



Integrated Country Strategy

JAMAICA

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Located at the center of trans-Caribbean trading routes and home to the largest English-speaking population in the Caribbean, Jamaica has emerged as a critical strategic partner to U.S. security and economic interests. The United States was one of the first countries to recognize Jamaica's independence in 1962 and the two countries have deepened their bilateral relationship. Millions of Americans have family connections on the island and are a crucial source of remittances for the Jamaican economy. Similarly, numerous U.S. companies have invested in Jamaica's economy and the U.S. trade surplus with Jamaica exceeds \$2 billion annually. An upwards of 40 percent of Jamaica's economy is dependent on the United States. Jamaica's current government charts a pragmatic foreign policy, seeking closer cooperation with the United States on issues ranging from counternarcotics to cybersecurity while simultaneously maintaining friendly relations with Cuba, China, and the 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Jamaica was among the first in the hemisphere to recognize China and maintains close relations, along with significant Chinese loans and investment in key infrastructure, bauxite, and telecommunications sectors. Jamaica generally votes with CARICOM members in multilateral organizations but has voted with the United States on U.S.-backed resolutions at the Organization of American States on Venezuela and Nicaragua.

Jamaica is a successful democracy characterized by a robust civil society, independent judiciary, and largely free and fair elections. However, the island has struggled with high crime, corruption, and anemic economic growth. Burgeoning numbers of at-risk youth and a shortage of economic opportunities have contributed to extraordinary levels of narcotics and firearms trafficking, money laundering, organized crime, corruption, and other illegal activities such as financial scamming that directly target U.S. citizens. Despite robust government efforts, including targeted States of Emergency, gang violence continues to fuel a homicide rate that consistently ranks among the highest in the world. A lack of institutional capacity and frequent delays in the judicial process often allow crimes to go unpunished.

Despite Jamaica's many assets – including an educated population, agricultural fertility, bauxite deposits, and a first-rate tourism sector – its economy had been stagnant for over three

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decades, with an average annual growth rate of less than 1 percent. Jamaica stabilized its economy through a series of International Monetary Fund-guided economic reforms in 2019. Nevertheless, challenges with poverty, unemployment, security, and health remain and were significantly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. To address these challenges, the government seeks to promote economic recovery, infrastructure development, and reduce violent crime. These issues, along with a lack of preparedness for natural disasters, high energy costs, and continuing discrimination against LGBTQI+ and other vulnerable populations elevate the risk environment for foreign investments.

The Mission's top priority is to harness the diverse ties binding the U.S.-Jamaica partnership to advance our values and interests in the region. Maintaining a robust platform for people-to-people ties and diplomatic engagement with the government that would continue to look at the United States as its most important partner will promote American values, serve our geopolitical, humanitarian, and economic interests, and enable the Mission to provide security for U.S. citizens.

The Mission's first goal is to provide safety and security for U.S. citizens residing in and visiting Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. To achieve this goal, the Embassy will conduct regular outreach and provide immediate response to protect U.S. citizens throughout Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. The Embassy will develop plans to enhance the protection of U.S. citizens during global pandemics and other disasters. Through their combined efforts, the U.S. law enforcement and development agencies represented in the Mission will work to counter threats from transnational criminals, support preventative measures to stop youth from joining criminal enterprises, and support victims of violence. Post will use diplomacy and programs to help the Jamaican government address root causes of violence (including violence against women and children, discrimination against the LGBTQI+ community, and the disproportionately high rates of murders and school dropout rates faced by boys and young men).

Our second goal is to increase Jamaica's healthcare system capacity to manage existing and emerging threats. Post will use assistance and diplomatic engagement to work with the

Jamaican government towards accelerating control of the HIV epidemic and managing COVID-19.

The third goal is to build greater space for the United States and U.S. firms to contribute to a robust and diversified Jamaican economy that would enable increased U.S. exports and investment to the benefit of both Jamaica and the United States. While the Jamaican economy has remained relatively strong in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic compared to others in the region, U.S. assistance in Jamaica's economic recovery must emphasize greater diversification and resilience, particularly in transformative sectors such as renewable energy and digital economy technologies. This will require encouraging Jamaica's choice of trusted vendors and other partners while growing its digital workforce and infrastructure. As a small island developing state, Jamaica is on the front lines of dealing with climate change. U.S. support for advancing climate change goals, including financing to promote renewable energy, and encouraging investment in climate-smart infrastructure, will be critical to help Jamaica mitigate climate challenges while increasing its resilience to natural and manmade disasters.

