

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## GIP Research Report 2021

The Growth Inducement Programme (GIP) of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) hereby invites persons who plan to or have already undertaken or commissioned research, consistent with those outlined in the enclosed Research Agenda, to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in our Research Report that will be featured at our third annual Economic Growth Forum in 2021.

The GIP has crafted a Research Agenda (see Appendix 1) consistent with its mandate to promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth for Jamaica through research, policy development, technical support and coordination of growth initiatives. Topics relate to the extant matters of MSME development; Intellectual Property; Climate Change; Asset Development; Big Data and International Competitiveness that require further study to inform Jamaica's development.

The GIP seeks to create a facilitative space to share innovative research on challenges, opportunities and solutions for growth in the Jamaican economy. Select summarized papers will be included in the GIP Research Report 2021 that will be published across varied media and featured at the 2021 Economic Growth Forum. A copy of the first such publication can be found here:

<https://www.pioj.gov.jm/product/growth-inducement-programme-research-report-2019/>. Other selected papers may be shared with a more targeted audience.

Among the persons expected to receive the report directly and/or attend the forum are Ministers of Government, heads of agencies, private sector leaders, academia and the media. As such, it provides a platform for researchers to showcase their findings and network with national decision-makers.

Apart from the opportunities to widely circulate your work, network and future collaborations, other significant benefits from participating are:

1. A deeper understanding of the Jamaican economy and the drivers of sustainable and inclusive growth through discussions and other recent studies.
2. The opportunity to strengthen your paper through feedback by a multi-disciplinary expert panel review.
3. The opportunity to contribute to the discussions and influence the development of strategic initiatives toward nation building.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SUBMISSION OF ABSTRACTS & PAPERS**

1. Select a topic from the GIP's Research Agenda, for which research work has been planned, commissioned or undertaken, where data gathering must be completed on or after **January 1, 2019**. The candidate must:
  - a. Ensure the research methodology and execution are sound.

- b. Have rights to share the findings.
2. For the GIP's consideration, the candidate must submit:
- a. An extended abstract of not more than 600 words (See Sample in Chart 1).
    - i. The abstract must consist of the following:
      - 1. Problem Statement
      - 2. Objective
      - 3. Methodology
      - 4. Findings/Results (if paper is already completed)
      - 5. Conclusion (if paper is already completed)
    - ii. The surrounding information should include:
      - 1. Title
      - 2. Name(s) of author(s) and affiliations (institutions and positions)
      - 3. The lead author's email address and phone number
      - 4. Keywords (4–6 highly related keywords)
      - 5. Short biography of the lead author (150 words maximum)
      - 6. Cover letter indicating that the author(s) have agreed to the submission and give their permission for the abstract and related research paper/parts thereof, if selected, to be edited and published by the PIOJ/ GIP.

All abstracts are to be in Microsoft Word format and emailed to the contacts below by 11:59pm (Jamaica time) on **Sunday, April 26, 2020**.

- b. The full research paper (draft or final version), if your abstract is short-listed to advance to the next stage. You would be asked to email to the contacts below by 11:59pm (Jamaica time) on **Sunday, October 25, 2020**.

We invite you to share this opportunity with as many suitable candidates as possible and provide the names of interested parties, likely topic from the Research Agenda (if known), and their contact information (phone number and email address). This information and any requests for clarification may be directed to Kellie-Ann Murray – Economic Specialist ([kmurray@pioj.gov.jm](mailto:kmurray@pioj.gov.jm) | 876-935-5073) and/or Janielle Green – Operations Officer ([jgreen@pioj.gov.jm](mailto:jgreen@pioj.gov.jm) | 876-935-5198) within the PIOJ's GIP. We look forward to your participation.

**CHART 1: SAMPLE OF ABSTRACT**

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**Title of Paper:** Study of Barriers to Access and Completion of Tertiary Technical Education in Jamaica

**Author(s):** FHI 360 for the Advance Program

**Affiliation:** United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

**Email Address of Author:** [RChisholm@fhi360.org](mailto:RChisholm@fhi360.org)

**Keyword:** Tertiary Technical education, Disadvantaged youth, Jamaica

**Abstract:**

**Problem Statement:** The strong barriers to access and completion of tertiary technical education, by youths, were assessed from three perspectives. From the *individual perspective*, there were financial challenges relating to tuition payments and miscellaneous fees and a general lack of awareness of tertiary technical education. From the *community perspective*, limited examples of family deriving success through educational attainment and violence in the school environment contributed to the adverse educational trajectory among youths. From the *gender perspective*, challenges emerged principally in the forms of pervasive sexual harassment and early pregnancy.

**Objective:** The study was designed to investigate the barriers disadvantaged students face in accessing technical tertiary education.

**Methodology:** The first stage was a qualitative research, which consisted of 16 focus groups with males and females between 17 and 25 years in the lower socio-economic group. The second phase was a quantitative survey with 824 participants.

**Results/ Findings:**

1. More than 90 per cent of each student type endorsed education as “very important”, more than 75 per cent agreed that their life goals could not be achieved without furthering their education and they were very committed to their goals and 9 in 10 of each student type endorsed skilled qualification as being “very important” to life goals.
2. Those pursuing tertiary technical/vocational education/training were more likely than the other groups, to cite high-level career aspirations.
3. Despite financial challenges, at least 8 in every 10 persons have never applied for financial aid/scholarship, mainly because of their perceived limited qualifications and ignorance of related sources of information.
4. Lack of exposure to career counselling did emerge as a barrier.
5. Most respondents in all groups agreed that both males and females (pregnant or not) were given the same access to educational institutions.
6. Main barriers to programme completion (i.e. programme drop-out) were related to financial difficulties, specifically their ability to pay tuition or supporting expenses. Only 7 per cent went on to complete the programme they stopped.

