

Evaluation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Support to Jamaica 2017/18 – 2024/25

Final Report
December 2025



The Commonwealth

EVALUATION SERIES 125

Evaluation of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Support to Jamaica 2017/18–2024/25

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2017/18-2024/25.

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Acknowledgments

This is an internal review conducted by the Strategy, Evaluation and Learning (SEL) section within the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnership and Digital Division (SPPDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The SEL section provides commissions and manages external evaluations of the Secretariat's programmes and also conducts internal evaluations. The evaluation team was led by Katherine Marshall Kissoon, with research and drafting support by Hayley D'Souza.

The evaluation team thanks the government officials and stakeholders in Jamaica who generously shared their time, experience and expertise to support this country review. In particular, the team is grateful to the Planning Institute of Jamaica for its facilitation of the field mission, including enabling contacts with government and donor representatives. Our thanks also to Secretariat colleagues, who provided valuable insights, shared programme information and contributed to validating the findings.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

CABOS	Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum
CCFAH	Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEP	Commonwealth Elections Professionals
CFTC	Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
COMSEC	Commonwealth Assessed Contribution Fund
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CVE	countering violent extremism
CYP	Commonwealth Youth Programme
EBR	Extra Budgetary Resource
ECJ	Electoral Commission of Jamaica
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the UN)
FY	financial year
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GDP	gross domestic product
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JAMPRO	Jamaica Promotions Corporation
JIS	Jamaica Information Service
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans
MTF	Medium-Term (Socio-economic Policy) Framework
NAP	National Adaptation Plan

NES	National Export Strategy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PCJ	Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica
PIFS	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
PIOJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
PPP	public–private partnership
PWD	people with disabilities
RJ	restorative justice
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPPDD	Strategy, Portfolio, Partnership and Digital Division
STATIN	Statistical Institute of Jamaica
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWI	University of the West Indies
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary

The country review of the Commonwealth Secretariat's engagement with Jamaica during financial years 2017/18 to 2024/25, assessed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Secretariat's support. Within the broad coverage of engagements over that period, the review assessed 66 project actions where there was sufficient maturity and data to support an assessment of results. It reviewed more than 178 documents and web resources and drew on 64 key informant interviews across 21 institutions in Jamaica.

The review found the portfolio of products and services delivered to Jamaica since 2017 were aligned with priorities in Jamaica's Vision 2030 and particularly SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 13 (climate action), and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions).

Interventions were highly relevant to progressing policy issues of priority for Jamaica. The Secretariat contributed to improved internal coherence and policy co-ordination in the areas of Countering Violent Extremism (CVE), Persons with Disabilities, sport for development and trade. The Secretariat levelled its convening role and political influence to convene partners and stakeholders and support intra-government co-ordination mechanisms.

The Secretariat also contributed to the enhanced knowledge and capabilities of Jamaican Government officials and stakeholders in the areas of CVE, restorative justice, trade, sport and natural resources. Further technical support may have enhanced Jamaica's ability to develop evidence-informed policies to support the rights of PWD and in the development value of diaspora finance. The review found that opportunities for deeper co-ordination and more sustained engagement could have been achieved through more deliberate collaboration with CARICOM's regional programmes and development partners.

While the impact of Secretariat programming in climate finance was quantified, contributions to outcomes in other technical areas were generally difficult to evidence. Nonetheless, the review found

some evidence of contribution towards higher-level results in natural resources, electoral and political practices, and trade.

The Secretariat's work had the greatest potential to drive sustained change in Jamaica when it was delivered through a programmatic approach that engaged in-country and regional stakeholders with long-term interest and institutional capabilities. While Jamaica engaged well with the Secretariat's convening across various thematic issues, in-country national outcomes were more evident through direct technical assistance.

Democracy and Governance: Secretariat support in Jamaica contributed to improved restorative justice practices, disability rights implementation, effective complaint resolution and transparent campaign financing in elections practices. In addition, increased awareness and strengthened inter-agency co-ordination to counter violent extremism supported national efforts to build social resilience.

Sustainable Development: The Secretariat's engagements contributed to improved trade policy implementation, debt management and debt transparency, responsible natural resource governance, and enabling conditions for diaspora investment and infrastructure development. In addition, early advocacy and technical support helped inform emerging partnerships and policy integration in sport for development and diaspora financing.

Resilience and Climate Action: Secretariat support contributed to enhanced access to climate finance, improved the national climate pipeline project quality, and enhanced national capacity for climate finance and policy. In parallel, analytical and knowledge support on diaspora financing helped inform development financing options and diaspora policy formulation.

What worked well?

- **Coherence and co-ordination between the Secretariat and local partners** enabled sustainable results in countering violent extremism, strengthening the rights of people with disabilities, leveraging sport for development and in trade policy.

- **National advisers** placed in-country to enhance access to climate finance, support legislative amendments, and provide legislative and policy inputs were effective in securing sustainable outcomes.
- Stakeholders valued the **high-quality, tailored technical** support, professionalism, political sensitivity and the responsiveness of Secretariat technical staff, project flexibility in the face of emergent challenges, and opportunities to learn from across Commonwealth regions.
- The Secretariat leveraged its convening power to support **policy advocacy at the regional and national levels through convening multisectoral stakeholders** on the rights of persons with disabilities, countering violent extremism and promoting sport for development.
- **National co-ordination** is enabled by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), which leads on strategic management of Vision 2030 and co-ordinates the portfolios of multilateral and bilateral development partners. Engaging central planning agencies such as PIOJ as a strategic partner can mitigate the downsides of the Secretariat's lack of country presence and enhance the coherence of Secretariat support.
- Greater **co-ordination with regional priorities**, particularly through the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), could enable more relevant and effective targeting of support.
- Project actions should be contextually informed, based on clear problem and stakeholder analysis, politically sensitive and adaptable to emergent challenges.
- To ensure stronger outcome orientation, the Secretariat's interventions, particularly training, must be built within clear programme objectives with supportive actions to address institutional capacity building.

Area of support	Outcomes with evidence of Secretariat contributions.
Democracy and Governance	
Restorative justice	• Improved justice system staff handling complex cases using restorative justice approaches. • Enhanced awareness and understanding among justice system stakeholders on the value of restorative justice approaches to improved access to justice
Countering violent extremism	• Enhanced awareness of Jamaica's vulnerabilities to violent extremism; • Strengthened national capacity for inter-agency, co-ordinated response to violent extremism.
Campaign financing legislation	• Enhanced regulatory framework and institutional capacity for transparent practices and governance in campaign financing.
Electoral support	• The Jamaica's Political Ombudsman developed capacity for improved handling of complaints.
Rights of people with disabilities	• Improved implementation of the Disability Act (2014), including through a tribunal for complaints.
Sustainable Development	
Trade	• Revised Foreign Trade Policy and Action Plan has been under implementation since 2017. • Strengthened positions in trade agreements • The opening of a dry-docking facility worth US\$37 million emerged in part through technical advisory.

(Continued)

Area of support	Outcomes with evidence of Secretariat contributions.
Debt management	Improved debt transparency since 2017 through institutionalising fiscal responsibility and regular publications of independent oversight reports validated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank.
Sport for development	- Integration of sports for development within Vision 2030. - Early advocacy foundational to current partnerships – University of the West Indies (UWI)/Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
Natural resource management	- Enhanced capacity of government officials to manage the petroleum sector more effectively. - Improved economic terms in negotiated contracts with investors. - Enhanced policies in mining, minerals and petroleum.
Resilience and Climate Action	
Climate finance	- US\$7.26 million in climate funding secured through the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub to address climate adaptation and readiness, representing a 1:3.6 return on investment. - Increased number of high-quality projects in the pipeline of Funds. - Enhanced readiness for climate policies, projects preparation and finance management
Small States Resilience	
Diaspora finance	Improved data and knowledge leveraging the diaspora to finance development informed national policy formulation.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The Secretariat's Country Evaluation Series aims to respond to member countries' need for evidence-based reporting on how countries are benefiting from the programmes and actions of the Secretariat. They seek to validate reported results and identify emergent outcomes due to the Secretariat's actions.

This report presents the findings of an assessment of the Secretariat's engagement with Jamaica since financial year 2017/18. This is one in a series of country reviews conducted by the Secretariat in the current strategic period and the first of the Secretariat's support to Jamaica.¹

The report is structured as follows.

- 1. Introduction.** The remainder of this section describes the evaluation objectives, methodologies and limitations.
- 2. Context.** This section sets the planning and implementation context for Jamaica and the Secretariat during the period under review and describes the country portfolio being evaluated.
- 3. Findings.** This section draws on an evaluation framework of performance to assess the intervention outputs and their contributions to outcomes in Jamaica, identifying success factors and lessons.
- 4. Discussion, lessons and conclusion.** This section reflects on the outcomes and the Secretariat's contribution to the country's Sustainable Development agenda, discusses the emergent themes, summarises lessons and suggests measures to enhance the effectiveness of Secretariat actions, before concluding.

1.2 Evaluation objectives and methodology

The terms of reference identified objectives as follows².

- Review the Secretariat's engagements, projects and actions to understand its contribution to Jamaica's development objectives.
- Assess intended and unintended outcomes and impact, including the Secretariat's gender and youth cross-cutting outcomes
- Identify lessons to strengthen future programme planning and management.

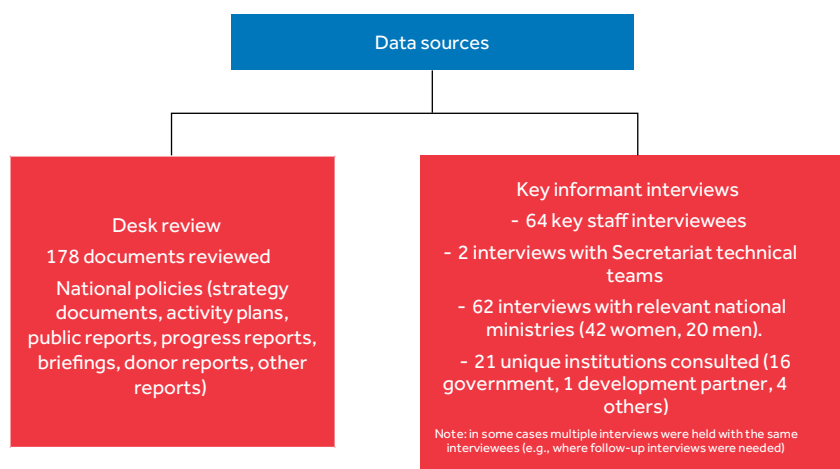
An evaluation framework was developed based on the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.³ This analytical approach provided guidance for assessing performance and results of the Secretariat's actions. While the depth of available monitoring and evaluation information was insufficient for an assessment of impact, the review nonetheless considered the potential for impact through mapping the alignment between overall evidence for progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The review utilised a qualitative approach using two main data collection methods: a desk review and interviews (Figure 1.1). The desk review drew on project documentation, government and other secondary and third-party reports. Interviews were conducted with in-country stakeholders during and after a country visit in November 2022. The Commonwealth Secretariat's programme teams were actively engaged to supplement project documentation and contextual understanding and to validate the findings and lessons. The analysis was framed in the context of the strategic pillars

¹ Included in the country evaluation series are Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Cameroon, Fiji, The Gambia, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Tonga.

² Terms of References were informed by consultations with the Jamaica High Commission in London.

³ OECD (2021), *Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully*, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/543e84ed-en>

Figure 1.1 Evaluation of data sources and methods of data collection.

of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Strategic Plan over the two strategic periods under review.⁴

The evaluation considered the quality of evidence for each evaluation criteria. However, given the significant limitations found with the data and evidence, the ratings were not relied on to inform the findings.

1.3 Limitations

The review faced several limitations.

First, there was limited outcome information in project documentation. While high-level results are targeted, projects are not consistently monitored at the outcome level and there is no overarching framework for country-level impact – making it difficult to directly align interventions with outcomes. Second, information on older projects

was hard to retrieve due to weak knowledge management and staff turnover, reducing access to relevant data and interviewees.

Fieldwork also coincided with the UNFCCC's COP-27 (the 27th Conference of the Parties), limiting access to some in-country stakeholders. In addition, the short duration of the country visit limited follow-up. The team adopted a flexible approach, allowing for some follow-ups to be completed virtually and worked closely with the Planning Institute of Jamaica to reach key officials.

Finally, there was risk of confirmation and courtesy bias, as targeted interviewees might offer more positive feedback, while indirect stakeholders and unintended outcomes could be missed. The team sought to mitigate this risk through third-party data triangulation.

⁴ Relevant intermediate outcomes under the previous Strategic Plan are reported under the new Strategic Plan pillars. For example, intermediate outcomes in 2017/18 under the 'Public Institutions' pillar of the 2017/18–2020/21 Strategic Plan are reported under the Democracy and Governance pillar (2021/22–2024/25), https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/migrated/inline/CommonwealthSecretariatStrategic_Plan_17_21.pdf Commonwealth Secretariat (2021), 'Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan 2021/22–2024/25', https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-01/Strategic%20Plan%2021_25.pdf

2. Review Context

The review context below describes the baseline situation and key developments for Jamaica and the Secretariat over the review period (2017–2024), with reference to the main policy and practice areas prioritised in the the Strategic Plans.

2.1 Jamaica economic and social overview

Between 2017 and 2024, Jamaica's economy recorded modest annual growth of 1–2 per cent, absorbing the sharp 9.9 per cent contraction in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Key sectors such as tourism and agriculture have recovered, but growth remains constrained by limited economic diversification, high energy costs and infrastructure bottlenecks. Inflation persisted across the period, driven by exposure to global supply chain disruptions and commodity price volatility. Overall, the poverty rate reached a low of 8.2 per cent in 2023, strongly attributable to the post-COVID economic rebound, increased employment (unemployment hitting a record low of 4.2 percent in 2024) and the strengthening of social safety nets.

Central government debt declined from 101.2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017 to 92.2 per cent in 2019 but surged to 106.3 per cent in 2020 amid pandemic-related spending. The Government of Jamaica aims to reduce public debt to 60 per cent of GDP by 2028. Despite structural challenges, poverty levels improved, with the population living below the upper middle-income threshold (US\$6.85/day) falling from 19 per cent in 2017 to 12 per cent in 2023. During 2014–2020, remittance inflows to Jamaica averaged US\$2.4 billion annually, approximately 16 per cent of Jamaica's GDP.^{5,6} Unemployment dropped from 7.4 per cent in 2017 to 4.1 per cent in 2022, while youth unemployment declined from 25.4 per cent

to 14.8 per cent by 2024. However, informal employment and reduced average working hours remain concerns.

The COVID-19 crisis severely disrupted tourism and trade, leading to a 10 per cent GDP contraction in 2020. The government adjusted fiscal targets to support health and social spending, and reduced value-added tax (VAT).

Jamaica's geographic characteristics exposes it to severe climate risks. Though responsible for less than 0.02 per cent of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the island faced Hurricane Irma (2017), a major drought (2020) and Hurricane Beryl (2024) – the earliest Atlantic Category 5 storm on record. Coastal erosion threatens the 60 per cent of the population living along the coast, disrupting agriculture, fisheries and tourism, and straining public infrastructure and resilience.

Social challenges remain pressing. Violent crime – particularly gang-related crime – persists, with a homicide rate of 60.9 per 100,000, well above the global average of 6.1. Corruption, organised crime and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) persons further strain social cohesion. Gender-based violence continues to affect one in four women. Reforms since 2017 include the 2021 Revised National Policy for Gender Equality and legislation like the Sexual Harassment Act (2022) and Domestic Violence Amendment Act (2023). Jamaica improved its Gender Inequality Index ranking from 96 (2017) to 88 (2022).

In terms of politics, the Jamaica Labour Party won a renewed mandate in the 2020 elections. The government has since initiated constitutional reforms, including a commitment to become a republic.

2.2 National development priorities

Jamaica has a co-ordinating forward vision in its Vision 2030, which sets out its priorities and strategies for realising the Sustainable Development Goals. The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), which houses the Vision 2030 Team, among others, is the principal national planning co-ordination mechanism in the country. Vision 2030 Jamaica is implemented through a

5 Key forms of diaspora finance included: remittances from Jamaicans living overseas; investment in local businesses; philanthropy, including donations to charitable causes and organisations in Jamaica; tourism as many members of the diaspora regularly visited Jamaica; and support through purchasing of exported goods and services.

6 Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (n.d.), 'National Diaspora Policy', <https://mfaft.gov.jm/site/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/National-Diaspora-Policy-1.pdf>

series of three-year Medium-Term Socio-economic Policy Frameworks (MTFs).⁷

Jamaica's strategic priorities have evolved since 2018 as the country adjusts to the changing political and economic landscape. This period overlaps with the two strategic periods under review. A review of strategic alignment between the national and strategic plan priorities identifies the following main findings.

- On the Secretariat's Strategic Plan 2017–2021, 12 of 18 intermediate outcomes are identifiable in Jamaica's MTF priorities.
- In the Strategic Plan 2021–2025, 11 of 13 intermediate outcomes were assessed as being aligned with Jamaica's MTF priorities.