The Management Objectives enhance the management platform in support of Mission Goals by improving the quality of life, productivity, and morale of the entire Mission, as well as ensuring that work and living environments allow personnel to achieve Mission Goals safely and securely. In addition, the Management Objectives will advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility while ensuring the Mission is fully and appropriately staffed.

2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: A More Safe, Just, and Secure Jamaica for U.S. Citizens and Jamaicans.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** Enhanced bilateral, interagency, local partners, and regional cooperation along with consular operations to increase border security and disrupt and deter transnational and domestic crime that threaten U.S. security and U.S. citizens in Jamaica.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Strengthened institutions and government to promote the rule of law, fight corruption, and improve conditions that drive crime and violence.

Mission Goal 2: Increase Jamaica's healthcare system capacity to manage existing and emerging threats.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Accelerate HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control to ensure Jamaica meets its 2025 goal of 90 percent of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) knowing their status, of whom 90 percent on treatment, and of those, 90 percent virally suppressed.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Government of Jamaica increases its resiliency to COVID-19 and develops COVID-19 mitigation strategies.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Jamaica increases contributions to Global Health Security Agenda.

Mission Goal 3: A more diversified Jamaican economy that also reflects U.S. competitive advantage in ICT and promotes climate resiliency.

- **Mission Objective 3.1:** Jamaica's economy becomes more sustainable, digital, energy efficient, and inclusive. Identify U.S. trade, investment, and public-private partnerships to promote a more sustainable, digital, energy efficient, and inclusive economy.
- **Mission Objective 3.2:** Implement effective strategies to counter foreign power influence that is adversarial to US economic and national security interests.

Management Objective 1: Build a cost-effective and agile management platform that allows personnel to achieve Mission goals safely and securely, while promoting wellness and community.

Management Objective 2: USDH and locally employed staffing efforts increasingly advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility to cultivate a fully and appropriately staffed mission able to advance Mission goals and Objectives.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 | A More Safe, Just, and Secure Jamaica for U.S. Citizens and Jamaicans.

Description | Jamaica is a tourist destination for U.S. citizens and is located in a region critical to the U.S. government. Jamaica has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, and 70 percent of the homicides are gang related. Therefore, the U.S. government will continue to provide security related assistance to the Government of Jamaica to decrease its linkages to transnational organized crime which threaten the United States, Jamaica, and the region.

Objective 1.1 | Enhanced bilateral, interagency, local partners, and regional cooperation along with consular operations to protect U.S. citizens, as well as increase border security and disrupt and deter transnational and domestic crime that threaten U.S. security and U.S. citizens in Jamaica

- **Justification** | Due to Jamaica's geographic position in the western Caribbean, its expansive and difficult to patrol coastline with over 150 unmanned seaports, high volume of tourist travel, and status as a major containerized cargo transshipment hub, the country is used for the trafficking of illicit items such as drugs, firearms, and bulk currency. Over 70 percent of homicides in Jamaica are gang related. These gangs use financial scams bilking U.S. citizens of over \$1 billion which is then used to fund their criminal operations. The Government of Jamaica has a poor record of responding to violent crimes committed against U.S. citizen tourists, especially those sexual in nature.
- **Linkages** | The objective links to Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) Goal 1 "Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad" by undertaking efforts to "Counter instability, transnational crime, and violence that threaten U.S. interests by strengthening citizen-responsive, governance, security, democracy, human rights, and rule of law."

- **Risks** | The risk of not achieving this objective is the increase in the number of U.S. citizen victims of violent crime in Jamaica. Furthermore, given Jamaica's geographic location transnational organized crime will increase, including the proliferation of illicit trafficking in narcotics, firearms, and bulk currency which finance criminals and threaten U.S. security and U.S. citizens in Jamaica.

Objective 1.2 | Strengthened government and independent institutions to uphold the rule of law, fight corruption, and improve conditions that drive crime and violence.

