



UNITED NATIONS  
JAMAICA



# PARTNERSHIPS FOR PEACE, PLANET AND PROSPERITY

The 76th Anniversary  
Special Feature of the  
**United Nations in Jamaica**



## Shared commitment to national development priorities

It is my pleasure to extend warmest congratulations to the United Nations, in particular the UN Country Team here in Jamaica, as the Organisation commemorates its 76<sup>th</sup> year of existence.

Although our celebrations take place against the backdrop of a persistent and unrelenting pandemic that has aggravated longstanding challenges and created new ones, we can continue to rely on the United Nations' steady guidance and support. As it did decades ago, the Institution provides an essential and necessary platform for meaningful, collective action. It is fitting, therefore, that we are marking this anniversary under the theme, "Partnerships for Peace, Planet and Prosperity."

The United Nations can be proud of its contribution to the socio-economic advancement of communities across the globe, especially in developing countries like Jamaica. Indeed, our growth and development have been a function of the very solid partnership that we have sustained with the United Nations and its Specialised Agencies.

We are pleased that this relationship has manifested itself through the very tangible presence of the Organisation on the ground. With your assistance, we have been able to promote the education, well-being and development of our people. This could not have been realised without your shared commitment and determination to advance our national development priorities.

Your work, therefore, is not only valued but deeply appreciated by the Government and people of Jamaica. We know firsthand the benefit of this partnership and



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look forward to its deepening in the years to come. Together, we can ensure that we bequeath to this and succeeding generations a legacy of which we can all be proud.

**The Most Honourable  
Sir Patrick Allen, ON, GCMG, CD, KStJ**  
Governor-General of Jamaica

## UN critical to recovery efforts and building forward stronger

Seventy-six years ago, representatives from fifty (50) countries gathered in San Francisco with the resolve and determination to establish an organization that would facilitate dialogue and cooperation among its membership. At the core, was the desire to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, as well as to advance social progress and better standards of living for the peoples of the world. They were successful in their efforts and on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1945, the United Nations was established.

Despite the challenges and threats that the world has encountered, and with which it continues to grapple, the role and mandate of the United Nations remain as relevant now as they were in 1945. For many of us, the United Nations has been the citadel for the creation of international norms and legal frameworks that have underpinned the principles of multilateralism that characterize the Organization. It has been an important medium for us to engage as equals on issues that impact the well-being and existence of our citizens.

The pursuit of disarmament and human rights, in tandem with a development agenda that benefits all, has made the United Nations a steadfast partner and critical facilitator for many developing countries. No other institution can boast this legacy or claim this distinction. Without question, the growth in its membership from 51 founding members to 193 countries in 2021, attests to the strong belief in the United Nations' continued applicability and strength of purpose.

It is for these reasons, that the Institution will be critical to the recovery efforts in the post COVID-19 era, and of course to the mission of building forward stronger. In this regard, there is no question that the UN Country Team will be pivotal to this collective endeavour. I, therefore, welcome the opportunity to deepen our partnership with the Team, with whom we already have



*The United Nations has been the citadel for the creation of international norms and legal frameworks that have underpinned the principles of multilateralism that characterize the Organization.*

a longstanding relationship. We thank you for your invaluable service, and commit to the continued partnership, to promote equity, prosperity and justice for all.

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



# Forging a Better World for All

It is with great pleasure that I join leaders around the world in celebrating the United Nations' 76th Anniversary. Since its inception the UN has been instrumental in forging a better world for all, through maintaining international peace and security, protecting human rights, delivering humanitarian aid, supporting sustainable development and inspiring climate action. In each of these areas, the UN continues to play the critical role of mobilizing the global community in service of accomplishing mankind's collective goals. This is why we can celebrate UN Day in recognition of enactment of the UN Charter in 1945.

Throughout this week, the UN in Jamaica has acknowledged the selfless service of our essential and frontline workers who have led the way in navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated crises facing our nation and the world.

I join in recognising our local heroes, and express my thanks to all those, at home and abroad, who have given of their expertise, skills, resources and time to waging this war on the virus. I am especially delighted by the 'Light Jamaica Blue' campaign which seeks to visibly recognise the persistent work of our local heroes "to reduce, avert and recover from the impact of COVID-19".

I welcome the celebration of UN Partnership Week in Jamaica, encouraging even more meaningful cooperation among the private sector, civil society, youth and international organizations. It is especially important that as we strive to achieve Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, that we work together with all stakeholders playing their part.

Happy 76th Anniversary!

**Mr. Mark J. Golding, MP**  
Leader of the Opposition



*The UN in Jamaica has acknowledged the selfless service of our essential and frontline workers who have led the way in navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and its associated crises facing our nation and the world.*

# Delivering Results, Improving Lives, Together

Today, we mark a significant milestone as the United Nations celebrates 76 years since its establishment. The United Nations has truly been an invaluable partner to Jamaica, embodying the spirit of "Partnerships for peace, planet and prosperity".

Our collective endeavours with the United Nations, particularly through the 13 UN Agencies and Offices operating locally, have supported our developmental aspirations and have positively impacted the lives of our citizens. More particularly, working under the banner of "Delivering Results Together", we have worked jointly to improve the lives and livelihoods of Jamaicans across many areas including human rights, education, economic empowerment, health and climate change. We are, therefore, pleased to join the Resident Co-ordinator, Dr. Garry Conille and his team in celebrating their accomplishments and our positive outcomes.

Our strong relationship has taken on added significance in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and our efforts at recovery. The UN System has provided invaluable and tangible assistance to the country, during the most unprecedented and one of the most challenging occurrences in recent history. We are deeply grateful for that support and we look forward to strengthening this bond of friendly co-operation as we move towards achieving our goal of building stronger and better beyond the pandemic.

From another perspective, Jamaica's long tradition of advocacy, careful negotiation and balanced diplomacy as a member of the inter-governmental framework of the United Nations, has been a hallmark of our foreign policy since our political independence in 1962. My recent participation in High-Level Week activities of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly attests to the continued importance of the multilateral system in addressing issues of global interest and impact.

We re-affirm our will to work together to deliver results for all members of the global community, including for small



*We look forward to strengthening this bond of friendly co-operation as we move towards achieving our goal of building stronger and better beyond the pandemic.*

island developing countries such as Jamaica, for whom the universality of the United Nations bears special significance.

As we commemorate the 76th Anniversary of the United Nations, Jamaica re-iterates our unwavering commitment to the principles and objectives of multilateralism, and to doing our part to ensure that the Organisation lives up to the noble ideals of the Charter.

Happy 76th anniversary to the UN Family!

**Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

# Tribute to Jamaica's Frontline Healthcare Workers

The Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport joins with the United Nations to celebrate and honour our frontline healthcare workers and their contributions in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. We welcome and support the Light Jamaica Blue initiative, as the United Nations celebrates its 76th anniversary during the period when we celebrate our Heroes. Let us use the opportunity to reflect on the past year and a half since the advent of the pandemic, being mindful of the fact that many of our healthcare workers have made the ultimate sacrifice.



This nation and generations yet unborn will remain forever grateful.

Our frontline healthcare workers continue to meet the pandemic head-on, on a daily basis, in our clinics, hospitals, doctor's offices, even our pharmacies. They represent the best of us and our indomitable spirit.

Indeed, they continue that rich tradition of Jamaican nurse Mary Seacole. Mary first treated cholera patients in Panama in the 1850's, and like our frontline workers exposed herself, eventually catching a mild form of the disease. She later travelled to Balaklava in Crimea, where she established a hotel and hospice for soldiers engaged in the Crimean War. In

the true sense of the Hippocratic Oath, Mary Seacole tended to both Allied and enemy soldiers.

As Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport I salute and pay tribute to Jamaica's frontline healthcare workers, who continue to work selflessly in the fight against Covid-19. Let us always celebrate and honour them for their service.

**Hon. Olivia Grange, CD, MP**  
Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS**

# Ensuring Responsible Stewardship of International Seabed Resources

2021 marks not only the 76th Anniversary of the United Nations but also the start of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The Decade aims to foster scientific research and technological innovation in support of a more sustainable ocean. The objectives of the Decade are at the core of the International Seabed Authority (ISA)'s mandates, which are to promote and encourage the conduct of marine scientific research in the international seabed area (the "Area"), coordinate and disseminate the research and analysis when available and to facilitate participation of developing States in deep-sea exploration and research programmes.



As we celebrate the achievements of the United Nations and contemplate ways to achieve the objectives of the Decade of Ocean Science and those of Agenda 2030 over the next 10 years, ISA stands ready to work with partners, at national, regional and international levels. In particular, ISA will continue to steadfastly implement the mandate given to it by the 1982 United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea to ensure the sustainable and equitable management and stewardship of the mineral resource found in the Area.

Jamaica was instrumental in the evolution of the negotiations and the crafting of the Convention, which was signed by 119 countries in Montego Bay in December of 1982. Kingston was subsequently selected as the site for ISA's headquarters when the Convention came into force on 16 November 1994, becoming one of the few countries, and the first in the region, to host a major UN body. Today, 167 States as well as the European Union have become parties to the Convention and are therefore Members of ISA. In 2021, Jamaica became one of the 22 Member States sponsoring exploration activities in the Area.

Through ISA, access to the resources of the Area is assured to both developed and developing states, rich and poor, large and small. The data collected through exploration and marine scientific research expeditions is compiled with the aim of being shared broadly with all.

Seafloor minerals, which are yet to be mined in commercial quantities anywhere in the world, are the only example of a global resource that has been placed under international management by an international organization established exclusively for that purpose. For many countries, particularly the developing countries, the existence of ISA fulfils a long-held vision that the mineral wealth of the deep seabed should not be appropriated by a few technologically advanced countries but should be accessible to all countries, including the most disadvantaged ones. As such, the efforts of ISA to put in place an effective regulatory framework for deep-sea mining represent a unique experiment in international relations.

Let 2021 be the dawn of a new era of sustainable stewardship of the ocean and its resources, for the benefit of humanity as a whole.

**Michael W. Lodge**  
Secretary-General  
International Seabed Authority



# A Reinvigorated UN Partnership with Jamaica

For almost two years we've all been impacted by the most dangerous challenge our world has faced in our lifetime – COVID-19.

This pandemic has certainly highlighted the fragility of our health system and exacerbated deep inequalities including access to technology and a global financial and supply chain system that disadvantages hundreds of millions of people all over the world.

But the coronavirus pandemic has also reminded us of our common humanity.

As frontline workers led the charge against the lethal infection, racing around the globe, countless stories emerged of disparate communities joining together, of boundaries breaking down, and of strange bedfellows making common cause against the threat. Collaborative relationships built on mutual trust have accelerated and reached new levels of intimacy. Everything from mobilizing new resources, to filling the urgent need for vaccines, face masks, ventilators, screening tests, and of course getting services and information to the people in need, required governments, civil society organisations, the private sector and development partners to effectively work together. Where we



have been successful, it has been mainly because of community, national, regional and global level partnerships.

As we continue the path to recovery, it is going to be critical that this important lesson - the need for strong, enduring, reliable and productive partnerships - be embedded in our collective efforts to address future shocks and build back better.

This crisis presents critical opportunities to seize this moment of disruption and secure a collective future of prosperity, to redesign

our approach to resilience and to advance our collective agenda to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This will of course require that we continue to forge new and strengthen existing alliances. We at the UN are committed to this.

Jamaica has long understood this, and I applaud its leadership in calling for greater regional and global cooperation. I also commend the people and government of Jamaica for braving this pandemic with resilience and for many times setting a global example.

Over the past few years, it has been a privilege for the UN country team to work with key stakeholders in supporting programmes that help mitigate the impacts of climate change, promote digital inclusion and youth participation, explore innovative ways to diversify the economy, ensure that children can access learning, unlock the true potential of the blue and green economies, create private-sector opportunities, improve food security and agriculture productivity, prevent violence especially as it impacts families, women and girls and increase access to development financing – all while supporting national efforts to fight against the health and socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19.

