



Gender Action Plan III – 2021-2025

Country Level Implementation Plan (CLIP) for Jamaica

1. Context for EU action gender equality and women’s empowerment in Jamaica

The Jamaican Constitution (1962) remains the cornerstone of the island’s legal system and institutions as it guarantees the freedom, rights and privileges of every Jamaican citizen. Inhumane treatment and racial, sexual, or political discrimination are forbidden under the Constitution. Jamaican women are entitled to equal pay as men for the same work under the 1975 Employment Act. Jamaica is a signatory to seven of nine international conventions that relate to gender equality. In addition, the country is a signatory to the Convention of Belem do Para - Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women.

Jamaica has passed local legislation and ratified conventions that, when effectively enforced, complement the rights protections offered by the international conventions. The National Policy on Gender Equality (2011), which is currently being revised, frames Jamaica’s gender equality efforts with its guiding principles being social justice, human rights, equality and equity, good governance, accountability, transparency and participation. The National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-based Violence (2017) is a ten-year Action Plan addressing interventions for GBV and VAWG locally. The Gender Advisory Council established in 2018 is a multi-sectoral body charged with providing support to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the NPGE and the NSAP-GBV. The Council works in tandem with the Bureau of Gender Affairs, which is the national gender machinery. The Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, and its Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (2018-2021) also inform actions regarding gender equality and is located within the Planning Institute of Jamaica, which has convening powers across multiple sectors.

According to the Statistical Institute of Jamaica’s (STATIN) last census in 2014, the country has a population of approximately 2.7 million, 50.5 percent women and 49.5 percent being men. While there is one percent more women than men in the population, the island is also noted for arguably having one of the highest incidences of female-headed households (FHH) in the world.⁴ Jamaica’s 2012 Survey of Living Conditions estimated that 45.6 per cent of all the households in Jamaica are female headed. Based on information from STATIN, over the period January 2020 – January 2021

⁴ <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10834-020-09743-3>

(especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic), the number of employed men decreased by 34,100 or 4.9 per cent to 656,200, while the figure for women fell by 40,200 or 6.9 per cent to 538,600⁵. This has significant impact for the welfare of the boys, girls and women in that household as it is widely argued that compared to male-headed households, FHHs are likely to be poorer and more vulnerable

In the Jamaican government's 8th report on the status of its implementation of commitments under the CEDAW submitted February 2020 the country highlighted the following priority actions:

- promote gender equality and empower women using the **Gender Equality Seal (GES) Programme** launched in 2016 to recognize private companies for meeting specific GEWE standards
- increase women's voice and participation through **Parliamentary representation** - as of September 2020 there is a historic 18 women in the House of Representatives.
- improve **Human Security** through the provision of trained security forces in effective administration of legislation and alternate dispute resolution to protect victims/prevent cases of DV.
- improve data and evidence collection to **Protect Victims and Witnesses of Abuse through the enactment of relevant legislation and the provision of technology** to minimize the distress and trauma of vulnerable witnesses
- further amend the **Domestic Violence Act (2014)** to widen the definition of domestic violence to include psychological, emotional and sexual acts; as well as significantly increased fines for the breach of a protection order.

Analytical basis for the CLIP:

The analytical basis for the Jamaica CLIP is the Gender Country Profile for Jamaica⁶ and analyses obtained from the first year of implementation of the Spotlight Initiative⁷. Findings indicate that while the country has a well-developed national plan and strategy to address GBV and GEWE, implementation remains inconsistent as a result of limited funding and inadequate technical assistance.

