

Country/Region/Global: Jamaica
Initiation Plan

Project Title: Advancing Jamaica's Digital Response to COVID-19

Expected UNDAF/CP Outcome(s): Access to equitable social protection systems, quality services improved and sustainable economic opportunities improved

Expected CPD Output(s):

Output 1.3: Global and national data collection, measurement and analytical systems in place to monitor progress on the post-2015 agenda and sustainable development goals

Output 1.2: National development plans and strategies address poverty and inequality for sustainability and risk resilience

Output 1.4: Functions, financing and capacity of subnational-level institutions enabled to deliver improved basic services and respond to priorities voiced by the public

Initiation Plan Start/End Dates: 24 November 2020 – 24 May 2022

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Brief Description

This Project Initiation Plan aims to support the Government in the improvement and expansion of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Coordination Platform. Specifically, the project will seek to evaluate and improve the platform, identifying opportunities for scaling the platform within across selected Ministries Departments and Agencies.

Programme Period: 2020 - 2022

Atlas Project Number: 00132032

Atlas Output ID: 00124784;
00124785

Gender Marker: 2

Total resources required 350,000.00

Total allocated resources: 350,000.00

• Regular 350,000.00

• Other:

○ Donor _____

○ Donor _____

○ Government _____

Unfunded budget: _____

In-kind Contributions _____

Agreed by UNDP:



I. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTPUT:

Development Challenge

COVID-19 has had a devastating impact globally. The World Health Organization has reported over 44 million confirmed cases with the number of deaths surpassing 1.7 million as of 28 October 2020. Jamaica like other countries, has been directly impacted by the virus with the first recorded case documented in early March. As of October 2020, the Government has reported over 7,200 cases and just under 150 deaths, representing a 700 percent increase in cases since mid-August with women comprising 55 percent of all infections.¹ The pandemic's impact is multi-dimensional and far-reaching, threatening macroeconomic stability, social welfare, jobs and the livelihoods of Jamaicans. Recent research has indicated increases in GBV cases regionally and declining incomes which disproportionately impact female-headed households and rural communities. The Government's efforts to slow the spread of COVID-19, aligned to global recommendations, focused on promoting the uptake of preventative measures; containment; and limited movement of citizens. These efforts inadvertently brought to the fore and in some cases exacerbated the barriers being faced by Jamaicans in accessing public services remotely. Further, the sudden onset of the pandemic highlighted coordination gaps within and across Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in efficiently directing international aid to the most impacted sectors and populations. The digitalisation of the coordination efforts and delivery of Government services have therefore emerged as a critical area to be strengthened in addressing not only COVID-19 but similar emergencies which may emerge within the Jamaican context.

The Government developed its "Rebuild Jamaica", COVID-19 response strategy which outlined critical areas where digital technologies could play a catalytic role, including the improved delivery of essential public service and information. The COVID-19 response strategy is further aligned to the country's three-year Medium-Term Socio-economic Policy Framework (2018 – 2021) that calls for the strengthening of a technological-driven society as a priority. At the policy level, Jamaica has consistently embraced and advanced work in the area of ICTs evidenced by its inclusion in the country's National Development Plan as a key development driver. Despite these gains, there remains a significant gap with over 40 percent of the country's population currently without access to the internet. Further, only 9 percent of those connected have much-needed broadband access, the latter being relatively costly.² The development of Digital Government is also a critical area which requires fast-tracking. The latest incarnation of the UN e-Government Development Index (EGDI) covering 193 member states, places Jamaica at place 112.³

The pandemic has shown the critical role governments must play to ensure countries are fully prepared to respond to crises and shield human development gains. Strategically deploying digital technologies within governments to foster responsiveness and effectiveness in coordination and service delivery is critical. Providing public services and information via digital technologies is therefore of paramount importance and requires a cohesive and synchronized approach across Government to achieve such a goal sustainably.

Expected Results & Outputs

The COVID-19 Emergency Response Coordination Platform (ERCP) is a digital platform developed by the Jamaican government with the support of UNDP to articulate the policy response during the pandemic, including managing multiple demands of goods and services from ministries, departments and agencies (MDA) and tracking the supply of those goods and services. It is currently jointly managed by the Planning Institute and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica. The platform was conceived as modular to facilitate its growth as needs evolve. This project aims to support the Government in its improvement and expansion.