2.3 Development partners and international relations

Development partners

Jamaica's multilateral partners are the International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN agencies, the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), while the main bilateral partners are the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. The Green Climate

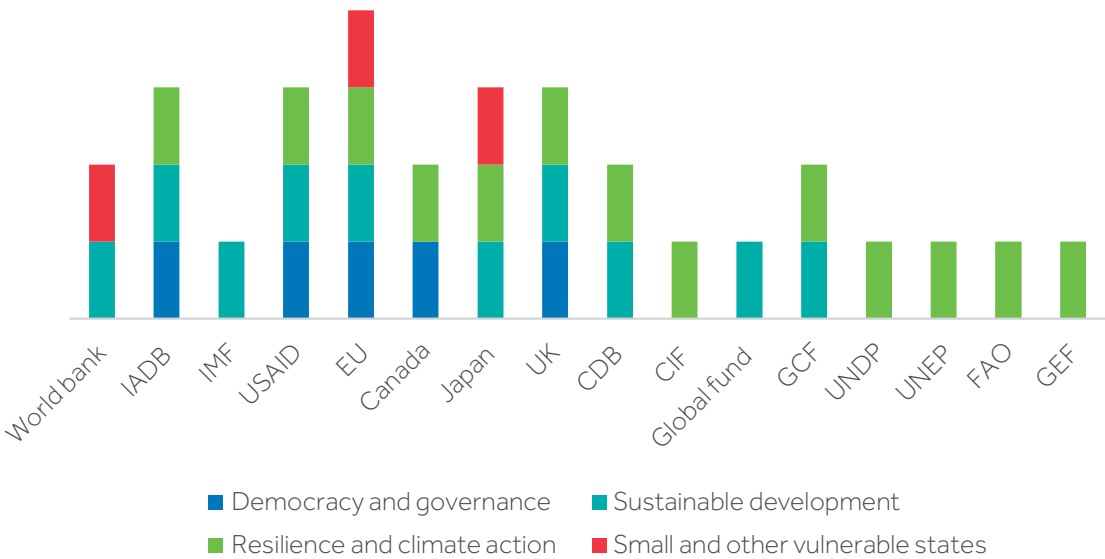
Fund (GCF) and Climate Investment Fund (CIF) are significant contributors to climate financing and green initiatives. These development partners and their overlapping portfolio interests are illustrated below in Figure 2.1.⁸

Figure 2.1 shows the significant overlapping interest from development partners in Jamaica, mapped from the perspective of the Secretariat's strategic pillars and programme priorities. This is particularly with respect to sustainable development (10 of the 13 mapped) and climate resilience (13 of the 16 mapped). A more limited number of partners (3 of the 13 mapped) are working with Jamaica to support its vulnerabilities as a small island state. Five (5) of the 13 are working with Jamaica on Democracy and Governance themes also supported by the Secretariat.

International relations

Jamaica maintains diplomatic relations with more than 150 countries across the Americas, Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Middle East.⁹ Historically, Jamaica has had close ties with the United Kingdom, but now has strong trade, financial and cultural relations with the United States, alongside other English-speaking Caribbean countries. Jamaica's membership of international organisations is outlined below.

Figure 2.1 Intersections between development partners' activities and the Secretariat's strategic pillars.



7 Vision 2030 Jamaica (n.d.), 'Update on Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan and MF 2015–2018', www.vision2030.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2021/08/Update-on-Vision-2030-Jamaica-2015-2016.pdf

8 A detailed analysis by development partner can be found in Annex C.

9 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (2024), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Homepage, <https://mfaft.gov.jm/site/bilateral-relations-department/>

Jamaica is a signatory to seven of nine core international human rights treaties (excluding the *Convention Against Torture* and the *Convention for the Protection of all Persons against Enforced Disappearance by the States Parties*).

Jamaica is a member of the United Nations (UN), the Forum of Small States within the UN system, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, the Association of Caribbean States and the Alliance of Small Island States.

Jamaica was a founding member of the Caribbean Development Bank and a founding state of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM). Jamaica is therefore part of the European Union (EU)-CARICOM economic partnership agreement (EU-CARICOM EPA).

2.4 Secretariat delivery context

At the 2015 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta, the Rt Hon. Patricia Scotland, QC, was appointed Secretary-General and took office on 1 April 2016.

In the four-year Strategic Plan, 2017/18 to 2020/21, the Secretariat's strategic results were framed under five pillars, refined to four in the subsequent Strategic Plan. Also from 2017, the Secretariat was restructured under three programmatic directorates: Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources (TONR); Economic and Youth Sustainable Development (EYSD); and the Governance and Peace Directorate (GPD). The directorates delivered an average 45 projects in each of the two periods. The impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic during 2020–2021 forced project adaptation and slowed or delayed delivery of activities.

The Secretariat was in a precarious financial position in 2017. Voluntary contributions from member countries to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC) had been declining since 2013.¹⁰ This trend continued over the two Strategic periods of the review. The Secretariat has taken steps to mitigate the effects, including through measures to strengthen internal governance and operational management, seeking opportunities for partnerships and improving its reporting to the Board of Governors. Extra-budgetary resources tied to programme objectives also supported the implementation of key mandates under the two strategic plans.

2.5 Country portfolio and contributions

The following section describes Jamaica's financial contributions to the Commonwealth Secretariat and the portfolio of country-specific projects delivered for Jamaica over the period 2017/18–2024/25.

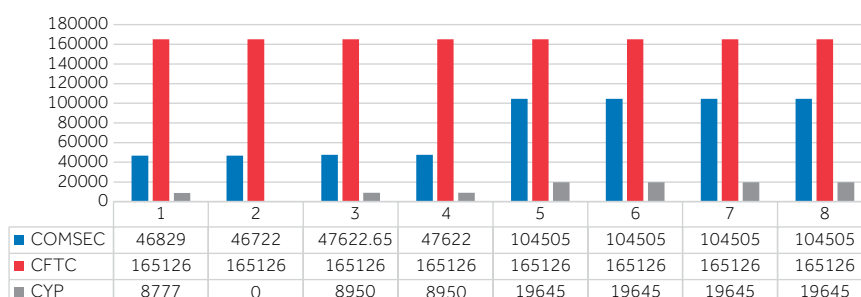
Financial contributions¹¹

As a member of the Commonwealth, Jamaica contributes to three Commonwealth funds:

- Commonwealth Assessed Contribution Fund (COMSEC)
- Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation (CFTC)
- Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP)

Jamaica contributed a total of £1,812,349 during the financial years 2017/18 to 2024/25.

Figure 2.2 Jamaica's contribution to Secretariat funds (£).



¹⁰ Report on the Funding of the Commonwealth Secretariat, 2022.

¹¹ Figures computed by evaluators based on data from the Secretariat's financial system, CODA.

Figure 2.2 shows that Jamaica's assessed contributions to COMSEC declined by more than 50 per cent in 2021/22, remaining steady for the remainder of the review period. Voluntary contributions to the CFTC fund remained at £165,126 annually from the start of the review period. Contributions to CYP fell from £19,645 annually during 2017/18 to 2020/21, to £8,950 from 2021/22.

Jamaica's actual contributions have been broadly in line with assessed contributions across the period, notwithstanding accumulation of arrears to the CYP fund after financial year 2021/20. Since that time, Jamaica has contributed to offset the arrears. Jamaica has not breached the Abuja Guidelines at any time during this period.¹²

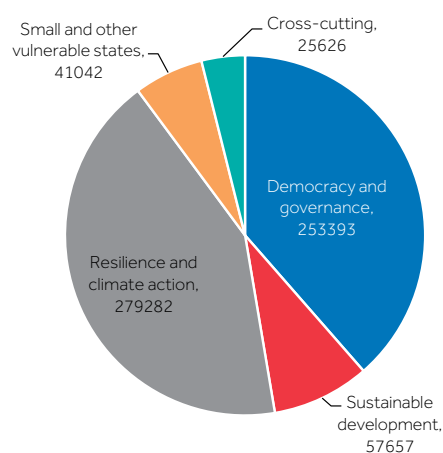
Country projects

The review identified 65 sub-projects/activities for which Jamaica was the direct beneficiary during 2017/18–2023/24. These activities were delivered through 24 projects. The country portfolio is shared in Annex 1. More than half of the projects were delivered to the Democracy and Governance pillar.

Direct project spends to Jamaica (excluding staff cost) totalled £777,267.90 across all funds between the financial years (FY) 2017/18 and 2023/24 (this also excludes spend on regional or Commonwealth-wide activities in which Jamaica participated). As Figure 2.3 illustrates, spending was mainly under the Democracy and Governance and the Resilience and Climate Action pillars.

Overall, the financial review shows Jamaica is a net financial contributor to the Commonwealth Secretariat's programmes -contributing £1.5 million across 2017/18–2023/24 to the Secretariat's three funds and receiving £796,736 in direct non-staff programme spend.¹³

Figure 2.3 Non-Staff programme spend shares by pillar.



2.6 Governance relations and ministerial engagements

As a Commonwealth member country, Jamaica is represented in the Secretariat's governance arrangements through its High Commission in London. Jamaica is involved in the Secretariat's Boards of Governors, the Executive Committee and the Accreditation Committee.

Jamaica had a lead role in representing the Caribbean–Canada Region on the Executive Committee during the financial years FY 2007/08–2008/09 and 2015/16–2016/17. Jamaica has also been a Caribbean regional member on the Accreditation Committee for following financial years: FY 2008/09 and 2016/17. Further, Jamaica was an active member of the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS) throughout the review period.

Jamaica was highly engaged in the Secretariat's thematic ministerial convenings. Of 46 ministerial meetings reviewed between 2017 and 2024, Jamaica attended 40 and was represented by a Minister at 22 of those meetings.

¹² The Abuja Guidelines were approved by Heads of Governments at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Abuja, Nigeria, in December 2003 and revised after the CHOGM in Perth, Australia, in October 2011. These guidelines govern the procedures for dealing with arrears of contributions to the Commonwealth Secretariat's funds. Countries that do not contribute (or pledge to assessed funds) for two consecutive years are not eligible to benefit from that Fund.

¹³ Excludes activities carried out at the regional or pan-Commonwealth level. Non-staff programme spend excludes the cost of Headquarter Secretariat Staff but may include projectized staff and consultants delivering technical assistance.

3. Findings

This section assesses the outcomes of the Secretariat's interventions in Jamaica over the review period 2017/18–2024/25.¹⁴

3.1 Democracy and governance

The Secretariat's work on Democracy and Governance focuses on furthering adherence of Commonwealth values and principles, encouraging countries to conduct credible, transparent and inclusive elections, and strengthening public institutions and frameworks to promote the rule of law, access to justice, human rights and good governance.¹⁵ Cross-cutting outcomes in favour of gender equality and youth empowerment were targeted by programmes to address disparities in access to political rights and justice.

Several of Jamaica's development partners also work on these themes. The main highlights include countering the high levels of crime, both organised and violent crime (US Agency for International Development (USAID), the EU, the UK), enhancements to public sector management (IADB), improvements to gender equality and justice services (Canada), and electoral training (the UN, Canada, India).

The Secretariat provided support to Jamaica in restorative justice; countering violent extremism; strengthening elections management; furthering the rights of people with disabilities; and enhancing public financial management.

Restorative justice

Restorative justice seeks to resolve conflicts by having all parties involved in the incident, as well as the community, engage in a circle with a focus

on restoring relationships.¹⁶ In 2012, the Ministry of Justice developed a National Restorative Justice Policy, which aimed to re-establish faith in state systems, improve the efficiency of the justice system, reduce the impact – including the cost – of crime, and empower communities through structured collaborations with the state.¹⁷ Restorative justice initiatives have been utilised across the island in the decade following the policy publication; however, there was limited use of restorative justice approaches in complex and sensitive cases.¹⁸

Secretariat actions

In the delivery period of 2021/22, the Secretariat collaborated with the Ministry of Justice, the Institute of Criminal Justice and Security, the University of the West Indies (UWI), and Thames Valley Restorative Justice to provide training on handling complex and sensitive cases using restorative justice (RJ) approaches. Approximately 50 per cent of eligible RJ staff were trained. Alongside this, the Secretariat provided a grant of £14,987 to fund a research study by the UWI that provided greater understanding of the effectiveness of the RJ approach in Jamaica, identified gaps in existing RJ programming and provided insights related to scaling up the initiative. The study identified 2,500–2,700 cases suitable for restorative justice measures during 2021/22, affirming the scale of the likely impact of the approach.¹⁹

These Secretariat initiatives were process traced alongside government actions for activities on restorative justice (see Figure 3.1).

¹⁴ See Annex A for the country portfolio.

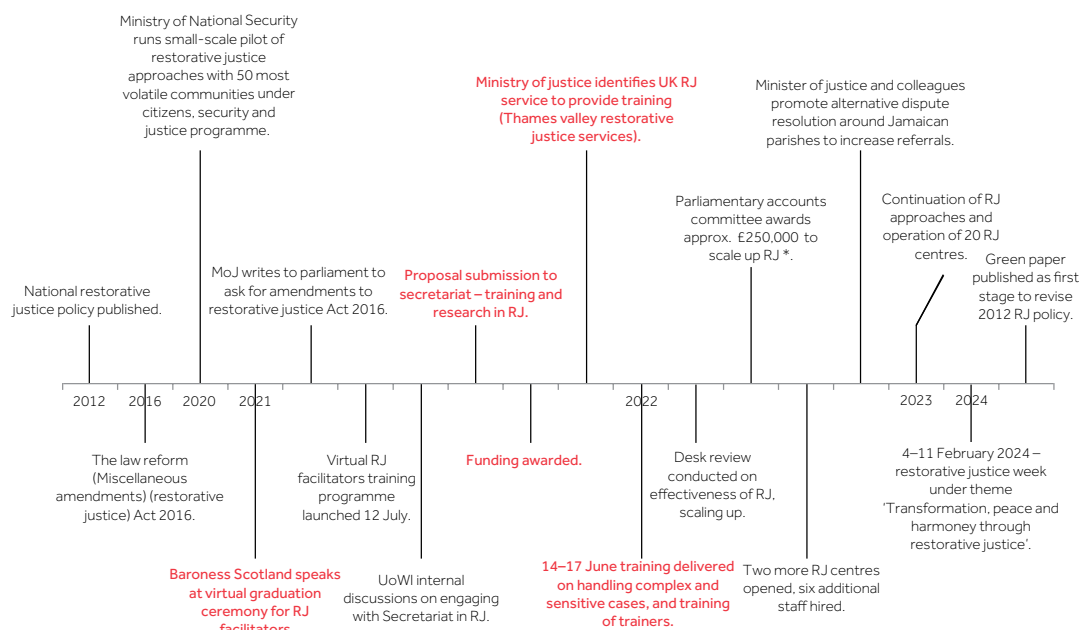
¹⁵ The Commonwealth's Charter affirms the following core values and principles of: (i) democracy; (ii) human rights; (iii) international peace and security; (iv) tolerance, respect and understanding; (v) freedom of expression; (vi) separation of powers; (vii) rule of law; (viii) good governance; (ix) sustainable development; (x) protecting the environment; (xi) access to health, education, food and shelter; (xii) gender equality; (xiii) importance of young people in the Commonwealth; (xiv) recognition of the needs of small states; (xv) recognition of the needs of vulnerable states; (xvi) role of civil society.

¹⁶ Six Pump Court (2024), 'Restorative Justice in Jamaica – Richard Barracough K.C.', <https://6pumpcourt.co.uk/restorative-justice-in-jamaica-richard-barracough-k-c/>

¹⁷ Government of Jamaica (2012), 'Ministry of Justice, the National Restorative Justice Policy', https://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/2020-10/Restorative%20Justice%20Policy_Revised_%20Final_Policy_March_18.pdf

¹⁸ Alexis Levers, L (2017), 'RJ Policy Transfer: The Case of Jamaica', University of Warwick, Department of Politics and International Studies, https://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/id/eprint/130951/1/WRAP_Theses_Levers_2017.pdf

¹⁹ UWI research study findings: at least 30,000 incidences of violence resulting in injuries in hospitals; 4,000 people enter criminal justice system due to this; 2,500–2,700 cases suitable for RJ.

Figure 3.1 Timeline of activities on restorative justice.

Note: **red** indicates Commonwealth Secretariat-funded intervention.

*Reported as J\$50 million during stakeholder interview in 2022.

National outcomes

Feedback from training participants was very positive, with participants reporting that the training enabled them to **manage complex cases more effectively**.²⁰ As stated by a participant from the Ministry of Justice:

'This training has enabled us to manage cases during the post-conviction stage ... It allows for victim closure, and it allows the offender to take responsibility and to make things right in order to [foster] their re-entry into communities.'

'We are very grateful for the technical assistance received from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Jamaica is building a robust alternative dispute resolution framework that broadens access to justice for Jamaicans ... We have been able to reduce the backlog of cases in our judicial system and strengthened our community-based reconciliation mechanisms.' (The Honourable Delroy Chuck, Jamaica's Minister of Justice)

Interviewees from the UWI and the Ministry of Justice concurred that **without the Secretariat's grant, the training and research would not have**

been carried out due to internal budget constraints.