Consultations with stakeholders

Starting in 2020, the EUD conducted robust consultation with diverse stakeholders including with **national authorities** in sectoral dialogue and the **national gender machinery** residing within the Bureau of Gender Affairs and the Planning Institute of Jamaica for the design of the MIPS, updating of the Human Rights Country Strategy, the CSO Roadmap and these CLIPs. The Bureau of Gender

⁵ <https://jis.gov.jm/1194800-jamaicans-employed-in-january/>

⁶ [Gender Country Profile for Jamaica 2021](#)

⁷ [Annual Report Jamaica](#)

Affairs acknowledged that there are gaps in the implementation of the legislations especially associated with limited funding and inadequate technical competencies. The greatest barrier to change however has been sub-cultural norms that are supportive of GBV (especially VAWG), which are multigenerational and thus entrenched. The most significant areas of need relates to assistance to review the current policy and plans on GBV and GEWE. This expressed need is currently being supported under Outcome 1 of the Spotlight Initiative with the aims of providing support to incorporate approved policy positions to address VAWG and family violence legislation and the review the National Policy on Gender Equality to ensure its alignment with the NSAP-GBV.

The **local authorities** consulted represented communities across the country with diverse needs. They outlined that whilst they are elected to represent the people they face multiple challenges accessing support from national authorities, thus the EU through its strength of advocacy should insist on a more sustainable development that includes local authorities. A group comprising of 37 female Counsellors have established a national network to ensure a gender perspective is maintained in all deliberations on development at the local level.

Consultations conducted with **civil society organizations** revealed that the priority areas for urgent intervention related to ensuring freedom from all forms of gender-based violence against women & girls; and strengthening economic & social rights while empowering girls & women. The main human rights challenges identified were high crime rate including increases in GBV and persistently high incidents of abuse of power by agents of the state, human trafficking, violent attacks against the LGBT community and unequal power relationships as a result of gender. Women's organizations and academia consulted specified that most reported acts of sexual abuse related to girls 14 years and older and women below 30 years but they reiterated that GBV affects women throughout their lifecycle. One's gender was considered a precursor for experiencing violence in Jamaica, as were social and economic status, educational attainment, age, sexual orientation and disability.

EUD conducted a survey⁸ of over 100 civil society and **community based organizations** who provided feedback on how EU support to Jamaica could provide better gender mainstreaming. CSOs suggested that EU should support the government in prioritizing social protection programmes for women and children, provide technical and financial assistance that is targeted at challenging discriminatory laws/policies or harmful gender stereotypes, support mechanisms for redress against human rights violation, provide assistance to build a resilient, inclusive and democratic society (*which are key focus areas of the Human Rights Country Strategy for Jamaica*),

⁸ [EU-CSO Roadmap Survey Jamaica](#)

support programmes that provide income generating education/opportunities for women while building a sustainability framework to ensure intergenerational benefits. CSOs stood ready to support the implementation of programmes but recognized that until a structured system of CSO consultation is achieved with national and local authorities, community based entities will continue to be reactive to the needs of their constituents.

2. Selected thematic areas of engagement and objectives

The concrete EU priorities in Jamaica for the **Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2024** will include the implementation of reforms to support Jamaica's priorities for achieving an inclusive and resilient digital economy and society, improve the country's resilience to natural hazards as a result of improved climate change adaptation and mitigation - disaster risk management, and support to address crime and violence which will be achieved while encompassing the protection of vulnerable groups (including people with disabilities, women and youth). The four EUMS in Jamaica do not have cooperation with the country thus EUD continues to ensure their participation through regular feedback and monthly HoMs meetings.

Gender perspectives⁹ of priority areas for the EU's cooperation with Jamaica, 2021 - 2024

I. Sustainable and inclusive economy (focusing on digital transitioning)

It is estimated that almost one-third of Jamaican women who have a college education or higher have left the country due to lack of opportunities. From 2006 to 2018, Jamaica's rank in female economic participation and opportunity dropped from 7 to 29 (WEF 2018). Women continue to earn less than men and the ratio of female to male unemployed adults is 1.81. Furthermore, only 63.6% of women participate in the labour force compared to 82.3% of men. Although the number of women in managerial positions in Jamaica has reached 59.3% in recent years only 33% of top executives are women (ILO, 2018) and 38.2% of businesses are women-owned (Expert Market, 2015).