Still, we realize that we need to do more.

And with the commitment of the UN SG, backed by member states, to continue the reforms, the new coordination instruments provided under the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2022-2026, will help us deepen our collaboration with communities, government and other key actors in Jamaica to find innovative ways to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

On this UN day, I would like to thank you, Jamaica, for being a proactive partner and for your commitment to sustainable and inclusive change.

Working together, we will emerge from the pandemic stronger, more agile, and better equipped to address the growing demands placed on all of us.

From the Secretary-General of the United Nations and your UN Country Team, Happy United Nations Day Jamaica!

**Dr. Garry Conille**

UN Resident Coordinator Jamaica, Bahamas, Bermuda, Turks and Caicos and The Cayman Islands

**DID YOU KNOW POLIO  
COULD BE THE SECOND  
HUMAN DISEASE TO EVER BE  
ERADICATED?**

**WORLD POLIO DAY**  
IS 24 OCTOBER [endpolio.org](http://endpolio.org) | [#endpolio](https://twitter.com/endpolio)



# UNICEF's Call for Support for Children Lost to Learning



**Mariko Kagoshima**  
Representative, UNICEF Jamaica

**unicef**   
for every child

*UNICEF has been calling on the government to intensify efforts to assess and provide targeted support for the 120,000 children who have been lost to learning.*

Since the closure of schools in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Jamaica, approximately 120,000 children, as reported by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI), have been disengaged from learning. Schools have had little or no regular contact with these students. These children who have been lost to learning represent almost 25 per cent of the enrolment in public primary and secondary schools.

UNICEF has been calling on the government to intensify efforts to assess and provide targeted support for the 120,000 children who have been lost to learning.

Damoie Byfield is a 17-year-old who is among the 120,000 children who have been lost to learning. He faces the triple threat of learning loss, the impact of COVID-19 and constant violence in his community. He is getting support through a UNICEF-funded programme operated by the Peace Management Initiative (PMI). The Behavioural Mentorship Programme, known on the ground as 'Save a Youth Life', is designed to help children who are caught up in gun violence and who have been excluded from school.

This is Damoie's account of his reality and how the UNICEF-supported programme has assisted him:

"The only thing I can do now is just babysit my sister since I'm not going to school. I don't have anything else to do. I prefer to babysit her then go out on the road and be around bad company.

She's teaching me a lot. She's smart – anything people say she'll understand and tell you. She might not tell you clearly, but I understand her. I love her.

If I don't carry her when I leave the house she bawls, but she needs to understand that things outside aren't right, and we have to stay in, because it's everywhere right now – the violence.

When violence is happening in the community it's hard for you to study and focus because you'll be sitting out by the door with your book recapping certain things and you hear a lot of shots start to fire, and that just replays in your brain.

I went to online classes for about two



**Damoie Byfield, age 17, together with his sister 'Chia' at home in the community of South Side, Kingston.**

© UNICEF/2021

weeks. I didn't have a device or anything to do the online classes – no WiFi, nothing. My mother met in a little accident where her hand was broken and they told her it would take two weeks to recover, so I used her phone.

But then my mother had to go back to work. She had to use her phone to do her business, so when she came home I couldn't get any time to do the school work. The work was just piling up. That's when I lost focus. I know that when it comes to tests I can do my schoolwork, but right now COVID-19 has just mashed up everything.

School is something that can occupy your time. School is a safe place to be in the daytime; for instance, police can't catch you on the road and ask you how you aren't in school, and you don't mix up in certain things.

My message to others is that if you get a chance to go back to school, just go to school and do your schoolwork. If you can have an education, and have subjects, then nobody can have anything over you.

Education is the key in everything, right now, and forever."



# Building Digital Skills for Distance Learning Among Teachers



**Saadia Sanchez-Vegas, PhD**, Director and Representative of the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Caribbean

*The rapid shift to distance education has opened our eyes to the power of digital learning – but it has also highlighted many challenges.*

The COVID-19 pandemic and consequent disruptions to schools continue to threaten decades of progress towards the right to Education in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 in the Caribbean. Data suggests that nearly 7 million students in 23 countries and 91,000 teachers have been affected by school closures.

As schools in Jamaica closed, teachers had to adapt quickly to blended and distance learning modalities. This was particularly challenging for those in areas with poor or no connectivity and limited access to devices. Even in contexts with adequate infrastructure and connectivity, many teaching professionals lacked the training and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills to design and facilitate quality learning from afar.

In January this year, in response to the significant needs of the education system in the Caribbean sub-region, UNESCO, Blackboard and the Caribbean Centre for Educational Planning (CCEP) at the University of the West Indies teamed up to launch the Education response to Covid-19: Distance Learning and Teacher Training Strategies in the Caribbean SIDS. With funding from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), this year-long project aims to strengthen the capacities of teachers and



school leaders on digital skills and blended learning solutions.

The goal is to train 10,000 teachers in the use of online education tools, resources and platforms. With the additional financial support from UNICEF Jamaica, more than 6000 Jamaican teachers have been able to register to the course to prepare themselves and others for the continuity of learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Haynese Carlyle, a primary school teacher in rural Jamaica, was among the first of three cohorts of the training programme. When schools closed last year, poor internet access and lack of means to communicate with her students made it challenging to deliver the curriculum as planned. In an interview with UNESCO, Carlyle said that she also found the traditional methods she used in the classroom, such as games and signing, to be less effective online. However, through the course, which she completed at her own pace, Carlyle learned how YouTube could be used as a teaching tool and how a combination of synchronous and asynchronous approaches could

benefit her students.

Ensuring that students with learning difficulties were included and engaged - something made more difficult by the lack of visual cues and in-person interaction - had been another key concern for Carlyle as she moved her lessons online. But she has now "learned methods on how to integrate inclusive teaching into the online environment [and] make personal videos to motivate [students]."

As intermittent lockdowns and school closures continue, distance

learning remains key to reaching millions of children in the Caribbean region and ensuring their right to education. It also looks set to play a greater role in the future of education in emergencies.

UNESCO commends the efforts of Jamaica's Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI) for its response to the unprecedented challenges to the education system during COVID-19, and remains committed to supporting Jamaica's education sector to ensure the right to education for all.







Domestic workers gather to advocate for labour rights.  
Credit: JHWU

# ILO Partnerships Tackle Labour Market Inequalities for a Sustainable, Inclusive and Resilient COVID-19 Recovery



**Dennis Zulu**  
Director, ILO Decent Work Team & Office for the Caribbean

For almost 60 years, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has collaborated with the Government of Jamaica (GOJ), employers' organizations, trade unions and others to foster socio-economic progress for workers and employers. Now, in the context of COVID-19, the specialized United Nations agency is building on that legacy for a human-centered recovery that leaves no one behind.

#### KEY NATIONAL PARTNERS:

- » Jamaica Household Workers' Union (JHWU)
- » Jamaica Employers' Federation (JEF)
- » Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS)
- » Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce (MIIC)
- » Ministry of Finance and Public Service (MoF&PS)
- » Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC)
- » Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)
- » University of the West Indies (UWI)
- » Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions (JCTU)

These three recent ILO partnerships are making a

difference.

## The Jamaica Formalization Project

#### AT A GLANCE:

- » The ILO estimates that 43 per cent of Jamaica's economy operates informally, leaving many people to face poverty without income security and social protection.
- » Informal workers and operators in household services, agriculture and fisheries are among the most at risk who have been hard hit by COVID-19 lockdowns.
- » The Project is a landmark ILO-funded partnership with multiple stakeholders including the MLSS, MIIC, JBDC and JHWU.
- » It aims to build the socio-economic resilience of hundreds of domestic workers, farmers and fisherfolk through entrepreneurship and skills training, and integration in official social protection systems.
- » Through legislative and policy development and capacity building of staff within partner Ministries, the project is also

facilitating the necessary frameworks for formalization in these largely informal sectors.

#### WHAT PARTNERS ARE SAYING:

*"The collaboration between the Jamaica Household Workers' Union and the ILO has been invaluable. Their practical support in developing a strong Business Plan and Curriculum for our soon to be launched Training Institute provides critical impetus as we seek to ultimately up skill our members as well the more than 58,000 household workers throughout Jamaica. This will enable household workers to advance their earning capacity and consequently take better care of their families. Practical partnership in action!"*

**Shirley Pryce OD, JP,**  
President, JHWU

*"Our 'Agriculture & Fisheries is Big Business' and 'Beyond Crop & Catch' campaigns seek to transform the mindsets and day-to-day operations of our farmers and fisherfolk so that they treat the industry as a business that requires them to think long-term. We are pleased to partner with the ILO through the Jamaica*

*Formalization Project, which connects with our campaigns to advance enterprise formalization and capacity development. Participants will benefit from training in business and product development as well as enterprise structuring for improvements in efficiency and effectiveness."*

**Harold Davis**  
Deputy CEO, JBDC

## Regional Initiative Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Child Labour

#### AT A GLANCE:

- » In 2015 Jamaica joined the ILO-supported Regional Initiative, which seeks to make Latin America and the Caribbean the first region in the world to eliminate child labour by 2025.
- » Through the Initiative, Jamaica is partnering with ILO and regional peers to improve national capacity in labour inspection with the aim of improving the enforcement of labour laws and contributing to the reduction and elimination of child labour.

CONTINUES ON PAGE 9





- » Jamaica has implemented the Child Labour Risk Identification Model (CLRISK) developed by ILO/ECLAC to further analyse and interpret national data on child labour in the country after high rates of child labour were found in 2016 Jamaica Youth Activity Survey.
- » School closures and increases in poverty caused by the COVID-19 health crisis are threatening to push more children into child labour across the region, including Jamaica.
- » Jamaica remains committed to fighting the effects and long-term impact of the pandemic on child labour and will continue to partner with the ILO to achieve the goal of SDG Target 8.7 by 2025.

**WHAT PARTNERS ARE SAYING:**

*“The Government of Jamaica has benefitted from ILO support to strengthen child labour enforcement mechanisms through labour inspection trainings and knowledge exchange during site visits, locally and internationally. We also hosted the Brazil-ILO South-South Cooperation Programme’s capacity building which included the participation of officials/colleagues from The Bahamas and Guyana.”*

**Sasha Deer-Gordon**  
Director, Child Labour, MLSS.

**Win-Win: Gender Equality Means Good Business Programme**

**AT A GLANCE:**

- » Women-owned businesses are vital to poverty reduction and economic growth in Jamaica however, they face many gender gaps in business development policies, financing and services that limit their success.
- » The European Union-funded Programme, implemented in Jamaica by the ILO and UN Women between 2018 and 2021, supported a partnership with UWI Mona and JEF to make a business case for gender equality so women can overcome barriers to starting and managing their own businesses.
- » They developed a framework for greater coordination between the private sector and Government to create women-friendly business development policies that will also address disparities worsened by the pandemic.

- » These results will help the economic empowerment of thousands of women and their families, support the goals and targets in Vision 2030 Jamaica, the MSME and Entrepreneurship Policy, the National Policy for Gender Equality and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

**WHAT PARTNERS ARE SAYING:**

*“The Jamaica Employers’ Federation is honoured to be a partner of the “Win-Win: Gender Equality Means Good*

*Business” Programme in Jamaica. Our sensitization programme is ongoing, through discussions and workshops, to ensure that the message “gender equality is good for business”, remains uppermost in participants’ minds. JEF commends the EU, ILO and UN Women, for this programme, and looks forward to further supporting the economic empowerment of women.”*

**Yvonne Davis,**  
Director, Workplace Solutions,  
Business Development and  
Consultancy Services, JEF



**ILO Project Coordinator Resel Melville with Trainers from the Ministry of Labour and National Institute for Inspection of Brazil (ENIT). Credit: MLSS**



**Win-Win: Gender Equality Means Good Business Programme public awareness poster. Credit: ILO**



**(R-L) 1st right, former Minister of Labour and Social Security, Honourable Lester Michael Henry, Left, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Mrs Colette Roberts Ridsen, right Director, Child Labour, MLSS, Mrs. Sasha Deer-Gordon shared a photo moment with winners of the 2020 Child Labour Essay Competition. Credit: MLSS**



# Key Milestones of the Spotlight Initiative to Date

## Meet the Spotlight Team



**Alicia Bowen-McCulskie**  
Programme Coordinator



**Sharon Lamonth**  
Monitoring and Evaluation



**Stefan Morris**  
Communications

### OUTCOME 1: Policy and Legislation

The Spotlight Initiative supported legislative reform for the following Acts to strengthen EVAWG, gender equality and non-discrimination that respond to the rights of women and girls.