The intervention was timely in complementing national initiatives that used community-based approaches to resolve and de-escalate interpersonal conflict.²¹ Since the Secretariat's engagement, restorative justice approaches are being scaled up across Jamaica at pace. In 2023, the Government of Jamaica published a Green Paper on Restorative Justice Policy. In financial year 2023/24, the government's Restorative Justice programme facilitated 1,792 referrals, with over 80 per cent of restorative justice conferences resulting in a successful agreement (82 per cent).²²

Countering violent extremism

Jamaica's homicide rate per 100,000 ranks among the highest in the Latin America and Caribbean region.²³ Crime is strongly linked with competition

²⁰ The Commonwealth (2022), 'Commonwealth Secretariat trains Jamaican restorative justice officials', <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/commonwealth-secretariat-trains-jamaican-restorative-justice-officials>

²¹ Jamaica Information Service (JIS) (2022), 'Restorative Justice Critical to Safeguarding Jamaica's Social Capital', <https://jis.gov.jm/restorative-justice-critical-to-safeguarding-jamaicas-social-capital/>

²² JIS (2023), 'Over 5,600 Persons Trained in Restorative Justice Practices', <https://jis.gov.jm/over-5600-persons-trained-in-restorative-justice-practices/>

²³ UN Office on Drugs and Crime (2023), 'HOMICIDE And Organized Crime In Latin America and The Caribbean', *UNODC Global Study on Homicide*. https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/gsh/2023/GSH_2023_LAC_web.pdf

between gangs for drug markets, with youth being the primary population cohort affected, both as victims and perpetrators.²⁴

The Secretariat's countering violent extremism (CVE) programme, rolled out in 2016 through earmarked funding (United Kingdom and Australia), took a preventative, whole of society approach to peacebuilding. The programme aimed to ensure 'targeted member countries are reporting an enhanced understanding of their national CVE gaps and strengths and are taking steps to implement CVE specific programming'. Following on Jamaica's participation in a regional CVE awareness raising event, the Secretariat responded to the country's Ministry of National Security request to support the government in identifying strategic opportunities to counter violent extremism, recognising the relevance of the programme for addressing the threat of youth radicalisation into gangs within and outside of the prison system.

Secretariat actions

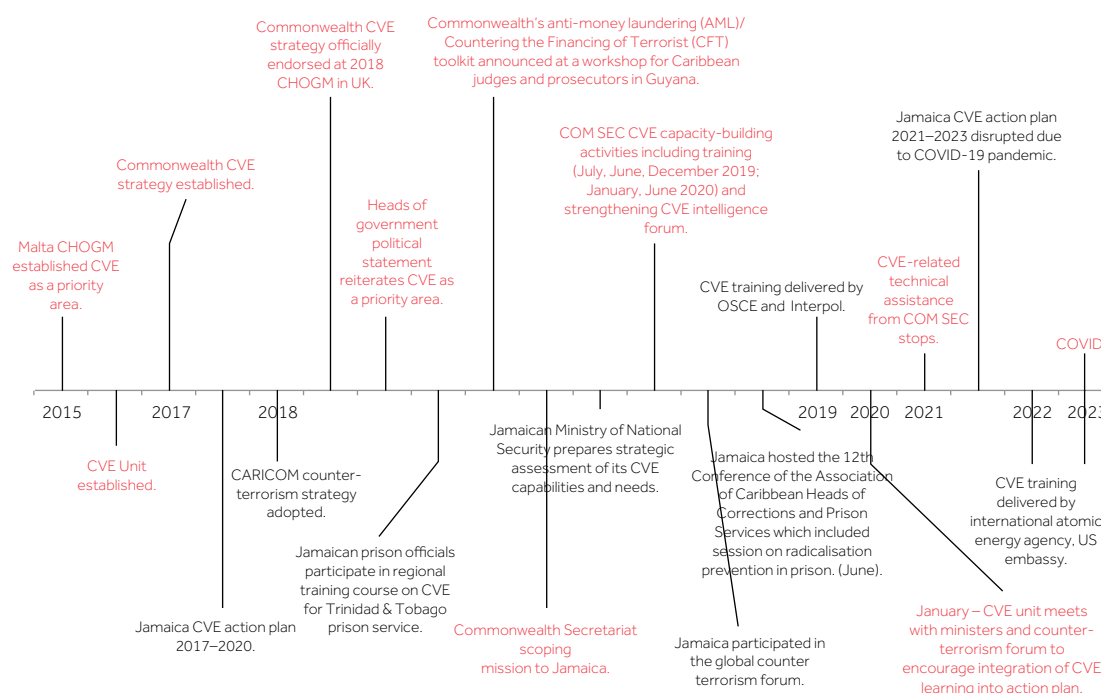
The Secretariat implemented three project activities in Jamaica: **(1) establishing partnerships**

and increasing dialogue on CVE (2018–2020); (2) technical support to prepare a counter-terrorism strategy (2018–2020);²⁵ and (3) capacity-building workshops with stakeholders across the prison system and with policy-makers (2018–2020).

CVE capacity-building activities delivered as follows.

- In the 2018–2019 financial period, the Secretariat's CVE Unit supported the delivery of workshop sessions that explored gender paradigms and their relationship to gang and extremist violence in Jamaica.
- In July 2019, a three-day workshop in Kingston on understanding violent extremism in Jamaican prisons and what approaches to countering violent extremism could work in the local environment reached 40 participants from the Jamaican Government. It included probation officers, psychologists, psychiatrists, chaplains, the Ministry of National Security (MNS) and the Department of Correctional Services (DCS).

Figure 3.2 Timeline of Secretariat support on CVE.



²⁴ Youth for Peace (2018), 'Jamaica Case Study', www.youth4peace.info/system/files/2018-04/6.%20CFR_Jamaica%20Case%20Study_Elizabeth%20Ward_0.pdf

²⁵ Work halted at closure of the CVE programme in 2023.

- In June and December 2019, further workshops were delivered, including for the Jamaican Corrections Service, on protecting prisoners from recruitment to violent extremism and on risk factors indicating mobilisation to commit terrorist violence.
- Between 2019 and 2020, at least three webinars were delivered on preventing terrorist use of the internet. During the Commonwealth global webinar, 'Using Online Tools to Build Peace and Security', which reached 30 participants, the CVE Unit encouraged Jamaica to integrate its learning on CVE into a structured and prioritised plan of action.
- In January 2020, CVE workshops were conducted on developing a research-informed national approach to preventing violent extremism and strategies for organising the Jamaican Government to support multidisciplinary approaches to CVE.

These included a standalone session on preventing terrorist use of the internet. Forty (40) officials received training, including from the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- In June 2020, a CVE policy workshop was delivered.
- Until 2021/22, ongoing ad-hoc engagement took place with the Strategic Intelligence Unit of the Ministry of National Security. This was up until the close out of the CVE project at the Secretariat.

National outcomes

The Secretariat interventions enhanced national security stakeholders' awareness of Jamaica's vulnerabilities to violent extremism, including entry points through gangs in the prison system as well as opportunities for reform in relevant policies.

85% Caribbean Regional Prisons Service workshop participants considered violent extremism to be a serious issue that is or could affect Jamaica

Baseline (2019)

100% Caribbean Regional Prisons Service workshop participants acquired new information that will help them counter violent extremism in their prison service

Post-workshop (2019)

The Secretariat's CVE Unit reported that Jamaica was better integrating female prison facilities into future CVE work and that there was increased understanding of violent extremism and CVE practices in the prison system. Ministry of National Security counterparts reported operational improvements to standard operating procedures and successful advocacy to integrate CVE approaches into its 2020–2023 action plan.

Jamaica's Counter Terrorism Forum ('the Forum'), co-ordinated by the Ministry of National Security, encouraged **interagency collaboration**, reflecting the Secretariat's 'whole of government' approach and engaging non-traditional inter-sectoral connections such as the education and youth sectors.

'[The Secretariat's support for the Counter Terrorism Forum] made us stronger, more

co-ordinated, and make (sic) us pull intel from different spaces and actors together.'

(Jamaican Government stakeholder)

The Forum provided an appropriate and fruitful entry point for sensitising government stakeholders and publicising the message on how CVE approaches can be applied to addressing gang culture and recruitment in Jamaica. The Secretariat's engagement also bolstered the influence of the National Security CVE champions within the Counter Terrorism Forum and added credibility to their advocacy.

Beyond these results, evidence of upstream influence on policy was not found.

'I'm not sure how far [the training] filtered up into policy to impact robust change ... like I'm not sure how it impacted decisions made or revised policies. It was maybe a bit

detached from other parts of the institutional framework that would have impacted policies or strategies ... there wasn't an obvious flow from the [CVE] Unit into policy stream.'
(Jamaican Government stakeholder)

Enhancing democratic processes

Unregulated finance is one of the biggest hindrances to credible, transparent and inclusive democratic processes.²⁶ Jamaica was the first Caribbean country to develop campaign financing legislation, implementing a 2014 Political Party Registration Act and a Campaign Financing Act in 2016, with a related regulation in 2017 and coming into force in 2018.^{27, 28} However, Jamaica did not have the institutional capacity to implement the legislation when it came into force in 2018.

The Secretariat has been mandated by Heads of Governments since 2018 to deliver electoral support services through a 'whole of cycle' approach. This approach extends beyond elections observations and seeks to proactively identify and respond to member countries' electoral management needs to better support democratic principles.

Secretariat actions

The Secretariat's activities aimed to improve political conduct in democratic processes as well as improve management of electoral processes.

The Secretariat provided two phases of technical assistance to the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ) on the implementation of its campaign finance legislation. Phase I, which was conducted remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, provided a consultant to the ECJ and the Office of the

Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP). The technical assistance delivered a Draft Implementation Plan, identifying recommended priority actions to operationalise the legislation, including on staffing, budget, supportive policies, procedures and tools. Phase II targeted progressing the implementation plan through technical assistance delivered by three campaign finance experts in-country for one week.

The Secretariat's technical assistance support faced some challenges. Encouragingly, to achieve ownership and buy-in, the campaign finance technical assistance saw consultants work closely with the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ) and the Office of the Registrar of Political Parties (ORPP) on the drafting of four policies and three procedures. However, Phase I was disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and the remote-working consultant faced challenges accessing information and holding in-depth discussions with ECJ and ORPP staff. Further budget limitations, as well as challenges in identifying the specialist legal expertise needed, delayed the initiation of Phase II.

In the same programmatic context, the Secretariat's Good Offices provided technical assistance to the Office of the Political Ombudsman, which aimed to enhance inclusive dialogue and women's political participation.

A range of knowledge-sharing activities, listed in Box 3.1, aimed at enhancing the capacities of Jamaican participants to support democratic and rule of law norms, including legislative drafters, elections professionals, and youth and women leaders and representatives.

Box 3.1 Training activities

- Training for legislative drafters.
- Commonwealth Elections Professionals (CEP) Network training in Trinidad and Tobago, and Barbados.
- Webinars on youth participation and women's political participation.
- Three-day workshops held in Barbados on Leadership for Good Governance and Social Transformation in the Caribbean.
- A regional training event in Antigua and Barbuda on international electoral best practice on gender mainstreaming.

²⁶ The Commonwealth (2020), *Political Finance Regulation. A Best Practice Guide to Commonwealth Legislative Approaches*, [https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-04/Political%20Finance%20Regulation%20Legislative%20Approaches\[66\].pdf?VersionId=.kl0NoN_VNuwwH0wnP_JcEiarciJLf4D](https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2023-04/Political%20Finance%20Regulation%20Legislative%20Approaches[66].pdf?VersionId=.kl0NoN_VNuwwH0wnP_JcEiarciJLf4D)

²⁷ Electoral Commission of Jamaica (2017), 'Election Campaign Financing Legislation and Regulations', <https://ecj.com.jm/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Election-Campaign-Financing-Legislation-Regulations-Revised-July-2017.pdf>

²⁸ Representation of the People (Amendment) Act (RPA), 2016 – Election Campaign Financing; Election Campaign Finance Regulations, 2017; Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2014; Electoral Commission (Interim) Act, 2006.

- Support provided to the Ombudsman's Office Political Awareness and Respect Initiative (PARI) virtual event (2020).
- Conflict resolution training delivered to the Jamaican Ministry of Justice.
- Stakeholders attend regional events.

National outcomes

The Secretariat's activities contributed to the following outcomes.

(1) **Improved guidance on appropriate campaign finance practices** and concrete definition of unacceptable practices, achieved through a series of policies and procedures.

These concrete policies and procedures can be implemented by the ECJ during elections periods to better support the achievement of fair, credible and inclusive elections. Given the sensitivity of this issue in the Caribbean and in the Commonwealth as a whole, the ECJ's ability to implement the legislation was due to be tested in practice in the leadup to the 2025 election. The election cycle would offer the opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the legislation and validate assumptions on how it worked in practice.

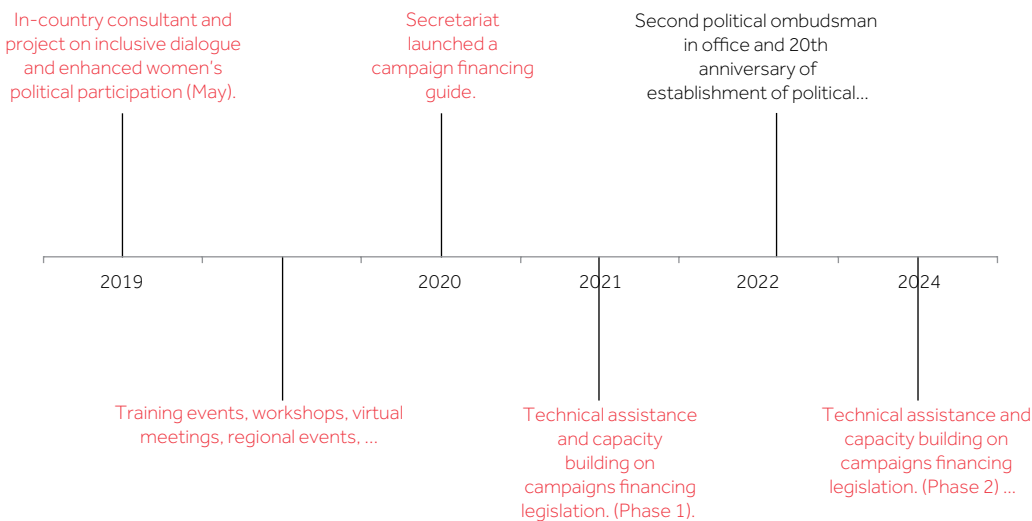
(2) Enactment of the first post-election review in Jamaica's history.

Following the completion of technical assistance in 2019, the Political Ombudsman's Office **committed to undertake post-election reviews**.²⁹ This resulted in the first election campaign review in Jamaica's history, which consisted of a series of fora with participants from political parties, civil society, the Political Awareness and Respect Initiative (PARI), government entities, academia, the Jamaica Constabulary Force, faith-based groups, youth organisations, the media and other stakeholders. The review was conducted after the 3 September 2020 General Election Campaign with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems. It also led to a civic education handbook, *Jamaica Strong and Free*, in 2022³⁰.

(3) Implementation by Jamaica's Office of the Political Ombudsman of a new approach to handling complaints.

Alongside this, the **technical assistance on political dialogue provided by the Secretariat's Good Offices resulted in the development of an approach to handling complaints by Jamaica's Political Ombudsman**. This contributed to improved transparency and credibility of political processes, with the potential to strengthen trust

Figure 3.3 Timeline of Secretariat support on enhancing democratic processes.



²⁹ Interview with stakeholder in the Office of the Political Ombudsman.

³⁰ <https://jis.gov.jm/features/jamaica-strong-and-free-easy-access-for-readers/>

in political institutions and reduce the current 'participation and trust' deficit.³¹ In February 2024, the House of Representatives passed the Political Ombudsman (Amendment) Act 2024, which will provide for the Office of the Political Ombudsman to be integrated into the Electoral Commission of Jamaica (ECJ).³²

Further, the Registrar of Political Parties in the Elections Office Jamaica conducted a review of electoral practices in similar jurisdictions with support from CEP alumni. Recommendations were submitted to the Electoral Office of Jamaica and Parliament for a proposed extension to election preparedness periods (although the proposal was not accepted).

There is limited evidence that the training activities contributed to improved elections management practices. There was some evidence of an increase in understanding of key international standards for the conduct of fair and inclusive elections and increased understanding and consideration of gender issues.

Enhancing rights of persons with disabilities

In 1966, just four years after gaining political independence, Jamaica signed a number of critical human rights treaties, showing a foundational emphasis on human rights in the country's international relations.^{33,34} The government stated its intention to establish a national human rights institution compliant with the Paris Principles in 2014, after dialogue with the Commonwealth Secretariat.³⁵ However, to date, this has not been achieved.

The Jamaican Government passed the Disabilities Act (2014) of Jamaica on signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).³⁶ In 2017, Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities, the mandated government agency under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security with responsibility for implementing government policies and programmes for persons with disabilities, estimated that 38,792 registered persons with disabilities met the definition under the Law.

