a full trend series.

Target 1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

Table 4 shows a decline in the prevalence of poverty among female-headed households to 10.9 per cent in 2019, reducing by half when compared with the estimate of 22.8 per cent in 2017. For male-headed households, a similar analysis shows a marked decline from 15.7 per cent in 2017 to 11.1 per cent in 2019.

TABLE 4 PREVALENCE OF POOR INDIVIDUALS BY SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD AND AGE GROUP, 2017 – 2019
(PER CENT)

	2017	2018	2019
Sex of Household Head			
Male	15.7	11.0	11.1
Female	22.8	14.4	10.9
Age Group			
Early Childhood (0-8 Yrs.)	23.4	15.2	13.9
Children (0-17 Yrs.)	24.4	15.7	13.3
Adolescents (10-19 Yrs.)	25.9	16.4	13.9
Youth (15-24 Yrs.)	23.7	14.6	13.7
Young Adult (25-34 Yrs.)	18.0	11.4	8.9
Prime Working Age (35-39 Yrs.)	15.7	10.4	9.3
Elderly (60+ Yrs.)	14.2	11.2	9.4
Jamaica	19.3	12.6	11.0
Source: Jamaica Survey Living Conditions			

The poverty prevalence in all age groups has also been declining. As of 2019, the poverty prevalence for children (0-17 years old) was 13.3 per cent, a reduction from 15.7 per cent in 2018, and 24.4 per cent in 2017. Reduction in poverty prevalence was also observed for persons aged 60 years and older, moving to 9.4 per cent in the latest estimate, from 14.2 per cent in 2017.

TABLE 5: PREVALENCE OF POVERTY BY SEX AND AGE GROUP, 2017 – 2019 (PER CENT)

	2017		2018		2019	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Age Group						
Early Childhood (0-8 Yrs.)	24.3	22.4	16.0	14.4	13.8	13.9
Children (0-17 Yrs.)	25.2	23.6	17.3	14.1	14.7	11.8
Adolescents (10-19 Yrs.)	27.0	24.7	18.8	14.0	16.9	10.9
Youth (15-24 Yrs.)	25.0	22.4	16.4	12.6	16.5	10.8
Young Adult (25-34 Yrs.)	15.7	20.3	11.2	11.5	9.6	8.2
Prime Working Age (35-39 Yrs.)	15.5	15.9	10.0	10.8	9.5	9.1
Elderly (60+ Yrs.)	13.4	14.8	11.7	10.8	11.0	8.0
Average Poverty Prevalence	20.9	20.6	14.5	12.6	13.1	10.4

Note: Per Cent estimates are weighted

Source: Compiled by the PIOJ from data supplied by STATIN

Table 5 shows that, on average, poverty prevalence is higher among males than females. For every year, the highest poverty prevalence rates were recorded among males, more specifically among children and adolescents. For 2017, the highest recorded rate was 25.2 per cent among male children 0-17 years and 18.8 per cent and 16.9 per cent among male adolescents for 2018 and 2019 respectively. Among females, poverty prevalence rates were highest among children 0-8 years and adolescents 10-19 years. Prime working age adults recorded similar rates of poverty prevalence among both sexes for the review period.

Reduction in poverty prevalence was significant for persons aged 60 years and older for both sexes. In the last estimate, poverty prevalence for Elderly males was 11.0 per cent, moving from 13.4 per cent in 2017. For females, similar analysis shows a marked decline from 14.8 per cent in 2017 to 8.0 per cent in 2019. Overall, there was a decline in poverty prevalence rates across all age groups from 2017 to 2019.

Target 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

The provisions of Jamaica's social protection floor are aligned to the ILO Recommendation 202 (2012); it includes support for Basic Income Security and Basic Social Services for the population in general, but more specifically for vulnerable families, workers, persons with disabilities and the elderly. The country acknowledges that all vulnerable groups should have access to safety nets and that other members of the population should be able to tap into contributory and other forms of social security. In 2014, the floor, included cash and in-kind transfers, economic assistance, residential care, basic health and education services, water and amenities, shelter and public transportation, inter alia. Most provisions and programmes were already in existence at that time, and a costing exercise was done on the public expenditure on

the social protection floor in 2017 estimated that 6.0 per cent of nominal GDP was being spent on basic social services and 0.1 per cent on basic income security as defined in the floor.

The National Insurance Scheme (NIS) and Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) are two key provisions within the social protection floor. The NIS provides pensions in the case of retirement, disability on the job, invalidity, and other forms of support the proportion of the adult population (18 years and older) registered to scheme, which is typically more likely in formal employment.

The Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH), is a major cash transfer social assistance programme, the proportion of registered beneficiaries of PATH, as a fraction of the total population, reflects the single largest target group that is simultaneously eligible for income transfers, support in shocks, education benefits, free health services, and school feeding programmes, *inter alia*. While continuing to extend the programme to eligible applicant households, the policy thrust of the government remains the reduction of poverty, and the provision of strategic case management support for welfare exit outcomes.

More recently, the GOJ embarked on two initiatives to further strengthen the Social Protection floor: the Social Pensions Programme and a feasibility study on unemployment insurance, following up on work previously recommended by the Labour Market Reform Commission 2017. The Social Pensions Programme targets persons 75 years and older who are without income support; it began providing transfers in July 2021. By November the programme provided pensions to 6 232 older persons, including those transitioning from other cash transfer programmes at the eligible age. The feasibility study for unemployment insurance is being conducted in collaboration with the ILO; it will determine options including institutional assessments, cost and actuarial analysis, demographic and legislative assessments, and provide the Cabinet with recommended options for consideration. The Social Pensions Programme and unemployment insurance will expand the SP floor. Thousands of older persons and their families, as well as workers across various industries, are likely to benefit from these additional social protection provisions.

Over the review period 2018-2022, the GOJ and its partners continued to address vulnerability needs among groups such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants and other vulnerable persons in their homes or communities. The municipal Social Assistance Programme implemented by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development continued to provide financial resources to communities through the local governance frameworks, targeting education, funeral assistance, housing support, youth summer employment programmes, *inter alia*. The programmes to address homelessness were also advanced with efforts to create a sound policy framework and accelerate shelter solutions in the wake of the 2020 pandemic. The support included night shelters, drop-in centres, transitional facilities, increased frequency of meal provision, sleeping areas health care and care packages—all examples of extending social benefits to population groups most in need.

The pandemic affected implementation of the migrant work programmes overseas. However, social security continued to be encouraged through contribution measures and facilitated for improved income security. Migrant workers on programmes managed by the MLSS continued to receive appropriate orientation and guidance. Continuing prohibition by the US against mandatory social security deductions from migrant workers' earnings since 2010 places sole responsibility on the individual workers. However, available modalities for effecting the contributions have created barriers to these workers. Efforts have also been made to improve the welfare and livelihood support for workers previously involved in overseas employment, through retooling, re-skilling and other aspects of empowerment, supported by the International Organization for Migration. Considerations for the greater formalization of the domestic worker and fisher-folk sectors are anticipated to expand the social security coverage of those involved. Collaboration with private sector entities and

non-government organizations at community levels served to support continuing interventions for vulnerable persons and families.

Persons with disabilities (PWD) continued to be served through the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities, and several NGO and private sector organizations. The GOJ budgets continued to be provided in support of Economic Empowerment Grants and Assistive Aids grants, as well as academic scholarships. These forms of support continued through the pandemic and benefited over 100 persons. Rehabilitation grants to support medical needs, income-generating projects and other avenues of assistance also continued to be disbursed to hundreds of applicants. Under the stimulus package created to mitigate the employment risks within the pandemic, the government also provided a \$40 million allocation for PWD. By November 2021, approximately half of the budget amount had been disbursed to nearly 2 000 applicants. Social security coverage for PWD is not easily measurable at the national level by the use of routine household surveys. However, qualitative information signals low levels of income security and inconsistency in employment, which bear directly on contributory social security provisions. Many PWD are involved in low-wage occupations, mainly stemming from levels of educational attainment and/or mobility restrictions. While there may be tax relief for informal employment, this impacts relatively few persons, while medical and other costs are likely to be burdensome. Apart from the employment deficits, persons with disabilities are also impacted by lags in retirement pension payments and administrative issues with staff appointments that allow them to join pension plans. There was very little attachment to social security for those employed within the informal sector.

Other crucial indicators for examining coverage include the proportion of the Prime Working Age (25-34 years) with Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) general examination certification, which moved from 20.7 per cent in 2017 to 24.6 per cent in the 2019 survey. At the level of the lowest quintile (consumption group), corresponding data was 4.8 per cent, from 6.5 per cent in 2017; while for Quintile 2 the estimate was 11.5 per cent in 2019, similar to 11.9 per cent in 2017. This age group is significant to watch as it is the youngest tier of the Prime Working Age and should reflect educational outcomes as well as the labour market potential. The level of outcomes for the lowest consumption groups remains weak and does not augur well for sustained poverty reduction.

Coverage by health insurance is also a useful indicator within the population. There are provisions in the safety net to support drug-related subsidies (e.g. National Health Fund and Jamaica Drugs for the Elderly Programme). Health insurance is still mainly offered through contributory schemes with private insurance companies, while the government continues to pursue the development of a national health insurance programme. In 2019, the survey showed that 18.2 per cent of individuals were covered by health insurance, relatively unchanged from the 18.9 per cent in 2017. The socioeconomic comparison shows that while 43.8 per cent of Quintile 5 respondents had health insurance in 2019 the similar data for Quintile 1 was 2.5 per cent. Health insurance of this type however still largely obtains in formal employment settings, and this may explain the findings. The government continued to provide free healthcare in the public health system for persons on welfare, including free access to requisite drugs.

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic further reinforced the role of the social protection system for social stability, social inclusion and social justice. Significant labour market impacts ensued, affecting thousands of families; additionally, many in the informal and services sectors lost income opportunities based on the mobility and other restrictions created by the pandemic. In April 2020, the GOJ moved quickly to institute a \$10 billion programme of economic stimulus and social welfare, the CARE Programme. This was intended to provide cash transfers to alleviate immediate needs, but it also targeted employers and small business entrepreneurs to protect against job losses. Also, the government provided \$40 million specifically targeted to supporting persons with disabilities who had suffered income losses. Overall social protection responses country-wide included welfare and social support, expansion of access to social services, social

security accommodations, and labour market support. The government leveraged support from non-government organizations, the private sector and international development partners.

The level of reach and access to the various benefits was however challenged by lack of formality, which expressed itself in weak attachment to the financial system, low levels of registration, affiliation and documentation, *inter alia*. Actions on both the demand and supply side will need to address these limitations in moving forward and advancing the extension of coverage. Steps are already being made to maintain direct bank deposits as a viable cash transfer modality and to advocate for the accommodation of low-risk bank accounts for certain clientele. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS), which executes several large income transfer programmes, has been actively involved in dialogue with the banking sector. There is currently increased sensitivity to the advantages of formalization and registration, which will facilitate the delivery of state benefits.

The networking and National Social Protection Committee (NSPC) partnerships have also supported the creation of new insurance products within the local insurance market in 2021, focused on contributory health and life insurance packages for small farmers and fisher folk. This is another important step in extending avenues of social security to marginalized workers. Over 200 000 registered farmers and fishers are anticipated to participate in the system, which promotes affordable premiums and provides for previously unmet health protection needs. These programmes have the potential to improve formalization through registration and expand workers' access to social insurance coverage.

The MLSS continued to make efforts at implementing parametric reforms to the National Insurance Scheme, arising from actuarial monitoring. In 2020 the insurable wage ceiling for contributors to the NIS was increased from \$1.5 million to \$3.0 million; this will be further increased to \$5.0 million in 2022. This will impact not only returns on investments to the National Insurance Fund but will also facilitate more meaningful contribution rates and benefits. Other reforms include routine actuarial reviews, enhanced back-office technologies, and human resource development, which have continued to be undertaken by the ministry.

The NSPC and its sub-committees focused on defining gaps and challenges to the extension of social protection coverage and access to social protection floors. Some of the major challenges in extending the coverage of social protection floor provisions are weak institutional capacities in service delivery entities, including limited human resources for case management and other client services; structural barriers to inclusion for persons with disabilities; limits to financial inclusion of vulnerable families and individuals; inequality in access to education; limited unemployment provisions, and limited livelihood protection.

The GOJ and its partners addressed several of these issues (as noted throughout the report), many having been exacerbated during the pandemic. The MLSS moved towards direct deposits and other electronic transfers for cash payments of social assistance and pension benefits. Negotiations have been pursued with the banking sector resulting in offerings of low-risk bank accounts for receipt of transfers and the cadre of caseworkers in the MLSS increased by some 300 persons, with pending reforms within the Public Assistance Division. Institutional assessments have been conducted on the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities to strengthen administrative and technical capacities. A feasibility study was undertaken regarding the establishment of unemployment insurance schemes. The GOJ through the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) also initiated a review of the targeting/screening mechanism used to identify poor and vulnerable families, and this is expected to be completed in 2022. This will further fine-tune the targeting mechanism and incorporate where necessary any emerging variables that are critical for identifying chronic poverty.

Target 1.4 By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) continues to guarantee the rights of all citizens, including the poor and vulnerable, to economic resources, basic services, and property through the Constitution, various laws, policies, and programmes. The following are among the pertinent rights-guaranteeing instruments in place:

- National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2013)
- National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (2019)
- National Land Policy (1997)
- Agricultural Land Utilization Policy (ALUP) (2011)
- National Education Strategic Plan (2012)
- Land Administration Management Programme (LAMP)
- National Housing Policy (2019)
- National Transport Policy (2007)
- National Minimum-Wage (Amendment) Order (2022)
- National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2017)

These national policy-level instruments outline Jamaica's thrust towards improved access to quality goods and services for citizens, including the poor; reduced unemployment; improved productivity and incomes; and improved access to credit and micro-finance. Relevant achievements include the following:

- Increase in the number of homeless shelters to meet the needs of vulnerable groups including the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Provision of grant funding for entrepreneurship ventures to members of poor households and at the community level.
- Business markets, community fairs and farmers' markets conducted island-wide to stimulate commerce among farmers and small producers.
- The provision of access to civil registration documents to farmers to expand access to services.
- Implementation of an electronic land titling system to improve the titling process.
- Support to community enterprises linked to the Agriculture and Tourism Sectors, including the commencement of the development of a formal COVID-19 response for the agricultural sector.

Data from the JSLC indicate that just above three-quarters of households in the country had access to improved/safe drinking water sources. The disparity between regions continued with households in the GKMA, OUC and Rural Areas reporting 98.6 per cent, 87.2 per cent and 56.0 per cent respectively in 2019. By consumption quintile, data showed that

over 60.0 per cent of households in each category had access to improved water sources. In the poorest quintile, 31.0 per cent had indoor taps, compared with 53.3 per cent in the wealthiest quintile. The difference between indoor and outdoor water sources indicates quality of life disparities.

Security of tenure by possession of land titles also indicates that households in Rural Areas and lower quintiles were less likely to have registered or common law titles; however, the data revealed some important improvements in these categories over the series (Table 6). In 2019, some 61.7 per cent of rural households reportedly had registered land titles, in comparison to 58.8 per cent in 2018. In Quintile 1, there was also a notable improvement in tenure status for number of households possessing registered land titles, increasing to 51.5 per cent from 43.3 per cent the previous year. The second quintile also showed improvement to 60.8 per cent from 56.5 per cent, while other quintiles remained largely the same, in respect of registered titles.

TABLE 6: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF POSSESSION OF LAND TITLE BY THE HOUSEHOLD HEAD, 2018-2019

	2018				2019			
	Yes Registered	Yes, Common Law	None	Total	Yes Registered	Yes, Common Law	None	Total
Region								
GKMA	82.8	4.6	12.6	100.0	89.2	1.1	9.7	100.0
Other Towns	63.8	12.5	23.7	100.0	66.1	12.2	21.7	100.0
Rural Areas	58.8	14.2	27.1	100.0	61.7	15.4	22.9	100.0
Quintile								
Poorest	43.3	17.7	39.0	100.0	51.5	15.5	33.0	100.0
2	56.5	13.1	30.4	100.0	60.8	12.6	26.6	100.0
3	63.4	16.2	20.4	100.0	63.5	14.5	22.0	100.0
4	69.4	6.2	24.4	100.0	69.3	10.7	20.0	100.0
5	78.8	8.4	12.7	100.0	78.2	9.7	12.1	100.0
Total	66.9	11.0	22.1	100.0	68.1	11.8	20.1	100.0

SOURCE: JAMAICA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

While progress has been made to improve access to goods and services for the most vulnerable individuals and households, there is room to build the public's awareness of the existence of government programmes, services and benefits that they can access; this is especially so for new and emerging vulnerable groups. Greater efforts at linking the poor to formal groups and institutions that can act as a buffer in times of crisis are also needed.

Target 1.5 Build resilience of the poor and vulnerable and reduce exposure to climate-related and other shocks

Figure 8 depicts a historical view of the conceptual underpinnings for social protection in Jamaica. The period under review with its added complexities caused by the pandemic has reinforced empowerment and resilience as the next frontier. Each period is characterized by prevailing concepts and ideologies, which fuelled policy and programme directions. Notwithstanding shifts in focus across time, influences by global thinking, political history, national discourse and research, the current direction benefits from continuing relevance of past experiences that serve to strengthen how policies and programmes are positioned.

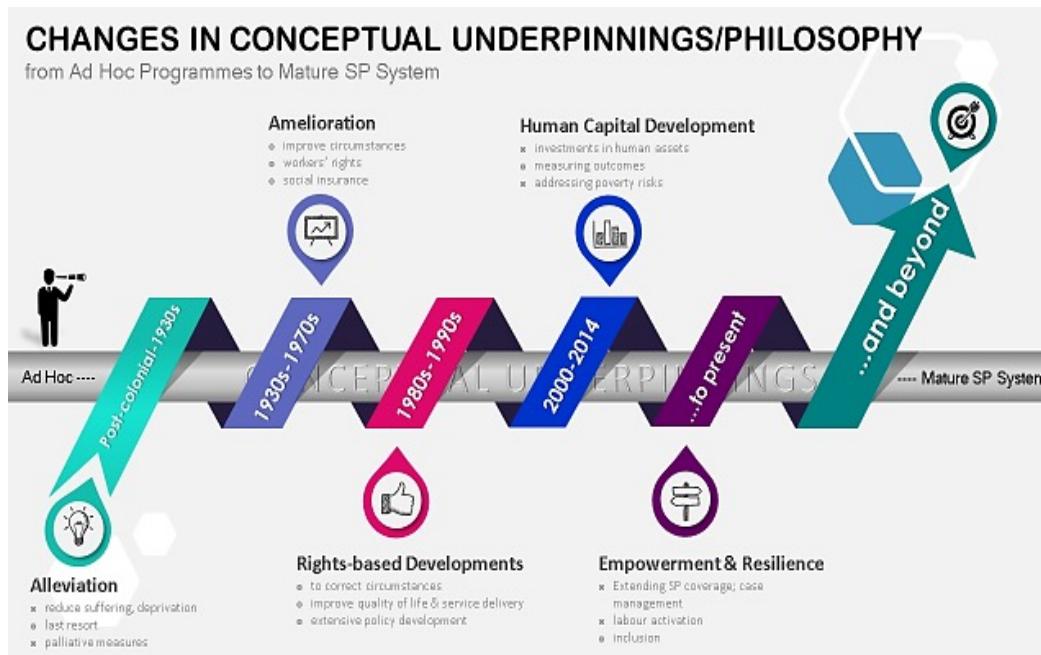


FIGURE 9: CONTINUUM OF THE CONCEPTUAL UNDERPINNINGS FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION IN JAMAICA
Source: Social Protection and Gender Unit, PIOJ 2021.

While there is an emphasis on efficient delivery of welfare provisions, the current environment underscores the need for flexibility and options for adjustments. At the household level, these require improved educational attainment levels, increased labour market participation and sustainable attachment, greater levels of certification and registration of livelihoods, availability of crop insurance, access to business capital, and greater worker protection. On the supply side, there is a need for digital delivery systems, case management, accessible financial and insurance services, and registration systems. Business development mentoring systems and labour activation services are also needed. Much work has already been done by the GOJ in collaboration with the private sector to address these areas.

Climate-related and other shocks are likely to hit the weakest the hardest; hence, resilience building is central to pandemic recovery efforts, as well as longer-term efforts ongoing in various sectors. This approach is reflected in the second Medium Term Programme for the National Policy on Poverty 2021-2024. Advocacy will be a critical strategy; without significant changes many will remain vulnerable in the face of shocks, unable to redeploy their energies or skills, and without risk-mitigating provisions such as insurance. At the nexus of social protection and climate change, advances will need to be made not only in social insurance coverage but also in the protection of physical environments from destruction by livelihood activities, which impact responsible production and consumption (Goal 12), life on land (Goal 14) and life below water (Goal 15).

Target 1A Ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.

The GOJ continues to build partnerships to mobilize financial and technical resources at the bilateral, regional and international levels. Several partnerships for the economic and social development of the poor exist including with major international funding agencies such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Union, and UN agencies. These partnerships are geared toward the human capital development of the poor and vulnerable including poor households, children, and persons with disabilities. The Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement and the SAMOA Pathway continue to guide Jamaica's thrust to build resilience from natural hazards and climate change impact. Jamaica acknowledges the need for continued focus on the prevention and mitigation of climate change impact on the society and those most vulnerable and continues to establish regional and international partnerships to demonstrate, strengthen and implement its commitment.

Partnerships at the local level continue to be highlighted, especially in the face of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration between the public and private sectors in the provision of goods and services to support those affected by various fallouts was evident. Academia also played a major role in identifying and interrogating pertinent areas for policy decisions. Notwithstanding, the collaboration between academia and the government can be further strengthened not only at the policy and programme development levels but also the implementation and product development levels. At the community level, the strengthening of community mechanisms to better respond to risks including disaster mitigation and expansion of livelihoods remain critical. There is a need however for innovative financing strategies that can raise capital from private and commercial sources.

Target 1B Create sound policy frameworks at the national, regional and international levels, based on pro-poor and gender-sensitive development strategies, to support accelerated investment in poverty eradication actions

The government's approval of the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy (SPS) in 2014 paved the way for greater efforts at integration and investment in holistic social protection (SP) system for the country. The National Social Protection Committee (NSPC), the supporting institutional framework for the SPS, is important multi-sectoral coordination and knowledge sharing and platform. Through effective collaboration across government and non-government entities, it has led to greater opportunities for extending the reach of programmes and provisions.

The SPS, which supports the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan identified priorities for the development of a strong SP system. These priorities included improved benefits and delivery systems for social assistance, improved targeting and case management, greater opportunities for vertical SP, strengthening of the reach of basic social services, and moving beyond the alleviation of circumstances to empowerment and resilience for families. These priorities are closely aligned with the strategic emphasis of the SDGs, and therefore the sector required little or no reinforcing of priorities. Advancements were made in case management cadres and procedures within the main ministries; actuarial reviews of the social insurance fund were undertaken and recommendations were carried through for improvement of its viability; revised policies were instituted for poverty reduction, international migration, human services, and senior citizens and new targeted social assistance programmes were developed.

The establishment of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks for poverty reduction and social protection, with the relevant indicators to track results and outcomes, strengthened the SP system. The M&E frameworks form part of new institutional arrangements for multi-sectoral involvement by stakeholder entities.

Sanctioned by the government, the National Social Protection Committee was convened in 2014, and sub-committees

were commissioned in 2015. The National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC) was commissioned in 2018; it uses an ad hoc working group structure to facilitate dialogue and technical input. The committee is chaired at the sector level by the PIOJ, which brings to bear a plethora of social, economic and environmental dynamics to the issues; through dialogue and deliberation, it has created opportunities for knowledge transfer and collaboration, enriching the stakeholder base and national consensus. Its members have also been sensitized about the importance of considering factors such as age, gender, disability, and other nuances not previously foremost in their implementation efforts.

Through their participation in the National Social Protection Committee NSPC, stakeholder entities (government and non-government) increase their awareness of and lend efforts to advancing the strategic imperatives of Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan. The avenues for creating, monitoring and evaluating priorities include the tri-annual Medium Term Socioeconomic Policy Framework as well as discrete Cabinet Submissions and Policy Briefs. Also, the NSPC, through ongoing discourse and cross-sectoral mainstreaming, networks and linkages at institutional levels, is an important mechanism for integrating social protection in other areas such as health, population, education and training, economy, sustainable development, migration, poverty and climate change. Further to this, the opportunity to influence government budgets at sectoral and institutional levels is important in achieving nationally established goals and targets, which these policy frameworks seek to advance.

The National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPRP) has a strong and functioning institutional arrangement in place to guide its implementation, monitoring, evaluation and coordination; it includes the Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit and the inter-sectoral National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC). The institutional framework in place under the local governance system provides a mechanism for coordination and local participation in decision-making. In this regard, the Local Economic Development Programme is a step taken in addressing poverty within this framework.

Other supporting social policy frameworks over the period have included the National Policy for Gender Equality and the work on advancing a revised Population and Sustainable Development Policy. With a strong strategic focus on mainstreaming gender analysis and accommodating gender-sensitive development, these policy frameworks further advance the commitment to equal rights for males and females. In October 2021, the revised National Policy for Senior Citizens was tabled in both Houses of Parliament as a White Paper²⁵. The policy takes a holistic approach to active and productive ageing, with a recognition of the role of older persons in development, and their broad social protection needs. Three of the six Codes of Practice, as well as the Regulations for the Disabilities Act 2014, have been significantly advanced and will strengthen the protection of the rights of citizens with disabilities. Another important advancement in the social policy framework was the tabling of a new Human Services legislation before the Parliament, which will modernize the framework and institutions for serving persons in need, and initiate a repeal of the Poor Relief Act. Provisions to accommodate approximately 20 000 clients of residential care and other supportive services will continue under the new law. More home and community-based types of interventions and care programmes are envisaged with continued modernization initiatives.

²⁵ The official Policy document.

The COVID-19 Pandemic Perspective

The pandemic hampered global efforts to reduce poverty, worsened pre-existing inequalities and uncovered vulnerabilities among the world's poor. The World Bank estimates that the effects of the pandemic could further push 100 million persons into poverty by 2020 causing global poverty rates to increase from 8.23 per cent in 2019 to 8.82 per cent in 2020.²⁶ Measures to contain the local spread of the virus—closing borders and curfews limiting public gatherings—negatively impacted the local economy particularly the most vulnerable, and highlighted the need for strengthened social protection measures.

Before the pandemic, poverty and food poverty levels were trending in a positive direction. Poverty prevalence rates were trending towards the goal of below 10.0 per cent while food poverty levels were close to global eradication levels of less than 3.0 per cent. Acceleration strategies outlined as priorities in the 2018-2021 Medium Term Programme prioritized greater access to safety nets, improved wage levels, skills certification, job matching and apprenticeships, improved public amenities and infrastructure, inter alia. These were anticipated to keep the poverty rates on a downward trajectory. At the core of the priority poverty reduction strategies was the creation of jobs and livelihoods to impact the consumption status of individuals and households. These strategies, together with the strengthening of productive sectors and strengthening the capacity of the poor to take advantage of the employment opportunities that would result were imperatives in the pre-pandemic period and continue to remain priorities of the government of Jamaica.

Locally, the fallout from the pandemic affected MDAs' ability to administer the NPRP. An in-depth report on the effect of the pandemic on service delivery of NPRP partnering organizations highlighted the disruption of service delivery in areas such as education, health, and assistance to the poor and vulnerable as well as youth and persons living with disabilities. Challenges ranged from the closure of schools and other physical spaces selected for training purposes; reduced operating hours and decreased human resource capacity to a lack of funding and budgetary constraints to effectively reach target groups and by extension meet programme objectives and established timelines.

Additional gaps identified highlighted the need for investment in technology, primarily around beneficiary access to internet services, information communication technology (ICT) platforms and supporting devices. It also revealed the need for greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in strategies and actions implemented across sectors, accompanied by legislation and relevant policy instruments. The insufficient accommodation for persons with disabilities in the health and education sector reiterated the need to expedite Jamaica's digital transformation to strengthen efforts to adequately serve this vulnerable population.

Despite the challenges, achievements of the National Poverty Reduction Programme continued in line with its main objectives: improving cost-effectiveness in programme delivery; reducing duplication while addressing gaps in coverage; improving monitoring and evaluation and accountability; building partnerships; and strengthening the systematic response to addressing poverty and vulnerability. Some of the key actions included:

- Provision of cash transfer, school feeding, post-secondary grants, tertiary bursaries, entrepreneurial grants, training, case management, and labour market interventions.
- Agricultural and entrepreneurship support and skills training for persons with disabilities, youth, and residents of poor and vulnerable communities.

²⁶ The World Bank. 2020. Projected poverty impacts of COVID-19 (coronavirus). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/brief/projected-poverty-impacts-of-COVID-19>

- Provision of psychosocial support to youth and families through mentorship, mental health, and sexual and reproductive health services.
- Community-level interventions such as road-improvement, rehabilitation of school infrastructure, access to improved water sources, drip irrigation equipment, provision of low-income housing support and solutions, and sanitation equipment.
- Strengthening of existing and creation of new public-private sector partnerships. New partnerships have been forged primarily in areas of telecommunications, provision and distribution of food and other consumer items, ICT support and capacity building.

In response to the crisis, the government implemented mitigation measures to allow for ease of access to benefits and distribution of resources through local entities and funding from international development partners. These measures aimed to reduce regression into poverty by the vulnerable population and support the recovery of jobs and economic output. Among the government's responses were:

- The allocation of approximately \$8.5 billion in the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 to its main cash transfer programme, Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH), to aid registered elderly, persons with disabilities, and children living in poor households, adult poor and pregnant and lactating women. An extraordinary payment of benefits was also provided in May 2020 to alleviate the immediate effects of the pandemic on beneficiary families. PATH contributes to both the food security needs of the poor as well as building human capital for sustainable outcomes.
- The GOJ strengthened its disaster response mechanism to the COVID-19 pandemic by instituting the COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) programme. This cash transfer programme targeted individuals and businesses that were impacted by the effects of the pandemic. Beneficiaries included the unemployed, students, small business operators and the tourism sector.
- The reduction in General Consumption Tax from 16.5 per cent to 15.0 per cent and a \$1 billion Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) tax credit to provide critical cash-flow support to MSMEs and a reduction in regulatory fees for certain crops.
- The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) provided grant financing of US\$ 231 170 for the development of the MPI for Jamaica. The index will provide a non-income measure to complement the current consumption-based measurement of poverty and will incorporate other contributing factors to poverty in the Jamaican context.

The recovery strategies implemented by the Government, together with the collaborative efforts of funding from International Development Partners and public-private partnerships are expected to contribute to achieving targets under the pertinent SDGs. The approach being pursued by the Government to achieve stronger economic growth is through greater alignment between policy and practice. Although full recovery to pre-crisis levels cannot be immediately expected, 2021 macroeconomic and employment data is indicating a rebounding of economic growth, employment and other indicators which are trending in the right direction, post-2020. The Government's continued investment in social safety nets, food and nutrition security, human capital development and livelihood creation alongside robust and supportive policy and regulatory frameworks will accelerate the efforts towards the achievement of the SDGs.

Lessons Learnt

From years of implementing policies and programmes, Jamaica has adapted its approaches from lessons learnt; these include:

- To reduce poverty, the strategic framework must consist of two central reinforcing elements: **economic growth and investment in human capital**. The availability of good quality education, health and nutrition as well as sustained economic growth is required to improve human welfare. Policy measures that are both pro-growth and pro-poor will foster an environment that promotes economic stability and improve human welfare. Sustained reduction in poverty levels will require:
 - "Sustained improvement in household's capacity to consume, that is, through employment or other income. This is strategic as the measurement of poverty is currently based on household consumption (food and non-food)
 - A coordinated, adequately targeted and supported National Poverty Reduction Programme that empowers the most vulnerable to successfully connect to employment and other opportunities
 - Addressing systemic, cultural, and psychosocial barriers that perpetuate poverty, and limit meaningful participation in education, training, and the labour market."²⁷
- **Environmental sustainability:** For poverty reduction to be viable, it must be environmentally sustainable. Climate-related and other shocks are likely to hit the weakest the hardest as they tend not to possess the means to invest in resources that promote resilience. Policies must aim to reduce their exposure to environmental shocks, ease economic risks and improve access to education and health services. Improved access to services and infrastructure will help to reduce environmental threats to the poor.
- Strengthening **partnerships and coordination** among the government, private sector and non-governmental organizations are critical for effective poverty reduction. Greater efforts must be made to ensure an effective division of labour amongst the organizations engaged in poverty reduction efforts. This will increase efficiency, reduce duplication and lead to a more effective poverty reduction outcome.

Way Forward

Overall, the investments provide sufficient evidence of the commitment of the GOJ to achieving balanced, inclusive, and sustainable social, economic, and environmental development. However, there is a need for capacity-building in the following areas if sustainable and inclusive social, economic, and environmental development is to be achieved:

²⁷ Source: National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme, 207, pg. XVI

- Improvement in internet accessibility, reliability, and availability across the island, especially targeting rural areas. Bolstering the information technology infrastructure and network will ensure sustained access to the internet, which provides the foundation upon which partnerships can be pursued with telecommunication entities for investments in underserved communities.
- Strengthening of policies and strategic alignment of national frameworks and the SDGs to address climate change, environmental sustainability issues and agriculture risk management.
- Improvement in national data capacity, storage, and registries to identify vulnerable populations. This will advance efforts to achieve inclusiveness, especially for vulnerable populations such as persons with disabilities, the homeless and the indigent.
- Strengthening the capacity of local-level stakeholders to deliver services to more beneficiaries. This involves training and prioritization and mobilization of funding through partnerships with International Development Partners (IDPs).

The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted several areas that will have an implication for the pace at which NPPR goals and by extension the SDG Goal of Eradicating Extreme Poverty can be reached. These factors include the economic and social context to support employment, livelihood, and human capital development. Consideration will therefore be given to the following:

- Strengthening and promoting an inclusive approach, which seeks to address existing and emerging vulnerabilities in efforts to resuscitate and restore the economy. As indicated in the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy, income security remains a critical factor for the achievement and sustainability of economic growth. This includes opportunities for all segments of the population to gain and regain access to livelihood, employment, and human capital development. Innovative strategies to resuscitate livelihoods will also be identified and pursued, including identifying avenues to build the resilience of the informal sector, while creating greater access to opportunities for formalization. Advocating for the acceleration of labour-market buffers in the event of shocks, including Unemployment Insurance, will also be pursued.
- Strengthening systems to accurately identify those who were not previously considered vulnerable but may fall into emerging groups in need of social protection. This includes continuous public education and information sharing (using accessible formats and media) to alert potential beneficiaries of support that they may be able to tap into. This includes information on how individuals and families may apply to or register with formal institutions and associations.
- Greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in strategies and actions implemented across sectors.

Due to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Jamaican economy and society, there is a need for a redoubling of efforts and resources towards securing the rights to basic services and resources, particularly for the most vulnerable. Barriers exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic on employment, livelihood and other areas remain in sharp focus, as the country rebounds. The need for greater focus on building new and existing partnerships at all levels to plug gaps and prevent a reversal in progress, including in the area of poverty reduction and equitable access, is underscored.

Resource Requirements

Advancing the poverty reduction priorities for Jamaica requires financing and technical support in key areas of the National Poverty Reduction Programme and the social protection systems. These increased resources through public-private partnerships for social services, as well as funding for further social research into key issues of social protection and poverty reduction. There is a need to build capacities within the public sector to bolster service delivery (e.g., increasing the cadre of social workers and hiring of case management staff for major programmes, strengthening institutional, community and home-based care solutions for social care and strengthening human resources and technological capacity for the digital transformation of service delivery as well as project management and programme management expertise in government entities). There is also a need for adequate programme budgets to achieve desired targets and outcomes at the organizational level.

2 ZERO HUNGER



GOAL 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Context

Hunger has been on the rise in Latin America and the Caribbean since 2014 and the COVID-19 pandemic has served to exacerbate the situation. Between 2019 and 2020, the prevalence of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean increased by 2 percentage points to 9.1 per cent. Forty-one per cent of the population of the region is moderately or severely food insecure, which translates to 267 million people whose human right to food is not being met. In Jamaica, gains have also been made to meet targets on undernourishment. Before the pandemic national food poverty prevalence was trending downwards. Food security is inexorably linked to the performance of the agricultural sector. Subsistence and commercial agriculture are vital to the Jamaican economy, contribute to nutritional status and social well-being and are a source of livelihood. In 2020, the sector recorded a 1.4 per cent decline in Real Value Added relative to 2019. The reduced performance stemmed mainly from the combined effect of the pandemic and adverse weather conditions on the economy (FAO, 2021).

Zero Hunger Highlights 2018-2022



Poverty

Decline in food poverty prevalence to 4% in 2019, from 5.4% in 2017

FIGURE 10: HIGHLIGHTS, ZERO HUNGER (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

The food poverty rate was 5.4 per cent in 2017, some 3.5 per cent in 2018 and 4.0 per cent in 2019. The overall decline in food poverty rates indicates progress in implementing the country's National Policy on Poverty, and National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPP/NPRP) 2017 which constitute a responsive instrument to implement and evaluate measures to address poverty and vulnerability. Goal 1 of the National Policy on Poverty and Poverty Reduction Programme aims to eradicate extreme (food) poverty by 2022.

TABLE 7: FOOD POVERTY PREVALENCE (PER CENT) BY REGION, 2017-2019

Region	2017	2018	2019
Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA)	5.5	2.9	0.4
Other Urban Centres (OUC)	4.8	3.9	3.5
Rural Areas	5.6	3.7	6.7
Jamaica	5.4	3.5	4.0

r – Revised; per cent estimates are weighted; discrepancies may be due to rounding.
Compiled by PIOJ with data supplied by STATIN

Table 7 shows that the rural areas recorded the highest food poverty rates in 2017 (5.6 per cent) with this trend repeating in 2019 at 6.7 per cent. In 2018 the food poverty prevalence in GKMA declined below 3.0 per cent and continued to decline in 2019.²⁸

Food security is a major aspect of social protection, and the following data from the JSCLC provides a snapshot of the experience of food security at the household level. In 2017, some 58.2 per cent of households indicated they had sufficient food to eat generally, with 28.6 per cent indicating there was sufficient food sometimes. This compared with 62.7 per cent and 26.1 per cent respectively in 2018, and 62.0 per cent and 27.5 per cent respectively in 2019. By 2019, just ahead of the pandemic, some 31.3 per cent of households in Quintile 1 indicated they had sufficient food generally, along with 45.0 per cent of Quintile 2 households. The data shows some important trends but reveals a fair degree of inconsistency and therefore food insecurity at some income levels. On the demand side, this may be influenced mainly by affordability and income flows based on earnings. Food inflation is also a concern, as the country has high import content for the food industry.

During the review period, Jamaica implemented new programmes towards the achievement of the eradication of extreme (food) poverty. These include:

- In 2018, the Approval of the Interim Guidelines for Beverages in Schools, to help improve the dietary intake of school-aged children.

28 Based on changes to sampling and weighting methodologies the current poverty series is available from 2017; future revision of prior year estimates by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica are anticipated for a full trend series.

- In 2019, the launch of the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Network (NIYCFN), in keeping with the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy²⁹. The goal of the policy is to create a sustainable environment that will contribute to a reduction in child morbidity and mortality and improvement in child health and nutrition. The country's goals for health and poverty reduction are impeded by inappropriate feeding practices which lead to rising incidences of persons being overweight and obesity which are risk factors for chronic diseases in children.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected food and nutrition security in Jamaica and the government has implemented short-term, intermediate and long-term strategies to reap measurable and sustainable outcomes. Feeding programmes traditionally targeting school children and the elderly were discontinued due to movement restrictions. Results from a UNICEF assessment³⁰ on the impact of the pandemic on children pointed to *inter alia* household food shortages with a prevalence rate that was higher among female-headed households. The UNDP/SALISES/CAPRI study³¹ also highlighted that 49.9 per cent of respondents requested food support to cushion the effects of the pandemic. With the support of the private sector entities, the Government of Jamaica prepared and delivered food packages to needy persons, including the elderly and persons living with disabilities. Agricultural producers facing gluts of domestic food and fruit crops due to the closure of significant markets such as tourism benefited from government-organized take-up and sale in farmers' markets island-wide. These efforts complemented the government's medium and long-term focus on the implementation of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy (2013) and aligned with programmes such as the School Feeding Programme, PATH, Poor Relief Programme, and special feeding programmes.

During the United Nations Food Systems Summit in September 2021, the government highlighted several persistent factors that are contributing to Jamaica's food insecurity.³² These include the increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events resulting from climate change, such as droughts, hurricanes, and floods; the limited availability and use of agricultural technology; a decrease in agricultural lands due to urbanization and the high cost of capital.

Some important priorities to address challenges and ensure that vulnerable populations and the poor have access to safe and nutritious food year-round are:

- Strengthen mitigation measures to lessen future effects of climate change. This includes further investment in alternate forms of energy – solar and wind – particularly in the agriculture sector.
- Improve the visibility of resources and networks that provide support in nutrition. This can be achieved through investment in public education campaigns to reach all beneficiaries.
- Invest in technology to address issues of food loss and waste to improve food and nutrition security, reduce environmental stress and meet climate goals.

²⁹ The network fosters community effort towards the care and support of mothers and caregivers. It also provides knowledge of nutrition principles for the healthy development of infants and children.

³⁰ UNICEF. https://www.unicef.org/jamaica/media/2646/file/UNICEF_Covid-Impact-on-Children_to%20distribute%20FINAL.pdf.

³¹ UNDP/SALISES/CaPRI. 2021. Socioeconomic Impact Assessment (SEIA) of COVID-19 and Policy Options in Jamaica. Kingston.

³² Statement by the Most Honourable Andrew Holness, ON, MP, PC, Prime Minister of Jamaica at the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/FSS_statement_Jamaica.pdf

- Enhance the resilience of local food systems to counter the effects of future shortages. Continued investment in local agricultural production and agro-industries is essential to achieving this goal.
- Further, implement the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Strategic Action Plan which incorporates strategies related to improving specific nutrition indicators.

Findings from the upcoming WFP's "Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey" (fourth round) revealed a decline of food security levels in Jamaica.

Specific findings include:

- A total of 7.0 per cent of respondents indicated that they went an entire day without eating in the week prior to the survey (February 2022), and 34.0 per cent of them skipped meals or ate less than usual. These findings represent a significant deterioration in the food consumption of Jamaicans compared to April 2020 (1.0 per cent and 11.0 per cent respectively) and are similar to the levels reported in June 2020 (10.0 per cent and 36.0 per cent respectively) which indicates a persistence in negative food security outcomes over longer periods of time.
- In February 2022, respondents in Jamaica went without eating a whole day and skipped meals more often than the regional average (5.0 per cent and 30 per cent respectively).
- When the FIES methodology is applied, 33.0 per cent of respondents in Jamaica are moderately food insecure and an additional 25.0 per cent severely food insecure, estimated over a recall period of 30 days. The prevalence of food insecurity is again higher in Jamaica, when compared to the Caribbean regional average of 19.0 per cent for severe and 29.0 per cent for moderate food insecurity.
- Respondents with lower income levels are experiencing severe and moderate food insecurity more often than those with higher incomes. Approximately every second respondent with well below average income level experienced severe food insecurity in the 30 days prior to the survey compared to every tenth respondent with well above average income. Lowest income households were most likely to resort to negative coping strategies, and over half of the lowest income respondents reported to have no food stocks at the time of the survey.
- Respondents are resorting to more severe actions, with 72.0 per cent drawing on savings to meet immediate food and other needs (85.0 per cent among lowest income households), nearly half reducing expenditures on education and health (61.0 per cent among lowest income households), and over a third selling productive assets (49.0 per cent among lowest income households).
- For 45.0 per cent to 46.0 per cent of all respondents with well below average incomes (poorest quintile), the main worry for the future is the inability to cover food needs (31.0 per cent among average respondents), other essential needs (37.0 per cent among average respondents), or unemployment (36 per cent among average respondents).

BOX 1 CARIBBEAN COVID-19 FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS IMPACT SURVEY

Target 2.2 By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons.

A decline in the prevalence of wasting and stunting, (measures of malnutrition)³³ in children under 5 years old points to progress towards addressing undernourishment. The global intermediate target is a reduction in the prevalence of stunting by 40.0 per cent by 2025 (from 2012 levels). The global target is for the elimination of wasting, and the prevalence of children being overweight by 2030. In 2018, the percentage of children under 5 years old whose height was too low for their age was 4.1 per cent in Jamaica, down from 5.7 per cent in 2012. In Jamaica, the prevalence of wasting in 2018 was 2.6 per cent (SDG Progress Report 2019/2020).

Efforts to improve the nutrition of Jamaican school children include:

- Provision of in-kind benefits by PATH as part of the School Feeding Programme (SFP), one of the largest social assistance programmes in Jamaica.
- The finalization of the National School Nutrition Policy (NSNP) by the Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY).
- A halt to the provision of bullas and muffins (which have significantly high sugar content) in schools through MOH and MOEY collaboration. Interim Guidelines for Beverages in Schools were also implemented³⁴.
- Social Marketing Campaign for the Food-Based Dietary Guidelines.
- The launch of a National Food Industry Task Force, and the launch of the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Network (NIYCFN) in 2019, in keeping with the National Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy.

There continues to be the need for sustainable programmes for iron supplementation to address anaemia, a common nutritional deficiency in Jamaican children and adolescents.

Target 2.3 By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

The agriculture sector plays an important socio-economic role in the country, especially in rural areas where 48 per cent of Jamaicans reside and the poverty rate is high. In 2020, there was a 1.4 per cent decline in Real Value Added (RVA) for the Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing industry relative to 2019; and the industry accounted for 7.8 per cent of Total Real Value Added (ESSJ 2020; Ministry of Agriculture Performance Report 2020-21).

³³ Stunting is defined as abnormally low height for age. Wasting is defined as low weight for height based on the global median from the World Health Organization child growth standards.

³⁴ Jamaica ranks in the top 10 globally for soft-drink consumption in adolescents, aged 13 to 15. Sugary-drink consumption is above the recommended amounts for maintaining good health in Jamaican children (JIS).

According to the PIOJ's Agricultural Productivity Index (API), the decline in the RVA resulted from reductions in gross output for 2020 compared to 2019 for Traditional Export Crops (-6.8 per cent), Animal Farming (-4.5 per cent), Fishing (-0.5 per cent) and Post-Harvest Activities (-27.7 per cent). This outweighed the increase of 0.7 per cent for Other Agricultural Crops. The combined negative effects of COVID-19 and adverse weather conditions were the main contributors to this performance.

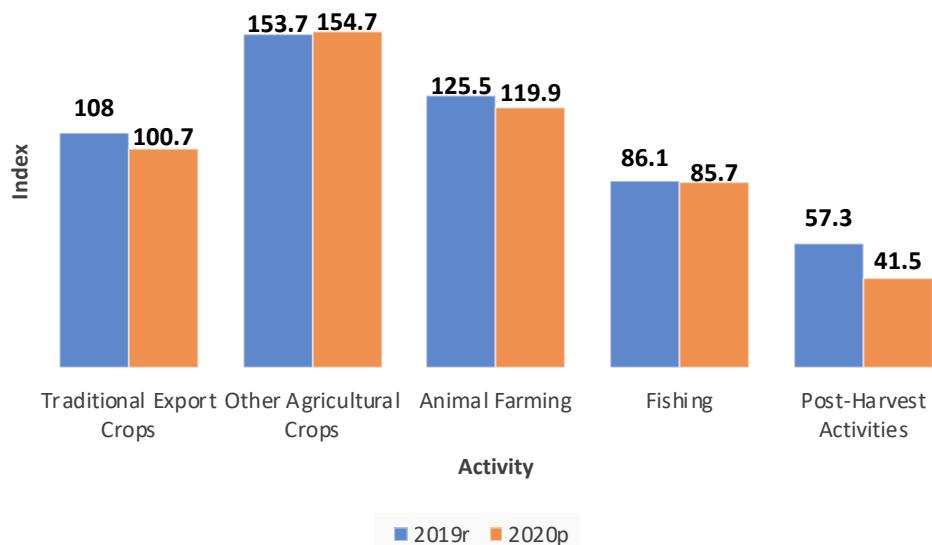


FIGURE 11: AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION INDEX 2019 & 2020
Source: Compiled using PIOJ's API in ESSJ 2020

The government has implemented several measures to cushion the negative effects of COVID-19 on the agricultural sector in Jamaica. As such, in 2020, despite a slight decline, the agriculture sector accounted for 51.4 per cent of all goods-producing employment; and 15.9 per cent of total employment.

Initiatives by the GOJ to cushion the negative impact of COVID-19 on the agriculture sector

- Additional injection of \$1 billion (US\$ 6.85 million) into the Productivity Incentive Programme to assist small farmers and fisher folk during the crisis including to provide climate smart production practices and technologies and stimulus package to purchase excess fruits and vegetables from farmers.
- Eighty-three fishers operating at four fishing beaches in St Catherine received vouchers valued at JM \$30 000 (US \$198) each to purchase gear and equipment (December 2020).
- Several agriculture and tourism enterprises in the parishes of St Ann and Trelawny benefited from a donation of Coronavirus (COVID-19) resilient supplies (sanitation items and PPE) under the COVID-19 Resilience and Capacity Building sub-project of the Rural Economic Development Initiative, Phase II (REDI II) implemented by Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF).
- Continued support for farmers by purchasing excess agricultural produce through the "Buy-Back Programme (February 2021).
- Exemption of farmers from curfew to allow continued attention to agricultural activities.

Source: UNDP Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 and Policy Options in Jamaica

The decline in employment in the sector may be attributed to weather-related shocks (drought and flooding) and reduced demand from the tourism sector (ESSJ 2020). The upcoming WFP's Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey (fourth round) indicated that farming and fishing have become important activities for many households as the pandemic progressed, primarily for household food consumption and complementing incomes. Nearly 25.0 per cent of respondents were engaged in any of these activities as of February 2022, compared to 14.0 per cent in April 2020. The survey also highlighted that those engaged in fishing/coastal activities appear to be facing more challenges related to income and food consumption. During each survey round they were more likely to report loss of jobs or reduced salaries/revenues relative to other respondents.

During the financial year 2020-2021, the government's Production Incentive Programme (PIP), aimed at increasing the production of strategically selected crops and livestock for local consumption with export potential, continued to be implemented benefitting both crop and livestock farmers. Efforts also continued under the Agro-Parks and Agro-Economic Zones Development Programme. In the financial year 2018/2019, production across the parks saw a steady increase from 1.8 million kilogrammes to 3.3 million kilogrammes up to February 2021 representing a 66.0 per cent increase over the period. (MOAF Sectoral Debate Presentation 2021-2022).

Work is ongoing to provide irrigation water to boost productivity on 718 hectares of land under the £35.5 million UKCIF-funded, Caribbean Development Bank-facilitated Essex Valley Agriculture Development Project (EVADP) in South St Elizabeth, and on 795 hectares of land under the £17 million Southern Plains Agricultural Development Project (SPAD) in St Catherine and Clarendon. Together these projects are impacting over 1500 farmers and their families.

In May 2021, Jamaica developed a strategy for "Improving on the Nation Agri-Business". The strategy comprises programmes and activities designed to address the challenges inhibiting the expansion of the agribusiness industry and infusing the leveraging of advancements in agriculture. The strategy is also geared towards supporting ecosystems that function to ensure food and nutritional security (MOAF Sectoral Debate Presentation 2021-2022). Jamaica presented projects at the SDG Fair in 2021 to attract SDG-sustainable FDI in the agriculture sector. One such project was the Bamboo Bio-products Project (BBP). It is designed to be the first fully integrated bamboo market pulp mill globally, using a sustainable agro-ecological-industrial model.

The challenges for the agriculture sector vary, including changing global markets forces, climate change factors namely adverse weather conditions³⁵, regular disruption to the supply and distribution chains, and small budgetary allocation to the sector. Inadequate access to low-cost formal sources of financing and credit remains a key issue for small farmers especially those in rural communities in Jamaica. Despite the wide array of traditional financial institutions and other specialized micro-lending institutions, farmers are denied financing for production and to upgrade their farms. Many small farmers have no formal land tenure (documented land ownership) although they are registered as agricultural producers. Land tenure and titling issues prevent small farmers from securing loans/financing and expanding crop production. About 30.0 per cent of the annual production of crops is lost due to poor post-harvest handling and treatment practices. There is also concern within the fisheries sector regarding unhygienic conditions, including inadequate washing and drainage facilities and the absence of cold storage and ice crushing facilities to avoid fish losses. The high incidence of theft from farms (Praedial Larceny) in terms of loss of stocks, produce and equipment of all types continues to be a major deterrent to agricultural production in Jamaica. The livelihoods of small farmers are sometimes completely wiped out when thieves strike.

³⁵ ESSJ (2019) pg. xxii

Other challenges to the sector include:

- Insufficient provision of targeted and consistent extension services
- Poor infrastructure including farm roads
- Disconnect between production and productivity and trade arrangements
- Inadequate ICT infrastructure, innovation and technological solutions
- Inadequate research and development capabilities
- Inability to attract and retain young people

Despite the contribution of the sector to Jamaica's GDP and employment, the poor perception of agriculture as a viable economic industry remains. There is a need to focus on building the competitiveness of the Jamaican agriculture sector. The development of non-traditional exports is a strategy that will improve the overall output of the sector and strengthen the global niche that Jamaica has and attract more young people and entrepreneurs to the sector. The GOJ is committed to strengthening the legislative and policy framework to support the development of the emerging sub-sectors. Efforts to expand the use of idle lands by farmers across the island and to provide farmers with the required financing for production such as for land preparation, inputs, and harvesting costs as well as to upgrade their farms will go a far way in making the sector more competitive. Increasing water storage capacity and expanding irrigation facilities are therefore critical (MICAF Strategic Business Plan 2019-2023). Priority actions that will reduce the need for trucking water to farming communities include implementing rainwater harvesting systems and increasing the number of water tanks (Sectoral Debate 2021/2022). Incentivizing youth in agriculture through a partnership with the education sector is also critical for a consistent supply of labour and to support the overall sustainability of the sector.

Target 2.4 By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

Climate impacts to smallholder agriculture systems include loss of agricultural assets, livestock, crops and agricultural infrastructure. Extreme events can delay land preparation, planting, and harvesting, thus increasing crop wastage. Droughts exacerbate soil degradation and loss of soil fertility and increase food production costs, affecting food security. Also, water and heat stress lead to reduced seed set and can exacerbate vulnerability to plant pests and diseases. Waterlogging and soil nutrients from floods cause crops loss. Floods can also cause soil erosion and landslides, further affecting crop production. Flood rains in October and November of 2020 impacted the agricultural sector resulting in losses of over \$2.5 billion.

Findings from the upcoming WFP's Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey (fourth round) are instructive. The data revealed that the main driver behind livelihood disruptions (two weeks before the February 2022 survey), as cited by 47.0 per cent of respondents, was the unaffordability of/or lack of access to livelihood inputs. Most impacted by this constraint are households with a well below average income level (52.0 per cent of those facing disruptions), and those relying on informal daily/casual labour (59.0 per cent). It is worthwhile noting that this factor has grown steadily in importance with each survey round (27.0 per cent in June 2020 and 9.0 per cent in April 2020) and is linked to wider trends related to supply chain disruptions and price rises in the Caribbean.

Water	Soils	Economy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decreased availability of water resources due to increased temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns and prolonged periods of drought. Reduced water quality due to saline intrusion into ground water sources caused by rising sea-levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced soil fertility and soil degradation due to soil salinization caused by rising sea levels and drought. Accelerated soil erosion and inundation of production fields due to the occurrence of extreme events (floods, hurricanes etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of employment and income earning opportunities. Loss of foreign exchange due to potential reduction in agricultural exports; and Increased demand for foreign exchange for food imports.

BOX 3 (ILLUSTRATIVE) POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR ASSOCIATED WITH CLIMATE CHANGE

Source: GOJ Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica

To advance efforts to build the resilience of the agricultural sector to climate change and natural hazards impacts, Jamaica activated the Drought Management Committee in 2020 and drafted a Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy, in line with the Sendai Framework. Other key initiatives for the review period include:

- A Drought Adaptation and Mitigation Programme, through the National Irrigation Commission: As of May 2021, the programme delivered approximately 276 000 gallons of water to 136 farmers who had experienced threats or damage to crops.
- RADA distributed Drip Irrigation Kits, valued at \$126 million and covering 202.34 hectares (500 acres) to farmers.
- Rehabilitation and construction of water catchment areas, which are considered critical infrastructure to support crops and livestock production. Ten catchment ponds are currently undergoing rehabilitation.

Continued investment in climate-smart technology and supportive measures to advance sustainable agriculture for the domestic economy will be critical for Jamaica to achieve greater food security (ESSJ 2020, Sectoral Debate & MOA Annual Report 2020). At the Global Food Systems Summit in September 2021, Jamaica highlighted that multilateral assistance to developing countries to transform food systems should be delivered in line with the national priorities and realities, ensuring that the processes of transition are just, equitable and fair³⁶.

The national agricultural extension agency provided technical assistance to 240,000 registered farmers in the following areas³⁷:

- Best practices for crop production
- Livestock rearing and production

³⁶ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/FSS_statement_Jamaica.pdf

³⁷ Source: MOAF Summary Report on Sustainable Development Goal 2.

- Climate-smart technologies
- Proper usage of chemicals
- Water adaptation strategies
- Disaster Risk Management

Target 2.5 By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed.

The availability and access to clean seeds to meet production requirements, especially during shocks including drought, natural disasters and pandemics is critical. Moreover, climate change impacts on agricultural production underscore the importance of seed security. In April 2019, the Cabinet approved the adoption of the National Seed Policy and Action Plan for tabling in Parliament as a White Paper. The National Seed Policy seeks to establish a sustainable seed system that ensures a consistent and reliable supply of clean, affordable and accessible seeds in support of agricultural production, productivity, food security and biodiversity. Policy implementation will commence during fiscal year 2021/2022. In 2019, the Senate passed the Protection of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Amendment) Act. The amendments will ensure the alignment and integration of the government's agricultural and rural development policies and programmes with the relevant international organizations to establish or strengthen the capabilities for the sustainable use of plant genetic resources, and promote the sharing and exchange of plant genetic resources. Jamaica ratified the 2001 International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in 2006.

Jamaica's domestic seed industry is not well developed as most planting material is imported or from farmer-saved seeds. Private sector involvement in certified seed production is limited for most crops, so the public sector is expected to meet the demand for locally produced planting material for key crops. The public sector seed programme is constrained by inadequate human resources for key skills (e.g., plant breeders, budders, and seed technologists), lack of funding for production and distribution activities, limited production capacity and stealing of the crops used for seed production. There remains the need for greater streamlining of resources and collaboration in the relevant sectors, and improved partnership with academia in biodiversity, and plant and animal research.

Target 2.A Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks, in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.

International Development Partners (IDPs) continue to support the Government of Jamaica with Official Development Assistance (ODA) to advance the agricultural sector. As Table 8 shows, grant support tripled between 2015 and 2020 (SDG Progress Report 2019/2020).

TABLE 8: FUNDING SUPPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS TO AGRICULTURE SECTOR, 2015 AND 2020

	2015	2020 ²
Grants (US\$)	0.98 million	3.04 million
Loans (US\$)	75.39 million	no loan inflows

Source: SDGs Progress Report 2019/2020

² Preliminary figures

In 2019, Jamaica secured a US\$40.0 million loan from the World Bank for the agriculture sector to improve economies of scale for small farmers and to mainstream climate resilience (Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2019). Additionally, there has been increased investment in research and technical development in the agricultural sector in 2019, through the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience; this includes a \$26.2 million outlay to refurbish a seed storage facility for vegetative seeds that are of economic importance, as well as training sessions that focus on disseminating information on pest management and best postharvest techniques for storage (SDG Progress Report 2019/2020).

Notwithstanding, additional support is required to address existing challenges and strengthen programmes that have already been launched.

Target 2.B Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.

The Agriculture Trade Enforcement Advisory Mechanism (ATEAM), a government and business partnership that aimed at removing unjustifiable trade restrictions that affect the growth of Jamaica's export, was launched on September 2, 2021 by the MOAF. This initiative is part of the ministry's commitment to optimize opportunities for Jamaica's export earnings from agricultural products. The ATEAM comprises representatives from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, JAMPRO, Bureau of Standards Jamaica, the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Since its establishment, the ATEAM has disseminated information on export opportunities under the CARICOM Grant of Suspensions of the Common External Tariff, and prepared and disseminated 10 export profiles of products with the greatest export potential to the world.

Other achievements by the ATEAM include the establishment of strategic partnerships with Jamaica's Mission in Geneva, Switzerland, covering Italy, Austria, Turkey, Greece, Liechtenstein and Cyprus, honorary consuls in Rome, Athens, Istanbul, Ankara and Jamaica's Embassy in China to obtain market access for Jamaican products.

Target 2.C Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility.

Limiting food price³⁸ volatility is important for achieving greater food security and a more efficient market. Since 2015, Jamaica recorded lower levels of abnormally high price increases; in more recent years there was low-price volatility, coinciding with stable inflation (Figure 12). (SDGs Progress Report 2019/2020).

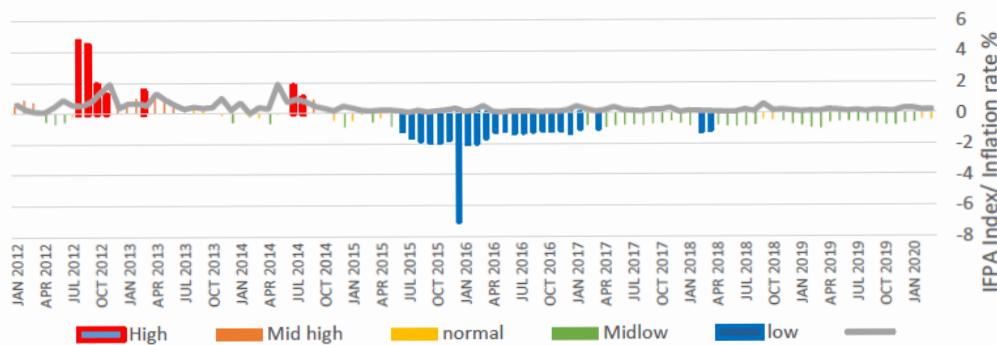


FIGURE 12 INDICATOR OF FOOD PRICE ANOMALIES

SOURCE: PLANNING INSTITUTE WITH DATA FROM THE BOJ

Also, findings from the WFP's Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security & Livelihoods Impact Survey (fourth round) indicated that:

- Food prices continued to increase since April 2020 with nearly every respondent (98.0 per cent) reporting an increase in food prices in the two weeks before the February 2022 survey, compared to April 2020 (71.0 per cent). There was no difference in perception between respondents from different income groups or residing in rural or urban areas. When compared with the regional average of 93.0 per cent, this means that slightly more respondents are reporting an increase in prices in Jamaica.
- Two-fifths of respondents reported challenges accessing markets in the week before the survey, primarily due to a lack of financial means (88.0 per cent of respondents). Respondents are increasingly buying cheaper and less preferred foods and in smaller quantities compared to April 2020.

The country has established **marketing monitoring mechanisms** through the platforms such as Jamaica Agricultural Marketing Information System (JAMIS) and Agri-linkages Exchange (ALEX). The data and information from these platforms support stakeholders to make informed decisions about the granting of import permits based on prevailing

38 The price of bread and cereals was tracked as the main food commodity, due to cereals still accounting for 45.0 per cent of a person's daily caloric intake, particularly for persons from developing countries (FAOSTAT 2017).

market conditions for example. This allows for the ministry to avoid extreme price volatility as decisions are made regarding the actual production and supply of food commodities.

Lessons Learnt

Food security in Jamaica is linked to the livelihoods and productivity of small-scale farmers, many of whom do not consistently apply sustainable agricultural practices. More programmes offering agricultural support, in the form of knowledge sharing and technical support, to build capacity as well as measures to improve land tenure, irrigation, and access to markets must be pursued.

Sustained partnerships and development assistance have proven to be beneficial in offsetting some of the challenges of the Jamaican agriculture sector. Collaboration and support from both international entities and the private sector are crucial to ensuring the sustainability of interventions, as well as effectively implementing new initiatives. Leveraging partnerships to develop new programmes will advance diversification, thereby improving the resilience of the economy, and sustaining growth and quality of life.

Extension services are essential for agriculture productivity. The extension services provided by RADA will have to be strengthened to assist farmers in making the transition to more climate-smart, modern and efficient farm practices particularly in the small farmer sub-sector and in rural parishes.

Overall, an **enabling environment underpinned by the consistent and ongoing application of technology, innovation, research and development and strong data systems** remains critical for the transformation and sustainability of the agricultural sector.

Way Forward

A decline in the incidents of wasting and stunting in children under five for example, shows that progress has been made to meet targets on undernourishment. Food poverty targets were also trending in the right direction until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Several policies aimed at ensuring nutrition and food security for children from the early childhood to secondary levels have been implemented as well as programmes towards the achievement of the eradication of extreme (food) poverty.

Agricultural productivity however remains a challenge—primarily the level of crop yield and the susceptibility to transitory price instability due to climate-related events such as drought, despite overall relative stability in prices in recent years. Given projected climate change impacts, price anomalies that are driven by weather-related events may become more frequent. The agriculture industry remains an important contributor to the country's GDP and employment level. The clear and most critical need is therefore for more investment to better address the impact of climate change on agriculture (e.g., through the preparation of a national adaptation plan for agriculture) and the myriad of other challenges the sector faces.

Other strategies and actions that will accelerate the achievement of Goal 2 include:

Key Initiatives and Programmes

- Re-introduce the Backyard Gardening Programme which focuses on addressing food and nutrition security at the household level.
- Strengthen child nutrition screening and interventions to reduce the incidence of undernutrition.

- *Governance Framework and Mechanisms*
- Create an enabling environment to support investments in the agriculture sector including,
- public-private partnerships that would lead to increased research and development towards increasing outputs and enhancing productivity.
- Accelerate/undertake Land Titling Reform which will treat with security of tenure and therefore unlock the latent capital that is hampered by unregistered and common law titles.

Infrastructure

- Continue to upgrade irrigation, drainage and road infrastructure to support the agriculture sector.
- Strengthen marketing infrastructure and support systems for the agriculture sector.
- Support digitalization of the agricultural sector and the strengthening of Internet connectivity in farming communities, especially rural communities, across the island.

Planning, Research and Knowledge Management

- Undertake strategic planning including long-term planning exercises to ensure that the sector can withstand exogenous shocks and ensure that internal food supply systems are sustained and equipped to supply food and nutrition, especially to the vulnerable, should food import availability become compromised.
- Promote relevant research and foresight on emerging trends for the agricultural sector; strengthened partnerships between the public and private sector and academic and research institutions could advance this effort.
- Consider the establishment of a regional and virtual extension platform affiliated with tertiary institutions to facilitate the ongoing uploading and dissemination of up-to-date knowledge (case studies, good practices, success stories, etc.) to the farmers and farming communities across the island.

Resource Requirements

Achieving the desired levels of food production locally which can satisfy nutritional needs and also support value added production require a multistakeholder approach targeting yields, distribution and storage. Ensuring the achievement of this goal has implications for health, poverty, economic and environmental development; as a result, the GOJ has developed and is guided by policies on production and standards for local and international markets that maintain safe foods in the market. The National Agribusiness Strategy 2020–2025 is one such initiative which outlines a plan of action for the industry.

Key to implementation of the strategy are investments in infrastructure, digitisation, and policy coordination. Support is required from international development partners, both local and international, private sector and community groups and trade associations. With the role of government clearly outlined in the design and implementation of elements of the strategy, other areas of support required includes:

- Public private partnerships with local and international investors for expansion of the Agroparks concept
- Implementation of climate smart agricultural practices and the technical expertise to train and mobilise new and existing farmers
- Developing innovative financing instruments to support spending on mitigation, and rehabilitation, through green funds, impact bonds or similar funds
- Development of digital technologies to support existing data collection and monitoring, research and development and the seed bank.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

GOAL 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages³⁹

Context

In 2019, the Ministry of Health was renamed the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW), to reflect more closely the World Health Organization's holistic definition of health, expanding the scope of the ministry's policy and programmatic focus to include all dimensions of wellness.

Jamaica's human development index places the country in the high human development category. The health sector in Jamaica has succeeded in areas such as the prevention, management and control of diseases. Improvements have been observed in life expectancy and a steady decline in infant and under-5 mortality. Nonetheless, challenges have been identified as the country is experiencing both a demographic and epidemiological transition and high rates on non-communicable diseases. Violence and injuries also place an additional burden on the health system. Further issues identified are *inter alia*, the need to improve efficiencies in health worker distribution, coordination of care, hospital and bed capacity, and administrative inefficiency. Challenges have also been experienced with keeping health facilities well-resourced and responsive to emerging situations, owing in part to the decreasing fiscal space due to low economic growth and high debt burden.

Public health expenditure is generally pro-poor however out-of-pocket expenses remain high, whilst health insurance coverage is low. Human Resources for Health need to be reviewed to better manage the epidemiologic and demographic transition of Jamaica. The Vision for Health 2030- Ten Year Strategic Plan (2019-2030), emanated from a comprehensive assessment of the health system and aims to address gaps through four defined components, which include a standard comprehensive essential benefits package, the health service delivery network, finance and governance, as two supportive elements, namely human resources and infrastructure. The Vision for Health 2030 is the Strategic Agenda to address the gaps and promote transformation in key areas toward reversing downward trends and accelerating progress toward universal access to health and universal health coverage in Jamaica.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning health and wellbeing.

³⁹ This section was written by the Ministry of Health and Wellness and is the only report developed by a Ministry for the VNR process. It demonstrates ownership of the process and the level of alignment with the SDGs.