- » Domestic Violence Act,
- » Sexual Offences Act,
- » Child Care and Protection Act,
- » Offence Against the Person Act,
- » The Sexual Harassment Bill

The programme also strengthened staff of human rights institutions and Civil Society Organizations in their understanding of laws around ending VAWG & to advocate

for legislative reform and policies on ending VAWG.

### OUTCOME 2: Institutional Strengthening

- » In collaboration with government agencies, the programme supported the development of National Strategies and Plans to prevent and respond to VAWG:
- » At the parish level the Clarendon and St Thomas Local Sustainable Development Plans were updated to incorporate VAWG strategies.
- » VAWG strategies were also integrated in national crime prevention programmes through a collaboration with the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF), that resulted in the inclusion of VAWG Prevention Strategies aimed at supporting the elimination of violence against women and girl in the Zones of Special Operations.
- » To support the sustainability of EVAWG interventions the University of the West Indies was engaged to integrate VAWG modules into pre-service training curriculum for medical students.

### OUTCOME 3: Prevention and Social Norms

- » To support change in attitudes and perception towards gender-based violence there is an emphasis in developing programmes for inclusion in education curricula to promote gender equitable norms and attitudes.
- » Training curriculum developed and teacher training initiated to deliver VAWG related content as part of the Health and Family Life Education Curriculum.
- » Teachers and administrators in eight target schools sensitized on VAWG

including support services.

- » Approximately 480 women, men, girls and boys participated in community-based activities to support gender equitable norms, attitudes and behaviours.
- » 470 women and girls who are victims of VAWG reached through tele support from Eve for Life and 400 teen mothers received counselling and learning support through the Women's Centre Foundation of Jamaica.

### OUTCOME 4: Essential Services

- » Approximately 200 women and girl survivors and their families, access support services through the helpline/crisis centre intervention in partnership with Woman Inc., and the opening of the first National Shelter (Northeast Region).
- » In collaboration with Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) 6 Domestic Violence Intervention Centres (DVICs) will be established. The DVIC will offer dispute resolution services, counselling and referral services for victims and perpetrators of violence.

### OUTCOME 5: Data Availability and Management

- » The Spotlight Initiative trained 37 key staff in National Statistical System on methods, approaches and ethical guidelines on the collection and analysis of VAWG prevalence data (17 government organizations participated).
- » Additionally, 12 CSOs and 2 Government organizations were trained on VAWG Administrative data.
- » The programme supported the

expansion of the Jamaica Injury Surveillance System (JISS) in training staff and providing resources for collection and analysis of VAWG at the Princess Margaret & Lionel Town hospitals.

### OUTCOME 6: Strengthening the Women's Movement

- » Cumulatively, small grants have aided over 240 women and members of key and vulnerable populations through technical and financial partnerships with 7 civil society organizations.
- » Mona Social Services (MSS)
- » Women's Empowerment for Change (WE Change)
- » Young Women/Men of Purpose (YWOP/ YMOP)
- » Jamaica Association for the Deaf (JAD)
- » Jamaica Household Workers' Union (JHWU)
- » Jamaican Network of Seropositives (JN+)
- » Stand Up for Jamaica

The Jamaica Association for the Deaf (JAD) grant supported GBV prevention workshops for women and girls who are deaf or hard of hearing: The interventions undertaken were:

GBV awareness sessions aim at building participants confidence to report incidents of GBV and access to victim support services.

Engaged first responders within the Deaf community and mainstream providers of victim support services to identify limitations that prevent Deaf and Hard of Hearing women and girls in accessing services and strategies for increasing accessibility for Deaf female victims.



**Spotlight Initiative**  
To eliminate violence against women and girls





# Supporting Survivors of Family Violence in Jamaica

Marie Allen\*, a 49-year-old mother of three, has been volunteering with Woman Inc. since she was 17. The Spotlight Initiative-supported, non-government organization (NGO) brings together volunteers from all walks of life who are dedicated to assisting survivors of gender-based violence (GBV).

Ms. Brown first heard about the organization through a friend who was experiencing violence at home.

"I realized that we have to do something about this [gender-based violence], because it has so many far-reaching consequences," says Ms. Brown. "I feel for people when they have [violent] situations."

Woman Inc. manages a crisis centre with a 24-hour hotline that provides remote counselling and information. They also connect survivors with police; justice, health, and sexual and reproductive services; material and financial aid; and safe accommodation in high-risk situations.

According to the Women's Health Survey (2016), more than one in four women in Jamaica aged 15 to 64 has experienced intimate physical and/or sexual violence in her lifetime. Of those, less than 40 per cent seek help. Lack of trust in the system, a lack of knowledge about their rights, fear and the normalization of violence can all discourage women and girls from contacting support services. This makes the work of organizations like Woman Inc. even more critical. In fact, Woman Inc. assisted over

*"I realized that we have to do something about gender-based violence. It has so many far-reaching consequences."*

**Leanna Brown\***,  
Woman Inc. volunteer

400 women between October 2020 and March 2021.

## A Universal Issue

When Ms. Brown began working with Woman Inc., she never imagined that she might be in the same situation as the women she assisted on the hotline - but that's exactly what happened. When her husband hit her during an argument, it was her work with Woman Inc. that gave her the courage to leave.

"[I thought,] If I let it slide, it might happen again and we are not going to let that happen," she says. "I went to my husband and said we can't do this, you need to go. I think if I were not more aware, I might have allowed it to slide and it would have happened again."

## The road to recovery

Serving women and girls throughout the pandemic means



**A woman collects a care package from Woman Inc., a voluntary NGO in Jamaica dedicated to helping survivors of violence against women and girls. Photo: Woman Inc. Jamaica.**

ensuring that survivors of violence can access to the services that they need, but also that they can become and stay financially independent from their abusers.

Marie Allen\*, a 40-year-old mother of two and a survivor of domestic violence, is one of more than 100 women who recently received a Spotlight Initiative bag from Woman Inc. containing hand

sanitizer, masks, soaps, sanitary pads and other essentials to get her through the pandemic. Woman Inc. has also ensured that Ms. Allen's daughter has the tools she needs to continue remote learning at school.

After meeting her ex-husband at the age of 14, Ms. Allen became pregnant with his child at 16 and they decided to marry when she

*"It wasn't easy for me [to leave] but I have some good people around to help me."*

**Marie Allen\***,  
Woman Inc. client

turned 18. That was when "all the abuse came down on me," she says.

It was difficult to leave him because her husband was the main financial provider. But she says that counselling, family and friends, her faith and assistance from organizations like Woman Inc. have helped her rise to the challenges. Today, she sees a bright future for herself and her children

"It wasn't easy for me but I have some good people around to help me, like Woman Inc., the Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA) and the Ministry of Labour. The counselling is the thing that helped me most of all," she says.

*The Spotlight Initiative has been working with Woman Inc., the Bureau of Gender Affairs, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other organizations to expand support and services to survivors of gender-based violence through a partnership that began in July 2020.*

*\*Names changed for anonymity*

## Commemorative Dates to Note

OCT 11	NOV 25	NOV 25 - to - DEC 10	DEC 3	DEC 10
International Day of the Girl Child	International Day to End Violence Against Women and Girls	16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence	United Nations International Day of Disabled Persons	Human Rights Day

# Responding to Violence against Women and Girls in Jamaica

## Mainstreaming Gender in the Health Sector

Despite the best efforts, the incidence of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) continues to skyrocket across the globe, including Jamaica. Partly to be blamed is the dark legacy of our colonizers' brutality deeply embedded in our culture which continues to drive our beliefs and attitudes, motivating acts of violence. Many have theorized that social tolerance to violence very often starts from childhood, misuse of corporal punishment, early exposure to violence in the family or through the media. Legislative progress has been made but VAWG remains widespread and widely accepted in Jamaica as indicated in the 2016 Women's Health Survey. Consider this, according to the Women's Health Survey 2016 Jamaica, among the women consulted there was a wide acceptance that a 'proper man' should be rough. It further states that 28% of women and girls consulted have experienced physical or sexual violence.

To reverse this trend, we need to collectively contribute to a society where VAWG is recognized as a human rights violation; based on power imbalance among the sexes and gender inequality. Mainstreaming gender, in particular violence against women and girls (VAWG), has gathered momentum over the last two decades with initiatives focusing on policy reforms, prevention, protection and legislation for sustainable change. Prioritizing VAWG is indeed integral to the region's commitment to the 1995 Beijing Platform Call for Action and central to Jamaica achieving its maternal health and gender Sustainable Development Goals.

VAWG has strong implications



**Cynthia Pitter,**  
**Lecturer - Nursing**  
**UWI, Faculty of Medical Sciences**

on the survivors physical and mental health, and on their control over their health, especially on the sexual and reproductive health. In 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that globally, 42% of women who had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hand of a partner had experienced injuries as a result. From the mental health point of view many consequences have also been studied, as an example, women experiencing intimate partner violence were twice as likely to experience depression and it is quite common among survivors to develop non communicable diseases (hypertension and cardiovascular disease) and somatoform disorders (such as irritable bowel, chronic pain, chronic pelvic pain). Accordingly, health facilities are often the first point of contact for survivors of VAWG. This makes it very important to have health providers on the frontline with the adequate preparation in providing proper care and safe referrals to

survivors disclosing their situation of VAWG. A proper and immediate response can be very important to prevent violence to escalate into femicides or attempt of suicide among the survivors. Therefore, mainstreaming gender in the education of healthcare providers, including higher learning, can contribute to reversing the negative attitudes and tolerance to violence in society.

### Preparing the Health Team

Health care providers are in a key position to see the effects of VAWG at the acute stage, as well as being witness to the chronic, long-lasting, often inter-generational, impact of violence on those directly affected as well as their families. However, lack of adequate preparation to identify and respond to abuse can do more harm than good; jeopardizing the survivor's safety. Strengthening the preparedness of our health professionals to respond in a timely and appropriate manner in any setting - from the primary or community level through to tertiary prevention in a hospital - is vital.

At The UWI Mona, the Faculty of Medical Sciences is the lead in preparing healthcare professionals including physicians and nurses. Graduates, as they become part of the health fraternity and on the frontline delivering quality care to the community, are expected to be aware of the needs and vulnerabilities of the population they serve.

What does 'quality' mean when training health professionals to deliver care? Over time the concept of quality has evolved

from a landscape that focused almost exclusively on the training of practitioners in using the biomedical model with emphasis on technical skills. Today, greater focus is on the relevance of graduates being a key component of positive health outcomes. In this regard, the service provided by the FMS and its graduates in addressing the needs of individual patients and the population subgroups is accepted as an essential value that contributes to quality of care.

In this vein, UWI Mona's Faculty of Medical Sciences (FMS) is collaborating with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), to implement a vital component of the Spotlight Initiative (SI). Funded by the European Union (EU), SI is a combined effort of global and local agencies to address the widespread levels of VAWG that is wreaking havoc on our Jamaican society.