Secretariat actions

The Secretariat implemented three key interventions.

- 1) The Secretariat provided technical support to a multi-stakeholder coalition led by the Centre for Disability Studies (UWICDS) and the CARICOM Special Rapporteur on Disability, delivering the Special Ministerial Conference for Specific Legislation for Persons with Disabilities in the Caribbean from 27-28 July 2021. The conference discussed draft model legislation on people with disabilities (PWD) in the Caribbean.
- 2) The Secretariat funded a study of four Caribbean counties, including Jamaica, to explore the experience of PWD in the healthcare system.
- 3) A second regional conference took place in 2023.

National outcomes

Secretariat actions contributed to the intermediate outcome – *Public institutions and frameworks in member countries strengthened to promote the rule of law, access to justice, human rights and good governance.*

The Secretariat's Caribbean conference in July 2021 contributed to **raising awareness among policymakers of the barriers to realising the rights of people with disabilities in Jamaica and in the wider Caribbean region.** This included ministers, Permanent Secretaries, Attorney

31 BTI Transformation Index (2024), *Jamaica Country Report 2024*, <https://bti-project.org/en/reports/country-report/JAM>

32 JIS (2024), 'Bill Passed to Integrate Political Ombudsman into ECJ', <https://jis.gov.jm/bill-passed-to-integrate-political-ombudsman-into-ecj/>

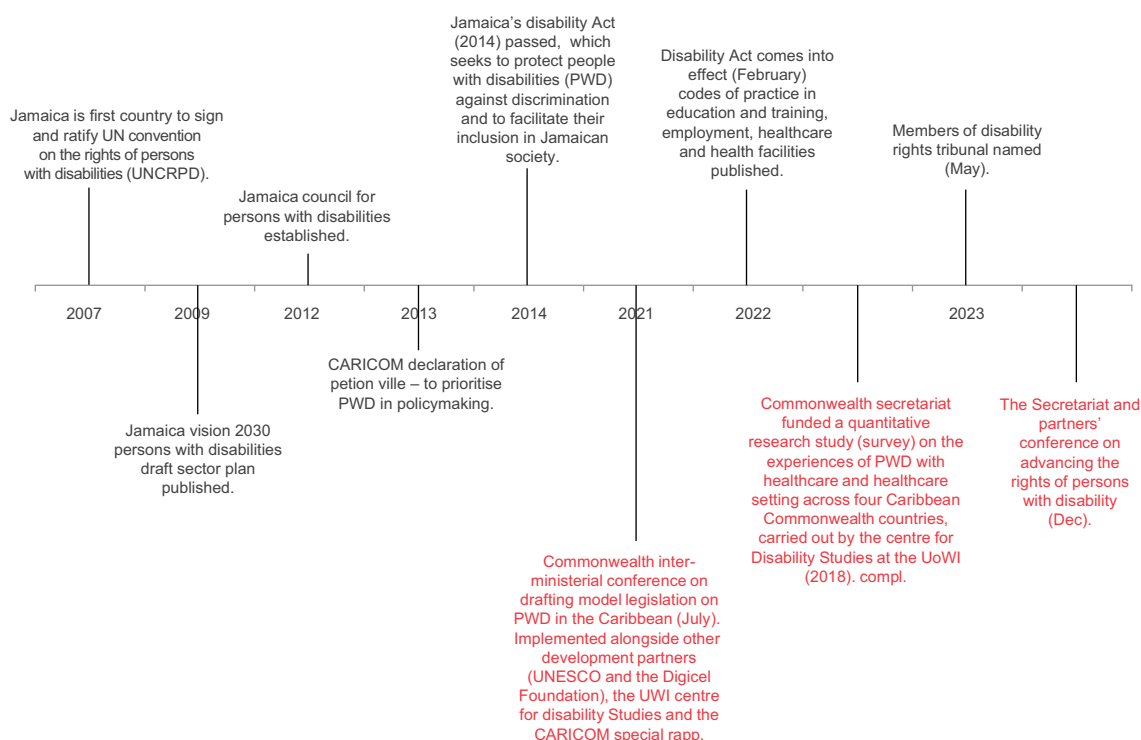
33 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

34 International Justice Resource Center (IJRC) (2018), 'Jamaica', www.ijrcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Jamaica-Factsheet.pdf

35 <https://jis.gov.jm/jamaica-takes-steps-establish-national-human-rights-institution/#:~:text=The%20Key%20Point:,compliant%20with%20the%20Paris%20Principles.>

36 Know Your Rights, The Disabilities Act 2014 MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL SECURITY and the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities. https://www.mlss.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/JCPD-2017_Disabilities-Act-8hx11-fn.pdf

Figure 3.4 Timeline of support to improve legislation relating to people with disabilities.



Generals and government representatives. **The conference brought to light the urgent need for the Jamaica Disability Act (2014) to be fully operationalised and provided national advocates with additional knowledge to engage governmental stakeholders.**

Secondly, the conference led to the **development of a template for specific legislation to protect the rights of PWD**, produced by the Secretariat and the Centre for Disability Studies at the University of the West Indies. The template indicated the essential features in such legislation, including: the establishment of statutory agency to drive disability development in each country; the development of disability rights tribunals; the establishment of a dedicated funding mechanism to drive development for persons with disabilities; and clauses to protect persons with disabilities in education, healthcare, employment, housing, public transportation accessibility and access to information³⁷.

The Disabled Persons Tribunal was established in Jamaica in 2023, authorised to formally settle complaints between PWD and a person or organisation.

Thirdly, a research study (completed in January 2022) found that the prevailing conceptualisation of disability in the Caribbean region is through the medical model of disability rather than using a rights-based (for example, the social model of disability) model. The study also found a lack of sensitisation to needs and rights of PWD in healthcare settings – for example, a lack of sign language interpreters in healthcare settings, lack of awareness of PWD needing sexual and reproductive healthcare, and gaps in care during the COVID-19 pandemic. UWI planned for the Secretariat-funded research study to shape further research studies to address knowledge and evidence gaps.

The multi-partner 2023 regional conference convened more than 100 senior officials and policy leads from over 20 countries. It concluded with commitments from the stakeholders present, as follows.

- 1) A five-year timeframe for countries to develop specific legislation to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

³⁷ <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-joined-multi-stakeholder-coalition-protect-rights-persons-disabilities-caribbean#:~:text=Strengthening%20the%20resilience%20of%20persons.of%20the%20Special%20Ministerial%20Conference.>

- 2) A three-year timeframe for countries to amend existing legislation to include essential elements omitted in the current legislation.
- 3) To capacitate institutions and individuals within the Caribbean to advocate for the establishment of specific legislation for PWDs.
- 4) To use the Regional Disability Index, which is administered by the UWICDS.
- 5) To continue and foster collaboration with other partners such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Digicel Foundation and CARICOM.³⁸

These commitments brought further visibility to the challenges facing PWD and built on earlier progress towards a shared understanding and solutions in the region. As at the end of 2024, the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities had received 55 cases. Of these, 29 have been investigated and resolved, 8 have been closed, 8 have been referred to the Disabilities Rights Tribunal, 1 to the Disputes Resolution Foundation, and 9 are under assessment to determine the next steps.³⁹

Main insights and lessons in Democracy and Governance

The Secretariat's actions in supporting Democracy and Governance outcomes in Jamaica demonstrated its value proposition in connecting cross-sectoral stakeholders at the regional and national levels and in driving policy change through technical assistance and knowledge dissemination. Insights and lessons include the following.

- The Secretariat provided high-value, cost-effective and strategically aligned interventions in justice reform, democratic processes and inclusion.
- Future programming should: ensure continuity through multi-phase support; focus on integrating reforms into institutional capacity-strengthening processes; support countries'

peer learning through case studies and peer networks; build on training events to establish knowledge transfer mechanisms; and build national capacities and coalitions for policy reform through whole of government and whole of society approaches.

- The Secretariat has a comparative advantage in providing targeted technical support through long-term engagements that helps countries operationalise existing policies or develop new frameworks (for example, in restorative justice, campaign finance, PWD rights).
- Multi-agency and multi-country collaboration (for example, with UWI, ministries, regional forums) enhanced ownership, contextual relevance and scale. Leveraging strong partners, like the University of the West Indies, is essential for programme success. This requires alignment with established national and regional strategies, such as the CARICOM Counter-Terrorism Strategy, to ensure sustainability of interventions and outcomes.
- Sustained engagement yielded stronger results – for example, interventions that included follow-up training, implementation support and stakeholder engagement (as with restorative justice, CVE) saw stronger uptake than one-off trainings or remote-only interventions.

3.2 Sustainable development

The Sustainable Development agenda within the Secretariat's Strategic Plans aimed at outcomes on effective trade policy; sustainable public finance and debt management; sustainable ocean, energy and natural resource management; and inclusive and resilient health and education systems.

The Sustainable Development focus aligned and overlapped with the efforts of other development partners, namely to:

- **strengthen social protection mechanisms** (UN Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank)
- **achieve fiscal consolidation and debt reduction** (IADB, IMF)
- **improve access to education** (UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Bank)

³⁸ University of the West Indies (2021), UWI Centre for Disability Studies Partners for Special Regional Conference, www.mona.uwi.edu/marcom/newsroom/entry/8237

³⁹ JIS (2025), 'Disabilities Rights Tribunal Settles Complaints', <https://jis.gov.jm/disabilities-rights-tribunal-settles-complaints/>

- **enhance the digital economy** (World Bank, EU)
- **improve private sector engagement** (IADB)
- **strengthen health systems in relation to pandemics and epidemics** (World Health Organization (WHO)/Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), USAID, Japan) **and HIV prevention and response** (Global Fund)
- **infrastructure projects** (UK), including on urban transport (GCF).

Effective trade policy

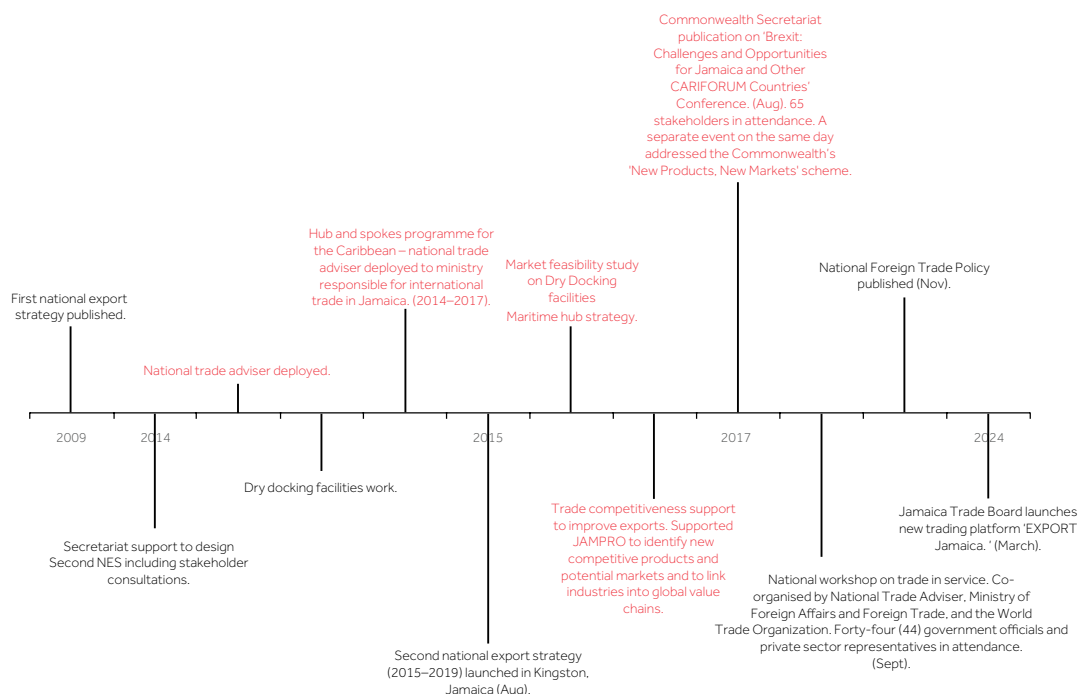
Jamaica's first National Export Strategy (2010–2013) was followed by only a modest increase in exports' contribution to GDP – 14 per cent, against the target of 33 per cent.⁴⁰ The sluggish export growth was attributed to disparities in the structure of the economy and regulatory burden, which undermined efficiency and discouraged private sector investment. It further highlighted weak economic resilience in Jamaica, which was still recovering from the 2008 financial crisis.⁴¹

The second National Export Strategy (NES) (2015–2019) Strategic Action Plan identified additional challenges to the Jamaican economy: a lack of absorptive capacity for locally produced goods; and a declining balance of payments that has impacted foreign exchange reserves and high government debt.⁴² The NES aimed to position the country for a 'market-driven approach to export development'. It prioritised agriculture and agro-processing, mining, film and animation, information technology-enabled services, and manufacturing. These include a focus on lowering the transaction cost of trading across borders, improving standards and quality management, while enhancing supply capacity. The NES also mainstreamed gender considerations by mapping the value chain of prioritised sectors, identifying where gender differences prevailed and designing interventions to address these at the sector level.

Secretariat actions

The Secretariat has provided several interventions (Figure 3.5) to enhance trade

Figure 3.5. Timeline of support to trade



⁴⁰ The Commonwealth (2016), *Jamaica's National Export Strategy 2015–2019: A Market-driven Approach*, https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/documents/Second%20Issue-Trade%20Express-Jamaica%20NES%20-O%20Bande_0.pdf?VersionId=XeWQ4tr5JIFcviCHmUDz5zZJaXRG2liE

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

competitiveness and trade facilitation in Jamaica over the past decade.

National outcomes

The Secretariat's marine-related technical assistance during 2016 recommended key policy and institutional measures. A dry-docking facility has allowed ships to dock in Jamaica, closing a previous gap, with the potential for further ship repair and servicing business activities to arise. It also paved the way for Jamaica to realise its ambition as a global logistics hub.⁴³

A study contributed to the formalisation of investment partnerships with a major German shipping line, Harren & Partner, which expressed its desire to establish a dry-docking facility. In 2024, the German Ship Repair Jamaica Shipyard opened to service ships up to 20,000 tons and to provide a range of maintenance and repair services to vessels operating in and around the Caribbean and Central America. This equated to US\$37 million in investment, with potential for 100 jobs to be created.⁴⁴

The placement of a national trade adviser, funded under the Secretariat–European Union Hubs and Spokes programme, contributed to critical trade policy outcomes.

- A revised Foreign Trade Policy and Action Plan was published in 2017 and integrated into Jamaica's Vision 2030.
- Jamaica's position on the Post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement was negotiated between the EU and 79 countries in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.
- Enhanced implementation of existing trade agreements that Jamaica is party to took place, including the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas (RTC), which establishes the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), and the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM)–EU economic partnership agreement (EPA).⁴⁵

- There was increased awareness among Jamaica's private sector of the regional integration process and opportunities in the CSME.

The second National Export Strategy provided technical guidance to the work of the Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO).⁴⁶ While a full evaluation of this strategy is required to better understand its effectiveness, stakeholders highlighted institutional capacity barriers in moving from strategy to implementation.

The Secretariat's 2017 facilitated conference on 'New Products, New Market' scheme assessed the global market potential for 23 newly identified competitive products in Jamaica. The country has continued to implement this strategic approach to product diversification.

A 2018 'Trade in Services' workshop enhanced participants' knowledge and understanding of Jamaica's trade in services commitments under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), CARIFORUM-EU EPA, and the CSME Services Regime. It also enabled participants to learn more about the European Union's services commitments under the CARIFORUM-EU EPA and opportunities that are available for Jamaica in the EU services market. This knowledge is critical to national efforts to formulate policy responses that are consistent with Jamaica's multilateral, regional and bilateral commitments on trade in services. As stated by a workshop participant:

'Understanding Jamaica's commitments under the multilateral trade agreements is key to effective policy-making. The Trade in Services workshop was therefore a welcomed forum. It not only allowed the uninitiated to understand how to assess the language and structure of trade agreements but also provided practical examples of some of Jamaica's current commitments. I would attend another similarly convened workshop.'⁴⁷

⁴³ JIS (2023), 'Multibillion-Dollar Shipyard Project Launched', <https://jis.gov.jm/multibillion-dollar-shipyard-project-launched/>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ On 22 March 2019, CARIFORUM member countries began signing an economic partnership agreement with the UK in the wake of Brexit. Under the agreement, the UK committed to providing immediate duty-free, quota-free access to goods exported from the CARIFORUM states. In exchange, the CARIFORUM states committed to gradual tariff liberalisation of goods.

