

Opening Remarks
Planning Institute of Jamaica
Growth Inducement Programme's Growth Forum
How Technological Disruptions Can Support Growth
by
Wayne Henry, PhD, JP
Director General
Planning Institute of Jamaica

Salutations:

- Miss Laura Levy – Growth Inducement Programme Director and today's Moderator
- Mrs Anika Shuttleworth – Acting Chief Executive Officer, eGov Jamaica Limited; Mr Gabriel Heron – Vice President of Marketing, Jamaica Promotions Corporation; and Mr Jason Scott – Deputy President, Jamaica Computer Society, our presenters today
- Other Heads of Ministries, Departments and Agencies present today and other government representatives.
- Leaders and members of the Private Sector
- Members of the PIOJ Board of Management, PIOJ Directors, and other Colleagues from the PIOJ
- Ladies & Gentlemen

Good morning.

On behalf of the Planning Institute of Jamaica, I am pleased to welcome you all to the Growth Inducement Programme's second annual Economic Growth Forum, today held under the theme **"How Technological Disruptions Can Support Growth"**.

For the past year, Jamaica, and indeed the entire world, has had to face, adapt to, and begin recovery from the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even from our modus operandi today, it is apparent that COVID-19 has fundamentally changed the way we live, work and do business in Jamaica – by significantly accelerating the use of digital technologies in all spheres. This pivoting from traditional to digital has been recently explored in fora¹ on various aspects of resilience to shocks, particularly the importance of digitalisation of public and private services.

¹ MLSS Virtual Productivity Forum, March 4; 2. JMIMB Digital Technology Conference, March 5 & 6; 3. Broadcast Commission's Artificial Intelligence for Sustainable Development, Feb. 18 & 19; 4. VMBS Business Success

Today, we will explore how disruptive technology can be utilised to stimulate further innovation, through the transformation of economic structures and business models, to engender the agility required to effectively function in the COVID-19 era and beyond. This will include an examination of how other countries have, and Jamaica could, utilise these technologies to fundamentally alter the way that agencies, industries, businesses, and consumers operate, making them more productive and profitable.

Today's forum reflects a central mandate of the PIOJ's Growth Inducement Programme (GIP), to identify, assess and share information on roadblocks, solutions, and emerging opportunities for economic growth in Jamaica. This is done both with and for its varied stakeholders, including government organisations, private sector leaders and umbrella organisations, unions, members of academia, and the wider public. The presentations and ensuing discussions are intended to inform and motivate the timely development of innovative and targeted government and business responses that take advantage of emerging growth opportunities.

As a country, we have earnestly undertaken many growth initiatives over the years, and while significant progress has been made in many areas, we have not seen the levels of economic growth that we desire. We believe that it is important to draw on our experience while looking toward new solutions arising from the fourth industrial revolution currently underway. The aim is to identify applicable opportunities and devise coordinated approaches to effectively create transformative solutions that will bolster business activity. A supportive and invigorated business environment will significantly increase Jamaica's ability to achieve the goals and targets outlined in Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, to attain improved economic and social outcomes.

I commend the GIP, and the wider PIOJ Team, for their efforts in conceptualising and executing this growth forum series. I also extend our appreciation to all the stakeholders who have partnered with us, including eGov Jamaica Limited; Jamaica Productions Corporation (JAMPRO); and the Jamaica Computer Society which is now a part of the [Jamaica Technology & Digital Alliance](#). Special thanks to today's presenters, everyone in attendance and those who will participate today.

We look forward to meaningful and constructive exchanges, as we continue to target robust, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth; to make Jamaica the place of choice to live, work, raise families and do business.

Strategies (during crisis) Forum, 5. Feb. 16; PSOJ Advanced Digital, 6. Feb. 4; Mayberry Jamaica Economy Review, Jan. 20. (that we are aware of)

Please continue to follow the government guidelines to balance life and livelihoods. Keep safe and God bless you all.