FIGURE 13: HIGHLIGHTS, GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING 2018 –2021

Discussion

Target 3.1 By 2030, Reduce the Global Maternal Mortality Ratio to Less than 70 per 100 000 Live Births

The maternal health programme of the Ministry of Health and Wellness is geared at ensuring that all pregnant women have access to quality healthcare throughout their pregnancy. If mortality occurs during childbirth, the classification of maternal deaths are Class 1 notifiable events, so healthcare providers must report these health events on suspicion to the respective Parish Health Departments within 24 hours of contact or the National Surveillance Unit (NSU)⁴⁰. Notified deaths are reviewed at the institutional, regional, and national levels by inter-disciplinary teams who classify them and identify any delays, which can be addressed to prevent future deaths. The team of experts consists of obstetricians, epidemiologists, medical officers of health, midwives and public health nurses. The data on maternal deaths are collated, entered into a database, and analyzed by the NSU. Three hundred and two (302) suspected pregnancy-related deaths were reported to the NSU between 2016 and 2020. Two-thirds of these cases (66.8 per cent, n = 202) met the WHO case definition and were further classified as maternal deaths (Figure 14).

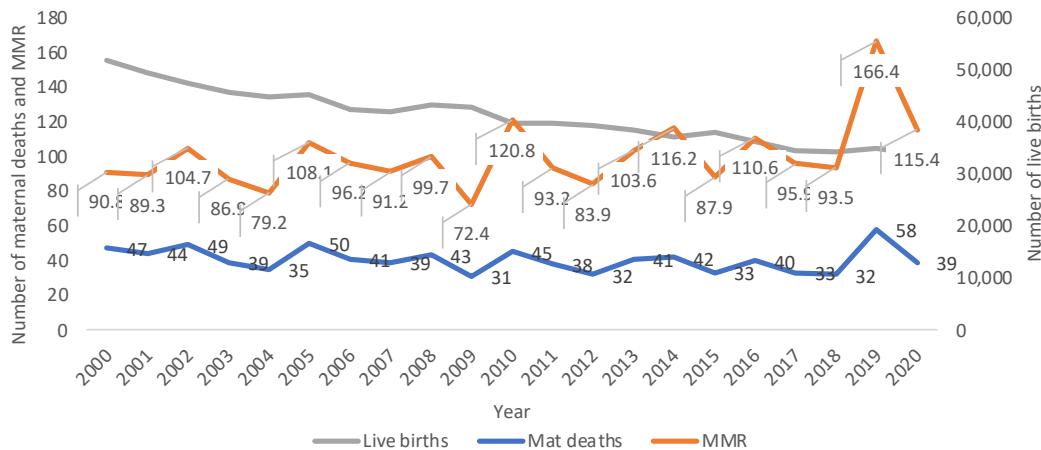


FIGURE 14: MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO, MATERNAL DEATHS AND LIVE BIRTHS BY YEAR: JAMAICA, 2000–2020
Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

Temporal Trends in the Maternal Mortality Ratio

The annual number of live births in Jamaica has steadily decreased over the last two decades from over 50 000 to approximately 35 000 live births each year. In addition, a general increase was noted in the last five years from 2016 to 2020. However, the number of maternal deaths and consequently the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) has fluctuated. The MMR ranged from 72.4 (31 maternal deaths) in 2009 to 166/100 000 live births (58 maternal deaths) in 2019 (Figure 14).

Classification of Maternal Deaths

Nationally there was a general increase in the number of live births at older maternal age from 1980 to 2020. The general trend for the period between 2008 and 2020 was a decline in direct maternal deaths and a general increase in indirect maternal deaths. Direct maternal deaths are obstetric complications of the pregnant state from interventions, omissions, incorrect treatment, or a combination of any of the above. Indirect maternal deaths are pre-existing diseases or disease that develops during pregnancy and which was not due to obstetric causes but was aggravated by the physiological effects of the pregnancy. The number of direct (n=34) and indirect (n=24) deaths was highest in 2019 (Figure 15).

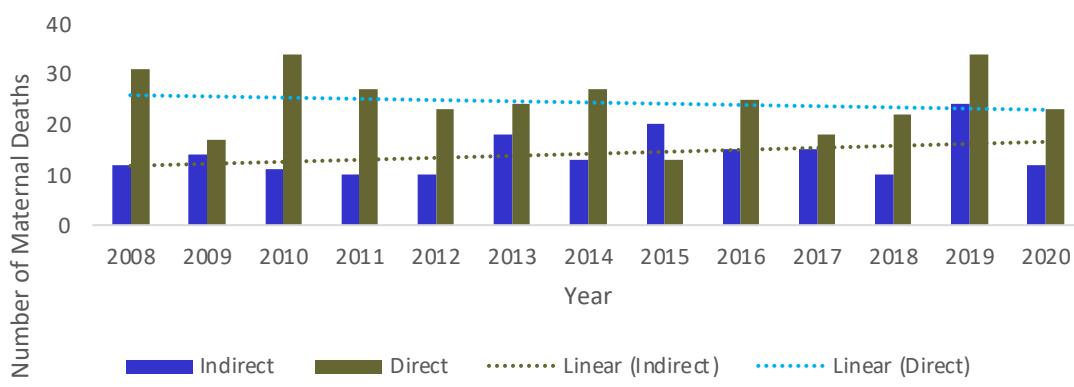


FIGURE 15: NUMBER OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT MATERNAL DEATHS OCCURRING IN JAMAICA BY YEAR, 2008–2020
Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

Cause of Death

The leading direct causes of maternal deaths by triennium from 1998 to 2018 were gestational hypertension, obstetric haemorrhage, and obstetric embolism (Figure 15). Diseases of the circulatory system, sickle cell disease, and HIV/AIDS were the main contributors to indirect maternal deaths between 1998 and 2018. However, a decrease in maternal deaths due to HIV/AIDS was noted (Figure 16).

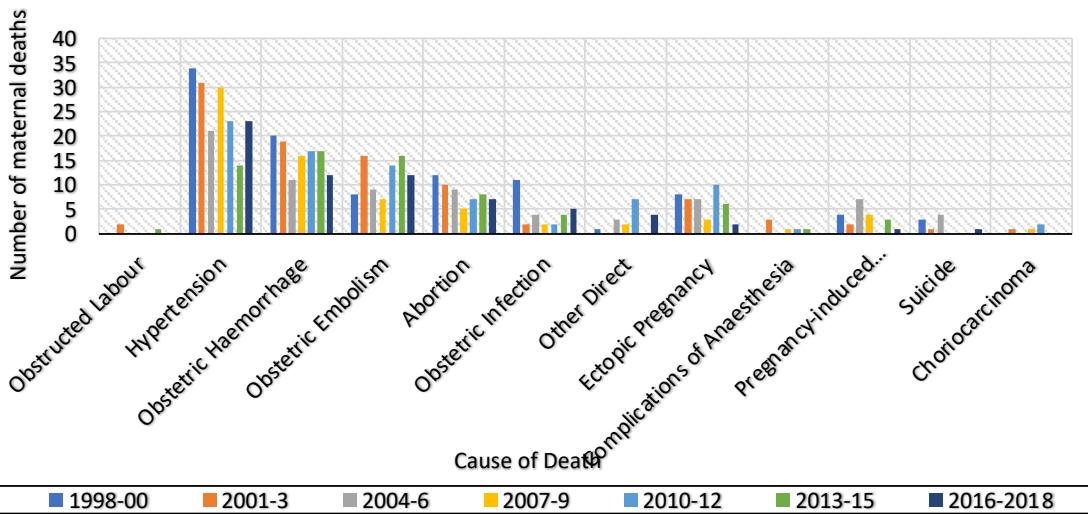


FIGURE 16: DIRECT CAUSES OF MATERNAL DEATHS BY TRIENNIAL FROM 1998–2018

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

The leading causes of maternal deaths in Jamaica in 2018–2020, were direct causes, including hypertensive syndromes, obstetric haemorrhage and obstetric embolism while indirect causes included circulatory disorders, sickle cell disease and respiratory diseases.

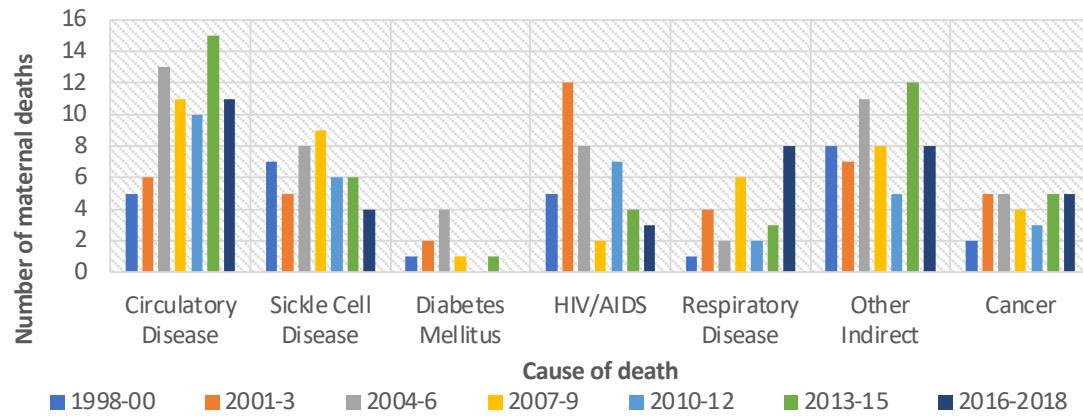


FIGURE 17: INDIRECT CAUSES OF MATERNAL DEATHS BY TRIENNIAL FROM 1998–2018

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

The government, through the Family Health Unit instituted the following mitigating strategies to address maternal mortality:

- Established a teenage clinic at the largest maternity hospital – the Victoria Jubilee Hospital to reduce teenage pregnancy.
- Jamaica has complemented facility-based records with home-based records with the implementation of the Maternal Record book for each pregnant mother
- National Annual Maternal Health conferences and workshops were conducted to share national maternal health status and the plan of action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Target 3.2. By 2030, End Preventable Deaths of Newborns and Children Under 5 Years of Age, With All Countries Aiming to Reduce Neonatal Mortality To At Least As Low As 12 Per 1,000 Live Births and Under-5 Mortality To At Least As Low As 25 Per 1000 Live Births.

In 2019, the infant mortality rate for Jamaica decreased to 15.2 deaths per 1 000 live births from 16.7 deaths per 1 000 live births. Based on the data identified in table 9, there has downward trend followed by three years of increases, with the lowest child mortality rate of 17.4 deaths per 1000 live births in 2016.

TABLE 9: NEONATAL AND UNDER-FIVE MORTALITY RATE 2014–19

Rates	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Neonatal mortality rate/ 1,000 live births	16.7	16.0	12.7	14.1	13.8	15.2
Under 5 mortality rate/ 1,000 live births	20.5	19.6	17.4	18.4	19.4	20.5

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

The ministry has prioritized this SDG target by conducting ongoing in-service education for doctors and nurses on safe motherhood, with a special focus on Neonatal Resuscitation and Reproductive Health. The Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC) 2013 -2021 was implemented in collaboration with the European Union to reduce the incidence of neonatal and maternal deaths due to inadequate access to High Dependency Units. Under the PROMAC, four (4) maternal and neonatal HDUs were established in the following hospitals: Bustamante Hospital for Children, St Ann's Bay, Victoria Jubilee, and Spanish Town Hospitals. The PROMAC facilitated the training of thirty-six (36) Doctors in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Anaesthetics, and Intensive Care Paediatrics. Seven doctors were trained in Maternal-Foetal Medicine and Emergency Obstetrics, and forty-six (46) nurses received post-basic midwifery training. Hence, over one thousand and eight hundred health professionals were trained in Neonatal and Maternal skills.

Additionally, a National Maternal and Perinatal Health Committee was formed in 2017, consisting of the following stakeholders: Obstetricians and Paediatricians from each Region, the Regional Epidemiologists, Medical Epidemiologists from National Surveillance Unit, and Programme Development Officer, Family Health Unit. The primary function of the committee is to develop, revise and implement maternal and perinatal health tools to end preventable morbidity

and mortality in Jamaica. This team continues to function as the governing body to produce and revise guidelines to standardize Obstetric and Neonatal Care in Jamaica. Moreover, a National Strategic Plan for Maternal and Perinatal Mortality Surveillance and Response was developed in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for Jamaica for 2018-2022 to improve the effectiveness of the maternal mortality surveillance process by integrating routine monitoring and evaluation of the response component at the facility, regional and national levels.

Target 3.3 By 2030, End the Epidemics of Aids, Tuberculosis, Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases and Combat Hepatitis, Water-Borne Diseases and Other Communicable Diseases.

HIV/AIDS is a priority communicable disease for the MOHW as Jamaica has both a general and concentrated HIV epidemic. The prevalence among adults (15-49 years) has decreased from 1.8 per cent (2013) to 1.4 per cent in 2020 with an estimated 32 000 people living with HIV (PLHIV).

Jamaica engaged several new strategies to address HIV prevention as part of a comprehensive national response to meet global targets and commitments to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. The National HIV Programme (NHP) located within the MOHW is mandated by the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) to coordinate and lead the implementation of the national HIV/AIDS response. The NHP is executed using a multi-sectoral approach, which focuses on prevention, treatment and care, enabling environment and human rights, empowerment and governance. Critical to this effort has been the commitment and support of the GOJ, donors and international partners such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Global Fund, the World Bank, and civil society.

Advances in prevention strategies included piloting HIV Self-Testing kits in 21 pharmacies from April to June 2021, by the National Family Planning Board (NFPB) which received overall favourable numbers with 67.0 per cent of pharmacies continuing with the programme. An increase in promotional material and capacity-building trainings of stakeholders was also used to increase the knowledge of HIV/STI in the population as well as increased media exposure both traditional and digital.

UNAIDS introduced their 95-95-95 global strategy for ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic by 2030 where 95.0 per cent of persons living with HIV (PLHIV) are diagnosed and aware of their status, 95.0 per cent of PLHIV diagnosed are on antiretroviral (ARV) and 95per cent of PLHIV on ARVs are virally suppressed. Jamaica set an intermediate goal of 90-90-90 by 2020. The intermediate goal was not attained however; progress has been made in slowing the spread of the virus in Jamaica, which is outlined in the table 10 by the increase in percentage of persons on ARVs and virally suppressed.

TABLE 10: AWARENESS AND TREATMENT STATUS OF PERSONS LIVING WITH HIV

Year	Percentage of PLHIV aware of their status	Percentage of PLHIV aware of their status and on antiretroviral	Percentage of PLHIV on ARVs and virally suppressed
2018	76	49	62
2019	82	54	65
2020	85	47	72

Challenges remain with keeping adolescents living with HIV on treatment and in care. A UNICEF-supported 2020 Situational Analysis on Jamaican Adolescents Living with HIV (ALHIV) found that many adolescents were challenged with staying in care and on treatment. Reports of "treatment fatigue" and a sharp reduction in adherence during adolescence, pointed to the need for peer-to-peer, family-based and professional support as part of the package of care for ALHIV. Based on these findings, the NHP has initiated plans to build a peer support network for ALHIV with the first set of eight youth PLHIV facilitators trained in 2021.

Continued education of service providers and empowerment of PHLIV mitigate risks of stigma or discrimination. The COVID-19 pandemic caused additional strain on the health sector especially related to disruptions in supply chain management, access to healthcare services and task shifting of healthcare workers. To combat these issues, telemedicine was implemented, clinic hours were extended, programme delivery was realigned and staff numbers were increased. The challenges with linkage to care are evident in the overall cascade. The availability of additional places to access care as well as social and psychological support are necessary to increase the percentage of PLHIV aware of their status and on antiretroviral.

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other government entities focused on social services, building legislative frameworks and education were engaged to ensure polices, plans and programmes reach the marginalized in society. Enhanced Package of Care for Key and Vulnerable Populations was also used to reach, namely – men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender women, women, and adolescents, out of school youths, persons living with disabilities, homeless, and drug users.

Target 3.4 By 2030, Reduce by One-Third Premature Mortality from Non-Communicable Diseases through Prevention and Treatment and Promote Mental Health and Well-Being.

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

NCDs have been the leading cause of global morbidity in developing nations; they account for 54.0 per cent of deaths in developing nations and 87.0 per cent in developed nations (MOHW, 2013). Data from the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) names heart disease as the leading cause of death within the region. Within 15 years, spanning 1985- to 2000, the agency reports that heart disease accounted for 15.3-17.5 per cent of deaths within the region (Ministry of Health and Wellness, 2013). For Jamaica, 70.0 per cent of deaths in 2010 were attributed to four (4) major NCDs: cancer, diabetes, disease of the circulatory system and chronic lower respiratory disease. Of these deaths, 27.0 per cent were individuals who were under 70 years (The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2010). With Jamaica's average life expectancy at 73.43 years, these deaths would be classified as premature. When the data are disaggregated, there seems to be a gender disparity. For women, diabetes was the leading cause of morbidity while for men, the leading cause of death was from external forces (accidents and homicides), followed by cardiovascular disease, diabetes and prostate cancer. The most recent Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey (2016-2017) has shown an increase in NCDs such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity among adults. Notably one in two adults in Jamaica is overweight or obese.⁴¹

These diseases share four common behavioural risk factors: tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol. The most recent Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey highlighted dietary behaviours with almost 8/10

⁴¹ Ministry of Health. (2018) Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey III (2016-2017) Preliminary Key findings. Retrieved from <https://www.moh.gov.jm/jamaica-health-and-lifestyle-survey-iii-2016-2017/>

Jamaicans aged 15-74 consuming fast foods more than once daily and 1 in 10 consuming excess salt at the table or frequently had salty sauces or high salt processed foods. In tandem with this, eighty-two per cent of Jamaican 15-74 are engaged in low physical activity and low rates of food label reading and fruit and vegetable consumption were also identified. Alcohol use was reported in 41.0 per cent of the population; highest in the 24-35 age group and current use of tobacco was reported in 15.0 per cent of the population.² Poor feeding practices in Jamaica begin very early in life with low rates of exclusive breastfeeding and inappropriate complementary feeding practices. The exclusive breastfeeding rate in Jamaica is below the 40.0 per cent target for exclusive breastfeeding for infants under six months of age. The principal concern is the inappropriate timing of early feeds, the increase in the incidence of nutrition-related childhood diseases and the increased risk of chronic NCDs in adulthood that may result from these practices. Childhood obesity and overweight, and the early onset of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are issues of growing concern in Jamaica from infancy through the adolescent years. Approximately 6 per cent of children under 5 are overweight.⁴² Meanwhile, rates of obesity have doubled among adolescent boys over the past decade and have increased by almost 50.0 per cent in adolescent girls aged 13-17. Among adolescents aged 13-15, approximately 7 out of 10 boys and girls drink one or more soda per day, on average and only 23.2 per cent of adolescents are physically active for at least 60 minutes per day.⁴³

A UNICEF/CAPRI Study on the socioeconomic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, found that most households reported increases in children's level of overeating (57.0 per cent) and that under 40 per cent of children older than six do not get any exercise at all daily.⁴⁴ UNICEF's Situational Analysis of Children 2021 noted that the combination of household income loss and the suspension of the school feeding programme due to COVID-19 may lead to an increased risk of malnutrition and consumption of cheaper processed foods with higher fat and sugar content.³

To combat the harmful effects of NCDs, Jamaica has implemented several programmes under defined areas, some of which include:

Policy and Advocacy

- **National Health Fund**, offers pharmaceutical services for the elderly through **Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme (JADEP)** - launched in 1996, JADEP improves access to essential drugs through payment subsidies.
- Abolition of User Fees at government health facilities-2008
- National Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy, 2014
- Interim Guidelines for Beverages in Schools, 2019
- National Strategic Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs
- National Operational Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Obesity in Children and Adolescents in Jamaica

⁴² UNICEF and CAPRI. Situational Analysis of Jamaican Children 2021

⁴³ NCDA, WHO, CDC. Global School Based Student Health Survey 2017

⁴⁴ UNICEF, CAPRI (2021). Lasting impact: Educational, social and psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children <https://www.unicef.org/jamaica/reports/lasting-impact>

- National Food and Nutrition Security Policy, 2006
- National Policy and Strategic Plan for the Promotion of Healthy Lifestyle

Physical Activity

- **Jamaica Moves** is the Ministry's primary physical activity initiative that embraces the Ottawa Charter for Promotion. It creates a vibrant and sustainable behaviour change model to tackle the risk factors of NCDs. The programme targets all members of the society at the individual, interpersonal, organizational and community levels.

Chronic Disease Surveillance and Management

- Formation of the Sickle Cell Clinical Management Subcommittee to provide technical support for improving Jamaica's Sickle Cell Disease Programme.
- Development of National Screening Guidelines for Priority Non-communicable Diseases in Primary Health Care.

Through a policy and investment loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the ministry launched its Health Systems Strengthening Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Disease in late 2019. This project will be implemented over 5 years. The policy component of the Programme seeks to consolidate regulatory measures to address the preventable causes of NCDs and to reorient the health system to address the prevention and control of NCDs through a people-centred primary health chronic care model. During the 2019/2020 financial year, some of the policy and legislative measures were advanced. This includes the drafting of a Concept Paper for the Screening Guidelines of Priority NCDs and the development of the Chronic Care Model. From these programmes, National Screening Guidelines for Priority non-communicable diseases were developed for the Primary Health Care system and there was the launch of the National Committee on NCDs, additionally, the government launched the Public-Private Partnership of non-communicable (PPP4NCDs), which engaged private general practitioners in the shared management of primary care clients with hypertension or diabetes.

The unit also focused on the commencement of Phase 1 of the Glycosylated A1C (HbA1c) programme to enhance point-of-care testing for glucose control for primary care clients with diabetes. For better management of disease, the Sickle Cell Clinical Management Subcommittee was formed to provide technical support or improve Jamaica's Sickle Cell Disease program. The Cabinet approved the proposal for exemption of fee at Public Pharmacies for all persons with Sickle Cell Disease. From the programme, National Screening Guidelines for Priority non-communicable diseases were developed for the Primary Health Care system.

In 2021, the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) launched the National NCD Committee charged with buttressing the ministry's work to effectively combat NCDs in Jamaica. Moving forward, the Ministry plans to implement additional programmes to increase the management and care of NCDs. This includes: a National Cervical Cancer Elimination Plan, implement the Chronic Care Model and the approval of free access to chemotherapeutic drugs for children with cancers at the UHWI, to name a few.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information and the MOHW signalled steps to develop and implement a National School Nutrition Policy (formerly the National School Feeding Policy) and supporting standards for meals; non-meal items, such as snacks available in the school food environment. Progress has been made in 2022, towards the

approval of the policy which will ensure that meals and snacks offered in Jamaica's School Feeding Programme meet the necessary nutritional standards. Discussions commenced in 2019 between the Ministry of Agriculture, MOHW and MOEY for the establishment of a Home-Grown School Feeding Programme in Jamaica to encourage children to eat more locally produced food.

There is a further need to strengthen Jamaica's policy, legal and programming environment to address several gaps including a lack of awareness and knowledge on good nutrition, school environments that enable easy access to unhealthy foods and few healthy options for children and adolescents, marketing of unhealthy foods to children and front of package labelling to improve food choices.

Mental Health

The goal of Mental Health Services (MHS) is to promote peaceful interaction among the Jamaican people, improve parenting and promote mental well-being for all. At present, the National Community Mental Health service has an estimated caseload of 23 500 individuals managed by 334 mental health workers. The Government of Jamaica has identified methods to bolster the work of Mental Health clinicians and strengthen their response to Mental Health. The National Mental Health Policy was drafted after discussion with relevant stakeholders and the senior ministry directorate has been reviewed and is awaiting cabinet submission. Under the Mental Health Action Plan (MHAP), a major objective is the provision of effective leadership and governance of mental health services. This will be achieved through the cabinet approval of a National Mental Health Strategic Plan (2020-2025) which provides a framework to identify the determinants of good mental health and implement strategies that acknowledge the need for a partnership approach to addressing mental illness including at the level communities.

The Mental Health Act (1996) is being amended to reflect the predominant non-custodial approach to MHS delivery and to provide a legal framework for delivery of these services per the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Under the MHAP, there is a thrust towards shifting mental health service delivery from hospital-based to community-based services and providing a service integrated into primary and secondary care. As it stands, psychiatric patients are treated in most regions on medical wards of general hospitals instead of localized community-based institutions, inevitably reducing public access to these services. In response to these inequities, the government is promoting the re-organization of Bellevue Hospital (the only mental hospital in Jamaica). This will involve reducing the size of the hospital while expanding the community mental health services. The realignment of service in the manner described above provides increased access and acceptability of service and potentially better outcomes.

Mental health promotion and prevention are ongoing activities executed by Mental Health teams in all health regions with targeted monthly sessions. In addition, there is an ongoing National Mass Mental Health Media campaign from 2019, which, through a variety of platforms, seeks to promote mental health and prevent mental illness. The ultimate goal of this campaign is to reduce Mental Health stigma and promote {Mental} health-seeking behaviours among the population.

At present, the ministry records attempted suicides per region (Table 11), however, there is a gap in the reporting method. At present, death by suicide is not recorded as such; instead, it is recorded based on the medical cause of death, that is, the death is reported as asphyxiation rather than death by suicide. The data presented in Table 11 represent only the number of attempts made, and there is no distinction based on repeat attempts versus first-time ones.

Over the last five years, there has been a great fluctuation in suicide attempts within each region, with South East

Regional Health Authority recording the largest numbers. The refinement of MH data collection techniques would significantly impact the psychosocial determinants of mental illness and may strengthen the government's response to reducing suicidal attempts.

TABLE 11: ATTEMPTED SUICIDE RATES BY REGION AND YEAR

Year	Region									
	NERHA		WERHA		SERHA		SRHA		BVH	
2016	21	44	15	37	31	62	49	65	0	2
2017	13	40	22	28	23	60	22	49	1	0
2018	13	35	20	38	25	75	12	22	0	0
2019	4	39	19	44	16	38	11	37	0	0
2020	7	12	18	31	18	26	13	30	0	0

Source: Table obtained for Hospital Monthly Summary Report (HMSR) illustrating the suicide attempts disaggregated by gender

In response to the increasing number of attempted suicides, the government has implemented the following interventions:

- Establishing a free 24-hour mental health and suicide Prevention Helpline operated by the MOHW (Table 12).
- Improving access to clinic services remotely through free tele-mental health services.
- Collaborating with UNICEF to establish a U-Matter Chat line providing emotional support for youth who may prefer to text rather than make voice calls.

TABLE 12: COMPARISON OF HELPLINE CALLS IN THE FIRST QUARTER BETWEEN 2020 AND 2021

Months	Calls	Months	Calls
April 2020	89	April 2021	198
May 2020	81	May 2021	133
June 2020	61	June 2021	202

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

In the first quarter of 2021, some 533 calls were made to the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Helpline which was double the number of calls made in the same period in 2020 (231). The U-Matter Chat line was launched in March 2022 and within the first week of operation received more than 100 contacts from adolescents and youth in need of

support. The MHU has also launched Reach-Out-Rangers, a contingent comprised of volunteers who are trained in the use of Psychological First Aid for community intervention. These Reach out Rangers were deployed to communities where persons may be experiencing emotional distress but are not prioritizing mental health-seeking. This initiative has seen a tripling in engagement (33) in November than that of the previous month (11). Those persons who are assessed as requiring more than the emotional support expected with the above training will be referred to the local mental health team for further management. There is also the inclusion of mental health in the Non-Communicable Disease Commission whose mandate includes the prevention and control of NCDs including mental illness. The subcommittee on mental health will pay particular attention to strategies to improve the promotion of mental wellness and early diagnosis and treatment of mental illness. Finally, there is a current review of human resources for the national mental health program, which should increase the number of mental health service providers available to respond to the MH crisis.

Target 3.5. Strengthen the Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse, Including Narcotic Drug Abuse and Harmful Use of Alcohol

The Cabinet sanctioned the drafting of the Harmful Alcohol Policy in June 2021, which is a major achievement towards addressing harmful alcohol use among the population. Coupled with ongoing meetings of the Cabinet's Joint Select Committee to report on the draft Tobacco Control Act of 2020, this will foster the climate to control the supply, marketing, interference, and monitoring of substances within these industries. The policy is expected to increase public awareness of the harms of use; increase the availability and access to prevention and treatment interventions; protect the vulnerable population, especially children; improve public health and reduce the burden on the health system. The average age of first use of harmful substances was 12.3 years old⁴⁵; the government through the National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA) aims to increase the age of first use by 1.7 years by 2025. Additionally, there has been an increase in the capacity of primary health care workers and school personnel trained to conduct Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in health care centres and hospitals across the island, expanding the capacity and publics' access to drug counselling intervention in communities island-wide.

The implementation of policies is informed by the collection and analysis of field data. The main method of data collection for the NCDA is surveys, which has been greatly impacted by the Novel Corona Virus and severe funding constraints resulting in the most recent population survey being conducted in 2017. Adopting other methods of data collection, the NCDA in collaboration with Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS/CICAD), carried out an Online COVID and Drug Use survey. The survey indicated an increase in substance use, within the past year. The use of alcohol increased by (32.0 per cent), cannabis (37.0 per cent) and tobacco (25.0 per cent) among adults who used these substances. This represents a strong relationship between increased drug use and pandemic conditions. The population consisted of rural and urban participants whose ages ranged from 18-39 years old, majority of the participants (75.0 per cent) were female which highlights gender patterns in substance abuse. The study further highlighted that mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, loneliness and financial problems associated with the pandemic were factors associated with increased drug use. The agency has also noted an increasing trend toward vaping and risk perception of cannabis use among adolescents. Some 60.0 per cent of youth thought cannabis use was very harmful, 10.0 per cent deemed it moderately harmful while 7.0 per cent thought it slightly harmful⁴⁶. Perceived risk of harmful substance(s) is highly subjective; with 17.0 per cent of youth deeming cannabis use slightly to be moderately harmful.

⁴⁵ National Secondary School Survey

⁴⁶ National Secondary School Survey

Strengthening public education campaigns targeting youth would serve as the best mitigating strategy.

The findings from the 2016 NCDA National Household Survey revealed that over 30 000 individuals reported that they felt the need for drug treatment to address their dependence and another 317 000 persons were classified as harmful alcohol consumers. Within this context, there is a need to scale up treatment facilities to increase access and availability island-wide to include treatment for adolescents and women with families.

The government, through the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) and the National Council on Drug Abuse, have acknowledged the gaps, which exist within the legislative system, and is proactively working to increase public knowledge about substance use and abuse. A strengthened public education programme on substance abuse is to be implemented to dispel myths and provide the population, especially youth, with accurate and current information concerning the negative effects of substance misuse. The ongoing discussion concerning Ganja/Cannabis has been vibrant and NCDA has introduced its Good Ganja Sense Public Education Campaign. An initiative labelled a Ganja Literacy project designed to explain what decriminalization means, and how Jamaicans should operate in a decriminalized environment. The programme engages all members of society on the changes to the 2015 Dangerous Drug Act that dispel the myths that are popular about ganja, highlighting the negative consequences, opportunities for medical use, and the rights of Rastafarians to religious and sacramental use. Additionally, there has been an increase in the capacity of primary healthcare workers to conduct Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) in healthcare centres across the island. The approved screening tool used for intake for new patients now includes screening questions on drug use. The MOHW has also committed to secure funding for a larger public education programme for alcohol misuse and tobacco use.

The National Drug Control Master Plan is a Strategic five-year plan which identifies the priority areas for national drug control, has expired and is to be revised for the next 5 years. The NCDA is working with the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (OAS/CICAD), as well as the Pan American Health Organization to develop the next Master Plan and needs significant support to formally table and adopt this plan so the Drug Demand and Supply reduction strategies can be more structured, planned and have a basis for sound evaluation.

The NCDA is committed to ensuring equity among the population. As such, their programmes are categorized as:

- Universal: these programmes target the entire population with drug prevention education whether or not you are a user,
- Selective: target members of the population that are at high risk for use because of certain risk factors affecting the individual or that are present in their environment
- Indicated: target those individuals who have started drug use and have deemed it problematic but are not yet addicted. Clients who need indicated programmes are deemed most at risk.

The school and community network, along with the evaluation from the field staff regarding an individual's level of drug use and their risk profile enables the NCDA to target the most at-risk individuals. After identification, the appropriate prevention/treatment initiative is identified that will assist them in reducing and eventually ceasing their substance misuse. The school-based programmes offered nationally are evidence-based and informed by relevant research.

Target 3.6. By 2020, Halve the Number of Global Deaths and Injuries from Road Traffic Accidents

In 2021, the number of road fatalities was 432, the highest number of fatalities recorded in Jamaica since 2002. As shown

in Figure 18, 88 per cent of the road fatalities recorded in 2021 were males, while 12.0 per cent were females.



FIGURE 18: ROAD FATALITIES DISAGGREGATED BY SEX

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

In an attempt to reduce the number of road fatalities in Jamaica, the Road Safety Unit collaborated with various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies of the Government (MDAs), Non-Government Organizations, Private Organizations, and the National Road Safety Council (NRSC) to develop several interventions and road safety campaigns. The Prime Minister of Jamaica signed the United Nations Second Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, which aims to prevent at least 50.0 per cent of road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030. The Prime Minister, being the chair of the National Road Safety Council, has prioritized this SDG target by stipulating that all rehabilitative road works currently on schedule must undergo a road safety inspection and be audited by the Road Safety Audit team. This is to ensure that the safety needs of all road users are satisfied and to reduce the instance of crash fatalities and injuries in Jamaica.

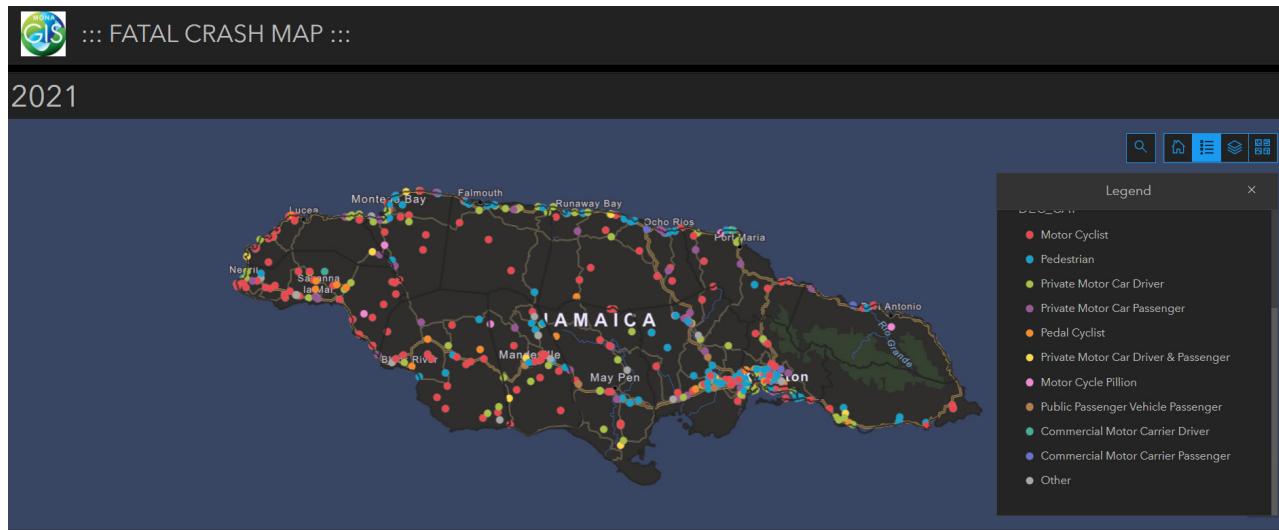


FIGURE 19: ROAD FATALITIES MAP BY CATEGORY

Source: Mona Geoinformatics

Moreover, various government entities are working together to achieve this SDG target, such as the National Road Safety Council (NRSC), Ministry of National Security, Jamaica Public Service, Ministry of Transport and Mining, National Works Agency, Ministry of Justice, Island Traffic Authority, Jamaica Constabulary Force (Public Safety Enforcement Branch), and MOHW. Additionally, the United Nations Children's Fund and Pan American Health Organization, along

with other Non-Government Agencies and Private Organizations, are working collectively with the Government of Jamaica to achieve this SDG target. The stakeholders meet quarterly to discuss goals and targets as relates to reducing road fatalities, however, a Transport Policy Guideline for vulnerable road users (pedestrians, pedal cyclists, and disabled persons) is needed. In partial response to this shortcoming, a Pedestrian Safety Committee (PSC) has been formed to address the road safety issues faced by pedestrians to reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities and injuries across the island. The PSC was developed based on the National Road Safety Council's 2019 Recommendations and the UN Second Decade of Action 2021-2030 Safe Systems Principles: Safe Road Infrastructure and Safe Road Users.

Target 3.7 By 2030, Ensure Universal Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health-Care Services, Including Family Planning, Information and Education, and the Integration of Reproductive Health into National Strategies and Programmes

The National Family Planning Board (NFPB) executes the commitment to ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services in Jamaica. Strengthening Jamaica's Sexual Reproductive Health (SRH) Programme is an important part of achieving this target. To bolster the SRH Programme, the NFPB also carries out the following: strategic planning of various programme activities, enabling a Reproductive Health Survey (approximately 90.0 per cent complete) for sound evidence-based decisions on SRH matters, as well as, contributing to the Population and Sustainable Development Policy as well as conducting research and investigation.

SDG target 3.7 can be further broken down into indicators 3.7.1 and 3.7.2. Indicator 3.7.1 refers to the percentage of women of reproductive age (15-49 years) who have demand for family planning satisfied by modern methods. The components of this indicator are contraceptive prevalence and unmet need for family planning. The NFPB, having recognized the interconnectivity of family planning with the 17 SDGs, enabled the strengthening of the Contraceptive Logistics Management Information System across the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs). The Logistic Indicators Assessment Tool (LIAT) which was developed by USAID was tailored and used to monitor/audit the contraceptive logistics systems throughout the health facilities at the clinic level. With such stringent and consistent monitoring over the years, coupled with capacity building of key health care providers in Contraceptive Forecasting Methodologies, as well as the evaluation of the CLMIS (using the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Assistance Committee Model), the following improvements have been noted and published:

- Contraceptive stock-out on the day of visit significantly declined to five (5.0) per cent (2019) from seventeen (17) per cent (2015).
- The prevalence of stock-out over six months declined significantly to twenty (20.0) per cent (2019) from eight-five (85.0) per cent (2015).
- Improvement in standardized recording of information using the Family Planning Register and Logbook.
- Improvement in the storage of contraceptive methods.

Indicator 3.7.2 measures the annual number of births to females aged 15-19 years per 1 000 females in the respective age group. The NFPB relies on the Reproductive Health Survey for adolescent fertility rate information. Data are still being collected for the 2021 survey. As such, information from the last survey (2008) is being used which reflected 72 births per 1 000 girls. Given the lull (14 years: 2008 to 2022) in the period of the RHS, other pertinent documents aided in the process of SRH decision-making; for example, the World Bank Group (2021) data reveal that:

- The current fertility rate for Jamaica in 2022 is 1.930 births per woman – being a 0.77 per cent decline from 2021.
- In 2021, there were 1.945 births per woman, a 0.82 per cent decline from 2020.
- In 2020, there were 1.961 births per woman, a 0.76 per cent decline from 2019.
- In 2019, there were 1.976 births per woman, a 0.75 per cent decline from 2018.
- The adolescent fertility rate was 49.88/1 000 in 2019.

In terms of a National Policy on Reproductive Health, the MOHW initiated the development of such a policy in 2018 and drafted a concept note in 2020. To date, the policy has not been submitted to Cabinet.

In advancing universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, the NFPB has made efforts to ensure that relevant policies, plans and programmes reach the most marginalized without prejudice. In doing so, the following may be noted:

- The use of traditional media to reach the most marginalized, for example, with the mass media campaigns on Human Rights ('Know Your Rights') and delaying adolescent pregnancy (with the tag line 'Live Life Before You Give Life') placed on television and radio stations with wide viewership and listenership.
- Radio and television placements of parenting advice.
- Social media was utilized to communicate with audiences via Instagram Live Chat sessions (meeting them on the most popular platform), regular posts answering questions and concerns on FP/HIV/STIs
- Use of face-to-face interventions across the island via the "Rispek Tour" to bring social protection partners with their services to a wide cross-section of rural and urban dwellers.
- Reporting stock-outs of commodities at clinics.

Target 3.8 Achieve Universal Health Coverage, Including Financial Risk Protection, Access to Quality Essential Health-Care Services and Access to Safe, Effective, Quality and Affordable Essential Medicines and Vaccines for All

Jamaica lacks sustainable and adequate funding for the health sector. The challenge of health care financing in Jamaica has been twofold: limited financial resources as a result of weak economic growth, and insufficient prioritization for allocation of resources to the health sector. However, the MOHW has been active in identifying the gaps in the health systems and outlining the directions for the health sector. The Vision for Health 2030 Plan addresses health financing in Goal 3, emphasizing increased and improved health financing for equity and efficiency through:

- The gradual increase in direct government funding toward the PAHO benchmark of 6 per cent of GDP as public investment in health.
- The establishment of a health care reserve (The Health Care Reform Fund) under the MOHW for discretionary investments related to the Vision for Health 2030 Plan implementation.
- The establishment of a National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme.

- The implementation of a series of policy measures to promote efficiency gains and spending rationalization in the health care sector.

The MOHW jointly with PAHO is currently proposing a fiscal space study to access the fiscal space for health. It is also being proposed that the National Health Accounts be strengthened and further used to identify possible financial revenues to fund health care. Further proposed solutions to address the gaps include:

- An assessment of Jamaica's health financial needs
- The best financial and policy tools for meeting these financial needs
- Pooling of existing resources to mitigate individual-level health risk and increase universal health coverage
- Preventing a further increase in poverty because of ill-health and catastrophic out-of-pocket payments
- Improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of resource use across the health system
- Cost-effective health programmes
- Providing resources to improve primary health care and effective coverage, especially for the most vulnerable and those in the lowest quintiles.

Human Resource for Health

There is limited information on the human resources for health regarding geographical distribution and the type of resource. However, the MOHW acknowledges the need for the strengthening of HRH, as currently, the health professional to population ratio stands at less than three (3) health professionals per 1000 patients. Owing to the many challenges outlined, there are to be considerable and immediate actions to address this issue. To this effect, PAHO proposed a plan of action with three strategic lines of action for HRH, namely:

1. Strengthen and consolidate governance and leadership in human resources for health.
2. Develop conditions and capacities in human resources for health to expand access to health and health coverage, with equity and quality.
3. Partner with the education sector to respond to the needs of health systems in the transformation toward universal access to health and universal health coverage.⁴⁷

Key to the implementation of the human resource for health reforms is the establishment of an HRH planning mechanism, functioning within and being led by the MOHW, and involving a core group of staff. This mechanism would also involve participation from the Ministry of Finance, the Cabinet, the Ministry of Education, the Public Service Commission, and other key stakeholders, to ensure full communication across the health sector (including the private sector). This HRH mechanism will contain an ongoing dynamic and iterative monitoring and evaluation approach.

Target 3.9. By 2030, Substantially Reduce the Number of Deaths and Illnesses from Hazardous Chemicals and Air, Water, and Soil Pollution and Contamination

The MOHW, guided by the standards and regulations stipulated by the National Environmental and Planning Agency (NEPA), sets standards for wastewater systems and indoor air quality. The Environmental Health Unit prioritizes this SDG target by conducting technical assessments on applications for the development of sub-divisions, which includes water systems, plants, etc. at the parish-level and national level. Given the grave impact on the natural environment, the frequency in which these assessments are conducted ranges from weekly to quarterly, and as often as necessary. In 2020, the ministry received 749 applications, of which 94.0 per cent were processed and approved. In 2018, the ministry received 720 applications, of which 95.0 per cent were processed and approved. An inter-sectoral mechanism was established to ensure compliance and maintenance of standards as stipulated by the Ministry. A Technical Review Committee was formed with the mandate to oversee and monitor all operations to achieve this target; the committee is comprised of representatives from NEPA, Natural Resource Conservation Authority (NRCA), MOHW, Kingston, and St Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSMC), and Water Resource Authority (WRA). However, there are compliance issues as it relates to monitoring and evaluation; the Public Health Act (Nuisance Act) guides remedial actions. In addition, the turnaround time to process applications is affected by the low bandwidth experienced when using the e-system (AMANDA). Notable, all policies and programmes implemented by the MOHW are guided by the Public Health Act.

Based on the mortality table produced by the Registrar General's Department (Table 13), there was a decrease in the number of deaths attributed to accidental poisoning by and exposure to noxious substances in 2019 when compared with 2018.

TABLE 13: MORTALITY

External causes of morbidity and mortality	ICD-10 Mortality Summary Codes	2018	2019
Exposure to smoke, fire, and flames	X00-X09	12	10
Accidental poisoning by and exposure to noxious substances	X40-X49	5	11
All other external causes	W20-W64, W75-W99, X10-X39, X50-X59, Y10-Y89	595	585
Total		612	606

Source: The Registrar General's Department (RGD) (Data for the year 2020-21 are not available as they are awaiting validation)

Target 3.D. Strengthen the Capacity of All Countries, in Particular Developing Countries, for Early Warning, Risk Reduction and Management of National and Global Health Risks

Jamaica has a well-established and maintained national surveillance system for health involving epidemiological and laboratory monitoring at the borders, through the port health programmes, during national crises/ disaster situations and at health services interfaces in public and private clinics and hospitals. It is effective in the surveillance of known

and novel diseases and the identification of possible sources, including COVID-19 now known to be caused by the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV2, and the endemic mosquito-borne illness, dengue, that manifests as seasonal outbreaks. It is the mechanism that provides an early warning signal for disease outbreaks and informs risk management strategies. This allows for evidence-based plans of action for preparedness and response, and the management of national and global health risks.

Additionally, institutionalized multi-stakeholder systems, such as the Emergency Health Planning Committee of the National Disaster Risk Management Council and the programme of activities for Jamaica's obligation under the International Health Regulations (2005), allow for a responsive system with health partners to better manage national and global health risks. The International Health Regulations (IHR) is the main instrument providing a legal basis for responding to Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEOC) including the pandemics. Under the IHR (2005), State Parties, including Jamaica, are obliged to develop and maintain minimum core capacities for surveillance and response, including at points of entry, to detect, assess, notify and respond to any potential public health events of international concern. Core capacity C11 refers to Points of Entry (POE) and Border Health. It has core capacity requirements at all times and public health response at POE and a risk-based approach to international travel-related measures.

Over the last few years, there have been more intense weather events impacting population health and the health system and an unusually protracted Dengue Outbreak in 2019, followed by the introduction of COVID-19 in 2020. These situations presented unprecedented demands requiring strengthening capacities across the full spectrum of health and medical services. To address the challenges, major investments were made in various areas for improved early warning systems for public health issues; reducing health risks posed by communicable diseases and overburdened public health and medical operational capacity for the general population and vulnerable sub-groups, thereby mitigating severe adverse outcomes and high-volume caseload. There have been strategic Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Upgrades, and enhanced coordination capacity, workforce modifications for improved efficiency and resilience, expanded diagnostic capacity and critical care capacity, and innovation in service delivery methodologies that enabled more responsive epidemiologic projections and forecasts and expanded access to care, allowing for a more resilient health system. The strengthened capacity is illustrated in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL AND GLOBAL HEALTH RISK

Following the WHO alert of the 2019 novel coronavirus, the SARS CoV2, the Government of Jamaica (GOJ), acting through the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) initiated a response and commenced sensitization of internal stakeholders and the population, as well as, activated the Ministry of Health Emergency Operations Centre (MOHW EOC), for coordination. Pre-existing Plans and other tools, instruments and mechanisms were used to develop guidance to respond to the threat of a COVID-19 pandemic. This built on existing activities through various combinations of expansion, acceleration in the implementation and innovation in initiatives.

EARLY WARNING

Pre-existing Capacity: Among the thirteen Prevention and Control Sub-Plans of the MOHW Disaster Management Manual, is the pre-existing Pandemic Influenza Plan which has a well-elaborated surveillance plan for acute respiratory illnesses as one prioritized condition for public health early warning systems. It, therefore, provided a sound basis for the development of the COVID-19 Prevention and Control Plan that guides Jamaica's overall COVID-19 response in a comprehensive and organized manner. The COVID-19 Prevention and Control Plan provides details for Alert and Pandemic Phases.

Pre-event Initiatives and Innovation: Development of a permanently established Health Emergency Operations Centre, Health System Strengthening for Universal Access to Care, reform of mental health services and Digital Transformation of the Health Sector were among programmes identified as a priority that will enhance the performance of the public health system. By accelerating the Digital Transformation programme activities, innovation in business processes was realized in the approach to data and interoperability that enabled artificial intelligence, geospatial technologies, data science and other emerging technologies to enhance various aspects of the health system. This included Health Emergency Operations Centre functionalities at national and subnational levels, including enhanced capacity for real-time tracking of COVID-19 cases across the country, while continually monitoring for other health risks including those related to international travel. Early identification of the localized occurrence of, for example, COVID-19 or mosquito breeding sites, and expansion of laboratory capabilities at the National Public Health Laboratory with strengthened partnerships with Regional Laboratories and private laboratories, allowed for the early mobilization of resources for prevention and containment to mitigate the adverse impacts and reduce national and global risks. In addition, improved access to mental health services allowed for earlier detection of mental health effects of various events allowing for early interventions.

RISK REDUCTION

Per the overarching strategy of GOJ's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the approach throughout the outbreak has been risk management using variable degrees of risk avoidance, risk reduction and risk retention to balance the protection of lives and livelihoods, through a whole government approach. The stated strategic goals of the Government were to delay, detect, contain, manage and communicate for COVID-19.

Pre-existing Capacity: The MOHW has made investments to elaborate an Enterprise Risk Management Program that will address various identified and prioritized risks. Among these are the issues of adequacy of Access to Health Care across the life course, the scope of public health surveillance system and public health laboratory capacity.

Pre-event Initiatives and Innovation: The COVID-19 outbreak presented an opportunity to leverage developmental activities using the Information Systems for Health (IS4H) Framework and improved access to specialist care with the Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes, (ECHO) model. It continues throughout the pandemic response with increasing access to health care through a mobile app, used as part of the implementation of Jamaica's chronic care model.

With the enhanced Surveillance Capacity with improved data and information management capabilities, COVID-19 trends in Jamaica are continuously monitored, establish epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19 infection in Jamaica, and inform risk assessment and decision-making that reflect the updated situation. This augmented the Early Warning Capabilities of the public health system.

A robust and responsive testing infrastructure is essential to containing the spread of communicable diseases, including that caused by the SARS-CoV-2, with notification of a COVID-19 case based on the results of COVID-19 testing, triggering a series of activities. Jamaica, in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), established local testing capacity in February 2020 at the long-established National Influenza Centre, which is housed at the University of the West Indies. This was subsequently supplemented with an open and a closed system established at the National Public Health Laboratory (NPHL) with the assistance of the Government of the Republic of Korea, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and PAHO/WHO. This resulted in the increased sample throughput that was required to process the increased number of samples arising from increased SARS-CoV-2 infection in the country. These interventions will be sustained and now allow for improved Diagnostic Capacity of endemic, new and emerging threats.

Significant investment was also made to retrofit strategically located hospitals for the provision of critical care and high dependency care, and cope with surge demands. This included infrastructure upgrades for reliable piped oxygen delivery, procurement and installation of critical care equipment and enhanced human resource training for the management of patients with critical care needs. Crises were created by the recurrent high demand for oxygenation resulting from hospitalization for persons of interest in relation to COVID-19.

Following formal evaluation of the systems at hospitals by the sole provider of medical-grade oxygen in Jamaica, the capacity for oxygen supply was increased and recommendations to improve delivery at the point of care were provided. Through additional support from our international partners, more interventions are to be undertaken within the USAID/JA Global Health American Rescue Plan. UNICEF has procured an oxygen plant to serve the needs of hospitals within the Northeast Health Region. The plant will be placed at the St Ann's Bay Hospital in the region and will be fitted to deliver medical oxygen to surrounding public health facilities.

Recognizing the normally high bed occupancy levels with annual variability, surge protocols were created to manage a rise in COVID-19 cases, to maintain order, quality of service and provision of adequate medical care for citizens during the ongoing global pandemic. In addition to identifying COVID-19 dedicated beds and updating existing surge plans for in-patient care tailored to the capacities, two Fixed Surge facilities for COVID-19 cases that require hospitalizations were secured for a capacity of 70 patients. The MOHW also acquired three Rapid Assembly Surge Systems for In-patient Care that has been installed at the Spanish Town Hospital, the May Pen Hospital and the University Hospital of the West Indies.

The MOHW commenced programmes to leverage partnerships to enhance access to care. The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed networking initiatives and advanced the Strategy of Health in all policies. The COVID-19 Pandemic has underscored the importance of health considerations in various aspects of society. The input of the MOHW has been keenly sought in a variety of areas including Safe Resumption of International Travel for Business and Recreational Purposes by both air and sea travel, including enhanced Border Sector Processes and Safe Resumption of Organised Sporting Activities. There have been several guidelines developed to support health and medical services in the context of the COVID-19 Outbreak as well as other areas outside of health service delivery. The MOHW has developed and issued several policies, protocols and guidelines.

A critical part of risk reduction measures for COVID-19 has been strong and consistent communication with the public. Early in 2020, shortly after the first case was reported, UNICEF supported communication efforts to raise awareness among the public. Working closely with the MOHW and PAHO, UNICEF produced public service announcements geared toward engaging children and their families to promote proper handwashing.

Jamaica became the first country in Latin America and the Caribbean to develop and roll out a digital vaccine registration platform. As vaccines were introduced in 2021, the MOHW with support from UNICEF and the Private Sector Vaccine developed and deployed a digital vaccine information management platform to manage the vaccination process as well as monitor and provide real-time reports on the status of COVID-19 vaccine delivery across the island. Further, UNICEF supported the development of digital COVID-19 vaccination certification for members of the public.

Additionally, UNICEF has supported the MOHW to improve its cold chain and vaccination supply chain systems with the procurement and installation of critical cold chain equipment in 70 health care facilities across the island. The installation was guided by a Cold Chain Inventory Assessment which has quantified the need for the health system and has filled approximately 60 per cent of the gap (UNICEF, 2021).

Resource Requirements

The Vision for Health 2030 outlines the financing requirements for the public health sector in keeping with international benchmarks. The plan identifies, that in the short to medium term, there is “consolidation of existing finance base to ensure implementation of a health benefits package/ National Insurance Scheme through a gradual increase in direct government funding toward the PAHO benchmark of 6.0 per cent of GDP as public investment in health and the establishment of a health care reserve (The Health Fund) under the MOHW for particular discretionary investments related to the Vision for Health 2030 Plan implementation.” In additional, the Plan recommends that in the long-term, there “is the development of the basis for establishing two strategic finance sources to complement the existing government finance sources: establishment of a National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme; [and] implementation of a series of policy measures to promote efficiency gains and spending rationalization in the health care sector” (MOHW 2019: 5).

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



GOAL 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all

Context

Jamaica continues to make significant strides in creating and fostering an environment for world-class education and training. The holistic development and empowerment of all citizens have been the centre of development planning initiatives undertaken by the government. This is reflected in the provision of free public education to all citizens from the pre-primary to the secondary level. Education at the tertiary level is subsidized by the government for public institutions, whereas private higher education institutions operate independently. Major activities towards the sustainable development of the education and training sectors were advanced at the national level through the Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY) National Education Strategic Plan (2011–2020), Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, the Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) 2018–2021, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The GOJ allocates one of the largest shares of the government budget to education signifying its commitment to building the human capital of the country. Financing for education is also supported with inputs from the private sector, International Development Partners (IDPs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community and faith-based organizations and households. Household contributions to education are made through the payment of auxiliary fees, cost-sharing at the tertiary level, and other payments for education-related inputs at all levels.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning quality education.

Quality Education Highlights 2018-2022



School Enrolment

Consistently high enrolment is characteristic of the education system from early childhood to Grade 11

Jamaica's Human Development Index (HDI) value for 2019 was 0.734—this places the country in the high human development category—positioning it at 101 out of 189 countries and territories.⁴⁸ Data from the 2019 Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSCL) revealed that the average years of schooling was 13.1 years. The adult literacy rate, which is a percentage of the population aged 15 years and over who can read and write stood at 88.1 per cent.

Discussion

Target 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

Data from the 2020 Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ) revealed that an estimated 671 739 persons in the school age cohort (3–24 years old) were enrolled in educational institutions with the highest enrollment at the Primary and Secondary levels, 29.0 and 30.0 per cent, respectively. Overall, consistently high enrolment continued to be a characteristic of the education system among children 3–16 years, that is, early childhood through Grade 11. On the other hand, enrolment among the 17–24 years remained low. Data from the JSCL 2019 revealed high enrolment rates at over 95.0 per cent from the Early Childhood level through to Grade 11. It should be noted that while enrolment remains high, the need for competent/specialist teachers should be prioritized by the Ministry. Continuous training of educators is needed to ensure that students can compete in the global market. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, educators have been trained on numerous online platforms to ensure that they are adequately prepared to engage students.

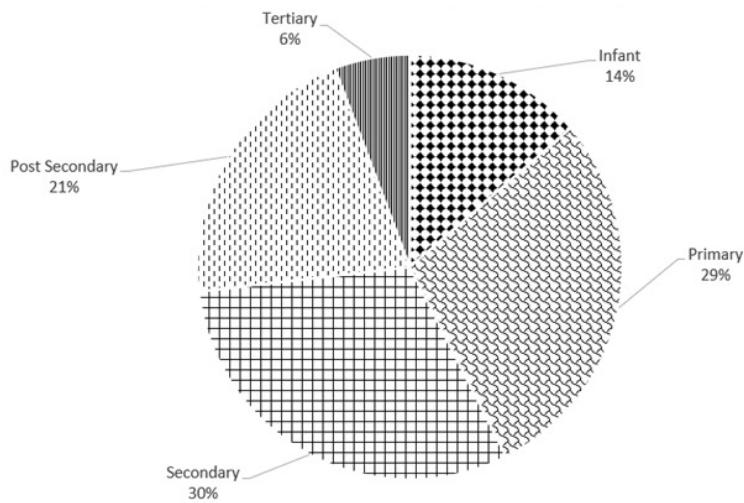


FIGURE 21: ENROLMENT BY EDUCATION LEVEL (3-24 YEARS) 2019/2020
Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

For Jamaica to offer world-class education and to prepare students for the 21st century, consideration must be given to the student to teacher ratio if the best possible outcomes are to be yielded. Data from the 2019 ESSJ revealed that the standard pupil-to-teacher ratio at the primary level was 35:1. Recognizing the need for closer attention to be provided to students by teachers, a directive from the Ministry of Education for primary schools to immediately begin reducing the pupil-teacher ratio to 25:1 was made in 2018.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/JAM>: The Education index "is [the] average mean years of schooling (of adults) and expected years of schooling (of children), both expressed as an index obtained by scaling with the corresponding maxima"

⁴⁹ Government Working to Achieve Teacher-Pupil Ratio of 1:25 – Ministry of Education and Youth (moe.gov.jm)

Despite high enrolment rates, children from lower-income households are more likely to not be enrolled at the secondary level. An indicator of this is the 7.7 per cent of children from the two lowest income quintiles aged 15–16 years who were not enrolled in secondary education compared with 0.0 per cent from the wealthiest quintile (JSLC 2022).

Students' performance is assessed based on several national examinations at various levels of the education system. The 2019/2020 administration of the *Grade One Individual Learning Profile (GOILP)* had 28 545 valid assessment records being submitted to the National Student Registration System. Disaggregated by sex, the data indicated that 14 415 students were males, 14 111 females and 19 students for which sex was not reported. The highest proficiency observed was Number Concepts, 80.0 per cent. On the other end, General Knowledge had the lowest level of proficiency, 58.0 per cent.

For the *Grade-4 Literacy Test and General Achievement in Numeracy (Grade Four Numeracy Test)*, mastery in the exams remained steady between 2015 and 2018 recording 85.0 per cent in 2015 and 81.0 per cent in 2018. Observation of the performance of boys and girls in literacy and numeracy exams revealed a gender disparity—mastery in both literacy and numeracy were higher for girls than boys over the four years. Performance in the literacy test showed a reduction in mastery performance for both males and females; there was a 2.2 percentage points decline by females relative to 4.4-percentage points decline for males. On the other hand, improvements were observed in numeracy performance; females improved by 1.7 percentage points compared with 2.7 percentage points for males. The national average for numeracy over the period improved by 2.0 percentage points. There has not been any significant change in performance by either sex; this suggests that the same pedagogical approach has remained in place and an examination of the curriculum is needed to improve students' performance/outcome.

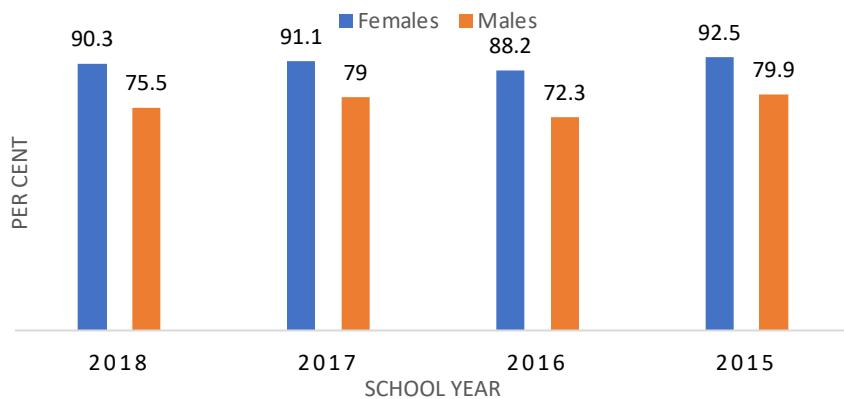


FIGURE 22 MASTERY IN GRADE 4 LITERACY TEST BY SEX (PER CENT), 2015–2018
SOURCE: JAMAICA EDUCATION TRANSFORMATION COMMISSION'S REPORT, 2021

In 2019, the *Primary Exit Profile (PEP)* which replaces the *Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT)* was introduced. The PEP places emphasis on the acquisition of 21st-century skills which include critical thinking, creativity, and communication. Of note, the number of students who sat the PEP examination in 2021, was 37 000, which represented a significant reduction of over 16 000 compared with the number of students who sat the GSAT 15 years ago. This signals the continuing reduction of the birth rate in Jamaica which must be considered as the education system implements its plans for the improvement of students' outcomes and school performance (NCE 2020). The impact extends beyond the education sector, as there are important implications for economic growth. With the onset of the pandemic and the accompanying fallouts and uncertainties, the birth rates have since fallen.

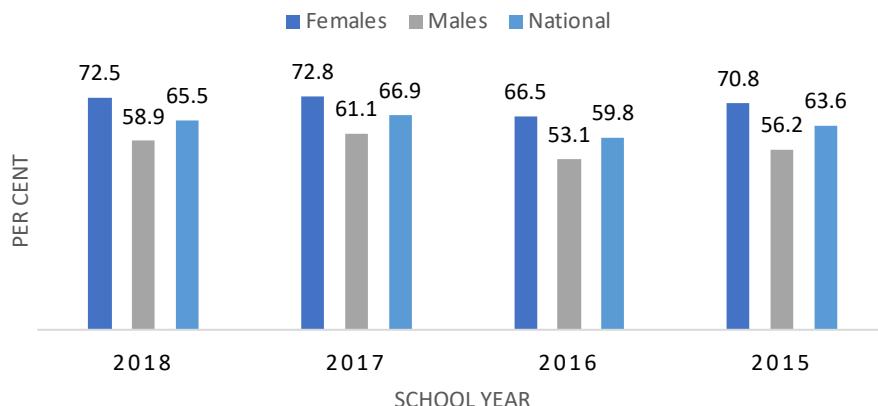


FIGURE 23: MASTERY IN GRADE 4 NUMERACY TEST BY SEX (PER CENT), 2015–2018
Source: Jamaica Education Transformation Commission's Report, 2021

The *Grade Nine Achievement Test (GNAT)* is offered to students at the end of grade 9 at All Age, Primary, and Junior High Schools for placement in Secondary schools. Students are tested in Language Arts and Mathematics. Since 2015, the mean score for Language Arts has remained under 70.0 per cent with 2019 recording the highest score of 68.0 per cent. Performance in Mathematics has always lagged behind Language Arts with the mean score remaining under 55.0 per cent; the lowest score was recorded in 2017, at 28.0 per cent.

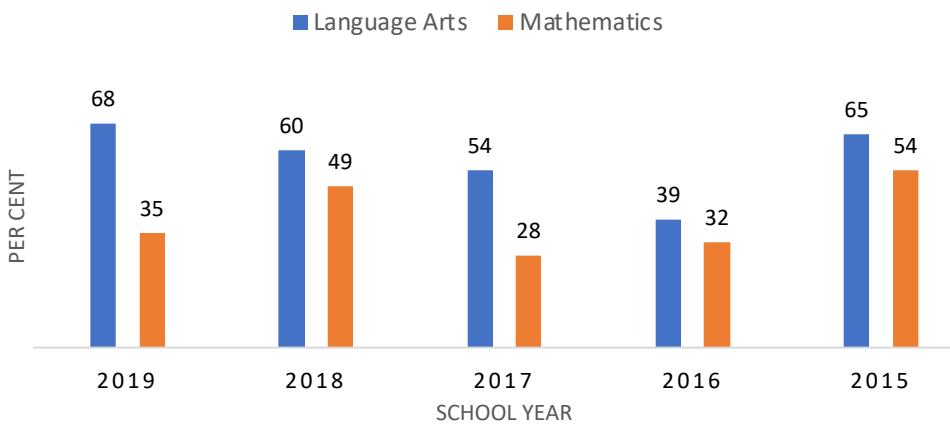


FIGURE 24: GRADE NINE ACHIEVEMENT TEST PERFORMANCE IN LANGUAGE ARTS AND MATHEMATICS (PER CENT), 2015–2019
Source: Jamaica Education Transformation Commission's Report, 2021

To address the low enrolment among the 17–24 cohort, the Sixth Form Pathways programme, inclusive of the Career Advancement Programme (CAP), was implemented to provide the opportunity for job market skills training or further education for students who would have otherwise completed their secondary education at Grade 11. The programme was first introduced in 2016 but was fully rolled out in October 2021. Students will be allowed to continue their education in one of three pathways (Traditional pathway, Technical pathway or General pathway), and it is anticipated that enrolment in post-secondary, tertiary or skills training institutions will improve. Students will graduate at the end of Grade 13 with the equivalent of an associate degree (CXC Associate Degree, Occupational Associate Degree) and a National School Leaving Certificate (NSLC). Provisions made under the programme will result in students being exposed to the requisite knowledge and skills needed for the world of work given that a component of the programme is executed in partnership with the HEART/NSTA Trust. The outcomes have the potential to positively impact the human capital development of the country.

Whilst this programme may have the potential to influence positive outcomes, it must be noted that mandating an additional two years in school without addressing structural issues and significantly improving the teaching methods and quality and the other elements of quality learning and social environment may not yield the intended results. There is therefore a need for a clear indication of an increase in the number of staff, expansion and or renovation of schools, improvement in resources and teaching materials, *inter alia* to support the successful execution of the programme.

Since the last VNR report, improvements have been observed in the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) exam pass rates for English Language and Mathematics except for 2021 where reductions were observed in both subjects. The reductions in performance may be due to the physical closure of schools to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease. Looking at the number of students with passes in five or more subjects including Mathematics and English, the data shows increase for the English Language in 2019 and 2020; with 2021 recording the lowest pass rate. Fluctuations were observed in the pass rate for Mathematics, however, the lowest pass rate recorded was in 2021. The disruption in attendance at physical school due to the COVID-19 pandemic may be the reason for this reduction.

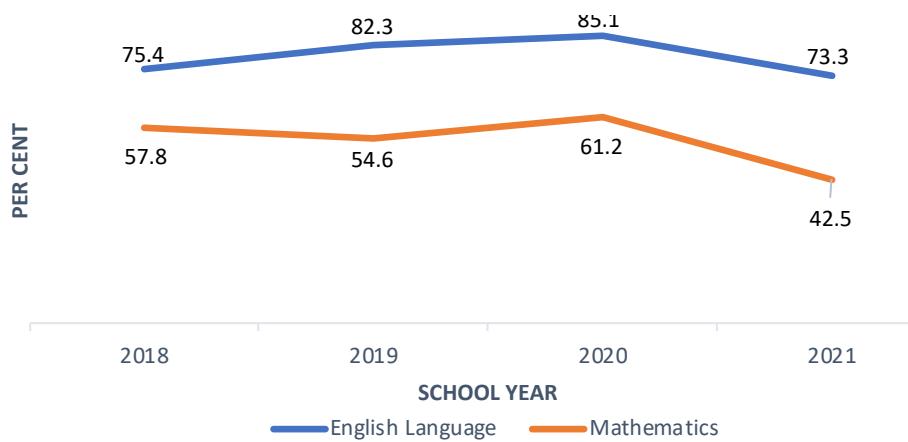


FIGURE 25: STUDENTS' CSEC PERFORMANCE IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND MATHEMATICS, 2018–2021

Source: Jamaica Education Transformation Commission's Report, 2021

TABLE 14: NUMBER OF STUDENTS PASSING 5 OR MORE SUBJECTS INCLUDING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND OR MATHEMATICS 2018–2021

Year	Passing 5 or more subjects including Mathematics and English Language	Passing 5 or more subjects including English Language Only	Passing 5 or more subjects including Mathematics Only	Passing 5 or more subjects including Mathematics and/ or English Language
*2021	6 323	4 123	401	10 847
2020	10 087	4 633	511	15 231
2019	9 234	4 235	392	13 861
2018	9 566	3 578	700	13 844

*Preliminary and last year Grade 11 enrolment was also used for some schools, hence enrolment is higher than the previous year noting that enrolment has been trending downwards based on the population.