¹ Ministry of Health and Wellness.

² ITU ICT-Eye, <https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-D/icteye>.

³ UNDESA eGovernment Survey - 2020.

The project is to evaluate and improve the platform strengthening the Government's capacity to coordinate the flow of international and local assistance (financial, goods, services) for COVID-19. The initiative will take advantage of the platform's modularity to expand the bundle of services provided by MDA to citizens, including vulnerable populations, ensuring the comprehensiveness of the emergency response.

The project envisages two separate, but related outputs in line with *UNDP's COVID-19 Offer 2.0*, underpinned by the participatory and co-creation led processes detailed below:

Output 1: Assessment of digital innovation coordination platform finalized.

Output 1 will focus on completing a comprehensive assessment of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Coordination Platform (ERCP). This assessment will serve to define the nature and scope of the platform's scaling and expansion to be undertaken within the Government. The assessment will include identifying technological requirements, redesigning business processes; identifying and closing functional and institutional gender gaps, the financial resources required and overall capacity building and institutional strengthening. As a part of the gender analysis to be undertaken, gender differentiated access and control over technology will be included.

The assessment will serve to examine how the platform was designed and implemented as part of broader digital transformation process and the extent to which the platform's Governance structures were designed to promote ownership and the systems' sustainability. For completeness, the UNDP supported online SDG/Vision2030 monitoring platform, established in 2019, will also be included in the assessment. This platform facilitates reporting on the progress of achievement of the National Development Plan and the SDGs across MDA. While the SDG platform will not be scaled up in this project, its inclusion in the assessment will deepen the understanding of national-level coordination and data management in not only a COVID-19 context but also more broadly, towards achieving the SDGs in the medium and long runs.

The assessment will be led by local consultants using a mixed methodology approach incorporating both primary and secondary data collection methods. The assessment's key outputs will be to distil lessons learned from the platform, identify best practices and critical pitfalls, and provide scaling-up and replication recommendations. As part of the assessment, a "readiness" assessment tool will be designed and deployed to guide MDA in determining their preparedness level to harness digital technologies. Design, implementation and utilization processes will be further analyzed from a gender perspective to ensure the platforms explicitly target gender-specific outputs and address functional and institutional gender gaps. The assessment's overall findings will inform and shape Output 2 below.

Output 2: Scaling-up and expansion of digital innovation coordination platform to other key MDA completed.

Based on the findings of Output 1, the COVID-19 Emergency Response Coordination Platform will be scaled-up within the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). It will also be expanded to include two additional ministries, departments, or agencies (MDAs).

The scaling-up of the platform within the PIOJ and the MFAFT will be part of a larger digital transformation process to ensure core skills, functions, and techniques required to sustain the platform are institutionalized. The scaling-up will address the problems found in the assessment and improve the platform. The expansion of the platform to two new MDA will be dependent on their readiness and on the demands for their services.

Building the internal capacity and capabilities of all MDA involved in the project will be a crucial goal. Live gender sensitive virtual training will be provided to develop the technical, administrative and managerial skills and competencies required to deploy and sustain the digital coordination platforms within the public sector. Additionally, a self-paced Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) specifically designed for civil servants, will be created. This course will make the training in technical skills available for a broader audience with key consideration given to gender differentials. It will also allow for the expansion of the platform and services provided to citizens as a spill over effect of the project.

The current Technical Working Group overseeing the implementation of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Coordination Platform (ERCP) will be expanded and its scope enhanced to

include strategic policy issues. On the technology side, arrangements will be made to transfer the ERCP to the Government's cloud-based central data centre as the hosting is currently done off-island. This transfer will ensure the platform's security, reduce institutional fragmentation and enhance the delivery of public digital services.

Each step of the scaling-up and expansion phases of the digital coordination platform will be documented in real-time from its inception. Gender will be mainstreamed in all materials, data and documents captured and created during implementation. A comprehensive report highlighting the benefits of public sector coordination and the potential implementation pitfalls MDAs will be generated. The scaling-up and expansion implementation report will be publicly disseminated and shared with key policymakers and other stakeholders.

