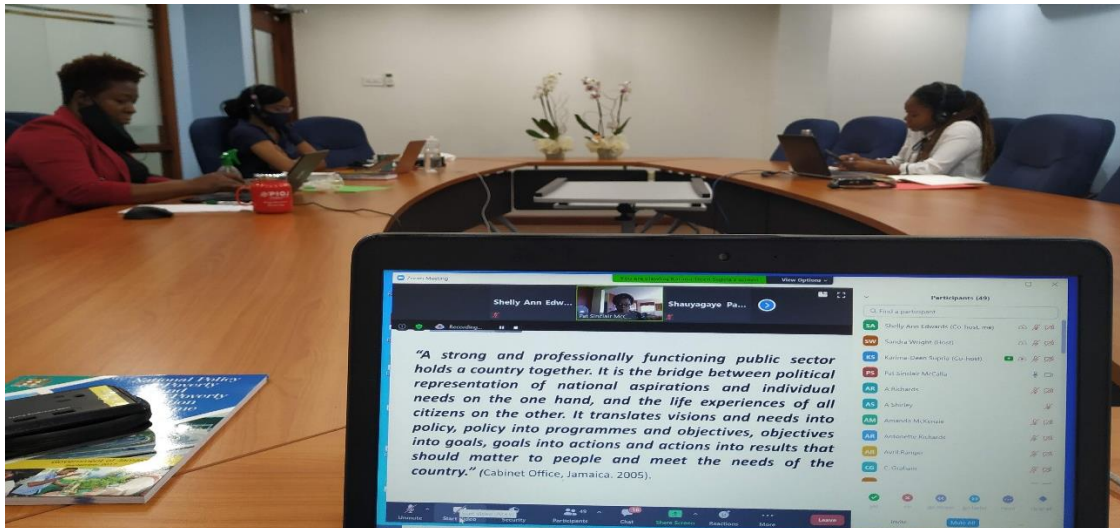




NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT FOR APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021



NPRP Virtual Capacity-Building Workshop in Progress

PLANNING INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit

June 2021

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
POVERTY PREVALENCE DATA.....	2
NPRP MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME 2018-2021	3
NPRP PROGRAMME FINANCING.....	4
ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FY 2020/2021	4
IMPLEMENTATION ACHIEVEMENTS	5
Impact of COVID-19 on Service Delivery of NPRP Partner Entities.....	5
Addressing Extreme Poverty and Basic Needs.....	5
Economic Empowerment and Human Capital Development	6
Psychosocial Cultural and Normative Advancement	8
Basic Community Infrastructure	9
COORDINATION AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING ACHIEVEMENTS.....	10
Meetings of the National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC) and NPRP Working Groups	10
NPRP Capacity Building Workshop	11
NPRP Medium-term Programme 2018-2021 Preliminary Assessment	11
Policy Brief on Global and Local Poverty Reduction Responses due to the Impact of COVID-19	12
Finalization of the Development of the NPRP Website	13
Strengthening Human Resource needs of the Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit (PRCU)	13
NPRP MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME 2021-2024	13
NEXT STEPS	14
APPENDICES	18

Our Vision

“Every Jamaican is consuming goods and services above the minimum acceptable national standards, and has equal and equitable opportunities and support to achieve and maintain income security and improved quality of life.” (NPP/NPRP, 2017)

Policy Goals

GOAL 1: Extreme (food) poverty eradicated by 2022

GOAL 2: National poverty prevalence reduced **significantly** below 10.0 per cent by 2030.

Guiding Principles

1. Respect for Human Rights
2. Inclusive and Participatory Development
3. Shared Prosperity
4. Empowerment and Personal Responsibility
5. Equitable Access to Basic Goods and Services
6. Evidence-Based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)
7. Transparency and Accountability
8. Sustainable Development Approaches

INTRODUCTION

This is the Financial Year (FY) 2020/2021 Annual Report for the National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPRP), which covers the period April 2020 - March 2021. The year 2020/2021 marked the third and final year of implementation of the first three-year Medium-term National Poverty Reduction Programme (2018-2021). The NPRP was launched in March 2018, following approval of the National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPP/NPRP) in September 2017. The NPP/NPRP continue to embody the commitments made by Government of Jamaica (GOJ) in an effort to eradicate extreme poverty and reduce absolute poverty, within the framework of the Vision 2030 Jamaica – National Development Plan, the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy (SPS, 2014), and the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Policy and Programme were approved by the Government as a strategic response to addressing the issue of poverty through a coordinated approach. They are recognised as contributory elements to the overall effort of the Government to strengthen and support economic growth and broader social and sustainable development outcomes. A multi-dimensional and collaborative approach to poverty reduction is therefore critical.

This Annual Report focuses on the achievements of the NPRP in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the responses and innovation of implementing partners to continue the delivery of services amidst the challenges. The report also outlines the PIOJ's role in coordinating the programme, the findings from a review of the 3-year programme implementation process, and the parameters for the new NPRP Medium-term Programme (2021-2024).