*Note: Some students would have also sat and passed subjects in earlier grades or privately

Source: Ministry of Education and Youth

In addition to tuition-free education in state-run institutions, the government through several initiatives aimed at ensuring equitable and quality education provides nutritional support to students. The School Feeding Programme (SFP) was designed to assist in improving the nutritional status of students, promote regular school attendance, as well as enhance students' learning capacity. Students from the poorest households and those from rural areas were the main beneficiaries. Transportation support is also provided to students. Operations under the SFP were redesigned in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Food packages were distributed to children benefiting from the programme, an additional \$1.3 billion was provided to PATH beneficiaries by the government.⁵⁰

Reducing inequities and safeguarding the future of the nation's children have been the forefront of development planning, however, the effects of the COVID-19 restrictions highlight the imperfections in the system and demonstrate the difficulties experienced by the most vulnerable children. Based on reports from the MOEY as of May 2021, over 120 000 students had been absent from school or were not consistent in participating in school activities because of the pandemic. They were not engaged online, not watching the television programmes, not listening to radio sessions, not in contact with schools or dialogue with teachers as well as not going through their books. Targeted remedial programmes and support systems are therefore needed urgently to ensure that vulnerable children are not left behind.

While there have been general improvements in data collection in the education system over the years, the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the timely collection of data remain areas of concern.

Target 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

Since the last Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018, several programmes and initiatives have been undertaken with emphasis placed on achieving the desired educational outcomes which included improved students' performance at all levels of the system and improved access to social services for vulnerable students.

Longstanding issues of the early childhood sector remain, including overcrowding in some schools, the majority of teachers lacking the minimum required qualification of a diploma from a teacher-training institution as well as the sector being grossly underfunded. Additionally, there are unregistered institutions with limited facilities conducive to teaching and learning. However, in furtherance of the systemic qualitative improvements, the MOEY in 2018 adopted a K-13 Strategy⁵¹ to cater to the 0–18 years population in school. The programme provides age-appropriate interventions starting with early intervention and stimulation, pre-education and development at age three months to three-plus years and the rationalization of Early Childhood Institutions (ECIs) and engagement of trained teachers (Early Childhood). Education at the early childhood level is compulsory and is offered by community-operated Basic Schools, Public Infant Schools and Infant Departments as well as in Kindergarten Departments of Private Preparatory Schools. The main focus at this level is the readiness of children to enter primary school.⁵² Noteworthy, universal enrolment is registered at the early childhood level (3–5 years age group) for both girls and boys.⁵³

The early childhood rationalization process that involves the merging of clusters of Basic Schools as well as subsuming some into infant departments of primary schools seeks to improve efficiency and ensure effective learning environments for children as well as ensuring that early childhood institutions (ECIs) are compliant with regulations governing the sector. The process also seeks to ensure that more children will have access to trained teachers in established certified Government-operated infant schools or departments. As of 2020, the rate of ECI compliance with regulations was at a record high, with 94.8 per cent of ECIs island-wide applying for a Certificate of Registration; 16 ECIs received certificates during the year for a total of 271 certified institutions island-wide; a permit to operate was issued to 26 ECIs, bringing the total number of permits issued to ECIs in operation to 2 248.⁵⁴ The Early Childhood Commission (ECC) is doubling efforts to ensure that other ECIs are compliant with the stipulations of the sector.

At the early childhood level, parenting education and support were strengthened by the Early Childhood Development Commission through the establishment of 75 Parent Places with 48 being certified by the National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC). In 2021, some 100 parents were targeted by the commission for training to assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children, while encouraging a collaborative effort between home and school,⁵⁵ to improve development outcomes for children.

Under the *Effective preventive health care for 0–6-year-olds*, the Child Health and Development Passport⁵⁶ was

51 Strategic interventions targeting Kindergarten (Early Childhood) to Grades 13 (Secondary education).

52 Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC) 2018.

53 JSLC 2019.

54 Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2020.

55 <https://jis.gov.jm/features/npsc-expands-reach-to-parents/>

56 The Child Health and Development Passport was introduced into the health-care system as the primary tool for the monitoring and risk screening of all children from birth to age 17.

redesigned following an evaluation of its effectiveness and implementation. Work carried out by the commission also included early and effective screening, diagnosis and intervention for at-risk children and households. An important outcome was the evaluation of the Jamaica School Readiness Assessment for four-year-olds (also referred to as the Age 4 Assessment) and a sustainability plan developed, which includes a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for annual assessment and dissemination of results.

Target 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.

In recent years, concerted efforts have been made by the country to ensure that all Jamaicans irrespective of their socio-economic background have equal access to affordable and quality education and training opportunities. The Students' Loan Bureau (SLB) continued to support tertiary education through its revolving fund, which provides loans to qualified Jamaican students for tuition at local and overseas tertiary institutions approved by the MOEY. Grants are also made by the Bureau to loan beneficiaries who require additional support. For the 2019/2020 Academic Year, the Bureau received 13 601 applications of which, 98.6 per cent were approved. Loan amounts of over \$4.0 billion were disbursed, an increase of 26.4 per cent. The increase in loan amount is linked to the government's priority to ensure that more Jamaicans especially the most vulnerable can access funding to pursue tertiary education. Efforts have also been made to extend the period for starting repayment from six months to 14 months.

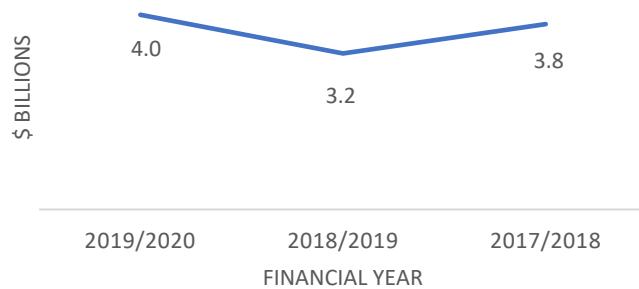


FIGURE 26 LOAN AMOUNT DISBURSED BY THE STUDENTS' LOAN BUREAU, IN \$ BILLION
SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA 2020

Over the last five years, there has been a reduction in interest rates from 12.0 per cent to 4.0 per cent, for some loans.⁵⁷ Data regarding quintile access to the Bureau were unavailable, however, data from the JSCLC 2019 revealed that some 4.5 per cent of individuals from the poorest quintile were enrolled in a tertiary institution, compared with 34.3 per cent from the wealthiest quintile. Currently, at the upper levels of the education system (17 years and over), there is a disproportionate under-representation of males, participants from the poorest quintiles and those from rural areas. Data from the 2019 JSCLC revealed that 13.7 per cent of males 19–24 years were enrolled in an educational/training institution compared with 19.2 per cent of females.

To address this issue, there is a need to revisit the structure of the curriculum, specifically how boys and girls are taught and make the appropriate changes to facilitate greater engagement of males in the education system, particularly at the

57 <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20190307/budgetdebate2019-slb-rate-cuts-four-policy-changes-borrowers>

tertiary level. Consideration should be given to an immediate thrust for specialist teachers trained to identify and address the learning challenges experienced by students. In 2019, the GOJ responded to the financial challenges of enrolling in higher education by ensuring that individuals employed by registered charities would benefit from 10.0 per cent of their loan balance forgiven for each year that they were employed full time to a charitable organization. The data suggests, however, that more needs to be done to ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are provided with adequate opportunities to pursue tertiary education.

The government is committed to addressing the current challenge of access to tertiary education by strategically addressing the issue of 35.0 per cent of the average 40 000 Grade 11 students transitioning to a Sixth Form Pathways programme, by mandating that students pursue an additional two years in an educational institution or a skills training programme. This is in keeping with the goal to "foster a system for ALL students to exit the secondary level with the knowledge, skills, competencies and attitudes which will have them ready for the world of work or to access tertiary level education."⁵⁸

The finalization of the merger of the National Youth Service and the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning with the HEART/NSTA Trust in 2019, and the subsequent rebranding to the HEART NSTA/Trust, provided the opportunity for more Jamaicans to access skills training, improving certification and targeting of unattached youth through the National Service Corps Programme (NSCP) and offering valuable work experience through the Hope Summer Work Programme and other programmes. Since the merger, there has been an increase in the enrolment and certification of individuals pursuing training. Total enrolment for the training period 2019/2020 was 141 748 participants. This represents an achievement of 95.3 per cent of the planned enrolment and a 17.1 per cent increase in the total enrolment over the previous year. Of the total enrolment, 60.0 per cent were females. While enrolment to the HEART NSTA/Trust has generally been good, there is a need to diversify programme offerings; increase the number of locations, especially in the rural areas; timely provision of certificates to students upon programme completion and the monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

A critical determinant of enrolment at the tertiary level is affordability. Based on data from the Economic and Social Survey Jamaica (2020), enrolment at tertiary institutions was estimated at 38 562 students, a reduction of 26.0 per cent relative to the previous year.⁵⁹ This reduction may be attributed to the global and associated restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in a loss of income and restrictions on face-to-face teaching and learning. While there has been an increase in the number of scholarships being offered to pursue tertiary studies, the utilization and access to these scholarships are limited because many students are not aware of them. There is a need to both raise awareness and increase the provision of scholarships and/or tuition support for students from low-income households⁶⁰.

To maximize labour market outcomes, there is a need to raise awareness of the labour market demands to inform programme choices to alleviate the issues of loan repayment in the context of limited employment opportunities. Focused interventions are needed to ensure that education at mainly the secondary and tertiary levels are responding to the needs of the youth and their realities, and the overall economy.

58 <https://moey.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/APSE-CAP-Factsheet.pdf>

59 <https://mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/Public-Expenditure-Review-of-the-Education-Sector-in-Jamaica-2.pdf>

60 <https://mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/Public-Expenditure-Review-of-the-Education-Sector-in-Jamaica-2.pdf>

Target 4.4 By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship

Several programmes have been developed and/or supported by the government to engage youth and adults in developing relevant skills through vocational and entrepreneurial training. Most programmes target youth; however, some institutions offer training to citizens irrespective of their age. During the 2019/2020 financial year, some 68 482 (59.0 per cent female) youth were trained through the HEART/NSTA Trust. Total youth certification for the period was 23 680, of which 62.0 per cent were females. Through the different programmes, individuals are provided with on-the-job training; training in digitization and document management; agriculture, agro-processing, leadership, social skills, environmental awareness and a healthy lifestyle; among others. Despite the high enrolment at the Trust, challenges remain with the rate of certification, attributed to failed assessments, dropouts, and absenteeism. A report tabled in the Parliament by the Auditor General's Department in September 2020 found that HEART, up to June 2020, achieved a certification rate of 45.0 per cent.

While efforts have been made to increase the proportion of youth with requisite information and communications technology (ICT) skills by equipping laboratories in schools with computers and other devices, the pandemic has highlighted the major issues of access and ownership of devices needed to participate in online teaching and learning among teachers and students. A major issue observed is the prohibitive cost associated with owning a laptop or desktop computer, particularly among the most vulnerable population. Through the efforts of government, the private sector, international development partners and others, many children and educators were provided with devices to continue with online teaching and learning. One of the positive consequences of the pandemic has been the increase in the number of households and students with computer devices. However, with the ownership/access to a device came the reality that many were not technologically literate, as well as many of the communities across the island, were without internet connectivity.

Data from the JSCL 2018 revealed that ownership of a working computer was reported by 38.4 per cent of households. The same report also indicated that of households with a working computer, a laptop was the most prevalent device and only 64.9 per cent of households had internet access. This suggests that the internet access that individuals have is from mobile broadband networks via handsets. To fully exploit the benefits and potentials of ICTs, there is a need to build human resource capacity and improve supporting infrastructure.

Target 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Both sexes in Jamaica have equal access to education at all levels of the system. The data show that there is almost equal enrolment between the sexes among the 3–16 years age group. However, the data indicate a reduction in general enrolment and between the sexes in the older cohorts. Enrolment among persons aged 17–24 years has remained low which suggests that interventions are needed to ensure that individuals continue education and training by targeting males. Over the years, the JSCL series reveal that in the 17–24 years age group, more females were enrolled in an educational institution or skills training facility. The government's response to this is the complete rollout of the Sixth Form Pathways Programme aimed at extending secondary schooling by two years. The new Sixth Form Pathways Programme is currently being facilitated in all secondary schools along with 24 private and 10 public tertiary institutions.

While enrolment overall has remained high, the challenges experienced by students of the special needs community are to be addressed. Many schools do not have appropriately trained educators, infrastructure or resources in place to create an enabling and inclusive environment for persons with disabilities (PWDs). Other issues affecting PWDs include the

limited number of specialized institutions to treat specific disabilities and the prohibitive cost of accessing these services. If we are to leave no one behind, then the issues affecting the PWDs should be given greater priority. Recognizing the rights and valuable contributions of PWDs, as well as part of the government's thrust towards a more inclusive society, the Disabilities Act (2014) took effect in February 2022. The Act makes provisions to safeguard and enhance the welfare of persons with disabilities across Jamaica.⁶¹

The Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)⁶² continues to support the most vulnerable households. Educational support is provided to students at all levels of the education system. Students who are beneficiaries of the programme are supported through the provision of books, transportation, and nutrition. Support under PATH includes Post-Secondary (Education) Grants and Tertiary (Education) Grant, the transportation subsidy and the School Feeding Programme.

To ensure that inequalities are reduced, transportation subsidies are provided to students irrespective of socioeconomic background for those living in/or attending schools in the Kingston Metropolitan Area through the state-run bus transport company. A similar system was rolled out in rural areas, through the rural bus system, targeting beneficiaries of PATH and other needy students. While the rural bus system does not benefit all students, it demonstrates efforts being made by the government to ensure that the most vulnerable students have access to education with plans to expand the service to all students.

Since the last report, no major disparities were observed in enrolment across the different regions (Rural Areas, Other Urban Centres-OUC and the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Areas-GKMA) by age groups. Similar to enrolment across the different regions, no major disparities were recorded for the 3–16 age group. However, the data indicated a corresponding increase in enrolment with age, for persons in the GKMA. In the area of certification, findings from the JSLC 2019 indicated that the largest proportion of respondents with academic qualifications was from the GKMA, 47.5 per cent, followed by OUC, 42.1 per cent, and Rural Areas, 31.9 per cent. The data also showed that the wealthiest quintile had a larger proportion of individuals (58.6 per cent) with subject passes/academic achievement⁶³ compared with individuals from the poorest quintile, 23.1 per cent. To address this disparity, the government has introduced several programmes to encourage individuals in rural areas to continue their educational pursuits or engage in vocational/skills training.

The National Unattached Youth programme aims to improve livelihood through skill development and training of unattached youth. The programme targets youth, ages 17–30 years, across the island. Total enrolment under the NUYP was 10 752 youth, while certification totalled 2 775 youth. By sex, enrolment was 30.4 per cent male and 69.6 per cent female. Of the total percentage of enrolled males and females, 19.8 per cent of males and 28.4 per cent of females were certified. Though several programmes support unattached youth, there is a need for monitoring and follow-up to determine the outcomes of trainees concerning labour market participation once they have completed their tenure under these programmes, and to evaluate the overall performance of the programme.

61 <https://jis.gov.jm/disabilities-act-to-take-effect-february-14-2022/>

62 The Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) is a conditional cash transfer (CCT) programme. It provides cash transfers to poor families, who are subject to comply with conditions that promote the development of the human capital of their members. Retrieved from: <https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/programme-advancement-through-health-and-education-path-jamaica>

63 Subject passes/academic achievement include: school leaving certificates, Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC), degrees, professional qualifications and training certificates.

Target 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, and achieve literacy and numeracy

Jamaica has made significant strides in improving literacy and numeracy. The adult literacy rate for Jamaica stands at 88.1 per cent (2014). Offered under the HEART/NSTA Trust, the High School Diploma Equivalency (HSDE) programme provides a ‘second chance’ for adult learners to strengthen their literacy and numeracy skills through three programme options—Basic (Grades 1–6); Intermediate (Grades 7–9) and Proficiency (Grades 10–11). In 2020, a total of 17 171 individuals were targeted for training under the HSDE programme. Actual enrolment was 18 489; some 17.0 per cent more than targeted. Certification was attained by 60.1 per cent.

There is a need for more current data on literacy and numeracy in Jamaica; the latest available data is from 2014. A proxy for the competence of individuals in literacy and numeracy in the Jamaican context is the performance in examinations such as English Language and Mathematics at the CSEC level. Substantial improvements have been recorded in the pass rates of students sitting terminal examinations at the secondary level since the last VNR report, particularly in the subject areas of Mathematics and English Language. For the 2017/2018 academic year, pass rates were 75.4 per cent and 57.8 per cent for English Language and Mathematics, respectively. Compared with the 2019/2020 academic year, pass rates for English Language and Mathematics were 86.4 per cent and 61.2 per cent, respectively. The restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic negatively impacted students’ performance in these two areas with pass rates recorded at 73.3 per cent and 42.5 per cent for English Language and Mathematics, respectively.

Numeracy and literacy can also be looked at in the context of the academic achievement of individuals. The JSLC 2019 captures data on the academic achievement of persons 14 years and over. Individuals within the 20–24 years age group registered the largest proportion (60.7 per cent) of persons with passes, whereas individuals who were 60 years and over-represented the lowest proportion (12.7 per cent).

Target 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and nonviolence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture’s contribution to sustainable development.

The National Standards Curriculum (NSC) was designed to promote the development of 21st-century skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and strategic and critical thinking. The 2019 administration of the Primary Exit Profile (PEP) which replaced the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) is a component of the NSC. The NSC spans primary and secondary levels, starting at grade one and ending at grade nine. Under the NSC, emphasis is being placed on project-based and problem-solving learning, with science, technology, engineering and mathematics/science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEM/STEAM) integrated at all levels.⁶⁴

Collaborative activities between the Jamaica Teaching Council and the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) Junior Environment Programme (NJEP) provided an opportunity for over 700 teachers at the Grades 4–6 level to be exposed to the Social Studies and Science objectives that relate to the environmental science in the National Standards Curriculum (NSC). Teachers were exposed to a 15-hour self-paced online training course titled, Planning and Delivering Environmental Topics in the National Standards Curriculum (NSC) Science and Social Studies Units. The NJEP

⁶⁴ <https://jis.gov.jm/national-standards-curriculum-promotes-inclusive-learning-morris/>

was conceptualized in 2019 and designed to impart expert and updated information and resources on the thematic areas of the NSC related to the NEPA's mandate – to manage and protect Jamaica's land, wood, air and water.⁶⁵

Critical issues relating to sustainable development are also incorporated into the national curriculum as well as through programmes such as the Health and Family Life Education (HFLE) and the implementation of the Family Life Education and the Citizenship Education Programme.⁶⁶

In 2019, the Ministry of Health (MOH) was rebranded as the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOHW) with a deliberate focus on healthy lifestyle practices and combating non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Subsequently, the Interim Guidelines for Beverages in Schools which applies to all schools up to and including the secondary level, which is under the remit of the MOEY were implemented. The Interim Guidelines for Beverages in Schools were introduced pending the completion of the National School Nutrition Policy (NSNP) and the National School Nutrition Standards (NSNS).

Sustainability is also being promoted through the Jamaica 4H Club. Training is provided to members aged 5–35 years in the areas of agriculture, agro-processing, leadership, social skills, environmental awareness, and a healthy lifestyle. The club has 91 218 registered members in over 1100 clubs. By sex, registered club members were 39 259 males, 47 960 females, and 3 999 members who did not state. A total of 6 631 female members were between the ages 15 and 24 years compared with 5 543 males.

To promote a culture of peace and nonviolence, several activities have been executed under the USAID/ MoEY Partnership for Improved Safety and Security in School programme including:

- Uniformed Groups – The programme partnered with 21 organizations to support the establishment and/or strengthening of 635 uniformed groups in schools to provide structured intervention and support programmes for over 23 000 students.
- Three new groups were introduced in secondary schools Integrity Club in 30 schools, Trafficking in Persons Club in 11 schools, and Safety and Security Ambassadors Club in 17 schools.
- A behaviour change intervention programme was implemented in five primary schools.
- The procurement and distribution of over 800 hand-held metal detectors in several schools and the installation of 28 walk-through metal detectors.

Target 4.A Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all

Investments in education infrastructure have been ongoing, particularly concerning creating an inclusive and enabling environment that is child and disability friendly. During the review period, allocation of \$1.4 billion to carry out expansion activities; electrical upgrading; construction of security fencing; upgrading of the ministry's facilities and making outstanding payments for infrastructure projects carried forward was advanced through the 2020/2021 Capital Projects. Improvements to facilities have been accelerated through the provision of additional classrooms to alleviate the shift

65 https://websitearchive2020.nepa.gov.jm/new/media_centre/press_releases/releases/2020/pr20200813-over_700_primary_school_teachers_educated_through_the_nepa_junior_environment_programme.php

66 MOEYI, Education Ministry Focuses on Resocialization at Grade 7, retrieved from <https://moey.gov.jm/education-ministry-focuses-resocialisation-grade-7>

system and overcrowding in schools. In fostering a more inclusive and disability-friendly environment, the government advanced plans to establish three special education diagnostic centres across the island. Through private placement, the Ministry provided financial support to 233 students who had to be placed in selected private special education facilities due to inadequate space in the public education system. A total of 665 students received tuition support in private special education institutions.

With the onset of the pandemic, some 550 special needs children benefited from support provided by the UNICEF to the MOEY Special Education Unit and Special Olympics Jamaica (SOJ). The students received adapted tablets (with specific approved content) and one-year data plans for educational purposes. In collaboration with the Early Childhood Commission (ECC), UNICEF supported the distribution of 1100 Play and Learn kits to children under age 6 in quarantined zones. In preparation for a safer return to school, UNICEF partnered with civil society specifically Food for the Poor, to improve access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and handwashing facilities for 20 000 children in 19 schools in high-risk COVID-19 areas.⁶⁷

Target 4. B By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships for developing countries in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and African countries for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training, and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programs in developed countries and other developing countries

The country continues to benefit from scholarship opportunities provided by several international partners. Scholarships were disbursed in several areas including industry and trade policy, theology and global ICT. The Government of the Republic of Korea provided scholarship opportunities for US\$300 000 (38.9 million).⁶⁸ The cooperation programme with the People's Republic of China (PRC) resulted in scholarships awarded to five persons for US\$215 529 (\$30.9 million) to pursue studies in the PRC in the areas of clinical medicine, and microbiology, mathematics education as well as safety science and engineering. The Government of the Republic of Cuba, under the Jamaica/Cuba Bilateral Scholarship Programme, awarded scholarships amounting to US\$381 920 (\$54.7 million) in the disciplines of medicine, general surgery, internal medicine, and nursing.⁶⁹

Approximately \$320 million has been spent on training 65 000 teachers since August 2020 (NCE 2021 Report).

The launch of the "Own Your Own Device Incentive Programme" provided over 24 000 vouchers to assist parents to provide a device for their children. Some 18 000 tablets and 12 000 desktop computers were distributed by the Ministry of Education and Youth to teachers and students, mainly at the primary level, at the early stages of the (Patterson 2020). Other device initiatives included the provision of 40 000 additional tablets/laptops to the poorest students in the upper primary Grades 4, 5 and 6 as well as public secondary schools have been provided with the funding to procure laptops for students in grades 10–13 who are beneficiaries of PATH.

Overall, there has been a general reduction in the amount awarded for scholarships and training through Official Development Assistance, in 2018 the amount was US\$4.2 million compared with US\$1.3 million in 2020. The reduction in amount may be as a result of the pandemic accounting for funds being diverted to other areas.

⁶⁷ <https://www.unicef.org/media/100321/file/Jamaica-2020-COAR.pdf>

⁶⁸ Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 2018

⁶⁹ Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 2018

Target 4. C By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states

In April 2020, a partnership with the UNICEF, National College for Educational Leadership and the MOEY was formed to create a virtual leadership course. The course provided school leaders with exposure to relevant technology and knowledge of various tools, resources, platforms and practices of leading remotely.

As of September 2021, some 2 428 school leaders (27 cohorts) completed the course.⁷⁰ An Online and Blended Professional Development Initiative between the UNESCO and the MOEY was also implemented in August 2020. The initiative focused on equipping a cohort of 40 teachers and master teachers in Jamaica with the skills, up-to-date tools and resources to apply innovative teaching methods or adaptive pedagogies, to strengthen teachers' ability to respond to the current crisis, and to strengthen the resilience of Jamaica's education system to future shocks.⁷¹

The continued focus was also given to improving teaching and quality assurance through the professional development of more than 5 000 educators at the early childhood, primary and secondary levels. In the 2018/2019 academic year, the proportion of trained teachers was 79.0 per cent, 91.0 per cent and 81.0 per cent for early childhood, primary and secondary schools, respectively.

Lessons Learnt

The COVID 19 Pandemic created the opportunity to expand the provision of online learning and increase access to education across borders. Many Jamaican students enrolled in colleges and universities all over the world as many universities significantly reduced their fees and moved teaching and learning online.

The pandemic highlighted the challenges in accessing data for the education sector, especially data on children with disabilities. The National Learning Management System was fast-tracked to ensure that educators, administrators and students could interface on the same platform. The launch of the "Bridging the Gap – Child Find" Initiative during the summer of 2021 to complement the efforts of school-based teams to identify, locate and reengage approximately 120 000 students who could not be accounted for using any of the three established modalities of remote learning: online/computer-aided, audiovisual or access to learning kits /printed materials.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted that not enough focus was being placed on incorporating education technology in all schools. A greater focus is needed to ensure that schools are properly resourced with technology to improve teaching and learning. While this affected students across all socioeconomic backgrounds, it was recognized that students from low-income families and rural areas were most impacted. Many of those students did not possess the requisite resources needed to participate in online teaching and learning and were from areas with limited or no internet connectivity. To tackle this issue, government, along with the private sector, international development partners and other stakeholders, partnered to ensure that teachers and students were provided with devices, data and other resources to continue teaching and learning.

⁷⁰ [https://www.unicef.org/media/107966/file/Virtual%20instructional%20leadership%20course%20\(Jamaica\).pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/107966/file/Virtual%20instructional%20leadership%20course%20(Jamaica).pdf)

⁷¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/jamaica/teachers-training-online-and-blended-learning-skills-ensure-quality-education-during>

Way Forward

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted and, in some cases, exacerbated the inequalities present in society. The economic and social progress made before the pandemic have been significantly impacted by learning loss due to the containment measures identified as a major concern for Jamaica. There is a need to address the disparities in access to, and participation in education by geography, sex and socioeconomic status. Though enrolment remains high across education levels and an increase in the number of individuals enrolled and certified in vocational and skills training, enrolment in higher education (tertiary) remains low, and there is a need to increase the participation of males and persons from low-income categories. Work continues in the area of policy development and revision of policies with several policies being advanced since 2018. Investments in education infrastructure and teacher training have also remained at the forefront of government priorities.

By May 2021, over 120 000 students had been absent from school or were not consistent in participating in school activities because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, efforts by the ministry and the schools with the support of partners are making significant steps in finding and re-engaging these students to continue their education.

Major issues to be addressed for the sector going forward include:

- Learning loss and the erosion of basic academic skills due to lack of practice especially at the early childhood and primary levels. These years are critical in the development of children and, being out of school for almost two years without the guidance of trained educators challenged their educational development.
- The potential loss of earnings is expected over the long term. According to recent World Bank simulations, a 10-month school closure has put Jamaica at risk of losing 1.3 years in learning-adjusted years of schooling. This translates to an average annual earning loss per student of USD 1 099, which aggregates to a total lifetime earning loss of USD 5.5 billion – a third of Jamaica's annual GDP.⁷²
- Deterioration in the mental health and physical status of children and educators.
- Loss of protection from home and community-based violence.
- Disruption in apprenticeship schemes and other work-based related experience as technical and vocational training were negatively impacted.

The pandemic highlighted the inequities and gaps that existed and exist within the education system, particularly for vulnerable students. There is a need for urgency in bridging the gaps for the most vulnerable students and providing a more inclusive learning environment. Policies should be developed to offer a more inclusive approach to education, that is, both in-person and online. This is not a new approach but rather, continuing the modality that had been introduced when schools had been physically closed. There is also an opportunity to improve record management for schools, ensuring that there is documentation to support monitoring of the sector. Another opportunity is the ongoing capacity development of educators. The pandemic revealed that the level of capability and virtual literacy differed among

educators, particularly in rural areas and among the older educators in using different types of software and platforms for teaching and learning. Ensuring that all educators are trained can lead to the acceptance of e-learning.

Additionally, preparations for future shocks by building back better should be prioritized. The pandemic had a devastating impact on the education sector, and the country must not only recover but also use this experience to anticipate and prepare for future shocks. An important consideration for the future is ensuring that the learning loss is remedied including with after-school and summer school programmes. A deliberate focus on learning and tutoring programmes will help address the learning gap, particularly among the most vulnerable students. For the education sector to build back better, it requires holistic, sustainable and deliberate collaboration among stakeholders.

Resource Requirements

Protect the education budget: The COVID-19 pandemic has jeopardized the economy of countries and prompted cuts in budgets. To ensure the protection of the education sector and resilience in recovery, the budget must be protected to ensure gains made are not jeopardized and schools most in need are adequately supported. Given the loss of income for many households, individuals wishing to continue their education may not be able to do so. Government and private interests could provide incentives for students to remain in school through scholarships, grants, bursaries, as well as volunteering opportunities with a financial aid component.

Improve or construct infrastructure to support digital literacy: Many schools before the pandemic lacked the necessary infrastructure and internet capacity to support a robust digital literacy programme and were unable to respond to the need to transition to online learning.

Partnership – Government and international organizations must coordinate efforts to ensure continuity of learning and protect the domestic and international financing of education. Applying principles of redistributive justice, resources must be directed to those who have been hardest hit economically, socially and educationally.⁷³

⁷³ https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/education_in_a_post-covid_world-nine_ideas_for_public_action.pdf

5 GENDER EQUALITY



GOAL 5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Context

The Human Development Report 2020, notes that Jamaica's Human Development Index (HDI) for 2019 was 0.734—which put the country in the high human development category—positioning it at 101 out of 189 countries and territories. The HDI for women was 0.730 and 0.735 for men. The Gender Development Index (GDI) is a measure of gender gaps in human development achievements; it accounts for disparities between women and men in health, knowledge and living standards. Jamaica's GDI score increased from 0.975 in 2015 to 0.994 in 2019, as shown in Figure 27. For the Gender Inequality Index (GII), which measures gender-based inequalities in reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity, Jamaica ranks 88 of 162 countries, with a GII score of 0.396⁷⁴.



FIGURE 27: GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT INDEX (GDI) 2015–2019 JAMAICA
Source: United Nations Development Programme

Jamaica has made credible gains in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment. Several of the government's institution-building initiatives and legislative measures have contributed to this. The National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) seeks to safeguard the principle of equality between women and men. It sets out the framework for a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to fully integrating gender in every area of national life. The NPGE emphasizes the importance of gender mainstreaming within Government of Jamaica (GOJ) Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). These initiatives are led by Gender Focal Points who are responsible for mainstreaming gender in all areas of work of the MDAs. The implementation of the NPGE has led to the development and implementation of the country's first National Strategic Action Plan to combat gender-based violence; partnerships and collaboration to collect and analyse sex-disaggregated data; increased advocacy for equity and equality in several legislation and policies; and

the establishment of an accountability mechanism (the Gender Advisory Council). Recognizing that men and boys are critical in achieving Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the government has remained steadfast in its commitment to men and boys and, in keeping with this policy imperative, has been engaging more effectively with men and boys around issues about gender norms, power relations, and gender-based violence.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls



FIGURE 28: HIGHLIGHTS GENDER EQUALITY, 2018-2022

Discussion

Target 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere

The Gender Sector Plan of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan 2009 and the National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) 2011 provide the framework for non-discrimination and the protection of the rights of all citizens. Since 2018, the GOJ has worked to implement and strengthen the legal and regulatory framework to address discrimination against women and girls. A raft of legislation including the Sexual Offences Act, 2009, the Offences against the Person Act, 1865 (amended 2014), the Domestic Violence Act, 1996 and the Child Care and Protection Act, 2004 are being reviewed in line with the NPGE to ensure equality, non-discrimination under the law and access to justice. Of note was the approval and passage of the Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act of 2021, which should ensure the protection and redress against all forms of unwanted sexual advances. The past five years have seen progress in advancing gender equality, women and girls' empowerment and ending discrimination. These are recognized in the areas such as education and social security.

Over the years, education has focused on access and parity—closing the enrolment gap between girls and boys. There is greater attention on critically assessing retention, achievement and the quality and relevance of education, which leads to improved enrolment and retention and ensures that boys and girls can fully realize the benefits of education.

Although a purposeful effort was made to ensure equitable access for all students, after three months of virtual learning, approximately 7.0 per cent remained unreached.⁷⁵ Among this population are teenage mothers, who account for 16.0⁷⁶ percent of all births in Jamaica and come from predominantly low socioeconomic, rural, and inner-city communities. The Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation provides educational services for school-aged girls during and after pregnancy and also supports these young mothers by providing day-care services. This support increased during the COVID-19 pandemic to include remote education, welfare, and psychological support.

Significant strides have been made in ensuring that social security initiatives are inclusive and that gender nuance is considered during implementation. However, challenges persist; these include:

- Gender inequality is often only seen as synonymous with targeting women as a vulnerable group or in their role as mothers or caregivers, without addressing other socio-economic issues such as income security;
- Programmes do not fully integrate criteria related to location, ethnicity, disability, and social biases, which compound gender differences and reinforce disparities.

Jamaica used a gender-transformative approach for national programmes and policy imperatives including the National Policy for Gender Equality and the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy. The GOJ provided economic empowerment and income security support for women, especially those in lower socio-economic sectors, including:

- increased support, which was provided to victims of gender-based violence through the opening of an additional shelter to temporarily house victims and their children;
- care packages were provided to household workers, victims and survivors of gender-based violence and other vulnerable clients, to maintain food security within these households;
- the GOJ provided an additional cash grant payment to beneficiaries of the PATH programme. This in effect increased by 50.0 per cent the aggregate amount that beneficiaries, including pregnant and lactating mothers, would have ordinarily received during the period.

The GOJ continued to pursue measures to prevent discrimination and promote the rights of women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The government also embarked on initiatives to empower and address the needs of persons with disabilities including women and girls. These included the passage of the regulations for Disabilities Act 2014 in October 2021; public education and awareness-raising on the Act; completion of three Codes of Practice (Education and Training, Healthcare and Employment) to support the implementation of the Act (another on Public Transportation was initiated in 2021). In 2020, there were 1 495 new registrants added to the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD) Registry, almost triple the number of new registrants in 2019, 564 persons. This is indicative of the concerted efforts made by the GOJ to have persons with disabilities linked to services. The supportive legal and regulatory framework will influence the lives and social and economic prospects of women with

⁷⁵ Support for school-aged moms in Jamaica during COVID-19. Dasmine Kennedy. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/06/18/support-for-school-aged-moms-in-jamaica-during-covid-19/>. June 2020.

⁷⁶ Baby boom shock Near 60,000 births in last decade among girls under 20.

disabilities, but these will have to be supported by other programmes, initiatives, political will and a continued enabling environment. Greater efforts will have to be made to have women and girls with disabilities access goods and services, especially for those living in rural Jamaica.

In relation to discrimination and HIV status, Figueroa et al. (2020)⁷⁷ show that heterosexual men, with a high-risk profile due to having multiple sex partners or having Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), accounted for 43.0 per cent of newly diagnosed HIV infections. Women who had no obvious risk but who acquired HIV because of the risk behaviour of their male sexual partners accounted for 32.0 per cent of all diagnosed HIV cases. This percentage is higher than that among women of high risk, who have multiple sex partners or have acquired STIs, which was reported to be 13.0 per cent of new HIV infections. Table 15 indicates the HIV prevalence in key populations in Jamaica.

Table 15 HIV PREVALENCE IN KEY POPULATIONS IN JAMAICA (1990,2000,2010,2017)

Subgroup	1990	2000	2010	2017
Men how have sex with Men (MSM)	9.6%	32.3%	31.4%	29.6%
Transgender women			52.9%	51.0%
Female sex workers	12.0%	9.0%	5.0%	1.0%
Inmates		3.3%	2.5%	6.9%
Homeless			8.8%	13.8%
STI clinic attendees	2.5%	7.1%	Male 4.6% Female 2.0%	Male 7.3% Female 2.0%
Antenatal clinic attendees	1.0%	2.0%	1.0%	0.9%

Source: Draft 2020-2025 National HIV Strategic Plan

Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual, and other types of exploitation

As is the case globally, reported cases of violence against women and girls in Jamaica can be driven by an intersection of cultural, economic, social and political factors. The Women's Health Survey 2016 (a comprehensive examination of the nature and prevalence of violence against women and girls in Jamaica) indicates that 1 in every 4 females in Jamaica has experienced physical or sexual violence by a male partner during their lifetime.⁷⁸ Women are at risk for both physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner, with young women under 30 years old, women who are poorly educated, those who are economically vulnerable and those who cohabited as minors, shown to be more consistently at risk of abuse.

77 Figueroa JP, Duncan JP, Bailey A, Skyers N. The HIV epidemic in Jamaica: a need to strengthen the National HIV Program. Rev Panam Salud Publica. 2020; 44: e157.

<https://doi.org/10.26633/RPSP.2020.157>

78 Women's Health Survey 2016. <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/Women-health-survey-2016-Jamaica-Final-Report.pdf>.

Partnerships to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls

Public-private partnerships have been strengthened to combat the issue of gender-based violence. Since 2019, the government has provided financial and technical support to several non-government and community-based organizations. The Community Outreach through Partnership for Empowerment (COPE) Initiative aims to raise awareness and promote good practices in response to the rising levels of GBV. It also promotes meaningful engagement with men and boys through a series of interventions to achieve behaviour change.

The Spotlight Initiative (SI) supported the implementation of the NSAP-GBV. The SI is a global, multi-year partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030. Benefits of the partnership included the operationalization of the national shelters and a 24/7 hotline for victims of GBV. This collaboration aims to advance women's empowerment, by ensuring that women and girls experiencing family violence have access to quality essential services. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need for access to these services.

BOX 4: PARTNERSHIPS TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

To combat the issue of gender-based violence, the Jamaican government approved and has subsequently implemented the National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-based Violence (NSAP-GBV) 2017-2027. The NSAP-GBV has five strategic areas: prevention, protection, intervention, legal procedures and protocols for data collection. This plan presents an integrated, systematic, coordinated multi-sectoral approach to address gender-based violence in Jamaica. In keeping with the five strategic priority areas of the NSAP-GBV, the government has since 2018 established shelters to provide protection and temporary living arrangements for female victims of domestic violence. The shelters provide counselling, psychosocial support and skills training opportunities to survivors and their children. A National Shelter Strategy has also been developed to serve as a critical framework to guide the design and implementation of shelters across Jamaica. To further support transition living arrangements for victims of abuse, technical assistance was provided to the only non-government agency that operates a shelter, for the renovation of the transition house for female victims and survivors of Gender-based Violence (GBV).

Structured public education and behaviour change initiatives were also implemented to address and eliminate the conditions that support violence against women and girls. The public education campaigns encourage community members to take collective responsibility to eliminate GBV by disseminating messages in communities across the country. Outputs of the programme included awareness-raising campaigns on GBV in schools and other public institutions. The government recognizes that men play an important role, largely as perpetrators as a result, initiatives for men were implemented within the context of understanding Jamaican masculinities and recognizing that there are particular challenges that males face, including violence and mental health issues.

To address the issue of trafficking in persons, the government has strengthened the framework for addressing human trafficking, with a specific focus on meeting international standards for the protection of citizens and penalizing offenders. Additionally, the Office of the National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking was established, the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) National Plan of Action was updated and the Trafficking in Persons Manual and Trafficking in Persons Standard Operating Procedures for health workers were developed.

Target 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation

Practices such as early, child and forced marriage is harmful to the development of girls and are often linked to poverty and low labour force participation. The Jamaica Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2011 (this survey is the most recent conducted in Jamaica)⁷⁹, showed that in 2011, 7.9 per cent of women aged 20 to 24 years were married or in a union before the age of 18 years and 1.4 per cent before the age of 15. The Women's Health Survey 2016 also noted that young girls who entered into relationships with much older men are more likely to be exposed to violence. However, there are numerous agencies, legislation and child-friendly policies that are in place to protect the rights of the child as well as to strengthen the family; of note are:

- The Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA), promotes child-friendly policies and ground-breaking programmes to strengthen families.
- The Office of the Children's Advocate, a Commission of Parliament mandated to enforce and protect the rights and best interests of children.
- The National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence, which was launched by the Ministry of Education and Youth in 2019. The plan signals Jamaica's commitment to the Global Partnership to end violence against children and will be implemented over five years. Its goal is to create and maintain a protective environment supportive of, and responsive to the issues of violence, child abuse and maltreatment of children in Jamaica. Central to the plan is the collaboration that is required amongst several MDAs, civil society groups and other stakeholders during implementation.

Target 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.

A time-use survey was undertaken in the 2018 Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), to determine the amount of time men and women spend doing various activities, such as paid work, childcare, volunteering, and socializing. The survey revealed that Jamaican women carry a greater burden of unpaid domestic and care work in the home. Women spend an estimated 294 minutes – or about five hours – carrying out these tasks daily, compared to men's 172 minutes, or just under three hours⁸⁰. The survey results indicate the importance of placing care at the core of the social, economic and political agendas at the national level, to create awareness, consensus and alliances around its relevance.

In keeping with the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) Decent Work Agenda, social justice and equal opportunities remain priorities for the GOJ. Progress to date includes the adoption of several international labour standards to address inequalities and women's right to work, especially for domestic workers. Jamaica has since ratified the ILO Convention 189 (C 189) on Decent Work for Domestic Workers. Convention 189 has since indicated the significant contribution of domestic workers to the national economy and has allowed for advocacy for increased job opportunities for workers with family responsibilities, and greater scope for caring for ageing populations, children and persons with disabilities.

The impact of COVID-19 has further exacerbated the vulnerabilities of domestic workers, with job losses that were

⁷⁹ Another round of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) is to be undertaken in 2022.

⁸⁰ Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions 2018

higher for domestic workers in informal employment. Notwithstanding this, the Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act 2021 speaks to the prevention of sexual harassment in the workplace, including within a domestic setting. Sensitization and public awareness sessions have been ongoing to address ratifying Convention 190 on Eliminating Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.

The Employment (Flexibility Work Arrangements) (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act was passed by the GOJ in 2014; this provides a framework for employers to establish flexible work hours to facilitate the needs of families and workers. The flexi-work arrangement also provides an avenue for increased employment opportunities and enhances productivity. Consequently, due to the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in 2020, the government and the private sector have implemented some flexible work arrangements to accommodate employees.

The government actively worked to implement programmes and initiatives aimed at addressing issues affecting women. Over the period 2018 to 2021, priority was given to the implementation of the national social protection system expressed in the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy 2014. The gender perspective is integrated into all areas and levels of the social protection system, underpinned by the life-cycle concerns of all citizens. A key guiding principle of the social protection system is gender equity, which shows the recognition and commitment of the GOJ to vulnerable groups as per the National Policy for Gender Equality 2011. The Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) continues to be the major cash transfer programme to support the vulnerable in mitigating the effects of poverty. The beneficiaries include children (health and education), the elderly, persons with disabilities, the adult poor, and pregnant and lactating mothers. The majority of the household heads on the PATH programme are women.

Target 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

The Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework 2018-2021 included strategies to ensure women's equal participation at all levels. The strategies are:

- Mainstream gender indicators in all sectors
- Develop a gender database as well as gender protocols
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming through structured programmes, committees and councils, such as the Gender Advisory Council (GAC)⁸¹.

The plan highlights the key factors that underpin these strategies: strong and accountable institutions, political commitment to effective management of the State; transparency in government; a justice system that is accessible and fair; equity and tolerance; and respect for human rights and freedoms. The GOJ, in its commitment to public sector reform, good governance and gender equity, also developed policy guidelines for the nomination, selection and appointment of board members of public bodies in Jamaica through the Public Bodies Management and Accountability (Nomination, Selection and Appointment to Boards) Regulations 2021. The purpose of these policy guidelines is to articulate a comprehensive and transparent process, based on best practices and approaches for the appointment of board members. The guidelines also refer to the support mechanisms needed to give greater accountability to board members. Adherence to and reporting on this process is expected to lead to greater confidence in corporate governance for public bodies. The policy guidelines also highlight diversity as a selection requirement. Consideration of gender in

the appointment process is enshrined in the National Policy for Gender Equality (2011), which states that public sector boards must have a minimum of 30.0 per cent females as members. It further states that ministers should strive towards having no less than 30.0 per cent of either male or female representation on each Board⁸². Currently, there are many women at the highest levels of economic decision-making bodies in Jamaica. As of December 2021, women comprise 60.0 per cent of the heads of government ministries, departments and agencies.

The full and active participation of women in legislatures, equal to men, is not just a goal in itself, but central to building and sustaining democracies. The equal presence of women, their leadership and perspective in parliaments are essential to ensure greater responsiveness to citizens' needs. There are more women legislators in Jamaica's Parliament than ever before; notwithstanding this, women continue to be underrepresented in the areas of politics and public decision-making. The reasons for this are multifaceted and complex and include entrenched gender roles. Since the 2020 general election, however, women currently make up 29.0 per cent of the 63-member House of Representatives, this is up from 19.0 per cent in the House of Representatives in 2016. This is the largest percentage of females in the House of Representatives in the country's history.

Target 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences

The GOJ remains committed to ensuring universal and equitable access to sexual and reproductive health for all members of the society. There has been a no-user fees policy for all public medical facilities since 2008. Services include all antenatal and post-natal services for all pregnant and lactating mothers.

In keeping with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Beijing Platform for Action, the GOJ has ensured that all women have access to primary care services where they can receive sexual and reproductive health services as well as family planning, and HIV and STIs related services. There was an integration of sexual health services and HIV-related services, which is delivered through the National Family Planning Board (NFPB). This programme was integrated across all primary care (clinics) centres. Women and girls are able to receive information and services along with HIV-related information, testing, counselling, treatment and follow-up care.

To improve access to family planning and other reproductive health services in Jamaica, the government through the National Family Planning Board (NFPB) provides family planning information as well as family planning visits. Data revealed that 104 231 family planning visits were made to public health facilities in 2020 compared with 191 532 in the previous year, a decrease of 45.6 per cent⁸³. Of the number of visitors for family planning services, 96.1 per cent was female. Between 2019 and 2020, female visits decreased by 49.9 per cent and male visits declined by 74.5 per cent. This decline in visits, between the two periods, for both males and females may be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the subsequent confinement measures implemented by the government. Notwithstanding this, the capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) were strengthened to provide services and supplies to persons at the community level due to the pandemic⁸⁴.

82 National Policy for Gender Equality 2011

83 Population and Health- Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Planning Institute of Jamaica.

84 Population and Health- Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Planning Institute of Jamaica.

TABLE 16: UTILIZATION AND COVERAGE OF PUBLIC SECTOR FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES, 2018–2020

Indicators	2018	2019 ^r	2020 ^p
Estimated population for family planning^a	575 816	522 943	-
Attendance at family planning clinics	202 983	191 532	104 231
Number of family planning users (per annum)	56 292	55 056	30 573
Number of new acceptors	39 759	42 754	18 079
Number of new acceptors as a % of total users	70.6	77.7	59.1
New acceptors < 20 yrs. of age as a % of new acceptors	13.8	12.4	11.2
New acceptors as a percentage of the target population	6.9	8.2	-
Male attendance as a % of total attendance	5.3	5.0	3.9

a – Target population = 69.0 per cent of the women in the reproductive age group 15 to 49 years (2006–2008), 72.5 per cent from 2009 to 2014, 76.0 per cent from 2014 through to 2019

p – Provisional

Source: National Family Planning Board (NFPB)

The Jamaica VNR Report 2018 noted the lack of up-to-date data about the country's reproductive health status. Work has since advanced for the implementation of the Reproductive Health Survey (RHS) in 2022. The RHS will be spearheaded by the NFPB, in partnership with the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). The RHS will capture accurate and sound evidence-based sexual and reproductive health data on the status of total fertility; contraceptive use; maternal and childcare; infant and child mortality; HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections; and gender-based violence within the country.

The Programme for the Reduction of Maternal and Child Mortality (PROMAC) is a national initiative implemented to provide critical care and neonatal services for mother and child. This effort seeks to build the capacity of health professionals in the areas of nutrition, critical care nursing and neonatology, as well as improve infrastructure and equipment to care for all critically ill mothers and babies. The programme is strategically designed to reduce maternal and child mortality.

Target 5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

The GOJ through the NDP and related sector plans as well as the outcomes of studies on labour market reform, seeks to address gender differentials in the labour market with particular provisions to improve the status of female workers in the labour force. Among the actions emanating from these processes were:

- A Gender-Disaggregated Study for Financial Inclusion designed as a component of the updated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Entrepreneurship Policy 2018.

The policy allows for equality and equity of opportunities between women and men-owned businesses. The policy supports: facilitating training, by allocating 50.0 percent of the training budget to women entrepreneurs; developing business incubators to facilitate ICT innovation and the use of indigenous materials with at least 30.0 per cent of the women-owned business; and collaborating with the Women Business Owners (WBOs) Jamaica Limited in the development of business-related policies/strategies for women.

- Undertaking a feasibility study for the introduction of unemployment insurance for workers, as it is recognized that this will assist in building resilience and allowing for labour market stability and mobility for women and men.
- The implementation of the Women's Entrepreneurship Support (WES) Project which was launched in 2017. In 2021, under phase two of the project, 10 women in medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) each received grants to assist with the sustainability and expansion of their businesses. The WES Project was developed to promote women's involvement in entrepreneurship in the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) sector. Beneficiaries also received training in business and skills development, capacity building and institutional strengthening.

Promoting women's entrepreneurship is an important part of Jamaica's development agenda. The premise is that an increase in women's entrepreneurship and economic participation widens the platform for women to become innovators, job creators, and problem solvers, and the associated positive impact this ought to have on economic growth and poverty reduction.

Women's participation in the labour force is indicative of socio-cultural shifts in the perception of working women. The increase in the number of females that are pursuing higher education—which provides opportunities for better-paying jobs—has created a demand for greater participation in the labour market for both women and men.

TABLE 17: KEY INDICATORS, JAMAICAN LABOUR MARKET- 2018-2020

Key Indicators	2018		2019		2020	
	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males
Employed in the labour force	547 000	672 200	567 100	684 400	514 900	643 300
Unemployed in the labour force	69 400	46 300	53 200	43 300	78 200	61 300
Unemployment rate	11.3	6.4	8.6	6.0	13.2	8.7
Labour force participation rate	57.9	70.4	58.5	71.0	56.7	69.5

Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica Labour Force Survey

Over the years, female unemployment has consistently been higher than that of males. Although females generally have higher levels of educational attainment compared with males, females accounted for 59.9 and 55.1 per cent⁸⁵ of the unemployed labour force in 2018 and 2019. The characteristics of the Jamaican economy lend themselves to this disparity, with lower educational requirements needed for men to be absorbed into large industries such as Construction, Agriculture, and Wholesale & Retail, and Repair of Motor vehicles & Equipment. This is partly evidenced by the number of employed males without training (74.1 per cent) compared with females in 2020⁸⁶. Notwithstanding, women's employment increased between 2018 and 2019.

The COVID-19 pandemic eroded some of the previous gains in female labour force participation and employment. The Labour Force Survey 2020 indicated an average decline of 5.3 per cent and 5.1 per cent for female and male employment respectively. While the pandemic affected employment generally, it had a considerable impact on the youth population, with female youth being affected the most. Female youth employment registered the highest percentage decline, at 9.8 per cent followed by an 8.4 per cent decline in male youth employment⁸⁷. The decline of female employment has led to a fall-off in female economic activity. Coupled with the pandemic, female unemployment was driven by a range of reasons, for example, women may opt against, or be prevented from pursuing formal employment opportunities due to taking care of children or family members and engaging in other productive activities that are outside of the formal labour market.

There is a gender division of labour in Jamaica, with women overrepresented in the services sector; as of January 2020, there were 379 900 females and 274 600 males in the services sector⁸⁸. These jobs are perceived to be more at risk in times of financial and environmental crises, as was experienced during the COVID 19 pandemic, especially within the hotels and restaurants industry. Men are overrepresented in agriculture and fishery (75.0 per cent), manufacturing (67.0 per cent) and construction (97.0 per cent) industries, indicating a gender gap.

Target 5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women

Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, National Strategy 6-6: Sector Strategy, emphasizes the transformation of the prevailing gender ideologies regarding science, engineering and technology, by enhancing the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women. In alignment with this strategy, the Draft Science, Technology and Innovation Policy has included Gender and Equity as one of its policy development areas.

Target 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels

Several key policy documents were implemented and legislation drafted to ensure equitable access to services for the vulnerable, as well as the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Gender considerations are explicit throughout these instruments and further advance the commitment to equal rights for males and females at all levels of society. These frameworks include but are not limited to:

⁸⁵ Statistical Institute of Jamaica October Labour Force Survey 2018, 2019

⁸⁶ Labour Market Chapter – Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Planning Institute of Jamaica.

⁸⁷ Labour Market Chapter – Economic and Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Planning Institute of Jamaica.

⁸⁸ Employed Labour Force by Industry Group STATIN <https://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx>

- The Disabilities Act 2014 and Regulations 2021
- Revised Population and Sustainable Development Policy (ongoing)
- National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme 2018
- National Housing Policy 2019
- Revised National Policy for Senior Citizens (White Paper 2021)

In 2019, a Joint Select Committee of Parliament was established to review and strengthen the provisions of specific pieces of legislation intended to protect women, children and others vulnerable from violence and abuse. These legislative instruments are the Sexual Offences Act, 2009, the Offences against the Person Act, 1865 (amended 2014), the Domestic Violence Act, 1996 and the Child Care and Protection Act, 2004. Particular emphasis was placed on the offences and punishment under these legislative instruments including the assault of women, children and the elderly; sexual offences against women, children and older persons; and other violent crimes against women, children, persons with disabilities and the elderly. Recommendations were made for these pieces of legislation to be amended to facilitate better administration of justice and effective protection of these special groups.

In October, the Parliament passed The Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act, 2021. It contains provisions for dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace, schools, correctional institutions, and places of safety, nursing homes, medical and psychiatric facilities, among other places. The passage of this Act represents the government's commitment to protecting its citizens and marks a significant milestone in protecting victims of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

The GOJ facilitated several sensitization sessions with public and private entities on the issue of sexual harassment. Emphasis has been on emotional intelligence, labour laws, grievance handling, good industrial relations practices and preventing workplace bullying. Partnerships have been forged with academia to offer structured training programmes and research studies on sexual harassment. These interventions have contributed to an appreciation among public sector workers of the importance of promoting an environment free of sexual harassment in which all categories of workers are treated with respect and dignity.

Other relevant legislation to support greater transparency and efficiency in the hearing of cases and thereby reducing case backlog were passed, and capacity was strengthened for the drafting and promulgation of legislation including capacity building of relevant court personnel. The state and particularly local-level capacity for Alternative Dispute Resolution was strengthened by the establishment of some Justice Centres, and key policy and programmatic interventions were implemented to support victims in their interactions with the justice system.

The COVID-19 Perspective

The pandemic significantly affected the livelihoods of more than 50.0 percent of households in Jamaica, including those where the mother's income was the only consistent financial resource available to the family (World Bank 2021)⁸⁹. The most vulnerable individuals and families were affected the most as the pandemic exacerbated issues of low and uncertain

⁸⁹ World Bank (2021) Caribbean Women Fight Through the Challenge of COVID 19 https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/news_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/news+and+events/news/caribbean-women-fight-through-covid-19.

incomes, with the added risk of contracting the virus and falling ill. The closure of schools brought additional financial and other stresses to parents, especially women. Many children were not able to attend online schooling after school closures for varying reasons and more women and men lost jobs.

The introduction of COVID-19 containment measures which limited movement outside of the home, often within small, inadequate living quarters as well as the inability to resolve the immediate challenge of providing for the family led to an increase in reports of gender-based violence.⁹⁰

In light of the negative impact of COVID-19 on the Jamaican society, the GOJ has implemented measures to ensure provision of basic services and resources and address issues facing the most vulnerable. Barriers exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic on security, education, livelihood and health remain in sharp focus.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

International commitments, namely the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention) have influenced how the Government of Jamaica promotes gender equality and ensure that women's autonomy and rights are protected. These key instruments provide the lens that the government uses to identify and address issues of inequality between men and women and to ensure that all women and girls are guaranteed the effective enjoyment of human rights without discrimination.

The GOJ has made significant strides toward eliminating violence against women by using a structured, coordinated and systematic approach that is guided by the relevant policy frameworks. The approach is also victim-centred and recognizes the importance of including males in the implementation strategies. Many steps have now been taken to raise awareness and create a more gender-responsive security and justice system.

Jamaica has had some success in mainstreaming gender in MDAs through an established network of Gender Focal Points. Focal points are identified and trained to spearhead the development and implementation of approved gender action plans within their respective MDAs and ensure that gender is integrated into all national policies, plans, programmes and operations using a gender equality framework. To date, more than 100 focal points have been trained, and have been implementing gender-sensitive programmes within their respective areas of work.

Jamaica has a robust legislative framework; since 2018, work has been ongoing to ensure that the laws to protect the rights of women and girls are relevant and contextual. Women's social, political and economic empowerment has been supported through many initiatives and programmes aimed to increase participation, agency and voice for women and girls in all situations.

Gender gaps persist in the areas of employment and income-earning levels. There is continued sexual division of labour related to women's participation in the labour market, particularly in new technology-driven areas of science, engineering, and entrepreneurship. Occupational choices for women relative to men are influenced by women's paid and unpaid care responsibilities, which were significantly increased under pandemic restrictions.

Notwithstanding these gaps, the government through its national machinery and other implementation mechanisms has sought to ensure a more inclusive approach to combating gender-based violence, advancing gender equality, and promoting a gender-sensitive approach to achieving balanced economic growth and sustainable development. The Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Gender Advisory Council are critical mechanisms charged with the development and implementation of policies and programmes that support women's empowerment. There has been a significant shift in focus on situating initiatives within the broader gender and development paradigm, and policies and programming continue to remain guided by the Jamaica National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) 2011 and the Gender Sector Plan of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan.

Additionally, building resilience to the impacts of climate change is one of the key priorities of the government. Given the cross-cutting nature of climate change, there was a need to develop an integrated approach to effectively build resilience at all levels, especially for rural women and women exposed to varying levels of vulnerabilities due to climate change. As such, the Climate Change Division (CCD) through its sectoral climate change adaptation programmes acknowledges the importance of a gender-responsive approach to disaster risk reduction and resilience building. To this end, the GOJ collaborated with several international and regional development partners to ensure more effectiveness and sustainability of programmes by including gender-sensitive strategies in the planning and implementation phases. Climate Change Focal Points have also been established within the MDAs and are responsible for developing and managing their sectoral strategies and actions concerning climate change and for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on these strategies and actions.

Way Forward

Jamaica ranks highly among the countries making significant progress towards achieving gender parity, sitting 42nd of 153 nations, as outlined in the 2021 Global Gender Gap Report. Notwithstanding, to achieve Goal 5, progress has to be maintained by ensuring that robust policy and legislative frameworks are sustained to facilitate a comprehensive and coordinated approach to fully integrating gender in every area of national life. It is also imperative that the process to review and revise relevant legislation is completed. Further work also needs to be done concerning women in decision-making. There is a need to create an enabling environment for and train more women in political and public leadership. There needs to be continued focus on eliminating gender-based violence. This is to ensure the protection of the human rights of women and girls; the loss of women's lives and the inter-generational impact on the welfare of their children and families; the demonstrable cost borne by the public health service; and loss of productivity related to high levels of male incarceration.

While much progress has been made, there is an ongoing need to continue all the relevant gender mainstreaming actions and structures, particularly to ensure that all new policies and revisions are gender transformative; indicators are identified, agreed on and regularly collected, and that temporary special measures are implemented where necessary. There is a need to examine the root causes of poverty and gender inequality and begin gender awareness-raising at a very early age with equitable focus on the issues based on gender to avoid marginalisation. Additionally, cultural barriers and norms that influence men's behaviours and subsequently the lives of women must be addressed.

Additionally, more work needs to be done to ensure the highest level of political commitment that is required for effectively addressing gender inequalities, particularly at the highest level of society. There is also a need for sufficient human and financial resources to achieve required institutional and social change over short, medium and long terms. Such resources are required for the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of gender equality in Jamaica.

Resource Requirements

Budget allocation for gender initiatives indicates a government's commitment and understanding of the challenges involved. Currently, the GOJ supports the implementation of the gender mainstreaming across MDAs. Through monthly subventions, the government also provides financial support to non-government organizations that are working to transform gender relations. However, the allocations are not sufficient to adequately support the volume of work.

The National Policy for Gender Equality speaks to the implementation of gender-responsive budgeting within the public sector. Gender-responsive budgeting involves analysing government budgets for their effect on the sexes and the norms and roles associated with them. It also involves transforming national budgets to ensure that gender equality commitments are realized. Gender-responsive budgeting is essential for gender justice and fiscal justice. A gender-responsive budget is one that works for everyone (women and men, girls and boys). Allocation of government resources based on this principle will ensure the equitable distribution of financial resources for the implementation of gender policies, programmes and projects. Notwithstanding this, partnerships must continue to be leveraged with all stakeholders including our international development partners to ensure the continuity of the work in the area of gender and development.

Gender -Responsive Budgeting

Essential for **gender justice** and **fiscal justice**.

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



GOAL 6

Ensure availability and sustainability management of water and sanitation for all

Context

Water resources and access to safe water for consumption are critical to human existence. For Jamaica, the main source of water supply is rainfall, which manifests as surface water (rivers and streams), groundwater (wells and springs), direct rainwater (through evapotranspiration and rainwater harvesting) and through a private project by the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited (JPS) desalination was introduced in 2016. Jamaica's water resources are excellent in quantity and relatively abundant, earning the island the moniker "land of wood and water." The country's main water sources are concentrated in the north of the island, while water demand is greatest in the south.

The agencies with responsibilities for the sector are:

- the Water Resources Authority (WRA), with responsibility for regulation, control and management of the nation's water resources;
- the National Water Commission (NWC), with responsibility for the public supply of drinking water and sewage treatment;
- the National Irrigation Commission (NIC), with responsibility for the supply of water for agricultural and irrigation;
- the Rural Water Supply Company, with responsibility for the execution of small rural projects;
- the Solid Waste Management Authority and Environmental Health Department of the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MOH&W), with responsibility for the monitoring of waste water and treatment;
- the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation with responsibility for oversight of the Water Sector as well as the implementation and monitoring of the Water Sector Policy; and evaluating the effectiveness of the programmes and initiatives aimed at meeting its requirements.

Along with the WRA are other regulators, namely the MOH&W, the national Environment & Planning Agency (NEP) and the Office of Utilities Regulation (OUR).

Concerning domestic water supply, the provision nationally is shared among the following institutions accordingly:

- National Water Commission – island wide (urban and rural) by Statute
- Parish Councils – rural areas by Statute

- GOJ Enterprises – specific supply areas by Licence
- Private Enterprises – specific supply areas by Licence
- ODPEM – island wide under conditions of disaster.

The liberalization of the water services sub-sector facilitated the inclusion of the participation of Private Enterprises as set out in the National Water Policy (1999). Consequently, housing developers can develop their water supply system to support their respective housing developments and utilize the option of operating these private water supply systems rather than handing them over to the NWC, as was previously required. Subsequently, five such private companies were licensed by the Office of Utilities Regulation to operate accordingly.

Jamaica through various institutional and related policy-led initiatives recognizes the role clean water supply and sanitation offer in advancing sustainable development and improved quality of life for all, by strengthening the water infrastructure. This is articulated in the Revised National Water Sector Policy & Implementation Plan 2019; the Water Sector Plan; Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, the guiding frameworks for development objectives and outcomes within the sector, as well as the Medium-Term Economic Framework, the mechanism through which Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and the SDGs are being implemented.

The prioritization of SDGs is embedded in its close alignment and integration in the country's national sustainable development framework. These goals mirror the comprehensive and ambitious social, environmental and economic reforms articulated and are being advanced by Jamaica. Concerning Goal 6, its links are manifested in several national outcomes articulated in Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan to include, "Healthy and Stable Population", "Strong Economic Infrastructure", "Sustainable Management and Use of Natural Resources", and "Hazard Risk Reduction and Adaptation to Climate Change". Underpinning the NDP are numerous policies and strategies, which produce the twin effect of guiding a multiplicity of sectors while fulfilling the desired outcomes of the national vision and the SDGs.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning clean water and sanitation.



FIGURE 29: HIGHLIGHTS, CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 6.1: By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all

The activities in the water and related sector are guided by the National Water Sector Policy (NWSP) & Implementation Plan (2019), which is also aligned with the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan. Critical to the achievement of Goal 6 is the work of the Water Resources Authority (WRA), the agency legally mandated to manage, protect, and control the allocation and use of Jamaica's water resources. It has been established that Jamaica has a surplus of freshwater resources to meet human and ecological needs up to 2025. Therefore, access (given the need to move water from the north of the island where it is more abundant to the south where the population/demand is greater), quality and distribution that would be of paramount importance. According to the JSLC 2019, improved drinking water sources are the proxy indicator by which access is measured. Included in this and designated safe drinking water are indoor or outdoor tap/pipe, public standpipe, bottled water, and trucked water from the NWC. All other sources, including harvested rainwater, wells, rivers and streams are considered unimproved sources. The responsible agencies are the NWC, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and some private providers.

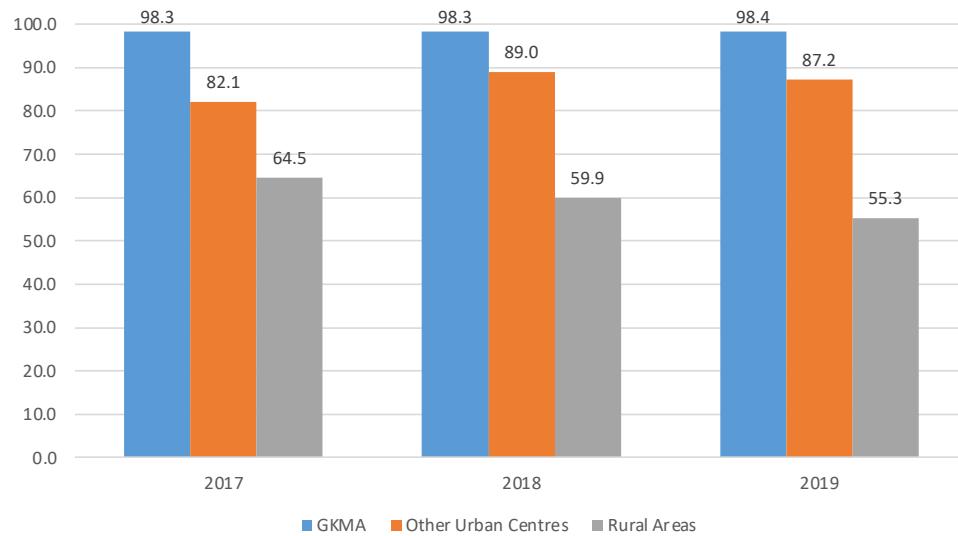


FIGURE 30: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION FOR SOURCE OF DRINKING WATER 2013–2019
Source: Jamaica Survey Living Conditions 2019

Several issues related to Goal 6 along with policies, programmes, projects and initiatives to address these were highlighted in the previous VNR. Despite these interventions, and the continued work, a number of these issues have not been fully addressed and include:

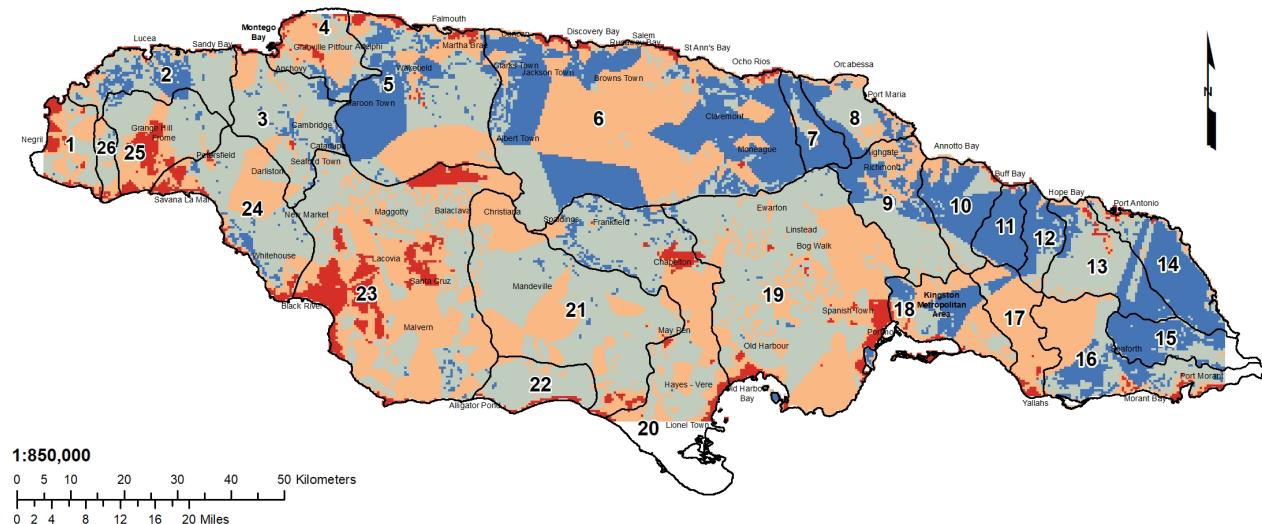
- Threats to water quality (Figure 31)
- Ageing infrastructure and under metering for 15.0 per cent of the population
- Inequalities regarding access to the drinking water sources by geographic region
- Inequalities in access to improved drinking water sources by geographic region and low level of connection to a sewerage network
- Environmental pollution and hazardous waste management

- Unsustainable land and water management agricultural practices
- Need for better quality climate and hydro-meteorological data for decision-making support



Draft

Limestone Aquifer Vulnerability



LEGEND		No.	WMU Name	No.	WMU Name	NOTES	
[21]	Watershed Management Unit	1	South Negril – Orange River	14	Divers River	Aquifer vulnerability refers to the potential for pollution of the aquifer at a given geographical location.	
[Blue]	Low Vulnerability	2	Lucea River	15	Plantain Garden River	Aquifer Vulnerability derived using the DRASTIC rating system based on seven weighted parameters used to calculate vulnerability values. The parameters and weights are:	
[Grey]	Medium Vulnerability	3	Great River	16	Morant River	Depth to Groundwater (5) / Recharge of Aquifer (4) / Aquifer Media (3) / Soil Media (2)	
[Orange]	High Vulnerability	4	Montego River	17	Yallahs River	Topography (Slope) of land / (1) Impact of Vadose Zone (5) / Conductivity of Aquifer (3)	
[Red]	Very High Vulnerability	5	Martha Brae	18	Hope River	DRASTIC makes four major assumptions:	
	DRAFT (2012) Prepared by the Water Resources Authority	6	Rio Bueno – White River	19	Rio Cobre	(1) The contaminant is introduced at the ground surface;	
		7	Rio Nuevo	20	Rio Minho	(2) The contaminant is flushed into the groundwater by precipitation;	
		8	Oracabessa – Pagee River	21	Milk River	(3) The contaminant has the mobility of water;	
		9	Wagewater River	22	Gut-Alligator Hole	(4) The area evaluated is over 40 hectares/0.4 km ² in area	
		10	Pencar – Buff Bay River	23	Black River		
		11	Spanish River	24	Deans Valley River		
		12	Swift River	25	Cabarita River		
		13	Rio Grande	26	New Savannah River		

FIGURE 31: LIMESTONE AQUIFER VULNERABILITY

Source: Water Resources Authority

Concerning the universal and equitable access to safe and affordable water supply, data provided by the JSLC 2019 indicates that 76.6 per cent of households had improved drinking water sources compared with 78.4 per cent reported in the JSLC 2018. Disaggregated according to region, 98.4 per cent of households in the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA) had access to improved drinking water sources, Other Urban Centres (OUC) 87.2 per cent and Rural Areas 56.0 per cent. Comparatively, the GKMA remained relatively flat over the three years, while respective declines of 1.3 percentage points and 4.1 percentage points in access to improved water sources in OUC and Rural Areas, respectively.

