

CALL FOR PAPERS

GIP Research Report 2022

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 Growth Research Agenda (*see Appendix 1*), to take advantage of the opportunity to participate in our Research Report that will be featured at our third annual Economic Growth Forum in 2022.

The GIP has crafted a Growth Research Agenda consistent with its mandate to promote robust, sustainable and inclusive economic growth for Jamaica through research, policy development, technical support and coordination of growth initiatives and is closely aligned to the nation's current thrust to rebuild Jamaica better than it was prior to the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, the topics outlined in this Research Agenda are being fielded to obtain data-driven recommendations for actionable and effective strategies to achieve significant and sustainable economic growth and labour employment for Jamaica. Consequently, the research will necessarily involve identifying viable opportunities and solutions to binding constraints on economic growth and employment. Furthermore, through its Research Report and Economic Growth Forum, the GIP facilitates the sharing and discussion of innovative research on challenges, opportunities and solutions for growth in the Jamaican economy. As such, summarized papers, selected from those submitted in answer to this call, will be included in the GIP Research Report 2022. the intention is for that report to be published across varied media and featured at the 2022 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 secure future collaborations, other significant benefits from participating could include:

1. A deeper understanding of the Jamaican economy and the drivers of sustainable and inclusive growth through discussions and review of 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 Growth Research Agenda, for which research work has been planned, commissioned or recently 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 work in its entirety
 - c. Have the right to give PIOJ/ GIP permission to share the work

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, July 11, 2021**.

- 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, January 9, 2022**.

We invite you to share this opportunity with as many suitable candidates as possible and provide us with 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 | 876-935-5073) and/or Janielle Green – Operations Officer (jgreen@pioj.gov.jm | 876-935-5198) within the PIOJ's GIP. We look forward to your participation.

CHART 1: SAMPLE OF ABSTRACT

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

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: GROWTH RESEARCH AGENDA 2021/2022

Below are the research topics, categorized in seven (7) thematic areas, to guide candidates' submissions. However, other growth-related research papers may be accepted and evaluated.

1. Wealth

Generally, wealth is defined as the stock of assets which generates the flow of income. The wealth of a country therefore includes human capital; man-made capital (buildings, machinery and equipment for the productive sectors, physical infrastructure inter alia); natural capital (including land, forests, fish, minerals and energy); social capital; and net foreign assets. Here, wealth is comprised of both the flow of income and stock of assets held in Jamaica, at a single point in time.

- a. *Economic Diversification*. Used as a strategy to enhance economic growth and development, economic diversification is the process of shifting an economy away from a few to multiple income sources from a growing range of sectors and markets¹. This paper would:
 - i. Explore actionable ways in which Jamaica could increase the size and number of its income streams in the short- medium- and long- term horizons.
 - ii. Investigate past initiatives to diversify the economy towards assessing their success and impact and, recommend practical solutions to improve effective implementation and long-term sustainability.
- b. *Supply Chain*. It is defined as a system of enterprises, processes and 'know-how' designed to carry a product or service from its initial development stage to the final consumer. This paper will evaluate the existing and potential supply chains (local and/or global) that could yield significant economic growth for Jamaica, as well as present actionable recommendations as to how that could be achieved.
- c. *Building resilience in the MSME sector*. The MSME sector plays a critical role in the Jamaican economy through its creation of employment and income for a large and wide cross-section of the population (including poor and marginalized groupings). Research sub-topics include:
 - i. Assessing weaknesses in the MSME sector and detailing tools to improve its resilience.
 - ii. Increasing the web presence of and developing an online community for Jamaican MSMEs:

¹ <https://unfccc.int/topics/resilience/resources/economic-diversification#:~:text=Economic%20diversification%20is%20the%20process,positive%20economic%20growth%20and%20development.>

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). This growth is principally fuelled by increasing consumer demand. Jamaican MSMEs are largely without a web presence and are therefore potentially foregoing significant sale and export opportunities. This paper would:

