



JAMAICA

National Diaspora Policy



**Background, Policy Process, Principles,
Goals, Outcomes and Actions**

DRAFT

MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
AND FOREIGN TRADE





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PREFACE

Migration is closely intertwined with the development of countries worldwide and is of critical importance to countries of origin, transit and destination. This is particularly the case of developing countries whose migrants provide critical support towards the social and economic development of their countries of origin. These migrants and their descendants also have issues and needs in the countries where they reside for which home countries need to support them to find effective solutions. On the other hand, developing countries are both sending and receiving countries hence they have to work in harmony with persons from other countries who live, work and contribute to their development. Jamaica as a developing country is part of this international migration scenario. Consequently Jamaica has developed a National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development Policy in which Diaspora and Development is an integral component.

The National Diaspora Policy seeks to provide a framework for maximizing the value of Diaspora contributions to Jamaica's development while at the same time addressing issues and concerns of the Diaspora and assisting them to live in harmony and to prosper in countries where they and their descendants reside. The underlying feature of the Policy is partnership, a synergistic engagement and reciprocity between Jamaica and its Diaspora.

The policy development process was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) in collaboration with the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Jamaica Diaspora Institute (JDI), the operating arm of the Jamaica Diaspora Foundation (JADF). The MFAFT through its Missions and Consulates undertook consultations with the Diaspora and received comments which were useful inputs for the development of the Policy. The JADF provided recommendations especially in the areas of governance, administration and funding for implementation of the Policy. The JDI provided research and situational analysis for the development of the policy. In addition the JDI played a critical role in combining the inputs from all entities and stakeholders to prepare the overall policy document.

We are grateful to all the stakeholders, institutions and persons who contributed to the development of this National Diaspora Policy. We hope that the actions and outcomes of this Policy will maximize the value of the contributions of the Diaspora to Jamaica's national development and simultaneously contribute to the growth and prosperity of the Diaspora.

BACKGROUND

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) has long recognized the value of the Diaspora and has seen the need to strategically streamline its efforts to maximise the value of the Diaspora's contribution to Jamaica's development in the areas of remittances, tourism and philanthropic engagements primarily in the sectors of health and education. Equally, the government has recognized the importance of establishing frameworks to safeguard the rights, responsibilities and social protection benefits of its migrants through bilateral and multilateral agreements.

The National Diaspora Policy prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT) with technical support provided by the Jamaica Diaspora Institute (JDI) and the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), provides the framework for enhancing the principle of mutuality between Jamaica and its Diaspora. The dialectic relationship is evident by the contribution of the Diaspora to Jamaica's sustainable development and by extension, Jamaica's advocacy on issues of importance to the Diaspora's welfare and well-being in host countries toward their social and economic advancement.

The National Diaspora Policy is aligned to the four core goals articulated in *Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan* as well as national priority documents such as the Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework, (MTF) which incorporates consideration of the IMF Extended Fund Facility and the National Growth Agenda Priorities as well as the Draft National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development.

Diaspora and development is a central thematic area which emerged from the Draft National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development. Diaspora development within the context of the migration and development nexus is considered to be a positive consequence of the migratory patterns of Jamaicans and their descendants. The migration and development nexus is premised on the basis that migration provides opportunities for enlarging a person's freedom while facilitating opportunities for social and economic advancement.

The National Diaspora Policy will seek to consolidate and increase philanthropic contributions of the Diaspora in education and health care while growing the areas of Diaspora trade and investments. Strengthening partnerships with the Diaspora will serve to cement benefits toward nation building and the engagement of the Diaspora in areas of national priority while facilitating mechanisms for advocacy and policy coherence on issues that are relevant to the Diaspora's development in host countries.

As key stakeholders and beneficiaries, the Diaspora will play an integral role in the development and implementation of the Diaspora Policy. The extent of their involvement will be manifested in their role as investors, partners, marketers, innovators, networkers and key collaborators in partnership with the GOJ, private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society. The Diaspora will also be key informants as well as a source of assistance for monitoring and implementation of Policy actions and outcomes.

The GOJ has committed to providing the enabling environment for the realization of the vision, goal, outcomes and actions of the Policy as well as establish and implement the necessary legislative, policy and governance frameworks required for the successful implementation of the Diaspora Policy.

POLICY PRINCIPLES AND STATEMENTS

Guiding Principles

The National Diaspora Policy embraces the building and sustenance of effective Diaspora partnerships that contribute to national development and empower members of the Diaspora. The Policy is grounded in eight guiding principles, which will facilitate improved coordination and communication, resulting in reciprocal growth and advancement.

The Diaspora Policy is guided by commitment to the following core principles:

Principle 1: Mutuality

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The implementation of the policy strategies and actions will serve the interests of both Jamaica and its Diaspora. The policy is congruent with the *Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan*, engaging all Jamaicans and their descendants to actively participate in national development outcomes while achieving their fullest potential in host countries.