Disaggregation by quintile showed that more than 60.0 per cent of households in all quintiles reported improved drinking water sources in 2019 and 2018. Also linked to access is the proximity to improved sources. While the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) recommends a distance of 30 minutes or less, the Jamaica Water Sector Policy proposes a shorter journey in distance travelled of 500 m. According to the JSLC 2019, some 55.8 per cent of households utilizing public sources travelled less than the 500m compared with 61.3 per cent in 2018. Further, all households in the GKMA travelled less than 500 m. The situation differs for the OUCs and Rural Areas, at 74.3 per cent and 51.1 per cent respectively. The improvement in the proportion for OUCs may be attributed to the increase in the proportion having access to improved sources and is consistent with projects rolled out by the NWC up to 2019.

Target 6.2: By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations

Improved access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene and the end of open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations would propel the country towards the universal achievement of same by 2030. As per the JMP 2021, Jamaica has the lowest level of hygiene services in the Caribbean with 67 per cent of the population having access to basic hygiene services, 16 per cent with limited service (without water or soap) and 17 per cent having no hygiene facility. There is need for greater investment in hygiene services especially in the context of the pandemic. Compared with 2018, there was a 4.7 percentage point increase to 86.2 per cent in households with water closets in 2019. The JSCL data indicated that for the comparative years (2019 and 2018), all households reported increased access to an improved sanitation facility (water closets)—the GKMA a 5.8 percentage point to 97.6 per cent, OUCs 4.7 percentage point to 86.1 and Rural Areas 2.4 percentage point to 77.6 per cent. Over the two years, there has also been a noticeable increase in all types of facilities used. However, water closets linked to onsite disposal systems and Pit Toilets have been most prevalent in rural areas. The percentage of households utilizing Pit Toilets remained relatively unchanged at 18.1 per cent, which in 2018 was the second most commonly used sanitation facility for Quintiles 1, 2 and 3.

The quality of Jamaica's water is reportedly very high and has been over the years. This is associated with the ambient quality, for which Jamaica's standard is generally high. According to the WRA, 92.1 per cent of the rivers within the 10 hydrologic basins were considered to be of good ambient quality in 2016. Based on the National Ambient water quality standard or the WHO guidelines for drinking water, the WRA reported that for 2018, the proportion of Jamaica's total water body, containing acceptable levels of Nitrate, Sodium, Chloride, Sulphate and Total Dissolved Solids separately was 97.0 per cent, 99.0 per cent, 98.0 per cent, 100.0 per cent and 80.0 per cent respectively. The preservation of this quality through an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) framework is imperative as the country seeks to maximize economic and social welfare without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems and the environment.

Target 6.5: By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate

In acknowledgment of this SDG target 6.5, Jamaica, through the 2019 Water Sector Policy, established and began implementation of the IRWM. The extent to which this is attained is measured in percentage terms from 0 (no implementation) to 100 (fully implemented). In 2020, Jamaica achieved 50.0 per cent overall implementation compared with 42.9 per cent in overall implementation in 2016. The 2020 implementation rate is above the average of 37.0 per cent for the Latin America and Caribbean region but below the global average of 54.0 per cent (UN STAT).

The need to ensure the sustainable use of freshwater resources cannot be overstated and includes the promotion of efficient water use. Consequently, other measures aimed at addressing the level of water stress have been undertaken to achieve target 6.5. The level of water stress, which is defined as the portion of freshwater withdrawal as a portion of available freshwater resources, has been relatively stable throughout the period 2014–2016 at approximately 33.0 per cent. Efforts to improve water efficiency include a Water IQ Initiative (WIQI), which is a conservation campaign aimed to raise awareness in schools of proper water management. Sector-wide campaigns include the encouragement of recycling wastewater in the Bauxite/Alumina industry (which has reduced the rate of freshwater withdrawal from aquifers) and institutionalized best practices for the treatment of wastewater in the hotel sector.

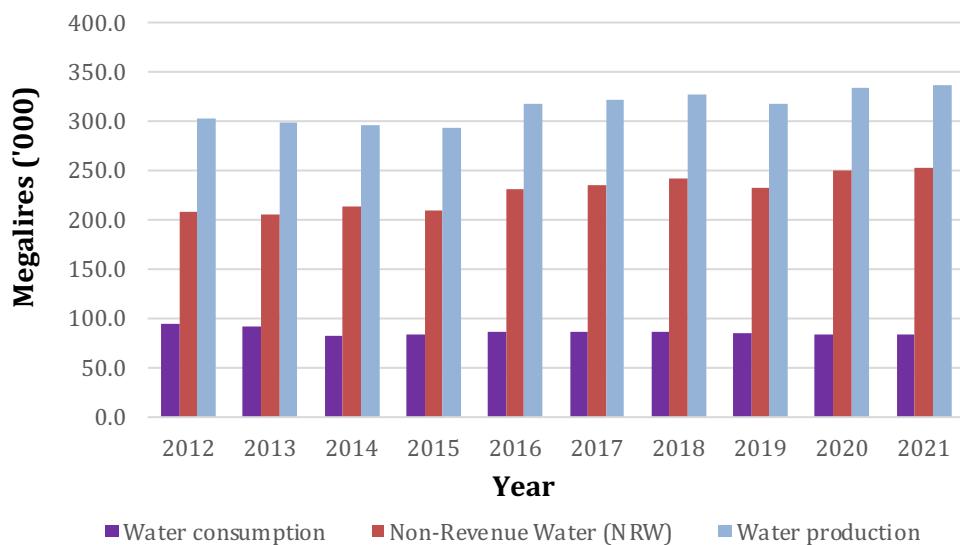


Figure 32: WATER CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 2012-2021

Source: Compiled by PIOJ with Data Supplied by NWC

Additional progress under Goal 6 was facilitated under the four components of the KMA Water Supply Improvement Project, more so Components 1 – Rehabilitation of Potable Water Supply for the KMA and more specifically the Non-Revenue Water sub-component. An island-wide NRW Reduction similar to the Kingston and St Andrew (KSA) - Co-Management NRW Reduction Programme should yield results that are beneficial to the sustenance of freshwater resources, as reduced wastage directly impacts the extent to which the resource is abstracted and contribute to mitigating the impact of climate change. The National Water Commission, in its report on the programme's progress noted that there was a reduction in the NRW volume in the KSA—moving from a baseline of 117 061 m³/day in 2016 to 79 000 m³/day.⁹¹ This reduction exceeds the production of the two largest Water Treatment Plants in the KSA system — the Mona at 38 184 m³/day and the Constant Springs Water Treatment Plant at 40 500 m³/day. Phase 2 of the KSA - Co-Management Project is recommended to enhance sustainability, water efficiency, and improvements in service delivery. The issue of non-revenue water is crucial to the NWC's sustainability and resource efficiency, as it accounts for 75.1 per cent of total water produced (figure 32). Attendant to the foregoing, are other projects facilitated by Jamaica's international partners, which include planned and ongoing projects in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes that have been benefiting from international cooperation and capacity-building support. The onset of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has somewhat dampened the progress of projects, and has implications for the sustainability agenda.

6.A By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water-and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies

Official Development Assistance (ODA) has played a critical role in meeting the Goals of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and by extension the SDGs, given their over 95.0 per cent alignment. The water sector has attracted financing in loans and grants from multilateral and bilateral associations during the period including:

⁹¹ NWC's NRW Reduction Programme Continues to Reap Good Success 4-20190910-National-Water-Commission-NRW-Reduction-Programme-Continues-To-Reap-Good-Success.pdf (nwcjamaica.com)

- Rural Water Supply Project: US\$30.0 million loan financing from the Caribbean Development Bank in 2020, to support improvements to infrastructure in five parishes across the island.
- Support to NWC for Improvements in Corporatization: US\$483,257 from 2017-2019 in grant financing from the Inter-American Development Bank to aid the NWC in improving corporate governance and service delivery.

The NWC's collection rate fell from approximately 85.0 per cent to 75.0 per cent between March to May 2020, resulting in a financial loss of at least \$100.0 million monthly. This was made worse by the approximately \$13.0 million loss monthly, occasioned by the waiving of late fees and another \$3.5 million spent on advertising and the approximately 50.0 per cent hike in cost associated with the significant increase in the trucking of water. These expenditures have severely hampered the company's progress towards achieving its objectives and the associated SDGs, in a context where access to safe water and hygiene is critical during a pandemic. In a tight fiscal environment, made worse by the resources needed for pandemic recovery, ODA to the water sector in loans and grants is needed to improve the areas of NRW, treatment and distribution.

Impact of COVID-19

With the NWC being the main supplier of domestic water, like other companies, it was impacted by the onset of the pandemic. Since this was a highly contagious disease, transmitted through humans, the main defence against the spread is constant sanitization, wearing masks and practicing social distancing. However, concerning its operations, the company was challenged by a reduction in collection rates and waiving of late fees, while expending more, thereby resulting in monthly losses reduced financial intake can limit the extent to which projects are undertaken. The NWC did however benefit from the suspension of four guaranteed standards, which usually have the highest level of breaches. Their suspension resulted in significantly lower levels of pay-out or potential pay-out for these breaches. In support of the GOJ response to the pandemic and recognising the importance of its service to Water Sanitation and Hygiene in the fight against the spread of the disease, the NWC suspended the disconnection of water for non-payment during the first 9 months of the pandemic. There can be no doubt the COVID-19 pandemic would have caused some setbacks or even a reversal of gains made towards the achievement of Goal 6.

Cross-cutting issues and interlinkages with other SDGs

Challenges

The first VNR highlighted some priority issues as well as policies, programmes, projects and initiatives to address these. These included concerns for degradation of the water quality and high levels of Non-Revenue Water. The measures to address these are rooted in an effective Water Sector Policy & Implementation Plan that provides the guidance necessary to achieve the SDGs. Accordingly, steps were taken to update the 2019 policy under an IDB-funded consultancy "Update of the Water Sector Strategic plans for the Achievement of the SDGs – Jamaica Water Sector Policy Implementation". Several gaps have been identified, inclusive of legislative and institutional capacity, and which are articulated in the recent study undertaken. Consequently, the efforts to address these should be of national importance. Notwithstanding, some programmes are aimed at reaching the most marginalized, for example, the Tank & Pump Programme under the Rural Water Programme, thereby ensuring that no one is left behind. Further efforts are being placed in the rural water supply, ensuring that urbanisation and inward migration do not further impact on the gulf of development between rural towns and more metropolitan areas.

Climate Change

Climate change can have a significant impact on the water sector in terms of rainfall levels and patterns - too much rainfall may cause a landslide, flooding and turbidity. Too little rainfall may cause a drop in water levels at the dams, which may significantly reduce the water supply. More intense and frequent hurricanes may lead to damage to water infrastructure and more intense and frequent droughts can cause a significant decline in the water supply. Consequently, several mitigation measures are being contemplated, including the utilization of renewable energy, rainwater harvesting and catchment tank rehabilitation, recycling of wastewater effluent, recharge of aquifers and improvement in drainage infrastructure as well as adherence to the Rio Cobre Flood Early Warning System. The reduction of the NRW is also contributing to limiting the impact of climate change through better water-use efficiency.

Human Rights and Gender Equality

Having access to adequate Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WaSH) services is crucial for every woman, man, girl and boy, to live a healthy life, with dignity, upholding human rights and ensuring gender equality. The rights to water and sanitation require that these are available, accessible, safe, acceptable and affordable for all, without discrimination.

Sustainable Development Goal 6 to "***ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all'*** has explicit gender dimensions. Water and sanitation issues affect women and men differently; hence all national efforts to achieve Goal 6 must explicitly consider and address gender inequality. Applying gender equality and equity principles in WaSH contributes to ensuring that they are accessible to everyone.

It must be noted that water and sanitation issues disproportionately affect women and girls due to biological needs (such as menstrual hygiene management and maternal health); social norms (responsibility for water collection); and particular risks (such as gender-based violence when accessing sanitation facilities). For this reason, there is explicit mention of women and girls in the target on sanitation. This target draws attention to the need to enable women to adequately manage their needs with dignity and safety, including in public settings (schools, workplaces and healthcare facilities). Globally, women are more likely to live in poverty than men, and are disproportionately affected by HIV. Disability can also affect access to water and sanitation for both women and men, but women with disabilities are often more disadvantaged than their male counterparts.

When gender equality and women and girls' empowerment are taken into consideration in policies and programmes, women will have more time to earn an income, girls are more likely to attend school, and family health and hygiene improves. Access to clean water and sanitation is crucial for poverty reduction and for achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls.

Against this background, gender equality and gender issues must be mainstreamed in all policies, programmes and projects in the water sector. Gender-responsive approaches should be considered in the design of potable water systems and sanitation and wastewater solutions, so those vulnerable individuals, including the elderly, youth and persons with disabilities, are treated equitably. These approaches should include capacity enhancement of men and women, for effective, efficient, and equitable solutions to the challenges of water resources management and development.

Renewable energies

The NWC is the single largest electricity consumer in Jamaica. Consequently, the price of energy weighs heavily on the extent to which universal access to water can be achieved. Therefore, trends towards the utilization of renewables as well as relatively cheaper energy sources should be pursued.

Way Forward

Progress on the achievement of Goal 6 can be further advanced with considerations given in several areas, including:

- Utilizing a comprehensive Water Supply Master Plan, the importance of which cannot be overstated
- Establishing a baseline for all WaSH systems in the country that is disaggregated by gender
- Investing in the digitalization of the NWC information systems
- Ensuring that the targets of the Water Sector Policy are aligned to the strategic plans of the NWC and other agencies engaged in the production and delivery of water and other indicators associated with the goal
- Ascertaining whether the mandate and tasks of the NWC are achievable and determine the role of the private sector and capitalize on the benefits that can be garnered from their involvement
- Committing to investing at least 1 per cent of the national GDP dedicated to the WaSH sector
- Elaborating a WaSH investment plan for each parish, especially the most unserved and vulnerable to natural hazards and waterborne and airborne diseases; and put in place a monitoring system for these plans at the parish level
- Strongly committing to the reduction of NRW below the average for the Caribbean
- Setting time-bound targets for the achievement of planned activities, and including them in the MTF to ensure these are monitored.

Resource Requirements

The activities to be undertaken to facilitate the achievement of Goal 6 will require financial and other resources. It is therefore of utmost importance that these are costed, and an investment strategy is articulated. Information garnered from the recent review of the Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan concluded that the “NWC’s Capital Investment Plan (2015 – 2030) is outdated and should be updated for the period 2022 to 2030. This updated plan should be comprehensive and include information on the proposed projects, expected benefits (reliability, coverage, etc.), estimated cost and timeline as a start”.

Financing is of paramount importance and the reliance on domestic resources though critical is not sufficient to undertake the mammoth task of achieving Goal 6. Consequently, the engagement of the private sector and Civil Society Organisations to facilitate partnerships (Public-Private Partnerships and International Development Partnerships) through the provision of loans and grants is important. It must be noted, however, that the country’s classification as a UMIC Upper Middle-Income Country poses a challenge in terms of the eligibility for these concessionary loans and grants. In the last VNR Report, it was stated that the *Roadmap for SDG Implementation in Jamaica (2017)* articulated some strategies that could be explored in the areas of domestic, international and private financing. These include improving the capacity for tax audits to address transfer pricing; exploring options for ‘green fees’, debt-for-nature swaps and diaspora bonds; facilitating social impact investment; and establishing a philanthropy platform. The realization and implementation of these arrangements would achieve the progress necessary for the achievement of Goal 6.

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



GOAL 7

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Context

Achieving affordable, sustainable and modern energy for all citizens is a goal with implications for production practices, household consumption and livelihoods and overall environmental protection. How countries seek to address the issues surrounding energy production and distribution, therefore, have far-reaching effects that require an approach that considers the multitude of impacting factors.

Jamaica's small open economy is highly dependent on imported fossil fuels for energy in transport, production and consumption. This reduces the domestic energy security impacting the prices of goods and services; and contributes to the emission of pollutants. The policy response to the energy sector continues to reinforce the standard of near-universal access to electricity and increase the diversification of the energy mix, with more alternative and renewable sources. In regulating the energy sector to allow for more producers and cleaner sources, the country aims to reduce costs, improve efficiency and lower the environmental footprint.

Affordable and Clean Energy Highlights 2018-2022



Renewable Energy

13% of electricity generated from renewable sources up 2021 up from 12.1% in 2018

FIGURE 33: HIGHLIGHTS AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY (2018–2022)

Discussion

Target 7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services

Jamaica continues to have near-universal access to electricity, with an estimated 99.4 per cent of the population. The gap in universal access is due to the status of the rural population, whose access reached 98.6 per cent in 2019. While the access to electricity in the rural population remains below universal, it has been climbing annually as more households are brought onto the national grid. Over the last decade, an additional 10.0 per cent of households have access to electricity, from the 88.0 per cent in 2011. (ECLAC) Efforts at increasing legal and safe access to electricity through the Rural Electrification Programme and the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, have targeted the reduction in costs for wiring of homes, improving relationships between the utility service and communities and prepaid payment plans for lower-income users.

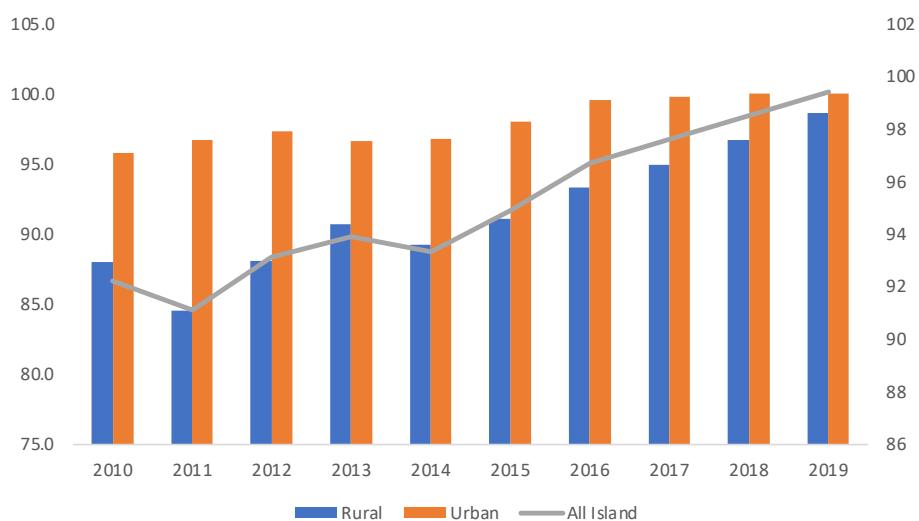


FIGURE 34: ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY BY % OF POPULATION

Source: World Bank SDGs Database

In addition to increasing access to electricity, ensuring access to clean energy sources by the population as a development goal continues to be on the agenda of policy and strategy. Jamaica's energy sources are largely petroleum-based, accounting for 85.8 per cent of total energy consumption in 2020. Due to the high reliance on these products, moving general consumption away from oil has been the aim of long-term development plans and projects. The National Energy Policy and projects like the Jamaica Energy Security and Efficiency Enhancement Project dating back to 2011 targeted (i) the regulatory framework leading to the amendments to the electricity act; (ii) increased investment in alternative sources of energy which saw the emergence of LNG and (iii) improvements in policy like the development of the integrated resource plan.

By the definition applied by the World Health Organisation, clean fuels and technologies for cooking "are those that attain the fine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) and carbon monoxide (CO) levels recommended in the WHO Air Quality Guidelines (2021)." ⁹² These fuels include solar, electric, biogas, liquefied petroleum gas and alcohol fuels including ethanol. Clean

⁹² These guidelines identify clean fuel and technology as those within the "annual average air quality guideline level (AQG, 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) or the Interim Target-1 level (IT1, 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) for $PM_{2.5}$; and either the 24-hour average air quality guideline level (AQG, 4 mg/m^3) or the Interim Target-1 level (IT-1, 7 mg/m^3) for CO."

fuel sources in Jamaica would be classified through the use of LPG and electricity. Jamaican households use LPG as the primary fuel source for cooking, with approximately 85.8 per cent of households reporting its use in 2019, in contrast to 1.5 per cent for electricity. Wood and charcoal, traditional fuel sources are reportedly used by 5.0 per cent and 6.2 per cent of households respectively. Of the households reporting the use of charcoal, the poorest quintiles of the population are the largest users, accounting for its use, at an estimated 14.6 per cent. (JSCLC, 2022).

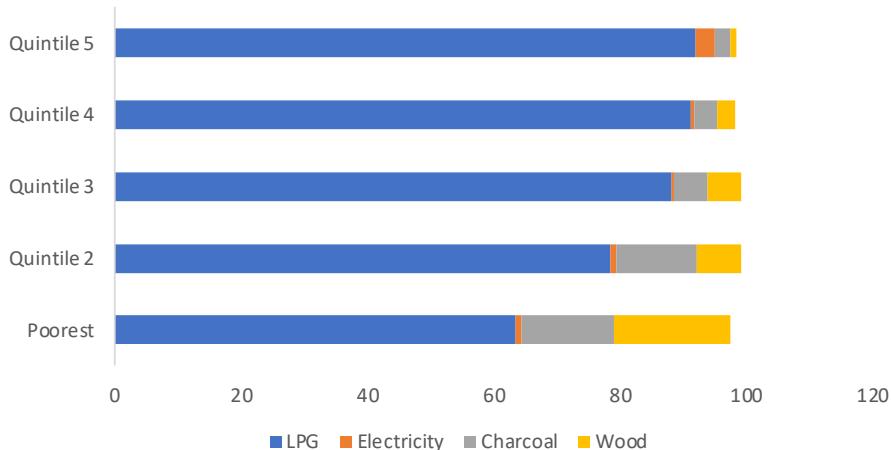


FIGURE 35: DISTRIBUTION OF FUEL USED FOR COOKING BY CONSUMPTION QUINTILE
Source: JSCLC

The use of clean fuels is increasing annually, as charcoal and wood are phased out. Notably, the poorest quintile of households, report increased usage of wood, from 14.1 per cent of households in 2017 to 18.4 per cent in 2019. Increased investments in the LPG market by established and new entrants present positive signals for further reduction in the use of charcoal and wood, through a wider distribution footprint of retailers and lower costs.

Target 7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

As stipulated by the NEP, 2009–2030, Jamaica seeks to increase the use of renewable energy as fuel in its energy mix to 20.0 per cent by 2030, and since the MTF 2018–2021 a target of renewables in electricity generation has been added of 30 per cent by 2030. This is part of the drive to decrease the use of imported petroleum as fuel, owing to the price volatility and environmental concerns associated with the use of petroleum products in final consumption. To aggressively reduce the impact of fossil fuel use, the target for electricity generation is under revision, up to 50.0 per cent from renewable sources.

TABLE 18: PERCENTAGE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY IN ENERGY PRODUCTION, 2013–2021

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
% Share of Renewables	5.9	6.3	8.2	10.5	11.2	12.1	10.7	13.0	13.0

Source: Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology

The key component of the push to increase renewable energy use is the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) approved by Cabinet in 2020. The IRP sets out Jamaica's 20-year plan for the electricity-generation sector. Since the first draft was submitted in 2018, the document has undergone revisions to include a tariff review, system avoided cost, renewable energy integration and long-run marginal cost. Modelling of the forecast electricity demand up to 2030 is being undertaken.

Approximately US\$7.3 billion is scheduled to be invested in the electricity sector by 2037 using the IRP as a guide. The investment in energy infrastructure for new distribution and existing efficiency is expected to have multiplier effects on industrial production, transport and household consumption. Expenditure will be focused on capital and maintenance costs and should result in an overall decrease in energy cost to reflect the retirement of the old and inefficient generators. It should also result in a lower cost to consumers, fewer power outages, and improve the island's carbon footprint.

Progress has been driven by the implementation of several renewable energy projects, the most recent, Eight Rivers Energy 37.0 MW Solar Plant in Westmoreland, the largest solar power plant in the English-speaking Caribbean (commissioned in 2019). This is in addition to With the IRP in place more projects are expected through an internationally competitive tender process managed by the Generation Procurement Entity, a body established to develop and manage tender processes. This method of energy procurement also serves to satisfy good governance principles through transparent exercises with tiers of review.

Crosscutting Issues

Climate Change

The practices outlined to reform and improve the energy sector are largely done as efforts to mitigate the single greatest challenge to mankind, climate change. As an outcome that is attributed directly and indirectly to human activity, how societies produce and consume is largely affected by energy sources. In Jamaica, the Energy sector is one of the main contributors to greenhouse gas emissions which impact climate change, because of the fuel sources used to produce energy.

Jamaica has become the first Caribbean nation to submit a tougher climate action plan under the Paris Agreement by adding targets for forestry and stepping up curbs on greenhouse gas emissions from energy. As shown in Table 19, if industrial operations in Jamaica were to continue as they did before the Paris Agreement, CO₂ emissions were expected to reach a total of 7.2 million tonnes in 2030. Based on Jamaica's initial climate action plan, emissions were expected to reduce between 1.1-and 1.5 million tonnes by 2030. However, based on subsequent tougher climate actions by Jamaica, emissions are expected to reduce by 1.8-2.0 million tonnes by 2030. Without international support, CO₂ emissions from Jamaica are expected to reduce by approximately 25.4 per cent through climate actions, while with international support, these emissions are expected to reduce further by 28.5 per cent.

TABLE 19: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT BY 2030

Action	CO ₂ emissions (million tonnes)
Business as Usual	7.2
Initial Action (Reduce by)	1.1-1.5
Updated Action (Reduce by)	1.8-2.0
% Reduction without International Support	25.4
% Reduction with International Support	28.5

Source: Jamaica Nationally Determined Contribution to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Gender Equality

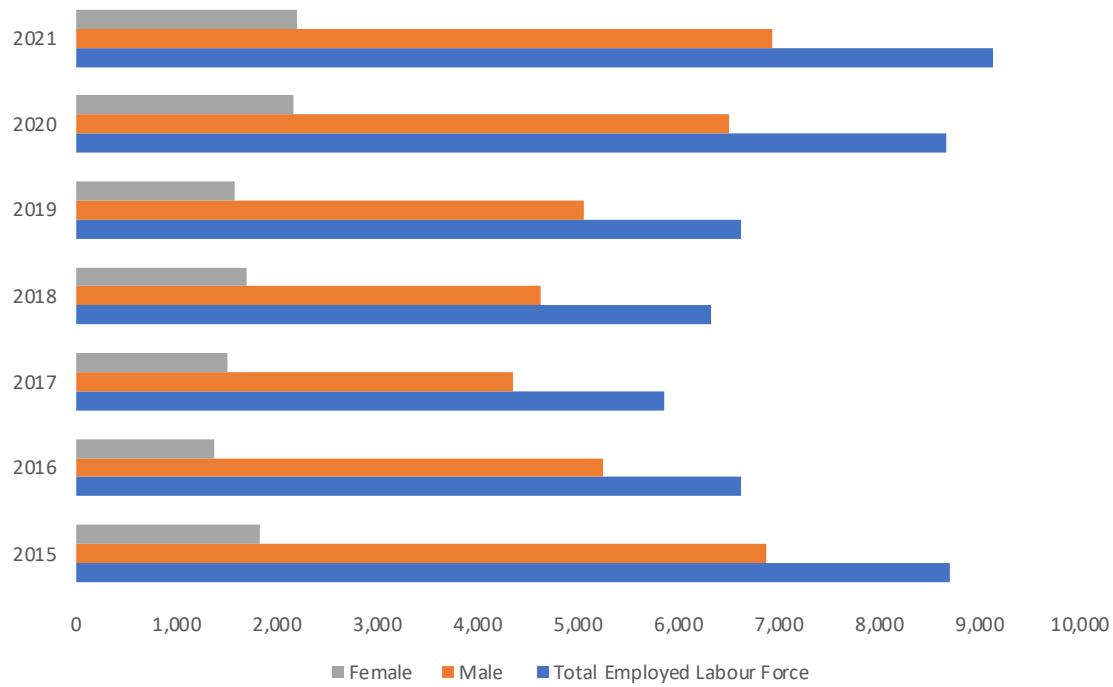


FIGURE 36: EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE IN ELECTRICITY, GAS AND WATER SUPPLY INDUSTRIES

SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Using the Electricity, Gas and Water Supply Industry as a proxy for analysis, the labour force data highlights that employment in the industry declined in 2016 and 2017 but entered an upward trajectory since and surpassed the 2015 level in 2021 with 9 125 employed persons (6 925 males and 2 200 females). Disaggregated by sex, the data showed that employment has remained consistently skewed towards males who continuously accounted for over 70.0 per cent of those employed and reached a high of 79.0 per cent in 2015. Female employment has fluctuated from a low of 20.8 per cent to a high of 26.9 per cent in 2018. The most significant jump in employment was between 2019 and 2020 with an increase of 592 females. The employed labour force in the industry has remained below 1.0 per cent of the Jamaica's total employed labour force.

While the Jamaican industry demographics are not dissimilar to global practices, attracting diverse talent pools to the industry supports the wellbeing of a broader group of the population. In response to the gap in employment, The Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, has partnered with the Faculty of Science and Technology at the University of the West Indies, Mona for the 'Walking in Her Footsteps' Stem Mentorship Programme. This programme is intended to increase the levels of attractiveness of careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics field; with potential for spill over effect and lead to more women in the energy sector. The programmes aim to connect young girls at the secondary and tertiary levels across the region with female STEM professionals.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

To address these concerns, the Government of Jamaica (GOJ) has been pushing, through policy initiatives, for increased usage of renewables and other forms of alternative energy in the energy mix. One main initiative is the formulation of the National Energy Policy (NEP), 2009–2030, with objectives focused on seven key areas:

- Security of Energy Supply through diversification of fuels as well as the development of renewables
- Modernizing the country's energy infrastructure
- Development of renewable energy sources such as solar and hydro
- Energy conservation and efficiency
- Development of a comprehensive governance/regulatory framework
- Enabling government ministries, departments and agencies to be models/leader for the rest of society in terms of energy management
- Eco-efficiency in industries.

Energy Efficiency and Conservation Programme (EECP)

A programme implemented to design cost-saving energy efficiency and energy conservation measures in the public sector. As stipulated by the NEP, 2009–2030, government should be leading in energy conservation practices. Under the programme, which **started in 2012**, retrofits and energy efficiency improvements have been carried out at several facilities across the public sector. The areas targeted were building envelope insulations and air conditioning.

At the end of 2019, there was the certification of approximately 120 public sector Facility Managers and Administrators in Energy Management and Auditing Techniques. Approximately 81 500 square feet (sq. ft.) of heat reducing film was installed at more than 37 public sector facilities; approximately 208 000 sq. ft. of cool roof solution was installed at 14 public facilities, and 29 facilities were outfitted with energy-efficient air-conditioning solutions. These interventions saved the GOJ US\$3.2 million, lowered CO₂ emissions by approximately 8 150 tonnes and reduced oil consumption by 6 330 barrels since the start of the project.

The programme was completed in 2020. Final activities included retrofitting 272.2 tonnes of air conditioning capacity and the installation of 2 057.3 square metres of cool roof solutions at the May Pen Police Station, Mobile Reserve (now Special Operations) and National Police College of Jamaica. There was also the development of a Hazardous Waste Management Manual for Energy Efficiency and Conservation Interventions in the Public Sector.

Expand Infrastructure and Upgrade Technology for Supplying Modern and Sustainable Energy

There were upgrades at the Bogue Power Plant (201 MW) and Old Harbour Power (190 MW) to facilitate the replacement of traditional heavy fuel oils (which contribute more pollution to the environment) with LNG (more environmentally friendly), simultaneously diversifying Jamaica's fuel options, which increases energy security, and reducing the country's carbon footprint.

- Old Harbour Power Plant - The Jamaica Public Service/South Jamaica Power Company 190MW
Old Harbour combined cycle power plant was commissioned into service in 2019 and since then has been providing power to the national grid, becoming the second natural gas power plant, following the conversion of the JPS Bogue Power Plant in Montego Bay from ADO to Natural Gas.

- Bogue Power Plant - The plant was commissioned and started commercial operations in 2016. It was converted from using only Automotive Diesel Oil (ADO) as fuel into a dual-fuel efficient plant utilizing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as well as ADO.

Smart Streetlight Programme

This programme involves the replacement of High-Pressure Sodium (HPS) lamps, with Light Emitting Diode (LED) bulbs in street lights across the country. The programme is expected to result in significant improvements in public lighting across the island as these lights are more energy-efficient, have a longer service life and added intelligent capabilities plus are also outfitted with smart controllers which allow for improved maintenance and monitoring. As of January 2021, approximately 84 700 smart LED bulbs have been installed in street lights across the island, representing more than 80.0 per cent of the island's street lights.

Way Forward

The importance of the energy sector to all facets of life requires all stakeholders in the regulation, production and distribution of energy sources to be resilient and able to withstand shocks. As a result, the COVID-19 pandemic did little to disrupt key operations, and impacted instead mainly macro indicators of generation and consumption, through declining in transport and production. Notwithstanding, reforms of the industry over time and prospects for the future have shown challenges in the process of achieving energy efficiency including:

- The slow pace of finalizing the relevant sub-policies of the NEP which remain in the draft since 2010
- Weak coordination of cross-sectoral government linkages in implementing strategies for energy diversification
- Use of different measurement frameworks to assess energy consumption from renewable energy sources
- Improving the generation of industry data for commercial and residential production and consumption across end uses.
- The relatively aged plants and equipment that are operational within the Electricity & Water Supply industry have contributed to the relatively lower than expected economic growth, as the industry continues to be plagued by plant downtime and inefficiency - The GOJ has addressed this by increasing the tax depreciation rate and initial capital allowances, as well as implementing sound fiscal and monetary policies, which have led to a downward trend in interest rates. This should make it more economical to invest in the upgrade of production plants and equipment.
- The cost of energy has been a major factor that has constrained development within the economy, especially within energy-intensive industries like Mining & Quarrying and Manufacturing. This partly reflects an inefficient system (generation plant, transmission and distribution) and the fuel source. The GOJ has created the policy environment and regulations to facilitate greater diversification in the source of energy utilized (new wind farms, solar farms and use of LNG) and the construction of more efficient plants in the Electricity & Water Supply, Manufacturing, and Bauxite & Mining Industries.

Resource Requirements

Through alignment of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and the SDGs, national outcome 10, energy security and efficiency outline a variety of plans and actions needed for the achievement of the targets related to renewable energy and access to electricity. Broadly, the strategies are under the themes of diversifying the energy supply and promoting efficiency and conservation.

Achieving these two aims requires the continued development of policy that attracts investment in the energy sector, but also ensures that investments align with the stated goals of improving livelihoods and prosperity through lowering the costs of energy for consumption and production and lowering the carbon footprint. In supporting policy, modern data collection methods to monitor the output of energy production are needed to measure impacts on air quality and waste management.

At the global level, Jamaica has stated and revised commitments to lowering its carbon footprint and regulating the production of harmful substances. However, as an open economy with reliance on shipping, logistics and cruise and leisure travel, how these industries consume petroleum-based products will further impact the island's ability to be carbon neutral. The international community is therefore encouraged to ensure that global industries, specifically in travel and logistics, as heavy consumers of fossil fuels, identify cheaper and cleaner fuels that lower the costs associated with a globalized economy and the impact on the environment.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



GOAL 8

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

Context

Jamaica continued to make progress in building economic resilience to achieve sustained inclusive economic growth and job creation through macroeconomic and business environment reforms. However, as a small, service-oriented (approx. 76 per cent of GDP), open economy (total trade approx. 90.0 per cent of GDP in 2019), that is highly indebted, the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated Public Health & Social Measures (PHSM) implemented to stem its spread globally and domestically, resulted in a worsening in GDP and labour market indicators in 2020. The level of decline was exacerbated by the fact that approximately three out of every five persons that are in the labour force have never received any formal training,⁹³ which hindered their ability to pivot and the lack of economic diversification, especially in Jamaica's export basket (highly concentrated in Tourism and Alumina). Over the years, the labour market has grappled with unemployment, underemployment and a high level of informality, at a time when the working-age population has been increasing 0.2 per cent annually.⁹⁴ The country has implemented several strategies to address these issues in its quest to promote sustained, inclusive growth and decent work.

The previous VNR highlighted structural issues in Jamaica that contributed to anaemic economic growth, low productivity, as well as high levels of informality. Progress has been made in addressing these issues. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the deficiencies and vulnerabilities in the economy and labour market and has presented an additional obstacle along the road to achieving decent work in Jamaica.

The review for the period 2018–2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning decent work and economic growth.

⁹³ According to an October 2020 labour force survey, 807,600 persons were reported as having no training, from a labour force of 1297 700. Source: The Jamaica Labour Force Survey 2020 Annual Review.

⁹⁴ Source: The Jamaica Labour Force Survey 2020 Annual Review.

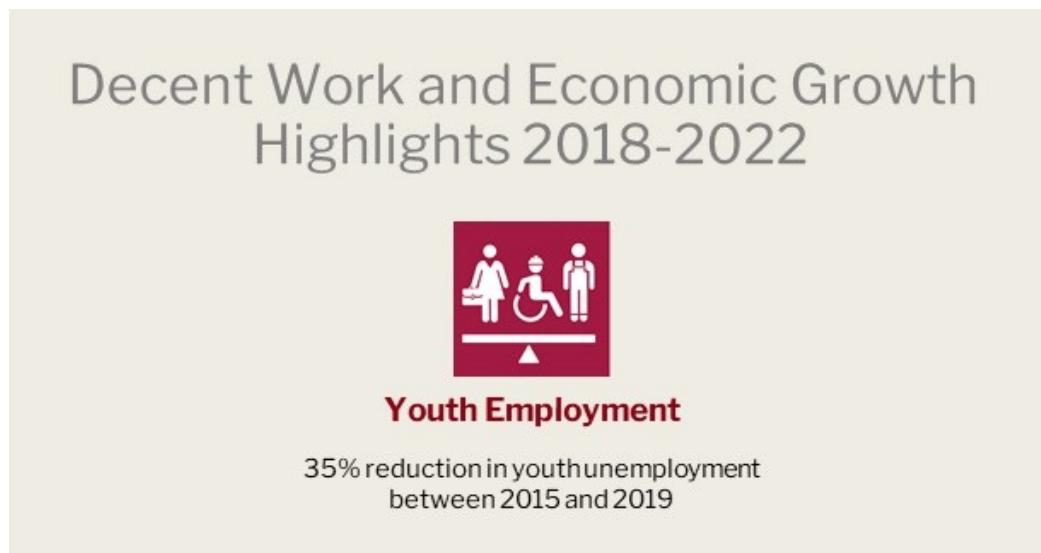


FIGURE 37: HIGHLIGHTS DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH (2018–2022)

Discussion

Target 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors

Over the years, productivity has been an issue in Jamaica. During the 2018–2021 period, the GOJ through the Jamaica Productivity Centre (JPC) continued to prioritize and promote national productivity-conscious culture. It is estimated that the growth rates for selected productivity indicators were as follow:

- Growth of labour productivity at 0.6 per cent in 2018, after consecutive years of negative growth caused by gains in employment exceeding real GDP growth (Figure 38).
- Capital Productivity grew by 0.6 per cent in 2018 and declined by 0.6 per cent in 2019.
- Total Factor Productivity grew by 0.7 per cent in 2018 and declined by 1.2 per cent in 2019.

FIGURE 38: ANNUAL VALUE ADDED PER WORKER 2011–2019
SOURCE: JAMAICA PRODUCTIVITY CENTRE

In 2019, the employed labour force increased by 2.6 per cent. This exceeded the rate of real GDP growth (0.9 per cent) and resulted in labour productivity declining by 1.7 per cent. The decline in Capital Productivity by 0.6 per cent reflected capital stock growing more than the rate of GDP. This was an indication of increased investments. Factors such as workforce skills, quality of management, governance, and investment climate, among other things (not including factors of production) affected the total factor productivity negatively.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 put a strain on Jamaica's already low levels of productivity. There was a worsening of already weak aggregate demand, slowing international trade and decreased gains in human capital attainment, which have all hampered global productivity growth. Preliminary data suggest that output per worker in Jamaica for the April–June 2020 period declined by an estimated 8.7 per cent compared with the similar quarter of the previous year.⁹⁵

This decrease mainly represented record reduction in economic activity related to travel, tourism, personal care services and agriculture. For April–June 2021, preliminary estimates for output per worker indicated a 5.4 per cent increase. This reflects the economy's march toward recovery. This increase has been supported by productivity gains in areas such as ICT and manufacturing as well as the gradual restart to travel and tourism activities. The growing need for ICT is notable, as the pandemic has presented some opportunities with increased instances of remote work, online schooling, and expanded internet access and e-commerce activity. Additionally, the closing of brick & mortar branches and increased use of technology in some industries such as Finance & Insurance Services and Water & Electricity have encouraged capital deepening (the increase in capital relative to labour) which will continue to support improvements in labour productivity. Notwithstanding the opportunities, significant challenges were also experienced with regards to: inadequate bandwidth, lack of ICT and device access, in particular in the rural areas etc.

Target 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services

High levels of informality have been a longstanding issue in Jamaica with estimates of up to 44.0 per cent of GDP.⁹⁶ The number of persons informally employed in 2020 was 453 500 or 46.8 per cent of non-agricultural employment, a significant decline from the 477 200 persons in 2018.

To combat the many development and growth challenges associated with high levels of informality, the government has collaborated with the ILO to provide technical training and entrepreneurial coaching for micro and small business operators in the agriculture and fisheries sectors. This will enable registered farmers and fisher folks to become formalized. Additionally, the government continued to provide a range of services through key agencies such as the Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) covering all stages of the business development cycle while also supporting existing informal MSMEs on the path to formalization.

The GOJ has also persisted with the implementation of the updated MSME and Entrepreneurship Policy (2018) that seeks to reduce the number of informal businesses by facilitating an enabling policy and programmatic environment for business formalization. Formalising MSMEs can broaden the tax base but also provide net benefits to firms and

⁹⁵ Source Jamaica Productivity Centre

⁹⁶ IADB. 2017. Estimating the Size of the Informal Economy in Caribbean States

employees in the form of government support. As at 2021, MSMEs contributed 13.3 per cent of taxes paid by firms, despite accounting for 91.5 per cent.

Other notable activities to aid with formalization included improving the ease of doing business by streamlining and simplifying the business registration process; facilitating online access to services; and introducing incentives such as the removal of the minimum business tax. Despite these efforts, challenges remain in reducing informality within the Jamaican economy.

Target 8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead

The GOJ continued to enact policies and programmes to improve the efficiency in the production and consumption of global resources, these include the revision of the National Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan in 2019, which is built on six guiding principles that include sustainability and efficiency. Programmes such as Energy Efficiency & Conservation and Energy Management and Efficiency were implemented to increase energy efficiency in government buildings and fuel conservation in road transportation. Data challenges remain in measuring the impact of these initiatives on material footprint, material footprint per capita, material footprint per GDP, domestic material consumption, domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP.

Target 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

Jamaica continued to make strides in reducing unemployment over the years with the total unemployment rate reaching a record low of 7.2 per cent in October 2019 (figure 39), a reduction of 1.5 percentage points compared with the corresponding period in 2018.



FIGURE 39: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 2011–2021
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

These gains were, however, eroded by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic which negatively impacted unemployment levels resulting in an increase to 12.6 per cent in July 2020. Steady recovery of jobs in subsequent months has since resulted in an unemployment rate reflecting pre-pandemic levels recording 7.1 per cent in October 2021.

The data when disaggregated by sex indicated that the female unemployment rate has improved over the years. Before

the pandemic, the female unemployment rate moved from 18.5 per cent in October 2015 to 8.6 per cent in October 2019 (Figure 40). This progress was reversed somewhat by pandemic related unemployment in 2020 and has recovered by October 2021 to 9.0 per cent. Despite the progress made over the period, female unemployment has continued to lag behind their male counterparts, although the gap has narrowed.

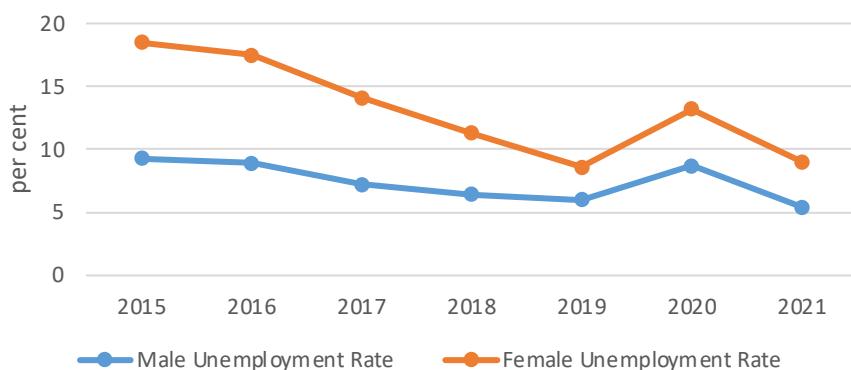


FIGURE 40: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (OCTOBER SURVEY) BY SEX 2015–2021

SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

While there have been improvements in employment levels among females, female labour force participation continues to be an issue when compared with male participation rates (Figure 41). Social and cultural norms have defined women as homemakers and have resulted in them bearing most of the care responsibility in the home, and thus limiting their participation. Care responsibilities coupled with lower-wage prospects act as a disincentive to participate in the market⁹⁷ despite improved educational attainment among females.

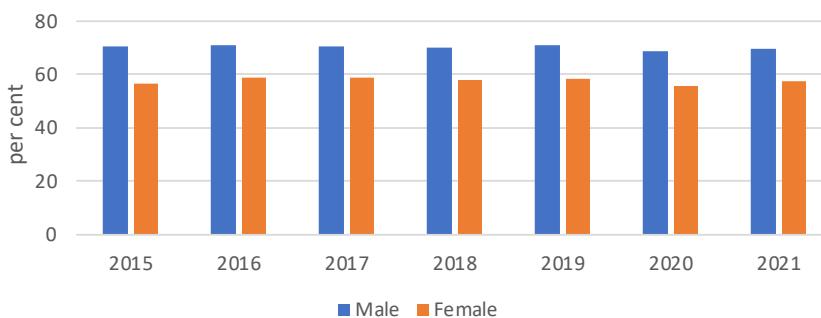


FIGURE 41: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION (OCTOBER SURVEY) BY SEX 2015 – 2021

Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica

Increased care responsibilities brought on by disruptions in the education system and limited child care facilities resulted in women leaving the labour force.⁹⁸ This was evident in Jamaica, where the female labour force participation rate in October 2020 was 2.7 percentage points lower than in 2019 (figure 41). While participation levels increased in 2021

⁹⁷ International Growth Centre. n.d. "IGC." Increasing women's participation in the workforce. <https://www.theigc.org/impact/increasing-womens-participation-in-the-workforce/>.

⁹⁸ Boesch, Diana, and Katie Hamm. 2020. "Valuing Women's Caregiving During and After the Coronavirus Crisis." American Progress. June 3. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/valuing-womens-caregiving-coronavirus-crisis/>.

indicating a return to the labour market, they remain below the pre-pandemic rate. This is concerning as labour force participation is important for the economic empowerment of women, the achievement of SDG 5 and economic growth and inclusion.

In addition to women, employment amongst the youth segment of the population remains an issue. Tackling youth unemployment has been a challenge for several reasons. Traditionally youth unemployment has been high due to insufficient education and training, a lack of working experience and high wage and occupational aspirations.⁹⁹ Over the years, Jamaica has made strides in reducing youth unemployment. Between 2018 and 2021, the youth unemployment rate declined from 24.9 per cent in October 2018 to 18.9 per cent in October 2021. Despite this success, general dynamics remain a concern as the female youth unemployment rate continues to outpace males (figure 42).

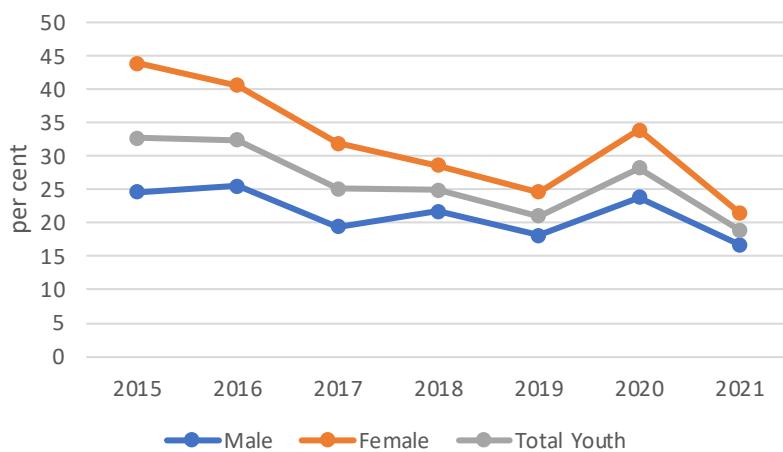
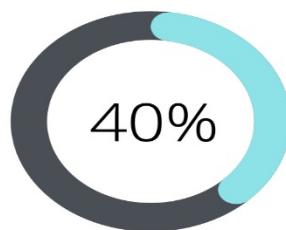


FIGURE 42: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (OCTOBER SURVEY) BY SEX 2015 – 2021
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the mounting issues related to youth unemployment. At the height of the pandemic youth unemployment rose to 30.3 per cent in July 2020. This increase is not surprising since youth tend to hold less secure jobs. While youth unemployment rates decreased in 2021, youth accounted for 40.0 per cent of the unemployed labour force.

⁹⁹ International Labour Organization. n.d. "ILO." The Challenge of Youth Unemployment in the Caribbean: The Role of. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/americas/-/ro-lima/-/sro-port_of_spain/documents/publication/wcms_224314.pdf.

Youth in Unemployed Labour Force



of Jamaica's unemployed labour force are youth
(14-24 years)
as at October 2021.

FIGURE 43: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA 2022

Target 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training

The mark of any progressive society is the level of investment in the development of the youth population. While some progress has been achieved in reducing youth unemployment, the youth unemployment rate does not provide a full picture of the labour market situation of youth nor does it give a full understanding of the challenges facing youth. Estimates from the Jamaica Youth Activity Survey (JYAS) 2016 indicated that 43.0 per cent of Jamaican youth were in the labour force and 56.0 per cent were engaged in education.¹⁰⁰ Of those in the labour force, however, 38.0 per cent were unemployed and 11.6 percent were both inactive and out of school. Overall, the number of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) was 28.0 percent. This statistic shows the potential youth labour market entrants and highlights the need to address youth engagement through bespoke policy and programmatic interventions to better utilize the youth population.

The GOJ has sought to create and strengthen several policies and programmes aimed at reducing the number of NEET youth. Some of these included the continued implementation of the National Youth Policy (2017) and the engagement of youth through the Youth Innovation Centres (YICs) that target at-risk youth. The YICs aim to provide support to youth and expose them to training and labour market opportunities. In 2018, approximately 17 000 youth were engaged at YICs. Additionally, the Housing, Opportunity, Production and Employment (HOPE) Programme since inception in 2017, has enrolled 40 000 young persons with the intention of providing among other areas, training, mentorship and work placement.

In 2019, the merger of the Human Employment and Resource Training/ National Youth Service Training Agency Trust (HEART/NSTA) with the National Youth Service, Jamaica Foundation for Life Long Learning and the Apprentice Board, was finalized. The functions and resources of the agency are expected to better support training, improve employability, and improve the quality of graduate output and expansion of training opportunities available to unattached and at-risk youth and adults in Jamaica. The trust continues to deliver skills training and certification, access to apprenticeship opportunities and summer work programmes. Data from 2019 indicate that 926 males and 3 297 females were enrolled in the Unattached Youth Programme with 59 males and 182 females gaining certification.

¹⁰⁰ ILO. 2018. Jamaica Youth Activity Survey, 2016. https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_30058/lang--en/index.htm

Target 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

The engagement of children in work that is dangerous and that affects growth and well-being continues to risk the achievement of the SDGs. In the JYAS, it is reported that approximately 38 000 children aged 5-17 years are affected by child labour¹⁰¹ in Jamaica.

To tackle child labour, over the period, the GOJ continued to develop The National Action Plan (NAP) to eliminate child labour. This was done through institutional strengthening, increased public awareness, increasing access to social assistance for children and families affected by child labour and enabling the withdrawal, rehabilitation and reintegration of affected children into schools and/or communities. Initial implementation of The Child Labour Risk Identification Model developed with support from the ILO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also began in 2021. The model is expected to enable the identification of locations and industries where child labour is likely to occur. Additionally, the GOJ approved an updated National Plan of Action to Combat Human Trafficking (2018–2021) in March 2019 and completed the development of a National Action Plan to Combat Child Labour through the Country Level Engagement and Assistance to Reduce Child Labour (CLEAR II) Project.

Despite these efforts, the lack of consistent data through frequent child labour surveys to properly track and monitor progress in combating child labour and the funding required remains a gap. Due to the data gap, it is difficult to analyse the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on child labour. However, it is argued that the pandemic will push more children into work.¹⁰² Disruption in the education system and a loss of livelihood will increase the risk of child labour in poorer marginalized households.

Target 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment

In its bid to continue working towards the full achievement of target 8.8, protecting labour rights and promoting a safe and secure working environment for all workers, work continues around the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Bill. In 2020, a settled draft of the Bill was received and circulated to key stakeholders for comments. The Bill was considered by the Legislation Committee of Cabinet which approved its tabling. This piece of legislation will repeal the Factories Act and is expected to establish health and safety standards for all workplaces. The enactment of the OSH legislation will enable the ratification of over thirty (30) ILO Conventions, Protocols, and Recommendations. Despite the already protracted time taken to develop the draft OSH Bill, the pandemic has resulted in the need for further revision of the draft Bill in light of safety issues, among other things, in the workplace highlighted by COVID-19. The GOJ is also looking to amend the Minimum Wage Act and make amendments to the National Minimum Wage Order and Employment Agencies Regulations to ensure that Jamaica is compliant with the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (C189) which ensures the effective promotion and protection of the human rights of Domestic Workers.

101 Child labour, as defined by the ILO, is work that deprives them of their childhood, potential and dignity.

102 UNICEF. 2020. "COVID-19 may push millions more children into child labour – ILO and UNICEF." UNICEF. June 12. <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/press-releases/covid-19-may-push-millions-more-children-child-labou>

Target 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

The Ministry of Tourism implemented policies to achieve the target over the review period. These include a Tourism Workers' Pension Act in March 2020, aimed at the creation of a pension scheme for tourism workers and a National Community Tourism Policy to support community-based tourism enterprises with a focus on innovation, entrepreneurship, and collaboration within communities.

The Tourism Networks Policy and Strategy was also developed to promote inclusive and sustainable tourism development through a more integrated, diversified, and responsive value chain that supports increased visitor arrivals and expenditure. One of the major strategies implemented from the Strategy is the Agri-Linkage Exchange programme (ALEX). The ALEX was developed in 2018 to strengthen the linkages with the agriculture industry through a web enabled commodity and telemarketing exchange.

The Jamaica Centre for Tourism Innovation (JCTI) was created to ensure that Jamaicans have access to higher paying jobs in the tourism sector by providing them with world-class internationally benchmarked certification. Since its establishment, the JCTI has facilitated the certification of more than ten thousand persons. In addition, in 2021, the JCTI partnered with the University of the West Indies Law Faculty to deliver a certificate programme called Tourism & The Law. JCTI implemented a tutor certification programme to facilitate the certification of middle managers. In keeping with the goal of extending tourism's reach into the high schools, the JCTI signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with the MOEY in 2020, to underpin the expansion of the Hospitality & Tourism Management Programme (HTMP) in high schools.

Target 8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all

The Bank of Jamaica Act was amended during the review period allowing the bank to enhance its governance and autonomy. To ensure that all Jamaicans, especially those underserved by the financial system, can save safely and increase their resilience to financial shocks, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy was created. The Insurance Act is being amended to allow for the development of a micro-insurance regulatory framework.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices

Building resilience, both economic, social and environmental is essential for Jamaica to meet the targets under Goal 8. Shocks, whether environmental (e.g., hurricanes), Social (e.g., health related), or economic (e.g., global recession) can derail the progress made under Goal 8 and set back the country's progress by decades. Therefore, safeguards must be put in place to ensure that sound fiscal and monetary policies are implemented to place Jamaica in a position to address these shocks, limit their impact and lessen the recovery period resulting from these events.

The insufficient diversification of the Jamaican economy, especially in the country's export basket, resulted in a significant falloff in economic output when the economy was negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and the PHSM was implemented to stop its spread. However, fiscal and monetary measures implemented to mitigate the fallout in economic activities, have begun to bear fruit and have positioned Jamaica to make a relatively quick recovery when compared with past shocks. Output is expected to reach pre COVID-19 levels in 2024 and Employment in 2023. This was made possible by the economic reform programme being implemented that led to countercyclical policy, which was not possible in the 2008-2009 Global economic crisis because of Jamaica's unsustainable fiscal position.

Another factor that played a role in the speed of recovery in output and jobs after the shock was the formation of a high-level economic task force that include members from the public sector, private sector, trade unions and civil society. This assisted in a shared vision on the way forward to address the economic fallout and build resilience to achieve Goal 8.

The MOT established The Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre to assess (research/monitor), plan for, forecast, mitigate, and manage risks related to tourism resilience and crisis management. The Ministry also prepared a Disaster Risk Management framework aimed at addressing the institutional arrangements for disaster risk management in the sector along with the requirements for planning, disaster risk assessments, and response and crisis communication. The framework will outline the importance of disaster risk management in strengthening the resilience of the tourism sector and promoting continuity of operations in the face of a disaster. In 2020 the MOT embarked on two projects aimed at building the resilience of the sector through the provision of templates on Disaster Risk Management and Business Continuity Planning customized for the tourism sector.

The COVID -19 Pandemic

Pre-COVID-19, beginning in 2018, Jamaica had surpassed its pre-global economic crisis of 2008-2009 output level and was on a trajectory of growth. This resulted from sustained reforms that seek to improve the macroeconomic environment as well as the ease of doing business. The Economic Reform Programme started in 2013, supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was designed to reduce public debt, facilitate job creation, improve labour force productivity and maintain the macroeconomic stability. Additionally, prudent fiscal management led to a reduction in the debt to GDP ratio and facilitated the crowding in private investment. The expansion was propelled by increased domestic and international demand, particularly for Tourism services. Despite this GDP per capita growth remained anaemic, with the largest increase in 2018 of 1.7 per cent (Figure 44). Growth was relatively low due to a lack of economic diversity, crime, dependence on certain industries (tourism) and relatively low levels of productivity. The Hotels & Restaurants industry was the main driver of growth, expanding by 1.6 per cent in 2018 and 4.9 per cent in 2019. Increases in the room stock via regular private sector investments as well as marketing in major source markets led to increased visitor arrivals over the two years.



FIGURE 44: ANNUAL REAL GDP PER CAPITA GROWTH RATE 2011-2020
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

The level of economic activity in 2020 was the lowest since 2002, and mainly reflected a fallout in activities that relied on face-to-face interaction and people movement, such as Tourism. COVID-19 and the PHSM implemented, which included: temporary closure of airports, work from home orders, shift to virtual school, restrictions on gathering and movements of people, resulted in the following industries recording significant declines:

- Hotels & Restaurants – fell by 53.8 per cent, mainly reflecting a decline in Stopover Arrivals by 67.2 per cent
- Other Services (which include Recreational, Cultural & Sporting Activities) – fell by 23.5 per cent, mainly as a result of a decline in total visitor arrivals (both stopover and cruise passenger arrivals) by 68.6 per cent.
- Transport, Storage & Communication – fell by 12.3 per cent reflecting mainly declines in air, sea and land transportation.¹⁰³

To mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the economy, various initiatives were implemented to temper the negative impact on the lives and livelihood of Jamaicans, especially the most vulnerable. These included tax cuts and transfers. One of the key initiatives implemented was the COVID-19 Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) programme, a temporary cash transfer programme that eased the economic fallout on Jamaicans.

The ability of the GOJ to implement a fiscal stimulus was due to the relative strength of the macro economy pre-pandemic owing to economic reforms that were undertaken over the last decade that led to a significant decline in the country's debt to GDP ratio from 135.3 per cent in 2013 to 94.6 per cent in 2019. It was also facilitated by a suspension of the fiscal rules under the Disaster Risk Management Act and a two-year extension to FY 2027/28 to meet the debt to GDP target of 60per cent.

Recovery

The Jamaican economy is on the road to recovery, as the economy has grown by 4.6 per cent in 2021 relative to 2020. Growth was facilitated by a relaxation of PHSM implemented domestically and globally because of increased vaccination rates. Industries that recorded the strongest growth over the first 9-months of 2021 were:

- Hotels & Restaurants up, 37.2 per cent
 - Relatively high vaccination rate and growth in the main source market contributed to a 39.5 per cent increase in Stopover arrivals relative to the corresponding period of 2020.
- Construction up, 9.0 per cent
 - Relatively low real interest rates and public capital expenditure particularly on the South Coast Highway Improvement Programme
- Agriculture Forestry & Fishing up, 8.3 per cent
 - Programmes to enhance productivity and recovery in Hotels & Restaurant industry and the Food, Beverages & Tobacco subindustry.

103 Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica Annual GDP Statistics

Way Forward

To accelerate the recovery progress and by extension work towards achieving Goal 8, the following recommendations were made by the economic task force:

- Build a COVID-19 Resilient Economy
- Recommit to, and Accelerate, Macro-Fiscal Reform and Business Climate Improvements
- Restore Tourism
- Deepen Local Supply Chains
- Strengthen Resilience
- Boost Public Sector Efficiency and Private Sector Competitiveness
- Digitize and Modernise Jamaica
- Diversify Jamaica's Economic Base
- Increase Formalisation
- Strengthen the Social Safety Net and Pursue Labour Market Reforms
- Increase GOJ Technical Resource Capacity
- Collection of consistent and reliable data to address data gaps

Challenges

- The economy, however, remains vulnerable to spikes in COVID-19 domestically, which may derail the pace of recovery. New variants such as Delta and Omicron have contributed to more restrictive PHSM locally and globally, which have slowed the pace of growth. Therefore, the rate of vaccination locally and globally will play a pivotal role in the pace of recovery, as the uncertainty associated with more restrictive PHSM has the potential to slow the pace of reopening and new investments.
- Supply side bottlenecks have contributed to higher inflation rates, which has led to tightening of monetary policy locally and globally. This also has the potential of slowing the pace of recovery in Jamaica.
- As the nation strives to achieve first-world status and enhance economic development, more investment is needed in technology and innovation initiatives that are aimed at improving productivity. The GOJ supports this focus on boosting innovation through various initiatives and building capacity in the area of research and development. The pandemic has therefore quickened the pace with which the nation has approached the Fourth Industrial Revolution as the increased adoption of technology supports productivity improvements. The relaxing of COVID-19 measures, continued adoption of new technologies and efforts towards digitalization are expected to have a continued positive impact on productivity. However, additional variants,

low vaccination rates and uncertain business environments will apply downward pressure on productivity growth.

Resource Requirements

Jamaica will require resources, both funding and technical expertise, for the following:

- Support from international partners to conduct surveys on child labour and youth not in education, employment or training, frequently
- Technical support for the implementation plan of the National Youth policy where youth employment is a thematic area
- Support from international partners is needed to further develop the blue and green economies in Jamaica. The skills necessary for jobs, especially technical jobs, are lacking.
- Funding and the transfer of knowledge are required to broaden the education curriculum to increase awareness among students of the job and business possibilities in these areas. Training programmes would therefore be required to aid in the development of the requisite skills.

**9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

GOAL 9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Context

Goal 9 of the SDGs focuses on the achievement of socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic development, through three intertwined pillars, namely infrastructure, industry and innovation. This is consistent with Jamaica's long-term development plan, Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, for which the four goals seek to guide the country towards achieving broad-based sustainable development by 2030. Specifically, Goal 3 of Vision 2030 Jamaica, "Jamaica's Economy is Prosperous" affirms a sustained focus on deepening the application of science and technology, a solid business environment and sound economic infrastructure, to benefit all aspects of national development and unleash the full creative potential of the people.

The intense implementation of macroeconomic reforms since 2010 has facilitated a more stable economic environment, evidenced by an improvement in several indicators. These include strong fiscal performance, the lowering of public debt; a fall in interest rates; and lower and stable inflation rates. These conditions, however, have failed to break the cycle of low growth.

To address the challenges, the GOJ's macroeconomic policy remains focused on creating an enabling environment that encompasses well-functioning institutions and systems, within a framework of sound monetary and fiscal policies. Beyond the macroeconomic framework, policies and programmes aimed at engendering broad-based sustainable growth include concentrated effort in the development of MSMEs; the inclusion of innovation in the creation of an enabling business environment; resilient infrastructure; and sustainable industrialization.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning industry, innovation and infrastructure.

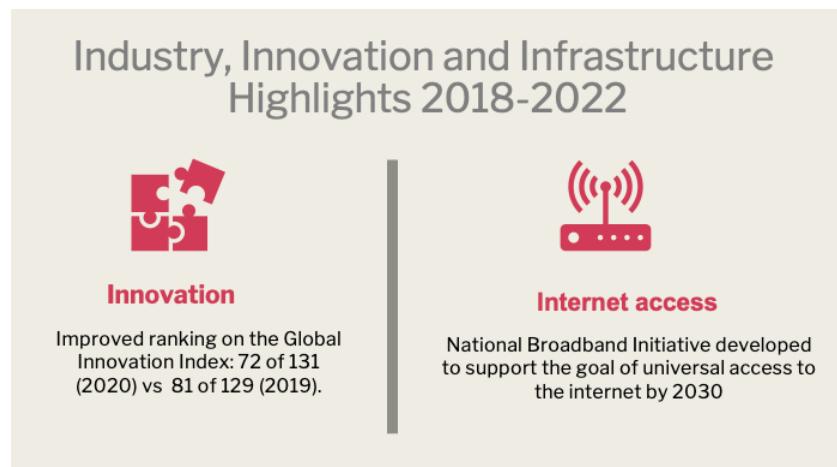


FIGURE 45: HIGHLIGHTS, INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 9.1 Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all

Investments in road infrastructure are seen as crucial spending for the development of industry and sustaining livelihoods through improved access to services and markets. The development of the road network locally, sees a high density of commercial activity in the GKMA where there is a complex road network that facilitates services delivery for citizens. Outside of this region, however, access to the major roads network to service particularly rural communities diminishes, as the population moves inwards from the coast.

