



# UNDP Jamaica

Support to the National Response and Recovery to Contain the Impact of COVID-19



## 1. Government Response

Jamaica has been directly impacted by the global pandemic with the first recorded case of the virus on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and subsequently, 529 confirmed cases and 9 deaths as of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

COVID-19 is not only a health crisis, but one with far reaching socio-economic impacts threatening macroeconomic stability, jobs and the livelihoods of Jamaicans. The Government has implemented a raft of measures geared at containment such as closure of schools, restrictions on social gatherings, social distancing, reduction of commercial activity to essential services, island-wide curfews and a lockdown of one parish.

These measures, along with significant interruptions in tourism and remittances will have significant impacts on the country's economy. In fact, the Ministry of Finance has stated that Jamaica will likely experience a massive economic shock as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic with the International Monetary Fund projecting a contraction of the economy by 5.6

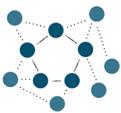
per cent in 2020. As a direct response to COVID-19, the Government has put in place a \$10 billion (Jamaican dollars) stimulus package focusing on support for impacted businesses and individuals who may have lost their jobs.

The stimulus package also includes social protection benefits for the elderly and other vulnerable groups. In addition, the General Consumption Tax (GCT) has recently been reduced from 16.5% to 15%.

The Government has requested the full support from the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the areas of Health, Education, Social Protection, Food Security and Coordination and Assessments. As such, UNDP is collaborating with the RCO and other UN agencies to provide technical support, especially in the areas of Coordination and Assessments in line with the UN Framework for immediate Socio-economic Assessments in response to COVID-19.

## 2. UNDP Support to Prepare, Respond and Recover

### Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Crisis Management and Response



- The Government of Jamaica has articulated the need for a digital emergency coordination platform to help coordinate and integrate articulated responses to the virus, including managing multiple demands/requests of goods and services from ministries, department and agencies and tracking the supply of those goods and services. Working in collaboration with the Government and other UN agencies UNDP is supporting the development of the emergency platform which will be modular to facilitate scaling up as needs evolve.
- In addition, UNDP will also be responding to the immediate needs of the most vulnerable by providing sanitation and care packages. Also, through repurposing of funds from some projects and working with other UN agencies such as UNWOMEN, UNDP will be supporting the provision of psychosocial counselling to persons, especially women who are directly impacted by COVID-19 and may also be experiencing increased Gender-based Violence (GBV).

### Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery



- UNDP will also be collaborating with the other UN agencies, CSOs, the private sector and other stakeholders to provide:
  - Grants to support Community Based Social Enterprise
  - Grants to mining and quarrying operators to kick start businesses
- As Technical Lead for the Social and Economic Response and Recovery, UNDP is collaborating with all UN agencies for the commencement of the initial in country socio-economic assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations. Information gleaned from this assessment will be used as the basis for undertaking more detailed context-specific impact analyses. These assessments will also support the post-COVID Needs Assessment being planned by the Government.

### 3. UNDP Support to UN Country Team

UNDP's support for COVID-19 response in Jamaica is embedded in the overall response of the UNCT. UNDP is already working with other UN agencies such as UNICEF, PAHO, IOM and FAO to provide technical expertise and support in the areas requested by the Government which includes Social Protection and Welfare, Health, Food Security, Education and Coordination and Assessments. UNDP is the technical lead for the joint response aligned to the UN Framework for immediate Socio-economic response to COVID-19. UNDP will be working with UNICEF and UNWOMEN to conduct Socio-economic assessments of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations and collaborating with all the agencies on repurposing of existing programmes to support the response where possible. The support for the emergency coordination platform has been endorsed by all the UN agencies and will enhance coordination for not only the Government but also international development partners.

With the implementation of the cluster approach, UNDP will activate the early recovery cluster under the Humanitarian Country Team to support post-COVID-19 Needs assessments to inform longer term recovery efforts.

### 4. Resources-COVID 19 Response

<b>Areas of Response</b>	<b>Reprogramming (Existing Projects) USD</b>	<b>New Resources USD</b>
Strengthening Health Systems	N/A	N/A
Inclusive and Multi-Sectoral Crisis Management and Response	106,000	N/A
Socio-Economic Impact and Recovery	185,000	n/a
<b>Total</b>		<b>291,000</b>

The resources to support the government of Jamaica to contain and recover from the impacts of COVID-19 have been repurposed from:

- Through the multi-country "Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDer)" Project, USD 100,000 have been repurposed to provide immediate sanitation and care packages to the most vulnerable as well as support for psychosocial interventions.
- Through the "Being LGBTI in the Caribbean" Project, USD 6,000 have been reprogrammed to provide care packages for LGBTI persons
- Approximately USD 50,000 have been repurposed from Phase II of the ACP-EU Development Minerals Project to provide grants for mining and quarry operators.
- From the "Strengthening Human Resilience in Northern Clarendon and West Kingston" Project, USD 135,000 are being repurposed to provide grants to support Community Based Social Enterprise; increase access to clean water; market access to small farmers and support for COVID-19 Rapid Assessment