Principle 2: Inclusiveness

The processes and mediums to attain policy outcomes will engage all stakeholders in the Diaspora and Jamaica. There will be the promotion of equal opportunities for the empowerment of Jamaicans both at home and abroad.

Principle 3: Participation and partnerships

Policies, plans, programmes and priorities are developed in a spirit of partnership and cooperation. This participatory approach will pervade all levels of the society and communities both locally and abroad for Diaspora engagement.

Principle 4: Integrity

Interactions between Jamaica and its Diaspora will be based on trust, fair play and mutual respect.

Principle 5: Communication

Communication will be open, transparent and timely thereby enabling knowledge sharing and informed decision-making.

Principle 6: Accountability

Stewardship of resources and management of the policy implementation process shall be rules-based and timely and will incorporate principles of good governance and established best practices.

Principle 7: Sustainability

There will be the institutionalization of the structures, processes and mechanisms for continuity, longevity, and effective and robust Diaspora engagement in support of sustainable development initiatives in communities at home and abroad.

Principle 8: Patriotism

National identity, pride and cultural affinity with “Brand Jamaica” are tenets which will be embraced by all Jamaicans, at home and abroad, and future generations.

VISION, GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Vision

Transformative engagements and partnerships providing an enabling environment for the empowerment of the Jamaican Diaspora to realize their fullest potential and enhance their well-being while optimizing contributions to national development.

Overall Policy Goal

National development and improved well-being of Jamaicans at home and abroad are facilitated through mutually beneficial strategic partnerships by 2030.

In pursuit of this policy goal, the following strategic objectives will apply:

- a. Diaspora engagements will facilitate the building of trust and increase cooperation through the strengthening of communication systems, mechanisms, strategies and processes
- b. increased involvement of the Diaspora in economic growth and social development in areas such as Diaspora tourism, remittance flows, investment, trade and entrepreneurship towards the stimulation of growth in Jamaican and Diaspora

communities

- c. national development priorities will inform the targeting and streamlining of Diaspora philanthropy
- d. nationalism, patriotism, affinity to “Brand Jamaica” and cultural connectivity are enhanced among Jamaican migrants and their descendants
- e. advocacy mechanisms will articulate the rights and concerns of the Jamaican Diaspora and resultant actions in accordance with international agreements
- f. the skills, expertise and wealth of migrants are enhanced through sustainable development, management and technology transfers to provide tangible benefits among Jamaicans, its Diaspora and their descendants
- g. public order, safety and security are salient in Diaspora engagements and strategies geared towards crime reduction in Jamaican and Diaspora communities
- h. Data and information systems are strengthened to facilitate measurement of Diaspora engagements for monitoring and evaluation purposes
- i. Diaspora engagements are streamlined into national development policies, plans and programmes at all levels to facilitate policy coherence

POLICY GOALS, OUTCOMES AND ACTIONS

Diaspora Engagement

Effective Diaspora engagement is central to optimizing the value of the diaspora to national development while addressing their needs and aspirations in host countries where they reside. Potential benefits can be harnessed from the talents, expertise and networks developed between Jamaica and its Diaspora members and communities. Within the Jamaican context, fostering diasporic

partnerships and engagements require the establishment of formal mechanisms geared at streamlining and integrating Diaspora issues into the national policy framework. The Jamaica Diaspora Policy recognizes the multiplicity of issues which emanate from Diaspora engagements, global outreach and support needed to advance the welfare of the Diaspora while impacting positively on Jamaica's development agenda.

Goal: *Established protocols and mechanisms facilitating robust and dynamic interactions between Jamaica and its Diaspora that advance the well-being of the Diaspora and enhance sustainable development in Jamaica by 2030.*

Intermediate Outcomes

1. An enabling environment which promotes trust and encourages mutual benefits to Jamaica and its Diaspora members
2. A coordinated, sustainable regulatory and institutional framework that provides guidelines and protocols for engagement between Jamaicans and Diaspora communities including youths, second generation and beyond
3. The provision of opportunities for Diaspora partnerships and involvement aimed at mutual social and economic advancement
4. Promulgation of advocacy to safeguard and preserve human rights and social protection benefits
5. Mainstream and integrate Diaspora engagement in the areas of Diaspora Direct Investments and corporate and individual philanthropy geared towards sustaining national and Diaspora networks, linkages and growth

Actions:

To achieve these outcomes, the government shall:

- a. *Develop a road map for Diaspora engagement and partnerships*
- b. *Implement policies, programmes and projects that support the building of networks and synergies around national priorities*
- c. *Promote good governance among Diaspora communities*
- d. *Facilitate institutional strengthening programmes and initiatives between home and destination countries for Diaspora engagement in areas of governance, rights, social protection, communication, advocacy, trade, investments, remittance and tourism among others*
- e. *Increase opportunities for structured dialogue among Diaspora members, Missions and Consulates to discuss matters critical to Diaspora integration*
- f. *Increase the use of technology to enable virtual interface between Diaspora and government representatives*
- g. *Provide structures for Diaspora associations and alumni active engagement on issues pertaining to the Diaspora's well-being and welfare*
- h. *Engage in bilateral and multilateral agreements on issues of diasporic importance*
- i. *Map Diaspora organizations, skills, expertise and identification of opinion interlocutors*
- j. *Forge partnerships with governments within traditional and non-traditional destination countries to promote dual citizenship and advocacy for voting rights in home country*
- k. *Establish mechanisms to build trust and effective communication*