Over the FY 2020/2021, emphasis continued to be placed on monitoring programme implementation progress, creating opportunities for partnership and collaboration among NPRP implementing partners, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation. A total of 80 programmes — delivered primarily by 29 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), and 10 partnering non-government entities — continued implementation under the NPRP, as part of a coordinated response to addressing poverty and vulnerability. These include entities delivering services to address extreme poverty and deprivation, psychosocial needs, infrastructural and other community development needs and those providing economic and human capital development opportunities. This is in keeping with the five Programme Areas of the NPRP, which are: Addressing Extreme Poverty and Basic Needs; Economic Empowerment and Human Capital Development; Psychosocial, Cultural and Normative Advancement; Basic Community Infrastructure; and Institutional Strengthening.

POVERTY PREVALENCE DATA

As at 2019 (latest available data) the national poverty prevalence was 11.0 per cent compared with 12.6 per cent in the previous year, representing a 1.6 percentage point decline, and an 8.3 percentage point decline when compared with the prevalence in 2017 (19.3 per cent), the NPRP baseline year. The largest prevalence was recorded for Rural Areas (RA) at 14.2 percent, followed by Other Urban Centres (OUC) at 13.4 per cent, and the Greater Kingston Metropolitan Area (GKMA) at 4.7 per cent. The comparative data for the revised 2018 estimates were 15.0 per cent for RA, 12.0 per cent for OUC and 9.2 per cent for GKMA.¹ The overall adult equivalent poverty line was \$203,177.00.

The overall adult equivalent food poverty line in 2019 was \$132,652.00. Food poverty prevalence stood at 4.0 per cent, compared with 3.5 per cent in 2018 and 5.4 per cent in 2017. The food poverty prevalence in the GKMA declined to 0.4 per cent from 2.9 per cent in 2018 and 5.5 per cent in 2017. RA recorded the highest prevalence of the food poor (6.7 per cent), followed by OUC with 3.5 per cent. Comparative 2018 regional data was 2.9 per cent in RA, 5.5 per cent in GKMA and 4.8 per cent in OUC. In 2017, the food poverty prevalence for RA was 5.6 per cent compared with 4.8 per cent for OUC and 5.5 per cent in GKMA.

The data show a general decline in poverty and food poverty prevalence between the years when the NPRP was implemented, with the poverty prevalence indicators trending in a positive direction towards the achievements of the NPP/NPRP Goals. In 2018 the food poverty prevalence in GKMA declined below 3.0 percent and further declined in 2019. This signaled the commencement of the eradication food poverty in the GKMA if sustained.

¹ Comparison of poverty data series cannot be made with years prior to 2017, as the sampling design and weighting methodology for the JSLC have been revised for 2017 and 2018 datasets only.

Table 1: Poverty Prevalence by Region, 2017-2019

PREVALENCE OF POVERTY AND FOOD POVERTY BY REGION, 2017–2019 (PER CENT)							
	POVERTY				FOOD POVERTY		
	2017	2018	2019		2017	2018	2019
Region							
GKMA	17.7	9.2	4.7		5.5	2.9	0.4
Other Urban Centres	19.8	12.0	13.4		4.8	3.9	3.5
Rural Areas	20.2	15.0	14.2		5.6	3.7	6.7
Jamaica	19.3	12.6	11.0		5.4	3.5	4.0
Note: Per cent estimates are weighted.							
Source: Compiled by the PIOJ from data supplied by STATIN							

NPRP MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME 2018-2021

The National Poverty Reduction Programme has five programme areas under which related strategies are identified to address in a systematic manner, the determinants of poverty in Jamaica (Figure 1). These programme areas provide the parameters that define the scope of interventions to be administered to target groups that are directly impacted by poverty. They are linked to Thematic Areas and related strategies of the National Policy on Poverty and guide the selection of programmes for inclusion in each three-year medium-term period.

Figure 1: Programme Areas – NPRP



As at the end of the FY 2020/2021, a total of 80 programmes, sub-programmes, projects and initiatives were aligned to the approved strategies in the 2018-2021 Medium-term NPRP (Appendix I). These programmes are being delivered by 39 entities, primarily Government MDAs

(29) with the support of partners from non-government entities and academia. The majority (over 90 per cent) of entities with programmes aligned to the NPRP, commenced participation in the first year of the Medium-term Programme through workshops, committee meetings and working group meetings to strengthen alignment, provide data and information, identify gaps and build partnerships to expand and improve programme delivery.

NPRP PROGRAMME FINANCING

The main source of financing for the NPRP continues to be the Government's annual budget allocation to MDAs for financing their programmes. No designated or special allocation is given to these MDAs to advance NPRP strategies. This is based on the fact that the NPRP is intended to coordinate and streamline existing resources and programmes towards achieving policy goals. It is therefore imperative that the programmes and initiatives under the NPRP are fully supported to enhance their capacities and ability to deliver the relevant support, services and infrastructure to advance poverty reduction. This is of consequence especially where programmes have demonstrated results and there is increased demand for their offerings. Several projects are funded with the support of various International Development Partners (IDPs), including the World Bank, European Union, and the Inter-American Development Bank. Non-government partners received financial support through sponsorships and membership contributions. The Government provides an allocation to the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) for coordination of the NPRP. For the FY 2020/2021 a total of \$25.5 million was allocated to the PIOJ to cover administrative support, coordinating and capacity-building activities under the NPRP.