**Conclusion:**

1. Develop more robust activities and programmes coordinated from start to finish to include technical tertiary institutions, parent-teacher associations and NGOs. Interventions should strive to be sustainable and include providing some support services e.g. day and after care for children. The latter will have two advantages: i) freeing up parents to go to training, ii) ensuring children have a safe and supportive after school environment including home-work supervision.
2. Focus on increasing the intake/uptake of students into tertiary technical education and cadre of technical teachers/educators.
3. Mainstreaming the disabled into educational facilities is the only way to ensure a measure of equity. Therefore, educational institutions must be equipped to facilitate this, including repurposing equipment.

## Appendix 1: RESEARCH AGENDA

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### 1. Intellectual Property Rights – Geographical Indications:<sup>1</sup>

Globally, Jamaica is known for its rich and vibrant culture; original creations from the minds of its people; athletic prowess and other unique intangibles. Monetizing these intangibles has met with some success but many will agree there is much more to be done. This paper will seek to explore key issues relating to geographical indications. In particular:

- a. Defining and capitalizing on Brand Jamaica
- b. Situation Analysis:
  - i. State of affairs in Jamaica.
  - ii. How other countries have benefited despite challenges.
  - iii. Challenges for Jamaica and recommendations to overcome/ameliorate same.
- c. Future outlook for geographical indications.

### 2. Utilizing Big Data for growth and development:

Big Data refers to extremely large data sets that may be analysed computationally to reveal patterns, trends, and associations (Oxford Dictionary). There are significant benefits to be derived from the effective use of Big Data, not least is the potential to gain more realistic and timely estimates of economic activity and avoid laborious methods employed by national accountants (World Economics).

This paper will seek to explore the varied sources and benefits of Big Data for Jamaica and recommend a subset to be actioned.

### 3. Receding shorelines in and the economic implications for Jamaica:

Coastal erosion is a growing concern in Jamaica, especially since approximately 82% of the population and 70% of all major industries lie along or near to the coastline<sup>2</sup>. This paper will seek to assess and evaluate the:

- a. State of the shorelines, over the last 10 years.
- b. Rate of recession.
- c. Impact on businesses and livelihoods.
- d. Possible solutions and associated costings.
- e. Future outlook.

### 4. Scaling up the reach of initiatives designed to impact MSMEs:

Over the years, several initiatives have been implemented to improve the development of MSMEs and, by extension, the growth of the Jamaican economy. While these initiatives have been well-

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<sup>1</sup> A **geographical indication** (GI) is a sign used on products that have a specific **geographical** origin and possess qualities or a reputation that are due to that origin. In order to function as a GI, a sign must identify a product as originating in a given place.

<sup>2</sup> Jamaica's Third National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: [https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/578491\\_Jamaica-NC3-1-TNC\\_Final\\_December132018.pdf](https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/SubmissionsStaging/NationalReports/Documents/578491_Jamaica-NC3-1-TNC_Final_December132018.pdf)

intentioned, most reach only a small percentage of the MSME population. This paper will seek to identify:

- a. Probable causes for low take-up of assistance by MSMEs.
- b. Cost-effective strategies to increase the impact of the initiatives across a larger percentage of MSMEs.

5. **Towards the development of a framework of definitions for Jamaica's Informal Economy (IE) and within the context of the MSME sector:**

- a. As it relates to the framework of definitions:
  - i. Address the ambiguities surrounding definitions re segments of the IE, especially within the context of the MSME sector. Without clarity it will be difficult to implement appropriate policies.
  - ii. Explore definitional approaches, such as:
    1. Registration vs tax compliance vs social welfare benefits etc.
    2. The level of non-compliance that constitutes informality.
    3. Identify and justify the different classes of the IE to be addressed.
    4. Address overlapping/conflicting terminologies.
- b. Explore the pros and cons of formalization, with a view to developing proposals enhance the attractiveness of formalization. For example, financial literacy and, GOJ contribution to social protection services.
- c. Analyse related results from the STATIN's Informal Sector Survey (ISS).

6. **Increasing the web presence of and developing an online community for Jamaican MSMEs:**

E-commerce is one of the fastest growing industries. According to Statista, retail e-commerce sales worldwide is expected to be US\$6.5 trillion in 2022 (almost 6 times the level recorded for 2014, US\$1.3 trillion). Commensurate with and/or driving this growth is increasing demand by consumers. Jamaican MSMEs are largely without a web presence and are therefore potentially foregoing significant sale and export opportunities.

This paper will:

- a. Consolidate and propose strategies to increase the web presence of MSMEs, including the Kolau option recently launched by MICAF.
- b. Conceptualize and propose the development of an online community for Jamaican MSMEs where business development information and key initiatives can be shared with a larger percentage of MSMEs, directly and indirectly.

7. **Divestment Selection Criteria Framework:**

The development of a framework to guide the decision-making process in the divestment of public assets.

8. **Stocktaking of Jamaica's Assets/Resources:**

In the context of the Oxford dictionary’s definition of “stocktaking”, the topic may be appropriately explained as the action of identifying and assessing the nation’s assets/resources with a view to ascertaining an appreciation of their magnitude and value. This information should prove useful in informing related policies and initiatives. Given the expansive scope of such an undertaking, phased research will be required. Phase 1 (which constitutes the entire scope to be pursued for this Research Agenda) will include:

- a. Identifying, extracting and organizing information from existing studies, databases and systems.
- b. From the unearthed information, the identification of the best-suited variables, structure and level of granularity, for which data is available.