As stated before, the project aims to work together with the Government at improving the COVID-19 Response Strategy. By doing so, it contributes to the achievement of the UNCT's COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response and Recovery Plan. Moreover, the two outcomes aim to have an emergency response aligned to the broader development goals outlined in Vision 2030 and the UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, highlighting the need for digital solutions to be advanced.

Partnerships

The success of the project will hinge on strong partnership and local ownership across multiple stakeholders including Government & Non-governmental entities. The PIOJ remains the main interlocutor between the UN and the Government of Jamaica. The agency has also been the main counterpart in the development and testing of UNDP-supported digital systems and is envisaged to be a critical partner in achieving the project's outputs from a coordination, policy and technical perspective.

Other MDA will be key to the expansion and testing of digital systems, and key linkages will be made through the existing Emergency Coordination Platform Technical Working Group. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade who jointly anchors the afore-mentioned platform with the PIOJ, will be critical to the success of the proposed project and will be engaged through the TWG and directly as a project partner. Further, the scaling of the Emergency Coordination Platform from solely supporting the COVID-19 response to a broader multi-hazard focus would require the engagement of the Ministry of Local Government and Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management.

Given the need to ensure alignment with the efforts of the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service in public sector transformation and the imminent establishment of the ICT Authority which will subsume the current e-Government entity, representatives from these entities will be engaged to provide technical and policy advice & leadership through the either the established TWG or project-specific governance structures. Engagement of the Bureau of Gender Affairs and members of Academia within the Project's Governance and Technical mechanisms will be paramount to ensuring gender equality mainstreaming.

The continued engagement and collaboration with the RCO will be critical to the success of this project. The RCO's strategic involvement will ensure linkages within the proposed project and that of the UN Socioeconomic Response Plan and the work of the wider UN System are advanced. Further, through the broader UN Systems engagement, additional technical and financial support may be leveraged as identified to sustain the project's results. Finally, International Development Partners, private sector, think tanks and other groups contributing to public sector transformation will be consulted and engaged throughout the project's implementation. International and local consultants and firms will be recruited to provide expertise and services where required and available.

Complementarity

The Government of Jamaica has provided a significant amount of resources to support its response to the COVID-19. In October 2020, the government announced a J\$25 billion economic stimulus

package.^[1] Additionally, the Ministry of Health has indicated that it was provided with J\$2.9 billion to support its COVID-19 response. The Government has also benefitted from a number of donations from International Development Partners to support its response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The UNCT has provided funding of US\$1.83 million to its relevant governmental and nongovernmental partners to support response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Initiatives supported by the UNCT include assessments, provision of essential items such as food and personal protective equipment to vulnerable populations, support to MSMEs and the provision of technological and communication equipment. UNDP, in particular, has provided over US\$230,000 to support response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Similarly, UNDP has supported public sector digitalization investments such as the PIOJ's SDG and National Development Plan monitoring and reporting pilot and the External Cooperation Management Information System (ECMIS). Both pilots were designed to bolster the PIOJ's capacity to deliver their services and monitor more efficiently using digital platforms. Specific alignment is detailed in the table below:

Funding source	Amount	Purpose of / period covered by Funding
UNDP Core Resources	50,000 USD	UNDP Core Resources supported the initial design of the Emergency Coordination Response Platform (ECRP) for COVID-19. This was supported between May 2020 – August 2020 and sought to improve the country's capacity to coordinate and manage the financial and other resources allocated to the country since the pandemic's onset, in partnership with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). This current proposal builds on this initial investment from the UNDP MCO in advancing digital solutions for COVID-19.
UNDP (Repurposed Project Funds)	230,000.00 USD <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU – 60,000.00 • United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security – 70,000. • Global Affairs Canada – 100,000.00 	Over 230,000.00 USD has been repurposed across the MCO's programme to support the COVID-19 response between April – December 2020. The funds have been allocated for socio-economic impact assessments; social protection efforts; psychosocial support; and MSME support. The proposed project will expand and complement the UNDP's ongoing support to COVID-19.
IADB	1,000,000.00 USD	There are ongoing investments by IADB in advancing the ICT policy landscape in Jamaica. Specifically, the IADB is supporting the country in supporting the development and implementation of a developing a new national ICT strategy, expected to be completed before the end of 2021. This project will ensure that the Government's ICT strategy draft will be incorporated into the scaling of the ERCP platform. Further, the platform being expanded contributes to enhanced capacity within Government for the

		provision Digital Public Service which is complementary to ICT.
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II. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The project will be administered under the UNDP's Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) in close collaboration with key Government and non-Governmental counterparts to secure partnerships at multiple levels. As implementing partner, UNDP MCO is responsible and accountable for managing the project and undertaking Quality Assurance as required. The project's Governance mechanism will include at minimum, representatives from the UNDP, Resident Coordinators Office (RCO), Planning Institute of Jamaica, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, E-Gov Jamaica, relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the Ministry of Finance & Public Service.