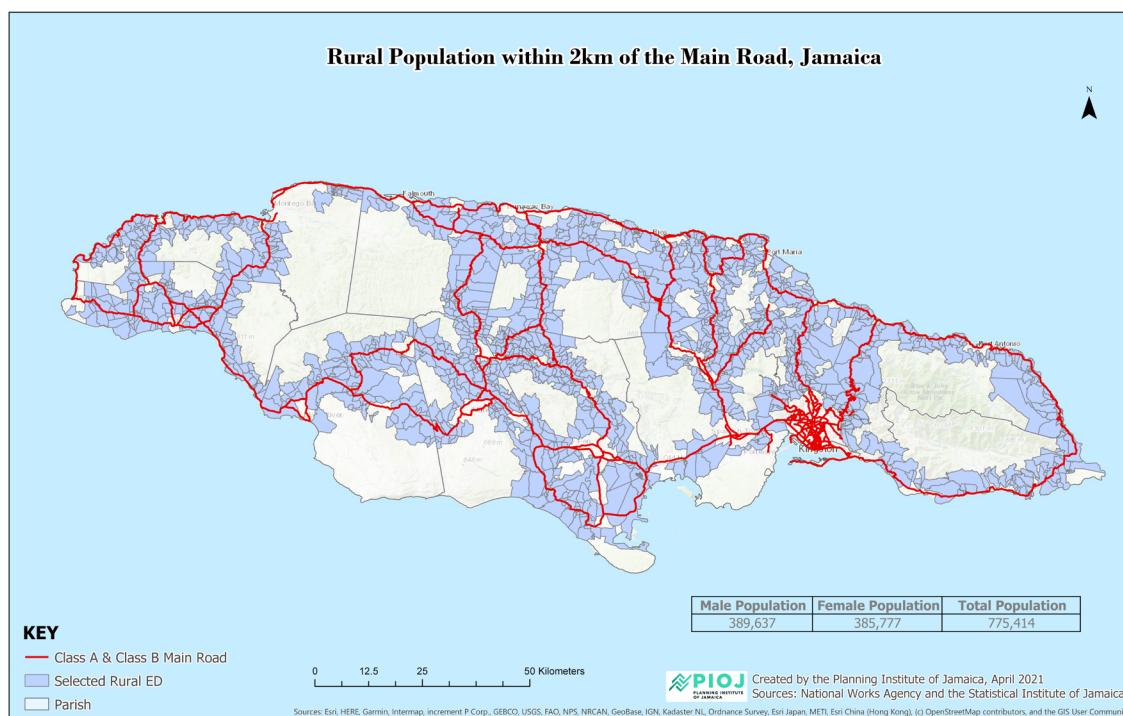


FIGURE 46: RURAL POPULATION WITHIN 2KM OF THE MAIN ROAD

SOURCE: NATIONAL WORKS AGENCY AND STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Through investments in transport infrastructure, Jamaica continues on its push to be a logistics-driven economy. These improvements support economic diversification initiatives which can lead to growth in the transport and storage industries, which currently contribute 4.8 per cent of GDP. Key to the performance of transport logistics is the investment in air and seaports which move cargo and passengers daily. In a move to increase efficiency and productivity, the GOJ has divested operations of the Sangster International Airport (2003), Kingston Container Terminal (2016), and the Norman Manley International Airport (2019). In parallel strategies to boost tourism, the GOJ has set a target of 5 million stopover arrivals by 2021, which was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The average annual growth in passenger movement up to 2019 was 4 per cent reaching 6.6 million, before the precipitous fall in 2020.

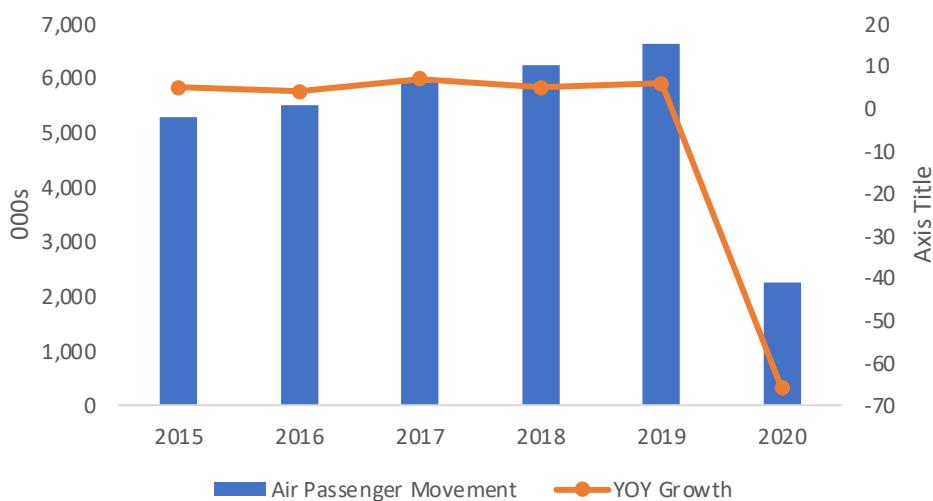


FIGURE 47: DOMESTIC AIR PASSENGER MOVEMENT
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

In contrast to passenger movements, the volume of domestic cargo movements is affected by the country's minerals trade and low exports relative to imports. Since the closure of the Alpart plant in 2009—one of the largest producers of bauxite and alumina—cargo volumes have declined from the average of 20 million tonnes pre-2009 to 15 million tonnes up to 2020. Changes in the commodities market result in fluctuating volumes annually and the concentration of imports to exports, measured by cargo unloaded to cargo loaded.

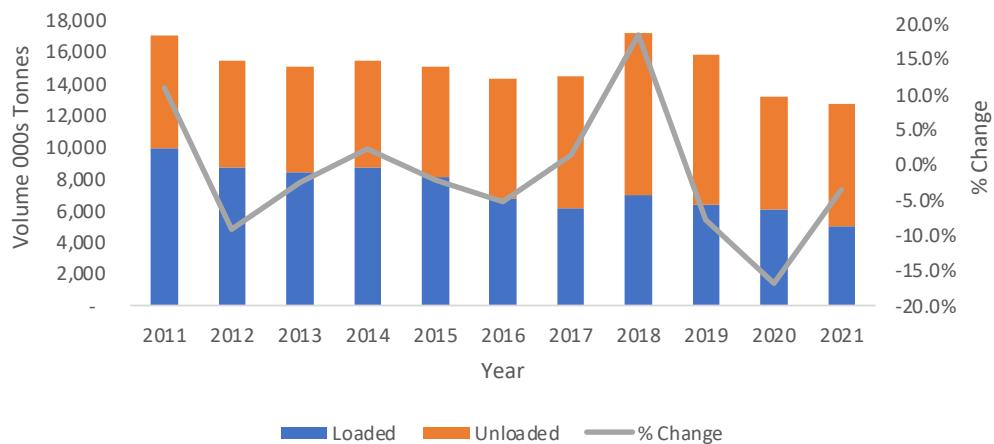


FIGURE 48: VOLUME OF CARGO MOVED AT DOMESTIC PORTS

SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Target 9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries

The manufacturing industry continues to be the largest contributor to GDP in the goods-producing sector, accounting for an average of 8.6 per cent of real value added annually up to 2020. Year on year growth in the industry has been low, at an average 0.48 per cent for the period 2010-2019. The industry recovered from the 2008 Global Recession, in 2015 and had five consecutive years of growth, before the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Contributing to this increase was an expansion in the output of Food, Beverages & Tobacco as the Other Manufacturing sub-category declined.



FIGURE 49: MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY REAL VALUE-ADDED CONTRIBUTION TO GDP AND YEAR OVER YEAR GROWTH

SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Despite the impact from the covid-19 related lockdowns in 2020, the industry has been one of the fastest to rebound,

reaching positive quarterly growth by Q1, 2021 at a value higher than the pre-pandemic quarterly average of \$16.5 billion.

The industry continues to be affected by low efficiency and cost competitiveness brought about by low workforce productivity, limited market access, and cost competitiveness among other factors.¹⁰⁴ Manufacturing value added per capita estimated by ECLAC had been rising to 2019, reaching US\$408.7, below the LAC average of \$1138.6 and US\$1789.5 for the Caribbean.

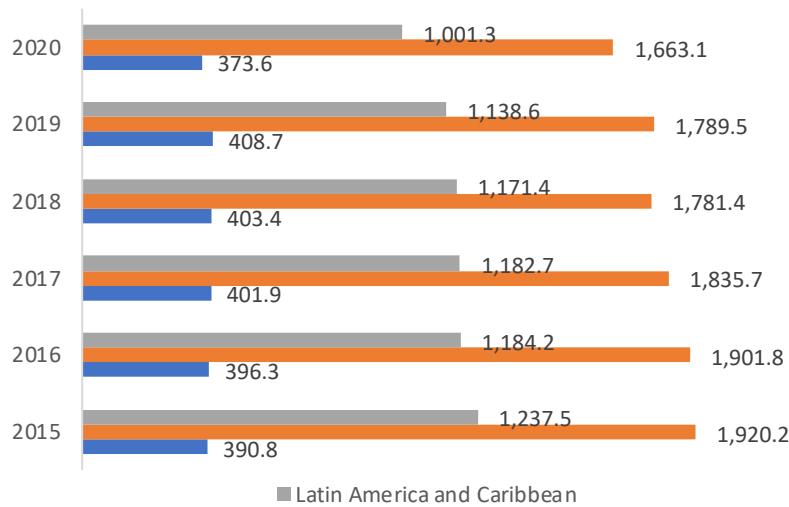


FIGURE 50: MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY PER CAPITA GDP (US\$)

SOURCE: ECLAC

As a largely services-driven economy, growth in jobs is increasingly in the hospitality, retail and burgeoning business process outsourcing industry. This shift is reflected in manufacturing employment and its proportion to total employment, declining over the period up to 2021.

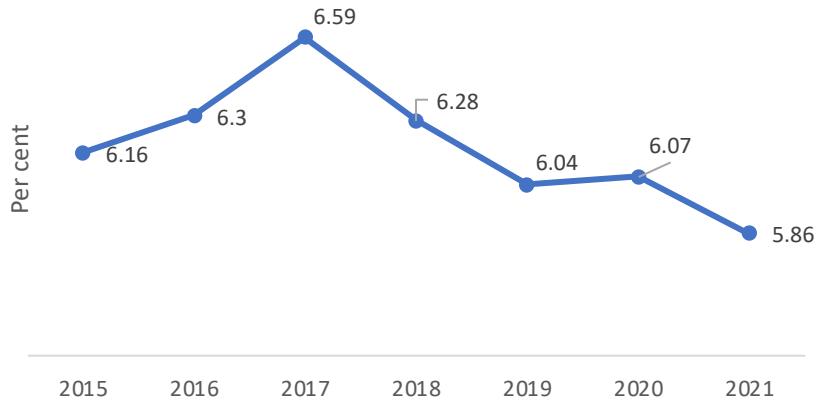


FIGURE 51: MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT SHARE OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

DBJ Providing MSME Support

The DBJ, in fulfilling its mandate to facilitate the growth and development of all viable enterprises in the productive sectors, recognises the pivotal role played by MSMEs in achieving economic growth. Accordingly, the Bank has implemented several programmes and projects to support micro firms, in accessing loans, grants, and technical assistance in business development areas. Programmes recently implemented included:

- Launched the Innovation Grant Fund in 2020, to increase revenue streams for medium-sized enterprises through the financing of innovating ventures that promote productivity.
- In partnership with the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service launched the SERVE programme which is intended to be a catalyst for the recovery of economic activity by assisting businesses that were adversely impacted by the pandemic.
- Redesigned the Credit Enhancement Facility which is a partial loan guarantee scheme that helps MSMEs without sufficient collateral to access loans from financial institutions.

BOX 5: DBJ PROVIDING MSME SUPPORT

Target 9.3 Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets

At the firm level, MSMEs are the largest category of businesses in Jamaica, with registered MSMEs accounting for 91.6 per cent of the firms which filed tax returns in 2020. Their earnings of \$4 293.4 million were 18.2 per cent of total retail sales a decline of 16.6 per cent relative to 2019.

MSMEs represent the main source of business start-ups and have the potential to contribute to increased output, employment and innovation. These firms, however, continue to encounter challenges of limited credit access; high levels of informality; limited linkages and market access; relatively low human and institutional capacity, all of which limit their ability to operate efficiently. The GOJ, through the Development Bank of Jamaica and the National Export-Import Bank, provides credit to MSMEs annually, directly and through other financial institutions. Credit to MSMEs from the GOJ and some private lenders peaked at \$59 billion in 2018 and decreased to \$39 billion in 2019 and 2020.

Target 9.5 Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small- island developing States

Economic growth is influenced by the integration of science, technology and innovation into production processes. With the declines in factor productivity experienced across industries like manufacturing, investing in science and technology becomes increasingly important for firms, from MSMEs to large industry players. With the absence of data on research and development spending, the GOJ has prioritized this through incentivizing research and development (R&D) in its Special Economic Zones legislation, and amendments to the National Income Accounting calculations to include R&D as a subsector. The budgetary allocations from the GOJ to science and technology programmes have been increasing annually, from \$6.5 billion in 2016 to \$10.9 billion in 2020.

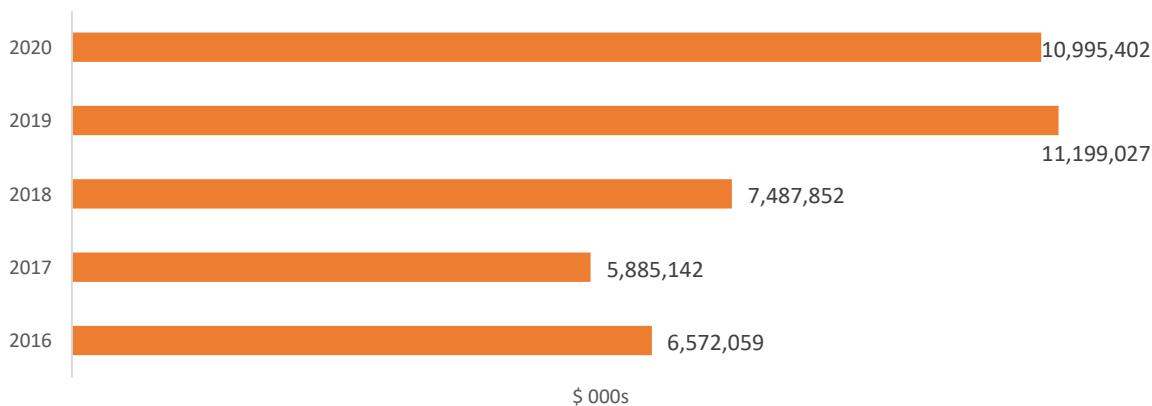


FIGURE 52: BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR SELECTED STI PROGRAMMES AND AGENCIES (GOI)
SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY

In 2020, Jamaica improved its ranking in the Global Innovation Index (GII), placing 72 of 131 countries relative to 81 of 129 countries in 2019. With this position, Jamaica was ranked 7th in Latin & the Caribbean and became the only Caribbean country and one of two countries in the region to be listed among the innovation achievers, a group of 25 economies that out-performed their peers.



FIGURE 53: JAMAICA'S RANKING IN GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX (GII) 2017-2020
SOURCE: WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION (WIPO)

On the Innovation Input Sub-Index, Jamaica fell two places, ranking 86th with a score of 37.19 (10th in the region). However, on the Innovation Output Sub-Index, the country improved seven places to earn the 62nd position with a score of 21.00 (third in the region). Areas of strength were identified for the following categories:

- Institutions – political environment and business environment
- Human Capital and Research – government expenditure on education
- Market Sophistication – ease of getting credit
- Business Sophistication – innovation linkages and knowledge absorption
- Knowledge and Technology Outputs – computer software spending
- Creative Outputs – intangible assets (e.g., trademarks, global brand value).

In addition to the GII Rank, the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, uses resident patent filings per million population as an indicator under national outcome 11, a technology-enabled society. The 10 filings (4 per million persons) remain above the baseline of 2.2 however, below the 2018 and 2021 targets of 18 or greater.

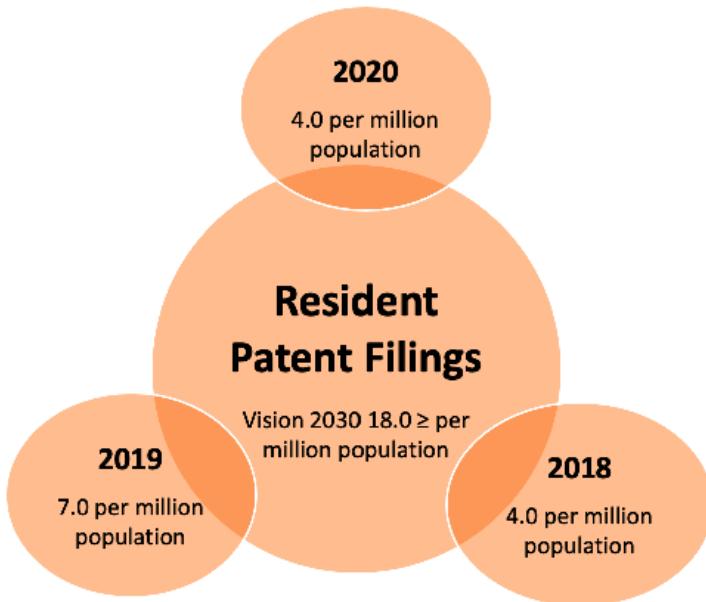


FIGURE 54: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS APPLICATIONS 2018 – 2020

SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA

The use of domestic resources from the national budget to finance infrastructure spending has been increasing since 2016; following a period of fiscal constraint that focussed on debt reduction. The GOJ has targeted infrastructure spending as a catalytic economic activity through residential developments and major roadwork projects. Support for these projects has come from domestic resources and through Official Development Assistance (ODA) in loans and grants.

The trends in ODA by sector are classified into funds directed to social infrastructure (health, education, housing and social safety), economic infrastructure (transport, power, water and sewerage) and the environment and climate change (natural hazards, ecosystem preservation, disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience). New ODA has been on a downward trend through a variety of factors, including the availability of projects for financing and Jamaica's status as an upper-middle-income designation, limiting access to concessional financing.

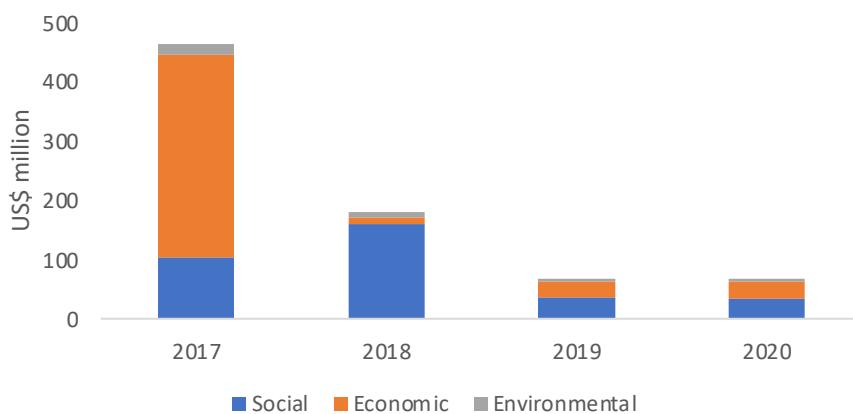


FIGURE 55: NEW ODA BY INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR

SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA

Through a new agreement with the International Financial Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group, Jamaica is set to leverage the expertise of the IFC in supporting the country's largest infrastructure project. The potential US\$600 million to US\$800 million project, is an extension of the previous largest, infrastructure project, the North-South Highway. The highway construction was largely financed by the People's Republic of China.

Towards developing strong and resilient economic infrastructure, as articulated in Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, the GOJ has undertaken several projects to facilitate the development of resilient infrastructure aimed at enhancing the efficient movement of persons, goods, services and information. Among the projects were the Major Infrastructure Development Programme (MIDP) and Greater Infrastructure Development Project (GIDP) through which repairs to main roads, parochial roads and housing scheme roads, the building of highways, river training, and repairs to bridges were affected.

Concerning upgrading infrastructure to facilitate the provision of universal access to safe, potable water and sewerage services to all Jamaicans, work continues to develop an efficient water delivery system. Currently, approximately 75.0 per cent of the country's population is connected to water distribution systems while, less than half of the population has access to centralized sewerage facilities, with most connected through on-site sewage disposal systems such as septic tanks and absorption pits.

Efforts to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation continued as we seek to achieve the targets contained in the national long-term development plan Vision 2030 Jamaica, continued through the development of several policies, seen below:

- **Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization:**
 - To restore vitality to the industry, the National Five-Year Manufacturing Growth Strategy was launched in 2020. The strategy underscores five focus areas namely, enhancing workforce productivity; improving cost competitiveness; expanding infrastructure; facilitating market expansion; incorporating innovation strategies; all geared towards transforming the industry and increasing its contribution to GDP.
 - The updated MSME and Entrepreneurship Policy 2018 was approved by both houses of Parliament. It provides a comprehensive, coherent and coordinated framework for addressing the policy issues

facing MSMEs as well as an outline for targeted support to the sector. Concerning financing, the lack of funding or the related high finance costs for the MSME sector has limited entrepreneurship. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce several banking institutions such as the National Export-Import (EX-IM) Bank and the Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) as well as private banks are actively involved in providing funding support to MSMEs. The formal banking system, however, typically requires collateral and formalized records which have deterred many MSMEs from accessing finance. This issue is compounded by the limited supply of formal non-bank sources of finance, with credit unions providing mostly consumer finance and an underdeveloped microfinance sector. To provide a framework for the development of the microfinance sector the Microcredit Act 2021 was passed. It aims to license and regulate microcredit institutions that provide financing to individuals and MSMEs and foster regulatory supervision by the Central Bank. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen the sector by improving the long-term sustainability of the players and the industry itself.

- **Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure:**

- The National Water Sector Policy and Implementation Plan (NWSP) was tabled and approved in the Houses of Parliament in 2019. The NWSP seeks to address challenges that have affected the reliability of water supply, including high levels of non-revenue water; high energy consumption in water supply; inadequate storage capacity; inadequate infrastructure; poor waste management practices and vulnerability to climate change. Towards achieving the objectives of the NWSP, several water supply projects were initiated and completed in 2020, providing new water systems to several communities across the island. Systems were also extended to broaden the capacity to serve additional households. The hydromet network was improved with the completion of an infrastructure upgrade to several (12) gauging stations and the expansion of the real-time data platform.

- **Significantly increase access to information and communications technology**

- The ICT Authority Act, 2019, seeks to improve the use of technology services across government entities and increase efficiency and productivity in the public service.

Target 9.C.1 Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020

Internet usage is of paramount importance to the process of incorporating science and technology into the production process. Exposure to vast amounts of information and communication have influenced all areas of human development, including education, health, finance and commerce. The need for ICT services was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, during which there was a move towards online school and work from home, which highlighted the inequalities in access. Whereas mobile penetration, which facilitates internet access, is estimated at 105.0 per cent internet usage lags at approximately 57.0 per cent of the population in 2020.¹⁰⁵

105 Calculated using population and internet usage data from the ESS.

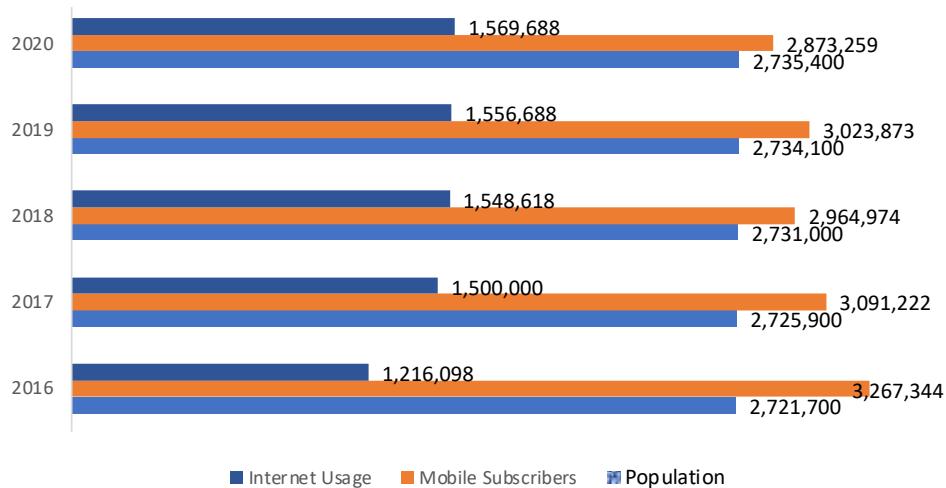


FIGURE 56: MOBILE PENETRATION AND INTERNET USAGE IN JAMAICA, 2016-2020
SOURCE: PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

To address these inequalities, the National Broadband Initiative was developed. It aims to build national broadband infrastructure to achieve the goal of universal access to the internet by 2030. Among the programmes under the Initiative is the expansion of the Government fibre optic cable, microwave infrastructure and public Wi-Fi hotspots. In 2020-2021, the GOJ expanded its fibre optic footprint to provide connectivity to several Municipal Corporations and Parish Courts in five parishes. Microwave connectivity, which provides a backup connection in the event the fibre optic cables are damaged, was also provided to all Parish Courts. In improving the efficiency of doing business through the use of the internet, several online platforms have been created to engender a seamless interface between firms and the government (Figure 57). These included the National Business Portal (<https://www.gov.jm/home>), launched in 2020, to facilitate multiple business-to-government transactions in one online location.



FIGURE 57: RECENT ADVANCES IN E-GOVERNMENT

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

Industrial development has received increased focus at the policy and strategic level, with initiatives such as the National Manufacturing Strategy, updates to the MSME policy and the numerous e-government initiatives to spur innovation and efficiency. Measures to increase the attractiveness of production in Jamaica have been the focus of the draft National Investment Policy which seeks to present a transparent process for facilitation of local and foreign direct investment.

Other areas of advancements achieved from 2018 to 2020 were:

- Strengthening of the standards environment through increased participation in voluntary international standards as well as local standards, resulting in the adoption of 85 standards - 78 product and 7 service standards in various sectors.
- Establishment of a FESTO Automation, Certification and Training (FACT) Centre for advanced training and certification in areas such as robotics and marine engineering
- Connectivity and access to ICT products and services within the public sector are being boosted with the launch of several portals and platforms. These sought to improve Government-Government (G2G), Government-Citizen (G2C) and Government-Business (G2B) relations in the areas of trade and investment; land resource administration; and service delivery.

Areas identified for further improvement in the category of Infrastructure and included indicators such as the use of ICTs, government online services, e-participation and general infrastructure. Despite there being a rise in internet usage from 2018-to 2020, there remain limitations to internet users across the island because of accessibility problems as only 68.0 per cent of the population use the internet as of 2018). As a result, portions of the population would be exempted from current and future innovations. Efforts should be made to increase internet access. Concentrated efforts should be made to increase accessibility across Jamaica specifically in rural areas.

As a way of securing development financing, blended financing models have become increasingly attractive options for SIDS. The Green Bond Project launched in 2021 in partnership with the Jamaica Stock Exchange and Green Climate Fund presents innovative ways of securing funds for development. Intended to raise funds on the domestic and regional debt capital markets to finance the implementation of climate-related or environmentally sustainable activities locally, this initiative is a step that can catalyse investments in renewable energy, waste management, efficient transport systems, sustainable housing & green/sustainable infrastructure, fisheries & forestry, protection of aquatic & terrestrial ecosystems, clean water, & sustainable water management. Subsequently, partnerships with key entities like the Jamaica Stock exchange add a layer of transparency to investment in these public projects.

Way Forward

Boosting national productivity requires investment by the public and private sector in skills training, science, and technology and infrastructure development. The GOJ has to lead in the development of a skilled labour force in partnership with companies to ensure that this human capital is utilized to its fullest potential. Further support to R&D spending by firms can be incentivized across sectors, and not solely operators in Special Economic Zones. The increase in R&D spending can spur advances in high technology production, in a heavily food-based industry.

Further private sector support is also crucial to the large cadre of MSMEs; though the value of an economic activity is low, finding ways to boost the output and create efficiencies among this large category of firms can aid national development directly. MSMEs are found across the island and employ a large portion of the population, formally and informally. Funding to MSME, credit enhancement fund, Innovation Grant and Serve program have contributed to growth in several industries however, some informal sectors and businesses have been unable to access funds for investments and growth. Efforts should be made to formalize informal industries that could potentially contribute to economic growth.

Physical infrastructure spending by the GOJ can further support the development of transport logistics, and manufacturing for export. As domestic production diversifies across agriculture and manufacturing, the availability of

decent water, electric, and transport infrastructure can spur private sector investment.

The need for greater infrastructure support in the areas of disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience is paramount. Through the SAMOA Pathway, these areas are recognized as a high priority for the development of SIDS and targets for ODA. The recurring support in these areas for Jamaica is consistently less than economic and social programmes, accounting for 4.2 per cent of reported infrastructure sectoral ODA in 2020.

Resource Requirements

In the context of building back better, the capabilities of the labour force and firms to innovate and create resilient products and services are key to development. As a small island development state, Jamaica's vulnerability is heightened and more so through its largely open economy. Developing resilience requires focussed efforts from all stakeholders that encourage the creativity of citizens and entrepreneurship, R&D in firms and physical and digital infrastructure to support service delivery and product improvements. These efforts require not only domestic funding, but also support from international partners to support a variety of actions, including but not limited to:

- Grant funding for research and development in agriculture, manufacturing, energy and logistics, can improve the domestic value chain for inputs and outputs
- Technical support in the development and sourcing of innovative financing mechanisms for national and private projects including venture funds, bonds, and private equity capital
- Disaster risk mitigation projects lessen the impact of adverse weather conditions on vulnerable industries and firms and the infrastructure which supports their trading activities
- Energy diversification projects can reduce the per-kilowatt-hour cost of electricity to high-tech and value-added producers.

The Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority (JSEZA) Strategy for Investment Attraction and Development

What is Sustain-a-Livity?

Sustain-a-Livity is a uniquely Jamaica concept embraced by the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority that combines two words:



Sustainable: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Livity: Is the Rastafari concept of righteous living. Its essence is the realization that an energy, or life force, conferred by Jah (God), exists within, and flows through, all peoples and all living things. Livity has a strong focus on living a natural lifestyle.

Sustain-A-Livity is the embodiment of an elevated lifestyle whereby people can develop an awareness to expand their workstyle, quality of life and spiritual interests; where eco-industrial parks interact and cooperate with the local community to achieve a harmonious living philosophy emanating from the Jamaican motto "Out of many one people" to protect the environment and achieve economic prosperity.

Sustain-a-Livity Framework

Sustain-a-Livity, developed by the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority (JSEZA) embraces the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development principles: Advancing Economic Competitiveness (**Economic**); Creating Shared Prosperity (**Social**); Safeguarding the Environment (**Environmental**); and the JSEZA has added Supporting the Rule of Law, Transparency and Accountability (**Governance**).

[See appendix C for details](#)

10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES


GOAL 10

Reduce inequalities within and among countries

Context

Reducing inequalities is an imperative in creating just and inclusive societies. SDG 10 calls for a reduction in inequalities by 2030, recognizing rough interlinkages across various development outcomes and differentials in education, health, housing and social protection, as well as access to justice and information. The ethos of the SDGs is to leave no one behind and requires recognition of the structural issues that create and perpetuate inequalities, and action to address the vulnerabilities faced by particular populations. Improving access to services and the means to create and sustain livelihoods and ensure quality of life for all citizens has been a priority of the GoJ through efforts to promote inclusive growth and through its social protection and poverty reduction policies and programmes that target the most vulnerable in society.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning inequality.

Reduced Inequalities Highlights 2018-2022



COVID-19 and the Vulnerable

Direct cash transfers made to the most vulnerable through COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme



Legislation

The Disabilities Act came into effect in February 2022 and Codes of Practice (Education and Training, Healthcare and Employment) completed to support its implementation.



Wages

Increase in the minimum wage took effect in April 2022.

FIGURE 58 HIGHLIGHTS, REDUCED INEQUALITIES (2018–2022)

Discussion

Target 10. 1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average

Jamaica uses a consumption-based¹⁰⁶ Gini coefficient¹⁰⁷ to measure inequality. It is calculated from the consumption expenditure data collected through the JSLC, an annual household survey. This monetary measure allows the categorization of the population into poorest to richest quintiles and deciles for comparison and analysis. In 2019,¹⁰⁸ some 50.6 per cent of national consumption expenditure was expended by individuals in the richest 20.0 per cent of the population compared with 5.2 per cent by those belonging to the poorest 20.0 per cent. Moreover, the richest 10.0 per cent of individuals registered an average consumption expenditure of almost 11 times that of the poorest 10.0 per cent. In 2019, Jamaica registered a Gini coefficient of 0.3671, a decline from 0.3782 in 2017.¹⁰⁹

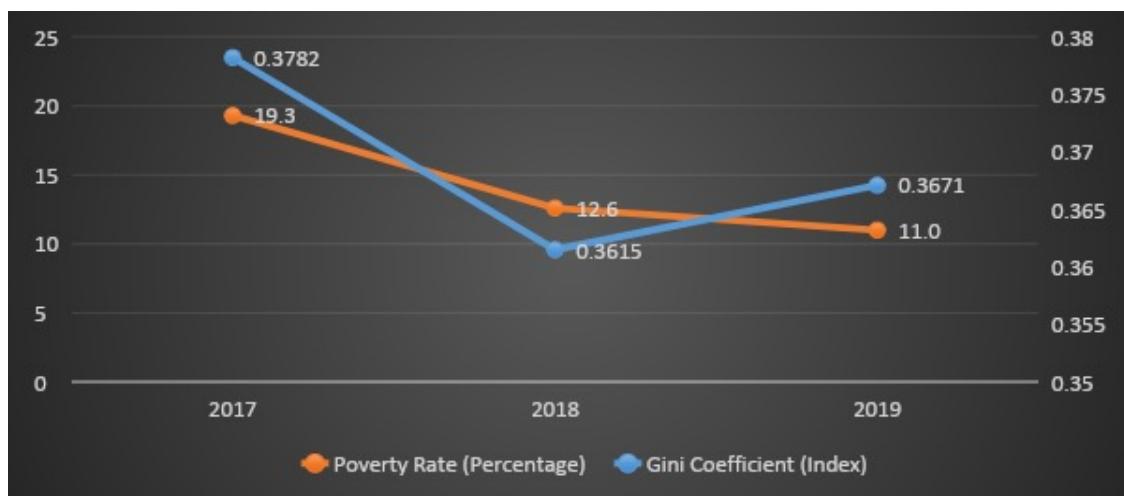


FIGURE 59 POVERTY RATE AND GINI COEFFICIENT, JAMAICA (2017–2019)
SOURCE: Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions

The reduction in the poverty rate and the Gini coefficient between 2017 and 2019 can be partly attributed to favourable economic conditions (Figure 59). In 2019, the Jamaican economy continued to show improvements evidenced by the 0.9 per cent growth in the country's real gross domestic product (GDP). This performance was supported by continued stability in the macroeconomic environment.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Consumption data is used as a proxy for income.

¹⁰⁷ The Gini provides a summary statistic for inequality, ranging from 0 (for perfect equality) to 1 (for perfect inequality).

¹⁰⁸ Most recent data available.

¹⁰⁹ Data for prior years are being revised due to updates in the survey methodology of the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions, so no analysis is given for years prior to 2017.

¹¹⁰ Planning Institute of Jamaica. 2021. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2019. Kingston: PIOJ

Notably, though Jamaica experienced GDP/economic growth in 2018 and 2019, the Gini coefficient did not decline over the period.¹¹¹ This implies that while there has been some progress through taxation and social assistance measures, increasing the spending capacities of the poorest has not yet been adequately addressed. Nevertheless, the utilisation of the multidimensional poverty index¹¹² to create a more comprehensive picture of the deprivations faced by the vulnerable population will provide data to inform the design of more adequate human and social development interventions that are targeted to reducing the levels of inequalities. Experts from the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) have been engaged to provide technical assistance to develop this index for Jamaica and the team expects the task to be completed by the end of 2022.

The containment measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to sharp reductions in output due to the contractions in supply and demand and the increased joblessness associated with the temporary closure of some businesses. This has resulted in deepening existing inequalities, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable communities hardest as they lacked the resources and tools to cope with the economic downturn.¹¹³ Jamaica's response included a multi-billion-dollar economic response and direct cash transfers to the most vulnerable. Through the COVID Allocation of Resources for Employees (CARE) Programme—a temporary cash transfer programme—the government sought to cushion the economic impact of the pandemic on individuals and businesses. The programme included 10 components and is targeted toward the poor and vulnerable in the society, the unemployed, the informally employed and the elderly.

Target 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all

Within the framework of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and the country's ongoing commitment to achieving the SDGs, efforts were focused on expanding social inclusion and improving the delivery of social services to vulnerable groups in the area of social development, social protection and culture. Programmatic and policy responses were implemented in response to addressing the immediate socio-economic impact of the pandemic. The social protection landscape benefited from the support of IDPs in the areas of infrastructure and capacity improvements. The care and protection of the nation's children remained a priority, evidenced by the full implementation of plans and programmes addressing the developmental needs of children. Programmes targeted youth were aimed at improving access to training and certification, job placement and volunteerism.

Economic and social inclusion of persons with disabilities were advanced through legislative and policy frameworks,¹¹⁴ which sought to remove the barriers to inclusion for persons living with disabilities¹¹⁵ and strengthening service delivery, in areas such as economic empowerment and welfare. In 2020, the JCPD partnered with institutions to finalize two Codes of Practice¹¹⁶ to support the implementation and monitoring of the Disabilities Act. The Disabilities Act, though passed in 2014 to make provisions to safeguard and enhance the welfare of persons with disabilities in Jamaica, came into effect on February 14, 2022, as part of a legislative framework that is aimed at improving the wellbeing of

¹¹¹ The change between 2018 and 2019 was not statistically significant.

¹¹² The multidimensional poverty index is a measure that considers a number of deprivations and is designed to address the heterogeneous nature of poverty.

¹¹³ Planning Institute of Jamaica. 2020. Post Disaster Needs Assessment of the Impact of COVID-19 on Jamaica: Draft Phase 1 Report (March to June 2020). Kingston, Jamaica

¹¹⁴ Planning Institute of Jamaica. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Kingston: PIOJ, 2021.

¹¹⁵ Please see section on Goal 1 for an extensive write up about persons living with disabilities in JamaICA.

¹¹⁶ Planning Institute of Jamaica. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Kingston: PIOJ, 2021.

persons living with disabilities.¹¹⁷ The legislation will protect and promote equal rights for persons with disabilities and prohibits discrimination.¹¹⁸ To date, work has been completed on three Codes of Practice—namely, Education and Training, Healthcare and Employment—with another initiated in October 2021 on Public Transportation. The supportive legislation will impact the lives and social and economic prospects of persons living with disabilities. Although advances have been made, there is still work to be done to address the issues faced by children and youth with disabilities and to expand the opportunities for education and training as well as meaningful employment. Social inclusion through communication, such as sign language, has improved in public media but is not mainstreamed in the local sphere. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, PWDs received assistance from the JCPD who partnered with other entities and the private sector to deliver services to PWDs. Public education messages on how to support PWDs were crafted and disseminated. However, the COVID-19 experience has highlighted that many persons with disabilities are not registered with the JCPD, and are unbanked as well.

Target 10.3 Adopt policies especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality

Measures aimed at reducing income inequality through wage and social protection policies were undertaken by the GOJ. As an important strategic goal under the government's 'Partnership for Economic Growth' and an integral part of the overall reform, to further shift from a system of direct taxation of personal income and a move toward indirect taxation, the government introduced a revised personal income tax threshold. The income tax thresholds for all Pay as You Earn (PAYE) workers were increased from \$592 800.00 to \$1.5 million dollars in 2016. This new threshold was implemented in two phases:¹¹⁹

- Phase 1: threshold moved to \$1 000 272.00 effective July 1, 2016
- Phase 2: threshold moved to \$1.5 million effective April 1, 2017.

The revised threshold led to increases in the levels of disposable income for over 400 000 Jamaicans, who are in the lower-income bracket to be exempted from paying PAYE taxes, leading to greater purchasing capacities.

Social protection covers a wide range of policies and programmes that are aimed at reducing the lifelong consequences of poverty and social exclusion. In Jamaica, the MLSS through policies and programmes offer various forms of assistance to the most vulnerable. The PATH, introduced island-wide in 2002, is a conditional cash transfer programme that provides cash grants to the most needy and vulnerable in society from five broad categories:

- Children: from birth to completion of secondary education
- Elderly: 60 years and over, not in receipt of a pension
- Persons with Disabilities
- Pregnant and Lactating Women
- Poor Adults 18–59 years.

¹¹⁷ Retrieved from: <https://jis.gov.jm/disabilities-act-to-take-effect-february-14-2022/>

¹¹⁸ Retrieved from: <https://jcpdja.com/the-disabilities-act>

¹¹⁹ //efaidnbmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html? pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fjis.gov.jm%2Fmedia%2FBulletin-May-16-2016-1.pdf&clen=4900295&chunk=true

PATH has four main objectives:¹²⁰

- to alleviate poverty by increasing the value of transfers to the poor
- to increase educational attainment and improve health outcomes of the poor by breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty
- to reduce child labour, by requiring children to have minimum attendance in school
- to prevent families from falling further into poverty in the event of an adverse shock.

In addition, the recently announced increase in the country's minimum wage that will take effect on April 1, 2022, will see the rate moving from \$7 000 to \$9 000 per 40-hour work and for industrial security guards, an increase from \$9 700 to \$10 500 per 40-hour workweek. The increase in the minimum wage was based on the recommendations from the National Minimum Wage Advisory Commission.

Target 10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global institutions

Jamaica participates at the Global level in dialogue on major global issues through representation on in areas such as financing, climate change, sustainable use of marine resources, *inter alia*. In its role as Co-Chair alongside Canada, Jamaica has been instrumental in maintaining the global focus on the importance of financing for development broadly, ensuring that adequate, responsive financing is available to address the many priorities of UN Member States in their efforts to achieve the SDGs. A cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary approach has been taken to isolate and examine many of the issues affecting states and determine a menu of viable options to address these challenges and accelerate Member States' recovery.

Jamaica, therefore, continues to place a high priority on the ongoing work under the Financing for Development Initiative in the Era of COVID-19 and beyond, for which the Jamaican Prime Minister is one of the co-convenors. Jamaica continues to promote policy options that will greatly assist the international community to take the decisive actions needed to shape the COVID-19 response and recovery, in particular for Small Island Developing States (SIDs) and Middle-Income Countries (MICs).

Jamaica is also a member of the Like-minded Group of Countries Supporters of MICs at the UN in New York, which also advocates the issues of access to financing for MICs on criteria other than GDP.

Target 10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of managed migration policies

The National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development was approved by the Cabinet and tabled in Parliament in 2018. Through this policy, Jamaica seeks to ensure the safe, orderly and regular migration in and out of Jamaica, and better integrate migration policy into the broader framework of development policies. The policy also respects the right to freedom of movement and is grounded in a set of guiding principles which form the basis for mainstreaming and implementing the policy actions. These principles are

¹²⁰ <https://efaidnbmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/viewer.html?pdfurl=https%3A%2F%2Fcdn.odi.org%2Fmedia%2Fdocuments%2F1694.pdf&clen=678341&chunk=true>

1. Respect for Human Rights
2. Fairness and Equity for Migrants
3. Mutual Benefits for Migrants, Countries of Origin
4. Partnership and Inclusion Policies
5. Public Awareness and Sensitization
6. Knowledge, Data and Information Sharing

Additionally, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development enforces the importance of Jamaica's IMD Policy and recognizes migration as a critical development driver which impacts the economic, social and environmental pillars of development.

Work continued with the implementation of the National IMD Policy to ensure that international migration contributes positively to national development goals and enhances the well-being of migrants; several concrete steps have been taken. These steps are centred on direct and cross-cutting connections to:

- Migration engagements and governance
- Human trafficking and exploitation
- Labour migration and employment
- Remittances
- Migration data and information systems.

Target 10.B Encourage official development assistance and financial flows to where the need is greatest¹²¹

ODA is provided by IDPs in the form of new and ongoing projects and programmes to assist Jamaica to reach its development goals.¹²² This assistance supported the implementation of the country's medium-term strategic priorities. For the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, a total of US\$18.6 million (\$2.7 billion) in grant resources were provided, of which US\$17.3 million (\$2.5 billion) was new resources while US\$1.3 million (\$186.3 million) was reprogrammed funds under on-going projects. These grant resources were concentrated in the areas of Health, Governance, Social Protection, Education and Research, as well as Agriculture.

Target 10.C By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5.0 per cent

Remittances received account for approximately 14.0 per cent of Jamaica's gross domestic product, larger than foreign direct investments and are more than two times the value of ODA¹²³ Remittances serve to foster poverty reduction,

¹²¹ See write-up on Goal 17

¹²² Planning Institute of Jamaica. Economic & Social Survey Jamaica 2020. Kingston: PIOJ, 2021.

¹²³ International Organization for Migration. Migration in Jamaica: A Country Profile. 2018.

increase productivity and investments, promote economic development, augment national savings, and ease foreign exchange constraints within the migrants' country of origin.¹²⁴

With high levels of emigration, the risk of losing critical skills within a country is significant. However, these emigrants tend to send their earnings to their country of origin, thus creating a source of foreign exchange. In 2019, remittance inflows in Jamaica rose to US\$2 405.6 million compared with US\$2 345.8 million in 2018—an increase of US\$59.8 million.¹²⁵ The provisional remittance inflows for 2020 and 2021 stood at US\$2 905.0 million and US\$3 497.1 million, respectively.¹²⁶ With the onset of the pandemic, remittance inflows have been increasing in Jamaica which may be a result of responding to the needs resulting from the fallout of the pandemic (Figure 60).

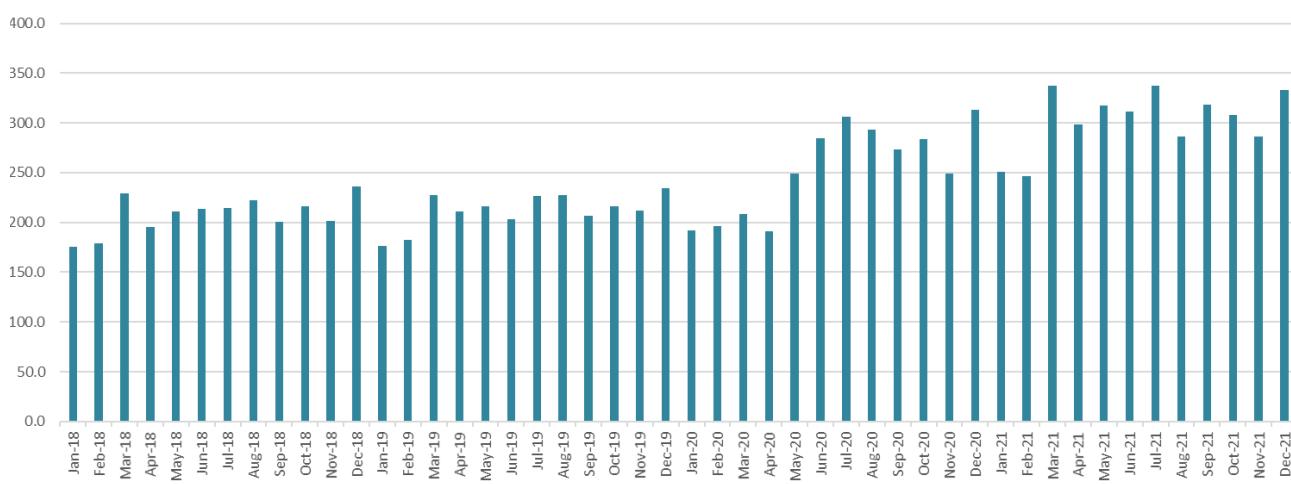


FIGURE 60 MONTHLY REMITTANCE INFLOWS IN USD MILLIONS (2018–2021)
SOURCE: BANK OF JAMAICA

Sending remittances attracts fees and reducing the cost of transfers and increasing the speed and efficiency can optimize remittance flows. It is also recognized that the reality of a large Diaspora population in global markets, with a ready appetite and affinity for Jamaican culture, products and services offers a ready market for Jamaican businesses and entrepreneurs. Diaspora capital markets can contribute significantly to national development by mobilizing savings for investments and providing long-term alternatives to facilitate wealth creation. The average total cost in percentage terms over the third quarter of 2021 for a US\$200, CA\$200 and UK£120, the largest sources of remittances to Jamaica, was 7.9 per cent, 6.3 per cent and 5.5 per cent, respectively.^{127,128} This is currently above the global UN target of 3.0 per cent by 2030 for all major currencies. However, the remittance costs for the UK and Canada reached three-year lows of 7.3 per cent and 6.9 per cent in 2020, respectively (Figure 61).

124 International Organization for Migration. Migration in Jamaica: A Country Profile, 2018.

125 http://www.boj.org.jm/uploads/pdf/rem_updates/rem_updates_jan2021.pdf

126 https://e2gobqetsqs.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Remittance-Bulletin-December-2021_Update.pdf

127 <https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/en/corridor>

128 Data for the fourth quarter of 2021 was not available at the time of writing.

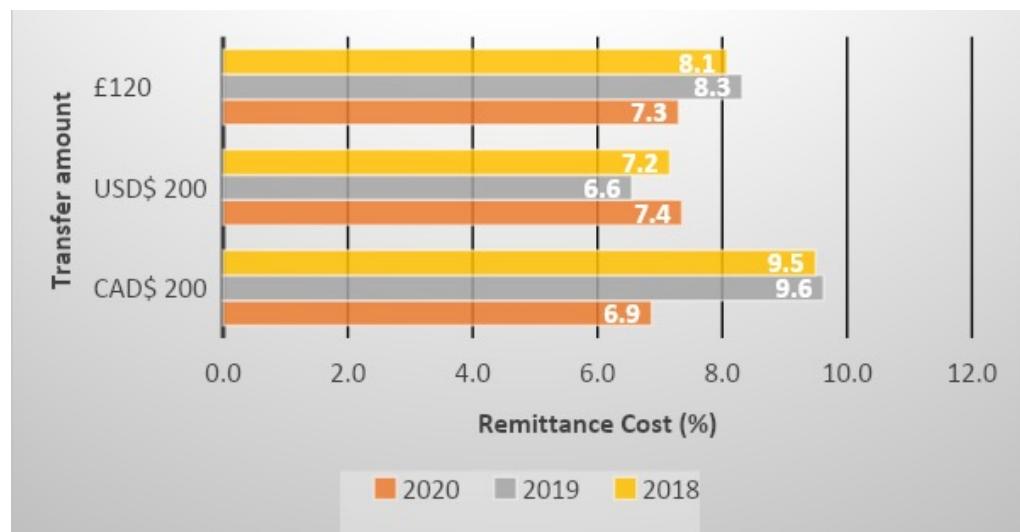


FIGURE 61 REMITTANCE COST (%) (2018–2020)
SOURCE: WORLD BANK

Lessons Learnt

1. Despite efforts to reach the poorest of the poor, it is important to recognize address the systemic issues and barriers (lack of access to basic social amenities, access to the internet and education in general, crime and violence and its psychosocial impact) to improving well-being of the most vulnerable.
2. There is need for timely, disaggregated data to inform targeted responses to the needs of the most vulnerable.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



GOAL 11

Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Context

There is an intersectionality of issues affecting internal migration, and the settlement of people in Jamaica, which includes, among other things, access to opportunities, security and infrastructure. Policymakers are therefore faced with addressing the concerns of more than half the population living in urban areas while ensuring equitable distribution of resources to maintain livelihoods in all areas. The complexities of developing safe and sustainable human settlements further raises concerns of public health, safety and natural disaster risk mitigation due to the threat of hydro-meteorological events including storms and hurricanes and man-made events like illegal dumping, air pollution and informal settlements. The progress on this goal has been supported by efforts to improve access to affordable housing, integrate sustainable development planning into local development, and improve connectivity and inclusivity through infrastructure development that has narrowed the rural-urban divide.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning sustainable cities and communities.

Sustainable Cities and Communities Highlights 2018-2022



Housing

Increase in value of residential mortgages since 2018

FIGURE 62 HIGHLIGHTS, SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES (2018-2022)

Discussion

Data available locally to measure progress on the targets and indicators for SDG 11, are related to access to housing and transport, the impact of hazards on lives and the economy and environmental issues such as waste management and air quality monitoring. Gaps remain in the ability to measure the cultural and natural heritage spending and coverage of green space for public use. The 2018 VNR captured updates and progress on housing, transport, waste management, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable planning, highlighting:

- The increase in housing starts and completions and lower mortgage rates from the National Housing Trust for persons with disabilities and low-income earners.
- Greater access for PWDs to public transport and passage of the Road Traffic Act to address road safety.
- Development of a Draft Emissions Policy Framework to monitor and regulate the output from industries
- Integration of the Sendai Framework into disaster risk reduction plans, passage of the Building Act, 2018 to improve resilience of infrastructure, along with hazard risk reduction made available through increased insurance coverage and convening of monitoring committees.

Target 11.1: By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

Discussion around housing and its importance in the community and national development involves quality of infrastructure, accessibility, tenure of occupants and security.

Quality and Tenure

Through alignment of the national development plan and the SDGs, prevalence of adequate housing is measured through the housing quality index (Hqi) and the proportion of households with access to secure tenure through household data from the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions. The quantity of quality housing has increased slightly over the period 2017 to 2019 as measured by the Hqi.¹²⁹ In 2019, the Hqi score was 75.7 per cent under the revised methodology; below the 76.0 per cent target set for 2018 under the MTF 2018-2021.¹³⁰ Improvements in housing quality variables over the period were observed in the exclusive use of a water closet and electricity for lighting which auger well for other SDG targets related to access to clean water (SDG 6) and electricity (SDG 7) see table 20. While there were increases in these Hqi components over the period, the variables on drinking water source and structure declined.

¹²⁹ The Housing Quality Index is a composite indicator used to assess the quality of the housing stock and is defined as the mean of the individual scores of selected variables namely: Walls of Concrete Block and Steel, Indoor Tap/Pipe as Main Source of Drinking Water, Electricity for Lighting, Exclusive Use of Water Closet, Exclusive Use of Kitchen, Number of Persons per Habitable Room.

¹³⁰ The 2030 target of this indicator is for 86.0 per cent of the housing stock which will require an improvement of 10.3 percentage points.

TABLE 20: HOUSING QUALITY INDEX

Indicator of Housing Quality	2017	2018	2019
Walls of Concrete Block & Steel	74.8	72.6	73.0
Exclusive Use of Water Closet	72.9	73.7	77.7
Indoor Tap/Pipe as Main Source of Drinking Water	51.3	51.0	46.5
Electricity for Lighting	93.9	95.6	95.5
Exclusive Use of Kitchen	94.1	94.3	94.1
Number of Persons Per Habitable Room	62.7	64.9	67.2
HQI	75.0	75.3	75.7

SOURCE: JAMIACA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

In addition to the HQI, the indicator on the proportion of households with access to secure tenure, is used in the NDP to measure sustainable urban and rural development. The proportion of households reporting a secure dwelling tenure arrangement was 70.9 per cent in 2019. This was a 4.4 per cent decline over the observable period 2017-2019. The indicator remains below the 80.5 per cent NDP baseline and is 17.1 per cent beneath the MTF 2018-2021 target.¹³¹ The proportion of households reporting ownership of the property on which they lived declined by 5.5 per cent, contributing to the decline in the indicator.

TABLE 21: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY STATUS OF DWELLING

Tenure Status	2017	2018	2019
Owned by Household Member	59.7	59.3	54.2
Rented/Leased	15.6	15.9	16.7
Proportion of households reporting secure tenure status	75.3	75.2	70.9

SOURCE: JAMIACA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

When disaggregated by sex, more male headed households reported a secure dwelling tenure status compared with female headed households. The decline in reported home ownership is observed across male and female headed households, however female headed households reported a larger percentage decline of 4.5 per cent, compared to 1.1 per cent for males.

¹³¹ The 2030 target under the Vision 2030 National Development Plan for the proportion of households with access to secure tenure is 95.0 per cent.

TABLE 22. DISAGGREGATED PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY STATUS OF DWELLING AND SEX OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

Dwelling Tenure Status	2017		2018		2019	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Owned by Household Member	32.3	27.4	33.6	25.7	31.2	22.9
Rented/Leased	7.3	8.3	8.3	7.6	7.9	8.8
Proportion of households reporting secure tenure arrangement	39.6	35.7	41.9	33.3	39.1	31.7

SOURCE: JAMAICA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

At the programme level, the Systematic Land Registration project has commenced to utilise research, geographic information system GIS data and adjudication processes to issue over 20 000 titles across the island. As of 2019, 40.6 per cent of households reported owing the land on which they live, and of this number, 68.1 per cent had a registered title for the property. Overall, 291 per cent of households who reported ownership of dwelling and land, had a registered title for the land. This is an increase from the 28.8 per cent in the previous year. Further, amendments to the Registration of Titles, Cadastral Mapping and Tenure Classification (Special Provisions) (Amendment) Act, 2020 and the Registration of Titles (Amendment) Act, 2020 support greater use of adjudication as a means of proving occupation and possession of land, and will separate the issuing of titles from the processes of planning and subdivision approval. These programmes and legislative changes evince the interconnectedness of the SDGs through impacts on goal 8 in lowering informal employment and goal 1 in property rights as the issuance of titles allows citizens to have security of tenure, which can be used to access capital for small businesses and insurance for protection of their assets from hazards.

Accessibility and Affordability

At the international level, the New Urban Agenda (NUA) aids in aligning national programmes and policies to affordable housing solutions that ensure a mix of quality services and access to public spaces by all (United Nations, 2017). Jamaica, in keeping with the NUA and the domestic Urban Renewal and Development Programme is seeking to build out the housing stock, increase the delivery of titles and regularise informal communities across the country. The draft National Housing Policy (2019) represents the commitment to address the inequities in development through focussing on: affordability, partnerships, social housing, legal frameworks, squatting and planning, management and governance. These interventions by the government and stakeholders aid in the achievement of targets 11.1 and 11.3 directly, while also addressing issues of security, non-discrimination and improved livelihoods.

The domestic housing shortage is quantified at 6 200 units annually, based on output from the NHT, NHT supported developers, the private market and informal development. The change in housing stock between the publishing of the 2001 and 2011 censuses was reported at 111 525 units. Of this total, 43 905 were completed by NHT and major developers which are captured in the annual ESSJ publication. The Draft Housing Policy recognises the remaining 67 620 units as units supplied by private builders and the informal sector. (MEGJC, 2019). The state facilitates residential construction by citizens and builders through housing finance and development from a number of agencies. Private development accounts for the bulk of residential construction, the main partner in this is the NHT, which is responsible for an annual average 53 per cent of reported residential mortgages. (Figure 63)

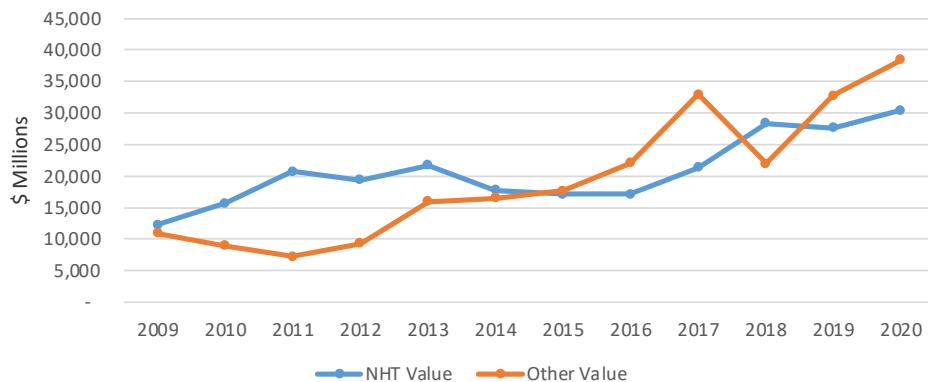


FIGURE 63: VALUE OF RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGES (ANNUAL DISBURSEMENT 2009-2020)

SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA

With the gap in housing solutions still substantial, recommendations for improvement include developing innovative finance solutions, increase in housing projects from the national developers,¹³² policy amendment and greater stakeholder collaboration. The approach in collaborative housing represents an opportunity to increase the quality of the existing housing stock for ownership and rental, build social capital and include citizens and civil society in the design and development of communities that can best meet their needs (Mullins & Moore, 2019).

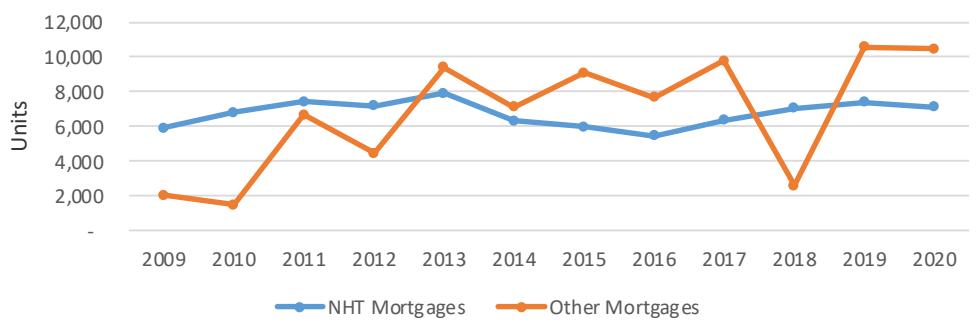


FIGURE 64: NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL MORTGAGES 2009-2020

SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY

The inclusion of private developers and civil society to support the development of innovative and affordable solutions can directly impact on 10 SDGs, through partnerships with the government in developing affordable housing, city planning and innovative designs. (Fei *et al*, 2020) multi-stakeholder collaboration—supported by the regulatory framework such as the current Development Orders, the National Building Act, 2018, which allows for application of the National Building Codes, and the upcoming Urban Renewal Policy and Action Plan and the Draft National Housing Policy—guide development that is inclusive, non-discriminatory, and provides safe quality infrastructure for a wide cross section of society.

In addition to the housing shortage due to low output, the challenge of rehabilitating existing housing stock and minimising the quantity of informal settlements remains a challenge in meeting target 11.1. Economic activities continue to play a role in the areas persons settle, transitioning from the traditional goods production and port activities, to tourism

and other services. As a result, attempts to remedy informal settlements have to be paired with industry development initiatives, which provide opportunities for entry into the formal economy.

Regularising existing and preventing the establishment of informal settlements continues to be an agenda item, addressed through policy and programmes. Work commenced on the National Squatter Management Policy (NSMP) which is scheduled to be completed in 2022. The NSMP seeks to curtail squatting in Jamaica to enhance the optimal and sustainable use of the country's land resources. It contains measures to address all forms of squatting in Jamaica, wherever it occurs – on government or privately owned lands, on beaches or on cays. Preliminary findings from the national squatter survey estimate that approximately 20 per cent of the population lives in squatter settlements. Approximately 541 settlements were identified prior to the national squatter survey and there are approximately 273 settlements surveyed to date across 8 parishes.

Target 11.2: By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

Through a liberalised transportation sector, citizens commute in rural and urban communities using public and private passenger vehicles. Public passenger vehicles operated by the government are primarily in Montego Bay and the Kingston Metropolitan Transport Region, with private passenger vehicles including buses and taxis supplement rural and urban routes.

Providing effective public transport in Jamaica is especially challenging, with the high density in the metropolitan areas resulting in capacity shortages based on the number of available buses; while the unplanned nature of some rural communities creates the problem of access. Efforts to increase the size of the fleet of public buses are underway as well ensuring efficient and cost-effective services. The high cost of fuel and out of commission buses has been a challenge in servicing routes adequately while regulating the offering of licensed private operators.

Overall seating capacity from public transport averages 60 seats per 1 000 persons and this shortage of capacity leads to an illegal or unregistered market for transport providers who capitalise on commuters' needs. The informal market complements the established providers and offers commuters an alternative and, in some cases, the only option for some routes. The informal modes however face criticism for dangerous road use affecting drivers and other road users and enforcing negative cultural archetypes, (Wright, Tangwell and Dick, 2021)

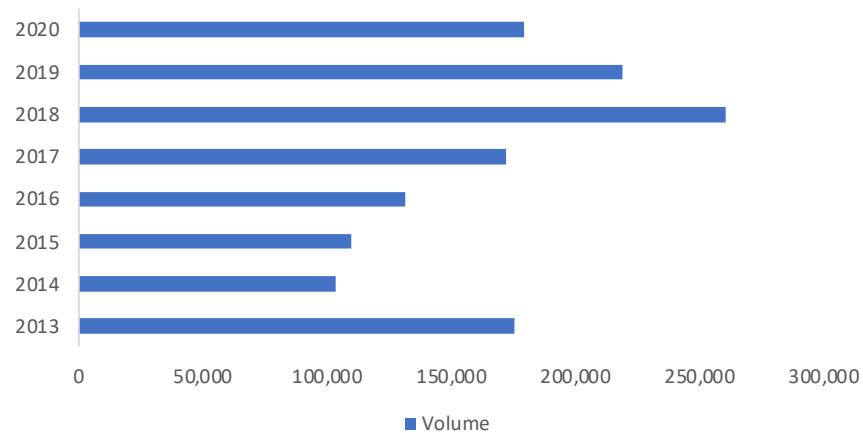


FIGURE 65: ANNUAL SEATING CAPACITY, PUBLIC PASSENGER VEHICLES (2013-2020)
SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY

The increase in private vehicle ownership that has been spurred by the lowering of interest rates on motor-vehicle loans, affordable used cars and other positive indicators related to incomes and spending requires greater focus on road infrastructure and legislation.¹³³ Ensuring the roadways are safe and regulations in place to protect persons becomes increasingly paramount, as well as readily available public transport that lowers the potential for collisions and fatalities, reduces congestion and vehicle emissions.

Road fatalities and injuries not only present a severe public health challenge but also impact on the safety of all road users, pedestrians and motorists. When analysed by gender, young men in Jamaica are five times more likely to be involved in collisions and fatalities than are women. In 2021, some 482 deaths were recorded from collisions, representing the highest number of fatalities from vehicular accidents on record in Jamaica. Additionally, an average 10 500 patients are treated annually for motor vehicle accidents, representing the second largest trauma category at Accident and Emergency facilities.

The legislative responses targeting road safety, was passed in 2018. However, outstanding regulations for the Road Traffic Act (2018), were tabled in February 2022. The delay in promulgation represents a challenge to the implementation and enforcement of rules that influence road safety and air quality from vehicle emissions including greenhouse gas emissions and particulate matter. These have further implications for the achievement of indicator 13.2.2 on the amount of greenhouse gas emissions and indicator 11.6.2 on annual mean levels of fine particulate matter.

Target 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

A key impact on the quality of settlements in Jamaica, are the prevalence of environmental events. The threat of damages from natural disasters continues to affect the island, with rainfall from storms and hurricanes being the most prevalent events. The previous VNR highlighted \$128 billion in losses and damages from hydrometeorological events between 2000 and 2017, this amount has increased with the passages of multiple storms and excessive rainfall events impacting on infrastructure, economic activities- primarily agriculture. In the period under review damages from weather systems totalled \$7.2 billion, largely on account of the passage of tropical storms Zeta and Eta in 2020. Three lives were lost between 2018 and 2020 from these and other climate related events.

Mitigating the impact of these events has been the focus of local and international support, through resilience building and financing initiatives. The promulgation of the Building Act is meant to regulate and improve the safety in the built environment and facilitate the application of the national building code. Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation plans have been developed at the community level to improve resilience. In financing, domestic resources have been bolstered by the transfer of \$2 billion to the Contingencies Fund specifically for natural disaster recovery as well as the signing of a US\$285.0 million Contingent Credit Facility with the IDB.

Target 11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

Jamaica's capacity to collect and treat waste in an efficient manner can impact on the natural environment- land, sea and air. The actions of both residents and commercial entities are contributory to the prevailing issues of improper waste disposal. A variety of factors including sporadic formal collection, barriers to servicing informal settlements due

¹³³ The number of certified fit motor vehicles by the Island Traffic Authority in 2020 of 551,886 represents an increase of 48 per cent to the 351,620 in 2016.

to terrain and crime, lack of receptacles in public spaces and weak regulations contribute to the illegal dumping (JET, 2016). These activities lead to flooding when there is heavy rainfall, marine pollution and air pollution through open air burning. National strategies take into account the importance of waste management by and ensuring equitable access to sanitation and solid waste disposal. Efforts are also focussed on addressing the nature of waste, to include all types such as e-waste, medical waste, agricultural waste inter alia, through a revised National Waste Management Policy to be completed as a strategic objective of the MTF 2018–2021.

Per capita waste generation has remained constant at 1.0 kg per day and forecasted to reach 1.5 kg by 2030. The total amount of waste collected through formal (public and private) systems in 2020 was 1 103 433 tonnes, increases of 9.7 per cent and 64.0 per cent since 2019 and 2014, respectively. The metropolitan parks and markers (MPM) waste shed accounts for 50.4 per cent of the waste collected nationally. The North-Eastern waste shed has had the fastest pace of collections, 23.0 per cent (CAGR) over the period 2014–2020, while the Southern region has a reported decline of 2.1 per cent over the same period.¹³⁴

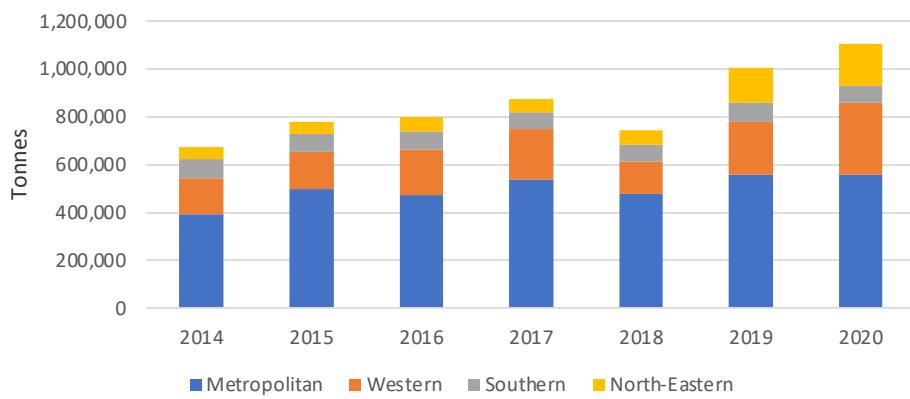


FIGURE 66: VOLUME OF WASTE COLLECTED BY REGION
SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA

Household disposal of garbage using formal methods at the national level was 70.0 per cent in 2019. Over half of households report use of regular public collection systems, 50.4 per cent nationally and 74.7 per cent in the GKMA. The main informal means of disposal is burning, which was reported by 27.2 per cent of households. Burning remains a popular form of disposal in rural households 46.3 percent compared with 51.1 per cent that reported disposal via public/private collection systems. While data on the proportion of municipal solid waste collected and managed in controlled facilities out of total municipal waste generated (Target 11.6.1) is unavailable, the proxy of household disposal shows a large proportion of public/private collection systems being used for disposal of waste, 92.2 per cent in the GKMA, against burning and other forms of disposal.