The SI is providing the Faculty with a unique opportunity to address family violence, through the review of its current curriculum and the development of new materials to build the skills of our health professionals to better address three priority areas of vulnerability: child sexual abuse, Intimate Partner Violence and discrimination against vulnerable groups. Discrimination is a factor that very often leads to violence. This consideration and acceptance are supported by the World Health Organization and the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates, with social accountability as its framework.

### Social accountability

It is imperative that stakeholders contribute to this partnership in social accountability, make a difference on priority issues and help to promote meaningful change. This requires an appreciation of the underlying social and structural determinants that provide the framework for positive health outcomes, of which gender plays a critical role. We are preparing students to meet the health care needs of the population, but the outcomes and desired impact are not always achieved at a population level despite this best intent. The priority health concerns to be addressed as we train future practitioners should mirror the needs of the wider health system. These priorities therefore should be identified jointly by governments, healthcare organizations, health professionals, and key stakeholders including the public. The curricula in a socially accountable school must therefore be adaptable and responsive if true impact is to be achieved.

FMS and its partner organizations will be better able to mount a meaningful and relevant response to one of the debilitating health issues of our society, estimated recently to have a direct impact on some 28 percent of women in Jamaica. This is an important advancement as we move to become socially accountable to our students and more so to the broader population that these health teams will ultimately serve.

**Cynthia Pitter is a Lecturer of Nursing**

**The University of the West Indies, Faculty of Medical Sciences, The UWI School of Nursing, Mona.**

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# Cooperation and coordination based on universal values



**Her Excellency  
Marianne Van Steen**  
Ambassador of the European  
Union to Jamaica

The European Union (EU) joins in celebrating the 76<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations (UN) and its founding Charter. The EU and the UN have been and continue to be natural partners here in Jamaica and across the globe. It is becoming increasingly evident that individual nation states acting alone lack the capacity to effectively address new and ongoing crises and threats across the globe. Cooperation and coordination based on universal values and rules are needed to navigate the emerging risks and opportunities. That is why the EU has reaffirmed its commitment to multilateralism, with a strong UN system as the cornerstone.

Here in Jamaica, the EU and UN share a steady partnership. The 'One UN' approach in the implementation of programmes and projects by UN agencies speaks to complementarity, efficient use of resources as well as a keen focus on inclusivity and impact over the long term.

The EU is currently working in partnership with UN agencies, the Government of Jamaica and civil society groups through the Spotlight

Initiative to eliminate family violence in key parishes. We have earmarked 8 million euros or approximately 1.3 billion Jamaican dollars to tackle gender-based violence in a more systematic and sustainable way. We are pleased that thus far, a State-run shelter to accommodate women and children who are victims of gender-based violence is now operational. Additionally, Domestic Violence Intervention Centres have been established by the Spotlight Initiative through the Jamaica Constabulary Force.

The recent passage of the Sexual Harassment Bill in the Houses of Parliament is a step in the right direction for Jamaica's development. We are pleased that submissions from the United Nations Development Programme, under Spotlight, helped to shape this important piece of legislation. The EU looks forward to full implementation in due course. At the same time, the move to create a safer Jamaica for women and girls continues. The 2021 Spotlight Initiative Work Plan aims to support the establishment of more national shelters for survivors of abuse and improve how healthcare

workers, police officers, justice system personnel think about and respond to gender-based violence.

Another EU-UN partnership relates to a major food systems assessment that is taking shape in Jamaica, led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. A consultation workshop with relevant players was held in early September to think through the major challenges and opportunities for Jamaica's food system and cultivate a roadmap for what a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system should look like.

The EU and its Member States will continue to promote the value of and need for effective multilateralism, in a push to build a safer and more stable world. The COVID-19 pandemic presents a unique opportunity to redefine what partnership means, especially within the Jamaican context, as we strive for inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and work relentlessly towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.





# UNDP Supports Jamaica in Strengthening coordinated response

Jamaica is innovating a digital emergency response mechanism to coordinate and track multiple demands for financial support, goods and services across government and inflows of international and local assistance, in the event of emergencies like COVID 19.

Called the External Support Coordination Platform or the Emergency Response Coordination Platform (ERCP), the system aims to strengthen government's capacity to jointly assess needs and shortfalls and to effectively allocate resources where needed when emergencies arise. The pilot platform gives enough information to support a more efficient and effective coordinated response and has the potential to address emergencies across multiple sectors as well as coordination, research and technology.

The digital platform was developed by the Government of Jamaica with the support of the United Nations Development Programme Multi Country Office in Jamaica (UNDP) and is jointly



managed by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) in the current pilot phase. UNDP supported the government in developing the platform, populating the database and conducting training, under the oversight of a National Technical Working Group comprising key stakeholders.

The platform features a modular design which will enable Government to expand the bundle of emergency response services

provided and coordinated by Ministries, Departments and Agencies as needs arise or evolve.

Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade in welcoming the platform noted that the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for countries worldwide, including Small Island Developing States, which were already facing significant developmental challenges. "In Jamaica, it was

important to ensure effective coordination across government to most readily communicate, channel and account for the immense outpouring of external support from international partners. The creation of the External Support Coordination Platform, with the support of the UNDP, will certainly allow Jamaica to better respond to this and future national emergencies in a more coordinated, efficient and accountable way", she stated.

"UNDP is honoured to support Jamaica's "Rebuild Jamaica" COVID-19 response strategy, in particular its goal of leveraging digital technologies to play a catalytic role in crisis management and the improved delivery of essential public service and information", UNDP Resident Representative Denise E Antonio stated. She said the pandemic has shown that the strategic deployment of digital technologies within governments is crucial in fostering responsiveness and effectiveness in coordination and service delivery and in ensuring countries are fully prepared to

respond to crises while protecting their human development gains.

Dr. Wayne Henry, Director General of the Planning Institute of Jamaica said "the External Support Coordination Platform is an instrumental addition to the country's infrastructure for response to emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Jamaica looks forward to the full functioning of the system to enable a more coordinated approach to the matching of support from our International Development Partners to needs identified in crisis situations. The Government is deeply grateful to the UNDP for this very timely and critical support".

The UNDP-supported digital COVID-19 response strategy is aligned to Jamaica's three-year Medium-Term Socio-economic Policy Framework (2018 – 2021) that calls for the strengthening of a technological-driven society as a priority.

## Justice Comes to Town

If you couldn't afford legal advice prior to 2017, the options were clear: Book time with a lawyer at one of only three legal aid locations in Jamaica, and make sure to budget travel costs and hours of lost time.

Today, options are expanding because the distance to free legal services is shrinking. Trained lawyers are heading out to communities onboard a fleet of centrally cooled mobile buses fitted with customer service booths.

With support from the Government of Canada in 2020, the Government of Jamaica added two large retrofitted 'dragon' buses to its lone coaster unit previously purchased in 2017, establishing a fleet of three mobile units.

Onboard the Mobile Justice Units,



clients sit with legal officers in any of the four well-appointed offices, with overflows directed to makeshift spaces at fairs and other special events. Mishka Anderson, Legal Officer with the Legal Aid Council advises, "if you are charged with a criminal offence or detained, contact us and we will

CONTINUES ON PAGE 15



*By 2019, community visits went up 42%, and the number of individuals served went up some 30% to nearly 5,000*



# Justice Comes to Town

CONT'D FROM PAGE 14

provide an attorney for you”.

Spearheaded by the Legal Aid Council, the fleet has become a key tool for improving access to justice in Jamaica. Although legal aid has always been free, a 2007 Jamaican Justice System Reform Task Force Report flagged accessibility as a big challenge – pointing to complex and archaic procedures and language; too many barriers to accessing legal information, legal assistance and the courts; and strong perceptions of unequal treatment under the law.

Although still a work in progress, gaps related to legal assistance were closing prior to the addition of the two buses: In 2018, one unit visited 196 communities and

provided legal advice to 3823 persons. By 2019, community visits went up 42%, and the number of individuals served went up some 30% to nearly 5000, Legal Research and Records Officer, Chadwyck Clarke confirms.

The two new mobile units were introduced in January 2020, roughly two months ahead of COVID-19 lockdowns which severely curtailed outreach. Although the number of community visits and clients justifiably plunged in 2020, the two additional units were on track to increase access to legal assistance to persons in need. In 2020, the Legal Aid Council Team served more than 1500 persons across 112 communities. Up to the first 2 months of 2021, the units visited another 27 communities and served 242 individuals, Clarke reports.

“With three buses and a complement of two drivers and three legal officers, we are no longer limited to deployment of one bus. We can now simultaneously deploy two units, thus increasing the number of persons we reach”.

“It was very efficient, I felt that (the team) spoke to me on my level, the assistance was prompt and affordable,” says Dion Frazer, one of the clients who visited the unit to seek advice on a family matter.

Vivienne Allen who had an issue with a company was delighted when “the Legal Officer made the effort to make contact with the office and sorted out my matter right there and then.”

A client who preferred to remain anonymous said he sought the clinic to help him with

expungement of his criminal record, a popular service offered under specific circumstances. “I am very satisfied with the service. They even assisted with bringing the application to the Ministry of Justice for me. Very helpful.”

“The mobile unit went through my documents and helped me with how to go about sorting out my father’s land. They even referred me to another office that drafted the documents for me”, says another client who again preferred to remain anonymous. The positive reviews are not just anecdotal. 98.7% of clients were either very satisfied or satisfied with the mobile clinic service and 100% said they would recommend the service, according to exit surveys collated December 2020 to February 2021.

# The Water Harvesters

Farmers, householders and teachers in two Jamaican communities are testing the human security approach to securing a resilient future and are yielding promising results.

Taps, where you can find them, run dry in many parts of northern Clarendon, Jamaica. Here, amid miles and miles of green hilly land, small farms, schools and districts fight unrelenting battles with drought.

Forty-seven kilometers east, in the heart of the nation’s capital - residents of west Kingston inner cities face battles of another kind – crime.

Though distinct in profile and location, both communities share in common, the multiplier effects of youth unemployment, limited opportunities, climate change and Poverty.

What if parallel investments are made into a holistic package of interventions targeting major underlying insecurities facing these two vulnerable communities - In short, a human security approach?

A joint United Nations/Government of Jamaica project with support from the UN Human Security Trust Fund is now putting the human security approach to the test in two clusters of communities in Jamaica - by investing in water security, climate smart agriculture, community governance, social enterprises and small business support, under an innovative project designed to bolster human resilience.

Three years after the programme was



launched, the water security and climate smart farming components are yielding positive returns.

## Water Access multiplies positive impacts

Community water harvesting systems have been rehabilitated in the northern Clarendon districts of Mount Airy and Culloden serving a combined population of approximately 3,000, as well as at four primary schools serving hundreds of students and their teachers. In addition, 20 small farmers are

now in possession of brand-new water harvesting and irrigation equipment that is delivering water to crops, even when drought is unrelenting.

Community water harvesting systems are meticulously monitored and maintained by trained community members, also known as ‘chlorinators’, to ensure the water is cleared for household use.

## Harvests double on less land

The farm irrigation system is a gift which

is reversing crops losses due to extended drought declares Euxan Smith, farmer and president of the Mt Airy Farmers Group. “We are planting less but reaping more. I now plant half the area, but reap twice the amount, while harvesting more crops with more weight over a longer time with more weekly income”. He credits the drip system and sustainable agricultural methods passed on to farmers. “It was never like that before. Farmers are saying it’s the way to go, and that if we had more rainfall, we could reap another 200%”.

## We are now never without water

Principals like Davia Johnson Newman of Alston Primary and Infant School praised the intervention at recent handing over ceremonies. “As a result of the catchment system the school has not been without water since we resumed face to face teaching and learning” she reports. “We are now able to accommodate up to 6800 gallons of water. This is important to us, especially since we are now utilizing more water on a daily basis in our sanitization and cleaning efforts.

“Prior to this support we had a temporary hand-wash facility which was simply a bucket with a pipe attached. Today we are pleased to have a permanent facility for proper handwashing”.