- 1. Through its Consulates and Missions, advocate foreign governments to recognize the rights of Jamaican emigrants in host countries to realize their fullest potential*

COMMUNICATION

Strengthening communication mechanisms toward the engagement of the Diaspora will require the utilization of strategies to facilitate timely and accurate transmission of information. Effective communication is required between the Diaspora and home for cementing the principles of trust, raising awareness, partnerships and ownership of joint initiatives and programmes. A communication strategy is therefore needed between the Diaspora and Jamaica to facilitate dialogue on issues pertaining to national goals and priorities. Structured communication channels and mechanisms are needed to open dialogue on issues of mutual importance such as diasporic engagements, migrants' rights and responsibilities, interests as well as the well-being of the Diaspora. Communication provides opportunities to ensure the empowerment of the Diaspora to achieve their fullest potential. Utilization of ICT platforms are significant for data-gathering, networking and information dissemination. The use of virtual tools are important mediums for fostering linkages with Diaspora descendants, second generation and beyond, as it provides an instantaneous audience and market for goods and services as well as a virtual space for dialogue on issues of national development.

Goal: *By 2030, communication methods and mechanisms are diversified to facilitate structured and interactive dialogue, robust partnerships and knowledge sharing.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. A coherent, integrated communication strategy by the GOJ to provide continuous and effective communication geared at stimulating Diaspora engagement
2. Communication channels and information exchanges are increased between Jamaica and the Diaspora

3. Structured mechanisms exist for timely engagement and information dissemination that result in strategic linkages between Jamaica and its Diaspora
4. The creative industries used as a medium of expression to resonate, communicate, translate and inform social and political actions critical for the integration of Diaspora communities

Actions:

The government shall:

- a. *Provide targeted news and information updates to Diaspora communities through different locations through the employment of various technologies*
- b. *Develop structured sensitization programmes specific to initiatives and projects being undertaken by GOJ and its partners in communities in home and host countries*
- c. *Utilize ICT platforms and tools to increase Diaspora reach and linkages*
- d. *Promote avenues for the growth of creative industries in Diaspora communities*
- e. *Support the use of mechanisms such as interlocutors to interface with the Jamaican Missions and Consulates overseas as important focal points for communication on matters of interest to the Diaspora communities*
- f. *Increase official visits overseas to improve interaction, information sharing and engagement with the Diaspora*
- g. *Facilitate collaboration with private sector interests, community leaders, business leaders and civil society in Jamaica and the host countries to disseminate relevant information and promote engagement within the Diaspora*

Global Outreach to support the welfare and advancement of the Diaspora

The GOJ will devise mechanisms and initiatives to extend its outreach to Jamaicans and their descendants who reside in non-traditional Diaspora communities. The government will seek to:

- Enhance Consular representation to these non-traditional host countries based on the size of populations
- Build networks of business and community leaders
- Engage persons of Jamaican descent to enlist their active involvement in realizing the goals and objectives of the National Diaspora Policy
- Encourage the increased establishment of Jamaican associations and charitable foundations

Goal: *By 2030, global outreach mechanisms are expanded and strengthened to facilitate the participation and engagement of the Diaspora in all countries of destination.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Negotiation and amendment of bilateral agreements in non-traditional host countries on matters relating to migrants' rights and responsibilities
2. Development of accountable mechanisms that facilitate good governance
3. Mechanisms established to facilitate increased involvement of the Diaspora in lobbying and decision-making related to their social and economic advancement in host countries
4. Establishment of networks within Diaspora organizations between main and non-traditional destination countries
5. Provision of opportunities for Diaspora investment, business

ownership, and entrepreneurship in host countries

6. Implementation of policy interventions targeting specific Diaspora goods and services
7. Build capacity of Missions and Consulates to assist the Diaspora to influence changes in policies and or capitalize on opportunities resulting from policies in countries where they reside

Actions:

The government shall:

- a. *Promote collaboration and strengthen existing mechanisms between Ministries Departments and Agencies in Jamaica and counterparts overseas, particularly in areas of social protection, child welfare, voluntary and involuntary migration*
- b. *Encourage Jamaicans and their descendants to utilize the opportunities for citizenship in traditional and non-traditional host countries*
- c. *Conclude important bilateral agreements such as double taxation, social security, portability of pension and other benefits, and reciprocal maintenance for minors*
- d. *Encourage mutual recognition between Jamaica and host countries for certification at secondary, tertiary and vocational institutions*
- e. *Facilitate networking opportunities for Jamaicans in traditional and non-traditional destination countries that allow for their empowerment*
- f. *Enhance the outreach of existing Missions and Consulates through the utilization of Information and Communications Technologies (ITCs)*
- g. *Make available pre-departure orientation packages to migrants from Jamaica with key information and contacts for settling in host countries*