ACHIEVEMENTS FOR FY 2020/2021

The reporting period 2020-2021, which marked the final year of the First Medium-term of the NPRP, encountered unprecedented challenges to the advancement and achievement of poverty reduction targets and outcomes. These challenges, stemming primarily from the adverse effects of the COVID-19 virus, resulted in disruption of service delivery. Nonetheless, the period saw key achievements in each programme area, the majority of which were born from the need to meet the exigencies created by the pandemic. These achievements were documented through programme updates and feedback received from partners throughout the reporting period, findings of a Preliminary Medium-term Assessment and the NPRP Capacity Building Workshop.

IMPLEMENTATION ACHIEVEMENTS

Impact of COVID-19 on Service Delivery of NPRP Partner Entities

Disruption of service delivery were noted mainly in areas supporting education, health, assistance to the poor and vulnerable as well as youth and persons living with disabilities (PWDs). Programmes which were operationally reliant on face-to-face methods of service provision were most impacted due to the various measures implemented to contain the spread of the virus. Physical spaces in which programmes operate such as schools, the MOH&W Teen Hub and the Women's Centre Foundation of Jamaica, were closed at some points in keeping with social distancing guidelines, while others operated on reduced hours and decreased human resource capacity. In light of this, partners made efforts to retailor programmes for virtual platforms. However, this mitigation measure was accompanied by its own sets of challenges stemming primarily from a pervasive lack of beneficiary access to internet services, information communication technology (ICT) platforms and supporting devices. Furthermore, due to the nature of some programmes which require a practical element, operations in these areas slowed tremendously or paused altogether. This created several gaps in programme delivery which negatively impacted partners' ability to effectively reach target groups and by extension meet programme objectives and established timelines.

Notwithstanding, there is an indication that existing partnerships were strengthened during this period and new partnerships formed to extend services to beneficiaries. The achievements under each Programme Area are outlined below. The programmes and entities contributing to each area are outlined in Appendix 1.

Addressing Extreme Poverty and Basic Needs

To address extreme poverty and basic needs, the NPRP targets persons who are more likely to experience unmet basic needs due to their specific vulnerabilities and risks related to poor health status, low educational outcomes, unemployment and lack of support systems. The target groups are destitute/vulnerable persons; persons experiencing food poverty (including children and the elderly); persons with disabilities; and pregnant and lactating women.

Key strategies from the NPP/NPRP (2017) being addressed under this component of the NPRP include:

1. Providing social transfers in the form of cash or kind to support the poorest (individuals or families) identified through appropriate screening mechanisms.
2. Designing and implementing appropriate programmes, mechanisms and facilities to ensure the availability, accessibility, safety, and stability of sufficient food supply for the extreme/food poor (food insecure) across the life cycle.
3. Formulating programmes to detect, prevent and mitigate malnutrition caused by inadequate intake of food.
4. Institutional strengthening, integration and expanded coverage, reach and efficacy of the national School Feeding Programme from the early childhood to secondary levels in keeping with nutritional guidelines to ensure equity, adequacy and accessibility.
5. Ensuring that basic amenities, public services and facilities are accessible to the poor, whether by means of targeted or universal interventions.
6. Facilitating institutional care as required, for the infirm, indigent or homeless, to ensure that the basic needs of the most vulnerable are met.
7. Ensuring programmes and interventions are in place to adequately respond to the needs of the temporary poor.
8. While meeting basic needs, supporting holistic development through promoting income security, human capital development and independence.

Given the importance of the emphasis of the services and support under this Programme Area to address immediate basic needs, several of the programmes were integral in the social assistance response to the pandemic. The achievements included:

- Establishment of partnerships to address risks and needs brought about by the pandemic. These included distribution of food and hygiene packages to vulnerable groups and families, and special grants to cushion the economic impact of the pandemic.
- Increase in the number of homeless shelters to meet the needs of that vulnerable groups including the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- School feeding top-up payment to student beneficiaries.
- Early payments, additional payment of cash grants and the waiving of compliance requirements.

Economic Empowerment and Human Capital Development

Economic empowerment and human capital development are critical to the sustainability of poverty reduction efforts to enable the transitioning out of and breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Low educational attainment levels, low income earning capability, inability to access basic social services, lack of economic opportunities leading to underemployment, unemployment and low wage employment, are among the determinants of poverty in Jamaica. The target groups under this Programme Area are the unemployed, unskilled, working poor, small producers

(farmers and fishers) and small entrepreneurs. Persons with disabilities and breadwinners are included in these groups.

Key strategies being addressed under this component of the NPRP include:

1. Creating greater access to education, training, and certification (including remedial education entrepreneurial and skills training) for members of the target group.
2. Facilitating and encouraging employment linkages and placement as well as apprenticeship programmes.
3. Livelihood development and strengthening through access to business development services, micro-finance and social enterprise options for targeted clients.
4. Provision of opportunities and support to the elderly for income-generating activities, to promote active ageing, income security, and inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills.
5. Identification and improvement of personal assets; capacities, talents and skills for income generation and Decent Work.
6. Improving road and water infrastructure at the local level (including farm roads and irrigation systems).
7. Promoting the development and expansion of local economic enterprises and social enterprises (e.g. in agriculture and agro-processing).
8. Expanding and supporting community niche products and industries.
9. Increasing access to suitable land for farming through divestment of available government owned lands.
10. Facilitating access to micro-finance services and technical assistance for productive purposes through financial institutions.
11. Increasing natural resource management through prevention and mitigation to strengthen sustainable livelihoods of the poor in areas vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change through river training; rehabilitation of watersheds; slope stabilization; provision of break water systems etc.