At the highest level, the project will be governed by a Project Steering Committee (PSC) which will be responsible for consensual management decisions for the project, review and appraise the work plans, and monitor the progress of the project through review of progress reports and annual reviews. At the technical level, the project's work will be aligned to the existing Technical Working Group (TWG) established to manage the COVID-19 donor coordination platform. Where indicated by the Government, additional sub-committees or groups may be established or reconfigured to provide additional oversight for achieving project results. The meaningful engagement of a multiplicity of stakeholders including NGOs through various consultative sessions and Technical Working Group will be critical to the co-creation process required to achieve and sustain the project's results.

Based on the unique nature and scope of the project, dedicated project staff will be required to ensure the achievement of project results. A Project Manager will be recruited to lead the day-to-day management and decision-making for the project under the direct supervision of the Programme Specialist with oversight from the UNDP Resident Representative. The PM will be further supported by the MCOs programmatic and financial staff, along with a cadre of technical consultants engaged to undertake specific components of the project.

III. MONITORING

In accordance with UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures, the Initiation Plan will be monitored following the corporate standards and requirements. An M&E framework will be developed to continuously monitor progress towards the achievement of PIP results.

The M&E framework will include the establishment of indicators for each PIP results, including the identification of baselines, milestones and targets. The Government counterparts will support the monitoring of project results and collection of relevant M&E data. Each entity will submit monitoring reports detailing progress made over the reporting period to the UNDP. The UNDP MCO will provide quality assurance functions and monitor the achievement of PIP results through the verification of achieved milestones and targets. Additionally, annual reports and an initiation phase report will be used to track progress against the results indicators in the results framework. This will also include the monitoring and management of risks which may threaten achievement of PIP results through a risk log. Knowledge management represents a key activity under the PIP, and as such, lessons learnt will be documented and integrated where applicable.

IV. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

UNDAF outcome involving UNDP 2: Access to equitable social protection systems, quality services improved and sustainable economic opportunities improved												
Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: Capacities of public-policy and rule-of-law institutions and civil society organizations strengthened												
Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Output 1.3: Global and national data collection, measurement and analytical systems in place to monitor progress on the post-2015 agenda and sustainable development goals Output 1.2: National development plans and strategies address poverty and inequality for sustainability and risk resilience Output 1.4: Functions, financing and capacity of subnational-level institutions enabled to deliver improved basic services and respond to priorities voiced by the public												
EXPECTED OUTPUTS <i>And baseline, indicators including annual targets</i>	Output indicators	TIMEFRAME								End of year target	Data source	DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND RISKS
		Baseline	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6				
Output 1: Assessment of digital innovation coordination platform finalized.	1.1 Number of assessments completed and disseminated	0	2020	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Two digital service delivery assessments completed and disseminated	Assessment report	Data collection method: Document review and stakeholder consultation Risks: lack of participation by stakeholders, unavailability of relevant documents and qualified consultants to undertake assignment
	1.2 Whether the digital innovation assessment includes a gender analysis	No	2020	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Project Report, Gender analysis	Data collection method: Document review Risk: Limited gender data to inform analysis
	1.3 Extent to which quick assessment readiness tool is developed	Not developed	2020	Not developed	Developed	Developed	Developed	Developed	Developed	Developed	Readiness tool	Data collection method: Document review, stakeholder consultations Risks: Unavailability of relevant data