⁴⁶ The Commonwealth (2016), *Jamaica's National Export Strategy 2015–2019: A Market-driven Approach*, https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/documents/Second%20Issue-Trade%20Express-Jamaica%20NES%20-O%20Bande_0.pdf?VersionId=XeWQ4tr5JIFcviCHmUDz5zZJaxRG2liE

⁴⁷ The Commonwealth (2017), 'National Workshop on Trade in Services: Kingston, Jamaica', <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/national-workshop-trade-services-kingston-jamaica>

Jamaica's trade openness (the ratio between the sum of exports and imports and gross domestic product) improved from 76.46 in 2016 to 90.11 in 2019 and 73.18 per cent in 2022, indicating a positive trend in the reduction of trade barriers in Jamaica.⁴⁸

The review could not assess the extent of the Secretariat's contributions to trade policy outcomes in Jamaica, given the complexities, dynamism and multiple actors involved in Jamaica's trade relations. However, key strategic and institutional processes were supported with this support acknowledged by counterparts. One national trade stakeholder summarised:

'The wins we made along the way were more like a proof of concept rather than a transformational process.'

Debt management

A report by the IMF and the World Bank presented to the Group of 20 countries (G20) in June 2018 raised critical issues related to public debt non-transparency in developing countries being linked to significantly higher debt levels than officially reported.⁴⁹ The lack of transparency around government debt and repayment obligations can reduce trust and therefore foreign investment, while also contributing to spiralling domestic debt and threats to the wider global financial system.⁵⁰ Improved debt recording and debt data quality can ensure greater transparency, while enabling countries to develop debt sustainability strategies and sound policies.

Secretariat actions

The Secretariat convened a regional workshop in Kingston from 27 June to 1 July 2022 on 'Public-Private Partnerships for Debt Managers', bringing together 101 debt and public finance officials with development partners in the region.

In 2023, the Secretariat introduced its new debt management system, Commonwealth Meridian, in Jamaica, replacing the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System (CS-DRMS). Commonwealth Meridian, launched in 2019, leverages modern technologies

for the integrated and comprehensive recording, management and analysis of both public and private debts, grants and lending portfolios. It is customised to countries' technological, institutional and governance infrastructures. It is configured around its users (for example, ministries of finance, the debt management office, central bank, international funders and aid agencies) to enable an integrated debt management information system.

To facilitate the implementation of Commonwealth Meridian, key activities implemented by the Secretariat included the following.

- Two (out of three) back-office staff from the Ministry of Finance and Public Service (MOFPS) completed the Secretariat's e-learning course on Commonwealth Meridian.
- Installation and deployment of the Meridian system in the MOFPS took place in April–May 2024, including training of user groups (encompassing the back-office, front and middle offices, reconciliation unit, and the settlements team), and meetings with stakeholders to ensure smooth implementation.
- Support was provided to updating external and domestic debt data in Meridian, designing reporting requirements, and designing debt service payment processing.

National outcomes

Despite Jamaica's status as an early mover on institutionalising debt management and the strong programmatic relationship with the Secretariat, the implementation of Commonwealth Meridian was initially stalled due to staff changes in the Debt Management Office. This delayed the completion of the data preparation for migration to the new system. **Meridian was eventually installed in May 2024 and fully operationalised in September 2024.**

'We feel closer to COMSEC than we do to the multilaterals who have their own agenda and where the relationship is slightly different, in terms of projects and loans, donor funding and so on. We have good relationships with all of them, but COMSEC is close to the debt management branch.' (DMO evaluation participant)

⁴⁸ The Global Economy (2025), 'Jamaica: Trade Openness', www.theglobaleconomy.com/Jamaica/trade_openness/

⁴⁹ IMF and World Bank, 2018, G20 Notes On Strengthening Public Debt Transparency, <https://www.imf.org/external/np/g20/pdf/2018/072718.pdf>

⁵⁰ Ibid

A 2021 World Bank report found that the use of the Secretariat's debt management system (CS-DRMS/Meridian), combined with trained debt management staff, 'significantly contribute to improved debt transparency'.⁵¹ Further, **the study found the Secretariat's system had a higher contributor impact on debt transparency than the alternate system in use in other countries.** Improved transparency affords the opportunity for better debt management and more accurate reporting, potentially streamlining debt restructuring and repayments and increasing available fiscal resources for addressing national sustainable development goals. Greater debt transparency can also create opportunities for improved economic governance by providing civil society organisations and other economic actors with information required to hold governments accountable. At the macroeconomic level, debt transparency is a necessary condition for economic stability and sustainable development.⁵²

On the regional workshop, a representative from the Development Bank of Jamaica Limited acknowledged the training facilitated knowledge sharing between member countries:

'We are always keen on knowledge sharing. While PPPs [public-private partnerships] are an option to fund public infrastructure, the related debt must be managed carefully. So knowing the benefits, risks and good global PPP practices provides a strong foundation for each country to build or expand its own PPP programme. We have found that learning from the practical experiences of other countries is a good way to build capacity to successfully execute PPPs.'⁵³

Despite the positive feedback, this was a standalone activity. There was no project or follow-on Secretariat actions to progress outcomes on public-private partnerships.

Sport for development

Despite Jamaica's strong global presence in sports, the sector is still largely focused on recreation and entertainment, rather than development. The need for a formalised sector and understanding of its potential role in development, has not yet achieved full consensus among national stakeholders.

The National Sports Policy, 2013–2023, was designed to increase participation in sport and improve mental and physical health alongside social and economic well-being. However, there was no associated monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework to measure the contribution of sport to national development. Although it was widely acknowledged in Jamaica that sport was important for achieving these policy goals, the true extent of its impact remained mostly unclear.⁵⁴

Secretariat actions

- An official from the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport in Jamaica was present at a Secretariat presentation on a pilot project to measure the contribution of sport to the SDGs, held around the 2018 Commonwealth Games, and registered interest in the pilot.
- Following a stakeholder forum, in 2019, the Secretariat provided technical assistance to develop an enhanced results framework and measurement and evaluation system for the National Sport Policy and relevant components of the National Development Plan, Vision 2030 Jamaica (April–August 2019).
- Further, the Secretariat provided training for 50 stakeholders on monitoring and evaluation and the contribution of sport to national development.
- Jamaica remained a member of the international steering group (made up of UN agencies, member countries and sector experts) measuring the contribution of sport to the SDGs, co-ordinated by the Secretariat.
- Jamaica received the Commonwealth Model Legislative Provisions on abuse of Position of Trust – a draft paper presented at Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting in July 2022.

⁵¹ Rivetti D. 2021. *Debt Transparency in Developing Economies*. Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 4.0.

⁵² Rivetti D. 2021. *Debt Transparency in Developing Economies*. Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 4.0.

⁵³ The Commonwealth (2022), 'The Commonwealth Secretariat and the Development Bank of Jamaica Partnered on PPP Workshop and Forum', <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/commonwealth-secretariat-and-development-bank-jamaica-partnered-ppp-workshop-and>

⁵⁴ Final Consultation Report, Sports for Development project. Internal document.

National outcomes

A M&E framework was delivered and played a key role in supporting national advocacy for sport for development and peace. It has not yet, however influenced deeper policy change in leveraging sports for development.

Jamaica actively engaged in Secretariat convenings on sports: the Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport (CABOS), including holding the role as Chair; Commonwealth Sports Ministers Forum 2020; Commonwealth Ministerial Teleconference on Sport for Development and Peace (SOMSDP) 2021; and Chair of the 10th Commonwealth Sports Ministers Meeting.

'The results framework was pretty solid, and it was developed as a consensus with stakeholders, and the fact that we could develop a results framework that showed the alignment of the national policy with the national development plan and the SDGs I think was commendable.'

(National stakeholder)

An independent assessment of the Sports programme found that the Secretariat's activities made some contribution to the national discussions on sport for sustainable development. A national stakeholder noted:

'I think a national framework for sport is a massive undertaking and a massive step

forward ... even if it's drafted at a slightly skinnier level than we would have hoped for, it's a necessary first step and I think it was designed with a practical understanding of the context that it will be implemented in and to facilitate engagement and facilitate uptake, so yes, I absolutely can see the benefit.'

The Commonwealth's global advocacy, and Jamaica's role in this, contributed to increased awareness of the potential for sports in the region. In 2018, the Caribbean Development Bank partnered with University of the West Indies to deliver a UWI Sport for Development Initiative aimed at enhancing the role of sports in economic growth and community development through improved infrastructure, programmes and partnerships. It also focused on providing affordable access to higher education and training within the sports industry.

Progress on leveraging sport for development in Jamaica gained attention through its presence within the Vision 2030 thematic working group. Nonetheless, additional interventions are needed to extend its policy influence to relevant ministries and bodies in Jamaica. For example, the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) expressed willingness to accommodate sports questions in the census, but technical support was needed on the design of these questions.

Figure 3.6. Project results framework, sport for development and peace



Natural resources management

Under the Sustainable Development pillar, the Secretariat's Oceans and Natural Resources Management programme aims to produce more sustainable, equitable, transparent and effective management, governance and use of member country's ocean, energy and natural resources.

At the start of this strategic period, Jamaica was highly dependent on petroleum imports for its energy needs.⁵⁵ Further, the mining sector was focused mainly on bauxite, despite the country having high concentrations of industrial minerals such as limestone and rare earth elements that could be utilised to drive national development. Jamaica had one of the highest energy costs in the region and needed to shift from heavy fuel to gas to reduce its energy costs and carbon footprint.

The country had a relatively new regulatory framework for the oil and gas industry, which was put in place to ensure greater transparency, accountability and environmental sustainability. Concerns about the effectiveness of the regulatory framework included: ensuring that licenses and permits for oil and gas exploration and production were issued efficiently and fairly; conducting thorough environmental impact assessments to minimise the sector's ecological footprint; and improving transparency and avoiding corruption in the allocation of licenses, contracts and revenue from oil and gas activities. The regulatory

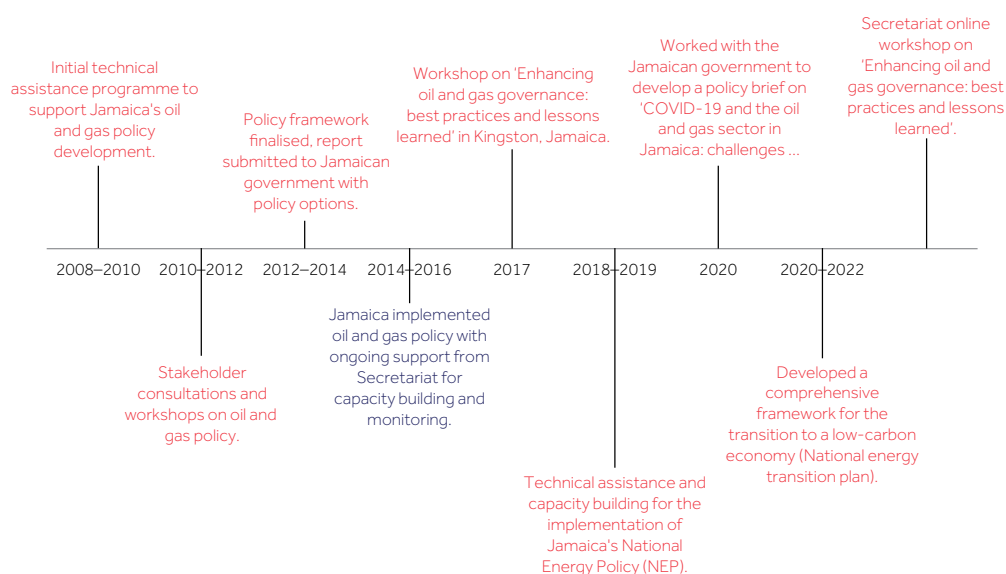
uncertainty was partly due to the country's relatively small size and limited experience with large-scale oil and gas operations. Further, global pressures – including a decline in crude oil prices since 2014, limited national production capacities and dependencies on foreign exchange earnings, and competition from the US, Canada and South America – were challenges to the competitiveness of the industry.

Following an oil spill in 2019 and continued criticism of the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica (PCJ), the government divested its stake and restructured the organisation. It eventually merged it with the Jamaica Public Service Company, to create the Jamaica Energy Corporation, which began operations in 2024. Further, the ministry responsible for natural resources was merged with the Ministry of Transport to create the Ministry of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport (MSETT) in March 2023.

Secretariat actions

Jamaica requested support from the Secretariat to review and design its regulatory framework for the petroleum and mining sector. The Secretariat supported Jamaica's Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology to enhance its natural resource policy development and implementation, commencing work in 2008 with intermittent engagements and activities through to 2017 (see Figure 3.7). This

Figure 3.7 Timeline of Secretariat support to natural resources management.



⁵⁵ IMF (2023), Jamaica: Technical Assistance Report–Climate Public Investment Management Assessment (C-PIMA), www.elibrary.imf.org/view/journals/002/2023/236/article-A001-en.xml

support comprised mainly technical advisory services but also capacity building and knowledge exchanges with other Commonwealth countries.

National outcomes

Overall, the technical assistance in natural resources led **to enhanced capacity of government officials to manage the petroleum sector more effectively**. This is evidenced through interactive working sessions with high-level government officials over the period. Some capacity gaps were also addressed through Jamaica's participation in the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Minerals, Metals and Sustainable Development.

The Secretariat's technical assistance also generated **improved economic terms in negotiated contracts with investors**. This is evidenced through the delivery of a model production sharing contract for the petroleum industry. The PCJ stated that the Secretariat was instrumental in helping its officers to develop negotiation strategies and equipping them with additional information and draft clauses required in preparation for upcoming negotiations.⁵⁶ Overall, the Government of Jamaica secured a strengthened negotiating position with international investors, including stronger fiscal terms for investment contracts, economic models provided to government and strengthened understanding of the fiscal regime.

The Secretariat's work has informed **improved policies in mining, minerals and petroleum**. The Secretariat provided recommendations for strengthening the mining sector and contributed to an independent external review of Jamaica's mineral policy framework. As at the time of reporting, the minerals policy was with the Cabinet for adoption. These actions have the potential to promote responsible mining and encourage increased youth and gender diversity in mining sector.

There are ongoing risks and challenges within the policy and regulatory framework. Existing laws and policies are based on the old institutional set-up, which has substantially changed in recent years. Without full implementation of recommendations, there remains a risk that the petroleum industry will be governed by non-transparent contracts rather than a transparent regulatory framework.

The opportunities for Jamaica to **sustain its peer country knowledge exchanges** remain through the New Producers Group (NPG) Forum. Jamaica is now an importer of natural gas, which has the potential to reduce energy costs for the population and contribute to national development goals.

Following the Secretariat's inability to respond to outstanding technical assistance needs in aluminium and limestone, Jamaica has engaged private consultancies to deliver key policy inputs, demonstrating its prioritisation and willingness to pay for this work.⁵⁷

Oceans governance and actions

The Commonwealth Blue Charter is an agreement by all 56 Commonwealth countries, adopted at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London, April 2018.⁵⁸ Commonwealth countries agreed to actively co-operate to solve ocean-related problems and meet commitments for sustainable ocean development.⁵⁹ Member-led Commonwealth Blue Charter Action Groups implement the Blue Charter. Jamaica is a member of the Mangrove Ecosystems and Livelihoods and Marine Protected Areas Action Groups.

In recent years, Jamaica has been active in these groups, particularly under regional initiatives such as the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) and related conservation efforts. The country has designated several marine protected areas (MPAs; also referred to as 'fish sanctuaries' or 'special fishery conservation areas') and is advancing management effectiveness, enforcement and sustainable financing for these areas. These efforts are informing national policy development and alignment with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. They are also supported by donors and financing funds, including the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), the Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the UNDP Global Environment Facility (GEF).

⁵⁷ PWC (2020) 'Limestone', <https://dobusinessjamaica.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/GroundCalciumCarbonateReduced.pdf>; https://dobusinessjamaica.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Limestone-Investment-Opportunities-in-Jamaica_Highlights-from-the-Limestone-Value-Chain-Analysis.pdf

⁵⁸ Commonwealth Blue Charter (2021), 'Commonwealth Blue Charter. "Shared ocean, shared values." A Commonwealth commitment to work together to protect and manage our ocean', <https://thecommonwealth.org/bluecharter>

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Back to Office Report. Internal.

Prior to 2022, activities of the Action Groups were limited by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Secretariat's contributions to Jamaica's progress in these focal areas were likely limited to knowledge sharing within the Blue Charter groups.

Main insights and lessons in Sustainable Development

The Secretariat's interventions were relevant and effective through delivery of valued outputs for Jamaica, but some interventions lacked sustainability due to financial and institutional constraints. Stronger follow-up, funding continuity and implementation support would have significantly amplified development outcomes, particularly in high-potential areas like sport for development and the burgeoning natural gas sector. Insights and lessons are as follows.

- The Secretariat's support in **sport for development** was a valued first step in promoting the use of sport as a tool for national development. Stakeholders questioned whether practical changes followed the workshops, and whether the results framework was actively used. Jamaica is yet to set social development goals for the sport sector or align policies and investment to support sport's contribution to the SDGs.
- **Technical assistance and capacity building** improved government officials' knowledge and capabilities in the trade, petroleum, mining and mineral sectors. While the contributions to economic development cannot be quantified in the context of this study, it is probably true that the Secretariat has contributed to improved investment, policy and governance frameworks for Jamaica.
- There was a **missed strategic opportunity**. Work in Jamaica stopped after 2018 due to budget cuts and a shortage of staff, particularly legal experts. This was an inopportune time – during the development of Jamaica's natural gas industry, estimated to be worth US\$70 billion. The absence of sustained technical assistance limited the Secretariat's ability to contribute to long-term sectoral reform, energy security and progress on the energy transition.
- Lack of reliable data remains a barrier to policy development and advocacy, as exemplified in the work on sport for development.