This NPRP Programme Area was significantly impacted by COVID-19 due to a disruption in livelihood and face-to-face training and educational delivery. There were however innovative approaches to the promotion and marketing of small businesses and agricultural support. While online learning posed many challenges for beneficiaries with limited or no access to the internet or electronic devices, there were efforts to partner with the private sector and other entities to address these gaps. Specific NPRP achievements are noted below:

- Provision of grant funding for entrepreneurship ventures to members of poor households and at the community level.
- Business markets, community fairs and farmers' markets were conducted island wide as a means of stimulating commerce among farmers and small producers.
- The provision of access to civil registration documents to farmers.
- Provision of irrigation infrastructure.

- Assistance with product development, and provision of planting materials for commercial and domestic use. Support was given to increase backyard gardening initiatives.
- implementation of an electronic land titling system as a means of improving the titling process.
- Retailoring of programmes to online platform delivery and videorecording of practical skills sessions for youth in training.
- Provision of computers, laptops, and other ICT equipment to students in need to support online education.

Psychosocial Cultural and Normative Advancement

Psychosocial, cultural and normative advancement is an integral component of the NPRP. This is based on the recognition that the interrelationship of social factors and individual thought and behaviour, including norms, values, myths and cultural practises, within the society enable and perpetuate poverty. This element focuses on enhancing parenting skills, providing mental health support services, building social capital, encouraging mind-set change, as well as considerations of the characteristics, behavioural and decision-making patterns of the target group in the design and implementation of programmes to increase uptake and enhance effective delivery. The following target groups are selected for the medium-term poverty reduction programme: youth, children, parents/guardians, breadwinners, and service providers.

Key NPP/NPRP strategies being addressed under this component of the NPRP include:

1. Provision of training, education, and re-socialization on cultural norms in areas such as: self-control, transfer of hope beyond circumstances, mind-set change, character building, overcoming limits and challenges, personal and civic responsibility as well as trust and relationship building.
2. Creating greater access to appropriate reproductive and mental health services and information.
3. Encouraging and facilitating positive mentorship and training in soft skills and entrepreneurship.
4. Promoting education as a sustainable means of poverty reduction through partnerships with tertiary level institutions.
5. Providing training and support services in transformative parenting, coping strategies, and management of family dynamics.

This Programme Area was also affected negatively in terms of the delivery of face-to-face interventions and limited access of some beneficiaries to internet connectivity. However, there was

significant demand for psychosocial interventions in response to the challenges posed by the pandemic. A number of helplines were established to provide counselling support in addition to online workshops, seminars, and conferences with various target groups including students, parents and teachers. Studies were initiated to examine the extent to which incidents of drug use and domestic violence had increased due to the pandemic and its associated impacts. There were human resource constraints and redeployment from programmes in a bid to respond to emerging COVID-19 related tasks. Psychosocial activities embarked on by NPRP partners included:

- Establishment of targeted psychosocial telephone helplines, and recruitment and training of parent mentors.
- Provision of individual and group telephone counselling sessions, including to address cases of gender-based violence and mental health challenges.
- Psychosocial sessions, seminars and conferences with students, teachers, and parents to address COVID-19 related challenges, particularly school-related ones.
- Training and capacity-building in drug abuse prevention and treatment.
- Provision of grants and ICT devices to support psychosocial interventions and programmes.
- Surveys on the impact of Covid-19 on programme beneficiaries and studies initiated on issues including gender-based violence and substance abuse.

Basic Community Infrastructure

The condition of basic infrastructure enables or inhibits access to basic social services and amenities and impacts psychosocial development. Access to infrastructure is not only important for social development but also economic development through provision of access to markets, inputs, distribution networks and transportation systems. Basic community infrastructure development is essential for balanced and sustainable rural and urban development. Though rural poverty rates are higher, the peculiar characteristics of both rural and urban communities that impact their poverty profile warrant the development of basic community infrastructure for both rural and urban communities.

Key strategies being addressed under this component of the NPRP are:

1. Provision and facilitation of equitable access to basic public infrastructure such as water, sanitation and solid waste disposal, electricity, schools, healthcare and other public facilities and services, in rural and urban communities. The minimum available access should be in keeping with the specified social protection floor.

2. Institutionalizing systems for the care and maintenance of public community infrastructure and promoting community responsibility among citizens in poor rural communities.
3. Ensuring that basic amenities, public services and facilities are accessible to the poor, whether by means of targeted or universal interventions.

The development of infrastructure including housing continued to be a priority, and increase demands were noted. Though some infrastructure projects were impacted by reduced number of workers on building sites due to COVID-19 restrictions, these projects continued. The demand for housing materials and solutions were addressed through the provision of grants. The issue of land titling remained a concern.

The NPRP achievements related to this Programme Area included:

- Support to community enterprises linked to the Agriculture and Tourism Sectors, including the commencement of the development of a formal COVID-19 response for the agricultural sector.
- Continuation of the infrastructure work projects, as the Construction industry was seen as one of the priority areas.
- Provision of housing solutions and materials.