- h. Liaise with governments in receiving countries to explore the prospects of bilateral and multilateral agreements on the internationalization of social security benefits for long-term and short-term migrants*

Social Protection, Rights and Responsibilities

The GOJ will seek to safeguard the rights, responsibilities and social protection benefits of its emigrants through bilateral and multilateral agreements. Through established frameworks such as Missions and Consulates, the GOJ provides opportunities for dialogue and negotiation with host countries for the provision of built-in safety net programmes that minimise migrants' vulnerability to external shocks. The provision and portability of comprehensive and integrated social safety net programmes benefit not only Diaspora communities but the home country which may not have the fiscal space to adequately meet the needs of temporary migrant workers. Nonetheless, emigrants in integrating in their new homelands have a responsibility to empower themselves with the requisite knowledge of specific issues relating to their welfare and the well-being of their descendants.

***Goal:** By 2030, the requisite governance and policy framework strengthened to safeguard labour rights and the portability of social benefits to support the well-being of the Diaspora and temporary migrant workers.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. A supportive environment that promotes and facilitates policy coherence on issues regarding social security benefits for members of the Diaspora
2. Strengthened advocacy mechanisms for the portability of social protection benefits and the provision of comprehensive social safety net programmes for temporary migrants
3. Mechanisms in place to guide the work of community based

organizations and friends of Jamaica which provide advice, social protection and services including welfare for Jamaicans in the Diaspora

Actions:

To achieve these outcomes the GOJ shall:

- a. *Initiate and support bilateral social security agreements to increase transferability and portability of pension, health, welfare and other benefits for Diaspora communities and temporary migrants*
- b. *Expand the outreach of existing Missions and Consulates through the utilization of Information and Communication Technologies*
- c. *Assist Jamaican emigrants to secure social protection benefits*
- d. *Enact new and amend existing legislation in recognition of the rights of migrants and facilitate their legitimate movements*
- e. *Adopt strategies to expand the number of social protection schemes available to migrants (inclusive of the private sector schemes)*
- f. *d) Expand bilateral social security agreements to increase transferability and portability of pension, health, welfare and other benefits for migrants*

Engagement and Integration of Diaspora, Second Generation and Beyond with special emphasis on the Youth

Strategic interactions with members of the Diaspora are warranted irrespective of age group. One of the recognized challenges with integration efforts has been the engagement of Diaspora youth. The aim therefore is to provide avenues to incentivize, involve and engage, as well as, engender a sense of cultural identity with Jamaica among members classified as second generation and beyond in Diaspora communities. There is need to promote a

sense of cultural affinity to Jamaica among the second , third and beyond generations, especially youth .

Goal: *By 2030, structured frameworks are in place engendering national identity and cultural affinity among Jamaican descendants in the second generation and beyond, particularly the youth.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Strengthened frameworks which engender the building of national and cultural identities with Jamaica such as joint youth initiatives which promote nation building and partnerships among Diaspora youth, second generation and beyond
2. Revised and amended legislative and regulatory mechanisms to facilitate dual citizenship and the bestowment of citizenship rights in Jamaica for second generation and beyond in the Diaspora.

Actions:

In supporting the engagement of Diaspora youth, second generation and beyond, the GOJ shall:

- a. Involve Diaspora youth in initiatives aimed at fostering cultural identity and national affinity*
- b. Provide incentives and mechanisms for the engagement and involvement of Diaspora youths second generation and beyond geared at engendering cultural affinity to Jamaica*
- c. Develop sustainable partnerships between individuals and organizations working with Diaspora youth*
- d. Implement special projects in Jamaica aimed at connecting youth in the Diaspora with youth in Jamaica*

- e. *Develop public private partnership programmes that allow for mentorship and coaching across Diaspora and Jamaican borders, utilizing the ICT platform*
- f. *Create a conducive environment for young persons in the Diaspora to take up internship opportunities at Jamaican institutions, including hospitals, educational institutions, community based and social enterprises in the private sector*
- g. *Promote avenues for the growth of creative industries to connect with the Diaspora youth*

Governance, Advocacy and Policy Coherence

Governance, advocacy and policy coherence are indispensable agents to the integration of reciprocal Diaspora relations. Transparent, accountable and participatory governance structures allow for the agitation of increased development benefits and assist the Diaspora to fulfil their fullest potential in host countries. Transparency and accountability in governance are critical ingredients to enable policy coherence and facilitate advocacy. Through International Development Partners (IDP) collaboration and partnerships, the country has yielded concrete results which have enabled its participation in South to South dialogue on issues pertaining to Diaspora and development.