Jamaica ranks 6 out of 190 countries in the "Starting a Business" category according to the World Bank Doing Business report. However, it ranks 71 in the "Ease of Doing Business" category. Some of the main constraints for businesses include trading across borders, paying taxes, getting electricity, and enforcing contracts. The TEA rate for Jamaica in 2016/17 was 9.9% where nascent entrepreneurs accounted for 59% of TEA while the remaining 41% was attributed to new businesses (GEM Jamaica 2017). The She Trades Outlook report emphasizes that, "government policy plays a critical role in shaping an enabling environment in which women can translate their resources

⁹ [Gender Country Profile for Jamaica 2021](#)

into labour, labour into paid work, and paid work into greater control over their lives.”¹⁰

According to the 2019 edition of the Global Competitiveness Report published by the World Economic Forum (WEF), Jamaica is the 80 most competitive nation in the world out of 141 countries, ranking at number 86 for infrastructure, 93 for ICT adoption, 33 for business dynamism and 83 for innovation ecosystem.¹¹ Jamaica has a relatively robust telecommunications infrastructure and has one of the highest mobile phone penetrations in the world¹². While internet access is increasing, a “digital divide” still exists – especially seen in the gender representation in IT studies and jobs, in rural areas and in vulnerable communities.

II. Climate change and environment

Between 2001 and 2012 Jamaica experienced 11 storm events (including 5 major hurricanes) and several flood events. These events combined resulted in loss and damage amounting to approximately J\$128.54 billion (State of the Jamaican Climate 2012 Report). Jamaica is the third most exposed country in the world to multiple hazards. This high exposure is attributed to the country’s location in the Atlantic Hurricane Belt, the geophysical orientation of its low-lying coastal zones, and its mountainous topography. The Jamaican territory is also crossed by five major fault lines, including the Plantain Garden Fault Zone, which triggered the 2010 and August 2021 Haitian earthquakes. Over 96 percent of the country’s GDP and population are at risk from two or more hazards.

Climate change is disproportionately harsh on vulnerable groups – a large majority among them members of rural communities, particularly women. As a result, women and girls tend to be more adversely impacted by natural disasters globally, and likewise in Jamaica. Financial inclusion surveys in other LAC countries show that women tend to have less income to save than men thus women are more vulnerable to climate shocks and natural disasters since only 54% of women in Jamaica note that in the case of an emergency, they have funds to cover expenses. However, in the Jamaican context, boys are more likely to miss school to assist with disaster recovery and especially those who were not excelling before a disaster may never return to formal education.

Even though the legislation provides equally for men and women, men generally have greater access to land than women - 1.10 hectares of land on average for women and 1.98 hectares for men - because of traditional land inheritance practices that favour men. Women’s lack of ownership has

¹⁰Ibid

¹¹ Klaus Schwab, The Global Competitiveness Report. 2019. World Economic Forum. Available: http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2019.pdf

¹² See: https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business/Digicel-Jamaica-s-smartphone-users-surpass-1-million_18201974

a negative impact on their access to credit, as they have difficulty in securing collateral. On average, female farmers also have less technical knowledge than their male counterparts which is translated into reduced voice and participation in decision making for women in the sector.

III. Good Governance and Human Security

The Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), reported an increase in the number of girls murdered from eight in 2016 to 20 in 2017 – more than doubling in one year.¹³ In 2017 the United Nations ranked Jamaica as the country with the second highest murder rate for women in the world.¹⁴ The Women’s Health Survey (2016), which focused on the impacts of violence against women in Jamaica showed that 20 per cent of Jamaican women reported being sexually abused before the age of 18 years and that the main perpetrators were, “friends or acquaintances (22.9 per cent), strangers (16.5 per cent) and family members other than parents or siblings (15.9 per cent).”

In theory, legal barriers to women’s political participation do not exist in Jamaica. According to the UPR Report 2015 on Jamaica, progress has been made within public decision-making, as women account for 59% of workers in the public sector and 41% in the private sector. Nevertheless, calls by the CEDAW committee have been made to strengthen measures to address barriers to participation.