# Nature and Livelihoods in Sweet Balance

*An award-winning community group's foray into beekeeping and agroforestry. A World Bee Day/ International Biological Diversity Day special*

In the hills above Trelawny, the award-winning Sawyers Local Forest Management Committee (LFMC) Benevolent Society in the Cockpit Country is combining beekeeping and agroforestry in a winning combination to reduce poverty and reverse biodiversity loss in this valuable region of Jamaica.

Their latest exploits come three years after being awarded the Forest Heroes Community-based organization award for the top LFMC group in 2018. Now they are partnering with the GEF Small Grants Programme implemented by the United Nations Development Programme to show that nature-based solutions to development make good sense.

Through a project designed to preserve natural resources while generating sustainable livelihoods in harmony with nature, Sawyers, with UNDP/GEF SGP support, is aiming to strike a balance between nature and livelihoods in the Cockpit Country which continues to be threatened by unsustainable practices. A report on drivers of land cover change says these practices are largely led by small-scale farmers cutting trees to make yam sticks and charcoal. But sustainable livelihood alternatives like beekeeping deploy nature's biodiversity warriors and pollinators to support income generating opportunities that are kind to the environment.

A USD \$118,000 grant from UNDP/GEF SGP matched by USD \$120,000 in cash, kind and sweat equity from Sawyers LFMC financed 60 hive boxes for 11 bee apiaries plus beekeeping training from RADA for nine persons in 2019. The grant also backed the conversion of a 40-foot container into a solarized office and facility with water harvesting infrastructure to extract and store honey and farming inputs; distributed seedlings and other inputs for 65 farmers; set up an automatic weather station; and reforested 13.5 hectares of



**Denise Antonio**  
Resident Representative  
UNDP

forest reserve with agroforestry crops for honeybees to feast on. This benefitted 20 farmers and the honeybee's plant-to-hive production line.

For the past two years, project development and implementation engaged more than 600 residents in and outside Sawyers and providing livelihood opportunities in farming and beekeeping for 230. As trained beekeeping teachers, Toussaint Brown, president of the Sawyers LGFMC and his eight peers in turn trained 15, bringing the cohort of trained beekeepers serving 11 apiary sites to 24. They are also training two other beekeepers in a neighbouring community, spreading the skills and opportunities further afield.

Two of the group's 11 apiaries are managed by Sawyers LFMC and the other nine by communities bordering Sawyers. They collectively supply honey, bee pollen and beeswax, and will trade under the group's Liquid Gold brand pending accreditation from the Bureau of Standards of Jamaica. Market data indicates beekeeping is an inroad to poverty reduction. Jamaica is forecast to earn JMD one billion from honey sales by Jamaica's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and a 23% return on investment according to Jamaica's trade and investment agency JAMPRO. Globally, honey's market size was valued USD \$9.21 billion in 2020 with a compounded annual growth rate of 8.2% according to a market



*Through a project designed to preserve natural resources while generating sustainable livelihoods in harmony with nature, Sawyers, with UNDP/GEF SGP support, is aiming to strike a balance between nature and livelihoods in the Cockpit Country which continues to be threatened by unsustainable practices.*

analysis report by Grand View Research.

Sawyers LFMC is determined to cut into this pie. "Last year we got 16 buckets of honey - one bucket holds 22 bottles of honey, and one bucket means JMD \$55,000 - a total of JMD\$ 800,000", Toussaint reveals. He says the project expanded on inputs previously received by another agency but added critical training and

equipment like a honey harvester to assure results. "Because of the GEF Small grant our knowledge base was expanded, and we learned more about harvesting of the honey. We were able not only to sell honey, but we were able to sell other by-products such as pollen and wax. We got 11 pounds of pollen and sold 53 pounds of wax for JMD \$2,500 per pound" he says.





# IOM – Partnerships to Manage Migration During the COVID-19 Pandemic

The work of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is deeply entrenched in the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits all of society. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programmes represent IOM's flagship mechanism for the meaningful repatriation of migrants. The effective governance of return migration is essential to comprehensive migration management, which is facilitated through collaboration amongst state and non-state actors at national and international levels.

For migrants who need to return home, but lack the means to do so, IOM's AVRR programmes are often the only solution to their plight. Beneficiaries of IOM's assistance include individuals whose application for asylum was rejected or withdrawn, stranded migrants, victims of trafficking, and other vulnerable groups, including unaccompanied migrant children, or those with health-related needs. AVRR support usually includes medical assessment, food and clothing, arrangements for travel and procurement of airline tickets/ payment for required transportation, accommodation, including meals, where necessary and an escort to accompany migrants, if required. Upon return, migrants are usually given assistance towards training or certification and/or start-up businesses, through which they are empowered to support themselves and their families, maintain their dignity and simultaneously contribute positively to society.

The widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global human mobility due to travel restrictions, border closures and lockdown measures to curb the spread of the virus left migrants stranded across the world. Consequentially, many migrants have encountered significant challenges and have reached out to IOM for support. Here is a story of a vulnerable Jamaican migrant who recently benefitted from one of IOM's AVRR programmes:



**Keisha Livermore**  
Head of Office, IOM Kingston

Ronica\*, a young migrant woman from Jamaica, had been a kindergarten teacher in China until she started experiencing mental health problems and was hospitalised. She lost her job leaving her with no option but to return home to Jamaica. Her illness was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, rendering her incapable of travelling the long route back to Jamaica unescorted. Therefore, the Jamaican Government sought IOM's expert assistance.



In addition to Ronica's high vulnerability, organizing her return was extremely complex for several reasons, including ongoing flight disruptions, exorbitant costs for the available flights, remoteness of her location, existing quarantine measures which restricted movement of IOM staff from one province to another, and the requirement of transit visas.

It was necessary to assess Ronica's situation and ensure that she was in stable medical condition to travel safely, as well as to ensure the continuation of treatment upon return. Considering long flights and the COVID-19 context, special medical escort was necessary. With the support of the Jamaican Government, a suitable escort was identified. Unfortunately, at the last



moment, this escort secured a job opportunity and had to remain in China.

Given that there were no Jamaican nationals available to

assist with this return, the search was extended to possible escorts from the Caribbean. Fortunately, a recent medical school graduate from Belize who was preparing to return home agreed to assume this role. The escort was given direct contact with IOM's designated medical experts, in case of any emergencies.

At the time, the only option for return to Jamaica was through Canada. However, during the pandemic, Canada introduced new regulations for transit passengers. IOM liaised with the Canadian Government, and through their generosity, transit visas were granted.

This movement was successful also due to support from IOM staff and Government representatives in Mexico and Belize.

In October 2020, following months of intensive preparation, Ronica\*, accompanied by the escort, finally arrived home. As committed, IOM continued to ensure that she received adequate health care and other necessary support.

*\*Name changed for anonymity*





**Tonni Brodber**  
Representative, UN Women  
Multi Country Office –  
Caribbean



*The COVID-19 pandemic has been a profound shock to the Jamaican society and economy. There is no question that while health workers have been on the frontlines responding to COVID-19, the impact has been felt across all walks of society. While everyone is facing unprecedented challenges, the crisis has laid bare and exacerbated the growing economic divide across socio-economic groups and has significantly impacted women.*



*Women have experienced notable issues regarding the availability and affordability of care, income loss and the increase vulnerabilities to gender based violence, deepening existing inequalities. In 2021, UN Women engaged our partners from both public and private sector and our developmental colleagues to address issues that challenge the peace, prosperity and this significant part of the planet, Jamaica.*



**Monique Long**  
Planning and Coordination  
Specialist, Jamaica



**Photo Credit: Urban Development Corporation**

## Jamaican Women Craft Vendors get Business Support to Enhance Resiliency



**Photo Credit: Urban Development Corporation**

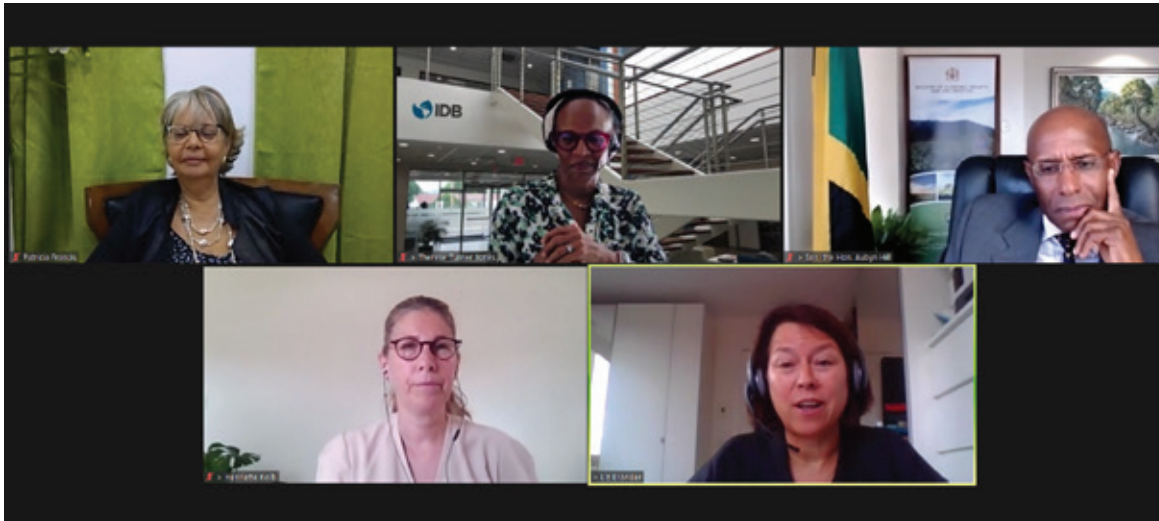
Under the Enabling, Gender Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience (EnGenDER) Project and through a broader partnership with the UDC, UN Women distributed cash subventions to provide a temporary safety net to the vendors. Global Affairs Canada readily agreed to the repurposing of the EnGenDER funds for the subventions, to support the most vulnerable in response to the economic disruptions caused by COVID-19.

The subventions were presented to 393 women craft vendors operating under lease arrangements across the six (6) craft markets managed by the UDC.

Ms Clare Bruce, a craft trader from the Pineapple Craft Market in the tourist town of Ocho Rios said: "It was devastating because we just had to go home, relying on whatever resources we had. So that meant if we had a little savings then that is what we lived on and just kept hoping for the best. We were excited to be receiving the grant which came just in time. The traders were grateful that somebody remembered us in craft."

**The EnGenDER Project is funded by Global Affairs Canada and UK FCDO, with joint implementation led by UNDP, UN Women, World Food Programme and Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency.**





## ‘Win-Win Webinar Promotes Gender Equality

Rebuilding Jamaica’s Economy with a Gender Lens was the core reminder of the “Win-Win: Building Back Better!” Webinar Series held in June 2021 under the “Win-Win: Gender Equality Means Good Business” programme, which concluded this year. The UN Women, European Union (EU) and International Labour Organization (ILO) programme was created to promote gender equality through the private sector.

We know it has to be all-hands-on deck to achieve gender equality in Jamaica.

## Jamaican CSO Champions Fight Against GBV Towards LBT Women

With mounting anxiety around the pandemic and increased stress leading to an increase in the incidence of family violence, women were reaching out to WE-Change for counselling and psychological support services. However, without the necessary resources to handle the magnitude of the incoming calls, the WE-Change team was unable to adequately support

victims/survivors of family violence and discrimination. As one of the civil society organisations working under Pillar six (6) of the Spotlight Initiative, WE-Change through the award of a small grant were able to acquire essential resources such as laptops and sound recorders to effectively document incidences of GBV and strengthen their response to victims

WE-Change is a community-based advocacy organisation established in 2015 out of a need to strengthen the women’s movement in Jamaica and advocate for all women, including lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) women.