Goal: *By 2030, legislative and institutional frameworks established for Diaspora engagement and participation in matters of national development and Diaspora welfare and well-being.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Legislative and institutional frameworks that support diasporic engagement in matters of national development and Diaspora empowerment and advancement
2. Diaspora research agenda that responds to the contemporary

challenges faced in Diaspora participation and engagement in economic growth, social development, political transition and institutional capacity building

3. Monitoring and coordinating machinery to reduce duplications and strengthen synergies that allow for Diaspora participation in national development.

Actions:

The GOJ shall:

- a. *Enhance and enable Consular representation and reach in host countries to cultivate confidence and trust in governance mechanisms*
- b. *Build networks of business and community leaders*
- c. *Establish training and capacity building programmes for national and Diaspora institutions*
- d. *Revise and amend legislation, with consideration for international agreements and formulate relevant policies for enhancing Diaspora engagement*
- e. *Facilitate research cooperation between research institutions in the Diaspora and Jamaica*
- f. *Support the strengthening of Jamaican associations and charitable foundations*
- g. *Devise mechanisms and initiatives to extend its outreach to Jamaicans and their descendants who reside in countries outside of the major Diaspora locations*
- h. *Examine legal and technical requirements needed for the participation of the Diaspora in their home country's national democratic process*
- i. *Design public education campaigns that build awareness among Diaspora members of their rights and responsibilities as well as provide information on policy changes that are favourable to the well-being of the Diaspora*

- j. Implement policy frameworks to protect the rights of migrants*
- k. Mainstream Diaspora issues in all national legislation, policies, plans and programmes*

Diaspora Direct Investments Corporate and Individual Philanthropy

The GOJ recognizes the value of the Diaspora's contribution through philanthropy. Diaspora philanthropy has contributed to the health and well-being of many Jamaicans and the ability of local public service agencies to meet the needs of Jamaicans at home. Philanthropy through social and welfare contributions to schools, hospitals and charitable organizations in Jamaica has been one of the mainstays of diasporic engagement in Jamaica.

Goal: *Increased social remittance contributions and diversified national impact by 2030.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Systems in place to measure and monitor both social and economic remittances received from the Diaspora
2. Increased, sustainable and transparent Diaspora philanthropic contributions towards Jamaica's social development and aligned with national legislation, protocols and priorities
3. Greater alignment of social remittances with identified social development needs in Jamaica
4. Policy coherence that facilitates efficient flow of social remittances
5. Registration, dollar value quantification and accounting of the value of Diaspora philanthropic contributions to the national economy

6. Local Foundations established in accordance with the new Charitable Organizations (Tax Harmonization Provisions) ACT 2013 in Jamaica to facilitate donations and contributions from the Diaspora.

Actions:

To achieve this goal and these outcomes the GOJ shall:

- a. *Improve the registration, regulatory frameworks and streamline processes that recognize and award incentives for Diaspora philanthropic engagements and contributions*
- b. *Encourage the efforts of the Diaspora to establish foundations and funding mechanisms including crowd funding that are aligned to laws governing charities in host countries*
- c. *Promote alignment of donations, equipment and professional services with the national priorities, guidelines, protocols and specifications*
- d. *Develop mechanisms for the measurement and monitoring of philanthropic contributions*
- e. *Increase incentives for philanthropy, including the sale of naming rights, the dedication of a block or certificate of contribution to members of the Diaspora who contribute to Jamaica*
- f. *Promote efforts of the Diaspora to establish Foundations and Crowd Funding websites that are aligned to laws governing charities in host countries where they reside*
- g. *Promote in the Diaspora alignment of donations, equipment, supplies and professional services with national priorities, guidelines, protocols and specifications*

Participation of the Diaspora in political decision-making in Jamaica

The provision for dual citizenship affords the Diaspora a number of benefits and privileges for living, working and investing in Jamaica. However, some members of the Diaspora have expressed a strong interest in participating in the political decision-making process. These issues will be amplified as Jamaica seeks to expand its global engagement of the Diaspora outside of the major locations: USA, Canada and the UK.

Other countries with similar issues have developed strategies for resolving this issue and Jamaica can examine the experience of these countries in the determination of our own approach going forward.

***Goal:** Protocols and mechanisms for involvement of the Diaspora in political decision-making in Jamaica established by 2030.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

Recommendations for modes of involvement of the Diaspora in political decision-making made by the Joint Select Committee of the Houses of Parliament for Diaspora Affairs.

Actions:

The Government of Jamaica will:

1. Examine the experiences and strategies of other countries and consider options for addressing the issue of involvement of the Diaspora in political decision-making in all its dimensions
2. Undertake consultations with the Electoral Commission of Jamaica and the Attorney General regarding options for addressing the issue of involvement of the Diaspora in political decision-making in the context of the current rules that govern general elections in Jamaica. The consultations will consider areas such as provisions for Jamaicans abroad

to vote; legal implications of permitting overseas voting; restrictions to consider on the issue of overseas voting; and the likely impact of the Diaspora's involvement in political decision-making in Jamaica

3. Establish a taskforce with representatives from Diaspora locations to conduct consultations with a wide cross section of Diaspora members and organizations and make recommendations to the Joint Select Committee of the Houses of Parliament for Diaspora Affairs

Diaspora investment, trade and entrepreneurship

Diaspora engagement has the potential to bolster economic advancement in the areas of investment, trade and entrepreneurship. Policies guiding economic engagement should be formulated given the fact that migrants are strategically located in host countries to leverage economic opportunities that can be translated into mutual benefits in Jamaica and countries where they reside. Diaspora communities with access to financial resources have the potential to facilitate investment opportunities from which positive development impacts can be generated.