3.3 Resilience and climate action

The Resilience and Climate Action pillar aimed to advance climate-resilient and low-carbon development in member countries, supporting their response to climate and ocean emergencies.

Financing for climate

Despite the SDG 13 target of US\$100 billion a year of climate finance mobilised by 2020, only US\$726 million of available climate finance had been received by the 31 Commonwealth small states by 2016.⁶⁰ The Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH) aimed to address this issue through filling knowledge and capacity gaps relating to securing finance for climate action.

Jamaica's vulnerability to climate change-related emergencies is well-recognised and a number of development partners are engaging with the Jamaican Government in responding to these, including through: **adaptation, mitigation and resilience measures** (USAID, EU, Canada, Japan, CIF); **disaster recovery** (EU, UK); **green investment mobilisation** (GCF, CIF), including from private equity and in clean energy; and through the IMF providing insurance against global risks – addressing physical and fiscal climate change resilience, decarbonisation and green transition risks.

Secretariat actions

Through the CCFAH, the Secretariat **placed a national climate finance adviser** in Jamaica from March 2017 to March 2020. The adviser provided embedded technical assistance to the government to enhance its institutional capacity to secure climate finance.

Key activities delivered included the following.

- Scanning for and developing project proposals to respond to funding opportunities through global climate funds.
- Development of Green Climate Fund (GCF) readiness project proposals to secure finance.
- Support for the implementation of the Climate Finance Readiness Strategy.
- Support for accreditation of national institutions with the GCF.

⁶⁰ The Commonwealth (2017), 'First Commonwealth climate finance expert begins work in Jamaica', <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/first-commonwealth-climate-finance-expert-begins-work-jamaica>

From December 2020 to March 2022, the Secretariat also conducted a **'Socio-economic and Financial Implications Assessment of Climate Change on Jamaica'** and delivered training on economic modelling tools.⁶¹ This was implemented with Jamaica's Ministry of Housing, Urban Renewal, Environment and Climate Change. The study examined the country's climate institutional framework and modelled the economic and public financial consequences of climate change. It noted that Jamaica has integrated climate mitigation and adaptation in its economic development processes. Its recommendations target enhancing capacities for climate adaptation and streamlining reporting for international agreements.

National outcomes

The placement of a national climate adviser in government aimed to increase institutional capacity to secure climate finance and improve climate readiness and resilience. From 2017 to 2020, the climate finance adviser helped **to secure over \$8 million in climate finance, with a further \$40,405,556** in the pipeline.⁶²

Box 3.2. Grants secured [USD]

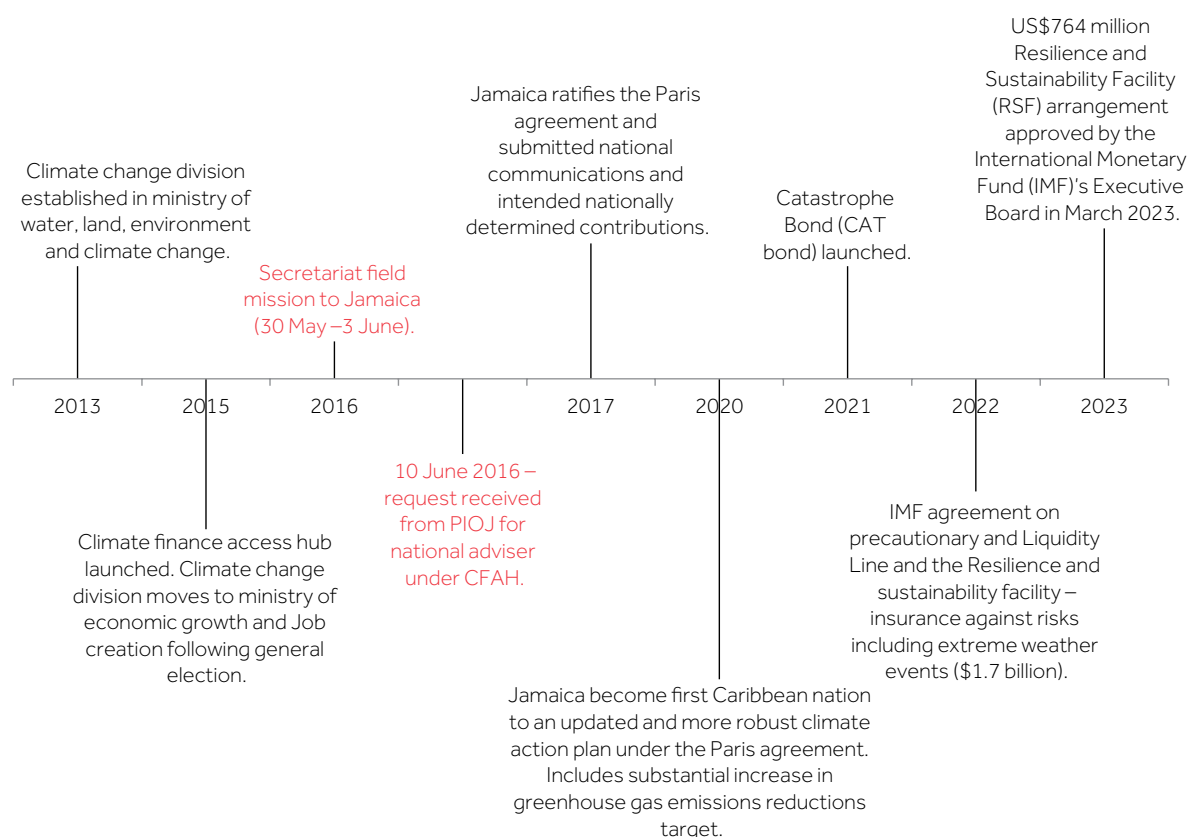
- Grant of \$1.3 million from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for strengthening Jamaica's capacity to meet transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement
- Grant of \$1.3 million from the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme for Enhancing Caribbean Civil Society's Access and Readiness for Climate Finance

61 The Commonwealth (2022), 'Socio-economic and Financial Implications Assessment of Climate Change on Jamaica', [https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-04/Socio-economic%20and%20Financial%20Implications%20of%20Climate%20Change%20on%20Jamaica_Final_UPDF%20March%202022.pdf?VersionId=OFHEbY0NfMqm3O3VnYH05bUZxd5x7GfS#&:text=Like%20many%20Caribbean%20countries%2C%20Jamaica,few%20decades%20\(ECLAC%202019\)](https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2022-04/Socio-economic%20and%20Financial%20Implications%20of%20Climate%20Change%20on%20Jamaica_Final_UPDF%20March%202022.pdf?VersionId=OFHEbY0NfMqm3O3VnYH05bUZxd5x7GfS#&:text=Like%20many%20Caribbean%20countries%2C%20Jamaica,few%20decades%20(ECLAC%202019))

62 The Commonwealth (2021), 'Evaluation of the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub', https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/migrated/inline/120%20-%20Evaluation%20of%20the%20Climate%20Finance%20Access%20Hub_with%20MR.pdf

- Grant of \$1 million from GCF towards supporting a comprehensive national adaptation planning process in Jamaica (Ja-NAP)
- Grant of \$1 million from GCF towards institutionalising a common framework for climate finance MRV to enhance complementarity and coherence for climate action in CARICOM States
- Grant of \$613,000 from the GCF for REDD+ readiness actions as part of Forest Policy
- Grant of \$582,000 accessed under the GCF Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, with a primary focus on Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)
- Grant of over \$500,000 from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for an analysis of the development and operation of a green bond market and the creation of regional green bond guidelines
- Grant of \$300,000 from the NAP Global Network for National Designated Authority (NDA) strengthening and GCF programme development
- Grant of \$272,797 from the GCF for facilitating a gender-responsive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Grant of \$260,143 for accelerating the uptake of climate smart agriculture in selected African, Caribbean and Pacific countries through the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA)
- Complimentary finance of \$65,000 secured to leverage Sustainable and Diverse Sources of climate finance; To enhance Climate Resilience, Gender Equality and Inclusiveness for Vulnerable and Marginalised Populations (EnGenDER)
- Grant of \$33,915 from GCF for support towards the Accreditation Gap Assessment and Action Plan to the Jamaica's Social investment Fund.

Figure 3.8 Timeline of support to Resilience and Climate Action.



- Technical assistance grant of \$22,000 for supporting national stocktaking for adaptation planning and interventions by NAP Global Network

Technical assistance grant of \$6,050 from GCF for NAP readiness proposal.

Funding Source	Amount (USD)
GCF	6,390,511
GEF	1,300,000
NAP Global Network	323,435
ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation	260,143
Complementary finance (EnGenDER)	65,000
	8,339,089

The CCFAH adviser supported Jamaica in enhancing climate budget tagging processes and in the development and implementation of a road map for climate finance readiness. In addition,

the technical support helped to fast-track progress on Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets. These results were achieved through an estimated conservative investment of US\$200,972, suggesting a 1:3.6 ratio of project spend to climate finance secured.⁶³

Secretariat support also contributed to two Jamaican institutions (the Development Bank of Jamaica and Jamaican Social Investment Fund) becoming accredited to the **Green Climate Fund** – unlocking direct access to global climate finance

An evaluation of the CCFAH found that awareness, skills and knowledge were increased due to the Hub's interventions in Jamaica. The evaluation found that further capacity improvements were still needed to develop bankable climate finance proposals.

⁶³ Spend excludes HQ and Hub overhead and supervisory costs to the project.

Main insights and lessons in climate resilience

The Secretariat's climate support in Jamaica delivered high-value outcomes – most notably enabling GCF accreditation and strengthening climate finance readiness. However, Jamaica's evolving climate landscape requires more integrated governance, stronger data systems, and better co-ordination across national and international stakeholders. Future programming must be strategic, targeted and collaborative to enhance Jamaica's resilience to climate change. Insights and lessons are as follows.

- Jamaica has made significant progress integrating climate adaptation and mitigation into its economic development and policy frameworks. However, there is a risk of duplication and inefficiency due to overlapping mandates among multiple climate-related agencies and ministries.
- The Secretariat is best placed to fill strategic co-ordination, institutional capacity and technical expertise gaps, and should avoid duplicating infrastructure financing or large-scale project implementation. The Secretariat should, however, be mindful to avoid creating a dependency on its support, ensuring that it contributes to the improved capacities at the institutional level based on clear baseline measures.
- Climate resilience support is a crowded donor landscape. With many active partners (for example, IMF, GCF, IADB, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), USAID and the European Investment Bank (EIB)), future Commonwealth interventions must co-ordinate closely to avoid duplication and fragmentation of climate finance.
- Future programming should consider the need to sustain momentum through continued, well-aligned activities beyond past technical support, deepening the assessment of capacity gaps mapping to access global funding programmes.

3.4 Small and other vulnerable states

The Secretariat's strategic priorities for its small state countries involves ensuring that their vulnerabilities are recognised in global

governance and their resilience needs are addressed through strengthened policies, institutions and systems.

Development partners in Jamaica are working to: **strengthen disaster risk management** (World Bank, EU) and **response to economic shocks** (World Bank, IMF); **enhance the business environment** (World Bank); and improve **access to markets**, including for the agricultural sector and through trade partnerships (UK, Japan, CDB).

Mobilising diaspora finance

Diaspora finance is crucial to the livelihoods of thousands of Jamaican families,⁶⁴ with an average of 75 per cent of the total remittances (valued at 19 percent of GDP in 2025) originating from Canada, the UK and the US – countries with high concentration of the Jamaica diaspora.⁶⁵ However, at the start of this strategic period, little was known about diaspora interest in savings and investments, due to the small number of existing surveys on this topic.⁶⁶

Secretariat actions

The Commonwealth Secretariat undertook a study on mobilising diaspora finance through the UK-based Flagship Diaspora Investor Survey, to assess investor demand in their country of origin. The survey was administered between October 2017 and March 2018 and covered six Commonwealth countries, including Jamaica. The survey investigated attitudes towards diaspora saving and investment and covered current practices and motivations, obstacles to saving and investment, addressing obstacles and other incentive mechanisms, and preferences for future saving and investment. The survey found a high prevalence of informal remittances to family and friends, but only a minority holding other financial products in the country. Barriers to saving and investment in-country were found to include fear of corruption, lack of information, political instability and weak legal frameworks, and a gap between interest in and practice of entrepreneurship.⁶⁷

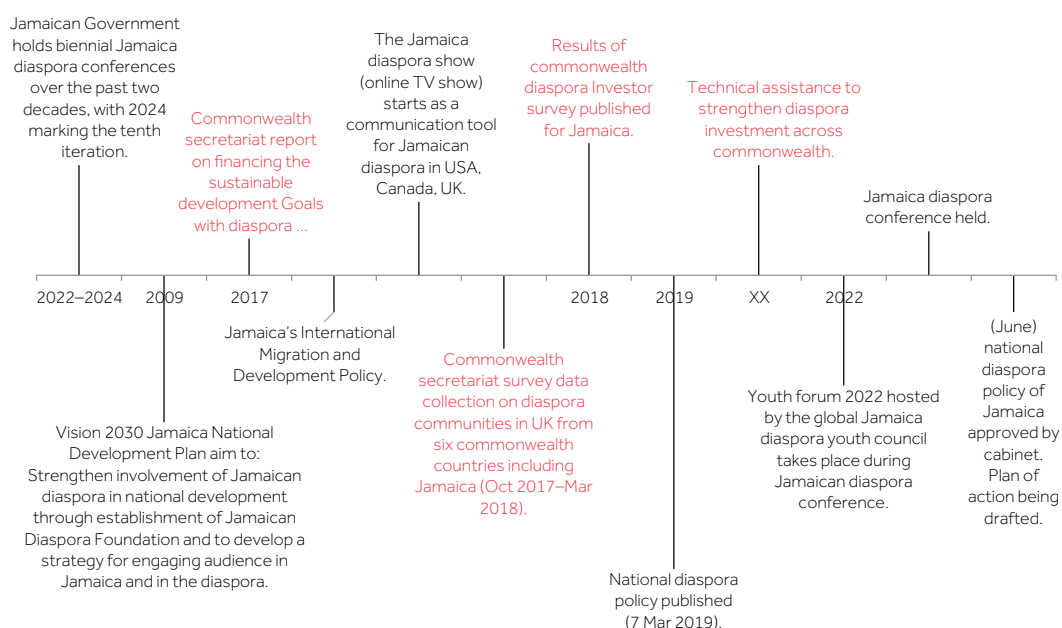
⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ The Commonwealth (2018), *Understanding the Investment Potential of the Jamaican Diaspora. Results of the Commonwealth Diaspora Investor Survey Country Report*, <https://production-new-commonwealth-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/migrated/inline/Understanding%20the%20Investment%20Potential%20of%20the%20Jamaican%20Diaspora.pdf>

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Figure 3.9 Timeline of support to diaspora finance.



The intervention sits within a wider history of action by the government to increase understanding of diaspora finance and motivate the Jamaican diaspora to invest. These are displayed in Figure 3.10.

National outcomes

The report, *Understanding the Investment Potential of the Commonwealth Diaspora*, was launched during CHOGM 2018 by Fiji's Minister for Industry and Trade and Tourism.

Jamaica's National Diaspora Policy was published in 2019, the year following the survey results publication, but this made no reference to the underlying evidence used or the Secretariat's survey. However, **interviewees credited the Secretariat with improving awareness and knowledge on the challenges and opportunities in leveraging diaspora financing.**

Jamaica has demonstrated a keen interest in exploiting the strategic opportunities for diaspora financing. Two virtual platforms were launched during the 10th Biennial Jamaica Diaspora Conference in 2024, developed with the IADB and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Main insights and lessons

Despite the groundbreaking nature of the Secretariat's report and the high profile afforded it through CHOGM, the Secretariat's contributions

to the development of policy in Jamaica was not well-known or visible in-country. The review found more broadly that country counterparts were unclear on the Secretariat's agenda in supporting small states. Many affirmed the potential of the Commonwealth to platform small states issues at the global level but this association was not visible in b=national policies.

The Secretariat needs to clarify its agenda for small states, distinguishing advocacy priorities and in-country support, to clearly communicate its value as a small states champion.

3.5 Secretariat's contribution to the SDGs

The Secretariat does not track impact within its results framework. Strategic Plan outcomes, however, align with helping member countries to progress on their SDGs and related global commitments.

Jamaica's national goals and outcomes are highly aligned with the SDGs and documented in its Vision 2030.⁶⁸ Figure 3.10 maps the Secretariat's results under relevant SDGs, linking their relevance and potential for contributing to impact.

⁶⁸ MTF 2018–2021 shows an over 95 per cent alignment between the national goals and outcomes and the SDGs.

Figure 3.10 Mapping of Secretariat results under relevant SDGs.