- **Justification** | Jamaica suffers from high rates of violent crime and violence—much of which is linked to transnational crime that affects the United States. While law enforcement is important, it is not sufficient on its own to resolve this issue. Corruption, inconsistent application of the rule of law, poverty, and limited opportunity create conditions that allow criminal activity to thrive. The Jamaican government, private sector, non-profit sector, and institutions (such as universities) must strengthen their capacity to uphold the rule of law, reign in corruption, and address societal issues (including those pertaining to male youth) that fuel crime and violence. As Jamaican criminal networks conduct criminal activity in the United States and throughout a region essential to U.S. national security, the U.S. government has an interest in helping Jamaican entities increase this capacity, develop, and deliver programs that support vulnerable communities, and make investments in its citizens' futures. As such, the United States will provide development assistance to support the achievement of this objective.
- **Linkages** | Efforts under this objective support the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), a major USG effort to decrease crime and violence in the region. Furthermore, the objective links to Joint Strategic Plan (JSP) Goal 1 "Protect America's Security at Home and Abroad" by undertaking efforts to "Counter instability, transnational crime, and violence that threaten U.S. interests by strengthening citizen-responsive, governance, security, democracy, human rights, and rule of law." Its focus on root causes, working with communities and various Jamaican bodies also links with

JSP Objective 2.2: “Promote healthy, educated and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives”.

- **Risks |** The risk of not achieving this objective is the continuance or increase of high rates of crime and violence in Jamaica. Jamaica’s domestic crime and violence is linked to transnational criminal organizations whose activities target and negatively affect U.S. domestic security. Furthermore, crime and violence sap the Jamaican economy’s potential, as well as its citizens’ potential. Failure to address underlying issues will require the U.S. to commit even more resources to fight crime at home and in the region. To mitigate this risk, programming works directly with the GoJ and other stakeholders to ensure U.S. efforts are operating on common ground, that programming is coordinated and based on local expertise, and that sustainability is factored in at the outset.

Mission Goal 2 | Increase Jamaica’s healthcare system capacity to manage existing and emerging threats.

Description | Jamaica’s health care system has made significant strides since independence. Nonetheless, ongoing epidemics such as HIV/AIDS and recent crises such as COVID-19 have exposed the limitations of Jamaica’s health care system to manage and respond to health threats. In addition to helping Jamaica address the HIV/AIDS epidemic and mitigate COVID-19, investments can also be made to strengthen Jamaica’s health systems so that they are better poised to identify, prevent, and respond to health threats. In helping Jamaica address HIV/AIDS, COVID-19, and gaps in its health system, the United States is investing in its own health security—limiting the effects of existing diseases on its own population and building the partnerships and network to manage future threats.

Objective 2.1 | Accelerate HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control to ensure Jamaica meets its 2025 goal of 90 percent of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) knowing their status, 90 percent on treatment, and 90 percent virally suppressed. (Lead: PEPFAR)

- **Justification** | Outside of sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean has some of the highest infection and prevalence rates. HIV/AIDS has a demonstrated potential to undermine a country's stability—generating massive human and economic costs. Achieving epidemic control throughout the region requires epidemic control in Jamaica, which has the highest number of cases in the English-speaking Caribbean.
- **Linkages** | This ICS objective is directly linked to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). PEPFAR's goal is to achieve epidemic control in the countries where it operates. Epidemic control is best gauged by a country's ability to achieve the UNAIDS "95-95-95" cascade. U.S. assistance programming supports Jamaica's efforts to reach "95-95-95." It also links with JSP Objective 2.2: "Promote healthy, educated and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives." By focusing on epidemic control in Jamaica and preventing it from affecting the United States, assistance also links with JPS objective 3.4: "Project American values and leadership by preventing the spread of disease and providing humanitarian relief."
- **Risks** | Not achieving epidemic control in Jamaica will undermine efforts to reach epidemic control in the region. While assistance faces programmatic risks such as host-country capacity and resources constraints, assistance activities mitigate this risk through inclusive strategic development with Jamaican stakeholders, partnerships with the GoJ, NGOs, and the private sector, emphasizing sustainability, and adhering to a learning and adapting approach to program implementation.