It is recognized that the reality of a large Diaspora population in global markets, with a ready appetite and affinity for Jamaican culture, products and services offers a ready market for Jamaican businesses and entrepreneurs. Diaspora capital markets can contribute significantly to national development by mobilizing savings for investments and providing long-term alternatives to facilitate wealth creation. As the Diaspora population grows, the acquisition of substantial financial assets beyond their current income and environment creates opportunities for uptake of available financial instruments. The correlation between investments and the resultant reductions in poverty levels in developing countries is testament to the contributions of the Diaspora to countries of origin in the areas of entrepreneurship and foreign direct investment.

Goal: *An enabling environment created to facilitate Diaspora direct investments, joint ventures and promote entrepreneurship for wealth creation, growth and prosperity by 2030.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Menu of incentives and programmes that is supported by legislation to increase Diaspora direct investments
2. Diaspora led investment initiatives related to Jamaica's Growth Agenda – areas such as Agro Parks, Redevelopment of Downtown Kingston and Montego Bay, Animation, Sports, Business Process Outsourcing
3. Increased Diaspora investments through the Jamaica Stock Exchange
4. Increased export of non-traditional food items to Diaspora locations
5. Research and development that provides timely and reliable data on global capital markets and Diaspora financial instruments
6. Improved service delivery of state agencies to respond to Diaspora investment concerns related to ease of doing business
7. Facilitation of transfer of scientific and technological knowledge as well as trade and investment through appropriate institutional mechanisms
8. Increased information sharing with the Diaspora on the benefits of locating trading enterprises in Jamaica, including reduced duties and tariffs into the Caribbean market and the developed economies of the North
9. Partnerships for stakeholder engagement for promoting Diaspora direct investments
10. Promote dialogue on the role of the Diaspora in export facilitation

Actions:

To achieve these outcomes, the GOJ shall:

- a. *Provide information on trade and investment opportunities in Jamaica*
- b. *Bolster mechanisms that support Diaspora led investment initiatives, such as supporting dialogue and consultations on the feasibility of capital markets investments*
- c. *Improve transparency and build capacities within the local financial sector to manage and sustain financial offerings available to the Diaspora*
- d. *Undertake in partnership with IDPs research or feasibility studies on the investment opportunities available to Diaspora communities*
- e. *Build awareness of capital market investment offerings available to the Diaspora*
- f. *Simplify and streamline procedures for opening accounts with Jamaican financial institutions*
- g. *Facilitate the transfer of scientific and technological knowledge as well as encourage trade and investment with Diaspora partners*
- h. *Support the agricultural industry as a route to increasing trade in fresh produce and support the agro-processing industry*
- i. *Enlist the support of the Diaspora in advocating for and protecting Jamaican goods and services through education and updating of developments in the area of trade*
- j. *Increase opportunities for persons in the Diaspora to create livelihoods through the sale and distribution of authentic Jamaican goods and services*

- k. Support the development of more interactive e-commerce platforms for Jamaican businesses at home, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises who trade internationally including with the Diaspora*

Data and Information

Generally there is dearth of consistent and reliable information on the Jamaican Diaspora. The lack of data affects the development of policies and strategies and hinders effective engagement. The government is aware that in order to develop robust policies to inform and support the Diaspora's welfare and well-being, timely, accurate and reliable data on size, location, composition and experiences are critical in ensuring engagement, analysis of migratory trends and development of bilateral agreements on migrants' rights .

Mapping of the Diaspora and developing a methodological framework for estimating the Diaspora composition, experiences, skills and expertise and willingness to participate in areas of national development are some of the critical indicators required for robust planning. Statistics emanating from the Diaspora Mapping Project will enable government's assisted return programmes to better target Diaspora professional groupings that can contribute to national development.

***Goal:** By 2030 timely, accurate and reliable information is available on the composition, interests, skills, expertise and the size and geographical distribution of the Diaspora .*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Research frameworks in place to provide data on the size, interests, geographical location, skills and expertise of the Diaspora

2. Secured database against internal and external threats
3. Improved data quality (reliability, accessibility, timeliness) sharing and communication among data providers and users in keeping with relevant data protection legislation and best practices.
4. Completion of initial Diaspora Mapping Project providing information on skills, expertise and interests of the Diaspora and geographical distribution and clustering of Diaspora members.