COORDINATION AND INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING ACHIEVEMENTS

The coordination of the NPRP continues to be managed by the Planning Institute of Jamaica, under direct management of the Social Protection and Gender Unit and spearheaded by the Poverty Reduction Coordination Unit. Throughout the reporting period, the following were among the chief actions undertaken by the PRCU:

Meetings of the National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC) and NPRP Working Groups

The NPRPC and its working group continued to meet, primarily virtually. Initially, some meetings had to be postponed facilitating adherence to COVID-19 restrictions prior to the migration of meetings to digital platforms. The focus of the meetings included discussions centered on the impact of the pandemic on the poor and by extension the policy goals, challenges and gaps encountered by implementing partners and strategies for bolstering partners' ability to meet the needs of the vulnerable during the pandemic.

NPRP Capacity Building Workshop

The NPRP Annual Capacity-building Workshop was held March 25 – 26, 2021 under the theme “*Advancing Poverty Reduction through Collaboration, Partnership, and Monitoring and Evaluation*”. Its purpose was to facilitate the participation of all implementing and technical support partners, and to improve collaboration and monitoring and evaluation. The objectives of (i) examining barriers to collaboration and monitoring and evaluation and (ii) strengthening collaboration and partnership among NPRP entities aimed to address critical capacity needs towards improved partnership and enhanced service delivery. The workshop consisted of five sessions covering various discussions and lecture topics including identifying and addressing barriers to partnership, collaboration and monitoring and evaluation, lessons from NPRP partners on examples of successful partnerships, and a keynote presentation on “*Strengthening Collaboration and Partnership in the Public Sector: Breaking the Silo*”. The evaluation of the session revealed that participants found the workshop beneficial.

NPRP Medium-term Programme 2018-2021 Preliminary Assessment

The reporting period marked the final year of implementation of the first Medium-Term Programme of the NPRP. A preliminary assessment of the NPRP was conducted with the following objectives to:

- Assess the implementation progress of the NPRP, against stated timelines and objectives.
- Assess the effectiveness of the coordinating approach and mechanisms of the NPRP.
- Assess the level of stakeholder participation, collaboration, and partnership facilitated through the NPRP.
- Assess performance of the NPRP based on the key indicators in the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework.
- Provide recommendations to inform ongoing implementation of the NPRP, guide the priorities and approaches for the development and implementation of the next medium-term period, and inform poverty reduction prioritization and decision-making.

The main findings include:

- The NPRP is largely being implemented in keeping with planned timelines and objectives as per those set out in the Detailed Medium-term Document.

- Major macro-economic indicators influencing the achievement of the Goals of the NPRP have been trending in the right direction up to 2019.
- The main achievements under the NPRP include:
 - Development and dissemination of the National Policy on Poverty. Linked to this is the establishment of the NPRP itself and the development of the Detailed Medium-term Action Plan document to guide implementation and coordination
 - Development of an M&E Framework for the National Poverty Reduction Programme.
 - Establishment of a coordinating mechanism and institutional framework for poverty reduction.
- The main benefits of NPRP partnership are opportunities for collaboration and networking with other partners and stakeholders in the NPRP.
- The existence of the National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee and its Working Groups is considered integral and beneficial.
- The primary challenges impacting implementation among partners are lack of financial, human and infrastructural resource, lengthy procurement processes, competing priorities, overlap of activities, and mindset of beneficiaries.

Policy Brief on Global and Local Poverty Reduction Responses due to the Impact of COVID-19

A Policy Brief on global and local poverty reduction responses due to the impact of COVID-19 was completed. The Brief, which was informed by a desk-research and provided policy recommendations, was shared with the NPRP partners and informed technical advice to the PIOJ's recommendations to guide the Government's COVID-19 response including considerations for reopening the country after lock-down and for the resuscitation of the economy.

The Brief indicated that several strategies have been proposed and are being implemented around the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. While each country grapples with varied issues specific to their own socio-economic, cultural, and geographic realities, the detrimental effects of the pandemic are prejudiced to none. As such, any attempt to move forward with sound mitigation policies, must consult global perspectives with a view for collaboration and knowledge, technology, and innovation transfers. Whilst mitigating the current crisis, sustainability must be at the forefront of policies and continuous assessment through monitoring and evaluation of implemented

approaches is critical. This envisages the identification of successes and failures of different approaches and ensures the world is readily equipped with comprehensive crisis response plans should there be future events of a similar nature and scope. Even more recognizable is that each country or region can learn from the other, and strategies proposed thus far have been widely implemented.

Nationally, efforts to mitigate the impact of the virus mirrors those employed globally in areas seeking to strengthen social safety nets, provide rapid cash transfers, address food security needs, sustain livelihoods and reinforce key sectors which have been most impacted. These efforts are underpinned and guided by Government policy frameworks including the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy (2014) and the National Policy on Poverty and National Poverty Reduction Programme (NPP/NPRP). Notwithstanding, there is the need for innovation in the distribution of cash transfers and humanitarian support to vulnerable groups. This must be done in such a way which sees increased solutions targeting those hardest to reach and most in need, while considering movement restrictions, reduced operations of post offices, financial institutions and other organizations used as outlets to reach beneficiaries.