Objective 2.2 | Government of Jamaica increases its resiliency to COVID-19 and develops COVID-19 mitigation strategies. (Lead: CDC and USAID; Contributors: DOD, State, PEPFAR)

- **Justification** | COVID-19 has taken an extreme toll on the Jamaican population and its economy. While the GoJ has been aggressive and focused on its efforts to mitigate COVID-19, the capacity of the country's health system has been breached, with hospital bed capacity oversubscribed and periodic episodes of hospitals having to admit only emergency non-COVID-19 cases. Meanwhile, vaccination rates remain stubbornly low. (As of 2022 Jamaica had the lowest vaccination rate in the Caribbean outside of Haiti.) The U.S. has interest in helping Jamaica mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Doing so will provide greater stability to a key ally in the region and strengthen the United States' own health security. Thus, the United States is aiding strengthen Jamaica's ability to identify, prevent, treat, and care for COVID-19. It also is helping Jamaica with its vaccination efforts by providing commodities (vaccines), implementation assistance (logistics, planning, cold chain development), and supporting efforts to understand and decrease vaccine hesitancy.
- **Linkages** | COVID assistance links directly with goals and objectives of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and supplemental legislation that proceeded it. It also links with JSP Objective 2.2: "Promote healthy, educated and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives." By focusing on epidemic control in Jamaica and preventing it from affecting the United States, assistance also links with JPS objective 3.4: "Project American values and leadership by preventing the spread of disease and providing humanitarian relief."
- **Risks** | As the pandemic has shown, what affects one country can affect another. Failure to support Jamaica's ability to mitigate COVID-19 could expose the United States to new strains of the virus. Furthermore, if Jamaica is unable to manage COVID-19, its economic and social stability could be gravely impaired. As with HIV/AIDS assistance, programmatic risks such as host-country capacity and resources constraints exist. COVID-19 assistance activities will also mitigate this risk through inclusive strategic

development with Jamaican stakeholders, partnerships with the GoJ, NGOs, and the private sector, emphasizing sustainability, and adhering to a learning and adapting approach to program implementation.

Objective 2.3 | Increase Jamaica’s Contributions to Global Health Security (Lead: CDC, USAID, and State.)

- **Justification** | By working with partner countries, the United States can increase their abilities to manage and mitigate the outbreak and spread of deadly infectious diseases. In doing so, this decreases the chances that such outbreaks will affect the United States, decreases the potential strains on the U.S. health care system, and decreases the potential for a disease to devastate and destabilize valued allies.
- **Linkages** | Efforts under this objective will directly link the United States Global Health Security Agenda. They also link to JSP Objective 2.2: “Promote healthy, educated and productive populations in partner countries to drive inclusive and sustainable development, open new markets and support U.S. prosperity and security objectives.” By investing in Jamaica’s health systems’ ability to manage disease threats, it will also be investing in the United States’ health security, which is in line with JPS objective 3.4: “Project American values and leadership by preventing the spread of disease and providing humanitarian relief”.
- **Risks** | Funding is required for Post to support Jamaica and to help it become a GHSA partner. Failure to secure this funding will limit Post’s ability to achieve this objective and will leave a gap in the region’s GHSA network. To mitigate this risk, Post will invest political capital to make Jamaica a bilateral partner in the GHSA. Furthermore, Post employees will use their diplomatic and technical expertise to help Jamaica understand the value of GHSA and Jamaica’s role within it.

Mission Goal 3 | A more diversified Jamaican economy that also reflects U.S. competitive advantage in ICT and promotes climate resiliency.

Description | This goal seeks to leverage U.S. competitive advantages in technology, geographic proximity, logistics, and product support to strengthen commercial ties and contribute to a diverse Jamaican economy. This is to maintain the U.S. as the preferred trade partner. This would also increase U.S. exports, bilateral trade, and U.S. investment to the benefit of both Jamaicans and Americans. The U.S. will assist Jamaica in its transition to a digital economy through embracing U.S. technology and educational resources to create a digital workforce. With the support of U.S. technical assistance, Jamaica will adopt more renewable energy and reduce its carbon footprint to advance global climate goals. Finally, Jamaica will develop its climate resiliency to respond to natural disasters and provide regional leadership on mitigating the impact of climate change.

Objective 3.1 | Jamaica's economy becomes more sustainable, digital, energy efficient, and inclusive. Identify U.S. trade, investment, and public-private partnerships to promote a more sustainable, digital, energy efficient, and inclusive economy.

- **Justification** | Increased economic ties with Jamaica support U.S. businesses further contributing to the trade surplus with Jamaica. Trade, investment, and inclusive economic growth also contribute to the stability of Jamaica, an important regional partner. Jamaica's use of energy-efficient technologies reduces carbon emissions and increases partnerships with U.S. renewable energy providers.
- **Linkages** | This goal links directly to USAID Development Objective – Self-reliance gains protected by increased resilience to natural disasters.
- **Risks** | Global supply chain disruptions, a slow recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic due to low vaccination rates, corruption, and crime and violence all pose risks to growing Jamaica's economy.