1. Explore obstacles to Jamaican MSMEs' presence online
 2. Consolidate and propose strategies to increase the web presence of MSMEs, including the digital marketing solutions and e-commerce opportunities for 25,000 MSMEs and launched by the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce (MIIC).
 3. 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.
- iii. 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-intentioned, most reach only a small percentage of the MSME population. This paper would identify:
1. Probable causes for low take-up of assistance by MSMEs.
 2. Identify successful MSME initiatives that could be scaled up and solutions to any obstacles that have prevented this from being done before
 3. Cost-effective strategies to increase the impact of the initiatives across a larger percentage of MSMEs.
- d. *The informal economy*. There are varied nuances to the definition and perceptions of the "informal economy". At its core, it may be defined as economic activity that is not regulated or protected by government. However, nuances surround treatment with respect to job security; legality of informal activities; lack or presence of agency; positive and adverse effects of informality; inclusion in GDP calculations *inter alia*. According to the International Labour Organization, over 60%² (or 2 billion) of the world's employed population is at least partly involved in the informal activities. The informal economy accounts for approximately 30% of economic activities in low- and middle- income countries, and an estimated 43%³ for Jamaica. Two research topics include:
- i. Towards the development of a framework of definitions for Jamaica's informal economy and within the context of the MSME sector:

² <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2020/12/what-is-the-informal-economy-basics.htm>

³ <https://publications.iadb.org/publications/english/document/The-Informal-Sector-in-Jamaica.pdf>

1. As it relates to the framework of definitions:
 - a. Address the ambiguities surrounding definitions re segments of the informal economy, especially within the context of the MSME sector. Without clarity it will be difficult to implement appropriate policies.
 - b. Explore definitional approaches, such as:
 - i. Registration vs tax compliance vs social welfare benefits etc.
 - ii. The level of non-compliance that constitutes informality.
 - iii. Identify and justify the different classes of the informal economy to be addressed.
 - iv. Address overlapping/conflicting terminologies.
2. Explore the pros and cons of formalization, with a view to developing proposals to enhance the attractiveness of formalization. For example, financial literacy and, GOJ contribution to social protection services.

ii. Examining how the informal economy can be strategically employed and/or transformed to bring about a stronger, more resilient economy.

e. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

2. Environment

The Brundtland admonition that humankind should seek to satisfy its current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same, speaks to responsible environmental management. Effective management of natural resources and building resilience to natural shocks require the ability to measure and analyse performance over time to produce and adjust appropriate sustainable policies and strategies. Jamaica has long articulated an intention to develop a positive relationship between economic growth and environmental sustainability. Notwithstanding, there continue to be worrying trends in respect of “deteriorating air and water quality, poor management of wastes, loss of biodiversity”⁴ inter alia. There are some strategies and programmes in place to address these and related concerns but more research is required that clearly shows the relationship between environmental and economic sustainability.

- a. **Blue Economy:** The World Bank defines the blue economy as the sustainable use of marine and coastal resources; while the European Commission purports a more expansive definition to reflect all economic activities arising from the use of the marine and coastal resources. The Caribbean Development Bank estimated Jamaica’s blue

⁴ <http://www.vision2030.gov.jm/Portals/0/MTF/MTF%202018%20-%202021%20-%2020March%202019.pdf>

economy was 7% (or US\$1 billion) of GDP in 2017⁵. This paper would assess and estimate the impact of the blue economy initiatives with potential to significantly enhance sustainable economic growth and labour employment in Jamaica.

- b. *Receding shorelines 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 coastline⁶. This paper would seek to assess and evaluate the:
 - i. State of Jamaica's shorelines over the last 10 years.
 - ii. Rate of recession.
 - iii. Impact on businesses and livelihoods, and the estimated cost to the economy.
 - iv. Possible solutions and associated costings.
 - v. Future outlook.
- c. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

3. Health

Academic inquiry into the relationship between health and economic growth is a relatively new field of research, brought into sharp focus with the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, the global economy contracted by 3.4% (or approximately US\$4 trillion), a reversal of the 2.9% growth projected for that year. Comparably, Jamaica contracted by 9.9%⁷ in 2020. Research topics under this heading include:

- a. Assess the impact of a healthy Jamaican population on economic growth and/or labour productivity and/or school attendance and/or poverty levels.
- b. Gauge the economic impact of a strained healthcare system and estimate the net economic benefits to accrue from a healthcare system suited to Jamaica's needs.
- c. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

4. Equity and Equality

Equity may refer to fairness in affording everyone the opportunity to receive what he or she need to be successful. Equality may be defined as treating everyone the same, with respect to race, gender, social class and access to opportunities. Equity and equality are usually examined

⁵ <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/business/20200212/cdb-highlights-blue-economy-contribution-jamaica-projects-41-growth>