Evidence of contribution to SDG				
12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	13 CLIMATE ACTION	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS		
The Secretariat's work on sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources focuses on strengthening governance and regulatory frameworks and ensuring Jamaica benefits from its production contracts.	The CCFAH secured US\$7.26 million from 2017 to 2020 in climate finance for Jamaica, contributing to enhanced national climate planning and implementation.	The Secretariat has supported institutional strengthening of: the Ministry of Justice; the Department of Correctional Services; the Ministry of National Security; the Debt Management Branch of the Ministry of Finance and Public Service; the Ministry of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport; and the Ministry of Water, Land, Environment and Climate Change. The Secretariat's activities in the area of restorative justice, countering violent extremism and promoting credible, transparent and inclusive elections may have also contributed to reducing violence, promoting the rule of law and protecting political decision-making. Work in the area of debt management capacities may contribute to creating effective, accountable and transparent institutions.		
Possibility of contribution to SDG				
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	5 GENDER EQUALITY	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	
Jamaica has an improved national awareness of, and measurement tools for, the contribution of sport to development, including by identifying data and policy linkages with the education and health sectors and emphasising the role of sports in improved national well-being.	Regional activities advocated for the increased participation of women in elections and decision-making activities. Gender-responsive climate finance secured.	Secretariat support on the energy transition and access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services began late in the review period and will not have yet contributed to this SDG.	The Secretariat's work around trade has the potential to contribute to improved economic growth, including through trade-related technical assistance (SDG Target 8a).	

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	15 LIFE ON LAND 	
Secretariat technical assistance in trade, natural resource industrialisation and global advocacy for small and vulnerable states can contribute to promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialisation.	The Secretariat's advocacy for persons with disabilities may contribute to reducing inequalities by addressing legal and policy inclusion and protections for this group. Efforts to mainstream youth and gender have found limited evidence of higher-level outcomes.	Climate projects funded through CCFAH help Jamaica to reduce the exposure and vulnerability of people living in poverty and those in vulnerable situations to climate-related extreme events and other shocks and disasters.	Climate finance secured may support investment in biodiversity conservation and sustainably use.	

4. Discussion and Lessons

4.1 Assessments of outcomes and impact

The findings emphasised that the Secretariat delivered a wide range of outputs across the strategic portfolios. The assessment harvested outcomes where there is some evidence of the Secretariat's contributions.

- Quantifiable impact was evidenced for climate finance, where US\$7.2 million was secured** for Jamaica between 2017 and 2020. The CCFAH national climate adviser helped progress Jamaica forward with its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets. A number of wider impacts can be expected from the climate projects financed: greater adaptation planning; contributions towards National Action Plans; meeting transparency requirements under the Paris Agreement; improved access and readiness for climate finance; complementarity and coherence of climate action in CARICOM states; protection of forests; regional green bond guidelines; strengthened institutional capacities, governance mechanisms, and planning and programming frameworks towards a transformational long-term climate action agenda; a gender-responsive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation; and climate-smart agricultural practices.
- Contributions were made to changes in electoral systems and practices.** The Secretariat's activities led to the first campaign review in Jamaica's history and a new approach to handling complaints procedures by the Office of the Political Ombudsman.
- Substantial progress was made in natural resources management, including enhanced capacity of government officials** to manage the petroleum sector more effectively, improved economic terms in negotiated contracts with investors, enhanced policies in mining, minerals and petroleum, and advocacy for Jamaica's needs and experiences in international fora.
- Improved opportunities for international trade were developed**, including through strengthened positions in new trade agreements and implementation of existing trade agreements. Contributions were made to the opening of a dry-docking facility worth US\$37 million.
- Changes in knowledge and capacity were generated** through training interventions and capacity building (in CVE, restorative justice, trade, sport, natural resources)
- Data gaps were filled and identified** for PWD and diaspora finance, supporting national policy efforts in these areas.
- The Commonwealth's Meridian system continued to be instrumental in supporting improved debt management. Jamaica** debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP) declined from ~144 per cent (2012) to ~72 per cent (2023), one of the most substantial declines in the region and globally. The Secretariat's support was not directly contributory to this decline but nonetheless enabled critical institutional capacity-building to support debt transparency and sustainable management.

There was potential for policy impact in: contributing to strengthening community-based alternatives to incarceration and dispute resolution (in CVE, restorative justice); enhancing awareness of the link between violent crime and terrorism; and ensuring petroleum contracts are governed by transparent equitable frameworks. However, these results require additional actions by the government and stakeholders and may be harmed by changes in priorities.

Institutional capacity-building pathways were found to be the most effective through long-term technical assistance. Evidence of training outcomes were limited to awareness raising and sensitisation. Structural barriers to the effectiveness of training interventions were identified. For example, departments that received training from the Secretariat also struggled with staff retention (in legislative drafting, restorative justice and CVE, debt management).

4.2 Coherence and co-ordination

The Secretariat's activities contributed to coherence and co-ordination in the following areas.

- **Countering violent extremism.** The Secretariat encouraged and leveraged interagency collaboration through the National Counter Terrorism Forum.
- **Rights of people with disabilities.** The Secretariat brought stakeholders together in two conferences, one of which led to pan-Caribbean commitments to enhance the rights of PWD.
- **Sport for development.** It generated a national framework for monitoring and evaluating the contribution of sport for development.
- **Trade.** The Secretariat contributed to more co-ordination around international trade through a revised international trade policy.

However, there appears to have been limited co-ordination between the Secretariat's activities and those of CARICOM, with a missed opportunity to scale up policy engagements through the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development. Further, there were also missed opportunities to co-ordinate Commonwealth youth empowerment and youth network activities with the national security and violence reduction aims of the Government of Jamaica.

The Secretariat's interventions could have been strengthened and sustained through greater co-ordination in-country. The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) houses the Vision 2030 team, which leads the co-ordination of Vision 2030, Jamaica's first long-term strategic development plan. This plan integrates economic, social, environmental and governance aspects of national development and is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. Governmental stakeholders were therefore already sensitised to the need for co-ordination and coherence in implementing development projects, and requests made to the Secretariat for support aligned with the strategic vision outlined in relevant Vision 2030 sector plans⁶⁹ (for example, sector plans on sports, natural resources and environmental management and hazard risk reduction and climate

change, national security and the correctional services, persons with disabilities), updated through the rolling sector plans and the Mid-Term Socio-Economic Policy Frameworks.⁷⁰

4.3 Summary of lessons

Lesson 1: High-quality, tailored technical assistance drives impact

The Secretariat's technical assistance aligned well with Jamaica's **Vision 2030** and sectoral priorities. Stakeholders highly valued its **accessible, adaptive and personalised support**, particularly in **legislative drafting, economic policy and natural resources**. For instance, in the petroleum sector, the Secretariat was seen as a **trusted adviser** whose inputs shaped negotiations and helped lay the legal foundation for a new natural gas industry. This demonstrates the importance of sustained, multi-level relationships – **diplomatic, institutional and technical** – in enabling long-term development partnerships.

Lesson 2: Strategic, timely interventions elevate under-recognised issues

The Secretariat provided **thought leadership** in areas with limited national attention, such as **persons with disabilities (PWD), countering violent extremism (CVE) and sport for development**. Its timely interventions raised visibility, empowered local champions and aligned with national policy milestones (for example, Jamaica's Medium-Term Socio-economic Policy Framework 2019–2022). High-profile engagement, including from the Secretary-General, amplified these efforts and influenced national discourse.

Lesson 3: Peer learning across Commonwealth countries is highly valued

Stakeholders appreciated opportunities for **cross-country learning** with peers facing similar challenges. For example, participation in a London workshop inspired Jamaica's campaign finance technical assistance. As one stakeholder noted, seeing similar issues in countries like **Nigeria and South Africa** reinforced a shared Commonwealth experience. This sense of **solidarity and shared institutional heritage** enhanced Jamaica's confidence and global positioning on key policy issues.

⁶⁹ <https://www.vision2030.gov.jm/vision-2030-jamaica-sector-plans/>

⁷⁰ Vision 2030 Jamaica, Medium Term Socio Economic Policy Frameworks, www.vision2030.gov.jm/medium-term-socio-economic-policy-frameworks/

Lesson 4: Needs assessments improve project effectiveness

Projects that began with a **baseline needs assessment** – such as those on CVE, sport for development and political dialogue – showed greater effectiveness. In contrast, trade-related assistance lacked a diagnostic phase, limiting its impact. Conducting structured assessments at project outset helps align support with real institutional gaps and enables better implementation planning.

Lesson 5: Legal and policy tools provide sustainable benefits

The Secretariat's **policy templates, legislation drafts and negotiation support** have had lasting value, especially in **natural resources, trade and disability inclusion**. However, **implementation support** is often lacking. For instance, while a sport for development results framework was produced, it remains underutilised. Sustained follow-up from both the Secretariat and national stakeholders is needed to translate policy products into real outcomes.

Lesson 6: In-country national advisers accelerate progress

National advisers deployed under programmes like **Hub and Spokes** and the **Climate Finance Access Hub (CCFAH)** provided daily technical support, upskilled national staff and advanced development finance pipelines. Jamaica's climate adviser received a top rating from national supervisors (5 out of 5), highlighting the effectiveness of well-matched technical experts. Strong **political and institutional support** from government further contributed to success. However, structural issues such as **staff attrition** limit long-term capacity building and should be considered in future design.

Lesson 7: Funding disruptions undermine policy momentum

Funding gaps led to interruptions at **critical policy stages**, notably in natural resources just before the natural gas sector became active. These pauses risk **eroding hard-won gains**. The Secretariat should assess where a country sits in the **policy or legislative cycle** before disengaging and consider **handover strategies** to other partners if projects are paused or closed. Matching country demand with available Secretariat resources is essential to sustaining momentum and maximising impact.

Lesson 8: Clarify small states agenda

The Secretariat has a strategic focus on small states. However, its global presence has become diffused in recent years, with an increased number of intergovernmental fora and the dominance of larger countries and organisations in the climate space. The Secretariat and Commonwealth need to clarify its agenda on small states to ensure a more focused and strategic agenda at the global advocacy and national development levels.

Lesson 9: Gender and youth mainstreaming gaps

The review tracked several youth and gender targeted activities. However, these were largely fragmented and standalone, with relevant national stakeholders unconnected and without a clear outcome focus. Further, projects delivered in thematic pillars did not have a strong element of mainstreaming these key cross-cutting priorities. Future in-country gender and youth mainstreaming needs to address these gaps to realise youth empowerment and gender equality through Secretariat programming.

Annexes

Annex A. Country Portfolio Assessed

Project	Sub-Project/Activity Name	Implementation Period
Commonwealth Meridian	Commonwealth Meridian – ‘Public-Private Partnerships for Debt Managers’ conference convened in Kingston, Jamaica.	2022-2023
	Meridian Implementation	
	Debt Data Validation in preparation for migrating to Meridian	
	Participation in Commonwealth Cadre of CVE Experts	
Countering Violent Extremism	Participation in Annual Jamaica Counter Terrorism Forum	2018-2022
	CARICOM Workshop: Preventing the Exploitation of Information and Communications Technologies for Terrorist and Violent Extremism Purposes in CARICOM;	
	Jamaican Government Roundtable and Senior Leadership Exchange and Scoping Mission	
	Workshop: Establishing CVE Program – Lessons Learned from the Commonwealth	
	Managing Violent Extremism in Jamaican Prisons	
	Workshop	
	CEP Phase II Caribbean & Americas training event #1 (St. John's, Antigua and Barbuda)	
Election Observation and Strengthening Electoral Processes	Strengthening Election Cybersecurity	2018-2021
	CEP Phase II Virtual Meeting: Commonwealth Africa and Caribbean & Americas	
	CEP Phase II Virtual Meeting: Commonwealth Caribbean & Americas	
	Provision of Technical assistance to the Electoral Commission of Jamaica on the Implementation of Campaign Finance Legislation and Regulations - Phase 1	
	CEP Phase II Caribbean & Americas training event #2 (Bridgetown, Barbados)	
Elections Support Project	CEP Phase III: Caribbean & Americas region training event (Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago)	2023
	Full cycle Support for Elections Management Bodies to strengthen implementation of COG recommendations	
	Provision of Technical assistance to the Electoral Commission of Jamaica on the Implementation of Campaign Finance Legislation and Regulations - Phase 2	

(Continued)

Project	Sub-Project/Activity Name	Implementation Period
Inclusive Dialogue and Enhanced Women's Political Participation	Workshop on transformational leadership for gender equality in the Caribbean	2018-2021
	In-country Consultations and Scoping mission to Jamaica	
	Virtual Workshop on Women's Parliamentary and Transformational Leadership	
	Workshop on Leadership for Good Governance and Social Transformation in the Caribbean, Barbados	
Justice Frameworks	(Military) justice reform needs assessment	2022
Commonwealth Office of Civil and Criminal Justice Reforms	Member of expert consultation group advising and reviewing the Benchmarks	2018
Promoting International Sound Practices in Public Debt Management	Technical Support Consultancy	2021-2022
Rule of Law	Cyber Frameworks	2022
Secretary-General support and consultation with Member States, CW organisations and others	Secretary-General visit to Jamaica	2016
Secretary-General Good Offices	6-Day restorative justice and community reconciliation capacity-building workshop	2019-2022
	Political dialogue advisory assistance to the Office of the Political Ombudsman	
	Intergenerational political dialogue with key stakeholders - Virtual	
Strengthening public administration to enhance good governance	Internal Audit and Enterprise Risk Management Exchange Learning Conference	2018
Commonwealth Youth Programme	Commonwealth Youth Networks - Former Commonwealth Youth Council Chair	2018-2021
	Establishment of Jamaica Youth Workers Association	
	Youth Participation & Youth Work Professionalisation	
Convening of Commonwealth Health Ministers and Senior Officials	CHMM Chair	2021-2022

(Continued)

Project	Sub-Project/Activity Name	Implementation Period
Health Security and Resilience	Annual Commonwealth Health Ministers Meeting	2017-2024
Inclusive and Resilient Education	Increased Effectiveness of Education Systems Management	2024
Learning for Life	Commonwealth of Learning Caribbean Focal Points Meeting	2018-2019
Maximising the development potential of sport	Monitoring and evaluation framework for measuring the impact of sport in Jamaica	
Pan-CW NR Advisory Assistance for Sustainable Development	New Producers Group (Peer Network)	2017-2019
	Mining Sector Reforms - detailed legal review of petroleum taxation submitted to Govt. Assisted Govt in negotiations with international oil companies.	
	Petroleum Sector Reforms	
Youth Skills Development and Economic Empowerment Project	Caribbean Youth Digital Skills in collaboration with Simplilearn - Special Ministerial Conference On Specific Legislation for Persons With Disabilities in the Caribbean	2022
Commonwealth Trade Competitiveness Programme	Launch of the Jamaica National Export Strategy 2015-2019	2015-2021
	Economic study on the impact of establishment of Ship Repair/Dry docking Facilities in Jamaica	
	Health and Wellness Services Sector	
	Consultation on 'Brexit and its implications for Jamaica and other CARIFORUM States'	
	New Products, New Markets Scheme	
	Research Study on the New Post-Brexit Procedural Rules for Caribbean Exports into the UK	
Hub and Spokes Programme- Consolidation Phase & Post H&S Support	National Trade Adviser (Kingston)	2019-2017
A Resilient Blue Commonwealth: Blue Charter	Blue Charter Action Groups	2019
Coordinated Action to Enhance Climate Change	Consultation on Commonwealth Call to Action on Living Lands	2021

(Continued)

Project	Sub-Project/Activity Name	Implementation Period
Improved access to climate finance	Commonwealth National Climate Finance Advisers (2)	2017 - 2021
	Development of climate finance approved and pipeline projects	
	Conducted Socio-Economic and Financial Implications Assessment of Climate Change under NDCP CAEP initiative	
	Participation in NDC Webinar Series - Developing Climate Financing Frameworks for Improved Alignment of Public and Private Sector Investments	
Economic Policy Support to Small States	Diaspora Finance Survey	
Youth Mainstreaming Participation & Inclusion	Commonwealth Youth Networks - CYCN Coordinator	2021 - 2022
	Commonwealth Youth Networks - CAYWA Coordinator	
	Commonwealth Youth Awards	
	Commonwealth Youth Forum 2022 - Youth leader attendance support from Commonwealth Youth Networks	
	Commonwealth Youth Networks - Commonwealth Youth Council's General Assembly - 2 youth per country represented at commonwealth level engagements	

Annex B. Participation in regional and pan-Commonwealth initiatives

Initiatives	
Commonwealth Youth Council	Youth representative from Jamaica chaired the Commonwealth Youth council.
Caribbean Regional Youth Council Summit	The Commonwealth Youth Council, in partnership with the Caribbean Regional Youth Council, hosted the 4th Caribbean Regional Youth Summit in Jamaica, 28 September–02 October 2017. It aimed at creating an intergenerational platform to share key emerging priorities for youth in the Caribbean ahead of the Commonwealth Youth Forum (CYF 2018).
Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Conference of Integrity Commissions and Anti-Corruption Bodies	The Third Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Conference of Integrity Commissions and Anti-Corruption Bodies was held in Jamaica in April 2017. It accepted Grenada's offer to host a Training Centre for Commonwealth Caribbean Anti-Corruption Agencies.
Commonwealth Small States Office	Jamaica is exploring arrangements for its own permanent presence in Geneva away from the office.
Faith in the Commonwealth	Young people from Jamaica attended a Training of Trainers workshop in Trinidad and Tobago before delivering community project activities (workshop, dialogues, presentations) in Jamaica.
Military Justice Workshop held 3 May 2022, hosted by The Bahamas Office of Civil and Criminal Justice Reform (OCCJR). Attended by Jamaica representatives (in-person) and five other Caribbean countries (virtual and in-person).	All countries asked the Secretariat to draft model military justice legislation for the Caribbean region based on international military justice principles and to create a database of relevant legislation, case law, and knowledge material on military justice knowledge within the Caribbean region. Six Caribbean countries who attended the Workshop on Military Justice requested support to tailor the model legislation to their individual needs. Countries suggested a memorandum of understanding to foster co-operation and enable assistance with military justice needs, including court martial proceedings.
Enterprise risk management	An enterprise risk management (ERM) policy and frameworks were adopted in Jamaica in the 2018/19 financial period. These enable member countries to achieve national strategic objectives and sustainable development through enhanced risk management and improved decision-making. Jamaica became interested in the introduction of ERM after its successful introduction in Botswana and The Gambia. As stated by a senior member of Jamaica's Internal Audit Directorate: 'It was instructive and encouraging to see the significant work The Gambia has achieved since they started implementation of ERM. There are several elements of their approach that we will be exploring to determine suitability for adoption, as the Government of Jamaica implements its ERM in Central Government.'