Actions:

The government shall:

- a. *Create an integrated database with expanded migration indicators and systemically update datasets to meet current development needs*
- b. *Promote and aggressively market Diaspora mapping project in host countries*
- c. *Develop baseline indicators for setting benchmarks on Diaspora engagement and the expected benefits*
- d. *Develop robust methodology to capture complex transnational migratory patterns*
- e. *Publish annual statistics on Diaspora composition, skills, expertise as well as investment preference to facilitate Diaspora engagement*
- f. *Develop a programme for linking websites in the public and private sectors in Jamaica and the Diaspora with vital Diaspora information*

Remittances

Remittances have emerged as an important contributor to the Jamaican economy, particularly when compared to other economic indicators even in times of economic decline. Private funds remitted by Diaspora communities to their families and members of their communities facilitate economic well-being in Jamaica. These

private funds act as buffers against economic shocks and are utilised primarily for consumption needs in individual households. Based on the linkages between remittances and other socio-economic indicators, it behoves the GOJ to effectively monitor the flow and use of remittances towards sustainable development.

Goal: *By 2030, legal and institutional mechanisms implemented to support the transmission, regulation, measurement and management of remittances.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Mechanisms that stimulate and sustain inflows of remittances from all Diaspora locations worldwide
2. Options for using a portion of remittances for investments created through partnerships with the government and financial institutions in Jamaica
3. Reduction in remittance transfer costs within Diaspora remittance corridors
4. A framework which monitors the impact of remittances on migrant households and national development

Actions:

The GOJ shall:

- a. Implement measures and programmes to effectively capture, monitor and measure cash and non-cash remittances*
- b. Partner with private entities to facilitate research, dialogue, development and implementation for the safe and efficient transmission of remittances*

- c. Launch an education and public awareness campaign on the various uses of remittances*
- d. Provide mechanisms which facilitate dialogue and partnership aimed at lowering the cost of remittances*
- e. Promote greater levels of compliance and competition among remittance transfer agencies and money transfer organizations to support the reduction in transfer costs and the increased benefits to migrants and their households*
- f. Promote effective use of remittances for national development purposes*
- g. Support the use of technology, for example mobile wallets to facilitate financial transactions for the unbanked sector of the Diaspora*

Human Capital Transfer

It is acknowledged that there exists a variety of skills and expertise in the Diaspora that can be harnessed for national development. The GOJ is committed to facilitating the involvement of the Diaspora not only through direct monetary means but also through the facilitation of the participation of experts and skilled members of the Diaspora. The inclusion of the Diaspora through a process of brain circulation, virtual or physical participation, cyclical or permanent return allows for improved human capital transfers. This type of engagement and exchange serves Jamaican businesses based in the Diaspora and support Jamaican organizations in their bid to diversify and access new markets internationally. Areas for collaboration are numerous, ranging from opportunities for enhancing the quality of teaching and training in Jamaican institutions, to the implementation and monitoring of the National Diaspora Policy.

Goal: *By 2030, increased human capital transfers in keeping with national development priorities.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Systems and mechanisms that facilitate structured human capital transfers
2. Effective matching and integration of skills in priority sectors that drive national development
3. National repository of Diaspora skills and expertise
4. Opportunities and incentives for the circulation of knowledge, skills and expertise “brain circulation” via-long term, temporary and cyclical return to fill areas of labour shortage

Actions:

The government shall:

- a. Develop a database of persons in the Diaspora that can be utilised for opportunities in the areas of technical, scientific, professional, intellectual and entrepreneurial exchanges, job placements, consultancies as well as research and development in Jamaica*
- b. Formulate and promote the visibility of sector and skill-specific groups/knowledge networks within the Diaspora, including lawyers, immigration consultants and business entrepreneurs*
- c. Advertise government consultancies and contracts within the Diaspora*
- d. Engage IDPs and foreign direct investments on the possibility of awarding development contracts to Jamaicans within the Diaspora*
- e. Strengthen engagement mechanisms with Diaspora partners and practitioners to fill resource and knowledge gaps*

f. Coordinate public and private partnerships with Diaspora organizations to facilitate the reintegration of returning and returned Jamaicans

Supporting and Protecting Brand Jamaica

The Government of Jamaica recognizes the role and potential of the Diaspora as brand ambassadors. The National Diaspora Policy creates an enabling environment which advances the role of the Diaspora in building, promoting and protecting “Brand Jamaica”. Important gains have been achieved in Jamaica’s property rights regime in recent years and the government recognizes that the Diaspora has a key role in creation, promotion and protection of a strong national brand.