In practice, evidence suggests that barriers do exist and are especially significant as regards women’s influence in decision-making related to public finances. In Jamaica, men predominantly exert control over the resources and determine access to public finances. At the level of public bodies, men are better represented than women as heads of agencies (with a breakdown of 70/30) while women are better represented than men (60/40) as accountability officers within the central government. However, despite the participation of women in the budgeting processes there is little evidence of gender-responsive budgeting as less than 1% of the budget is dedicated to addressing gender-related challenges.

¹³ Cited in the UNICEF 2018 report as sourced by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

¹⁴ Jamaica holds world’s second highest rate of female homicides in 2017 – UN Report. November 19, 2019 at www.jamaicaobserver.com.

Priority sectors of the MIP	EUD Objectives to pursue through dialogue, activities or programmes	Overall objective of the EU action for GEWE	Selected areas of engagement on GEWE	Specific GEWE Thematic Objectives	Synergies with EUMS and other actors	CSO inclusion in design, implementation & monitoring
Sustainable & Inclusive Economy (focusing on digital transitioning)	<p>SO 1: to increase access to gender-responsive, accountable and effective digital skills and literacy products and services, especially for the vulnerable</p> <p>SO 3. To promote the digital transformation of existing MSMEs and the growth of the technology sector</p>	Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, can equally participate in shaping the digital world of tomorrow	<p>A1) Number of teacher training institutions with digital pedagogy integrated in curricula with EU assistance (disaggregated by courses / programmes, early childhood / primary / TVET, rural/urban)</p> <p>C1. Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: firms - MSME only</p>	Women, men, girls and boys in all their diversity participate fully and equally in the digital economy	Government of Jamaica, Jamaica Chamber of Commerce, Private Sector Organization of Jamaica, Development Bank of Jamaica	<p>Minimum of 5% of the budget for the sector is dedicated to support for civil society actions through calls for proposals and/or other appropriate funding modalities</p> <p>CSO inclusion through consultation at all stages of programme cycle management</p>
Climate Change and Environment	SO 1. To Improve resilience to impacts of climate change and disasters caused by natural events affecting sustained economic and social development	Women in all their diversity influence decision-making processes on environmental conservation and climate	<p>A1) Improve the governance framework for Climate Action and ensure transparency and accountability</p> <p>B1) Number of green jobs created from</p>	1. Increased participation of women and girls in all their diversity in decision-making processes on environment and climate change issues	Government of Jamaica	Minimum of 5% of the budget for the sector is dedicated to support for civil society actions through calls for proposals and/or other appropriate funding modalities.

	<p>SO 2: To enhance sustainable management of natural resources</p>	<p>change policies and actions</p>	<p>ecological transition activities, disaggregated by the number of women, men, girls and boys, people with disabilities</p>	<p>2. Strategies and agreements on climate mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable management of natural resources and biodiversity are more gender-responsive, at local, national, regional and international level 4. Women and men in all their diversity, increasingly participate in and have improved access to jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities and alternative livelihoods in the green economy and the circular economy</p>		<p>CSOs inclusion through consultation at all stages of programme cycle management</p>
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<p>Good Governance and Human Security</p>	<p>SO 1: Jamaica society is safer, more inclusive and resilient with emphasis on a rights-based approach</p> <p>SO 2: To improve protection of women, men, girls and boys from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the workplace and online.</p>	<p>Women, men, girls and boys are free from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the work place and online</p>	<p>A2. Increased access to youth and gender-responsive, accountable and effective primary public services in vulnerable communities.</p>	<p>Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are better protected from all forms of gender-based violence in the public and private spheres, in the work place and online through legislation and effective enforcement</p> <p>Women, men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, who experience gender-based violence have increased access to essential services</p>	<p>Government of Jamaica, UN – Spotlight Initiative</p>	<p>Minimum of 5% of the budget for the sector is dedicated to support for civil society actions through calls for proposals and/or other appropriate funding modalities.</p> <p>CSOs inclusion through consultation at all stages of programme cycle management</p>
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3. Targeted action(s) supporting gender equality and women's empowerment