With the support of Small Grants from the EU-Spotlight Initiative, seven (7) civil society

organizations that target women, men, girls and boys, including marginalized groups such as persons living with HIV, persons with disabilities and the LGBT community, have received support for capacity building to address current organizational challenges and to scale up the work that they are doing within their communities.



UN Women Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Maria-Noel Vaeza, Hon Olivia Grange, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport and UN Women Multi Country Office -Caribbean Representative, Tonni Brodber stand in solidarity towards achieving gender equality in Jamaica.

UN Women Photo: Dorian Clarke



Kingston Creative Executive Director, Andrea Dempster Chung and UN Women Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, Maria-Noel Vaeza tour the Water Lane Mural Project

UN Women Photo: Dorian Clarke





**Mayor of Kingston, Senator Councillor Delroy Williams walks with the UNAIDS Jamaica team, appreciating ongoing efforts by the KSAMC to revitalize Downtown.**  
Credit: Kingston and Saint Andrew Municipal Corporation.

# Creating Stigma-free Spaces in Kingston

The Fast-Track Cities initiative is a global partnership between cities and municipalities around the world, and the International Association of Providers of AIDS Care (IAPAC) and UNAIDS, to Fast-Track the global targets to end AIDS as a public health concern by 2030. The City of Kingston is one of the cities that participates in this partnership.

The ongoing collaboration between UNAIDS and the Kingston and Saint Andrew Municipal Corporation (KSAMC) has produced several contributions to the national HIV response, including but not limited to the development of a city situational analysis and an online epidemiological profile, which are important instruments that inform the design of HIV-related interventions in Kingston and Saint Andrew.

However, all forms of HIV-related stigma and discrimination continue to pose substantial challenges to people's access to HIV prevention and treatment services and have a profoundly negative impact on the achievement of the national HIV targets. For example, when a person is living with HIV and is on treatment, it lowers the viral load in their blood, making HIV undetectable, at which stage HIV cannot be transmitted to other persons. However, a third of people living with HIV surveyed in 2019 in Jamaica reported experiencing stigma and discrimination due to their HIV status.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the survey found that 38% of people living with HIV delay testing because they fear how others would treat them, and 29% delayed treatment as a result.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, according to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), "failure to make any progress on HIV-related stigma and discrimination [globally] would



undermine efforts to reach the HIV testing, treatment and viral suppression targets, resulting in an additional 440 000 AIDS-related deaths between 2020 and 2030, and that failure to make any progress across all societal enablers would undermine efforts to reach HIV prevention targets, resulting in 2.6 million additional new HIV infections over the same period."<sup>3</sup>

According to His Worship the Mayor of Kingston, Senator Councillor Delroy Williams, "a key component in reducing new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths is reducing and eliminating the stigma and discrimination associated with getting tested for HIV and knowing your HIV status."<sup>4</sup>

To tackle stigma and discrimination against persons living with HIV in Kingston, a partnership between UNAIDS, the Jamaican Network of Seropositives (JN+), and the Kingston and Saint Andrew Municipal Corporation, have decided to work together to create *Stigma-Free Spaces*.

A Stigma-Free Space will be a public space of gathering, entertainment, business, or worship where:

People strive to ensure that stigma and discrimination against persons living with HIV does not occur.

People are sensitized to prevent and identify stigma and discrimination.

Managers are committed and act to transform or sustain these spaces as enabling environments that respect, protect and promote human rights.

Persons can easily access information to increase awareness about stigma and discrimination, and about available channels to access redress, if necessary.

The process to create these spaces include performing situation assessments, review of internal workplace policies, development, and dissemination of public declarations of commitment to end stigma and discrimination, training and sensitization of staff, managers, service users and the public who visit these spaces, and a certification declaring the space free from stigma.

As part of this effort, the office of the Kingston and Saint Andrew Municipal Corporation is committed to becoming the first Stigma Free Space in Kingston, and to encourage other entities to participate until the entire City of Kingston is freed from stigma and discrimination.

These efforts are critical to improve health outcomes amongst people most affected by HIV, and in line with the *Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Ending inequalities and getting on track to end AIDS by 2030*, recently adopted by all Member States, including Jamaica, at the United Nations General Assembly in June 2021. In this Declaration, all Member States committed to eliminating HIV-related stigma and discrimination and to respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV (...).<sup>5</sup>

1 Stigma Index 2.0. 2020.

2 Ibid.

3 <https://www.unaids.org/en/story-type/update#:~:text=The%20analysis%20suggests%20that%20failure,make%20any%20progress%20across%20all>

4 <https://www.fast-trackcities.org/cities/kingston>

5 [https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media\\_asset/2021\\_political-declaration-on-hiv-and-aids\\_en.pdf](https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/2021_political-declaration-on-hiv-and-aids_en.pdf)



# Partnerships, the keys for protecting and preserving the planet

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Caribbean Sub-Regional Office is based in Jamaica and acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote protection for the Caribbean environment and sustainable development. Since 2016, we have been working with Jamaica and other countries in the Caribbean to assist governments and regional institutions in meeting their environmental needs and achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

For UNEP's work in Jamaica, partnerships with local communities, businesses and academic institutions are all vital to ensure that environmental issues are tackled appropriately.

## The Net Zero Energy Building Project

UNEP partnered with the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) at The University of the West Indies (UWI) to deliver the Caribbean's first net zero energy building. The building hosts the Centre for Advanced Research in Renewable Energy and is a prototype to show best practices in energy efficiency, renewable energy and environmental design.

Net zero energy means that the building produces about as much renewable energy as it requires to function. In addition to being net zero in relation to energy, the centre also consumes less water than the average building. Designed to also be an emergency shelter, it is adapted to local climatic conditions and built to have greater resilience to extreme weather events such as flooding, hurricanes, and drought, as well as earthquakes.

Our partnership with UWI on this project placed innovation and research at the centre of our work in climate change mitigation and adaptation. A key aim for this partnership was to foster research



**Vincent Sweeney,**  
Head, Caribbean Sub-Regional Office United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)



on practical solutions to transform building policies and practices. It is hoped that the solutions gained from this building and the research done there will encourage sustainability and energy efficiency in future construction.

## GEF-IWEco National Sub-Project in Jamaica

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) IWEco Project is working with the community in the Negril Environmental Protection Area (EPA), to support biodiversity and ecosystems of the area. A key objective of the IWEco Sub-Project in Jamaica is to support the capacity of the Negril EPA community to observe and protect their environment together with the local government.

As part of this sub-project, the Negril area Environmental Protection Trust (NEPT) has received a GEF grant under

the Sub-Project and has been engaging and training farmers in Negril on topics related to climate-smart farming and alternative livelihood programmes using best environmental practices.

To date, 141 farmers from seven different community groups within the Negril EPA have been engaged in hands on training from the Rural Agriculture Development Authority (RADA) and Hardware & Lumber (H&L) Agro, one of two operating divisions of H&L, which is Jamaica's largest wholesaler of building materials and agricultural equipment. Farmers have also received vegetable seeds to augment their livelihoods.

## Plastic Waste Minimisation Project

The Plastic Waste Minimisation Project (PWMP) aimed to strengthen Jamaica's waste management capacity and reduce the accumulation of plastic marine litter. A key component for this project was engagement with the private sector, to encourage more sustainable practices among businesses and communities alike.

During the project, the Plastic Waste Management Virtual



**RADA officer conducting training on the use of the A-frame in contour farming.**  
Photo: UNEP/IWEco Project



**The Centre for Advanced Research in Renewable Energy at the University of the West Indies.**

Conference engaged civil society, the private sector and the general public in educating on sustainable business models that minimize plastic waste. The project also established the National Green Business Certification Programme of Jamaica, which helps businesses to learn and implement best practices in the area of environmental stewardship, while promoting environmentally friendly practices.

Community involvement was key in the PWMP. As part of the project,

the Rae Town Plastic Recycling Project was initiated, which encouraged Rae Town residents to participate in clean-up activities and trained environmental wardens to prevent improper waste management. The Eco-Rewards Plastic Recycling Pilot was also launched in Lee's Food Fair in Kingston and encouraged customers to bring their plastic to be recycled for eco-reward points. The Pilot programme collected over a thousand pounds of plastic waste within the first weeks of implementation.



**The Eco-Rewards Plastic Recycling Pilot launched in Lee's Food Fair in Kingston.**





**PPE Delivery:**  
The team at the PAHO/WHO Jamaica Country Office delivers vital Personal Protective Equipment to assist frontline workers

# Enabling development of Resilient Health Systems

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents a broad opportunity for the 'five P's': people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. In particular, the health-oriented Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 3) seeks to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for people at all ages. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) / World Health Organization (WHO) serves as connecting and coordinating entities to achieve this goal.



**Ian Stein**  
PAHO/WHO Representative  
Jamaica, Bermuda and The  
Cayman Islands

PAHO/WHO lays the groundwork for action across diverse sectors whose activities have significant effects on health, and the Organization's technical cooperation work is guided by its Country Cooperation Strategy (2017–2022). Similarly, governments, the private sector, civil society, other international organizations, and collaborating partners follow their corresponding strategies and will continue to innovate and adapt to meet a broader and multifaceted vision of health and development.

## People & The Pandemic Response

COVID-19 exposed new vulnerabilities within the health sector and but also revealed opportunities to bolster health systems. The challenges through 2020/2021 required the PAHO/WHO Country Office in Jamaica to leverage well established

relationships to provide effective technical guidance and capacity-building to support national health responses. Together with government collaboration and leadership, key highlights include:

- » Laboratory training to introduce molecular detection capacity for diagnosis of COVID-19 at Jamaica's National Influenza Centre and National Public Health Laboratory.
- » Training of 20,000 healthcare workers and related frontline workers in areas such as surveillance, infection prevention and control, laboratory capacity strengthening clinical management.
- » Collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Education to train health and education officers to implement the Mental



Health Literacy in Schools programme island wide.

## Partnership

Partnerships are critical to achieving health gains. In this context, key highlights include:

- » Strengthening the information system for health (IS4H) to ensure collection of and access to the data required to inform decision-making processes at the different levels of the health systems, including policymakers, healthcare managers, health professionals, and patients.
- » Supporting the Ministry of Health and Wellness' Tobacco Control Team regarding the preparation of its comprehensive tobacco control legislation, the proposed Tobacco Control Act, 2020.
- » Supporting the National Public Health Laboratory through the donation of key equipment as part of the End Tuberculosis Strategy.

## Looking Ahead

Consistently across the Americas, PAHO recommends that public expenditure on health should reach 6% of gross domestic

product. However, based on recent statistics, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean spend an average of 3.7% - less than that which is considered to be required to ensure quality, timely health care for all.

In September, leaders from PAHO and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

(ECLAC) discussed necessary regional actions to strengthen the health, social and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In this context, the future of health in the region offers opportunities for a transformative recovery, emphasizing the investment in sustainability and equality.





# Jamaica, a Steadfast Partner for Advancing Equal Rights and Protections

I am pleased to bring greetings on behalf of the United Nations Population Fund in the Caribbean on this occasion of UN Day 2021. As United Nations (UN) Agencies we continue to collaborate with Governments and stakeholders to discuss common problems and find shared solutions that benefit all of humanity.

In its thrust to partner for prosperity, UNFPA has been able to work with the Jamaican Government, community service organizations, non-governmental organizations, our UN counterparts and other stakeholders to continue our mission towards achieving zero unmet need for family planning, zero maternal deaths and zero gender-based violence and harmful practices. UNFPA continues to support our stakeholders to help keep health systems functioning, maintain the provision of sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services, including SRH commodities, and prevent and respond to gender-based violence.

UNFPA also spearheaded an assessment of the reproductive health commodity security situation in Jamaica in 2020 to analyze RHCS maturity and identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities in each country. The assessment included an analysis of the impact of stock



**Alison Drayton**

Director, UNFPA Subregional Office of the Caribbean

outs of sexual and reproductive health commodities as a result of supply chain constraints during COVID-19.