Finalization of the Development of the NPRP Website

The process of developing the NPRP website was finalized. The launch of the website is anticipated early in the next FY.

Strengthening Human Resource needs of the Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit (PRCU)

In January 2020 a Programme Officer with responsibility for Monitoring and Evaluation was added to the PRCU team. This brings the total staff complement of the coordinating unit to four.

NPRP MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME 2021-2024

Informed by the preliminary assessment of the first medium-term programme, the parameters of the new Medium-term Programme cycle (2021-2024) were determined. The programme content and approach remain relevant and have been carried forward into the new cycle. There are, however, areas to be strengthened in the new implementation cycle. For continuity, the NPRP programme cycles are guided by the thematic areas and objectives of the National Policy on Poverty. The following broad areas will be brought forward from the first Medium-term cycle (2018-2021):

- Bimonthly National Poverty Reduction Programme Committee (NPRPC) meetings, and Working Group Meetings.
- Coordinating approach and institutional framework
- Programme Levels (Individual/household, Community, and National)
- Five Programme Areas, key strategies, and target groups
- Slate of NPRP implementing partners and programmes (except where programmes have ended, are no longer aligned to the NPRP, or cannot be engaged over an extended period)
- NPRP Priority Areas remain relevant and will continue to be perused
- Capacity building among NPRP partners and the coordinating unit

Under the new medium-term programme period the areas that will be strengthened include:

- Participation of key stakeholders (Implementing Entities and Supporting Entities)
- The level of engagement with each implementing partner. This includes reaching low participating entities and those who were not adequately engaged. New partners or programmes to be included under the NPRP will also be explored
- Improving communication mechanisms and strategies (Develop and implement NPRP communication strategy)
- Protocols for enhancing coordination, participation, collaboration, partnership and data and information sharing
- The approach to facilitation of partnerships and collaboration among NPRP partners
- Full implementation of NPRP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Database, ensure tracking of key indicators
- Feedback mechanism among implementing entities and the PIOJ/PRCU
- Resource identification and alignment
- Examination of NPRP priorities to identify direct strategies to accelerate uptake and reach of various programmes, in light of the negative impacts of COVID-19

NEXT STEPS

The priorities under the NPRP remain, but will be re-examined for identification of accelerators, due to the impact of COVID-19. The priorities cut across all five programme areas and include focus on safety nets, food security, human capital development, skills certification and on-the-job training, livelihood development, support for labour market participation, access to basic infrastructure, psychosocial interventions and strengthening partnerships. Economic

empowerment of the poor and vulnerable (target groups include youth, women, and the elderly) will be pursued as it relates to employment, training and retraining, and entrepreneurship. Further examination of data and indicators, along with pertinent technical discussions to guide the review of targets and the NPP/NPRP Goals will be undertaken. Advancing the development of the psychosocial component of the NPRP remains a priority, and the finalization of the design and implementation of a pilot initiative, and a NPRP communication strategy will be pursued.

COVID-19 Response

As at 2019 (latest available data) the national poverty prevalence was 11.0 per cent, which represents a 1.6 percentage point decline when compared with the previous year. It is anticipated, however, that the impact of the global pandemic COVID-19 on the economy would likely have affected segments of the population causing some to have slipped below the poverty line, even though the extent to which this is so has not yet been determined. This is in keeping with global experiences and projections. The PIOJ will therefore be working with all partners to identify how the process toward empowering families while strengthening and resuscitating livelihoods and connecting the poor and vulnerable to various resources can be accelerated.

The pandemic has led to the testing of each country's mechanism to readily identify and respond to emerging needs and vulnerabilities. The importance of formal attachments to institutions, the existence of information systems, cash transfer programmes, attachment to financial institutions all proved to be significant factors in the speed, effectiveness, and sustainability of responses. Nationally, efforts to mitigate the impact of the virus mirrors those employed globally in areas seeking to strengthen social safety nets, provide rapid cash transfers, address food security needs, sustain livelihoods and reinforce key sectors which have been most impacted. Whilst mitigating the current crisis, sustainability must be at the forefront of policies and continuous assessment through monitoring and evaluation of implemented approaches is critical.

There are opportunities for increased partnerships among NPRP partners as well as with private sectors entities. The initiation of new partnerships, particularly in areas of ICT infrastructure and development could serve to fill gaps regarding digital delivery and migration of some services to online platforms, along with the use of database management systems for record retention. This would be a move in the expedition of the digital transformation necessary to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 while also filling gaps which existed prior to the pandemic.

The feedback from NPRP partners highlighted the need for increased human resources to support rapid response and adaptation to provide services to a larger number of persons seeking assistance. In areas where applicable, such as homelessness support, delivery of care packages to persons with disabilities, etc., a national volunteering drive can be initiated where volunteers are quickly trained in health protocols and crisis response to provide support where possible. International Development Partners (IDPs) can also be engaged for grant funding to increase human resource capacity in technical areas where there is an identifiable need.

There is also an indication that there needs to be greater inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in strategies and actions implemented across sectors. For example, COVID-19 has reiterated the need to expedite Jamaica's digital transformation; therefore, strategies to do so should be devised with consideration of the implications on PWDs. Furthermore, an assessment of the ICT infrastructure which will be needed to facilitate greater levels of their inclusion and participation in the health and education sectors should be pursued.