EUD has supported the implementation of the **Spotlight Initiative in Jamaica** and recognize that the gains made under this programme have the potential to be gender-transformative but will need further actions to achieve sustainability. The ongoing budget support programme with the government on **Citizen Security** has already started to address the need for institutionalized changes to foster human security. Gender sensitive indicators have already been agreed for all sectors under the MIP therefore the targeted G2 action will support the achievement of the MIP's priority **Good Governance and Human Security** subsequent to the end of the first phase of the Spotlight Initiative. The G2 targeted action will be further articulated in the second half of implementation of the MIP.

The significant absence of sex disaggregated data in Jamaica and the region has been highlighted by all stakeholders. Strengthening of the technical capacity of the national gender machinery in legislative reform also needs to be data driven. EUD has therefore to include the possibility for gender researches in the support to be provided under the Technical Cooperation Facility which complements the actions under the MIP. The G2 action will prioritize support to women's organizations and organizations working on gender equality.

4. Engage in dialogue for gender equality and women empowerment

EUD will continue to pursue political dialogue with the government through regularly held Article 8 Dialogue which has provided an invaluable opportunity to raise issues of human rights in particular the concerning and recurring matter of VAWG. Policy dialogue will continue to be held on a sectoral basis and will prioritize issues of GEWE through the inclusion of gender indicators which measure performance for each sector.

The review of the CSO Roadmap has reaffirmed for EUD that civil Society organizations in Jamaica continue to demand an increasing role in policy dialogue with Government and in assuming an oversight role for implementation of public policies. The 2020 political elections confirmed the trend of reduced citizen participation in this fundamental democratic exercise and highlighted civil society's fundamental role in engaging people disillusioned with the traditional political party representation. Under the CSO Roadmap, the EU will engage annually in more structured dialogue with CSOs (including women's organizations) and provide specific financial support to strengthen capacities and foster networking & coordination, encouraging the creation of alliances to address specific development issues while ensuring gender mainstreaming.

Considered as part of civil society, the organised private sector is a strong advocate for resilience,

economic growth and citizen security. This grouping will be a key stakeholder in policy dialogue and oversight and it has played an important role in catalysing dialogue between government and the broader civil society on the most pressing societal and economic issues like crime and public debt. For the EU it is also a necessary partner to accompany digitalisation and sustainable economic growth and to ensuring that skills-trainings is demand-driven.

5. Outreach and other communication or public diplomacy activities

For the period 2021 – 2025, EUD will continue to optimize the opportunities to share messages in support of GEWE and human rights on international days of greatest significance. This will be done jointly with EUMS or the UN machinery where possible. EUD has strong convening power within the country thus will also continue to support national and local authorities on locally recognized events which celebrate gender. GEWE is a cross-cutting issue for all CSO calls for proposals thus most support to CSOs provide an opportunity to share key messages. EUD will also utilize the internal social media platforms as an emerging form of public diplomacy to share targeted messages which will raise awareness, promote positive sub-cultural change.

6. Technical Facility and/or financial resources allocated to support GAP III implementation

Following robust consultations with the partner country and multiple stakeholders, EUD has produced a MIP with agreed gender sensitive indicators for measuring performance under each sector for support. These indicators will translate into gender sensitive Action Documents which ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all programmes. Therefore while it is at this time not possible to project the exact anticipated expenditure and activities that will be designed, it is already clear that the programmes will achieve G2 marker status. Each sector has been considered in the already completed Gender Country Profile and possible interventions have been suggested.

Under the **Good Governance and Human Security** priority of the MIP the G2 targeted action will be further articulated in the second half of implementation of the MIP. The TCF support to the government will also provide opportunities for gender research towards technical support of the gender machinery and gender mainstreaming.

Date: 23/08/2021

Signature by Head of Delegation: Fredrik EKFELODT [e-Signed]