¹³⁴ Metropolitan wasteshed includes: Kingston, St Andrew, St Catherine, and St Thomas. Western wasteshed includes: Westmoreland, Hanover, St James, and Trelawny.

Southern wasteshed includes: St Elizabeth, Clarendon and Manchester. North-Eastern wasteshed includes: St Ann, Portland, and St Mary.

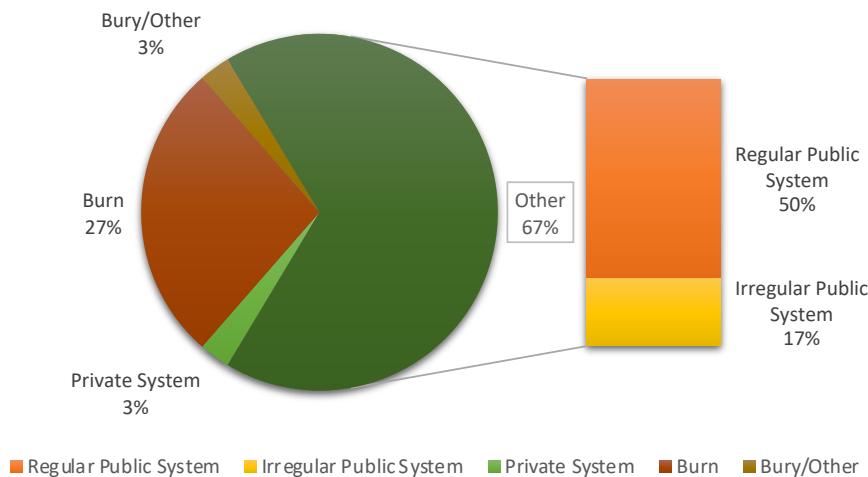


FIGURE 67: METHOD OF GARBAGE DISPOSAL BY HOUSEHOLD
SOURCE: JAMAICA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

With the impact of COVID-19 felt across all sectors, the full impact on progress related to SDG 11 is yet to be measured. Beyond public health impacts, COVID-19 depleted household incomes, through a reduction in economic activities related to global economic downturn and restrictions on movement. These activities had a deleterious impact on persons from urban areas, where there was a density of COVID-19 cases, e.g., Kingston and St Andrew accounted for 26.7 per cent of all cases while women accounted for 57.0 per cent of all cases. The immediate effects on income from the pandemic can affect the housing situation of urban residents leading to further declines in the tenure status of households, where the numbers of individuals living rent-free has been climbing year over year.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

While challenges continue to affect developing countries in implementing the SDGs, the purpose of constant monitoring and evaluation allows for the identification of problem areas, successes with multiplier effects and the ability to observe best practice from other nations. In the case of Jamaica, the discussion has identified challenges in increasing the housing stock, faster policy responses and the impact of climate related events. Amidst this, there have been key measures taken to move progress incrementally in these and other areas:

- Parliamentary approval of the Water Sector Policy in 2019, to promote and ensure sustainability and intergenerational equity and improved efficiency, Integrated Water Resources Management and universal access to safe water. These actions improve the distribution and use of water, which can have the requisite multiplier effect on SDG 6 and on variables used in the Housing Quality Index.
- Multiplier effects can also be observed in the Gazetteering of Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order, 2018 and the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order, 2018 which sets restrictions on the importation, trade and use of certain plastics products effective January 1, 2019. Plastic materials are large components of garbage illegally dumped and lead to flooding, and pollution of the ocean along with other effluent that block drains.
- Improvement in disaster risk response, through insurance coverage for catastrophes from the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility Segregated Portfolio Company (CCRIF SPC);

which resulted in a \$500 million pay out in December 2020 to assist with recovery from tropical storms Zeta and Eta.

- The preparation of the Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy and the completion of a number of DRM governance documents including:
 - Protocol and Guidelines to Mainstream Gender in DRM/CCA Consultancy
 - National Framework for Disaster Risk Management
 - Outline of Parish Disaster Risk Management Plan
 - National Disaster Response Coordination Plan
 - National Relief Clearance Plan
- Information and communication technology are increasingly being used in projects to facilitate effective planning and decision making. The ongoing Squatter Management Survey to support the Squatter Management Policy, has been utilising—in eight of the fourteen parishes—geo spatial data to map and store data on informal settlements.
- The importance of spatial data was highlighted in the 2018 VNR, with reference to the National Spatial Plan. The plan remains in draft; however, the National Spatial Planning Information Portal was launched in 2021. The portal is publicly available and when complete will allow for the analysis and modelling of data to support research, planning and development.
- Under the Urban Renewal and Development Programme Sector Plan of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, the former Ministry of Housing Urban Renewal and Climate Change referenced three sub-programmes in its activities under health and wellness, environment health and greenspaces. These led to the identification of eight public parks as multi-generational and multi-purpose green spaces so that the needs of women, children, the disabled and elderly are met and fulfilled within these locations.
- The pace of progress in improvements to local planning capabilities has been mixed, with the island now being completely covered with local development orders. The development orders which guide the use of land, have been on record since 1962, and the most recent update being done in 2021. In keeping with sustainable development practises, the process of updating and confirming Development Orders continues.

Way Forward

In addressing the challenge of rapid urbanisation, the New Urban Agenda (NUA) represents a novel approach by countries to incorporate principles of sustainable development. The NUA reinforces the ethos of the SDGs of leaving no one behind, leveraging urbanisation for productivity, decent work and opportunities for all, while maintaining sound

environmental practices that allow for harmony between human settlement, industry and the natural environment.¹³⁵ In localising the application of the NUA, Caribbean SIDS are faced with a confluence of issues related to human, financial and technical resource capacity, as well as frequent adverse weather events and the growing threat of climate change to coastal cities. According to Mycoo and Bharath (2021) refocussing the NUA to the realities of a small island developing state would focus attention on:

- (i) Safe, affordable, and resilient urban housing
- (ii) Informal communities and rural-urban linkages
- (iii) Safe and affordable urban water and sewerage services
- (iv) Disaster risk reduction, climate change and urban resiliency
- (v) Safe and sustainable urban transportation
- (vi) Inclusive urbanisation and participatory integrated spatial planning
- (vii) Technology

Achieving the outcomes in SDG 11 requires a multifaceted approach that will allow for cross dimensional impacts in all the SDGs due to the health, safety, environment, infrastructure, economic development and partnerships implications. Monitoring and mitigating potential threats from any of these areas is the immediate action to avoid missing the target of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Specific areas with alignment to the goals 11, 13 and 15 include the improvement of infrastructure along coastline and complement with the expansion of nature-based solutions (mangrove forest rehabilitation, coral reef rehabilitation, watershed restoration and preservation, *inter alia.*), complemented by the adoption of the disaster risk management plans and guidance documents.

Improvements are needed in the pace of policy and legislative processes to avoid urban decay, unwanted citizen reaction to developments, environmental degradation and loss of life from adverse natural events.

Resource Requirements

The key challenges undergirding achievement of SDG 11 are in financing, data, and pace of policy development. Availability of domestic financing continues to be a challenge in augmenting the public transport sector, increasing the housing stock and improving road infrastructure. Data gaps exist in reporting on spending on cultural preservation, availability of green space and disaggregated data to drive planning in the public and private sectors to reduce vulnerability to climate and other types of hazards. The policy development process is still protracted. A number of policy documents have remained in draft for long periods including the National Housing Policy. Notwithstanding the progress made on developing a draft National Spatial Plan, there is need to finalize and operationalize, include considerations for the blue economy and the exclusive economic zone. Addressing these gaps not only impact on the achievement of goal 11, but also the related environmental, economic and social indicators across the SDGs.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



GOAL 12

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Context

Consumption and production are at the heart of every economy. How consumers and companies manage their products and waste, directly impacts the built and natural environment, domestically and internationally. Jamaica is not unique in the challenges it faces with food regulation, energy and manufacturing output and how firms treat the waste from these industries. With an exclusive economic zone of 257.7 square kilometres (sq. km.) and a land area of 10 991 sq. km, the importance of sustainable resource management and management of chemicals and waste can affect livelihoods on land and at sea. Sound environmental practices are therefore required across industries and more so for those that use marine resources, such as tourism and fisheries.

Jamaica's policy and legislative agenda have kept pace with targeting consumers and producers through protecting lands from resource exploitation, banning single-use plastics and facilitating recycling initiatives. Further progress will require stronger measures for non-compliance and increasing the information available to consumers and producers on the content of products and harmful substances.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Responsible Consumption and Production Highlights 2018-2022



Policy

National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes approved



Standards

Jamaican Standard (JS) ISO 14005:2017 – Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Guidelines launched

FIGURE 68: HIGHLIGHTS, SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 12.1 Implement the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, all countries taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries

The GOI, through a range of policies and programmes, coordinated and implemented the 10-Year Framework of Programmes (YFP). The NEPA, through the Regional Strategy and Action Plan for Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP), is Jamaica's focal point for the 10YFP. The Jamaica VNR Report 2018 highlighted that Jamaica's policy planning and regulatory framework included the National Energy Policy (2009-2030), Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica (2015) and Water Sector Policy (2018) among others. Since then, the latest policy to promote sustainable consumption and production practices was approved in 2018.

The Public Procurement Regulation (2018) was introduced to provide balance in the procurement of goods and services by the public sector. The policy supports MSMEs through reserve contracts and projects equal to 20.0 per cent of the annual procurement budget. Government spending has reached approximately 13.2 per cent of real value-added annually, accounting for one of the largest contributions to GDP annually. With MSMEs representing over 91.6 per cent of registered businesses, increasing the pool of revenue available to these firms has significant benefits to job creation and growth.

Cabinet's approval of the National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Waste¹³⁶ was a key milestone towards strengthening the governance framework for environmental management and sustainable consumption and production. The policy is in keeping with international and regional best practices to ensure the protection of human health and the environment and guided by the tenets of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. Additionally, the Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Policy is currently in development.

Further, statutes, and one bill were promulgated in the Houses of Parliament including the Food Storage and Prevention of Infestation (FSPI) {Amendment} Act and Regulations, 2019, and the Protection of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture {Amendment} Act, 2019, which makes provisions for the protection of Jamaica's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Jamaica is preparing to make amendments to the Forest Act, 1996 and Forest Regulations, 2001; the proposed amendments emphasize the promotion of conservation and sustainable use of forests, mechanisms to include the private sector in forestry, and strategies to ensure compliance and enforcement.

Target 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

The Mining and Quarrying industry in Jamaica contributes an average of 2.1 per cent to gross domestic product (GDP) annually, representing the smallest industry group measured in the national accounts. However, products from the extractive industry, bauxite, alumina, limestone and others, account for an average of 49.8 per cent of merchandise export earnings.

¹³⁶ The policy includes inputs from a series of stakeholder consultations led by the Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change in 2019.

Due to the importance of the extractive industry in foreign exchange earnings, employment and contribution to GDP, navigating the sustainable use of land and resources for earnings and also environmental protection is a pertinent concern. As a result, actions have been taken to declare the Cockpit Country—home to large reserves of bauxite and also the largest remaining natural forest—as a protected area, increasing the country's protected land territory from 18.0 per cent to 24.0 per cent. The challenge facing firms in the mining and quarrying industry in sustainable production and land revitalization is compounded by the increase in demand for products. The domestic construction boom and increased demand for alumina products are factors for exploitation. However, bauxite and alumina production have been declining annually, significantly affected by activities at the producing plants and proprietary changes.

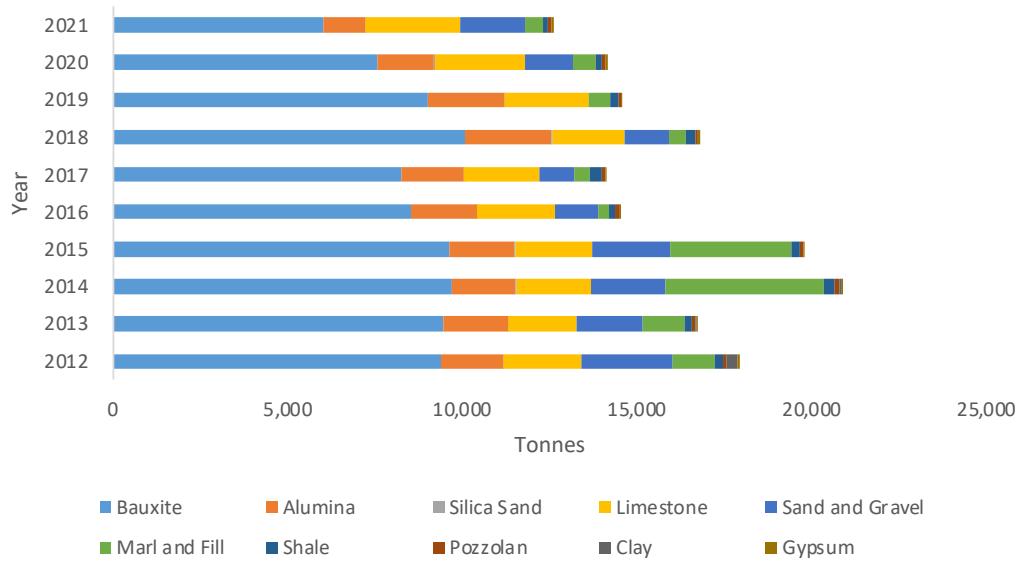


FIGURE 69: DOMESTIC MINERAL PRODUCTION
SOURCE: STATISTICAL INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Target 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

Goal 12 is aligned to Goals 3 and 4 of Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan 'Jamaica's economy is prosperous', 'Jamaica has a healthy natural environment'. A key area of focus to achieve these goals is the management of waste. The Plastic Waste Minimization Project, initiated in 2018, was designed to reduce marine litter from plastics generated from land-based activities. Up to 2019, more than 15.0 tonnes of plastic material had been collected. Additionally, the programme delivered a Final Regulatory Impact Assessment on Plastics and Polystyrene in 2020.

The UNDP also implemented the National Implementation Plan for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (NIP for POPs) which sought to strengthen national and local capacities to effectively manage Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs).

The GOJ implemented the Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order (2018) and the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order (2018) to ban the importation, distribution, manufacture and commercial use of certain types of single use plastics, in phases, as of January 1, 2019 (NEPA, 2020). A mobile app was developed by the National Solid Waste Management Authority (NSWMA) to facilitate easier collection and reporting of non-collection of solid waste, and illegal dumping.

The NSWMA launched the Northern Belt Plastic Project in 16 communities across the Manufacturing Process Management (MPM) region to increase public awareness of the importance of solid waste separation and promote solid waste management best practices. Over 2 200kg of plastic was collected and handed over to a recycling company for processing.

E-waste is a major factor in solid waste management. Data from the UN in the Global E-Waste Monitor (2020) show that Jamaica generated the most e-waste in the Caribbean sub-region, with 17.8 kilo tonnes in 2019 and the second-lowest level of waste generated per capita at 6.2 kilograms. Management of e-waste has been included in the Draft National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Waste.

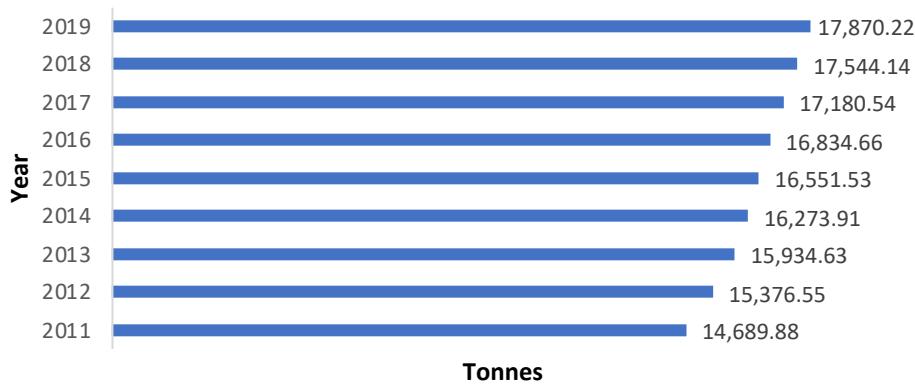


FIGURE 70. VOLUME OF E-WASTE GENERATED
SOURCE: UN STAT

The Cabinet approved the National Programme for the environmentally sound management of end-of-life pneumatic tyres. The ten-year \$428.0 million project involves the removal of pneumatic tyres from the island's disposal sites for incineration in a high-temperature kiln.

To further promote sustainable production, the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce and the Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change advanced the development of the National Investment Policy and prepared a Draft Green Economy Investment Strategy and Action Plan.

Target 12.8 By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

Under the Knowledge Co-Creation and the Young Leaders Programmes, funded by Government of Japan, 14 persons (including eight females) were trained in areas such as tourism development, disaster risk reduction, value chain development for sustainable use of fisheries resources and solid waste management. The Government of Japan also approved grants in the amount of \$67.1 million on the Sustainable Transport and Renewable Energy-Powered Electromobility Support Project to prepare an electric mobility strategic framework, which is intended to improve the technology transition in the transport and energy sectors consistent with indicator 12.a.1. As of 2021, five charging ports have been installed.

Through the initiative, Support for the Development of the Ginger Value Chain (2018-2019), Jamaica made progress in strengthening the scientific and technological capacity through initiatives such as the MOAF's improved capacity to develop and implement value chain upgrading strategies and a review of the ginger tissue culture facilities with recommendations for improvement in Jamaica (2018–2019). The Government of Korea awarded scholarships worth \$8.3 million for students who are pursuing graduate studies in urban development policy and technology entrepreneurship.

The Food Storage and Prevention of Infestation Division (FSPID) was the first local inspection entity to attain the ISO/IEC 17020:2012 international standard. Additionally, more than 40 standards were developed for products and services over the review period. Among those launched was the Jamaican Standard (JS) ISO 14005:2017 – Environmental Management Systems (EMS) Guidelines which will facilitate the implementation of an EMS within organizations, particularly, MSMEs.

There are gaps in the availability of data to track progress under SDG 12, including measurement of the material footprint in Jamaica.

TABLE 23: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON AVAILABLE INDICATORS.

Targets	Indicator	Output as at 2018	Progress	Assessment
Target 12.2 By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources	Implementation of Environmental Management Systems (EMS) including standard specifications such as ISO 14000 environmental management standards	At the end of 2017, at least 10 companies were certified	At the end of 2020, 12 companies certified	Relatively no change
	Coral Reef Health as measured by the National Environment and Planning Agency	In 2015 the Coral Reef Health Index was 2.2. Jamaica ranked as 'poor'.	In 2020 the CHRI index was 2.0 remaining in the category 'poor'.	Decline
Target 12.4 By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment	National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Waste	Green Paper tabled in 2017	White paper completed March 2019, revisions made and submitted to Cabinet at the end of 2020	Approved
	Emissions Policy Framework for Jamaica	---	Green Paper finalized and submitted to Cabinet by the Ministry of Housing Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change.	Ongoing
	Draft Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF)	Passed into law in 2015	Amended to include provisions in conformity with the Paris Agreement as well as developments in the international climate change arena. Submitted as Green paper to Cabinet in 2020	Ongoing

SOURCE: JAMAICA SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

One of the lessons learned over the period is that there are benefits to be derived from increased public awareness activities. There was a positive response by the private sector to the bans introduced by the GOJ on plastics. The Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) reported that the ban fuelled opportunities for the manufacturing of bio-degradable packaging, such as paper bags and bamboo straws (ESSJ 2019). This was associated with the rise in public awareness activities conducted between 2019 and 2021 concerning the proper treatment of plastic waste, with activities being conducted in multiple communities.

Another best practice that has paid dividends is the development of policy that is aligned with the SDGs and the national planning framework - the Jamaica National Energy Policy 2009–2030 which emphasizes the sustainable management of energy resources and the development of viable renewable energy resources, with the latter expected to represent no less than 20.0 per cent of the energy mix by 2030. Since 2013, renewable energy has risen to 13.0 per cent of total energy production.

Crosscutting issues and interlinkages with other SDGs

Progress made in achieving the targets under goal 12 has implications for other goals, specifically SDG 13 'Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.' Target 13.2 in particular speaks to integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning. This is demonstrated in:

- Finalization of the Green Economy Investment Strategy and Action Plan, a component of the Plastic Waste Minimisation Project.
- The tabling of the White Paper for the National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Waste in Parliament. This aligns with the international agreements made by Jamaica including the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

Increased up take of renewable energy also augers well for SDG 7 "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all"; target 7.2 on the renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption.

Way Forward

Achieving progress on the sustainable production and consumption of goods and services presents challenges for Jamaica in advancing the 2030 Agenda because of the myriad interconnected areas of responsibility for citizens, the private sector and the government. Jamaica has several policies and action plans that promote sustainable consumption and production however, the enforcement and monitoring of practices by citizens and businesses is the next step.

The take-up of firms committing to certification to ISO-14000 remains slow, with 12 firms obtaining the standard, up from 10 at the end of 2017. This will limit Jamaica's ability to address pollution from the source—firms' manufacturing plants. Moral suasion may not be enough; stronger responses that emphasize good environmental practices are required.

Resource constraints notwithstanding, key actions for moving forward include:

- Development of indicators to measure the targets under SDG 12 (e.g. - Jamaica's material footprint.)

- Strengthening the monitoring framework within respective MDAs with responsibility for monitoring the targets.
- Facilitation of greater partnerships between businesses and MDAs to determine the full economic cost of sustainable consumption and production and the development of strategies for meeting these standards in production.

Resource Requirements

- For Jamaica to advance towards achieving SDG 12 resources are needed in the following areas: Increased allocation of finances from domestic resource mobilization and the alignment of environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) principles in businesses, including MSMEs.
- Higher levels of sharing of technical expertise at the domestic and international level, supporting the *means of implementation* as outlined under the commitments related to SDG 17.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

GOAL 13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Context

For SIDS like Jamaica which are vulnerable to climate impacts, rapid shifts in key climatic variables, and heightened exposure of critical sectors and resources to climate impacts, underscore the urgency to act. Jamaica has been experiencing a warming trend in recent years with average minimum temperatures increasing faster than maximum temperatures (rate increase of 0.011 °C/year), and mean temperatures increasing at a rate of 0.008 °C/year (CSGM, 2021). Studies indicate a likely increase in the intensity of extreme weather events due to climate change and an increase in the Intensity of storms by 2.0 to 11.0 per cent with a shift in distribution toward higher wind speeds and potential damages (CSGM, 2021). The GOJ's efforts to mobilize resources for climate action, enhance institutional capacity to respond to climate change, and integrate climate and disaster risk management in all aspects of national planning, demonstrates that climate action is a priority.

Recent studies highlight the vulnerability of coastal and marine resources, water resources, human settlements and infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, human health and forests to climate change (FAO & GOJ, 2020; GOJ, n.d., 2020a). Economic modelling done to inform the development of [Jamaica's Long-Term Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Strategy](#), shows that as climate change intensifies, the risks posed by different climate hazards will exacerbate Jamaica's economic vulnerability, particularly in coastal locations (World Bank, 2021). Jamaica's geography and high concentration of economic assets and activities in coastal areas heighten the risk posed, and actions over the current review period have sought to enhance resilience and disaster risk reduction through *inter alia* integration of climate change into national policy, strategies and plans. The financial risk to coastal areas is highlighted in the examples of Clarendon and Trelawny in Table 24.

TABLE 24: THE PROJECTED ECONOMIC VALUE OF DAMAGE BY SELECT HAZARDS FROM CLIMATE CHANGE IN SELECT COASTAL AREAS OF JAMAICA.

Climate Hazard	Economic Impact in select coastal areas of Jamaica
Hurricanes	A 1-in-100-year hurricane wind would cause between US \$4.8 billion and US \$5.9 billion in damages by 2050, depending on the climate change trajectory, up from US \$3 billion today. The difference of 42.0 per cent is due to the increasing severity of storms rather than economic growth in exposed areas.
Coastal Flooding	Under a 2.4oC warming scenario, a 1-in-100-year coastal flood could cause US \$329 million of damages in Clarendon and US \$158 million of damages in Trelawny. In Clarendon, this level of damage is more than double the current expected damage from a coastal flood with the same return period (US \$144 million).
Fluvial events	Damages from a 100-year fluvial event could reach as high as US \$977 million under a 2.4oC scenario in Clarendon. This reflects the exposure of bauxite mining and agricultural processing industries in Clarendon, which is exposed to flooding both currently and in future scenarios. These damages again are more than double the current maximum expected damages from a 1-in-100-year fluvial event of US \$415 million.

SOURCE: WORLD BANK & IBRD, 2021.

The review for the period 2018–2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning climate action.

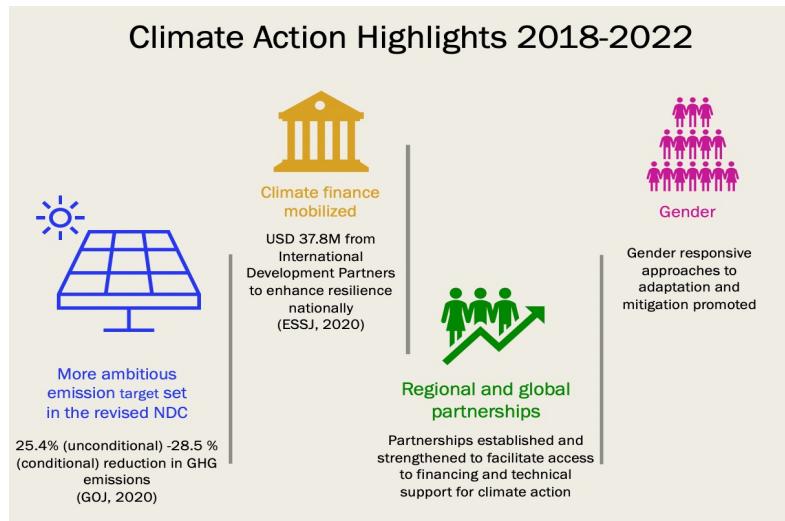


Figure 71: Highlights, Climate Action 2018–2022

Discussion

Target 13.1 Strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate hazards and natural disasters

Disaster Risk Reduction

In 2019, droughts and related fires affected a number of parishes across Jamaica, with losses totalling over \$60 million (PIOJ, 2020). Extreme rainfall events and resultant flash floods were a stark reminder of the country's disaster risk. Jamaica's progress towards reducing risks from climate-related hazards and natural disasters covered key areas, such

as strengthening telecommunication infrastructure, expanding the availability of data and decision-making tools and policy development. For example, through the National Risk Information Platform which is currently being developed, stakeholders will have access to hazard information (vulnerable locations, maps of hazard areas). The development of a National Vulnerability Ranking Index Tool and Platform is in its early stages. When completed, it will inter alia, allow users to examine vulnerability by sectors and regions. The National Risk Information Platform and the National Vulnerability Ranking Index Tool and Platform will support decision-making around the risks associated with climate change, an integral element of adaptive capacity.

The UNDP has assisted the Government towards meeting its obligation under the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the London Amendments (March, 1993) to which it is a signatory. Additionally, Jamaica ceded to the Copenhagen Amendment (November, 1997) and the Montreal and Beijing Amendments (September 2003). In relation to these protocols, Jamaica has had the assistance of the UNDP in completely phasing out Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and embarked on the phasing out of Hydro Chlorofluorocarbons (HCFC's) through the project, HCFC Phase Out Management Plan. Under Phase II, the country will address strategic areas related to local consumption of HCFCs.

Other achievements include:

- Cabinet's approval for the development of a **Disaster Risk Financing Policy** that seeks to create an enabling framework for mainstreaming disaster risk financing in resilience. If successfully implemented, the policy would improve Jamaica's ability to manage the economic burdens associated with disasters.
- Establishment of a US\$285 million **Contingent Credit Facility for Disaster Risk Emergencies (CCF)** with the Inter-American Development Bank to widen and diversify the post-disaster risk financing options and strengthen Jamaica's effort toward resilience to natural disasters.
- **Bush Fire Warning Index** is being developed as a predictive tool that will allow for greater accuracy in locating and extinguishing bush fires. Increased occurrence of droughts makes the need to effectively address risks associated with bush fires critical, reducing loss of forests, lives and livelihoods.
- The transfer of **\$2 billion to the Contingencies Fund in 2019** and the raising of the aggregate ceiling of the Fund from \$100 million to the \$10 billion.
- The signing of a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the GOJ and the USAID committing US\$5 million** to assist the GOJ in funding its Disaster Risk Financing Initiative (2019)
- Launch of the **Green Bond Project (2021)** which seeks to raise funds on the domestic and regional debt capital markets to finance the implementation of climate-related or environmentally sustainable activities locally. These include engagements targeting energy efficiency; clean transportation; pollution prevention; sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry; protection of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems; clean water; and sustainable water management
- **Issuance of a Catastrophe Risk Bond (2021)** which will provide the GOJ with financial protection of up to the US \$185 million against losses from named storms for three Atlantic tropical cyclone seasons ending in December 2023. The GOJ was the first of any SIDS to independently sponsor such a bond (MOFPS, 2021).

Adaptation

Jamaica made notable gains in climate adaptation for the period under the review. The multi-year Technological Needs Assessment (TNA) Project, for example, which commenced in 2019, is a key initiative that supported Jamaica to craft a comprehensive strategy for adaptation and mitigation. It identifies the technologies that may be adopted to expand adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture, coastal resources, water and energy sectors at various levels and outlines approaches to promote uptake for select sectors (GOJ, 2020). Additionally, the [Barrier Analysis and Enabling Framework \(BAEF\)](#) of the TNA outlines the economic, social and political barriers to technology adoption and the enabling framework necessary for wider uptake nationally (GOJ, 2021a). Jamaica's TNA Roadmap also identifies renewable technologies as a key area. Success in this area will contribute to reduced emissions and the achievement of SDG 7.

Adaptation planning is central to building adaptive capacity. Jamaica received grant funding of US\$1.1 million from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) to commence the preparation of its first [National Adaptation Plan](#) (NAP) (Spence, 2021). The NAP builds on outputs of the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR), comprised of a series of investment projects which collectively have supported resilience building through a web of adaptation initiatives. The NAP will include a private sector engagement strategy, a finance strategy, an investment plan for adaptation, and will promote gender equality in line with the UNFCCC's [Gender Action Plan](#). In 2011, the UN Capital Development Fund initiated the LoCAL (Local Climate Adaptive Living) Facility to deliver climate finance solutions for local governments in developing countries (OpenAid, n.d.). At the local level, the initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of municipal corporations to integrate climate action through capacity building and financing opportunities (Dawkins, 2021).

Through the PPCR, stakeholders now have a range of equipment and adaptation solutions to better respond to climate change; these include automatic weather stations, aquaponic systems in rural communities, and communal greenhouses that adopt a climate-smart design. Other capacity-building initiatives designed to strengthen individuals' and institutions' adaptive capacity included Soil Moisture Probe Operations Training for technical staff in select agencies, training in Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change for community members and training of Policy Analysts in climate-proofing for national policies (Change Focal Point Network Reports, 2021). These initiatives have strengthened institutional capacity for climate data collection, processing and information dissemination for the attainment of Target 13.1.

Enabling Climate Action: critical capabilities and resources

Skills and Networks	Infrastructure	Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons trained: climate-smart agriculture practices; and applying weather and climate services to agriculture • Farmers' groups established. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro-check dams to manage water flow and reduce soil erosion during extreme rainfall events installed. • Distribution networks expanded to strengthen rainwater harvesting systems • Weather radar installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotto Bay Community Disaster Risk Management (CDRM) Plan revised to a Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation Plan to enable stakeholders to better address communities' risks.

Highlights taken from three key initiatives focused on building adaptive capacity at the individual and institutional levels: 1) Improving Climate Data and Information Management Project; 2) GOJ/Adaptation Fund Programme and 3) Accelerating the Uptake of Climate Smart Agriculture in ACP Countries Project.

Other achievements include the adaptation stocktake where over 150 existing adaptation initiatives were identified at the national and local levels. The stocktake serves as a baseline of adaptation strategies/tools nationally to inform actions that may be up scaled. The stocktake exercise will assist in understanding the current landscape of climate change adaptation initiatives to identify gaps and opportunities for further action. One specific intended use is to position Jamaica to better leverage climate finance (IISD, 2022) to support resilience building.

Target 13.2 Integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and plans. Mobilizing climate finance and empowering national stakeholders to participate in climate action were among the key initiatives

Jamaica uses an integrated approach to national development planning. Climate change adaptation and mitigation are important cross-cutting elements for all sectors. Efforts are made to mainstream hazard risk reduction, sustainable land and natural resource management in national development planning, strategies and programmes. At the sector level, key achievements in selected sectors for the period under review are described in Table 25.

TABLE 25: EXAMPLES OF INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS INTO POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PLANS AND RELATED ADAPTATION INTERVENTIONS

Sector	Result
Health	A Climate Action Plan for Health for Caribbean Countries was developed to build awareness of stakeholders in the health sector and strengthen actions in the sector regionally.
Water	1810 MICRO check dams were installed in the Upper Rio Minho Watershed Area (URMWA) as part of land management and erosion control.
Transport	The National Transport Policy to include climate change considerations; and the development of a proposal to procure electric vehicles to promote mitigation efforts was revised.
Meteorology	Commenced development of early warning systems for bush fires due to more severe droughts because of climate change.
Tourism	Risk assessments were conducted to develop risk profiles and risk maps for resort areas across the island and expansion of approach to climate resilience in the tourism sector.

SOURCE: CLIMATE CHANGE FOCAL POINT NETWORK REPORTS (2021)

The Climate Change Policy Framework which governs national climate planning underpins these and other actions to support resilience building. Coordination will be critical to the successful implementation of the climate change policy and other related policies. The Climate Change Focal Point Network¹³⁷ publishes CC-Connect, a bi-annual electronic newsletter that shares information about the climate-related initiatives being undertaken by the government and its partners. The publication is a useful tool for keeping implementers informed and highlighting opportunities for collaboration.

Jamaica submitted its updated [Nationally Determined Contribution \(NDC\)](#) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in June 2020. The related NDC Implementation Plan was launched in 2021 and outlines the

¹³⁷ The CCFPN has representation from all ministries and relevant departments and agencies (MDAs). The focal points are responsible for coordinating, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the development of their sectoral climate action.

strategies to achieve targets in the NDC. The sectoral scope of this NDC was broadened to include emission reduction targets in the energy, forestry, and land-use sectors. The addition of the land-use sectors and forests is significant given the critical role they play in climate change adaptation and mitigation. The revised targets for 2030 are ambitious—1.8 to 2.0 MtCO₂e¹³⁸, up from 1.1 to 1.5 MtCO₂e in the last NDC, representing a 25.4 per cent reduction relative to business-as-usual emissions in 2030 without international support (unconditional)¹³⁹ and 28.5 per cent reduction relative to business-as-usual emissions in 2030 conditional¹⁴⁰ upon international support (GOJ, 2020b). The updated NDC prioritizes gender-responsiveness and is subject to all relevant laws, guidelines, policies and programmes that are designed to increase inclusiveness and fairness, including the National Policy for Gender Equity (GOJ, 2020b).

Jamaica benefited from the NDC Partnership Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) and completed consultations to inform the implementation of 11 sub-projects. Activities under this initiative included an assessment of climate expenditure analysis and modelling to support the introduction of climate-responsive budgeting and the preparation of the Long-term Low Emissions and Climate Resilient Development Strategy (2050 Pathway Strategy), which will also support Jamaica in achieving its NDC targets. Jamaica's [Integrated Resource Plan for the Electricity Sector](#) was also revised in 2020 and proposes the integration of renewables to save costs and reduce emissions.

In 2018, Jamaica initiated the revision of the Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF); it was approved as a Green Paper in 2021. The framework presents strategies to effectively respond to climate change impacts up to 2030 (GOJ, 2021b). The updated policy expands on the framing of gender in climate planning nationally and highlights its integration as important for gender-equitable development, in line with the Vision 2030 Gender Sector Plan and the National Policy for Gender Equality (GOJ, 2021b). Key agents of implementation include the Climate Change Focal Point Network (CCFPN) through the various ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) represented and the Policy Analyst Network (PAN)¹⁴¹. The PAN leads the policy development and analysis process whereas the FPN members shape policy through research and facilitate implementation at the institutional level.

Climate Leadership

Jamaica further strengthened its commitment to climate action through key leadership roles globally and regionally; these include Co-chair of the Nationally Determined Contribution Partnership, a global coalition of 193 members including countries and institutional partners; Co-chair of the UN Climate Change Financing Initiative with France, a political initiative to mobilize climate financing to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and in the last financial year, Jamaica assumed the Chair of the Board of Governors of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). Jamaica's leadership in climate action in the Caribbean was also demonstrated in the country's pioneering of several initiatives in the region - the development of a financing risk policy, the launch of a Green Bond Project and the first to submit its updated NDC.

¹³⁸ Metric tonne of carbon equivalent.

¹³⁹ Unconditional contribution is what countries could implement based on their own resources and capabilities.

¹⁴⁰ Conditional contribution" is one which countries would undertake if international means of support are provided, or other conditions are met.

¹⁴¹ The Policy Analyst Network (PAN) is a group of approximately 30 to 40 officials in the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Government of Jamaica dedicated to sharing best practises in policy analysis. The PAN was formally launched by the Prime Minister of Jamaica on June 13, 2001 at Jamaica House, Kingston, Jamaica.

Climate Finance

Jamaica accessed climate finance through channels such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Global Environment Facility and the Clean Development Mechanism, as well as through bilateral agreements with partners such as Canada, Japan, the United Kingdom and Germany. From its collaboration with the GCF, Jamaica prepared the Country Programme for Engagement and the GCF approved three readiness projects. The projects, valued at US\$2.1 million, are aimed at, *inter alia*, strengthening Jamaica's institutional capacity to plan, access and deliver climate finance (PIOJ, 2020).

Through the GCF Readiness Facility, Jamaica accessed funding support for the development of the country's National Adaptation Plan (NAP). In addition, Jamaica is also spearheading innovative financial tools to fund climate action, such as the development of the Green Bond Project with Stock Exchange (GOJ, 2020a) - an initiative pioneered in the Caribbean by Jamaica. These actions are complemented by Jamaica's preparation of its National REDD+ Readiness Strategy; key outputs to date include the gap analysis of the legislative, policy and institutional frameworks governing sectors relevant to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. These actions point primarily to the integration of climate change in national policies and strategies toward target 13.2.

ODA accessed through bilateral and multilateral arrangements further strengthened the country's response to climate impacts with total funding support of \$442.9 million (US \$3.3 million) (PIOJ, 2020). There was an increase in the funding to the environment and climate change from bilateral arrangements with Canada (72.0 per cent), along with increases in funding from FAO and the GEF Small Grants Programme of 47.0 per cent and 39.0 per cent respectively. Jamaica joined the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, which was launched in April 2019. The coalition was designed to accelerate climate action in economic and financial policies through collaborative strategies (World Bank, 2021). Jamaica was the first country in the English-speaking Caribbean to join the coalition.

Partnerships

Other key partnerships that provided the financial and technical support to advance climate action included the NDC Partnership Economic Advisory Programme, the Coalition of Climate Resilience Investment (CCRI) and the UNICEF Partnership. Through the UNICEF Partnership, Jamaica completed a climate landscape analysis for children. Those initiatives complemented the ongoing bilateral and multilateral arrangements with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Global Affairs Canada (GAC) that provided the funding support to strengthen the enabling framework for climate action through policy development.

Regarding private sector engagement, in 2019, the Climate Change Division coordinated a regional study, "Barriers to Private Sector Investment and Capital Mobilization for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in Jamaica". The results support Jamaica's efforts to engage the private sector actors in climate action and mobilize domestic finance to address climate change. The strategy also supports a cross-cutting approach to development planning across SDGs (GOJ, 2020a).

Jamaica commenced discussions with the Coalition of Climate Resilience Investment (CCRI) as a potential public sector partner. Under the CCRI, which brings together global private sector companies, governments and multilaterals, stakeholders pledged that 70.0 per cent of the US\$90.0 trillion, expected to be invested in infrastructure globally between 2019 and 2030, will go to low and middle-income countries exposed to climate risks.

Cross-cutting Issues and interlinkages with other SDGs

Youth engagement

Youth are key stakeholders in climate action. Research on youth climate activism in Jamaica suggests that there is great potential for youth to amplify efforts to address climate change locally (Daze, 2021; Swaby, 2020). Additionally, given that youth is a cross-cutting priority of the SDGs, efforts to engage youth in climate planning will be beneficial to other SDGs and will support the sustainability of current efforts at resilience building (UNICEF, 2020). Recent efforts by agencies such as the Climate Change Division indicate a growing awareness of the value of youth participation and leadership for advancing Goal 13. Examples of youth engagement during the review period include the appointment of Climate Change Youth Ambassadors, the designation of a Youth Ambassador to the NDC process and the hosting of a Post COP Youth Consultation in 2019 (GOJ, 2021b). The Climate Change Division (CCD) also continued its engagement with the Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council, the youth arm of the Jamaica Climate Change Advisory Board.

Gender Equality

Jamaica acknowledges that gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are central to the linkages between population and development, and the achievement of the SDGs (PIO, 2020). Regarding climate change, gender is prioritized in the climate change agenda through the UNFCCC, in fulfilment of its obligations under the Convention and to implement the Gender Action Plan (GAP), Jamaica took concrete steps to make gender considerations an essential element of climate action. These include:

- Capacity building initiatives targeted at Gender Focal Points and members of the Climate Change Focal Point Network to provide tools and guidelines on addressing the intersection of climate and gender in policymaking and policy implementation.
- Preparation of a gender analysis of the Climate Change Policy Framework (commissioned by the Climate Change Division), the results of which were used to identify gaps and entry points for gender integration in national-level climate action.
- Submission of a readiness proposal, *Facilitating a Gender Responsive Approach to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Jamaica*, to facilitate gender-responsive approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation (GOJ, 2020a).
- Preparation of Protocol and Guidelines to Mainstream Gender in Disaster Risk Management and Change Adaptation (2021).

Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Stakeholders acknowledge that climate change, though not a new or emerging issue remains an urgent concern for Jamaica. The Climate Change Policy Framework highlights key challenges:

- **High incidence of poverty** and related social issues may undermine the whole-of-society approach to climate action (World Bank, 2020). Poverty enhances some communities' exposure to negative climate impacts and diminishes their adaptive capacity. Reducing Jamaica's poverty

rate (12.6 per cent in 2018)¹⁴², therefore, is integral to Jamaica's capacity to manage climate change impacts. There is a great need for financial support to improve the lives of Jamaicans experiencing poverty which exacerbates climate vulnerability (FAO and GOJ, 2020)

- **Limited financial resources:** Competing national priorities limit the availability of domestic finance for climate action. While Jamaica has received support from global funding mechanisms such as the GCF and GEF, more sustainable sources of finance are needed to bolster the national capacity to address climate change (UNFPA, 2021). Additionally, Jamaica's limit to taking on additional debt will have implications for the types of instruments employed for projects (GOJ, 2020a).
- **Gaps in policy and legislative frameworks:** The data suggests that gaps in the policy framework for mitigation will hamper efforts to increase emission targets for the country. The existing legal framework for climate action needs to be modernized and supporting regulations put in place to allow for adjustments required nationally to meet adaptation and mitigation targets (GOJ, 2021b).
- **Limited research capacity and technological development:** Significant progress has been made to strengthen research capacities nationally; however, capacity and information gaps remain a challenge (GOJ, 2020a). In the forestry sector for example, gaps remain in areas such as identification and propagation of drought-resilient species, mitigating against the increase in forest fires due to drier temperatures; research on crop species that can adapt to fires (stakeholder consultation).
- **The COVID-19 Pandemic:** Challenges and delays in procurement and rollout of planned activities and fewer opportunities for stakeholder consultations affected short-term implementation targets over the period 2020–2022. The pandemic also highlighted weaknesses across several areas of the supply chain; this has implications for the movement of supplies in an emergency and the scarcity of supplies.

Key lessons learned over the review period include:

- **Data integration:** Increased use of climate data and information including climate scenarios in development planning, specifically the preparation of local-level development orders, local sustainable development plans and disaster risk management plans. The availability of real-time climate data and information is also being used to improve forecasting, disaster response and early warning systems.
- **Climate responsive budgeting:** Increased recognition by the government of the need to integrate climate change considerations into national financial management. Several policies, such as the Transport Policy, and plans are currently being updated/revised to include climate change and resilience-building considerations. These will be underpinned by the development of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP).

Way Forward

Jamaica's approach to combating climate change has been strategic, collaborative, integrated, inclusive and ambitious. Initiatives that strengthen policies, enhance integration across actors and sectors, facilitate stakeholders' participation and build their capacity, are in keeping with the principle of sustainable development.

Target 13. 1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

Notable achievements focused on continued capacity building of key institutions, mobilizing climate finance and identifying the technologies needed to support climate resilience. Also, Jamaica created avenues to include the youth's voice in the climate response. A draft Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy and Action Plan was prepared in 2020, and regulations were instituted to enable the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Act to provide an opportunity to fully integrate climate change adaptation and DRM activities nationally and locally. This initiative also provides for the development of standard guidelines and tools to screen for disaster risks and climate change issues in the development approval process, as well as preparation of continuity of governance plans.

As part of the strategy for improving emergency response capacity under the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan the GOJ intends to train volunteers to support disaster emergency response. The volunteers will work in tandem with volunteers from the Jamaica National Voluntary Program for Disaster Risk Management to serve in the pre-and post-impact phases of a disaster (Artica, 2022).

Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

The country's climate ambition is evident in the revised NDC and the progress made in the development of the NAP—both of which are an indication of strong global commitment and national priorities. Progress towards revising the Climate Change Policy Framework (CCPF) and preparing the 2050 Long-term Low Emissions and Climate Resilient Development Strategy are important milestones for ensuring climate measures become standard practice in development planning. The application of the Systematic Risk Assessment Tool (SRAT) which was developed by the Coalition of Climate Resilience Investment (CCRI) will facilitate the mapping of Jamaica's assets to ensure risk assessment data is integrated into national planning systems.

Resource requirements

To advance climate action, Jamaica will need resources in four key areas: sustained financial support for adaptation and mitigation measures, data to inform adaptation planning, data management infrastructure and technical expertise as seen in Figure 70.

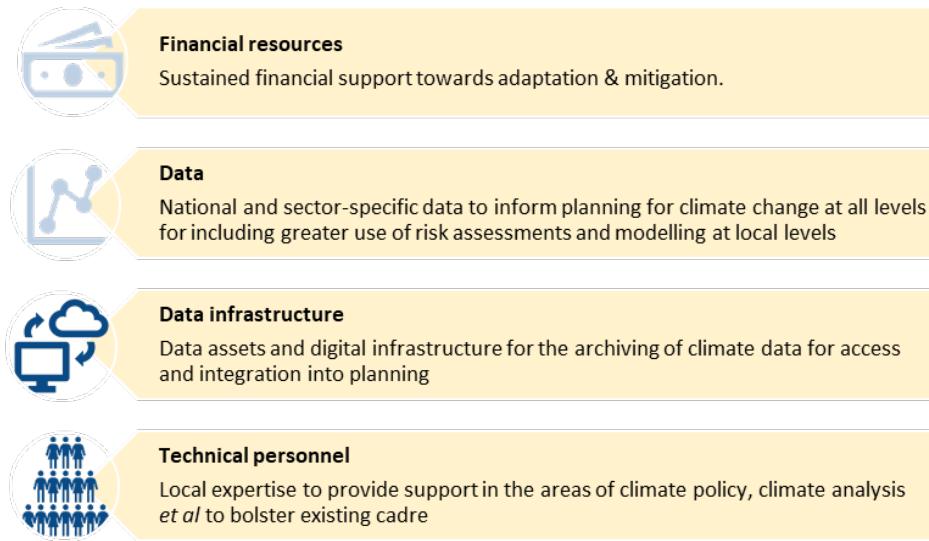


FIGURE 72: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO ADVANCE CLIMATE ACTION IN JAMAICA

Regarding technical expertise, stakeholders identified that there is a need for more robust climate change analysis to be done within the government's ministries, departments and agencies. Most training initiatives, they note, are largely at the introductory level. Suggestions are that individuals trained at the tertiary level and recruited and retained in the public sector would enhance Jamaica's capacity to develop and implement national-level actions and meet global commitments (GOJ, 2020).



GOAL 14

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Context

For SIDS like Jamaica, the marine environment is of high importance for sustainable development. By contributing to activities like fishing and tourism, our marine resources play a major role in economic life. Pollution, overfishing, and other stresses on our coastal and marine areas impact biodiversity of the ecosystem, livelihoods of individuals and overall quality of the marine environment, constituting serious threats to Sustainable Development. The SDG14 – “Life Below Water” calls attention to these threats and urges appropriate solutions. The significant targets for Goal 14 are summarized in Figure 73.

Significant Goal 14 targets	Strategies in Jamaica's 2018 Voluntary National Review (VNR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent and reduce marine pollution of all kinds • Sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems • Regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices • Implementing science-based management plans • Conserve coastal and marine areas • Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers, marine resources and markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and enforce legislation; reduce land-based sources of pollution • Tackle Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing • Improve data and information to guide the decision-making processes and explore the potential of the Blue Economy to contribute to sustainable development • Implement plans and policies to effect change and build resiliency addressing the effects of climate change

FIGURE 73: GOAL 14 TARGETS AND KEY POST-2018 STRATEGIES

At the national level, sustainable development is implemented within the frameworks of Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan the MTF 2018–2021, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related multilateral environmental agreements. Goal 14 is primarily aligned with the National Development Goal 4 – ‘Jamaica has a Healthy Natural Environment’. This prioritizes sustainable management and use of environmental and natural resources, hazard risk reduction and adaptation to climate change, and sustainable urban and rural development as they relate to our coastal and marine resources.

The main threats to Jamaica's coastal and marine resources include climate change impacts along with the problems of pollution; illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing. Together these contribute to beach erosion, poor health of our coral reefs and a decline in fish biomass and biodiversity. Since 2018, priority has been given to tackling climate change and IUU fishing and reducing land-based sources of pollution, as well as improving supporting data and information to guide decision-making. Additionally, the blue economy is to be explored and partnerships with stakeholders and regional and international partners pursued.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning life under water.

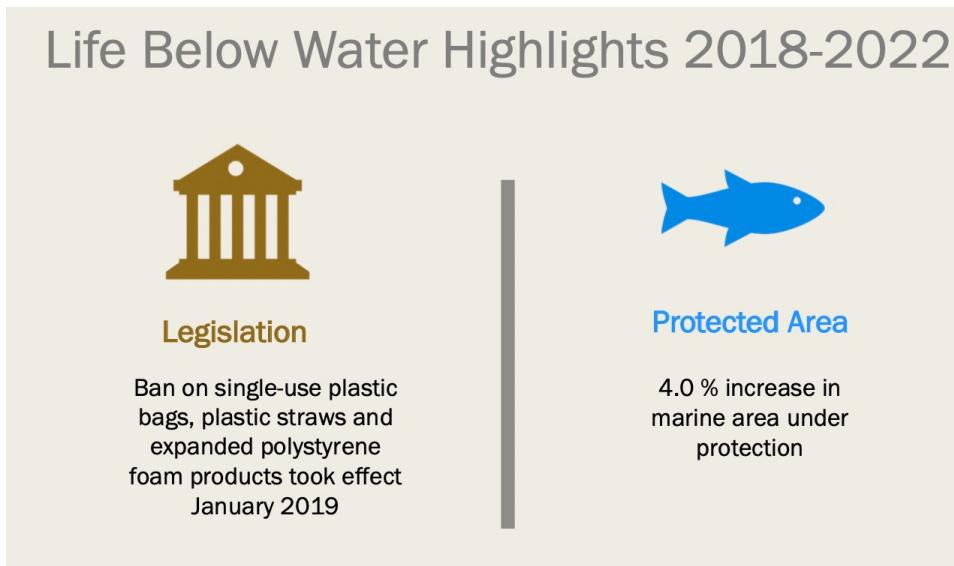


FIGURE 74: HIGHLIGHTS, LIFE BELOW WATER (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution

Land-based solid waste and nutrient pollution, a consequence of improper waste disposal, low sewer connection and agricultural runoff, is a major threat to the marine ecosystem. Approximately a third of Jamaican households use improper methods of waste disposal. In 2018, the proportion of households that were disposing garbage by formal means was approximately 70.0 per cent¹⁴³ while 27.2 per cent disposed of garbage by burning. The remainder dumped directly into gullies/river/sea/pond or buried their garbage.

Jamaica is addressing marine pollution through a broad waste management strategy that includes collaboration between the government and civil society organizations in raising awareness and changing behaviour, e.g., through campaigns like 'Nuh Dutty up Jamaica' as well as recycling and waste management programmes.

143 Formal disposal methods include a public collection system and dumping at a municipal site (Source: Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC) 2019)

Legislation banning single-use plastic bags, plastic straws and expanded polystyrene foam products took effect in January 2019¹⁴⁴. This was implemented in three phases: Phase One banned the manufacture, importation, distribution and use of specific types of single-use plastic bags; Phase Two which commenced in 2020, banned the manufacturing, distribution and use of expanded polystyrene foam products; and Phase Three which applies to 24" by 24" single-use plastic bags and disposable drinking straws attached to drink boxes or pouches, took effect in 2021.

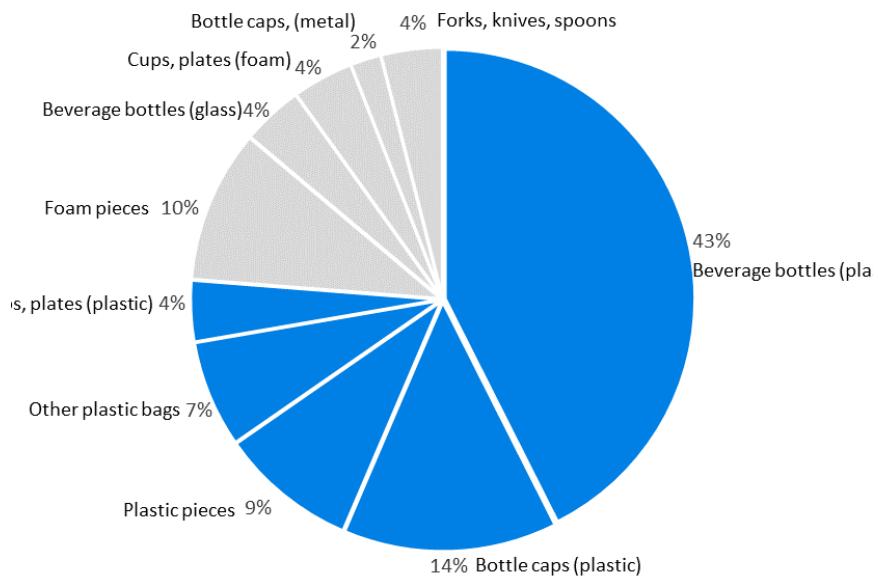


FIGURE 75: COMPOSITION OF TOP TEN ITEMS COLLECTED IN ICC BEACH CLEAN-UP, 2019
SOURCE: JAMAICA ENVIRONMENT TRUST (JET)

The implementation of the Plastic Waste Minimization Project by National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA), (2019-2021), resulted in 15.2 tonnes/33 580 lbs of plastic material being collected as part of a drive to reduce the amount of waste entering the Kingston Harbour. This included the recovery of 5000 pounds of plastic waste in the Supermarket Plastic Recyclables Drop Off Programme.¹⁴⁵ Other key initiatives include the Ocean Clean-up Pilot project in the Kingston Harbour, which is considered Jamaica's highest polluted waterway and NEPA's Adopt-A-Beach Programme.¹⁴⁶

Plastic marine litter is a longstanding issue. Efforts to cut plastic pollution include legislation, public awareness projects, and public/private partnerships.

Annual International Coastal Clean-up Day (ICC) activities revealed that the volume of plastic beverage bottles declined marginally from 45.0 per cent of the top ten items collected in 2015 to 42.0 per cent in 2019 (ESSJ 2019). Plastic materials continue to dominate the top ten items collected over the years—accounting for almost three-fourths in 2019 (Figure 73). In the 2020 ICC exercise,¹⁴⁷ 42 907 units of the top 10 items were collected from 25 sites (land, underwater, watercraft) along 20.4km of coastline. Plastic bottles remained the number one collected item for a 13th consecutive year.

¹⁴⁴ The Natural Resources Conservation (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order 2018 and The Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order 2018.

¹⁴⁵ Under this project, in December 2020, the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) partnered with the Private Sector in the launch of the Supermarket Plastic Recyclables Drop-Off Programme. (Source: NEPA).

¹⁴⁶ From notes compiled by the National Environment and Planning Agency (May 2022)

¹⁴⁷ The ICC 2020 activities were scaled down to comply with GOJ protocols for public gatherings for the management of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Overall, marine water quality¹⁴⁸ deteriorated in some areas. The proportion of sites that exceeded target levels for nitrates, phosphates, Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and faecal coliform, was 100 per cent, 94.8 per cent, 15.7 per cent and 31.8 per cent respectively for 2020. This represented an increase over 2019 for all indicators except BOD, which was reduced by 38.7 per cent (Table 26).

TABLE 26: INDICATORS OF MARINE WATER QUALITY 2020

Indicators	Sites Exceeding Standard (% 2019)	Sites Exceeding Standard (% 2020)	% Change
Nitrates	84.6	100.0	18.2
Phosphates	83.4	94.8	13.7
Biological Oxygen Demand	25.6	15.7	-38.7
Faecal Coliform	30.0	31.8	6.0

SOURCE: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AGENCY (NEPA)

Target 14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans

Beaches

Average beach erosion over the 2015 to 2019 period has been low, at 3.6 per cent, with most beaches increasing in width over the period, from an average width of 24.6 meters in 2015 to 29.8 meters in 2019.¹⁴⁹ For the 2018/2018 monitoring period, one site recorded "chronic erosion"; for 2020/2021 period, that number increased to four sites.¹⁵⁰ Interventions proposed in the Coastal and Beach Restoration Guidelines to stop beach erosion have been implemented, including armouring techniques (e.g., seawalls, revetments) or sand-trapping structures (e.g., groynes). Under the GOJ/Adaptation Fund Programme, other interventions include installation of hard engineering structures and bioengineering solutions along the north-eastern coast. Nature-based solutions to complement hard engineering structures include mangrove and coral restoration efforts. Additionally, in 2020, the Beach Monitoring Programme expanded to include four sites in Negril.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ The indicators of marine water quality are nitrates, phosphates, BOD and Faecal coliform.

¹⁴⁹ Economic and Social Survey Jamaica (ESSJ) 2020.

¹⁵⁰ Data compiled by NEPA, June 2022.

¹⁵¹ Data compiled by NEPA, June 2022.

Coastal and Marine Resources

Jamaica scored above the world and regional averages in 2 of the 11 areas assessed—Climate Change (65.7) and Pollution Emissions (78.6). The country, however, recorded low scores for the Fisheries (4.7) and Water Resources (3.0) indicators, which is a possible reflection of the continued challenges with issues of overfishing, the percentage of the population connected to sewer systems and the treatment of household wastewater (Source: ESSJ 2020; Environmental Performance Index).¹⁵²

Fisheries remain in a degraded state; for the herbivorous and commercial fish indicators all sites assessed were ranked as "critical". The average herbivorous biomass declined to 542.43 g/100 m² in 2020 from 610.07 g/100 m² in 2019; in 2020 the average commercial fish abundance fell to 32.99 g/100 m² from 64.66 g/100 m² in 2019.

Coral Reefs

The country continued to face challenges with maintaining healthy coral reefs. The assessment carried out using the Coral Reef Health Index (CRHI) uses 4 indicators: coral cover, macro-algae cover, herbivorous fish abundance and commercially important fish abundance. In 2020, the results showed an overall average CRHI score of 2.0 (Table 27), a decrease from the previous year's CRHI of 2.2. Sites and location-specific calculations showed that five sites ranked as "fair", five sites ranked as "poor" and twelve sites ranked as "critical".¹⁵³ Similar to 2019, none of the reefs were ranked as "good" or "very good".

TABLE 27: INDICATORS OF MARINE WATER QUALITY 2020 CORAL REEF HEALTH INDEX BY PARISH

Parish	Number of Sites by Ranking			Total No. of Sites
	Critical	Poor	Fair	
Portland		1		1
Kingston	3	1		4
St Catherine	1			1
St Mary	2	1	2	5
St Ann	4	2	1	7
St James	1		2	3
Hanover	1			1
Total	12	5	5	22

SOURCE: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SURVEY JAMAICA

¹⁵² The Environmental Performance Index (EPI) provides a data-driven summary of the state of sustainability around the world. Using 32 performance indicators across 11 issue categories, the EPI ranks 180 countries on environmental health and ecosystem vitality.

¹⁵³ CRHI: Critical: >1.0-1.8; Poor: >1.9-2.6; Fair: >2.7-3.4; Good: >3.4-4.2; Very Good: >4.3-5.

The Action Plan for the Protection and Restoration of Coral Reefs 2018-2023 has targets for conducting research, mapping and monitoring, reducing pollution and habitat destruction and eventually restoring the coral reefs, as well as keeping the public informed to change potentially damaging behaviour to conservation efforts. There has also been a move to more resilient interventions in recent years such as the use of artificial reefs (and mangrove replanting) undertaken by agencies and academic institutions, such as the Blue Carbon Restoration in Southern Clarendon Project by University of the West Indies Solution of Developing Countries (SODECO).

Target 14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics

The Promoting Community-Based Climate Resilience in the Fisheries Sector Project aims to enhance climate resilience of the fisheries sector through strengthening policy and regulatory framework and facilitating the transition of fishers to sustainable livelihoods. Under this project, monitoring and surveillance capacities of the National Fisheries Authority were boosted with the commissioning of a fully equipped enforcement vessel, to be used to combat Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing practices within the coastal zone. The project also embarked on several preparatory and analytical studies to support implementation including:

- A Social Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Gender, Youth and Labour Dynamics in the Fisheries Sector
- A study to identify sub-projects for Climate Resilient Aquaculture, Mariculture, Polyculture & Alternative Livelihoods
- Designs for a climate-resilient tilapia hatchery and fish farm as well as design and specifications for a demonstration mariculture facility were also completed.

The US\$4.9 million project, which was officially launched in July 2020, was projected to benefit over 40 000 local fisheries stakeholders. As artisanal fishers represent one of the vulnerable groups in the population, this intervention highlights inclusiveness, contributing to preserving the principle of "leaving no one behind".

Target 14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas

Currently, the total coverage of the protected marine area in Jamaica amounts to roughly 1 918 km². It is estimated that the coverage of protected marine areas—which is the percentage of designated key marine areas for biodiversity—is roughly 15.0 per cent, which is above the SDG target of 10.0 per cent (2020 SDGs Progress Report). For the 2020/2022 period, Jamaica approved two additional marine protected areas for declaration —Black River Landscape and Pedro Cays and surrounding waters— which will add 4.0 per cent to the protected marine areas of Jamaica (SDG Progress Report 2019/2020). Figure 76 highlights the location of Jamaica's marine protected areas designated by NRCA/NEPA.

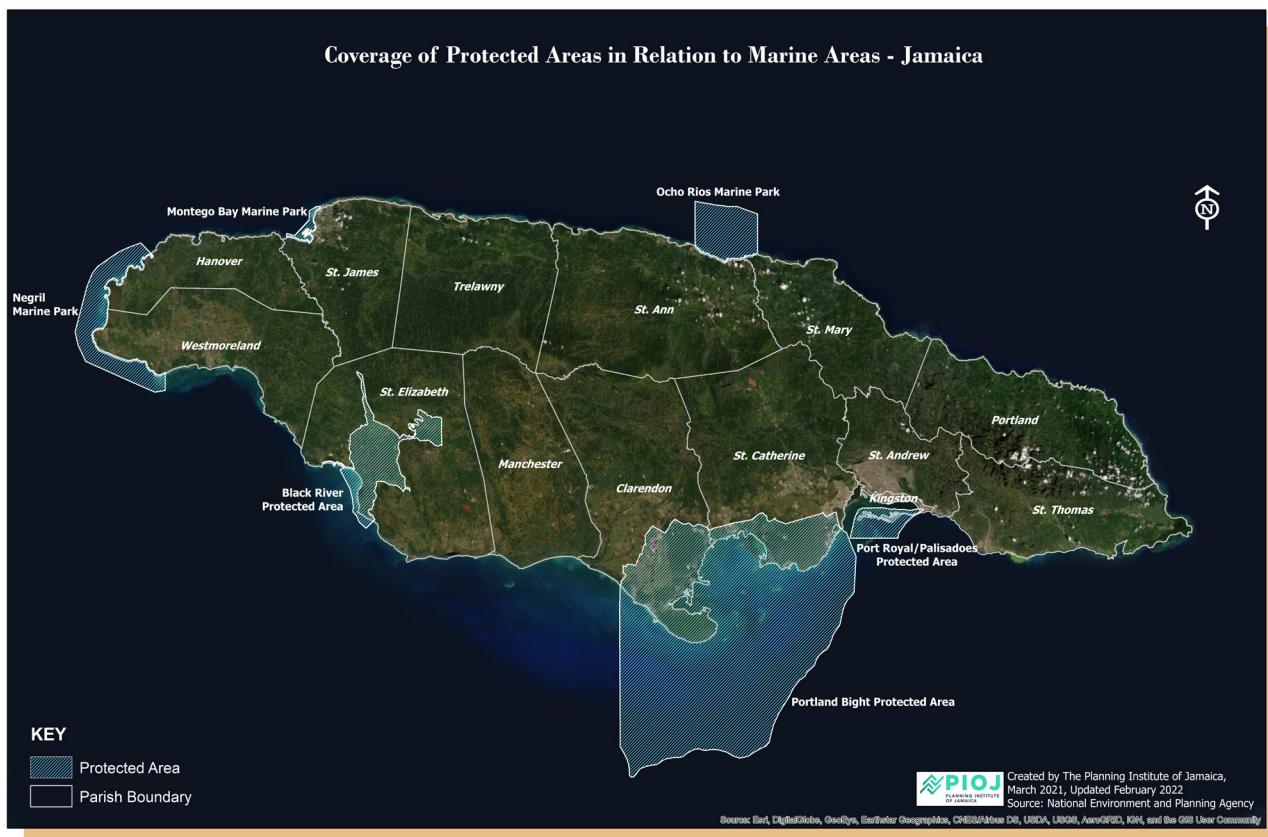


FIGURE 76: PROTECTED MARINE AREAS 2020
SOURCE: PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Policies and frameworks have been implemented to protect marine areas including the updated National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity in Jamaica, 2016-2021 which support the sustainable management of biodiversity while also fulfilling country obligations of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity. Other policies that focus on improving biodiversity and the management of protected areas include the Protected Area System Master Plan (PASMP) 2014–2017. The PASMP aimed to align protected areas to national priorities and establish a comprehensive and representative system and framework for managing protected areas and maintaining ecological processes and systems.

Unregulated harvesting of both plants and animals negatively affects the biodiversity of the country. Several measures including laws and fines, to both protect areas from overexploitation and to deter potential perpetrators have been pursued. To date there are 18 Special Fishery Conservation Areas (SFCAs) following the designation of 3 sites in 2015. The SFCAs are 'no fishing areas' that are reserved for the reproduction of fish populations, with their protected status governed by the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries through The Fisheries Act, 2018. There is, however, a need to expand the network to restore declining fish stocks and improve biodiversity and expand the fisheries sector.

The Ballast Water Management Act 2019 is another legislative achievement that supports sustainable development. It aims to protect the island's marine environment by regulating the discharge of ballast water and preventing ships from introducing harmful, invasive aquatic species when entering domestic waters. The Act ensures compliance with international maritime standards (International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004, which entered into effect globally in 2017).

Crosscutting issues and interlinkages with other SDGs

Climate change is clearly impacting the marine environment. For example, the damaging effect of recent extreme weather – devastating hurricanes and flood rains, which, combined with inadequate waste disposal practices contribute to marine pollution and coral reef health. Actions to improve climate resilience therefore complement measures aimed at protecting marine resources.

Given the importance of mangroves to marine ecosystem health, the progress of measures to "protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems..." (SDG 15) is highly relevant to the goal of protecting our marine resources for sustainable development (SDG 14).

The focus on improving livelihoods of small-scale artisanal fishers provides an opportunity to apply the inclusive principle of "leaving no one behind", as the artisanal fishers are a vulnerable population group often experiencing extreme poverty (SDG 1 and SDG 2).

SDG 17 – "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development" becomes especially relevant in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, as this had a negative effect on our capacity to implement some policies and plans. In this regard, the GOJ (through the National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee for example) has been exploring strategies for financing implementation of sustainable development goals. Grant funding will clearly play a role, but renewed focus is needed on partnerships (e.g., with investors), especially in fully implementing blue economy projects.

Challenges

The main challenges to the achievement of SDG 14 include:

- Continued degradation of the marine ecosystem, highlighted by improper disposal of land-based waste, poor marine water quality and coral reef health. Climate change impacts, such as extreme weather, continue to contribute to the degradation of the marine ecosystem, e.g., damage to coral reefs
- The collection and availability of data: This is evident for indicators such as the contribution of sustainable fisheries to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- The establishment and management of Protected Areas is hindered by the inadequacy of data and research lack of adequate (and sustained) funding for full operationalization and insufficient legislative support for enforcement
- Monitoring and enforcement frameworks exist; however, this has been hindered by resource constraints
- The COVID-19 pandemic indirectly affected outcomes: for example, data collection and awareness building initiatives such as the ICC beach clean-up were curtailed in 2020.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices

The work done since 2018 highlighted several lessons that should inform further development of strategies and policies for SDGs. These include:

- The difficulty of achieving sustainable goals for a SIDS and in the context of resource limitations. For long-term solutions, structural issues deserve increased attention
- The health of coral reefs remains a persistent challenge, impacted by climate change and hydro-meteorological effects such as extreme weather, which have had a damaging effect. Progress in achieving climate change resilience is, therefore, a critical component of achieving sustainable development
- The COVID-19 pandemic has had unforeseen impacts on interventions that required the mobilization of large numbers of people, such as beach clean-up activities, but steps were taken to minimize the disruptive effect
- Strategies that proved particularly effective include: the enactment and enforcement of legislation to reduce plastic waste, and collaboration between the government and stakeholders in addressing problems that stem from the behaviour of householders, e.g., waste disposal practices. This was shown to be of critical importance in addressing the issue of marine pollution.