The ongoing pandemic has impacted area that will have an implication for the pace at which the goals of the NPRP can be reached. These include the economic and social context to support employment, livelihood, and human capital development. Consideration must therefore be given to the following:

1. Any effort to resuscitate and restore the economy must seek to address existing and emerging vulnerabilities. This must take an inclusive approach ensuring opportunities for all segments of the population to gain and regain access to livelihood, employment, and human capital development. As indicated in the Jamaica Social Protection Strategy, income security remains a critical factor to achieve and sustain economic growth.
2. There is the need to accurately identify those who were not previously considered vulnerable but may fall into emerging groups in need of social protection. Consequently, there is a need for continuous public education and information sharing (using accessible formats and media) to alert potential beneficiaries of support that they may be able to tap into. This must also include information on how individuals and families may apply to or register with formal institutions and associations.
3. Government provision of basic infrastructural framework is needed to ensure sustained access to the internet. This is the foundation upon which further partnerships can be pursued with telecommunications entities for investments in rural and other underserved communities.

4. Greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in strategies and actions implemented across sectors.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME (2018-2021) LIST OF PROGRAMMES AND PARTICIPATING ENTITIES – YEAR 1

PROGRAMME AREA	PROGRAMME/ INITIATIVE		RESPONSIBLE ENTITY
GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA PARTNERS			
PROGRAMME AREA 1- Addressing Extreme Poverty and Basic Needs Related Policy Objectives: <i>Objective 1:</i> Strengthen social safety nets to address extreme poverty-induced deprivations (including hunger) <i>Objective 4:</i> Enhance food and nutrition security of the poor. Summary of Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">Enhance food and nutrition securityAddress deprivations and extreme povertyProvide access to basic amenities and services	1.	School Feeding Programme	Ministry of Education, Youth and Information (MOEYI)
	2.	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)	Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS)
	3.	Public Assistance	
	4.	Meals on Wheels	National Council for Senior Citizens (NCSC)
	5.	Child Health Clinics	Ministry of Health & Wellness (MOH&W)
	6.	JADEP	
	7.	NHF	
	8.	Primary health care services	
	9.	Emergency relief and supplies**	Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)
	10.	Extension Services	Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA)
	11.	Poor Relief Programme	Ministry of Local Government and Community Development (MLGCD)
	12.	Homelessness Programme	
	13.	Poverty Reduction Programme IV	Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF)
	14.	Food Security Initiatives	Ministry of Industry, Commerce Agriculture and Fisheries (MICAF)
PROGRAMME AREA 2- Economic Empowerment and Human Capital Development Related Policy Objectives: <i>Objective 2:</i> Promote and expand human capital development among the poor and vulnerable (including children and persons with disabilities). <i>Objective3:</i> To enhance livelihood creation and income security among the poor and vulnerable Summary of Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">Job creation, placement and linkagesTraining and certificationEarly Childhood education and developmentProvision of technical and financial support to business developmentAccess to markets by small producers	15.	Grants and Loans to MSMEs	Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ)
	16.	MSME Support Programme	HEART Trust/NTA
	17.	NVQJ Certification Programme	
	18.	High School Diploma Equivalency Programme	
	19.	Vocational Training for Persons with Disabilities	
	20.	Business Support to MSMEs/ Business Incubator Programme	Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC)
	21.	Economic Empowerment Grant Programme	Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD)
	22.	Youth in Agriculture	Jamaica 4-H
	23.	Entrepreneurial and creative industry support	Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport (MCGES)
	24.	Pilot Programme For Climate Resilience II	Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC)
	25.	Major Infrastructure Development Programme	
	26.	Land Administration and Management Programme	
	27.	Rural Electrification Programme	
	28.	Career Advancement Programme	MOEYI
	29.	Early Childhood Education Programme	
	30.	Youth Development Services	
	31.	The Child Find Project	
	32.	Agro-Tourism /Farmers’ Market (in partnership with Jamaica Tourist Board/Tourism Enhancement Fund)**	MICAF
	33.	Support to Banana Farmers	Banana Board