UNFPA's work under the European Union funded Spotlight Initiative is another collaborative effort of which we are very proud. The Jamaica Spotlight Programme seeks to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, with a particular focus on domestic and family violence. Within this framework, we have been supporting the strengthening of national and sub-national institutions in the health, social services, police and justice sectors to deliver integrated, coordinated,



high quality, evidence-based and sustainable services to address family violence. Our support is in line with internationally recognized best practices in the Essential Services Package for Women and Girls Subject to Violence, and in alignment with the Jamaican legal framework. We have also contributed to increase awareness among women, girls and the public in general on how and where to report instances of violence and access critical health, police, social and justice services.

We have also been able to partner with UNICEF to address harmful attitudes, behaviours and social norms, particularly discriminatory gender norms and inequitable power relations between women and men, through coordinated work in the education sector.

In our bid to leave no one behind, UNFPA, UNAIDS, and TransWave Jamaica, collaborated to develop a five-year comprehensive transgender health strategy, the first of its kind in the English-speaking Caribbean. The strategy addresses health issues that are comprehensive in



scope, expanding the focus on transgender health beyond the confines of HIV. The document outlines the vision, priorities, and course of action for enhancing, maintaining and diversifying the provision of health care for all Jamaicans.

It has been almost two years since Jamaica documented its first case of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). We have been able to contribute towards managing a pandemic that can only be described as the largest global public health crisis in a century, with daunting health and socioeconomic challenges. Governments globally and in the Caribbean have been taking

unprecedented measures to limit the spread of the virus by disseminating vaccines and strengthening health systems, among others.

Our achievements have been many, however, there is still much more work to be done. We thank our stakeholders and partners who continue to work alongside us during this unprecedented time. Together we will endeavour to provide the well-needed support and services required to continue our mission to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.





# A Bold Vision for Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment, and a Better Life

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) places partnerships at the heart of our mission to provide nutritious food, build economies, and contribute to enhanced livelihood opportunities in an environmentally sustainable way.

During the UN Food Systems Summit in September, we heard the call for stronger synergies and more strategic partnerships across countries and entities to create more inclusive and resilient food systems that respect people and planet.

The COVID-19 pandemic has set us behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and created huge



## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

economic setbacks for countries of the Caribbean. Yet, it has challenged us to transform our agricultural food systems and to create more strategic and effective partnerships that can lead to even more sustainable development outcomes.

We recognize this UN Day with our UN family bearing these in mind and embracing the theme of

Partnerships for Peace, Planet and Prosperity, so that we can action the call from the Summit, recover from the pandemic and propel towards restabilizing the path to the sustainable development agenda.

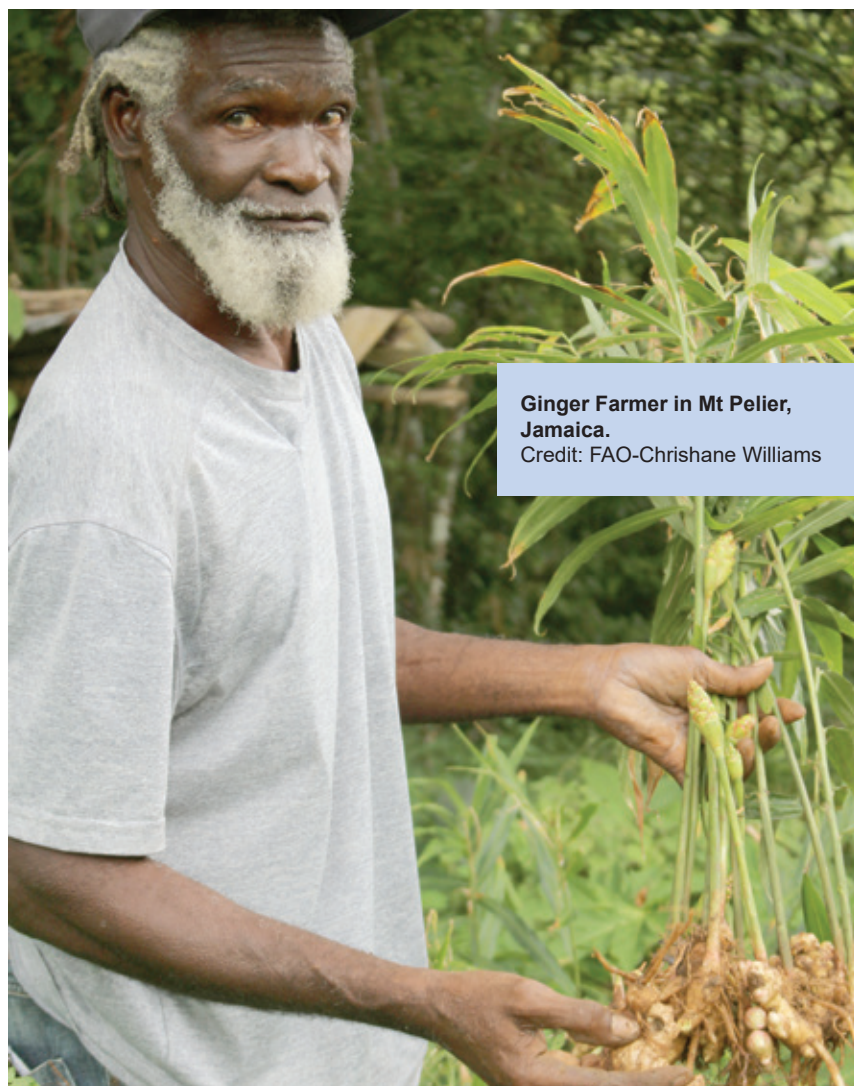
The building of resilient agricultural (agro)-industries is therefore timely. FAO has a bold vision to push for better production, better

nutrition, a better environment, and a better life. By supporting the development of a modern and profitable agriculture sector, cemented by strong partnerships and carrying a focus on building and revitalizing Jamaica's agro-industries, we can achieve these four betters.

FAO proudly reaffirms our commitment to the people and Government of Jamaica in building these industries in a manner that protects the planet and that will lead to prosperity as we work towards recovering from the pandemic. Our work on the ginger sector and the newly formalized turmeric sector is among some of the key agro-industries in this endeavour.



**Dr Crispim Moreira**  
FAO Representative for  
Jamaica, the Bahamas and  
Belize



**Ginger Farmer in Mt Pelier, Jamaica.**  
Credit: FAO-Chrishane Williams

## Growing Jamaica's Spice Rack using Public-Private Partnerships

### Good old Ginger

Jamaican ginger has a long renowned name on the international markets due to its pungency and potency. Yet, for years the market suffered from low production caused by the impacts of the Ginger Rhizome Rot Disease. The disease spread across the island and led to decreased yields, farmers pulling out of ginger production due to increased risks and inevitably huge financial losses.

Over the past four years, FAO has provided consistent and strong technical support to the Government of Jamaica in rebuilding its Ginger Industry by introducing a participatory approach to value chain development. The COVID-19 pandemic served as a litmus test for this highly collaborative and participatory approach and for managing the risks associated with the industry, and today continues to provide promising results.

FAO, supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority (JACRA),

delivered training in certification protocols, good agricultural practices, business planning, strategic industry planning and other areas over the past years. These trainings have fostered an environment for discussions and increased collaboration between the private and public sector, farmers, plant nursery operators, academia, exporters, processors and scientists and helped in creating a strong Public-Private Partnership (PPP).

As a result of this PPP and the application of this participatory approach to value chain development, the country is today on its way to addressing the Ginger Rhizome Rot Disease that plagued the island for decades. Additionally, the first batch of certified disease-free ginger ever produced in the country using tissue culture from public sector nurseries into the hands of six private sector nurseries has now been achieved. From here, farmers involved in the project will be connected to a secure market and be able to consistently produce

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certified ginger locally and on the global export market, thanks to significant private sector investment.

Behind this success is an example of an effective partnership and strong synergy among all actors in the value chain. It has also positioned Jamaica's ginger industry as a best practice in competitive and resilient value chain development for the entire Caribbean region.

The work of FAO and its partners on rebuilding the ginger sector has even had a catalytic effect on the country's agriculture sector and is now the blueprint for the development of other agro-industries, including Jamaica's first turmeric industry.

## Time for Turmeric

Spawned by the successes and lessons learnt from the ginger industry, Jamaica began its journey towards revitalizing the commercial production of turmeric at the onset of 2021. Although a sister root of ginger, turmeric is not affected by the rhizome rot and while mainly used for curry, it has grown in popularity for other uses such as tea, healthy juices, nutraceuticals and personal care products.

Jamaican turmeric, which was previously only grown wild, has similar growing properties to ginger. It is said that Jamaica's turmeric contains strong characteristics in flavour, colour and curcumin content and is highly suitable for the export market. However, with 90% of the dried turmeric



**Turmeric nursery.**  
Credit: FAO-Chrishane Williams

used in Jamaica being imported, the country is seeking to make the crop competitively available to local processors and to expand its exports.

FAO has thus embarked on this journey to support the Government in developing its first turmeric industry, in collaboration with

the Research and Development Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the Jamaica Agricultural Commodities Regulatory Authority (JACRA) and future partners.

The industry is being built using a participatory value chain development

approach. Through value chain assessments conducted by JACRA and FAO, and an industry business model that integrates the private sector has been developed to ensure that Jamaican turmeric can reap quantifiable benefits for the nation's farmers, processors and exporters. This business model relies on the production of turmeric plantlets that have applied Good Agricultural Practices that respect the environment.

The project is currently nearing the end of its pilot phase and has so far secured 14 turmeric farmers to commercially cultivate the crop for the first time on 22 acres of land, as well as contract farming arrangements for 8 pilot farmers, on over 15 acres of land with a well-known processor. With on-going requests from farmers and processors alike to join the initiative, there are plans for expansion and scale up in 2022.

The work carried out under the ginger and turmeric sectors is a clear indication that the collaborative process is the key to building strong industries and boosting sustainable agri- food systems. Our efforts under this initiative are therefore focused on transforming food systems to be more efficient, resilient and inclusive, whilst contributing directly to the SDGs.

FAO will continue within the collaborative spirit of the United Nations in delivering as one, and in working with our partners to ensure that Jamaica can continue to grow a sustainable and resilient agriculture sector that is economically sustainable and safeguards the environment for all.



**Cutting of turmeric buds.**  
Credit: FAO-Chrishane Williams



# Meeting needs and strengthening systems in response to COVID-19:

## WFP support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security

The World Food Programme (WFP) is supporting the Government of Jamaica to address the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable segments of the population. WFP provided technical expertise, in conjunction with the Jamaica Red Cross, to train staff from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to apply digital methods for data collection, verification and analysis of beneficiaries of assistance in meeting basic food needs. With a donation of 30 tablets and training to 174 social workers, WFP has assisted in creating a team of skilled people who can use digital tools for delivering support to vulnerable people. The training enabled the Ministry to operate its first island-wide tablet-based data collection with real-time monitoring. Through

a digitized record keeping process the government is able to better map where the greatest needs exist and respond more efficiently to the vulnerable.

The data collection was part of a larger effort providing food assistance to those most in need. Throughout June and July, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the World Food Programme provided food kits to more than 40,000 elderly and vulnerable people. The COVID-19 pandemic caused income losses and led to increased food insecurity across the country. A food security and livelihoods impact survey carried out by WFP in partnership with CARICOM examined how the pandemic was affecting food security in the region. In June 2020, the survey



**Regis Chapman**  
Representative and Country Director a.i.

found that in Jamaica 74% of respondents had experienced job loss or a decline in salaries in their households, and impacts have continued – impacting low-income



households the most.