Objective 3.2 | Implement effective strategies to counter foreign power influence that is adversarial to U.S. economic and national security interests.

- **Justification** | Given Jamaica's proximity to the United States, its large diaspora community, and history of aligned interests on geopolitical issues, it is critical to reinforce our role as the country's closest economic and national security partner and counter the growing influence of authoritarian countries. The United States can reinforce this role by expanding commercial engagement with Jamaica based on leveraging U.S. technological and logistical competitive advantage and governed by the principles of fairness and transparency applicable to open market competition, and in keeping with the rule of law.
- **Linkages** | Joint Strategic Plan 1.4 - Increase capacity and strengthen resilience of our partners and allies to deter aggression, coercion, and malign influence by state and non-state actors.
- **Risks** | Geopolitical rivals continue to exert growing influence on Jamaican government and public. Untrusted vendors already comprise part of Jamaica's technological networks and, left unchecked, could shape the future of Jamaica's digital economy. Geopolitical rivals continue to exert growing influence on Jamaican government and public. Untrusted vendors already comprise part of Jamaica's technological networks and, left unchecked, could shape the future of Jamaica's digital economy.

4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 | Build a cost-effective and agile management platform that allows personnel to achieve Mission goals safely and securely, while promoting wellness and community.

- **Justification** | The U.S. government presence in Jamaica has expanded from 76 USDH authorized positions in 2010 to 104 in 2021 with multiple new agencies represented and corresponding LE staff growth. A stagnant Management platform has not kept pace with this growth, hampering service provision to support our diplomatic mission. Persistent issues contribute to morale challenges among both American and Jamaican staff. The Management sections will focus on providing agile, modern tools to support diplomacy, with personnel well-versed in the use of technology for information sharing and collaboration across sections and agencies in furtherance of overarching Mission goals. Post will develop Quality Management and Customer Service protocols aligned with the Department's Collaborative Management Initiative (CMI) that facilitate regular feedback from mission customers with the goal of improving service. For a medium-sized mission, Embassy Kingston operates significant infrastructure including a NEC, a large and challenging housing facility, and three government-owned residences. This requires a constant focus on physical infrastructure that promotes operational efficiency, greening goals, and quality of life, all in an operating environment that is subject to disruption by natural events. Post must enhance its capacity to maintain and develop these facilities by ensuring it has adequate resources and that the workforce is invested and able to execute projects in a timely manner.
- **Linkages** | Links directly to WHA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan Priority 2.2: Assess, redesign, and reengineer organizational structures and business processes to promote teamwork, collaboration, cross-functional operations, and transparency and to deconstruct organizational siloes that lead to exclusive cultures and to flawed decision making.”

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- **Risks** | Over focus on technology could lead to the loss of face-to-face interaction. With more remote access work, customer service standards will need to be monitored to ensure they are still being met. Management will need to balance analytics with customer service.

Management Objective 2 | USDH and locally employed staffing efforts increasingly advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility to cultivate a fully and appropriately staffed mission able to advance Mission Goals and Objectives.

- **Justification** | Post has historically received low interest in State Department positions. Post must increase interest in serving at U.S. Embassy Jamaica to attract bidders from all stages of their career while advancing DEIA goals. Post will focus on recruiting, training, and retaining employees who best support our mission, while fostering diversity and inclusion across the mission through targeted recruitment. In addition, the Management platform is not adequately staffed to support the growing medium-sized mission. Specifically, Post currently does not have a USDH Medical Provider to provide medical support to over 200 American employees and their family members. Also, Human Resource support is regional. Post needs an on-site USDH Human Resource Officer.
- **Linkages** | Links to National Gender strategy. It also links to WHA Strategic Plan Priority 1.3: “Leaders shall develop and implement broad outreach strategies to attract leaders from a variety of sources to the organization, consistent with merit system principles, through strategic partnership with affinity organizations...” and Priority 2.1: “Foster a culture of inclusion and engagement by employing culture change strategies such as the New Inclusion Quotient (New IQ) Initiative and Diversity and Inclusion Dialogues. Provide training and education on cultural competency, inclusion and unconscious bias, for all employees.”

- **Risks** | Managers will need to learn and focus on ways to conduct fair and balanced interviews and implement recruitment strategies that reach a diverse population to ensure that diverse candidates apply for positions.