Goal: *To ensure that by 2030, the Diaspora are ambassadors, builders and protectors of “Brand Jamaica”*

Intermediate Outcomes

1. Ratification of international agreements, protocols and the promotion of local actions and legislation that provide greater protection of Intellectual Property for Jamaica’s cultural, creative and sporting industries
2. International Intellectual Property Rights secured for Jamaican products and services related to cultural, creative industries and sports
3. Establishment and renewal of public education programmes and initiatives which support descendants of Jamaicans in the Diaspora purchasing and using Jamaican products and participating in activities that promote Jamaican culture and its creative industries
4. An expanded Diaspora network of Jamaican Brand Ambassadors

5. Greater business opportunities in host countries for forging partnerships with the Diaspora

Actions

The government will:

- a. *Increase information and dissemination campaigns on Intellectual Property Rights, and the value of its protection*
- b. *Coordinate efforts towards educating the Diaspora and Jamaicans on how to protect and avoid misuse of “Brand Jamaica”*
- c. *Expedite measures for the implementation and monitoring of an effective intellectual property and copyright regime*
- d. *Ratify international agreements and establish legislation for improved protection of Jamaica’s creative, cultural and sporting industries*
- e. *Offer Jamaicans and those in the Diaspora greater protection, as well as more authority in making complaints and prevention against misuse or unlawful use and benefit from Jamaican symbols and trademarks*
- f. *Create networks of media professionals within the Diaspora tasked with the responsibility to timely investigate and mitigate some of the negative images and perceptions presented in the international media*
- g. *Expand the network of Diaspora Brand Ambassadors who will represent, advocate, create and facilitate business linkages*

Diaspora Tourism

Diaspora tourism plays a unique and important role in the advancement of the tourism and economic sectors. It presents viable

opportunities in traditional, new and emerging markets for goods and services produced. Diaspora tourism also contributes directly to Jamaica's economic recovery, given its tremendous earning potential. The linkages between Diaspora tourism and other sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing play an integral role in improving our tourism product, sustaining investment and modernizing and diversifying the economic sector to foster growth and job opportunities for Jamaicans and the Diaspora.

Goal: Streamlined and integrated mechanisms to adequately leverage Diaspora tourism for economic and social development by 2030.

Intermediate outcomes

1. Processes and mechanisms that attract Diaspora visitors and allow for effective promotion and growth of medical, business, heritage and events tourism
2. Promotion of tourism campaigns directed at targeted Diaspora populations
3. Safety and security standards are strengthened to reduce threats posed by perceived lawlessness and corruption as well as dangerous transport infrastructure

Actions:

To achieve the Diaspora tourism goal and associated outcomes, the GOJ shall:

- a. Increase the number of festivals and events that promote Jamaica's cultural heritage*
- b. Increase programmes marketing Jamaica's cultural products to the tourism industry, hoteliers and tour operators*

- c. *Continue transport improvements that facilitate a better balance between visitors to the north and north-west coasts and the rest of the country*
- d. *Develop a tourism marketing strategy to sustain, promote and diversify the Diaspora tourist product*
- e. *Leverage the skills, expertise and the capital available within the Diaspora to create a strong community-centred tourism product*
- f. *Explore and facilitate the development and implementation of an incentive programme geared towards medical, business, heritage and eco-tourism*
- g. *Increase occupancy of existing accommodation stock by effective marketing, improving attractions and developing the wider product by upgrading leisure and recreation facilities*
- h. *Expose Jamaican craft producers to international trends by sponsoring participation in international craft fairs*
- i. *Stimulate tourism growth in the south coast region and diversify the national tourism product*
- j. *Improve local capabilities to plan and develop controls and regulations, monitor and track approvals, service customers and enforce planning regulations*

Safety, Security and the Diaspora

The GOJ recognizes the impact of crime on its citizens at home and in the Diaspora, as well as its impact on the economy. Strategies geared at investigation and identification of criminal activities are some of the efforts that have been employed by security officials within host and home countries. Mechanisms such as public education campaigns and advocacy aimed at empowering the Diaspora on matters pertaining to personal safety and security while reducing the risks of deviance and criminality are continuously undertaken.

The National Diaspora Policy also supports the goals of the National Policy and Plan of Action on International Migration and Development to facilitate the reintegration of those among the Diaspora who have been deported. Additionally, the government pledges to heighten its engagement with its international partners, including DFATD in addressing transnational criminal activity.

Goal: *Governance and legislative framework in place which subscribes to the Rule of Law; promotes public order, safety and security.*

Intermediate Outcomes:

1. Expansion of bilateral cooperation that addresses issues of transnational and cross border criminal activities, and immigration policies
2. Strengthened mechanisms to address cyber and financial crimes (money laundering and lottery scamming and extortion)
3. Sustained crime reduction strategy targeting communities in which returned residents reside
4. Public education mechanisms to inform immigrants of public regulations and standards bolstered
5. Increased support (e.g. advice, education), opportunities and institutional capacities for the settlement and reintegration of members of the Diaspora

Actions:

The GOJ shall:

- a. *Enhance safety and security measures through the strengthening of immigration policies*

- b. Forge bilateral agreements which are geared at preventing clandestine migration, human trafficking and labour exploitation of Diaspora members with irregular migrant status*
- c. Strengthen and expand systems and mechanisms for the exchange of information across relevant MDAs and inter-state agencies as well as IDPs to address transnational criminal activities*
- d. Enable the participation of the Diaspora in crime prevention and reduction programmes*
- e. Establish public education programmes on security issues to assist members of the Diaspora with their resettlement in Jamaica*

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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