(Continued)

Initiatives	
Data Science Innovation Workshop	A regional Data Science Innovation Workshop was delivered to improve compilation of official statistics, use of data visualisation and dissemination, and to strengthen national statistical systems (three days, May 2022). It included government agencies, the private sector, Chamber of Commerce, employers federation and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from across the Caribbean. Initial discussions between the Secretariat and STATIN to strengthen the relationship between STATIN and the private sector through the Chamber of Commerce and support to aid national consumer price index data did not deliver any further action.
A Commonwealth cybercrimes framework aimed to support member countries to implement the 2018 Commonwealth Cyber Declaration; and strengthen national efforts to combat cybercrime through awareness raising, knowledge sharing and the provision of technical assistance.	• <i>'Commonwealth Conference on Addressing Cybercrime in the Caribbean'</i>, 9–12 May 2022, Barbados, enabled key stakeholders from 12 member countries to identify practical solutions to effectively address cybercrime. • Stakeholder, Jamaica Police Force: <i>'Multi-stakeholders must forge together to get insights of the deficits the region faces with regard to MLA and put forward a workable strategy for all concerned'</i>. • Forty-one (41) delegates drawn from different sectors such as finance, criminal justice, governments, law schools and regional organisations attended the four-day conference. Female delegates made up 45 per cent and male delegates 55 per cent. • Ninety-nine (99) per cent of participants said that the conference was timely and comprehensively addressed the issue of cybercrime in the region considering recent cybercrime attacks.
Leadership for Good Governance	Jamaican representatives attended a workshop on 'Leadership for Good Governance and Social Transformation' in the Caribbean, held in Barbados 25–27 April 2022. The workshop was delivered by the Secretariat, UN Women and Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL). Parliamentarians, ministers, high-level women leaders, civil society organisations and experts in inclusive dialogue and women's political participation gathered to reflect critically on the significance of democratic participation and equitable development in the Commonwealth. The workshop deepened participants' understanding, reflected on good practice, and offered strategies for advancing women's parliamentary leadership across the Commonwealth Caribbean.

Annex C. Development partners mapping

Table C1. Development partners working with Jamaica in areas that align with the Secretariat's work

Development partners and approximate size of portfolio in Jamaica	Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Pillars (2021–2025)			
	Democracy and Governance	Sustainable Development	Resilience and Climate Action	Small and Other Vulnerable States
World Bank ⁷¹ 2024–2027: US\$550 million investment foreseen.		Strengthening social protection mechanisms. Improving access to quality secondary education. Regional digitaleconomy initiatives.		Strengthening disaster risk management and response to economic shock.
Inter-American Development Bank ⁷²	Improving public sector management. Fiscal consolidation and debt reduction.	Sustainable development through private sector engagement.	Integration of climate action in national fiscal policy and management.	
International Monetary Fund		Debt reduction. Improving macroeconomic stability.		
USAID \$2 billion committed since mission in Jamaica was established (1962).	Addressing high rates of violent crime including among youth.	Improving epidemic preparedness and response.	Increasing climate resilience.	
EU	Support to address crime and violence.	Inclusive and resilient digital economy and society	Improved resilience to natural hazards through better climate change adaptation and mitigation.	Disaster risk management.

⁷¹ World Bank Group (2025), 'The World Bank in Jamaica', <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/jamaica>

⁷² IADB Group (2022), 'Document of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Inter-American Investment Corporation', www.iadb.org/document.cfm?id=EZSHARE-225150620-11

Table C1. (Continued)

Development partners and approximate size of portfolio in Jamaica	Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Pillars (2021–2025)				Small and Other Vulnerable States
	Democracy and Governance	Sustainable Development	Resilience and Climate Action		
Canada CAD\$127.75 million pledged in 2023.	Improved gender equality and justice services.		Improved climate resilience.		
Japan US\$1.85 million medical equipment delivered.		Strengthening health and medical systems.	Addressing climate change impacts.	Prioritising needs of small island developing states (SIDS) in global governance.	
UK ⁷³ Lead bilateral donor. Significant debt relief.	Violence prevention, countering serious and organised crime, anti-corruption. Reducing inequality and exclusion of LGBT people.	Eradicating HIV/AIDs. Trade partnerships.	Gender-responsive disaster recovery. Climate and environmental resilience. Blue carbon fund.		
Caribbean Development Bank ⁷⁴		Increased productivity and access to markets for farmers.	Climate-smart agricultural products.		
Climate Investment Fund US\$30 million climate resilience pilot programme. US\$500,000 technical assistance in 2021. ⁷⁵			Pilot programme for climate resilience, mainstreaming climate change in national development planning and decision-making. Scaling-up affordable, clean and resilient energy in region. Increased green investment mobilisation.		(Continued)

⁷³ UK Government (2025), 'Development Tracker', https://devtracker.fcdo.gov.uk/search_p

⁷⁴ Caribbean Development Bank (2023), 'Jamaica Borrowing Members', www.caribank.org/countries-and-members/borrowing-members/jamaica

⁷⁵ CIF (2020), 'Jamaica', www.cif.org/country/jamaica

Table C1. (Continued)

Development partners and approximate size of portfolio in Jamaica	Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Pillars (2021–2025)				Small and Other Vulnerable States
	Democracy and Governance	Sustainable Development	Resilience and Climate Action		
Green Climate Fund ⁷⁶ \$38 million		Strengthening urban public transport and quality of life in secondary cities.	Long-term loans and leveraging private investment for climate adaptation and mitigation investment. Link between climate resilience, e-mobility and urban transport systems development. Protecting coral reefs through blue economy private equity fund.		
United Nations Development Programme ⁷⁷			Increasing national capacity for biodiversity finance. Supporting national strategy, action plans and reporting on biodiversity. Supporting fulfilment of commitments and reporting to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) mechanisms.		

(Continued)

⁷⁶ Green Climate Fund (2025). 'Jamaica'. www.greenclimate.fund/countries/jamaica⁷⁷ Jamaica Multilateral Technical Cooperation Indicative List 2023 (internal, shared with evaluation team).

Table C1. (Continued)

Development partners and approximate size of portfolio in Jamaica	Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Pillars (2021–2025)			
	Democracy and Governance	Sustainable Development	Resilience and Climate Action	Small and Other Vulnerable States
			Supporting integration of climate considerations into national policies strategies and programmes Develop strategy on energy efficiency. Increasing knowledge of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies among youth.	
UN Environment Programme			Reducing marine plastics and plastic pollution and transition to a circular economy.	
Food and Agriculture Organization			Strengthening climate-sensitive agriculture.	
Global Environment Facility			Increasing resilience of landscapes and seascapes.	

Annex D. Strategic Plans: result frameworks

Strategic Results Framework Strategic Plan 2017/18–2020/21					
Goals					
• Strong democracy, rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights and respect for diversity • Inclusive growth and sustainable development • A well-connected and networked Commonwealth					
Strategic Outcomes	Democracy (Peace)	Public institutions (Peace)	Youth and Social Development (People)	Economic Development (Prosperity)	Small and Other Vulnerable States (Planet)
	1. Greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles	2. More effective, efficient and equitable public governance	3. People of the Commonwealth fulfil their potential with dignity and equality in a healthy environment	4. More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development	5. Strengthened resilience of small and other vulnerable states, including adaptation and mitigation against climate change
Intermediate Outcomes	1.1 CMAG is well-informed and supported to protect and promote Commonwealth values and principles 1.2 Member countries engaged with and benefit from strengthened Good Offices of the Secretary-general 1.3 Member countries conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections 1.4 Strengthened mechanisms of civil paths to peace in member countries to counter violent extremism	2.1 Human Rights promoted and protected, and participation in the UN's UPR process improved 2.2 Rule of law strengthened and access to justice ensured for all 2.3 Improved public administration for good governance and the prevention and elimination of corruption	3.1 Young people engaged and empowered to meaningfully participate in political and development processes 3.2 Sports contributes to sustainable development, health and peaceful and just societies 3.3 Strengthened sustainable policies reduce disparities and improve health and education outcomes 3.4 Women, girls and other vulnerable groups empowered and protected against violence and harmful practices	4.1 Effective mechanisms for increased trade, increased access to trade, employment and business growth 4.2 Commonwealth positions, advanced in international development and financing mechanisms 4.3 National frameworks facilitate effective debt management 4.4 Sustainable development of marine, other natural resources, including 'blue economies	5.1 International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small and other vulnerable states' development strategies and resilience needs 5.2 Increased resilience, adaptation and mitigation against climate change 5.3 Improved access to climate financing

Cross-cutting outcomes

- Partnerships and Innovation: Strengthened partnerships and innovations to support member countries and Commonwealth organisations
- Gender mainstreaming: Gender equality and the empowerment of women integrated in the Secretariat's policies, frameworks, programmes and projects
- Consensus Building: Member countries achieve consensus and advance key priority issues

Strategic Results Framework Strategic Plan 2021/22–2024/25				
	Democracy and Governance	Sustainable Development	Resilience and Climate Action	Small and other vulnerable states
Strategic outcomes	1. Greater adherence to Commonwealth values and principles and advancement of good governance	2. Sustainable and inclusive economic and social development	3. Climate-resilient and low-carbon development to respond to climate and ocean emergencies	4. Small and other vulnerable states' needs and concerns addressed in global governance
Intermediate outcomes	1.1 Member countries effectively utilise mechanisms to further adherence of Commonwealth values and principles. ¹ 1.2 Member countries conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections. 1.3 Public institutions and framework in member countries strengthened to promote rule of law, access to justice, human rights and good governance	2.1 Effective trade policy, increased competitiveness and co-operation. 2.2 Sustainable public finance and debt management. 2.3 Sustainable, equitable, transparent and effective management, governance and use of the ocean, energy and natural resources. 2.4 Inclusive and resilient education and health systems	3.1 Enhanced intra-Commonwealth co-operation on sustainable ocean action and energy transition 3.2 Enhanced access to financial resources, technology and capacities for climate change and adaptation and migration	4.1 Policy positions advanced in global governance mechanisms 4.2 Reduced vulnerability to shocks and improved fiscal sustainability and access to financing
Cross-cutting	CC1. Effective participation and equal opportunities for youth in leadership, governance, economic and social development enhanced CC2. Gender disparities in access to political, social and economic rights and violence against women and girls reduced			
Organisational enablers	CI. Enhanced use of technology, innovation and digitalisation CII. Delivery through co-creative partnerships increased CIII. Dynamic risk management approach institutionalised			

¹Mechanisms include the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) and Good Offices and projects such as Countering Violent Extremism, Value-based leadership framework

Annex E. National stakeholder institutions met, 2022–2023

Institutions	Attending representatives
Planning Institute of Jamaica	Dr Wayne Henry, Director General
	Ms Barbara Scott, Deputy Director General
	Ms Delores Wade, Director
	Ms Lorna Sampson,
	Ms Shashion Thomas
	Mr Easton Williams
	Ms Antonette Richards
	Ms Eltonette Anderson
	Ms Deidra Coy
	Mrs Mareeca Brown Bailey
Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs	Ms Nadine Wilkins, Director of Legal Reform Wayne Robinson, Acting Permanent Secretary. Chief Parliamentary Counsel
Political Ombudsman	Hon. Donna Parchment Brown
Electoral Commission of Jamaica	Glasspool Brown, Director of Elections, Electoral Office of Jamaica
Ministry of National Security	Titania Ward Tanisha Webster-Stevens
Ministry of Finance and Public Service	Ms Sonia Dressekie, Director, Debt Operations Dian Black, Carleen, Portfolio Manager
Ministry of Health and Wellness	Mr Dunstan Bryan, Permanent Secretary
	Dr Karen Webster Kerr, Acting Chief Medical Officer
	Mr Howard Lynch, Chief Technical Director, Policy Planning and Development
	Ms Kadian Birch, Acting Principal Director, Policy Development and Research
	Dr Nicole Dawkins-Wright, Director, Emergency, Disaster Management and Special Services
	Dr Simone Spence, Director, Health Promotion and Protection
	Dr Naydene Williams, Director, Health Services Planning and Integration or Dr Kevin Goulbourne/ Dr Judith Leiba
	Dr Ardene Harris, Acting National Epidemiologist
	Mr Andre Wiltshire, Acting Director, Programme Co-ordination, Planning and Strategic Initiatives

(Continued)

Institutions	Attending representatives
Meeting with Senator Floyd Morris	Senator Floyd Morris Keisha, Director of Vision 2030
Inter-American Development Bank	Lorenzo Escondido, Chief of Operations
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	Ms Judi Ann Edwards, Crown Counsel
Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation	Mrs Andrea Martin-Swaby, Deputy DPP, Unit Head – Cyber Crime & Digital Forensic Unit
Ministry of Transport and Mining	Omar Alcock, Senior Technical Officer, Climate Change Division and UNFCCC Focal Point
	Mrs Dawn Smith Fagan – Acting Chief Technical Director
	Ms Tanya Bedward – Director of Transport Policy
	Mr Surech Bhalai – Principal Director, Mining Minerals
	Ms Shernette Sampson – Director of Projects
	Mellisha Meeks, Project Officer, Project Unit
	Leighton Williams, Acting Commissioner of Mines
Ministry of Education and Youth	Ms Yanique Williams, Jamaica Youth Focal Point, Acting Senior Director, Youth and Adolescent Policy Division
	National Youth Council
	Gihon Mitchell, Youth Empowerment Officer
	Youth Workers Society, Grant recipient
	Simone Campbell, Programme Development Specialist
	Vivienne Johnson, Senior Director, Planning and Development
	Cherica Hussey Acting Senior Education Officer, Education Planning Unit, Planning and Development Division cherica.hussey@moe.gov.jm
	Delores Wade, Director, Multilateral Technical Co-operation Unit, PIOJ
[Former] CFTC Consultant	Clive Edwards, Local Government Consultant (former CFTC project contact)
	Mr Benjamin Fraser, Caribbean and the Americas Regional Representative on the Commonwealth Students' Association
Commonwealth Youth Climate Change Network	Ms Leneka Rhoden (Chair)
Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport	Mrs Suzette Irvin Ison, Principal Director Sport Policy Development and Monitoring Branch
	Mrs Florette Blackwood – Sport Development and Innovation Consultant

(Continued)

Institutions	Attending representatives
National Environment Protection Agency	Ainsworth Carroll, Planning, Projects, Monitoring, Evaluation & Research Division
	Anthony McKenzie, Environmental Management & Conservation Division
	Aisha Bedasse-Jureidini, Projects
	Monique Curtis, Manager (Acting) Ecosystems Management Branch
Jamaica Teaching Council (Ministry of Education and Youth)	Dr Winsome Gordon
	Ingrid Pearl-Wilmot
	Lanre Chin, Mentoring Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade	Alicia Morris, Foreign Trade Department
	Joan Thomas Edwards, Undersecretary Foreign Trade Division
	Julia Hyatt, Director, International Organisations Department
Meeting with Ms Dianne McIntosh	Dianne McIntosh
Ministry of Justice	Julian Brooks, former Institute of Criminal Justice and Security (ICJS) Professor Anthony Harriot, former Director of ICJS Corinne Bailey, Current Director, Center for Criminal Justice and Security (formerly ICJS) Adrienne Lindsay, Co-ordinator for National Restorative Justice Programme at MOJ Tariq Weekes, Research Fellow at Center for Criminal Justice and Security

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