Way Forward

While progress has been made in addressing the pressing issues of marine pollution, protection of marine and coastal ecosystems, IUU fishing, and inclusion of artisanal fishers, some challenges remain. There were signs of the continued degradation of the marine ecosystem, highlighted by poor marine water quality and coral reef health. However, plans and policies are in place to address these challenges. With a renewed focus on a green and blue recovery, efforts by the GOJ and development partners to overcome these challenges are expected to have a greater effect.

The enactment and enforcement of legislation to tackle IUU fishing and reduce marine pollution will be continued, as well as measures implemented to protect marine and coastal ecosystems. There is recognition of the need to expand the SFCA network to restore declining fish stocks, improve biodiversity and expand the fisheries sector (e.g., studies have been done on solutions, including aquaculture, mariculture, polyculture and freshwater fish ponds). Also, capacity building and adequate financing are needed for effective monitoring and enforcement. Plans will be implemented to fully exploit the potential of the blue economy to contribute to sustainable development.

Resources Requirements

To achieve all the stated objectives, it will be necessary to ensure adequate resources to the implementation of the proposed plans and policies, including:

1. Increased and specific budget allocations to address the issues, protection of coastal and marine environment and marine ecosystems, as well as implementation of projects to enhance livelihoods of artisanal fishers.
2. Equipment and Infrastructure, e.g., to sustainably control beach erosion and to ensure effective enforcement of legislative and regulatory measures to discourage Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported Fishing.
3. Personnel, including security personnel to ensure enforcement of laws and regulations etc.
4. Improved data collection and data management systems to facilitate better monitoring of measures to protect the marine environment.
5. Financial, material and human resources to identify potential and pursue evident opportunities related to the blue economy. This includes conducting and sharing information on studies and ensuring that they inform policies and plans.

15 LIFE
ON LAND**GOAL 15**

Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Context

Goal 15 targets include ensuring the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services; combating desertification, restoring degraded land and soil; ensuring the conservation of mountain ecosystems (broadleaf mountain and limestone forests), including their biodiversity; taking urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats and halt the loss of biodiversity and prevent the extinction of threatened species.

Jamaica's VNR Report 2018 highlighted that fires and poor agricultural practices were threats to conservation and the sustainable management of forests. Other key issues identified included climate change and the proliferation of Invasive Alien Species (IAS). The report noted managing the demand for land-based resources and their health and vitality as a post-2018 priority and that improved financial and technical capacity would be critical to achieving that objective. Since 2018, Jamaica has made progress in addressing the Goal 15 targets, with many of the initiatives supporting more than one target. Table 28 presents Jamaica's status on key indicators that relate to Goal 15.

TABLE 28: SELECTED GLOBAL SDG AND PROXY INDICATORS, GOAL 15

Selected Global SDGs and Proxy Indicators	2013	2020 ¹⁵⁶
Total forest area	439 900 ha	436 600 ha
Protected forest area	122 700 ha	125 700 ha
Total land area	1 094 500 ha	1 094 500 ha
Total protected area	415 600 ha	491 000 ha
Forest area as a % of total land area	40.2%	39.9%
Protected forest area as a % of total forest area	27.9 %	28.8%
Protected forest area as a % of total land area	11.2 %	11.5%
Forest area annual net change	0.41%	-0.1%
Proportion of forest area located within legally established protected areas	30% of total protected areas	26% of total protected areas
Forest area under a long-term forest management plan ¹⁵⁷	70.54 ha	10,150.90 ha
Proportion of forest area under a long-term forest management plan	.016 %	2.325%

¹⁵⁶ The data for 2020 are estimates provided by the GIS Department of the Forestry Department and not an actual land use/cover assessment.

¹⁵⁷ A Long-Term Forest Plan (LTFP) is a 20-year strategic management plan that brings together the management objectives, the environmental, economic, and social functions and the silvicultural prescriptions into a comprehensive plan to deliver long term benefits through sustainable forest management.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning life on land.



FIGURE 77: HIGHLIGHTS, LIFE ON LAND (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 15.1: By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements

Jamaica's forests are the main repositories of biodiversity, especially of endemic flora and fauna. Data shows that Jamaica's forest cover is declining (Indicator 15.1.1). In 2013, 40.2 per cent (439,938 ha) of the island (excluding cays) was classified as forests (Land Use/Cover Change Assessment (LUCA)¹⁵⁴, 2015) (Table 28). The area under forest cover declined slightly to 39.9 per cent of the island's land use (approx. 436 600 ha) in 2020.

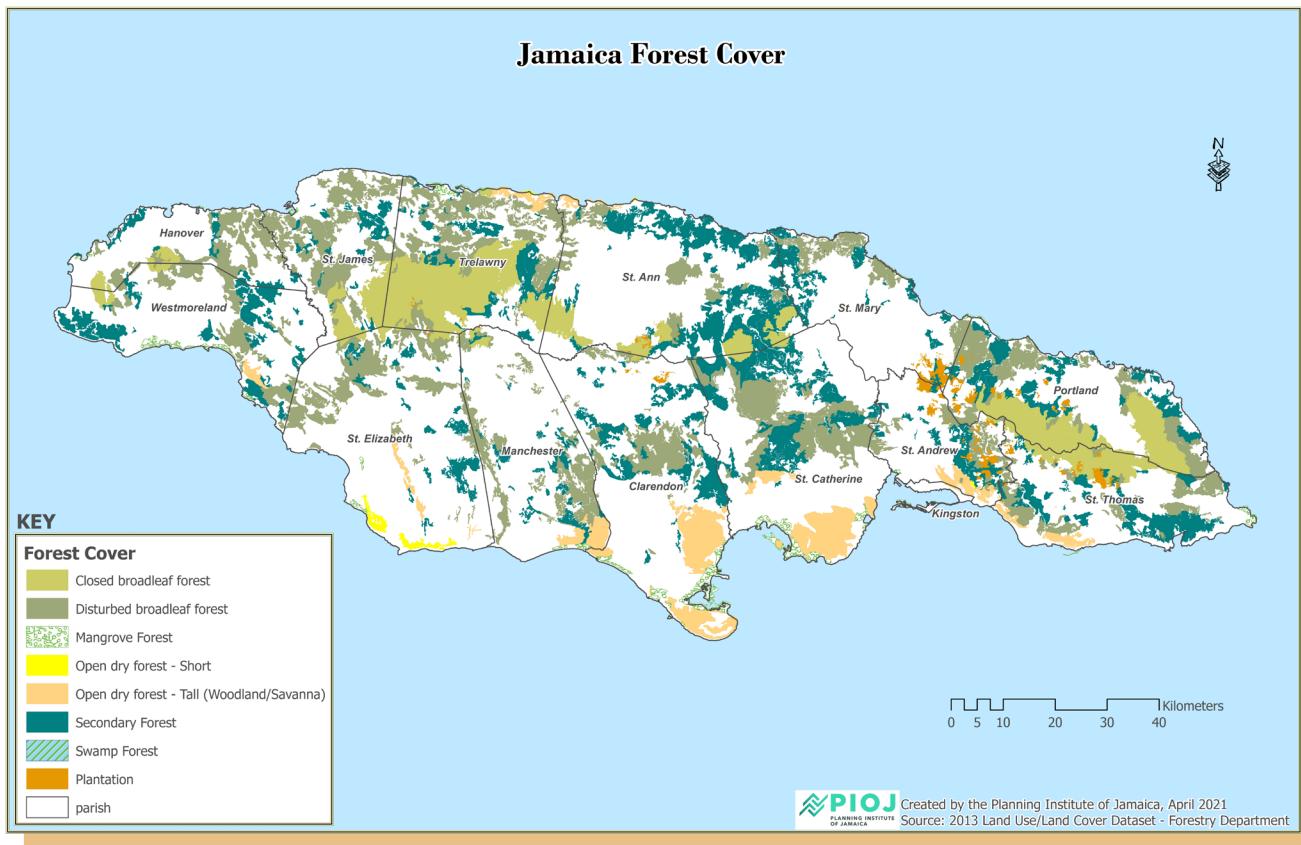


FIGURE 78: FOREST COVER OF JAMAICA - 2013
SOURCE: THE FORESTRY DEPARTMENT (2017)

Dry limestone forests are threatened globally. In Jamaica, deforestation is a significant challenge and most of its forests are classified as wet or dry limestone forest. During the review period, Jamaica identified areas that had been degraded or destroyed and made noteworthy progress to restore them, thereby contributing to the conservation and restoration of mountain forests (Forestry Department). While there was a net increase in forest cover overall (0.4 per cent per annum) in 2013, primary (Closed Broadleaf) forests were declining (0.2 per cent per annum) (Table 29). The annual net change of 0.4 per cent in forest cover in 2013 has since declined to -0.1 per cent per annum in 2020.

154 The LUCA, completed in 2015, compared forest cover of 1998 and 2013.

TABLE 29 RATE OF PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN SELECTED FORESTS OVER THE REPORTING PERIODS.

Type of forest	Reporting Period	
	2015–2017	2018–2020
Broadleaf Forest	-0.2	-0.2
Open Dry Forest	-7.2	-7.2
SOURCE: PIOJ, 2019–2021		

The introduction of the National Forest Management and Conservation Plan, 2016–2026 was highlighted in the VNR Report 2018 as an important achievement. Jamaica has made fair progress since the last report to increase the area under protection. Work was also done to complete boundary verification for ten forest estates in four parishes, representing approximately 500 hectares of land (Forestry Department, 2019; 2020). Jamaica has increased the proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected forest areas with 28.8 per cent (125 700 ha) in 2020 compared to 27.9 per cent (122 700 ha) in 2013 (Indicator 15.1.2).

A priority for the post-2018 period was the preparation of the declaration to effect the Cockpit Country protected area after completion of ground truthing activities. Jamaica having completed the ground truthing activities, boundary establishment and installation of permanent monuments for the area proposed for protection in 2021, subsequently gazetted 78 024 hectares of land in 2022 as the Cockpit Country Protected Area (CCPA) under the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (NRCA) Act (JIS, 2022a). The CCPA is now the island's largest terrestrial protected area. In addition, the declaration of the Black River Protected Area will contribute to the preservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the area, including the swamp forest, mangroves, beaches, seagrass (beds) and coral reefs. As a result of the declarations, forest area under protection will increase significantly under the next report.

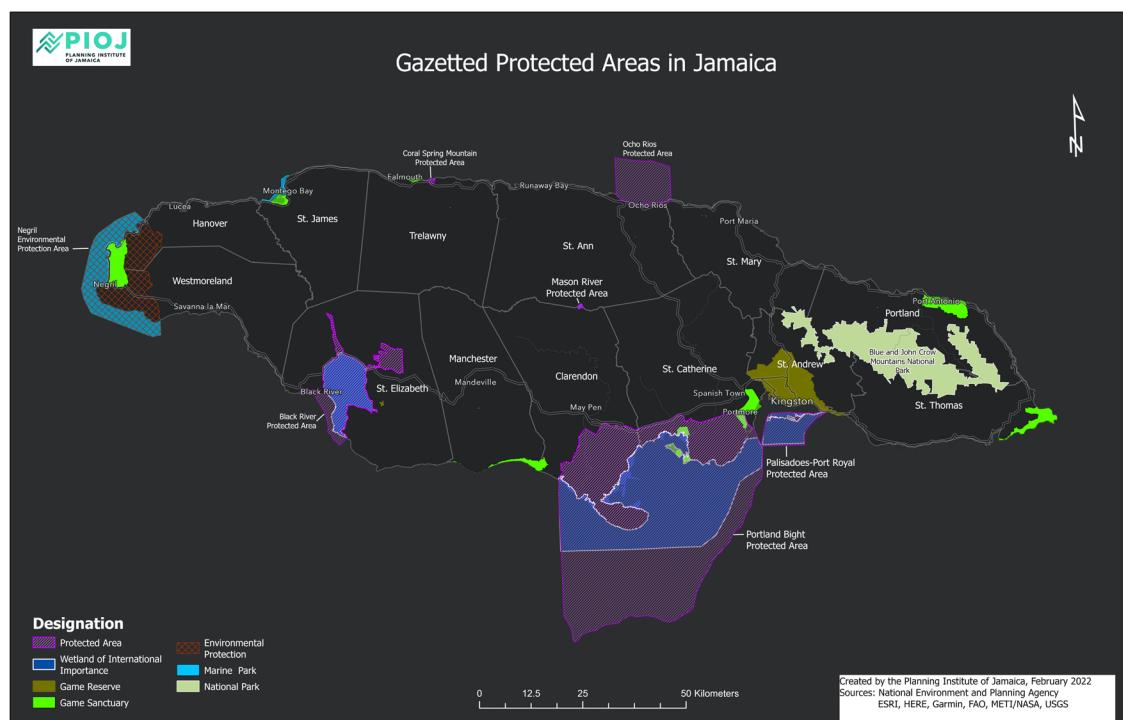


FIGURE 79: GAZETTED PROTECTED AREAS IN JAMAICA – 2022
SOURCES: NEPA, ESRI, HERE, GARMIN, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS

Target 15.2: By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally

In late 2021, Jamaica signed the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use at COP 26 to "halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation" by 2030. The restoration of degraded lands was supported by the launch of the National Tree Planting Initiative in 2019, "Three Million Trees in Three Years". Already, the Forestry Department, the lead agency for the initiative, has planted 1 000 107¹⁵⁵ seedlings as at March 17, 2022. The objective of the Initiative is to support national development in the areas of climate change and reforestation efforts to increase forest cover and establish high value urban green spaces for all Jamaicans. Complementary initiatives to sustain and manage forestry resource include the planting of fruit trees; along with timber trees (as part of agroforestry practice)¹⁵⁶.

The Forestry Department also launched the Urban Trees Product Line Project in 2021 which saw residents in urban communities receiving potted fruit trees and ornamental plants. Similarly, the National Fruit Tree Planting Programme, established by the MO in May 2019 aims to plant five million fruit trees in five years. Similarly, 15 hectares of forest were planted in Pennants (Upper Rio Minho Watershed), as well as the implementation of watershed management initiatives under the Adaptation Programme and Financing Mechanisms for the PPCR project. Effort was also made towards expanding urban forestry in Jamaica through the drafting of guidelines to support urban forestry initiatives.

The Sawmill Licensing Registration Programme is an important initiative for regulating the production, trade or storage of local lumber. Since the last reporting period, the approval rate declined, with 64.5 per cent of applications received between 2018 and 2020 approved compared to approximately 70.0 per cent between 2015 and 2017 as data in Table 30 shows (PIOJ, 2020; 2021).

TABLE 30 APPROVED LICENCES UNDER THE SAWMILL LICENSING REGISTRATION PROGRAMME

Sawmill Licensing Registration Programme	Reporting Period	
	2015-2017	2018-2020
Applications	209	121
Approved Licences	185	78

SOURCE: PIOJ, 2016–2021

Additionally, the Incentives to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Forest Management in Jamaica Report was finalised in September 2020; it outlines possible new incentives, some of which are tax-based, to offer to private forest landowners. This initiative will help Jamaica to finance and incentivize sustainable forest management and contribute to the achievement of Target 15.B.

The development of a National Mangrove Forest Management Plan was a planned priority action for 2018-2021. As of

155 <https://www.forestry.gov.jm/NTPI>

156 In March 2022, the Forestry Department launched the "876Tress" mobile app to track the number of seedlings being planted.

March 2021, 13 627.35 hectares¹⁵⁷ of mangrove and swamp forests have been assessed and mapped since 2018 to serve as a baseline data to support the formulation of the plan (Stakeholder Consultation for VNR Preparation). The European Union-funded Budget Support Programme for the Forest Sector (2018-2022), was instrumental to advancing this activity. The National Mangrove Forest Management Plan, expected to be completed in June 2022, will strengthen Jamaica's efforts to conserve and restore its terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems (Target 15.1) and protect biodiversity and natural habitats (Target 15.5). Also, under the World Bank funded Program on Forest (PROFOR), the Mangrove Monitoring and Evaluation Manual-Jamaica and the Forces of Nature: Assessment and Economic Valuation of Coastal Protection Services Provided by Mangroves in Jamaica were completed. The Program highlighted the growing interest within the development agenda to include nature-based solutions for disaster risk management (DRM), which are provided by mangrove forests.

Target 15.3: By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world¹⁵⁸

The 1999 classification of Watershed Management Units (WMU) remain the same despite the implementation of localized projects/initiatives. The Rio Minho, Wag Water River, Hope River and Yallahs River WMUs are classified as severely degraded. The Integrated Management of the Yallahs River and Hope River Watershed Management Areas Project improved the conservation and management of biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services in the respective Watershed Management Units. The project, a pilot model for watershed management, resulted in a reduction in the levels of sedimentation within rivers, improved agricultural practices in six communities and strengthened community members' capacity in areas such as fire management and land husbandry, and reforested over 500 hectares of land. Ongoing implementation of best practices will continue to improve the degraded state of the Yallahs River and Hope River Watersheds.

Jamaica's progress towards achieving land degradation-neutrality was supported by the EU-funded 4.9 million Euro "A Jamaican Path from Hills to Ocean" Project. The project aims to support increased climate resilience and protect livelihoods through the use of integrated Sustainable Landscape Management in selected WMUs - Wag Water, Rio Nuevo and Rio Bueno/White River. Under the GOJ/ Adaptation Fund Programme, an agro-forestry programme is being undertaken to plant 30 000 trees. Tree planting has taken place in St Mary and St Catherine and as at the end of 2021 approximately 70.0 per cent of the 30 000 target was achieved.

Additionally, the EU-funded Budget Support Programme, 2018–2022, aimed at reforesting 150 hectares of denuded lands annually¹⁵⁹ is a significant thrust towards advancing the achievement of Goal 15. Between the years 2018-2021,¹⁶⁰ the Forestry Department reforested 535.25 hectares, surpassing the annual target of 150 hectares in 2020 and 2021 (Figure 80). Given the high costs associated with reforestation, particularly the Forestry Department's approach to "grow trees—a three-year commitment—not just plant trees", the funding support accelerated Jamaica's planned reforestation initiatives. The Forestry Department achieved high levels of engagement with the communities in the reforested areas—an important element to ensuring that the reforested areas are maintained particularly where agriculture is the driver of deforestation. The areas of dialogue and cooperation between the Forestry Department and the communities

¹⁵⁷ Report from the Forestry Department, May 2022.

¹⁵⁸ There is no data to measure indicator 15.3.1 relating to the proportion of land that is degraded over total land area.

¹⁵⁹ In keeping with the Forestry Department's target.

¹⁶⁰ Data for 2021 not yet available.

include the value of maintaining forests, integrating agroforestry techniques, eliminating *slash and burn* and forest fire management (Stakeholder Consultation for VNR Preparation).

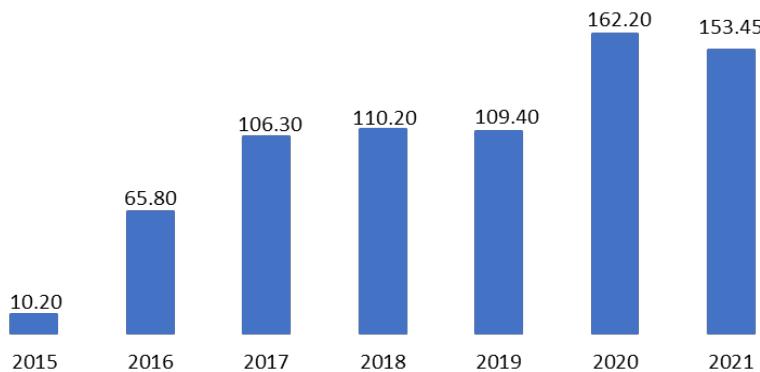


FIGURE 80 : DENUDED LANDS REFORESTED (HA)
SOURCE: PIOJ 2016-2021

Implementation of school and public awareness programmes remain a vital strategy for ensuring conservation at the local level. Over the reporting period, the Forestry Department and other stakeholders engaged over 230 000 Jamaican students through hundreds of school visits and public awareness events (Forestry Department, 2020; 2021). The Student Watershed Action Group (SWAG) was also launched by NEPA in 2019 to critically examine environmental issues, creatively address associated challenges; and build sustainable and resilient communities (PIOJ, 2020).

Target 15.4: By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development

In 2017, Jamaica's Mountain Green Cover Index (MGI), score was 85.58, which was greater than the world's score of 75.8 but less than the score for the Caribbean, 96.3¹⁶¹. The MGI¹⁶² is defined as the ratio of the mountain green cover area to the total mountain area. It measures the changes of the green vegetation (forest, shrubs, trees, pasture land, crop land, etc.) in mountain areas (to monitor progress on the mountain target). Mountain key biodiversity areas completely covered by protected areas stood at 28.9 per cent in 2019¹⁶³.

¹⁶¹ <https://gegslive.unepgrid.ch/index.php>

¹⁶² Information relating to the index is on an open data platform which is being maintained by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

¹⁶³ https://gegslive.unepgrid.ch/country_profile.php?selectedCountry=%20388&selectedTheme=1

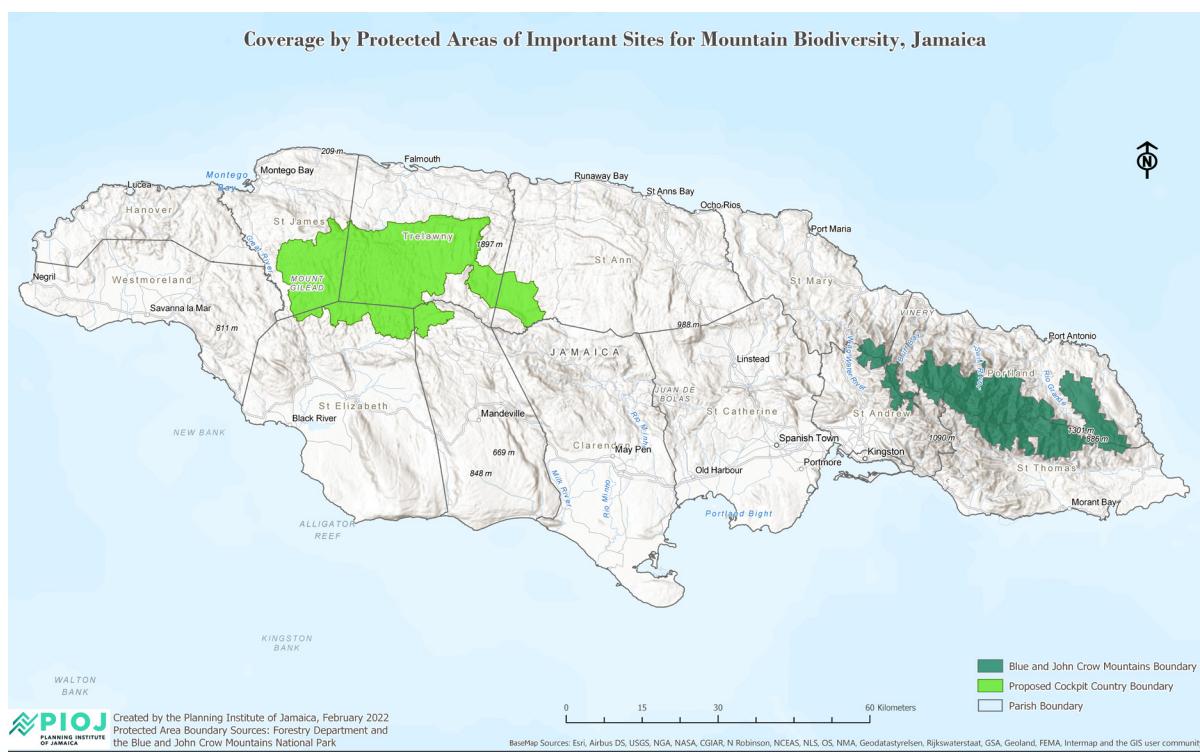


FIGURE 81: COVERAGE BY PROTECTED AREAS OF IMPORTANT SITES FOR MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY
SOURCE: THE FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

Localized forest management plans support conservation efforts in Jamaican communities, especially those in mountain ecosystems. Since the last VNR more important sites for mountain biodiversity are now under protected areas management (Indicator 15.4.1). As of March 2021, Jamaica approved 3 new forest management plans increasing the area under management to 60 756 hectares (Forestry Department, 2021). Under the previous review period Jamaica had nine forest management plans, representing approximately 55 931 hectares.

TABLE 31: NUMBER OF FOREST MANAGEMENT PLANS APPROVED

Approved Forest Management Plans	Reporting Period	
	2015-2017	2018-2021
Forest estates	7	8
Watershed	-	1
Private Areas	2	3
Total Number of Approved Forest Management Plans	9	12

SOURCE: THE FORESTRY DEPARTMENT (2021)

To date, 94 of the island's 228 forest estates, approximately 41.0 per cent, have a forest management plan (Forestry Department, 2021). An important aspect of local level conservation is the establishment and engagement of Local Forest Management Committee (LFMC) to enable the participation of the communities in the co-management of forested areas (specifically those managed by the Forestry Department).

Target 15.5: Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species

The National Strategy and Action Plan for Biological Diversity in Jamaica 2016-2021 (NBSAP) included biodiversity conservation which are aligned to the Convention on Biological Diversity Aichi Targets. The post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will build on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Biodiversity is a critical asset for the Jamaican people and ensuring long term and sustainable economic activities are key to promoting the importance of biodiversity conservation across all economic sectors through partnerships (NEPA, 2016). The main threats to biodiversity in Jamaica are habitat loss, climate change, resource over-exploitation, invasive alien species and pollution.

In 2015, Jamaica's score on the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List Index (RLI)¹⁶⁴ was 0.673. It declined to 0.668 in 2018 and further to 0.665 in 2020 (Indicator 15.5.1). The declining trend suggests that the rate of biodiversity loss should be of concern. The IUCN Red List 2021 shows that 342 species were threatened (inclusive of 213 plant species and 48 fish species under threat), compared to 298 in 2014; noticeable increases were observed among fishes and reptiles (Figure 82).

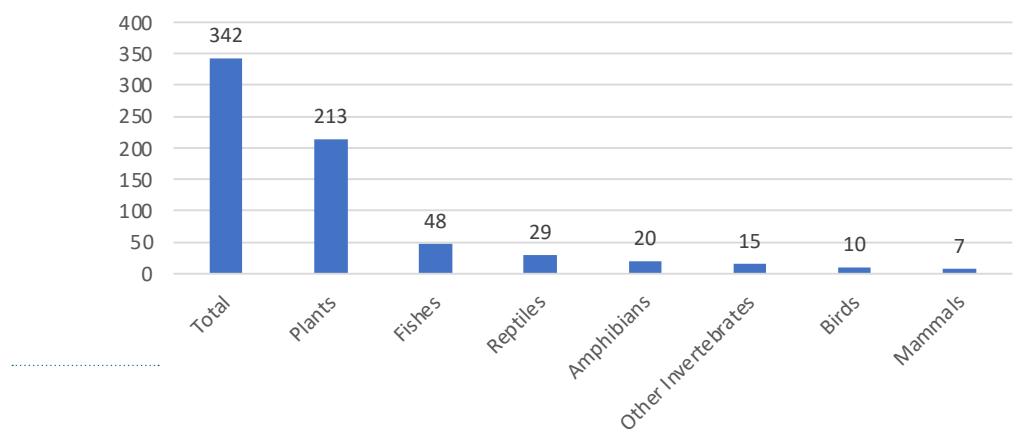


FIGURE 82: NUMBER OF THREATENED SPECIES IN JAMAICA
SOURCE: IUCN RED LIST 2021¹

1 <https://www.iucnredlist.org/statistics>

Of the threatened species that are endemics, an estimated 25.6 per cent were *vulnerable*, 23.1 per cent were critically endangered and 51.3 per cent were *endangered*.

Actions geared towards biodiversity conservation included the monitoring of five key endangered terrestrial species: Jamaican Iguana (*Cyclura collei*), the Homerus (Giant) Swallowtail Butterfly (*Pterourus homerus*), the Yellow-billed Parrot (*Amazona collaria*), the Jamaican Boa (*Epicrates subflavus*) and the Jamaican Hutia (*Geocapromys brownii*), as well as game bird species and nesting sea turtle. Also, Jamaica completed its Management Plan for the American Crocodile.

164 The RLI shows trends in overall extinction risk for species, and is used by governments to track their progress towards targets for reducing biodiversity loss.

The Jamaican Iguana is an endemic species classified as "critically endangered" by the IUCN. To date, Jamaica has released 534 iguanas under the Iguana Head Start and Re-introduction Programme since the first release in 1996; almost a third (152 iguanas) were released in this reporting period alone. The programme released 112 iguanas between 2015 and 2017; almost as many were released between 2018 and 2020, with a noticeable decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic as Figure 83 shows (PIOJ, 2019-2021). This thrust has included an initiative under the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme which supported the release of iguanas.

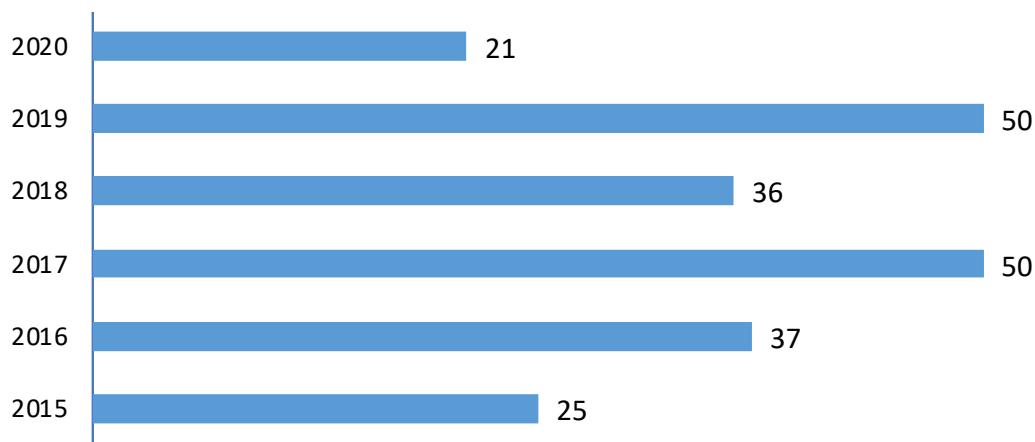


FIGURE 83 NUMBER OF IGUANAS RELEASED UNDER THE IGUANA RE-INTRODUCTION PROGRAMME
SOURCE: PIOJ 2016–2021

Target 15.6: Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed

Regarding the adoption of legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits (Indicator 15.6.1), Jamaica is a signatory to, but has not yet ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS). The NEPA and the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC) are collaborating to prepare legislation that will facilitate ratification. If successful, this will ensure that local people, can benefit from the transfer of knowledge on genetic resources that lead to the commercialization of products.

Target 15.7: Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products¹⁶⁵

Actions geared at eliminating poaching and trafficking of protected species (Target 15.7) and combatting global poaching and trafficking (Target 15.C) included 'Croc-Wise, an educational outreach initiative targeting communities and schools around crocodile habitats, designed to develop an appreciation for the reptile. Based on current capacities within key organizations, it is difficult to track activities relating to the trafficking of protected/endemic/endangered species. According to NEPA, the American Crocodile has suffered from increased poaching and habitat loss over the review period (JIS 2018).

¹⁶⁵ Jamaica doesn't currently monitor the proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked (Indicator 15.7).

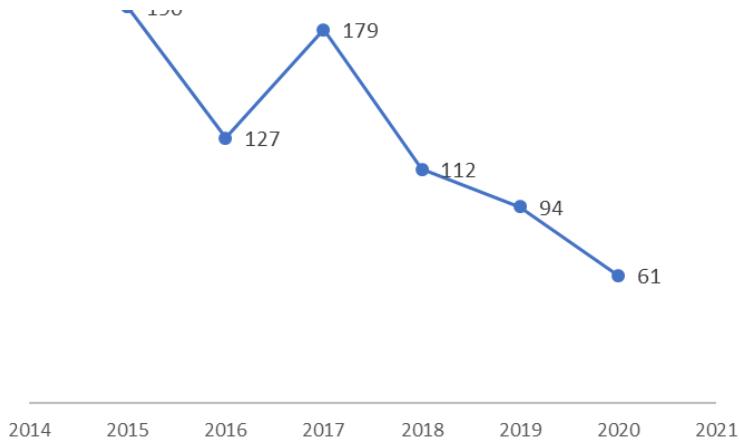


FIGURE 84: CITES PERMITS AND CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY NEPA
SOURCE: PIOJ 2016–2021

Regarding the regulation of import and export of flora and fauna under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), there was a steady decline in the number of permits and certificates issued by NEPA since 2018. Jamaica granted 496 between 2015-2017 permits and certificates compared to 267 over the period 2018-2020 (Figure 84).

However, outside of the permits and certificates for Queen Conch and orchids, majority of the others are to facilitate the export of samples for testing or associated with research and are not to enable trading.

Target 15.8: By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species

Jamaica made efforts to strengthen and establish legal and institutional frameworks to enable the effective prevention, eradication, and control of IAS at regional, national, and local (site-specific) levels (indicator 15.8.1). Jamaica enacted the Ballast Water Management Act in 2019; it aims to protect Jamaica's marine environment through the implementation of measures to prevent ships entering Jamaica's waters from introducing foreign aquatic species and diseases into the country. Also, the proposed amendments to the Wildlife Protection Act will specifically address invasive alien species (IAS).

The implementation of the National Invasive Alien Species Strategy and Action Plan (2014-2020) also contributed to the prevention, control or eradicate the priority species. The VNR 2018 for Jamaica report noted that the launch of the Jamaica Invasive Species Database (JISD) would be important for addressing the threats that IAS pose to biodiversity. An operational IAS database is an example of best practice for addressing the issue of invasive alien species on land and in water ecosystems. In 2022, the JISD hosted 86 of over 120 recorded invasive alien species, including plants, animals and other organisms. The effort to populate the database and update current records is ongoing. The IAS Working Group, an advisory committee and coordinating mechanism on issues relating to IAS, mobilized efforts to populate the IAS database and continues to sensitize the public on IAS.

The Mason River Protected Area (MRPA) is a bird sanctuary and Ramsar site, protected area and natural heritage site. The site is a rare example of an upland peat bog and scrub savannah, with approx. 430 species (11 per cent endemism and some listed in the IUCN Red List). Within the MRPA, the Natural History Museum (NHM) of Jamaica continues to lead

efforts to halt the spread of the invasive plant species, the vampire fern (*Dicranopteris pectinata*). The invasive vampire fern species is harmful to other plants and is being removed, and the area restored with native species.

Leading/implementing MDAs prepared strategies and protocols to manage other invasive alien species. Of note are the strategies for bamboo including the National Bamboo Development Plan, the Bamboo Straws Standard and the Draft Jamaican Standard Code of Practice for Bamboo Plantation and the Draft Invasive Alien Species Programme for the control of Australian Red Claw Crayfish and Suckermouth Catfish for Black River. Jamaica's 29 endemic/native Jamaican frog species are threatened by the Cuban Tree Frog (*Osteopilus septentrionalis*) that competes with them for habitats and resources. The NEPA continues its efforts to protect the endemic/native frog species through public education and the removal of the Cuban Tree Frog from affected areas.

Target 15.9: By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts

Jamaica submitted its established national targets in 2016 in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Targets and in keeping with the National Strategy and Action Plan on Biological Diversity (2016-2021) (indicator 15.9.1(a)). The 20 targets were adopted with minor modifications as national targets, and respectively assigned outputs/results, national indicators, baselines, prioritized activities and parties responsible for implementation to each target¹⁶⁶. These targets are underpinned by the global 2030 SDGs, and especially promotes mainstreaming as the most effective means for achieving the national targets, which can be accomplished through consideration of biodiversity in strategic plans, such as the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and its supporting MTFs, national poverty reduction strategies, and activities carried out in key production sectors (i.e. forestry, fisheries, mining, tourism and agriculture). Also, the integration of forestry considerations in local development orders (i.e., Parish Development Orders) is supporting the integration of ecosystem and biodiversity into governmental planning at the local planning level.

According to STATIN (2021), Jamaica has not yet started the development of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (Indicator 15.9.1(b)). One of the key challenges relates to the availability of related data. However, preliminary work had commenced before the reporting period with technical assistance from United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC). Of note, the "triple bottom line" accounting framework is supported by the Environment Management Systems (EMS) Policy (2019).

Target 15.A/B: Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems as well as to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to advance such management

Through ODA Jamaica received US \$23.2 million towards conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for 2015-2018¹⁶⁷. Overall, the ODA was consistent with the other areas highlighted for additional support such as the environment, climate change resilience; disaster risk management; governance; agriculture and social protection to advance the GOJ's strategic objectives and priorities articulated through the MTF 2018–2021.

Of note, the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) and the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica (EF) disbursed over US \$4.6 million in capacity building grants to NGOs between 2018 and 2021 (PIOJ, 2019-

¹⁶⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/about/latest/#jm>

¹⁶⁷ <https://unstats-undesa.opendata.arcgis.com/>

2021 and Forestry Department, 2020; 2021). The grantees implemented projects to combat deforestation, conserve biodiversity, build resilience to climate change, enhance conservation mechanisms of the marine ecosystems and to facilitate the establishment of alternative livelihoods. These financial resources aided in the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity and was made possible through the partnerships established and sustained with local entities, private sector interests, and international partners.

Jamaica did not generate revenue and/or mobilize finance from biodiversity-relevant economic instruments (Indicator 15.a/b.1(b)), However, as Figure 85 shows, the GOJ's investments in environmental management and forestry programming steadily increased from 2015/16 FY to 2019/20 FY, with allocations in 2019/20 FY being approximately 63.5 per cent more than the 2015/16 FY. The allocations decreased in 2020-21 FY; declines in Recurrent and Capital Funds due to reprogramming because of the COVID-19 pandemic was a factor. Additionally, the GOJ allocated approximately 32 per cent more funds to support environmental management and forestry related programmes more during the 2018/19 to 2020/21 FY (US \$64.9 million) than the 2015/16 to 2017/18 FY (US \$49 million) (PIOJ, 2016-2021).

Additionally, the National Conservation Trust Fund of Jamaica (NCTF) is now operational and is providing grants for community-level management of protected areas, among others.



FIGURE 85: COMBINED FORESTRY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION BUDGETARY ALLOCATION (IN USD MILLION)
SOURCE: PIOJ 2016-2021.

⁶ Environmental Protection and Conservation reflects allocations to the National Environment and Planning Agency, and environmental management and meteorological services under the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development

⁷ Conversion rate is US\$1 to JMD \$155.

Target 15.C: Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities¹⁶⁸

The NEPA received protection and control assistance through partnerships with entities such as Jamaica Customs Agency and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) in Jamaica in reducing poaching and the international sale of wildlife¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁸ Jamaica doesn't currently monitor the proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked (Indicator 15.c.1.).

¹⁶⁹ <https://jis.gov.jm/features/nepa-protects-countrys-wildlife/>

Policies, strategies, legislative instruments and provisions that have contributed to progress.

Efforts to develop and maintain a comprehensive governance framework for the forest sector and protect and strengthen forest biodiversity leveraged the achievements that were noted in the VNR 2018 Report. For example, Jamaica advanced amendments to the Forest Act 1996, building on the preliminary work done before 2018. In 2018, key amendments were made to the Wildlife Protection Act; efforts since then have also advanced. The Forest Act and the Wildlife Protection Act are now being targeted for promulgation. The amendment to the Wildlife Protection Act is particularly important because it will facilitate Jamaica's ratification of the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol to the Cartagena Convention.

The GOJ implemented the Trade (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order (2018) and the Natural Resources Conservation Authority (Plastic Packaging Materials Prohibition) Order (2018) to ban the importation, distribution, manufacture and commercial use of certain types of single use plastics in phases as of January 1, 2019 (NEPA, 2020). A Deposit Refund Scheme (DRS) for the recycling/return of plastic bottles has been implemented (JIS, 2021). In addition, the implementation of the Plastic Waste Minimization Project strengthened policy and enhanced legal frameworks to reduce and manage plastic waste from land-based sources. Also, a mobile app was developed by the NSWMA to facilitate easier collection, reporting of non-collection of solid waste and illegal dumping.

The Cabinet approved the Environment Management Systems (EMS) Policy¹⁷⁰ in 2019; it is aligned to SDG 15 and will support Jamaica in realizing improvements in sustainable management and use of environmental and natural resources in economic sectors. A key feature of the policy is the Green Business Jamaica Initiative, launched in 2018, to promote good environmental practices to sustain natural resources. Other policies approved by the Cabinet include the Biosafety Policy for Jamaica¹⁷¹, the National Policy for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous Wastes¹⁷² and the Water Sector Policy and Strategy¹⁷³.

Additionally for this review period, approval was received for three Green Papers¹⁷⁴: The revised Beach Access and Management Policy¹⁷⁵, the Emissions Policy Framework for Jamaica¹⁷⁶ and the revised Climate Change Policy Framework.¹⁷⁷ Also, Jamaica initiated the policy development process to manage squatting, with the drafting of the National Squatter Management Policy¹⁷⁸.

¹⁷⁰ As a White Paper, the official Policy document.

¹⁷¹ Aims to protect local species from genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

¹⁷² Focuses on the environmentally sound management of hazardous wastes in Jamaica in keeping with international and regional best practices, to ensure the protection of human health and the environment.

¹⁷³ To facilitate the population having universal access to potable water and adequate sanitation.

¹⁷⁴ Initial document that facilitates public discussion and input on the policy issue.

¹⁷⁵ To govern all beaches in Jamaica whether owned by the State or by private interests and covers public access to beaches as well as their management and regulation.

¹⁷⁶ Aims to reduce emissions from key pollutant sources in order to maintain good air quality.

¹⁷⁷ To support sustained growth and prosperity through enhanced resilience and capacity to adapt to the impacts and to mitigate the causes of climate change.

¹⁷⁸ To provide a strategic direction for addressing squatting by cauterising the practice and fostering orderly development of land resources.

Relevant international conventions/ agreements

Jamaica continued to pursue its relevant obligations under the international multilateral agreements to which it is a party or signatory. A summary of selected activities or achievements is noted in Table 32.

TABLE 32: JAMAICA'S PARTICIPATION IN UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES, CONVENTIONS AND FORA

UN Convention on Biodiversity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6th National Report • Adoption of the Kunming Declaration for the implementation of a more effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.
UN Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued processing of permits and licences for trade in endangered flora and fauna (2018-2021)
UN Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of National Voluntary Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets (2020). • National Target - LDN is achieved by 2030 as compared to 2015 and an additional 10% of degraded lands of the national territory are improved.
UN Forum on Forests (UNFF)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission of Global Forest Goals (2019) • Global Forest Goals Report (2021)
UN-REDD Programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing work to become "REDD+ Ready"
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jamaica signed the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use at COP 26 to "halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation" by 2030. • Adoption of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

Crosscutting issues and interlinkages with other SDGs

Climate Action

Information from risk mapping and vulnerability assessments are available as key inputs for forest sector stakeholders to better respond to climate change. More importantly, the inclusion of forest sector in Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) is a notable milestone and it supports the development of a National REDD+ Readiness Strategy, preparing Jamaica to mobilize foreign exchange in the form of carbon finance. Also, to support REDD+ Readiness Preparation, Jamaica completed the gap analysis of the legislative, policy and institutional frameworks governing sectors relevant to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The National Tree Planting Initiative will also aid in the expansion of carbon sinks. These initiatives will support the integration of terrestrial ecosystem and biodiversity management into governmental planning. See Goal 13 on Climate Action.

Pollution

Managing pollution remains key to the conservation and restoration of Jamaica's terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems (Target 15.1) and the protection of its biodiversity and natural habitats (Target 15.5). Air quality, oil spills and sewage discharge accounted for most of the reported pollution between 2015 and 2020. There were 213 reported incidences between 2015 and 2017 which decreased to 113 for the period 2018-2020, (PIOJ 2016-2021). Noticeable decline in the number of reported incidents can be attributed to increased awareness and enhanced environmental management or a reduction in reporting. Other pollution incidents included improper waste disposal, spills from other chemicals, molasses and other general substances; fish kill, algal bloom, water pollution/fire control runoff; noise and sewage odour.

The COVID-19 Pandemic

Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the execution of projects and programmes. Reduced government revenues, budget reformulations and the various containment measures that restricted daily life are some examples of the factors that affected implementation. However, there was increased utilization of technology to facilitate implementation and coordination for example virtual meetings, trainings and awareness sessions which provided cost saving opportunities (e.g. event venues, meals and transportation).

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

Stakeholders identified the Thematic Working Groups (TWGs), a coordination mechanism under Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan, as a useful platform for facilitating dialogue and coordination across SDG implementing partners. Additionally, co-management arrangements with NGOs and CBOs are mutually beneficial for government and local partners in the management of protected areas and beaches.

Poor coordination (e.g., duplication of activities) limits implementation progress. Agreements among ministries, departments and agencies (e.g., MOUs) are a useful approach to overcome it. Examples include the MOU between the Scientific Research Council (SRC) and NEPA to protect the country's rich biodiversity.

Funding and staffing shortfalls also affected the pace of implementation and scope of monitoring and enforcement efforts in areas such as IAS removal and poaching of endangered species. Training and technical assistance from regional and international partners helped to address some gaps. Issues remain with limited technical capacity within implementing MDAs for example to conduct ecosystem and natural resource valuations, loss and damage assessments of forests and carbon accounting. This impacts Jamaica's ability to leverage funds to sustainably manage forest resources. Similarly, successful forest fire prevention and containment initiatives preserve forest cover, protect biodiversity and other forest products as well as reduce the release of CO₂ into the atmosphere. However, these initiatives are usually underfunded or delayed due to limited fiscal space. Additionally, the nature of the terrain may affect reforestation and removal of invasive alien species activities.

There are also challenges with land accessibility for reforestation, unavailability of seedlings to meet demands, low survival rate and low growth rate of newly planted seedlings. As such, search for land now commences at least a year ahead of scheduled planting activities and communities engaged prior to execution. Effort is being made to develop of a comprehensive reforestation programme to build on the successes of past programmes and to engage more persons under the Forestry Department's Private Planters Programme. In addition, forest management plans were not incorporated as part of the Forestry Department's planning process and as such experienced implementation challenges, these plans are now being included in the agency's overall planning process.

Way Forward

There is need to further strengthen the legislative framework to support the management of all forests and to safeguard biodiversity, especially as the majority of the forests are privately owned. A legislative structure to allow for sustainable forest management is also needed. Also, the management of forests is fragmented, the Forestry Department manages those on crown lands and other forests are managed by the Urban Development Cooperation (UDC) and NEPA. Additionally, there is no significant legislation¹⁷⁹ in Jamaica that protects plant species, especially those outside protected areas. This is a concern given that plants are the most threatened species in Jamaica. The revision of legislation and the National REDD+ Readiness Strategy will help with this challenge.

Improper farming techniques and livelihood activities of forest dependent communities continue to affect forest resources. Further research should be conducted to determine suitable alternative livelihood options. Community involvement, capacity building/training and stakeholder engagement are critical towards adopting sustainable practices. As such, enhanced awareness and capacity building programmes have engaged community members to assist with the management of forest resources, thereby leading to more projects and initiatives being successful. Alternative livelihood opportunities and agroforestry programmes are being established within forest dependent communities to reduce the pressures on the forest. Based on the success of community involvement and alternative livelihood opportunities, these initiatives should be expanded.

Climate change and natural and man-made hazards are major threats to forest management and biodiversity conservation and are likely to exacerbate existing issues. Changes in temperature and precipitation will affect the frequency and extent of forest fires (SOJC 2015). Additional research is needed to combat climate change and maintain sustainable forests such as the identification and propagation of drought resilient species, mitigating against the increase in forest fires due to drier temperatures and research on species that can adapt to fires. This is necessary to halt deforestation.

Actions geared at eliminating poaching and trafficking of protected species (15.7) and combatting global poaching and trafficking (15.C) were minimal. It is expected that the amendments to the primary legislation, the Wildlife Protection Act (1945), will deter poaching through increased fines and penalties.

Competing uses for land-based natural resources should be managed to safeguard the health and vitality of these resources. Efforts to further strengthen the legislative and policy frameworks and implement effective programmes and initiatives will be important for building the resilience of these ecosystems. Some priorities/plans/programmes being recommended are:

1. Finalize and implement key legislative frameworks including the Draft Forest Bill and the Natural Resources Conservation Authority Bill along with the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
2. Prepare/update 6 Development Orders to include forest management priorities
3. Develop the National Mangrove Forest Management Plan, complete 12 harvesting plans for forest clusters, completion of boundary verification and descriptions for eight forest estates, develop best management practices and Special Regulations for Riparian Forests

¹⁷⁹ Amendments presently being undertaken for the Wild Life Protection Act will include protected plants.

4. Complete the National REDD+ Strategy and Action Plan, develop the Pilot National Forest Inventory (NFI) Utilising Manual, undertake Carbon Stock Assessments (CSMs) in five (5) Forest Estates and complete the analysis of the National Forest Emission Level (NFEL)
5. Ratify the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (ABS)
6. Reforest over 150 hectares of denuded land annually to increase forest cover, implement sustained planting initiatives to ensure the survival of seedlings and reduce impact of forest fires and land clearing to halt deforestation. The Forestry Department should increase control and access of the 73.6 per cent of forests that are privately owned in order to regulate the activities on these lands.
7. Strengthen stakeholder engagement at the national and local levels of implementation.
8. Develop or adopt relevant indicators and track annual progress such as those submitted to the Global Forest Goals.
9. Establish partnerships with local MDAs, NGOs, communities and international partners to address resources gaps (e.g., financial and technical capacities).

Resource requirements

Implementation of the SDGs is complex and requires investments from and coordination among the public and private sectors, international development partners and civil society. Further progress towards conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and ecosystems will require financial resources and strengthened technical capacities (Figure 86). In addition, up-to-date aerial imagery is required to determine more recent disturbance levels within forested areas.

This is necessary to track annual changes in the forest cover and should be accessible to MDAs and the public to facilitate informed decision-making. Also, there is need to build capacity to determine the National Forest Emission Levels (NFELs).

Existing partnerships should be strengthened and new ones forged to leverage resources and accelerate implementation in areas such as mapping forested areas, increasing seedling production and engaging local communities to sustain planting initiatives.



FIGURE 86: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS TO ENHANCE THE MANAGEMENT OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN JAMAICA

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



GOAL 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Context

Goal 16 of the SDG is aligned to Goal 2 of the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan states that the Jamaican society is safe, cohesive and just. The achievement of this goal continued to be a major focus for the GOJ. During the period FY2018/19 – 2020/21 the ministries of National Security and Justice were allocated approximately \$300 billion to undertake various activities aimed at improving safety and access to justice. There were some gains made during the reporting period mainly between 2018 and 2019 however, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the continued implementation of several initiatives as operational changes were implemented in keeping with the measures that were instituted to manage the spread of the coronavirus.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning peace, justice and strong institutions.

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions Highlights 2018-2022



Violence against Children

National Plan of Action for an Integrated Response to Children and Violence launched in 2019.

Discussion

Target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

Reducing the levels of crime and violence in the country continued to be a major focus for the GOJ. As such, the GOJ continued to use a combination of measures aimed at reducing and preventing crime and violence. This included short-term interventions such as the declaration of communities as Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) and the declaration of States of Public Emergencies (SOEs) in police divisions. Medium to long-term interventions included legislative updates; building the technological capacity of the security forces; and social intervention programmes to provide well-needed services to residents in volatile and vulnerable communities. The National Commission on Violence Prevention was established in 2019 to develop a ten-year action plan focusing on violence prevention. Subsequently, in 2020, the Citizen Security Secretariat was established to provide oversight for the implementation of the Citizen Security Plan which provides a multi-sectoral and community-focused approach to improving citizen security in Jamaica. As it relates to building the technological capacity of the security forces, this included the continued implementation of the National Surveillance Programme dubbed Jamaica Eye. This programme is designed to increase the safety of citizens and assist the security forces in solving crimes through a system of networked CCTVs. The Data Protection Act which came into effect in 2020, provides a level of protection or recourse for persons with privacy concerns. The increased use of online systems due to the pandemic has also resulted in the need to focus on issues related to cybersecurity. The National Cybersecurity Strategy 2015 – 2025 has been prepared and a review of the Cybercrimes Act, 2015 has begun. There are also plans to develop a National Child Online Protection Strategy.

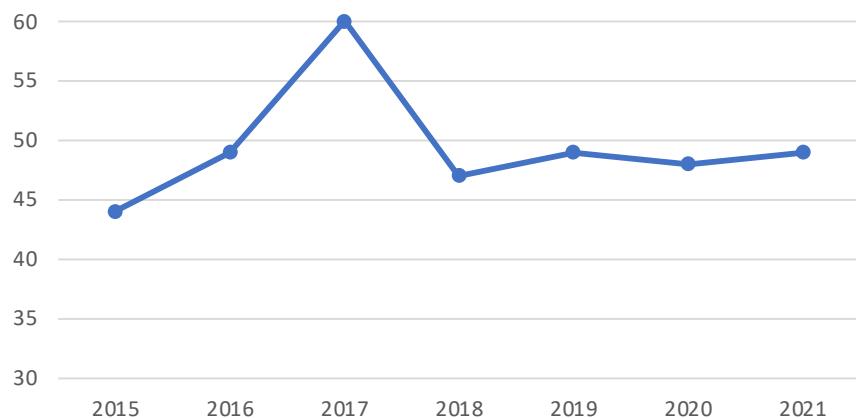


FIGURE 88: MURDER RATE PER 100,000 FOR YEARS 2018 – 2021
SOURCE: JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE

The murder rate increased to 49 per 100 000 in 2021 from 47 per 100 000 in 2018, with 90 per cent of victims being males. It should be noted, however, that other categories of major crimes¹⁸⁰ have been trending downwards from 4 369 in 2018 to 3 661 in 2021. Regarding sexual violence, measures to address incidences and prevention have been in the form of legislation, namely the Sexual Harassment (Protection and Prevention) Act 2021 and strengthening victim support services. While certain types of crimes are trending downwards, data from the 2019 Jamaica National Crime Victimization Survey (JNCVS) showed that 91.0 per cent of respondents generally felt safer walking alone in their community during the day while 69.9 per cent felt safe walking alone in the night. This is in contrast to the 2016 JNCVS report that showed that 95.5 per cent felt safe walking alone in their community during the day and 81.7 per cent during the night.

¹⁸⁰ Robberies, Rape, Shooting, Aggravated Assault, Break-in

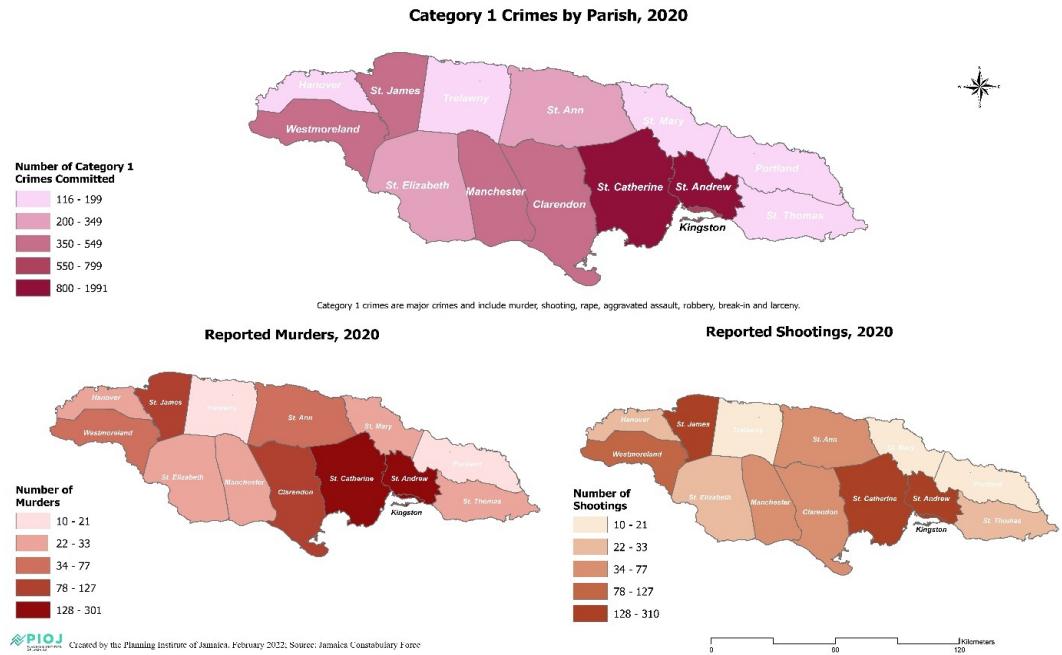


FIGURE 89: CATEGORY 1 CRIMES BY PARISH, 2020
SOURCE: JAMAICA CONSTABULARY FORCE

As the GOJ continued its “Clear, Hold, Build” approach to manage crime and violence at the community level, various social interventions were undertaken including the provision of educational and skills training, assistance in identifying, establishing and expanding income generation activities, provision of psycho-social support and provision of access to justice services. The use of this approach first began in 2017 through the enactment of the Law Reform (Zones of Special Operations) (Special Security and Community Development Measures) Act and has continued to be operational through the declaration of Zones of Special Operations (ZOSOs) in communities. There were also programmes focused on improving the physical environment and infrastructure such as solid waste management, road repairs and school sanitation projects. Work done under the Community Renewal Programme (CRP) has identified the 100 most volatile and vulnerable communities across the parishes registering the highest levels of crime and violence. However, a number of the communities identified have received little or no targeted intervention due to inadequate resources and even in communities that have received support, the interventions have only been able to focus on a limited number of persons or just a few of the priorities identified. The CRP has also developed a Community Renewal Index to show how close/far a community is from being renewed. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the ability of stakeholders to implement some of their activities within these volatile and vulnerable communities such as education and skills training as classes had to be held virtually and many participants did not have access to the required electronic devices or adequate internet access and in other instances based on the nature of the training, some elements could not be done virtually.

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has also increased domestic violence in many countries worldwide including Jamaica as lockdowns and restrictions on movement have resulted in perpetrators having increased access to their victims. Some recommendations have been put forward to address this issue such as increasing the number of shelters available for victims of violence; amending the Domestic Violence and Sexual Harassment Acts to enable stiffer penalties for breaches; provide adequate personnel to cater to the psychosocial needs of both the victims and perpetrators of domestic violence; and increased sensitization and training of key stakeholders to identify and address signs of domestic violence.

Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children

In 2018, Jamaica completed the National Plan of Action for an integrated response to Children and Violence (NPACV) and launched it in 2019. The NPACV provides a structured, multi-sectoral approach to addressing key issues relating to children as victims, perpetrators and witnesses of violence and abuse. The Child Diversion Act was passed in 2018 and implementation of the Child Diversion programme commenced in 2019. This programme aims to reduce the number of children exposed to the formal criminal justice system by diverting them into diversionary programmes to enable rehabilitation. By the end of 2021, over 600 children had been referred to the programme since inception in March 2020. With persons between the ages of 12 to 24 years accounting for a significant proportion of persons arrested for Category 1 (major) crimes, the National Child Diversion Programme is a mechanism to treat perpetrators of minor offences before they graduate to perpetrators of major offences.

Implementation of the Child Protection Compact between the GOJ and the US government began in 2018 to support the GOJ in addressing the issue of child trafficking. Under this partnership, the Trafficking in Persons Handbook for MDAs was published in 2021. The handbook has a child trafficking screening tool, presents indicators of child trafficking and the national referral mechanism for managing child trafficking in Jamaica. In 2019, the Anti-Trafficking in Person (A-TIP) Club in schools was launched and there are 20 secondary schools with an A-TIP club. The multi-stakeholder approach to implementing the National Plan of Action for Human Trafficking enabled the country to main its Tier 2 (Upper) ranking in the United States Department of State Trafficking in Persons report.

Target 16.3: Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all

The GOJ continued to promote equal access to justice by undertaking reforms aimed at strengthening systems in the formal justice sector and providing alternate dispute resolution mechanisms at the community level. As it relates to the formal justice system, technological and physical improvement continued in the island's courts. At the same time, a total of seven Parish Justice Centres were established. These centres offer restorative justice, child diversion and mediation services. During the period 2018–2021, over 6 500 restorative justice conferences were held with over 89.0 per cent being successfully resolved. The use of restorative justice conferences is another methodology being employed to reduce the backlog of cases in the courts. The restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the closure of courts however, the country was able to pivot to a virtual format with the installation of audio-visual equipment in 19 courts across the island. This operational change increased the number of judgements and a further reduction in the number of backlog cases in the nation's courts. Justice reform also included the implementation of the Justice Undertakings for Social Transformation (JUST) Programme which was developed out of an assessment of the Jamaican Justice System dating back to 2006. Under the Justice Undertakings for Social Transformation (JUST) programme, the Case Information Statistical System (CISS) was implemented in family, tax and traffic courts. There was also funding and support to the Court Statistician and Data Collection Project and the completion of the Legislative Production Management System and various add-ons, including workflow and knowledge management systems for the Ministry of Justice and its departments, as well as an automated drafting template.

Target 16.4: By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime

The Financial Investigations Division, The Major Organized Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency, and the Counter-Terrorism and Organized Crime Division in the Jamaica Constabulary Force are the main agencies working in this area.

Jamaica's National Risk Assessment (NRA)¹⁸¹ for the period 2016 - 2019 was published in 2021. The NRA seeks to identify, assess and understand the money laundering and terrorist financing risks within the country to enhance the country's national risk-based anti-money laundering and counter the financing of terrorism framework. The country's overall money laundering risk was assessed as Medium-High. This was due to a national money laundering threat level of Medium High and a national money laundering vulnerability level also assessed as Medium-High. The main threats identified in the assessment included financial and cybercrime, and illicit trafficking in narcotics. The main vulnerabilities identified included Jamaica's high crime rate, porous borders, geographic location, the pace of investigations and prosecutions, high level of informality, and significant use of cash in the economy. It should be noted that the challenges identified in 2019 still exist in 2022. There are elements of the vulnerabilities that are impossible to change such as geographic location and porous borders and so, the focus has to be placed on the other elements that can be improved. The country has 145 unofficial ports and as a result, maritime and border control is a major priority for the GOJ. To this end, work has commenced on the development of the national Border Security Policy and Strategy. This will seek to secure the country against various threats such as the illegal movement of weapons, drugs, and other contraband.

Additionally, work started in 2020 to adopt and implement the Roadmap for implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunition across the Caribbean. Successful implementation of the Roadmap should result in a safer Caribbean by addressing the issue of illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition. Discussions also commenced with SALIENT (The Savings Lives Entity) to identify strategies to deal with the issue relating to the flow and use of small arms in the country. This is as firearms remain the main implement used to commit over 80.0 per cent of murders annually.

Target 16.5: Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms

The Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency (MOCA) Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure Regulations were passed in 2020. The Regulations now give effect to the provisions of the Major Organised Crime and Anti-Corruption Agency Act, which include the establishment of the agency a statutory law-enforcement agency with operational independence and authority. MOCA investigates organised crime, public sector corruption, economic and financial crimes and police corruption. Between 2018 and 2021, MOCA conducted 138 operations which led to 161 people being arrested of which 152 were charged. The impact of the pandemic could be seen in the work of MOCA with a 77.0 per cent reduction in the number of operations conducted from 61 in 2018 to 14 in 2020.

The Integrity Commission was established in 2018 after the promulgation of the Integrity Commission Act in February 2018. The establishment of this body as a result of merging the operations of three government entities namely, the former Office of the Contractor General, which was responsible for ensuring that the government procurement procedures and the issuance of government licences and permits were free of impropriety and irregularity; the former Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, to which public officials were required to annually file their income, asset and liability statements; and the former Integrity Commission (Parliamentary), to which Parliamentarians were required to annually file their income, asset and liability statements.

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Target 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels

Some \$19.5 million was allocated in the fiscal year 2020/21 for the Public Sector Modernisation Programme (PSMP) II. The programme has been focused on improving accountability and service delivery in the public service. Some initiatives have been undertaken thus far and include the implementation of Phase A of the Human Capital Management Enterprise System or MyHR+ in 13 entities; the development of the GOJ Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Transformation Blue Print and the ICT Governance Frameworks; the design of GovNet; business process re-engineering for the Government Electrical Inspectorate (GEI); provision of equipment for the Jamaica Archives and Records Department (JARD) to support the development of a Records and Information Management Policy and improve the digitization capacity in JARD; support to the Auditor General's Department to develop an internal audit manual; implementation of the Customer Service Monitoring and Evaluation System in seven government entities; and piloting of the Enterprise Content Management Solution to support the Public Sector Customer Service Policy.

Target 16.7: Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels

The Social Development Commission continues to provide support to residents and communities in the establishment and functioning of community governance structures. In 2018, there were 578 active Community Development Committees (CDCs), 65 active Development Area Committees and 13 active Parish Development Committees. In 2019 there were 651 active CDCs, 64 active DACs and 12 active PDCs however, by 2020 there were reported declines in the numbers of active groups – 559 or 14 per cent reduction in active CDCs, 63 or 2 per cent reduction in active DACs and 10 or 17 per cent reduction in active PDCs. The decline in the number of active governance groups was due largely to the COVID-19 pandemic as it became difficult for groups to meet.

Target 16.9: By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration

The National Identification and Registration Act was passed in 2021. The National Identification System (NIDS) will provide a comprehensive and secure structure to enable the collection and storage of identity information. This secure voluntary tool can also verify an individual's identity, facilitate the electronic signing of documents and securely access a range of government services online. As a part of activities to commemorate Jamaica's 60th year of independence, approximately 11,000 undocumented eligible Jamaicans with incomes below a specified threshold will be provided with birth certificates free of cost through Project BirthRight. The J\$50 million initiative will be implemented under the auspices of the NIDS, in collaboration with the Registrar General's Department (RGD) and will utilise existing methods to verify that applicants are born in Jamaica. Registration forms to access the programme will be available at the RGD's branch offices, on the RGD and the NIDS Facts websites, and the Office of the Prime Minister's social media pages in July 2022.

Target 16.a: Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime

Preserving the human rights of all citizens and visitors remained a priority for the government and so work continued to establish a National Human Rights Institute. The Cabinet is deliberating the establishment of this institute. A Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs was established in January 2022 with the protection of Human Rights as one of the focus areas.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

With an overwhelming number of cases facing the courts and incidences of crime on the rise, greater attention has been placed on how to filter the number of cases that enter the courts. As a result, the focus on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods has been employed in the use of mediation and restorative justice that can alleviate pressures on the

system and close matters for citizens in a timely manner. Reducing the number of civil and criminal cases in the parish courts especially has borne results in civil matters, where the gross clearance rate has increased from 90.73 per cent in 2019 to 101.10 per cent in 2021. ¹⁸²

Way Forward

Efforts at improving the dispensation of justice and access to fair treatment for all is an ongoing process. Continued support of various local and international partners is crucial in identifying best practices from countries that have undergone similar challenges and implementing workable solutions based on local circumstances.

The need for increased use of data and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to inform the decision-making process is necessary to affect and guide positive change. Coordination and scaling-up of workable solutions are areas that have also been identified as strategies that will, if properly implemented, assist in achieving set targets.

The continued focus on community-level interventions to improve safety and security is critical, however, there is a need for the identification of adequate resources to increase both the number of communities receiving interventions and the number of residents in target communities benefiting from these interventions. Additionally, capacity building of the various entities in the security architecture is also needed to ensure that they can adequately manage their areas of responsibility and deal with current and new threats.

Resource Requirements

The resource requirements to advance progress on goal 16 are in the areas of technology, data management and technical cooperation. The judicial system and the associate social justice programmes in Restorative Justice, Child Diversion and Victim Services all serve to improve service delivery. Supporting these improvements require resources to strengthen application of digital technology that facilitate data management and case management. Projects such as the current Judicial Case Management Solution (JCMS), which received initial support from the European Union, through the 11th European Development Fund present the opportunity for further cooperation from international development partners. Leveraging data for improvements in the courts system requires the use of technology. Better data management not only affects users but the wider society through access to information that can improve policy responses, research and advocacy.

NEW AND EMERGING CHALLENGES

A benefit of long-term development planning is the agility that facilitates responsiveness to challenges as a form of risk management. With eight years left to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda, Jamaica faces new and emerging challenges, which have been borne out of the lingering effects of past crises and emerging national and global issues that impact development. These challenges have the potential to compound the effects of systemic issues such as low labour productivity, high debt levels, poverty and inequality and limited access to development financing. Among these challenges are:

- The declining population growth trend that will present medium to long-term challenges in increased economic pressure on the working age population and declining resources to care for the elderly
- In the global sphere, the rising geopolitical threats have presented new challenges in disrupted supply chains and contributes to a high inflationary environment
- The rise of nationalism and nearshoring resulting in declining outward investment to developing countries

Internal

Declining Population Growth

Declines in fertility and high migration rates continue to affect the growth of the population, measured at 2 734 million in 2019.¹⁸³ Annual growth has been on a downward trend for decades, reaching a low of 0.081 per cent in 2016 before mild recovery to 0.11 per cent from 2018 - 2019. The long-term implications of this trajectory are in the resources to provide for an ageing population through pensions and national insurance and dwindling aggregate demand from younger consumers leading to lower economic growth.

The working age population, in order to finance social spending can face reduction in income due to higher taxes and national insurance contributions. The decline in this population creates stressors in social protection planning. Jamaica is currently in process of updating the population policy to address these issues.