Output 2: Scaling-up and expansion of digital innovation and coordination platform to other key MDA completed.	2.1 CH-1 Number of government entities supported to ensure business continuity and provision of basic and social services during the COVID-19 pandemic	1	2020	1 MDA has adopted digital public service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	1 MDA has adopted digital public service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	1 MDA have adopted digital service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	2 MDA have adopted digital public service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	4 MDA have adopted digital public service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	4 MDA have adopted digital public service delivery platforms, supporting them sustainably by modernizing related business processes	Project report	Data collection method: Document review, stakeholder consultation Risks: Unavailability of relevant documents, lack of participation by stakeholders, unwillingness to use/slow utilization of platform in business process modernization
	2.2 DD-1 Number of digital solutions adopted to address the COVID-19 pandemic	1	2020	1 digital solution adopted to address COVID-19	2 digital solutions adopted to address COVID-19	1 digital solution adopted to address COVID-19	2 digital solutions adopted to address COVID-19	2 digital solutions adopted to address COVID-19	2 digital solutions adopted to address COVID-19	Project report	Data collection methods: Observation, stakeholder consultations, official and other relevant national statistics Risks: Unavailability of relevant data
	2.3 Number of online training courses developed on ERCP to public service entities	0	2020	0 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	0 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	1 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	2 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	2 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	2 online training courses developed on ERCP for public service entities	Training modules on ERCP, Training report	Data collection method: Surveys, focus group discussions, interviews. Risks: Unavailability of relevant trainers to develop course material
	2.4 Number of persons trained in the use and maintenance of the ERCP disaggregated by gender and Ministry	0	2020	0	0	10 (7 female 3 males)	20 (14 females 6 males)	20 (14 females 6 males)	20 (14 females 6 males)	Training report, register	Data collection method: Surveys, focus group discussions, interviews. Risks: Unavailability of relevant staff members to attend the training sessions
	2.5 Number of digital transformation lessons learnt/knowledge products developed	0	2020	0	0	0	0	1	1	Project report	Data collection method: Document review, Input from Technical Committee, stakeholder consultation Risks: unavailability of relevant documents to inform product development

V. WORK PLAN

Period⁴: November 2020 – July 2022

EXPECTED OUTPUTS <i>And baseline, indicators including annual targets</i>	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List activity results and associated actions</i>	TIMEFRAME						RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
Output 1: Assessment of digital innovation coordination platform finalized	<i>1.1 Define scope of work for the assessment of the digital coordination platforms in consultation with existing Technical Working Group (co-creation)</i>	X						UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	1,000.00
	<i>1.2 Recruit national consultants to undertake assessment</i>	X						UNDP	UNDP RFF	71300	50,000.00
	<i>1.3 Organize consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders and compile inputs for final assessment report</i>	X						UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	1,000.00
	<i>1.4 Disseminate final report and recommendations for scaling and expanding digital coordination platform with key decision-makers and stakeholders (Government, IDPs)</i>	X						UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	10,000.00
Output 1: Subtotal										62,000.00	
Output 2: Scaling-up and expansion of digital innovation coordination platform to other key MDA completed.	<i>2.1 Develop criteria for MDA selection in consultation with relevant stakeholders (co-creation), based in assessment report findings</i>	X						UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	1,000.00
	<i>2.2 Recruit and manage consultant firm to design and deploy required technology, supported by local consultants (inclusive of gender specialist) to scale-up and expand digital coordination platforms</i>		X	X				UNDP	UNDP RFF	71200 71300 72100 72800	130,000.00
	<i>2.3 Move digital coordination platforms to Government's data center</i>			X	X			UNDP	UNDP RFF	71300 75700	10,000.00

⁴ Maximum 18 months

	<i>2.4 Develop and launch online, self-paced training MOOC on the management and use of digital coordination platforms</i>			x	x		x		UNDP	UNDP RFF	71300 72800	40,000.00
	<i>2.5 Prepare and disseminate lessons learnt and best practices of knowledge product on the implementation and expansion of the digital coordination platforms</i>			x	x				UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	30,000.00
	<i>2.6 Implement communication and visibility activities</i>				x				UNDP	UNDP RFF	75700	7,000.00
Output 2 Subtotal												218,000.00
Project Management	<i>Project coordination and implementation (18-month contract for PM)</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		UNDP	UNDP RFF	71400	60,000.00
	<i>Direct Project Costs</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X		UNDP	UNDP RFF	74598	10,000.00
Total												70,000.00
TOTAL											350,000.00	