⁶ 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

⁷ Total Value-Added Annual Growth Rate in Constant (2007) Prices

on the bases of gender and income. In 2015, Jamaica was among the 193 governments who committed to reducing inequality, under Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)⁸. By way of international comparison, in 2020, Jamaica ranked a respectable 41 out of 153 countries assessed by the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report, which benchmarks national gender gaps on the basis of economics, education, health and politics. Research topics for consideration include:

- a. Evaluate the macroeconomic benefits of improved gender equality/equity in income and/or educational attainment.
- b. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

5. Safety and Security

Crime and violence are often listed as Jamaica’s number one challenge and they continue to have significant adverse effects on the economic growth and well-being of Jamaicans. According to the 2018 Report on the Economic Value of Peace, Jamaica ranked 5th out of 163 countries for the highest cost of homicide as a percentage of GDP (of 15%). Jamaica’s Food & Nutrition Security Policy admits: “Low food production and high dependency on food imports combine to confront Jamaica with an unprecedentedly high and rising Food Import Bill and a worrying food security vulnerability to external economic shocks and climate change.” Research topics for consideration include:

- a. Estimate the recent economic cost of crime and violence in Jamaica.
- b. The crime of praedial larceny⁹:
 - i. Assess its impact on food security and economic growth.
 - ii. Identify key sub-issues and recommend actionable strategies to ameliorate adverse impacts.
- c. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

6. Human Capital

Human capital of a country may be defined as the collective intangible resources (such as qualifications, talents, skills, knowledge, experience, judgement and wisdom) that are acquired by individuals, in a given population to maximize their own employability. A healthy, educated

⁸ Sustainable Development Goals

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/3/as086e/as086e.pdf> ;

<https://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/Praedial%20Larceny%20%28Prevention%29%20Act.pdf> ;

and productive labour force is an important determinant of sustainable growth and its development has been a crucial element in all of Jamaica's growth plans since the early 1990s. Human capital is multifaceted and necessitates the development of the entire person. It is simultaneously an instrument to produce external value as well as an instrument to improve itself. Research topics for consideration include:

- a. *Collective Mindset*. Mindset is a set of assumptions, world views/philosophies, methods, or notations held by an individual or group of persons. Consequently, mindset can determine the success of an individual and by extension a nation. If the prevailing mindset does not support sustainable economic growth, all other measures will not have the desired impact on growth. This paper will present methodologies to measure Jamaica's collective mindset and recommend strategies to improve same towards achieving greater levels of productivity, discipline and self-actualization.
- b. *'Know-how'*. It may be defined as the practical knowledge (confidential and/or tacit) that can be employed to develop a product, business or industry but cannot be readily transferred to another from a distant geographical location. This know-how has been cited by economists such as Harvard University's Ricardo Hausmann as being critical for significant and sustained economic growth. This paper will explore actionable and effective steps towards engaging the diaspora as an accessible source of 'know how' for Jamaica.
- c. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.

7. Poverty Reduction

The World Bank's *World Development Report (2000)* defines poverty as an unacceptable deprivation in human well-being that can be comprised of both physiological and social deprivation. Physiological deprivation encompasses low monetary income and consumption levels, and describes one's inability to secure basic material or biological needs, including adequate nutrition, health, education and shelter. Social deprivation expands the poverty definition to include risk, vulnerability, powerlessness and lack of self-respect.¹⁰ The Jamaican government evidenced its commitment to breaking poverty cycles through the 2018 launch of the National Policy on Poverty, which is aligned with the pre-existing policies and strategies, and the National Poverty Reduction Programme¹¹, which serves as a core coordinating body for the various poverty reduction initiatives. The Policy outlines a comprehensive approach to improving the "capabilities of Jamaicans to participate fully in economic and social life, while recognizing the critical imperative of appropriate safety nets."

¹⁰ <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/exrp/macropol/eng/#1>

¹¹ <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/product/jamaica-social-protection-strategy/>; <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/policies/national-policy-on-poverty-and-the-poverty-reduction-programme/>; <https://opm.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/NATIONAL-POVERTY-POLICY-Green-Paper-December-2016-Public.pdf>

- a. This paper would assess the relationship between poverty and economic growth in Jamaica, using suitable statistical techniques.
- b. Any other category-specific research geared towards achieving a growing, sustainable and resilient economy.