External

Geopolitical Risk

Geopolitical tensions have always presented a downside risk to achieving the 2030 Agenda. However, as the post COVID-19 recovery is affected by the latest tensions in Europe, the effects are challenging the effectiveness of global supply chains and food security manifested in high inflation. Jamaica has not faced such a high inflationary environment since the Global Recession in 2008 and the years immediately following. High inflation threatens the gains made in poverty and food poverty, by worsening the vulnerabilities experienced by persons on fixed incomes and who depend

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on government transfers and remittances to supplement consumption. At the macro level, the inflationary environment increases the cost of borrowing for government which can stymie recovery efforts in the short to medium term; therefore, worsening the ability to protect the economy from any further shocks.

Risk of Reshoring

Jamaica has a highly open economy, where trade accounts for an estimated 90 per cent of GDP.¹⁸⁴ Additionally, the openness is reflected in foreign direct investment (FDI) which has supported the development of hospitality, telecommunications, mining and other sectors, with a stock of capital surpassing US\$17 814 million in 2021.¹⁸⁵ The impact of international trade measures and investor sentiment have always had ripple effects in the domestic economy with the effects visible in employment, GDP growth and government revenues.

A negative outcome in the pandemic recovery and heavily tied to other geopolitical risks, is the increase in countries looking inward. Limiting the supply of crucial goods and services, like agricultural commodities, investment, and technology; can have a downside risk to the prospects of small countries like Jamaica. For agricultural development, the dependency on importation of seeds and planting materials, in addition to wheat and corn for processing, increases costs on firms and prices on consumers. World commodity prices for products like fertiliser are estimated to have moved US\$73.2 in 2020 to a forecasted US\$223.7 for 2022.¹⁸⁶

Prior to the pandemic, FDI into Jamaica had been in its third year of decline with some key industries including tourism and infrastructure registering little to no inflows. With investors globally expressing caution in where to move funds for acquisitions or for greenfield investment, how Jamaica positions as an attractive location for FDI is essential. The threat of reshoring, (bringing business back to the home country or region) presents a challenge for economies like Jamaica, where the business process outsourcing (BPO) and knowledge process outsourcing (KPO) industries have led to high levels of job creation. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) recognises the fragile recovery in investments to SDG-relevant sectors in developing countries, noting there are prospects in the renewable energy and utilities sectors, where long term financing opportunities are attracting foreign capital.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ World Bank Development Indicators

¹⁸⁵ Bank of Jamaica International Investment Position

¹⁸⁶ World Bank Commodity Markets Outlook April 2022

¹⁸⁷ UNCTAD. 2022. Investment Trends Monitor. Issue 40.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Means of Implementation

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

Context

SDG 17 – *Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development* is a multi-pronged approach by which developed countries in particular are called on to meet the commitments of funding/financing to developing countries to support their efforts to implement the SDGs. Jamaica's position as an open, SIDS places it in an even more vulnerable group of countries, susceptible to external economic and environmental shocks. With domestic resources balancing debt repayments and development needs, the space for support in areas beyond finance, including trade, technology, capacity building, data, and addressing systemic issues remains. The aim is to grow support and promote actions by governments, market regulators, and the private sector towards aligning financial markets with sustainable development. This would include advocating for capacity building for domestic resource mobilization (DRM), stronger cooperation on tax issues, and advocacy around capacity building support for data collection, particularly in developing countries.

The review for the period 2018-2022 summarizes key achievements, issues and challenges concerning partnerships to achieve the SDGs in Jamaica.

Partnerships for the Goals Highlights 2018-2022



Debt

Reduction in debt to GDP ratio from 135.3% in 2013 to 94.6% in 2019

FIGURE 90: HIGHLIGHTS MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION (2018-2022)

Discussion

Target 17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection

SIDS face the challenge of financing the SDGs whilst focussing on building competitive economies and emerging from debt. Jamaica is no exception to this with a historically high debt to GDP ratio, low tax compliance and weak economic growth. These challenges reinforce the need for the application of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), the framework for financing the 2030 Agenda.

Prior to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the GOJ was in its third consecutive year of managing finances through a fiscal surplus which was largely financed by tax revenues; at an average of 89.1 per cent of total revenue and grants. Bilateral partners have been providing the bulk of grant funding at an average of 62 per cent of ODA.¹⁸⁸ Government revenues increased with the level of economic activity from 25.7 per cent of GDP in the financial year (FY) 2012/2013 to a high of 30.6 per cent in FY 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. The commitment to fiscal responsibility led to concurrent increases in capital projects from domestic resources and a lowering of the debt stock to 94.4 per cent in the fiscal year 2018/2019.

The impact of the pandemic interrupted the trend of gains from the surplus years through lower economic output which affected key ratios, increases in spending and an 11 per cent decline in revenues. As a result, the fiscal balance declined from 0.9 per cent in the financial year 2019/2020 to -3.1 per cent in 2020/2021; while total debt as a percentage of GDP increased to 109.7 per cent. Despite these negative indicators, the primary balance remained positive at 3.5 per cent for 2020/2021, ending over five years of surplus greater than six per cent.

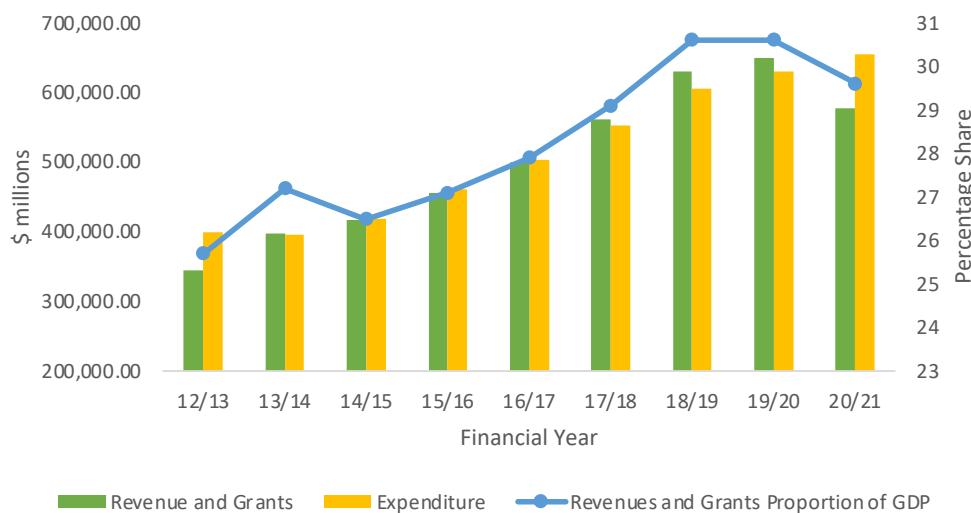


FIGURE 91: GOVERNMENT REVENUES, EXPENDITURE AND PROPORTION OF REVENUE TO GDP
SOURCE: MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The increases in government revenues have come from reforms to the tax system that improves efficiency and promotes transparency at collectorates. Jamaica is ahead of the region in required payments per year (11 to 28.2 for Latin America and the Caribbean) and time taken to file taxes (268 hours to 317.1 hours for Latin America and the Caribbean). ¹⁸⁹ Moderate economic growth has spurred revenue increases from companies and individuals, despite an increase in the income tax threshold; job growth has led to greater personal income tax receipts.

Improvements in tax efficiency and recovery of the economy will prove paramount in providing resources for financing the SDGs from domestic sources. The gap in financing brought about by the pandemic will require further support from the international community, targeting health and education services that have been most affected.

The need to improve access to financing options continues to be a challenge for Jamaica, particularly due to its classification as an upper-middle-income country. Jamaica will need to intensify its efforts at identifying alternative and innovative sources of financing to bridge the development financing gap. Jamaica should also continue to stress the need for official development assistance (ODA) providers to strengthen their efforts to meet the commitments they have made—including by collectively redoubling their efforts—to ensure that ODA, as a critical source of development finance, can deliver on the transformational ambition of the 2030 Agenda.

Target 17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

IDPs continued to collaborate with Jamaica to advance the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and by extension, the SDGs, through the alignment of ODA to the GOJ's priorities articulated in the two successive MTFs, 2015–2018 and 2018–2021. ODA is provided in the form of budget support, investment loans, grants and technical assistance from multilateral and bilateral sources.

During the period 2015–2020, new ODA supported the national development goals (Figure 90) as follows:

- **Goal 1:** Jamaicans are Empowered to Achieve their Fullest Potential, US\$505.4 million
- **Goal 2:** The Jamaican Society is Secure, Cohesive and Just, US\$370.6 million
- **Goal 3:** Jamaica's Economy is Prosperous, US\$1.1 billion;
- **Goal 4:** Jamaica has a Healthy Natural Environment, US\$132.9 million.

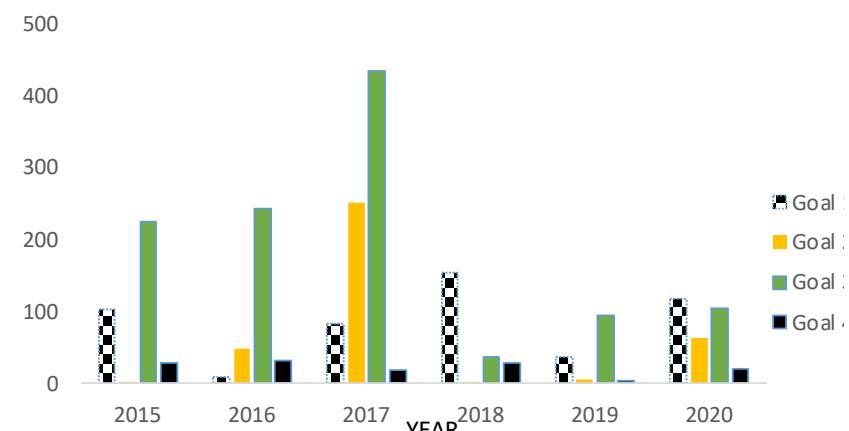


FIGURE 92: NEW ODA SUPPORT ALIGNED TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS (US\$ MILLION)

SOURCE: PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

By 2020, the overall value of new and ongoing projects funded by IDPs was US\$2.3 billion and targeted the economic and social infrastructure, environment and climate change, and productive sectors, as well as administrative areas, which included public sector reform and governance. The People's Republic of China has become the largest partner accounting for over 30 per cent of active cooperation programmes. The bulk of this support was from the China Export-Import Bank, financing in part by the GOJ, major construction in the island's road network. As the macroeconomy improves, the GOJ continues to deliberately pursue a strategy to build economic independence, by limiting the number of new investment loans and thereby reduce the country's debt to GDP ratio.

The declining trend in official development assistance can be seen in the five-period moving averages from 2006, observed at US\$736 million in 2010 and US\$357.9 million by the end of 2020. The average decline in new ODA is largely reflected by the decline in loans, which over the same period have fallen from US\$626.8 million (period average) to US\$253.8 million at the end of 2020. This reduction is reflective of the GOJs commitment to financial independence and lowering the debt burden. Grant financing has had a smaller relative decline from US\$110.2 million to US\$104.02 million in 2020. This reduction in ODA grant financing is largely attributable to Jamaica's designation as an upper-middle-income country. While overall ODA is decreasing, the sustained inflow of grant financing across periods is still beneficial to a Small Island Developing State like Jamaica which depends on cheap concessional financing for development projects and other areas of technical cooperation.

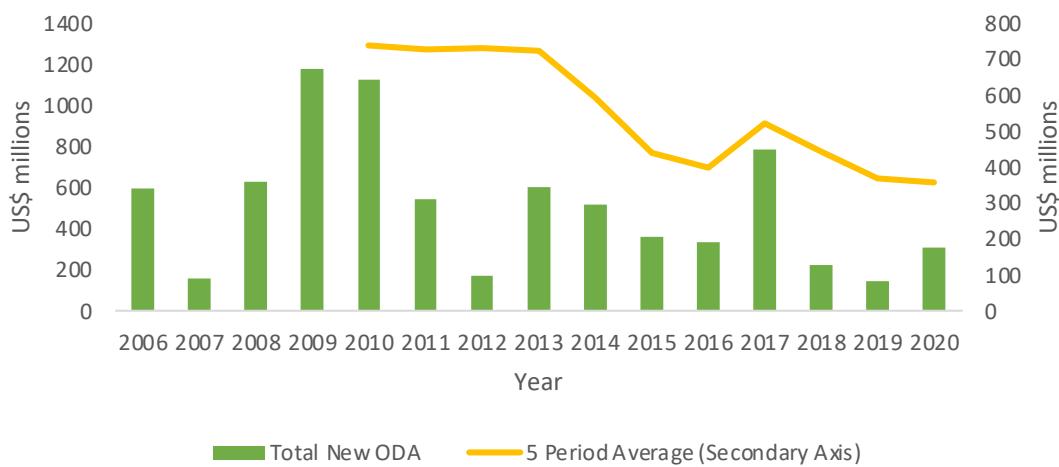


FIGURE 93: ANNUAL NEW OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
SOURCE: PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Grant resources totalling \$2.7 billion (US\$18.6 million) were provided by several IDPs for the GOJs response to the COVID-19 pandemic, of which \$2.5 billion (US\$17.3 million) was new resources while \$186.3 million (US\$1.3 million) was reprogrammed funds under on-going projects. These grant resources were concentrated in the areas of Health, Governance, Social Protection, Education and Research, as well as Agriculture. Additionally, loan resources to the tune of \$24.4 billion (US\$170.0 million) in budget support financing from the IDB and World Bank, were provided to assist the government as it sought to respond to the pandemic. In 2021, development partners continued to support the GOJs response and recovery efforts in mitigating the effects of the pandemic.

In 2022, it is anticipated that the GOJ will bolster the country's collaboration with development partners through multilateral assistance that will support the areas of digitalization; education; social protection; data management; environment and climate change; citizen security and MSME start-ups, as well as bilateral partnerships, targeting the areas of violence prevention, social justice, youth empowerment and environmental protection, *inter alia*.

Overall, ODA will continue to identify strategic investments, especially technology-based ones, which can significantly propel Jamaica to meeting its SDG targets, as well as fill financing gaps related to the GOJs priorities in the medium-term, particularly in response to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to ODA, other inflows into Jamaica that support key foreign exchange requirements are remittances. Remittances support the livelihoods for many of Jamaica's vulnerable groups and represents the second-largest source of foreign exchange, exceeding export earnings and below tourism and services earnings. Inflows as a proportion of GDP have been stable at approximately 15 per cent for the last decade. For 2020, total remittance inflow was 20.0 per cent higher than in 2019 and the percentage of GDP climbed due to the pandemic recession.

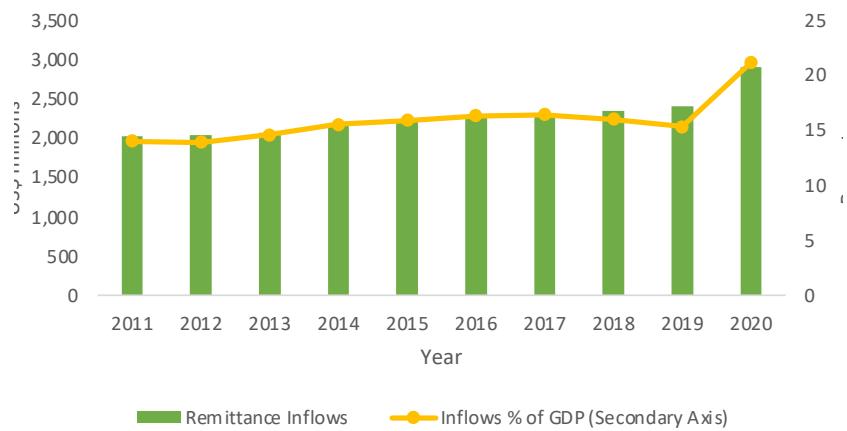


FIGURE 94: REMITTANCE INFLOWS TO JAMAICA
SOURCE: BANK OF JAMAICA

Target 17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress

UNCTAD in its 2019 Report on Current Challenges to Developing Country Debt Sustainability, assessed the issue of debt and debt sustainability and interrelated systemic issues and highlighted the impact debt levels continue to have on middle-income developing countries and small island developing states.¹⁹⁰ The rising debt vulnerabilities due to fast global financial integration and recurrent cycles of financial instability are generic to developing countries, independent of their average per capita income status. It further noted that middle-income developing countries "still face significant challenges to achieve sustainable development". Explanations have ranged from structural factors that create developmental turning points; to more general considerations about the growing obstacles to continued economic diversification in the current volatile and slow-growth global economy. This is in combination with greater demands being placed on middle-income countries' institutional and political capacities to respond to rising investment requirements associated with late industrialization pushes.

¹⁹⁰ Current challenges to developing country debt sustainability, prepared by the United Nations Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (Geneva, 2019).

A stronger and more resilient economic growth is needed to eliminate poverty and boost shared prosperity. However, this will not be possible without the creation of an enabling environment that is conducive to development. Among these measures, the mobilization of domestic and international resources and the effective support given to developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability must be included.

To ensure that developing countries, particularly MICs and SIDs, have reliable access to financing for development, it is essential for the financing for development agenda to address/solve longstanding and emerging challenges to development. Solutions of importance to SIDs and MICs include addressing country eligibility for access to concessional financing, supporting universal social protection and decent work as well as investing in global digital cooperation and connectivity to close the digital divide.

Target 17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology

Technology transfer remains one of the areas of concern for developing countries that do not have the resources to build domestic infrastructure that supports the private sector and individual innovation. Leveraging science, technology and innovation for development is key on the agenda for Jamaica's planning through national and sector policies and projects that incorporate government spending on recurring and new initiatives, with technical assistance and grants from IDPs.

The role of global actors in this technology transfer is underpinned by the domestic telecommunications market where two major providers drive competition. These firms, with majority ownership in the UK and Ireland drive competition in the domestic market. While their performance has led to high connectivity for mobile subscribers (mobile phone penetration of 105 per cent and mobile broadband penetration of 63.7 per cent), fixed line broadband subscriptions remain relatively low at 14.1 per cent as at 2020, only surpassing the average for developing countries in 2019.¹⁹¹

One of the main concerns for households is the cost to access services and the availability of high-speed connections in rural and mountainous areas, creating a digital divide based on geography and affordability. The pandemic further exacerbated the digital divide during the lockdown periods where school and work activities moved online. Connectivity challenges affected over 85 per cent of remote classes across primary and secondary institutions.¹⁹² The learning loss through access to hardware and the connectivity to attend classes and tutorials will be felt in the short to medium term.

Jamaica has one of the largest digital divides in the Latin America and Caribbean region when measured against OECD countries. In both fixed and mobile broadband, based on the level of infrastructure domestically, the gap between Jamaica and OECD nations is at 24.0 per cent and 69.9 per cent for both fixed and mobile broadband connectivity respectively. Remediating this gap requires significant investment in infrastructure, which can have benefits of increased GDP and productivity of up to 11.8 per cent and 9.7 per cent respectively.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ International Telecommunication Union ICT Indicators Database

¹⁹² UNDP, SALISES, CAPRI (2021). Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of Covid-19 and Policy Options in Jamaica. Kingston

¹⁹³ Rosenblatt et al. Digital Infrastructure and Development in the Caribbean". *Caribbean Quarterly Economic Bulletin* Volume 10, Issue 3. (2021) <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0003914>

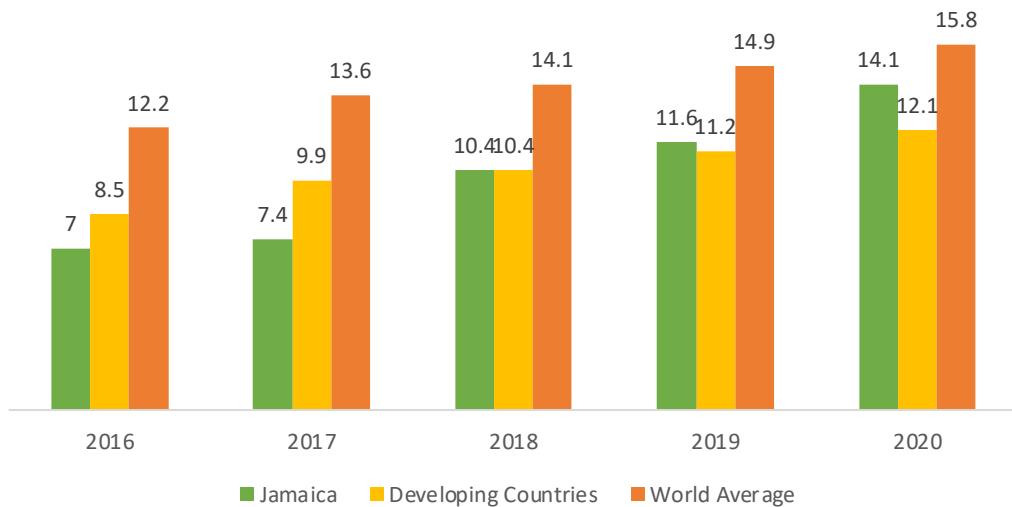


FIGURE 95: FIXED BROADBAND SUBSCRIPTIONS PER 100 INHABITANTS
SOURCE: INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION

Improving technology infrastructure is under the ambit of the National Broadband Initiative (NBI), led by the Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology. The national strategy seeks to improve inter-island connectivity through a multiphase approach. Part of this is addressed in the National Infrastructure Communication Backbone, a network that includes schools, ministries, departments and agencies of government and other public entities. The network will allow for greater use of applications, which improve GOJ service delivery, security, and transport. The role of international partners through FDI or ODA are incorporated in broader infrastructure plans that seek to ensure island-wide fibre-optic broadband and increased competition in the telecommunications market.¹⁹⁴ The GOJ is further rolling out community access points, having completed over 400 locations across the island and creating public Wi-Fi spots.

Target 17.11 Significantly increase the exports of developing countries, in particular with a view to doubling the least developed countries' share of global exports by 2020

Jamaica continues to participate actively in key aspects of the work programme of the World Trade Organization (WTO), particularly in the areas of trade negotiations and consultations; administration and implementation of the existing WTO agreements; monitoring and transparency; dispute settlement; and supporting development and building trade capacity.

In the last few years, the attention of WTO Members has focused on concluding the negotiations on fisheries subsidies and advancing the negotiations on agriculture, two key legacy areas from the Doha Round. Members have committed themselves to conclude comprehensive and effective disciplines that prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies that contribute to overcapacity and overfishing and eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing while ensuring that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing countries and LDCs is an integral part of the outcome of the negotiations. Work has advanced in the negotiations in recent years with the key objectives of developing countries, including Jamaica, being that an outcome on fisheries subsidies is balanced and equitable and takes into account the needs and concerns of developing countries and LDCs. An outcome

¹⁹⁴ Hon. Daryl Vaz MP, "Science, Energy and Technology: Building a Brighter Future." (Sectoral presentation at Houses of Parliament, George William Gordon House, May 18, 2021)

on fisheries subsidies will result in the implementation of SDG target 14.6 as it relates to environmental sustainability and the use of marine resources for sustainable development.

Jamaica also remained actively engaged in work relating to the monitoring and transparency mandate of the WTO, particularly as it relates to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the measures taken by Members in response to its effects. As a small, vulnerable economy and given the importance of trade to our economy, Jamaica, working with other WTO Members, underscored the importance of keeping international trade open and non-discriminatory and the need to avoid implementing trade-restrictive measures.

In international trade, Jamaica has not seen any significant increase in its merchandise exports since the SDGs were agreed upon in 2015. In the last five years, merchandise imports have increased steadily and exports, while reflecting some level of fluctuation, have remained fairly stable. The trade deficit remains in place with total imports almost four times greater than the level of exports. While the performance of services exports continues to be dominated by tourism earnings, increasingly marginally since 2015.

The forecast for trade growth for 2022 remains cautious with slow growth expected for international trade during the first quarter of 2022. Positive growth rates are expected for trade in both goods and services but only marginally keeping trade volumes at levels similar to the last quarter of 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic saw an acceleration in digitalization including concerning the international exchange of goods and services. This could create opportunities for MSMEs and women and have a positive impact on their ability to trade internationally as we seek to build a more inclusive multilateral trading system.

Improving market access remains a priority for Jamaica, as a SID and support has been given to decisions relating to the LDCs at the Ninth Ministerial Conference of the WTO 2013, comprising three applicable elements: (i) the implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access; (ii) preferential rules of origin; (iii) the operationalization of the services waiver. Combined, these decisions seek to facilitate and increase the participation of LDCs in the multilateral trading system by providing increased market access for the exports of goods and services from these countries; increasing LDC trade opportunities; and allowing them greater flexibility in implementing the WTO rules.

The decisions have been implemented by most developed countries and several developing countries, which are in a position to provide such preferential treatment to the LDCs, including through their respective preferential arrangements, such as GSP schemes. Jamaica continues to support and provide advocacy with other WTO Members for proposals submitted by LDCs for special dispensation and consideration of this group of countries in the WTO.

Target 17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts

Effective monitoring and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda require relevant, timely and quality data and statistics that will help a country to track progress and identify gaps. This allows decision-makers to track progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and promote accountability, particularly for communities at risk of being left behind. Official statistics in Jamaica are produced by the STATIN, the national statistics office, as well as by a number of GOJ MDAs.

To improve the coordination, production, and dissemination of official statistics, STATIN continues to undertake initiatives to strengthen the legislative framework that governs the Statistics Act. The proposed amendments to the

Statistics Act seek to encourage trust and reliability in statistics produced and modernise and improve the operation of Jamaica's statistical authority. Another proposed amendment to the Statistics Act is the establishment of the National Statistics System for the coordination, production, and dissemination of official statistics. However, efforts to move this activity forward were limited by competing priorities and resource constraints.

Technical assistance aimed at improving the quality of statistics in Jamaica was received from several international development partners such as the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC), Statistics Canada under the Programme for Regional Advancement of Statistics in CARICOM (PRASC), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC).

To improve data dissemination for the SDGs, STATIN partnered with Mona School of Business & Management (MSBM) to develop Jamaica's National Reporting Platform (NRP) for the SDGs. This customized platform is expected to be launched in 2022 and will facilitate greater information sharing among MDAs and provide an Open Data portal of SDG statistical indicators, enhancing the country's ability to keep track of its progress and report on the SDGs. The platform will also promote awareness, access, and reuse of data by various stakeholders, policymakers, academia, media, civil society, and the general public.

Jamaica faces challenges in the production of data to monitor the SDGs. Data gaps and the unavailability of disaggregated data for some indicators continue to pose a challenge, impacting compliance with the principle of Leaving No One Behind. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has reiterated the need for coordination in the production of official statistics as well as the incorporation of non-traditional approaches to gathering data. STATIN continued to engage with other MDAs to improve the Institute's access to administrative data. The use of administrative data will reduce the response burden, lower survey costs, and improve the quality of the statistics.

Lessons Learnt and Best Practice

With less than a decade remaining to achieve the SDGs, partnerships and resourcefulness will be further tested at the domestic and international levels. The recovery from the pandemic has shown that sound economic management does provide a foundation for resilience and mitigation of shocks. However, persistent shocks to any economy, especially an already vulnerable small island intensify the need for additional support to achieving the development goals.

In the most recent report from the UNSG, outlined in Our Common Agenda, the SG outlines recommendations for the next 25 years of his vision on the future of global cooperation and reinvigorating inclusive, networked, and effective multilateralism, which is currently undergoing consultations by the Member States.¹⁹⁵ The recognition by the United Nations of the special considerations for developing countries, particularly in the context of how we measure progress beyond GDP, how we rationalize graduation criteria, how we allocate ODA and define access for SIDS to financing is encouraging. It goes further and involves how the international community treats small vulnerable economies within the context of a multilateral trade regime; how we approach debt sustainability for such economies; and, how we advance considerations of international tax cooperation, resilience and capacity building.

¹⁹⁵ Our Common Agenda – Report of the Secretary General, prepared by the United Nations (New York, 2021) https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf

Way Forward

To better increase the representation in international fora, Jamaica will be part of the negotiating team within the negotiating bloc of the G77 and China (alongside Costa Rica, Morocco, Singapore, and Nigeria). These opportunities allow for an elevated voice and can garner support for common causes which affect small states related to development financing and climate change among others.

Concerning the Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond Initiative, launched in May 2020, by the Prime Ministers of Jamaica, Canada and the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG), work is ongoing within the dedicated clusters to bring the relevant policy options and recommendations to the national level to support COVID-19 response and recovery.

The following information assists in recalling the context and contribution of the Financing for Development Initiative (FFDI) thus far:

- The FFDI has propelled substantial work, particularly on debt, liquidity, and jobs and social protection
- The work of the Discussion groups launched in 2020 through to the present FfDI Clusters has had a major impact on agenda-setting. Results have included the extension of the Debt Service Suspension initiative (DSSI), the issuance of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), and the creation of the Resilience and Sustainability Trust (RST). One noteworthy example lies in Cluster IV which continues to work on SDR reallocations, the Liquidity and Sustainability Facility (LSF), the Fund to Alleviate COVID-19 Economics (FACE), adopting long-termism into Credit Rating Agencies (CRAs), and incorporating SDGs and multidimensional vulnerability indices into debt restructuring assessments.

Corporate Social Responsibility¹⁹⁶

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can support domestic resource mobilization for the SDGs through alignment with the Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The drive toward CSR is based on the recognition that the environment of modern business is becoming increasingly complex, requiring innovative responses by corporate entities to ensure their competitiveness and long-term sustainability. An increasingly competitive global economy, rapid technological change, income inequalities, the plight of vulnerable populations, and concerns for the environment present evolving challenges as well as opportunities for the public and private sectors especially in Small Island Developing States like Jamaica that seeks to achieve sustainability in development while solving urgent national problems.

Increasingly, the interest and participation of the public in seeking solutions to social economic and environmental problems is a factor in the strategic decision-making of companies. In response, firms are adopting innovative approaches to business operations—technology, e-commerce, targeting diverse demographics with new services, and interest in more effective corporate governance, results-based performance management, and stakeholder networks. Some of the most successful firms create value by recognizing and addressing wider stakeholder interests—becoming more society-oriented—and placing value on “good corporate citizenship”.

¹⁹⁶ See thematic Report on CSR

This diagnosis provides a strong basis for support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a proactive role of the corporate sector, through corporate social responsibility. These considerations underpin the growing interest in and relevance of CSR.¹⁹⁷

Resource Requirements

The path to recovery will require further efforts at economic diversification, especially in the trade of goods and services. The dependence on mineral exports in merchandise goods trade and tourism in services trade results in vulnerability that needs to be offset by exploring other industries and products in new and existing markets. The existing business environment reform agenda is encouraged, to spur economic growth which can boost government revenues and increase the availability of funds for social projects, capital works and meeting debt reduction targets.

In the international arena, strengthening existing partnerships through coalition-building and lobbying with developed countries is needed. Improving access to concessional financing, technical cooperation and follow-through on commitments can support the resource gaps in mitigation of climate change-related events, data for monitoring and accountability and other areas hindering development such as security.

¹⁹⁷ See Thematic Report on Corporate Social Responsibility Annexed to this Main Document

FEATURE: JAMAICA SOCIAL STOCK EXCHANGE

In January 2019, the Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE) pioneered the launch of the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange (JSSE), not just as a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activity of the JSE, but as a platform to promote the mobilization of Social Capital Markets. In so doing, this initiative will assist in localizing the 17 SDGs. On 6th December 2019, the Jamaica Stock Exchange (JSE) and the Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) innovation subsidiary, IDB Lab, signed a Technical Cooperation Agreement aimed at developing and growing the Social Sector in Jamaica which would include the Fourth Economy i.e., social enterprises. The project seeks to address the challenges faced by SSOs in raising financial resources by addressing their limited capacity for business management and/or project management and their inability to quantify and communicate their contribution to potential donors and investors in order to engage them in support of their social impact work. To help to achieve these objectives, the project facilitates the development of systems, processes and tools whereby private funds for the social sector can be systematically mobilized in a sustainable way and in an atmosphere of trust under the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange (JSSE).

In an innovative and forward-thinking thrust to build an impact ecosystem for the overall social sector funding landscape, the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange, has developed a platform that seeks to help not-for-profit organisations access funding and assist for-profit social organisations access capital through the issuance of securities. The development of the Jamaica Social Investment Market (JSIM) and the Jamaica Impact Investment Market (JIIM) are the two markets/platforms under the umbrella of the JSSE.

As stated above the Jamaica Social Stock Exchange (JSSE), through the "Innovating Social Sector Financing" Project works to provide the foundational work necessary to: improve the business management skills and structure of the SSO's to attract funding; improve the systems, process and tools for the JSSE to measure social impact; and facilitate awareness and stakeholder engagement. It has since achieved several key milestones/activities:

- Development of an online curriculum for the course, Certificate in Social Sector Management
- Development of a Social Impact Measurement Framework
- Market Research - Demand and Supply Assessment of the Social Sector
- Drafting of a Communication Plan to drive awareness of the JSSE and its initiatives; and
- Facilitate Stakeholder Engagement:

(a)The JSSE is working with the other entities which are still awaiting funding to convey their messages more attractively and appealingly. A campaign is being established to re-engage largely through social and traditional media.

(b) Collaborating with the government to develop the framework policy for social enterprises to be legally defined and governed, allowing the JSSE to launch its second phase, the Jamaica Impact Investment Market (JIIM). This framework has been submitted to the Ministry of Industry Investment & Commerce (MIIC) as the SOCIAL ENTERPRISE LEGAL STATUS ACT- A Bill for the Introduction of an enabling Legal Framework for Social Enterprises in Jamaica.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Jamaica's first VNR 2018, demonstrated the need to strengthen the institutional and monitoring systems to support the full implementation of the SDGs. The GOJ and its partners responded accordingly, and the second review process demonstrates that progress has been made in strengthening participation in the institutional mechanisms for the SDGs, as well as the M&E framework and systems including at the local level. The country has, through this VNR, demonstrated its continued commitment to the implementation of the SDGs and the global commitments under the 2030 Agenda.

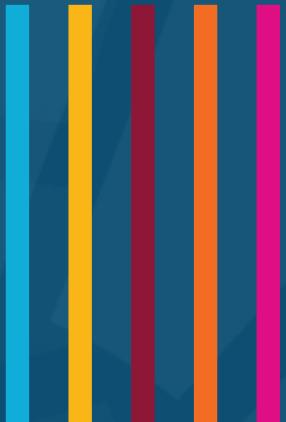
The key areas of progress have been demonstrated in education through universal enrolment rates up to grade 11 of secondary school; improvements in gender parity, marked reductions in poverty and food poverty and significant improvements in the environmental targets, particularly in increasing protected areas. Challenges brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic have resulted in slippages in key development indicators and have negatively impacted key sectors, as well as prevailing structural issues. There are concerns with the level of learning loss owing to the containment measures for the pandemic and the impact of inflation on household consumption as Jamaica is susceptible to the impact of prevailing external shocks. The country's vulnerability to natural disasters remains a major challenge, as well as the impact of crime on the economy and key social sectors. These challenges are compounded by Jamaica's designation as a middle-income country, which presents constraints to accessing concessional financing, despite its structural issues and vulnerabilities.

The country continues to strengthen strategic areas to bolster development, including the financing for development framework through key interventions such as results based budgeting and innovative financing. Strengthening policy coherence, the monitoring and evaluation framework, and systems for the national development plan, in line with the SDGs promotes transparency and accountability in development, as well as strengthening the institutional mechanism to drive action at the national and local levels.

The Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan continues to be the mechanism for implementation of the SDGs, demonstrating the country's ownership and commitment to the Agenda. The implementation of the current MTF 2021/2024 will demonstrate greater levels of alignment to the SDGs and facilitate action at the central and local levels to achieve the goals.

The VNR 2022 has focussed on strengthening stakeholder partnership and participation; and from the thematic reports will seek to strengthen local level alignment and action to advance the SDGs. In addition, domestic resource mobilization is emphasized through private sector participation within the framework of corporate social responsibility.

Whilst the country rebounds from the varying impacts of the pandemic, the achievement of the SDGs continues to be prioritized as a framework for rebuilding.



APPENDICES

A. JAMAICA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Introduction

Jamaica's SEZ Regime, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic has become an island of calm in a turbulent ocean. The SEZ Regime represents for Jamaica's economic independence a policy instrument that creates a safe haven for near shore manufacturing, distribution, outsourcing services, etc. ready to serve the 1-billion-person market in the Americas and beyond.

Just like we have become a shining example for macro-economic stability and debt reduction under an austere IMF programme we must, now through our SEZ Regime become, for investor attraction, sustainable economic development, growth, and quality job creation. This is at the heart of the Sustain-a-Livity concept being promoted by Jamaica's Special Economic Zone Authority (JSEZA).

Sustain-a-Livity: The Transformative Potential¹⁹⁸

Sustain-a-Livity has the potential to have a catalytic and transformative effect on the Jamaican economy. If Jamaica could attract between 0.001 per cent to 0.01 per cent of the over US \$30 billion sustainable investment market Jamaica stands to increase its 2021 GDP from US \$14.9 billion to between US \$15.3 billion – US \$17.8 billion.

TABLE 33 SUSTAINABILITY GDP PROJECTIONS

	Value capture of 0.01% (USD)	Value capture of 0.001% (USD)	Jamaican 2021 GDP (USD)
	\$3 billion	300 million	\$14.9 billion
Sustain-a- Livity value added to Jamaican 2021 GDP	\$17.9 billion	\$15.3 billion	-

Sustain-a- Livity's impact on growing the Jamaican workforce is equally impressive. According to Okun's law a country's GDP must grow at about a 4.0 per cent rate for one year to achieve a 1% reduction in the rate of unemployment. The Sustain-a-Livity induced GDP growth would expand Jamaica's 2021 workforce of 1 329 100 by 0.05 – 5 per cent or 1 335 745 – 1 395 555.

198 Global sustainable investment now tops US \$30 trillion up 68% since 2014 and 10-fold since 2004. – McKinsey & Company 2019

What is Sustain-a-Livity?



Sustain-a-Livity is a uniquely Jamaica concept embraced by the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority that combines two words:

Sustainable: Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Livity: Is the Rastafari concept of righteous living. Its essence is the realization that an energy, or life force, conferred by Jah (God), exists within, and flows through, all peoples and all living things. Livity has a strong focus on living a natural lifestyle.

Sustain-A-Livity is the embodiment of an elevated lifestyle whereby people can develop an awareness to expand their workstyle, quality of life and spiritual interests; where eco-industrial parks interact and cooperate with the local community to achieve a harmonious living philosophy emanating from the Jamaican motto "*Out of many one people*" to protect the environment and achieve economic prosperity.

Sustain-a-Livity Framework

Sustain-a-Livity, developed by the Jamaica Special Economic Zone Authority (JSEZA) embraces the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development principles: Advancing Economic Competitiveness (**Economic**); Creating Shared Prosperity (**Social**); Safeguarding the Environment (**Environmental**); and the JSEZA has added Supporting the Rule of Law, Transparency and Accountability (**Governance**).

TABLE 34 JSEZA OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT – SUSTAIN-A-LIVITY

Area	Indicator	Details
Economic	Investment	Capital expenditure
	Value Addition	GDP Contribution
	Re-investment	Contribution to fixed capital formation
	Exports	Total and net exports
	Technology and knowledge transfer	Supplier training programmes

TABLE 34 JSEZA OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT – SUSTAIN-A-LIVITY

Area	Indicator	Details
Social	Job creation	Total jobs
	Labour impact indicators	Employment of women in top management, skills upgrading
	Community engagement	CSR programmes
	Employee turnover rate	Stable and secure employment
	Wages	Total and above minimum wage and PAYE threshold
Environmental	Energy usage	Energy footprint – Total energy usage
	Renewable energy usage	Types of renewable and renewable footprint
	Water usage	Water footprint
	Rainwater harvesting	Size of system
	Waste disposal	Types of waste and disposal methods
Governance	Licenses and permits	National Environmental Planning Authority, fire, construction
	Conditions subsequent	
	General conditions of licenses/authorisation	These follow the act and regulations
	Business plan, master plan, construction timelines adherence	Business plan, master plan, construction timelines all form part of the 'Agreement'
	Fiscal compliance	Tax and customs adherence

Sustain-a-Livity and SDGs

Sustain-a-Livity is fully supportive of Vision 2030 Jamaica—National Development Plan; and embraces all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, there are several SDGs that come into sharp focus under Sustain-a-Livity:

- **SDG 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- **SDG 6 -** Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all,
- **SDG 7-** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all,

- **SDG 8** - Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- **SDG 9** - Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
- **SDG 11** - to make cities safe and sustainable
- **SDG 17** - Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Economic, Social, Governance (ESG)

Sustain-A-Livity is among other things an investor brand being developed and rolled out by the JSEZA aimed at the US \$30 trillion Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) global investment market. Sustain-A-Livity is a Jamaican concept whereby persons can develop an awareness to expand their workstyle, lifestyle, life-based and spiritual interests. Where eco-industrial parks interact/ cooperate with the local community to achieve a harmonious living philosophy emanating from out of many one people and to protect the environment and to achieve economic prosperity.

Powered by Sustain-a-Livity Jamaica's SEZs, offer a work-style and life-style deeply rooted in Jamaica's cultural traditions that embraces the harmony between humanity and nature for the benefit of People, Planet, and Profits.

Sustain-a-Livity Strategies:		
Principle	Goal	Strategy
Economic	Advancing Economic Competitiveness	Add resilience to your supply chains. Just in time strategy meets just in case.
Social	Creating Shared Prosperity	Tap into Jamaica's natural resources of the latent creative talent of her people, medicinal plants, mineral resources and agriculture to grow your business. A truly corporate socially responsible growth strategy.
Environmental	Safeguarding the Environment	Lower your green house gas emissions by being closer to major markets. A nearshore Americas strategy.
Governance	Supporting the Rule of Law, Transparency and Accountability	SDG assessment, monitoring and reporting. Alignment with Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) initiatives.

Figure 96 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES

What Investors can expect?

With competitive fiscal incentives, a strong talent pool and ability to tailor and scale rapidly workforce development to meet investor needs, Jamaica's SEZ investment and export opportunities offers supply chain agility and resilience to a range of industries.

TABLE 35 INVESTOR EXPECTATIONS

	Application	Aftercare	Monitoring
What an investor can expect?	<i>An evaluation process using Sustain-a-Livity principles</i>	<i>Business Acceleration or One-stop-shop service</i>	<i>Self-reporting based on Sustain-a-Livity principles</i>

With Sustain-a- Livity Jamaica's SEZ Regime delivers to investors a location in the America's: that enhances their competitiveness while creating shared prosperity and safeguarding the environment. The key to Jamaica's Sustain-a-Livity ecosystem is the commercial certainty and business friendliness created by the rule of law, transparency and accountability.

B. FEATURE: "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA" PROJECT¹⁹⁹

The project "Advancing the SDGs through Vision 2030 Jamaica" was the largest project undertaken since 2018 specifically geared towards strengthening the integration of the SDGs in the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and enhancing national capacity to achieve the national and global goals.

The main expected outcomes of the "Advancing the SDGs through Vision 2030 Jamaica" project are:

- Outcome 1: Capacity to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on progress towards attainment of the SDGs and goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica improved
- Outcome 2: Capacity to measure the contribution of international development partner support/assistance towards the achievement of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs improved
- Outcome 3: Increased capacity to utilize new and innovative financing mechanisms to advance the financing of the country's development priorities towards achieving the goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica and advancing the SDGs in Jamaica
- Outcome 4: Increased capacity of local authorities and municipalities to align Local Sustainable Development Plans with the National Development Plan and SDGs

The project was initially slated for March – December 2019 and was first extended to mid-2020. However, owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project was extended to June 2021. The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) led the implementation of the project through support from the UNDP and with counterpart funding from the GoJ. The counterpart funding was utilized to support the various activities as well as one important social responsibility initiative after the official end of the project. This social responsibility initiative was in the form of a competition titled "My New Normal 2" that engaged students in sharing their experiences with learning within the context of the "new normal" associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. The public were engaged on social media to assist in choosing the winners with quality standards maintained through the final scores being divided between the scores from a panel of judges and scores based on online voting. One of five laptops and 3 tablets were each presented to eight (8) winners to support them in their distance learning. It was the second staging of the completion, which was previously staged over December 2020 – February 2021 when five (5) winners each received a laptop and Vision 2030 Jamaica and SDG branded gift items.

¹⁹⁹ Implemented By The PIOJ, Through Support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Summary of Project Performance

Outcome 1: Capacity to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on progress towards attainment of the SDGs and goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica improved

Outcome 2: Capacity to measure the contribution of international development partner support/assistance towards the achievement of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs improved

The project gave focus to strengthening national capacity for evidence-based decision making toward improved policy, planning, and attracting and effectively utilizing external partner support. This included better enabling stakeholder engagement in monitoring national development performance. This area of project focus was advanced through two main activities geared towards improving the coordination and use of technology in managing and accessing quality data to inform national development policy and planning. Two (2) electronic platforms were developed – an “Online Monitoring Platform” for monitoring Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs; and an External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS) for improving efficiencies and effectiveness in coordinating external partner support and aligning such with national development priorities based on planned results aligned with Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. The “Online Monitoring Platform” is geared towards advancing Outcome One (1) of the project and the ECMIS is geared towards advancing Outcome Two (2).

Online Monitoring Platform

In 2019, the international firm, Community Systems Foundation (CSF) was contracted, based on a competitive bidding process, to develop and host an online monitoring platform using its data for all (DFA) system. The Online Monitoring Platform is the first major deliverable of the PIO’s “Data for Development” initiative and provides data and statistics for evidence-based policy, planning and results-based management in support of the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. It includes a Monitoring Platform for Vision 2030 Jamaica, with its centrepiece being an Electronic Monitoring Dashboard for the National Outcome Indicators. Performance is measured against a baseline year, 2007 and targets. Under the dashboard, Vision 2030 Jamaica has transitioned to annual targets from targets set for every 3 calendar years that coincide with the end and start of the successive MTFs that are implemented over fiscal years. This will improve precision in measuring and articulating annual performance against targets. The performance measurement categories have also expanded from three to five. The three performance categories that were being used were: “met or exceeded target”, “above baseline but below target” and “same or worse than baseline”. The expanded five categories are: “fully achieved or exceeded”, “mostly achieved”, “somewhat achieved”, little achieved”, and “same as or worse than baseline” (see chart below). The categories “mostly achieved”, “somewhat achieved”, and little achieved” are a breakdown of the category “above baseline but below target” and allow for greater appreciation of distance from target. The use of the new targeting approach will commence under MTF 2021/22. Specifically, it will commence in annual reporting for FY 2021/22 and quarterly reporting commencing the 1st quarter FY 2022/23 (April – June 2022).

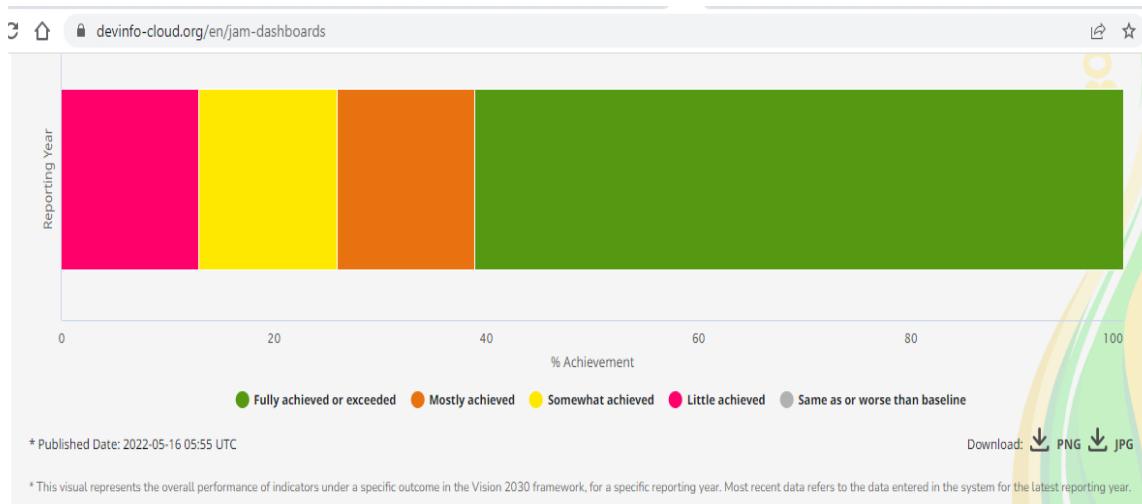


FIGURE 97 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT CATEGORIES FOR VISION 2030 JAMAICA NATIONAL OUTCOME INDICATORS

The Vision 2030 Jamaica Dashboard also measures the “Leaving No One Behind” principle through a focus on inclusion based on indicators and disaggregation of indicators to measure economic inclusion, environmental inclusion, social inclusion, and cohesion, including gender and age disaggregation.

The build out of functionalities to support the measurement against budget/development financing based on the MTF commenced in 2020. This process has progressed slower than planned, owing to disruptions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and a longer process to develop a Cost Estimation Framework and Cost the MTF than was initially anticipated. The timeline for completion of this activity has been shifted to 2024. A local development dashboard is also being developed to support the localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs.

The Online Monitoring Platform also has functionalities for constructing sector data/statistical dashboards. It currently consists of a statistical dashboard for education and child protection. There is also a dashboard linked to the integrated database of social, economic, and environmental indicators dubbed “JamData”. The “JamData” database offers access to a range of indicators to support evidence and results based management, including, research, analysis and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). The Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) is leading the development of a statistical dashboard for the Global SDGs Indicators.

A Metadata Hub is a central feature of the Online Monitoring Platform. It includes a mix of metadata and indicator reference information to support indicator and data quality assessments and appropriate utilization of data/statistics. It also supports transparency and accountability in the measurement of development performance by providing stakeholders with information on what areas of development are being measured (definitions), how they are being measured (methodology) and where and how they can best be applied (limitations).

In 2021, an initiative to strengthen national capacity for data-driven localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs commenced with enhancements to the integrated database and the addition of two dashboards. The data functionalities of the Online Monitoring Platform were expanded to accommodate community level data, in support of the localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. This activity represented a partnership between the Vision 2030 Jamaica Secretariat and the Community Renewal Programme (CRP), both housed in the PIO.

The first phase in developing a Local Development Dashboard was completed. This consisted of design and input of available data. The dashboard will support localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs and includes disaggregation of the national outcome indicators by parish. The data input is still underway as disaggregated indicators are being developed and data are being compiled/computed, including the development of relevant methodologies. A process to identify suitable proxy indicators is also underway.

The expanded data functionalities to include community level data facilitated the build out of a CRP Monitoring Dashboard based on the CRP's M&E Framework. The dashboard will complement an existing electronic system managed by the CRP through partnership with key stakeholders such as the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) and the Social Development Commission (SDC). The system serves as repository and warehouse for community level data and supports quality assurance and data sharing. The CRP Monitoring Dashboard also supports assessments of vulnerability and volatility, and community renewal based on two complementary indices developed by the CRP. The CRP is also partner in supporting the GoJ's efforts, led by the Ministry of National Security (MNS), to strengthen the availability of quality baseline data for timely evidence-based decision making in developing and implementing policies for advancing security and safety. The dashboard is intended to support these efforts.

The online monitoring platform is accompanied by a JamData Mobile App that can be accessed free of cost on apple and android devices.

The Online Monitoring platform will be officially launched in late 2022.

External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS)

The External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS) supports the management and warehousing of information on external cooperation resources and partners. It includes data on external partner supported programmes and projects, the resources involved, duration and alignment with Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. The ECMIS is intended to support optimal alignment of partner interests and objectives with relevant programmes and projects advancing the achievement of the national and global goals. It is also intended to support synergies, partnership and collaboration in the commitment and allocation of partner resources towards increased efficiencies and effectiveness and reduced duplication and incoherence.

Outcome 3: Increased capacity to utilize new and innovative financing mechanisms to advance the financing of the country's development priorities towards achieving the goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica and advancing the SDGs in Jamaica

Innovative Financing Report and Draft Policy Concept/Brief

Improving national capacity for sustainable development financing through exploration of innovative financing approaches was also an area of focus. A Draft Report on Innovative Finance titled "Innovative Finance: Opportunities in the Jamaican Context" and a Draft Policy Concept were produced to support policy-driven knowledge-based efforts to strengthen sustainable development financing. The report was developed by a consultant, Wayne Beecher, with support from the PIOI in engaging stakeholders and providing the government's perspective. The UNDP also lent its technical expertise and support. The process to develop the policy concept highlighted that policy development in the area of innovative financing required a thorough review of the policy environment and context. Followed by a process of modelling and testing to inform policy that is relevant and coherent with the country's fiscal and monetary policy frameworks and broader economic development programme. This required a longer term programmatic intervention than the short-term intervention that could be accommodated under the project. Hence, focus was given to developing a Draft Report

on Innovative Finance towards creating a foundation for evidence-based review of the needs for developing a policy architecture. The policy concepts were integrated in the report. The report was followed by interventions starting in 2020, led by the United Nations Country Team in collaboration with the GoJ, to access funding from the SDGs Joint Fund towards supporting the development of capacity for innovative financing and results-based budgeting. The SDGs Joint Fund approved and supported a project to strengthen the capacity for performance-based budgeting in the ministries with portfolio responsibilities for health and education as well as a process to support budget expenditure assessments and mapping towards strengthened capacity for results-based budgeting. A concept to develop an Outcome-based Model for Innovative Financing in Jamaica received initial approval for the submission of a proposal – being one (1) of 16 countries to be selected from a list of over 150 countries. However, while the SDGs Joint Fund demonstrated interest in the model by providing support for its further development, as of May 2022, further ground-work and testing are required to demonstrate feasibility.

The Draft Report on Innovative Finance is being used as a resource document, providing data and information to inform further evidence gathering and analysis. It is not considered a final argument or perspective. The report proposes the development and implementation of two innovative financing mechanisms to facilitate an increase in development financing to advance the achievement of inclusive and sustainable growth in Jamaica. The two proposed mechanisms are an Enhanced Impact Investment Fund Model and an Outcome Fund Model. The use of innovative financing mechanisms, particularly the two proposed, is predicated on:

- recognition that financial resources are available at both the local and global levels that can be harnessed for development financing.
- the view that innovative financing mechanisms which incentivize payment for results could have a meaningful impact on development progress. The report notes that deeper investment analysis would be required to determine if development progress has been hindered by the absence of a purpose-built innovative financial mechanism in the country.

Through the lens of sustainability and adequacy, the report assessed the current financing arrangement for the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the context of existing budgetary constraints; the country's low appetite for additional debt; and declines in Official Development Assistance (ODAs) and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). The report posits that there are opportunities that can be leveraged to complement the current development financing arrangement. These include the consistently increasing flows of remittances, investable assets available globally, and high liquidity in the domestic commercial banking sector. Despite these opportunities, market failures and the perception of risk by international investors have limited the consistent flow of significant capital from the global market into Jamaica. The report theorizes that the misalignment between the abundance of financial resources available and the lack of sustainable financing for developing countries like Jamaica is due largely to the mismatch between investor perceived risk and the actual available risk adjusted returns investment opportunities. The perceived risks identified are deemed to be linked to several challenges including:

- inadequate institutional and regulatory environment for innovative financing
- underdeveloped local capital markets
- Shortage of innovative business models with proven commercial viability and scalability.
- Inadequate expertise in the areas of private equity and venture capital
- Risk averse nature of many domestic private investors

- Crime and Violence
- Perception of corruption
- Nascent Ecosystem for innovative financing

The two proposed models were deemed appropriate to leverage complementary development financing and make development projects more effective and efficient by linking financing to results; distributing risk; and improving the availability of working capital that matches the length, or tenor, of investments to project needs. Descriptions of the proposed models are presented below.

- **Enhanced Impact Investment Fund Model:** Impact investment funds are vehicles that pool investments from accredited investors; a group of individuals or companies, to invest in projects purposefully designed to deliver positive social, environmental and financial returns. These funds can be structured into different layers, including equity, mezzanine and senior tranches, which bear different risk-return profiles. Impact investments target a range of returns from below market to market rate, depending on investors' strategic goals. The enhancements proposed for the local adaptation of the impact investment model include a design innovation in the form of an "impact venture studio" which will be used to generate investable projects that meet international investment standards; and thus, be suitable for investment opportunities from the global capital market. The Impact Venture Studio will operate like an innovation design lab to identify opportunities and design, test and launch investable social business models. It is also proposed that the Impact Investment Fund be structured as a Public-Private Partnership, comprising public representation along with local and international private partners, to ensure operational alignment to Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs.
- **Outcome Fund Model:** The Outcome Fund, which is a derivative of the impact bond, pools investments from both public and private development-oriented investors and thus would have the capacity to sponsor both social impact bonds and development impact bonds using a common structure. Outcome Funds shift the risk from outcome payers (e.g. GO) to the service providers while encouraging innovations and execution capacities. The proposed model would also include a digitalized impact investment platform which can crowd-in investment from multiple sources of investments; domestic and global. The ecosystem would be orchestrated by an enhanced Impact Venture Studio operating as an innovation lab to generate, design, launch and spin-off social ventures designed to contribute to the achievement of the National Goals and SDGs. The Impact Venture Studio will pool human capital to create deep capacities in design thinking, innovation, agile performance management and digital technologies.

Outcome 4: Increased capacity of local authorities and municipalities to align Local Sustainable Development Plans (LSDPs) with the National Development Plan (NDP) and SDGs.

While the focus of this activity was geared towards increasing the capacity of local authorities to align Local Sustainable Development Plans (LSDPs) with the Vision 2030 Jamaica/NDP and SDGs, the actual output was representative of the wider programme for localization, communications and promoting social responsibility. The Vision 2030 Jamaica "Parish Talk" Initiative, launched in 2016, was utilized as the main mechanism for engaging local authorities and the wider Jamaican society. The Vision 2030 Jamaica Secretariat led the activities with support from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Secretariat and the wider Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ).

The project funds were also used to support communications and social responsibility initiatives geared towards advancing the localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. This included the use of 10-second advertisements on 5 electronic display boards for 3 months. The ads promoted the alignment of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Three (3) ads were placed on large boards:

- one in the New Kingston area of the parish of Kingston and St Andrew where the capital city Kingston is located
- one on the Drax Hall Main Road, in the parish of St. Ann, which is a major thoroughfare and tourist attraction
- and the other in Sam Sharp Square, named after a national hero and located in the city centre of Montego Bay, Jamaica's second city and a major tourist attraction.

Two (2) ads were placed on smaller display boards known as "city lights" located in major commercial areas – the Transportation Centre, a landmark in Half-Way-Tree, Kingston and St Andrew; and an intersection in what is known as the golden triangle – one of the highest valued real estate areas in Jamaica. Also, the "My New Normal Competition", previously mentioned, was utilized to engage students in aligning their value of education and training and their adaptation to the "new normal" of the COVID-19 with advancing the achievement of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. There were 13 winners over two staging of the competition in 2020-2022 with each winner receiving a laptop or tablet in support of them achieving "World-Class Education and Training" / "Quality Education" outcomes.

Parish Talk 2019

"Parish Talk" aims to strengthen the localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica and SDGs through engaging stakeholders in capacity building, knowledge, and information sharing, and promoting 'ownership' around Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. Focus is given to supporting stakeholders in aligning local development planning with what it means for them to work towards and achieve "happiness, good health and sufficient wealth" with the principles, approaches and expected development results under Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. These objectives have been advanced through engaging a range of stakeholders across Jamaica in knowledge and information sharing and capacity building initiatives. The scope of Parish Talk is island wide and includes visits to all parishes to facilitate "on-the-ground" engagements with groups/ organizations and persons residing and/or otherwise operating in the parish. It is intended to be face-to-face, interactive and in the familiar, even personal spaces, of stakeholders. The main results-based strategic objectives are presented in the chart below.



Figure 98 PARISH TALK STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
SOURCE: PARISH TALK 2019 REPORT

Parish Talk 2019 was undertaken over July – December 2019 and included preliminary engagements and parish visits. The parish visits were completed from September to December 2019. It involved 1-day visits/events hosted in the 14 parishes and the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including elected local government representatives and staff of Municipal Corporations (local authorities); community and parish development committees and other community-focused/based organizations; regional and parish arms of social development organizations; educational institutions including basic schools and tertiary level institutions; parish libraries; fire-fighters; parish level chambers of commerce; and faith-based organizations.

Key stakeholders were engaged as follows:

- Consultation sessions with Municipal Corporations (MCs) to build knowledge and capacity to support the alignment of Local Sustainable Development Planning with Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs.
- Visits to Parish Libraries to engage staff and provide a copy of the “Plan Document” and copies of the Vision 2030 Jamaica “Popular Version” and “Citizens’ Guide to Understanding Vision 2030 Jamaica” for sharing with the general public.
- Discussions with representatives of chambers of commerce and other private sector partners around their roles in implementation and what Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs offer in support of business and economic development
- Dialogue around Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs with a range of development actors/partners, including Parish Development Committees (PDCs) and Community Development Committees (CDCs), schools, churches, civil society organizations (CSOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Information and knowledge sharing with the general public via a booth mounted in the town square or ‘Walk Throughs’.²⁰⁰

200 A Walk Through involves the team interacting with citizens in the immediate and surrounding areas such as parks, shops, markets as well as with pedestrians.

The highlights of each parish visit were shared on the Vision 2030 Jamaica social media platforms. These included notifications, photographs and 'Parish of Choice/Stakeholder Ownership' videos featuring stakeholders from the engagements with the MCs affirming their commitment to Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs.

There have been several direct and indirect outputs from the "Parish Talk 2019" engagements. A "Parish Talk 2019 Report" was prepared, and a published version completed and made available on the Vision 2030 Jamaica website in March 2022. The report describes parish engagements and presents main findings and observations, including from a post-consultation evaluation completed by participants in the sessions with the MCs. Also, based on the relationships established during "Parish Talk", the Vision 2030 Jamaica Secretariat was invited by two (2) MCs for the parish of St Thomas and the Portmore municipality to join committees steering the development of their Local Sustainable Development Plans (LSDP). The Secretariat supported both processes through to the preparation of draft LSDPs. Further information on Parish Talk is provided in the section on localization.

The approach to the development of a planned "How to Guide – Alignment of Local Sustainable Development Planning with Vision 2030 Jamaica" has evolved in response to lessons learned and a changing context informed by an on-going strategic review of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. The Vision 2030 Jamaica Secretariat has determined that critical activities such as the update of the Vision 2030 Jamaica Sector Plans that will be undertaken via a 7-month consultancy starting June 1, 2022, as well as completion of a process to strengthen the evidence- and results- based management frameworks of Vision 2030 Jamaica and integration of the SDGs and developing a cost estimation framework for the MTF should be completed prior to developing the Guide. Also, the "How to Guide" will be first developed as a Discussion Guide that will be finalized through consultation with key stakeholders such as the ministry with portfolio responsibility for local government and municipal corporations, and other partners in development focused on parish and community development. This is intended to promote maximum stakeholder input and ownership of the final product.

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/ Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/ Stakeholders
Outcome 1: Capacity to Monitor, Evaluate and Report on progress towards attainment of the SDGs and Goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica improved	Online Platform developed	Integrated Database – “JamData” Database	The “Jam Data” Database: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows for open access to an Integrated Database of Development Indicators and Time Series Data on the Indicators.• Comprises what is currently JamStats, EduStats and Child Protection Databases on the JamStats Website.	The “Jam Data” Database: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows for the monitoring of a range of key development indicators. These indicators are primarily socio-economic but also include indicators that cover the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability• Allows for the creation of Statistical Dashboards on Development Subject Areas and feeds data to the Vision 2030 Jamaica Monitoring Dashboard• Is the database for the Jam Data Mobile App	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stakeholders do not directly interface with the database• It is utilized by the PIOJ and partners to provide data for development monitoring and evaluation to support evidence- and results- based planning and implementation.

201 Sustainability/Legacy Outputs (in blue font)

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/Stakeholders
		Vision 2030 Jamaica Monitoring Dashboard	<p>The Vision 2030 Jamaica Monitoring Dashboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents the National Outcome Indicators, Baseline, Targets and Time Series Data to cover the period of Plan Implementation up to 2030 and the Baseline Year, 2007. • Shows performance against targets. • Includes Data Visualizations • Functionalities to support monitoring of performance based budgeting (being developed) 	<p>The Vision 2030 Jamaica Monitoring Dashboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for stakeholders to participate in the monitoring of performance regarding the Vision 2030 Jamaica 15 National Outcomes and 4 Goals and aligned SDGs • Supports government accountability • Supports the monitoring of development performance over time in support of assessments of sustainability • Supports the monitoring of inclusive development, "leaving no one behind" based on indicators of inclusion and disaggregation. • Supports Learning and Action by providing data to inform planning and the development of each Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF). The MTF presents the 3-year strategic policy framework for planning and programming to advance the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica towards the achievement of the National Goals and Outcomes and the SDGs. • It allows for the creation of graphs and charts as visualizations of development performance. • It serves as a proxy reporting mechanism and informs performance reporting on Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academia and students • International Development Partners (IDPs) • Free and Open Access

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/ Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/ Stakeholders
		Data/Statistical Dashboards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jam Data • Education Dashboard • Child Protection Dashboard • CRP Monitoring Dashboard²⁰² • Vision 2030 Jamaica • Local Development Dashboard (under construction)²⁰³ 	The Data/Statistical Dashboards consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jam Data Dashboard which features Key Facts on Jamaica and data/statistics on the economy, living standards and human development • Education Dashboard (PIO) in partnership with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information) • Child Protection Dashboard (PIO) in partnership with the Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA)) • CRP Monitoring Dashboard – presents data and statistics relevant to beneficiary communities under CRP. • Vision 2030 Jamaica Local Development Dashboard, which presents disaggregation of National Outcome Indicators by parish (phase one completed; production of disaggregated indicators and data input are ongoing) 	The Data/Statistical Dashboards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a centralized space for access to development indicators and time series data • Support the monitoring of key development indicators by stakeholders • Support the monitoring of inclusive development "leaving no one behind" by examining indicators with disaggregated data and local level development indicators. • Support Learning and Action in the M&E process. • Serve as proxy reporting mechanisms and inform reporting on development performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy makers and planners • Stakeholders in development including private sector, civil society • Local Development Actors • Academia and students • International Development Partners (IDPs) • Everyone • Free and Open Access

²⁰² Not official part of project but benefited – not funded under project²⁰³ Ibid

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/Stakeholders
		MetaData Hub	<p>The MetaData Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides information on the quality of the data that constitute the development indicators in the Integrated Database and are utilized for monitoring development performance. The MetaData includes descriptions on definition, method of computation, and data collection and source. Is still being populated and this will not be completed by launch date. There is metadata for some indicators. 	<p>The MetaData Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the application/ utilization and interpretation of indicators. Presents information on the quality of data, which supports assessments regarding use of the indicators, including limitations to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy makers and planners Stakeholders in development including private sector, civil society Local Development Actors Academia and students International Development Partners (IDPs) Everyone Free and Open Access
		Jam Data Mobile App	<p>The Jam Data Mobile App:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is an Open Access Source of Data Provides mobile access to the data on development indicators to support the monitoring of development performance Offers a range of data visualizations Can be used online and offline Is available free of cost in the Apple and Google Play Stores. 	<p>The Jam Data Mobile App:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides data to support the monitoring of development performance Allows for data on development indicators to be viewed through a range of visualizations Offers a range of data visualizations Allows for wider coverage and access to the data on development indicator offerings, owing to Jamaica's high level of mobile phone penetration and increasing public access to Wi-Fi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy makers and planners Stakeholders in development including private sector, civil society Local Development Actors Academia and students International Development Partners (IDPs) Everyone Free and Open Access

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/ Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/ Stakeholders
Outcome 2: Capacity to measure the contribution of international development partner support/ assistance towards the achievement of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs improved	External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS) developed (phase I)	External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database on project descriptions for external cooperation managed projects Functionalities for data input and warehousing System upgradeable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allows for improved coordination in management of projects Support greater efficiencies and effectiveness in aligning partner goals and objectives to relevant projects in support of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs Allows for easier teamwork including inter and cross team collaboration Restricted to those with permission to access – login/ password access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team/Staff – External Cooperation Management Division Approved stakeholders
Outcome 3: Increased capacity to utilize new and innovative financing mechanisms to advance the financing of the country's development priorities towards achieving the goals of Vision 2030 Jamaica and advancing the SDGs in Jamaica	Comprehensive Innovative Financing Analysis applicable to the Jamaican context, reflected in draft report	Draft Report entitled "Innovative Finance: Opportunities in the Jamaican Context"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Report details the findings of an analysis of the Innovative Finance ecosystem with focus on the Jamaican ecosystem and the opportunities available to Jamaica based on the local and global context. 	The Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the strengthening of Innovative Financing in Jamaica Provides an exploratory assessment of the ecosystem, opportunities, challenges, and models that are applicable in the Jamaican context. Draft to inform further analysis 	N/A

TABLE 36 MAIN OUTPUTS FROM PROJECT "ADVANCING THE SDGS THROUGH VISION 2030 JAMAICA"²⁰¹

Outcomes	Outputs	Tenets/ Components	Description	Utility/Function	Target Groups/ Stakeholders
Outcome 4: Increased Capacity of local authorities and municipalities to align Local Sustainable Development Plans with the National Development Plan and the SDGs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Increased knowledge of local authorities on the alignment of the Vision 2030 Jamaica and SDGs within their respective institutions and other corporate and operational processes ii. Increased awareness of key stakeholders on the SDGs and Vision 2030 Jamaica 	Report on Parish Talk 2019, including Workshop Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Report on Parish Talk 2019 presents a description of the activities and stakeholders engaged across the island and stakeholder views and perspectives on development and development needs. The Section of the Report that presents the findings of the Participant Evaluation of the Workshops with Municipal Corporations (MCs) provides insight on demand from local level stakeholders, including staff of the MCs and political representatives for capacity building support to align local sustainable development planning with Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Parish Talk 2019 Report will serve as a source of evidence on the outputs and lessons learned from stakeholder engagement in an island wide multi-faceted project activity geared towards the localization of Vision 2030 Jamaica 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy makers and planners • Development actors engaged in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation at the local level • Everyone • The document is available free of cost on the Vision 2030 Jamaica Website.

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