WFP also provided logistics support to assist in coordinating the food distribution across 14 parishes, increasing the technical expertise of the Ministry's staff in warehousing, storage and inventory management. The food kits were delivered to homes or distributed at central locations within parishes. As these distributions were executed, WFP was able to extend its reach with local social impact organisations and response agencies. Distributions were facilitated

through the support of partners from the Office of Disaster Preparedness & Emergency Management (ODPEM); Food For the Poor; Jamaica Red Cross; Seventh Day Adventist Community along with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Through the collective effort people were able to access items to assist in reducing the impact of the pandemic on them and their families.

The World Food Programme continues to collaborate with the Government of Jamaica to strengthen the social protection system and mechanisms for responding to shocks, as part of the broader efforts of the UN system to ensure that no one is left behind in the face of COVID-19 and future shocks and disasters.

The World Food Programme has partnered with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and other local response agencies to support the national COVID-19 response.





UN Resident Coordinator in Jamaica, Dr. Garry Conille, and the UNDP Resident Representative in Jamaica, Ms. Denise E. Antonio, visited two programme sites in the region of Clarendon, with the objective of speaking with stakeholders and garnering the impact of this human security initiative on the lives of Jamaicans.



## The Human Security Trust Fund Joint Programme Strengthening human resilience in Northern Clarendon and West Kingston

The Programme entitled “Strengthening human resilience in Northern Clarendon and West Kingston” (HSTF Programme) has been under implementation in Northern Clarendon and West Kingston since 30 October 2017 and comes to a close on 31 December 2021 after a one-year period of extension. The Programme is funded primarily by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) with counterpart contributions from the Government of Jamaica and partner institutions and incorporates the Human Security Approach in its design, implementation and management.

Through a partnership between the Government of Jamaica, The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), The Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), UN Women and local community groups and partner agencies, the Project serves as a ‘one stop shop’ for the application of the Human Security Approach as a key means of enhancing the livelihoods of vulnerable community groups. The activities of the HSTF Programme are implemented according to targets and activities established under four (4) objectives namely; (1) strengthening of community

organizational capacity and cohesion; (2) enhancing economic, food and nutrition security; (3) improved environmental health and water security; and (4) strengthening institutional capacity to mainstream the Human Security Approach (HSA) to development. The Programme has been successful in achieving positive results under all objectives to the benefit of the targeted stakeholders.

### Objective I

**Under Objective I**, cumulatively the Programme has trained 31 persons in skills relevant to community leadership and management; conducted 4 community audits which provided valuable baseline data for further project implementation initiatives; contributed to the establishment and equipping (including provision of 181 tablets) of a virtual learning centre in West Kingston to enhance the online learning environment in response to closure of face to face schools as a result of the covid19 pandemic; trained in excess of 50 youths in areas relating to sustainable development and entrepreneurship. The training is equipping the beneficiaries to be better community managers as well as to enhance their earning potential as jobs seekers and or as entrepreneurs.



### Objective II

**For Objective II**, focuses on enhanced food and nutrition security. Thirty out of target of 10, on-farm water management systems were installed collaboratively with farmers, on individual farmers' plots. Each farmer was trained via the Farmer's Field School Methodology in areas covering, but not limited to; the operation and maintenance of water harvesting systems and small-scale irrigation systems; implementation of Good Agricultural Practices including Climate Smart Agriculture; Farm plot readiness, measurement and site suitability; Sustainability of programmes; Smart agricultural practices and expansion/scale up of current systems; Crop diversification led by market demand; capacity building through stakeholder collaboration; Integration of fertigation systems to existing

drip irrigation systems and self-actualisation and organisational development.

The infrastructural work and training had the effect of increasing agricultural output and income generation. The beneficiary farmers have reported increased yields and resilience from drought conditions as well as access to niche markets not previously available to them. The objective also facilitated the establishment of close linkages with public sector institutions such as the Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA), local NGOs and private sector firms which will contribute to sustainability of the results.

Food security was also enhanced through provision of support to the establishment of 350 backyard gardens in Clarendon as a contribution to The Backyard Gardens Programme (BYGP), a Government initiative spearheaded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, geared at boosting the country's food security and emphasizing the importance of eating local produce.

The HSTF Programme has also facilitated direct employment generation through the provision of grants under the Social

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Enterprise Initiative implemented through a partnership with the Jamaica 4-H Foundation. Following a study conducted by Dr K'adamawe K'nife, of the Office of Social Enterprise, University of the West Indies, the HSTF Programme partnered with the Jamaica 4-H Foundation to provide grants supported by training and mentoring to 7 Community Development Councils to establish viable social enterprises in keeping with their social and economic profiles. Ventures for which grants were provided include:- equipment rental; animal husbandry; bee keeping, agroforestry, upholstery and screen printing.

### Objective III

**Objective III** focuses on improved environmental health and water security. Under this objective, the HSTF Programme:- Formulated and handed over to Government, a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to support the National Water Sector Policy; conducted and disseminated a Gender Awareness Beneficiary Assessment (GABA) on gender dimensions in accessing piped water; provided, to GOJ, technical support to the revision of the Draft Industry Specific legislation for the Water Sector Policy; developed "Hello Rain, a new digital platform (see [www.hellorain.org](http://www.hellorain.org)) for rainwater harvesting which is being used as a training tool; rehabilitated 2 water harvesting systems to provide potable water to communities in Northern Clarendon, which lack access to water from the municipal source; and established water harvesting systems for sanitation at 4 schools in Northern Clarendon. Work continues at enhancing sanitation in schools and in the rehabilitation of selected health centres with a focus on water harvesting for sustainable and efficient water use.

The programme has also contributed to enhanced knowledge and skills at the community level, in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction,



to support the efforts of communities to prepare for climate-related events and disasters. Communities are better equipped to integrate climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in. to local economic development plans, and build resilience and reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change and natural hazards through participatory activities in key aspects of disaster risk reduction including:- Production and validation of community hazard and vulnerability maps; community planning and strategic meeting including plan development; of goods and services for the improvement of communities' capacities to respond to natural disasters; implementation of community emergency drills; preparation of community Climate Change and disaster Risk reduction Adaptation and management plans; and training in specialized areas for the communities. These activities are being implemented with active community participation, though a partnership with the CPDCBS, CMC and the KSAMC. even under conditions of inclement weather brought on by storms and restrictions in

movement and gatherings arising from the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Objective IV

For **Objective IV**, the focus has been on strengthening institutional capacity to mainstream the Human Security Approach (HSA) to development. The UN Joint Programme partnered with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) to mainstream the Human Security Approach in the Country Implementation Plan (CIP) and Country Programme Strategies of UN agencies; thirty-two (32) representatives from Government along with UN Agencies and community leaders from West Kingston and Northern Clarendon participated in a 2-day training course on The Human Security Approach during 2018. Some 25 participants of similar profile, benefited from a follow up virtual training session on 25 March 2021.

Under this objective the programme developed and executed a communication

strategy which is under implementation until programme completion. Key outputs of the HSTF Programme and related activities in Jamaica and overseas are constantly highlighted through the Programme's social media pages, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

As the first Human Security Joint Programme in Jamaica, the HSTF Programme with its pooled resources of agencies with different expertise complemented by the co-funding from the Government of Jamaica has created the opportunity for community members to work in close association with key government institutions. This collaboration has extended the benefits to stakeholders in the participating communities and provided the opportunity for government, civil society and the UN to work together on a common approach to development. Although the programme faced initial start-up and implementation difficulties compounded by the recent global pandemic, COVID-19 (since March 2020), the programme team has worked to mitigate the challenges. The linkages established through partnerships and the pooling of resources has extended the results and benefits through a catalytic multiplier effect and will contribute to the sustainability of the results and outcomes beyond the life of the programme. Some key partnerships established under the HSTF Programme are with:- The Social Development Commission; the Rural Agricultural Development Authority; the Clarendon Parish Development Committee Benevolent Society; the Clarendon Municipal Corporation; the Kingston and St Andrew Municipal Corporation; the Jamaica 4-H Foundation; the Fletchers Land Benevolent Society.

Of special significance is the fact that the HSTF Programme has demonstrated that 5 UN agencies with different roles, and structures including administrative and financial systems, can effectively work together to "deliver as one" for the benefit of their common stakeholders.

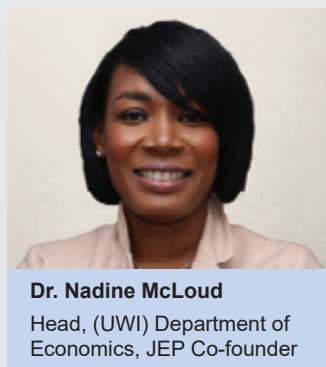




# Familiar Faces, New Partnerships

UWI Dept of Economics and United Nations partnership brings together economic and public policy experts in The Jamaican Economy Panel

The Jamaican Economy Panel (JEP) was established in 2021 as an innovative collaboration between the United Nations and The University of the West Indies (UWI) Department of Economics. JEP brings together experts from international institutions, academia, and the private sector to shed its light on a different topic every month. The panellists are invited to fill out a survey and to share their thoughts, which are then collated into a monthly publication.



**Dr. Nadine McLoud**  
Head, (UWI) Department of Economics, JEP Co-founder



**Dr. Olaf J. de Groot**  
Economist, UNRCO, JEP Co-founder



can and will be addressed at the JEP. The collective wisdom of such a diverse group of experts is able to pinpoint the most relevant emerging trends and thus to provide a useful amount

of relevant information. Possible topics include the challenge of obesity, the coming demographic crunch and what can be done to further stimulate the creative economy in Jamaica.

The topics attempt to align with current events and debates in the popular media or the publication of relevant new literature. For obvious reasons, much of the discussion has had to do with the different impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Some key findings

The field of economics is able to address a broad range of issue types: those relate to individual behaviour, public policy and questions about expected future developments. Looking at the first six reports shows that all these different elements have come back in one way or another.

Individual behaviour was most clearly addressed in July, when the panellists were asked about vaccine hesitancy. While acknowledging that vaccine choice is important, they endorsed pursuing an information campaign focused on low-information households as having the greatest potential.

Most of the issues addressed by the JEP have, nevertheless, addressed questions of public policy. For example, in May, the panellists were asked about debt policy and whether the goals for public debt, which have naturally been greatly impacted by the pandemic. In this case, the panellists concluded that, while

the Government was balancing debt reduction and other spending priorities adequately, the goal of achieving a debt-to-GDP ratio of 60% by 2027/28 may be overly ambitious. In September, responding to the publication of the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the panellists considered how carbon pricing could realistically be implemented in the Caribbean. The panellists agreed that the Caribbean could, and should, implement a carbon pricing regime, but drew attention to the importance of minimizing administrative costs and making sure that any associated price increases were compensated, especially for the poorest in society.

Looking at future developments, the very first Discussion (April) asked panellists when they expected Jamaica to reach its pre-pandemic level of GDP per capita, with a consensus forming around 2024. In June, in response to the publication of the Sustainable Development Report for 2021, which showed that progress on the SDGs continues to lag, the panellists endorsed the importance of the SDGs, but highlighted that a people-focus would be key to achieve long-term sustainable development.

## What is next?

The October Discussion explores the Green Recovery. Other topics



*JEP discussions bring to light some of the key tradeoffs on topical issues in public policy that need to be addressed to help bring a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery.*

**Therese Turner-Jones**  
IDB General Manager Country Caribbean Group and Jamaica Country Representative



*The JEP is an interesting way of bringing together voices from different sectors: academia, private sector, international organizations and forms the basis of great partnership.*

**Dr. Andre Haughton**  
Senior Lecturer, UWI, Mona



*The inclusion of voices from the private sector add value to discussions of the types of public policy issues addressed in the JEP Discussions.*

**Keith Collister,**  
Financial analyst and Observer columnist



**Spotlight Initiative**  
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September 2021

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By Ricardo Brown

**Building Community Change  
Champions for GBV, One  
Community at a Time**

By Stefan Morris

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# Spotlight

in Jamaica



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