PROGRAMME AREA	PROGRAMME/ INITIATIVE		RESPONSIBLE ENTITY
GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA PARTNERS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase participation in national insurance schemes.• Timely review of labour market legislation• Environmentally sustainable agricultural practices.	34.	Financial Literacy Strategy (in partnership with Bank of Jamaica)	Ministry of Finance and the Public Service (MOFPS)
	35.	Labour Division/Labour Relations Department	MLSS
	36.	Overseas Employment Programme	
	37.	Social and Economic Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities	
	38.	Steps To Work	
	39.	Labour Market Information System	
	40.	Early Stimulation Programme	
	41.	National Insurance Scheme	
	42.	Child labour prevention initiatives	
	43.	Economic Empowerment Grant Programme	JCPD
	44.	Seniors Entrepreneurship Programme	NCSC
	45.	Irrigation Programme for Agriculture	National Irrigation Commission (NIC)
	46.	Extension Services	RADA
	47.	Social Services and Home Economic Programme	
	48.	Local Economic Development Support Programme	Social Development Commission (SDC)
	49.	Students Loan and Grant Programme**	Student’s Loan Bureau (SLB)
	50.	GOJ Adaptation Fund Project	Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)
	51.	Housing Opportunity Prosperity Employment Programme (HOPE)	Office of the Prime Minister (OPM)
PROGRAMME AREA 3- Psychosocial Cultural and Normative Advancement Related Policy Objectives: <i>Objective 6:</i> To address psycho-social, cultural and normative influences on poverty <i>Summary of Strategies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training, education and resocialization• Access to reproductive and mental health services and information• Parenting and family support services	52.	Sexual and Reproductive Health Services	MOH&W
	53.	Mental Health Services	
	54.	Teenage Pregnancy Clinic	
	55.	Community Security Initiatives/CSJP	Ministry of National Security (MNS)
	56.	Parents support initiatives	National Parenting Support Commission (NPSC)
	57.	Supporting Continuing Education of Adolescent Mothers	Women’s Centre of Jamaica Foundation (WCJF)
	58.	Child Protection Initiatives	Child Protection and Family Services Agency (CPFSA)
	59.	Psychosocial Initiatives	National Council on Drug Abuse (NCDA)
PROGRAMME AREA 4- Basic Community Infrastructure Related Policy Objectives: <i>Objective 5:</i> To strengthen basic social and physical infrastructure <i>Summary of Strategies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build and maintain community infrastructure	60.	Integrated Community Development Project	JSIF
	61.	Basic Needs Trust Fund	JSIF
	62.	PetroCaribe Development Fund	JSIF
	63.	Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project	JSIF
	64.	Parish Council Maintenance Programmes	MLGCD
	65.	Public Works Programme (Local Authority)	
	66.	Water, Works and Housing Initiatives	OPM/ MEGJC

PROGRAMME AREA	PROGRAMME/ INITIATIVE		RESPONSIBLE ENTITY
GOVERNMENT OF JAMAICA PARTNERS			
	67.	Community Renewal Programme (Representative)	PIOJ
	68.	Regularization of Informal Settlements	Housing Agency of Jamaica (HAJ)
PROGRAMME AREA 5- Institutional Strengthening Related Policy Objectives: <i>Objective 7:</i> To strengthen coordination and capacity building for poverty reduction. Summary of Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide training for service providers• Strengthen coordination and M&E of poverty reduction programmes		Capacity Building of MDAs and NGOs	PIOJ - Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit
NON GOVERNMENT PARTNERS			
Programme Area 1	1.	Food Supply Programme	Food For The Poor
	2.	Housing Programme	
	3.	Welfare Services	The Salvation Army
	4.	Welfare Services **	Seventh Day Adventist Church (Adventist Development and Relief Agency)
Programme Area 2	5.	Skills Training and Certification for Persons with Disabilities	Abilities Foundation
	6.	Social Enterprise/Entrepreneurship	Jamaica National (JN) Foundation
	7.	Fishing Village Programme	Food For The Poor
Programme Area 3	8.	School Suspension Intervention Programme/ Conflict Resolution	Dispute Resolution Foundation
	9.	Welfare and Social Initiatives **	Jamaica Council of Churches
	10.	Youth Development, Parenting and Mentorship Programmes	International Youth Fellowship
	11.	Support to the development of the psychosocial component of the NPRP and to the execution of initiatives under this programme area	University of Technology
	12.	Support to the development of the psychosocial component of the NPRP and to the execution of initiatives under this programme area	University of the West Indies (Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work)
TECHNICAL SUPPORT AREAS			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Poverty Reduction Coordination▪ Social Protection and Gender▪ Human and Community Development▪ Policy Research▪ Population and Health▪ Economic Planning, Research and Policy Logistics▪ Sustainable Development and Regional Planning			Planning Institute of Jamaica
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Budget/Social Projects			Ministry of Finance and the Public Service

Source: Compiled by Poverty Reduction Coordinating Unit, PIOJ, 2017

*** Programmes are to be fully engaged in next FY*

Appendix II

COMPOSITION OF THE NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME COMMITTEE (NPRPC) MEDIUM-TERM NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION PROGRAMME (YEAR 1)

NAME OF AGENCY	PROGRAMME/ INITIATIVE
GOVERNMENT	
HEART Trust/NTA	MSME Support Programme NVQJ Certification Programme
Jamaica Business Development Corporation	Business Support to MSMEs/ Business Incubator Programme
Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities	Economic Empowerment Grant Programme
Jamaica Social Investment Fund	Poverty Reduction Programme IV
	Basic Needs Trust Fund VIII
	Integrated Community Development Project
Micro Investment Development Agency (MIDA)	MSME loans and Formalization Programme
Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport	Representative
Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation	Pilot Programme For Climate Resilience II
	Land Administration and Management Programme
Ministry of Education, Youth and Information	School Feeding Programme
	Career Advancement Programme
	Early Childhood Education Programme
	Youth Programmes
	Child Services Division
Ministry of Finance and the Public Service	Social Projects Representative
Ministry of Health	Sexual and Reproductive Health Services
	Mental Health Services
	Primary Healthcare Services
Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries	Agro-Tourism /Farmers' Market (in partnership with Jamaica Tourist Board/Tourism Enhancement Fund), Agro Parks
Ministry of Labour and Social Security	Economic Empowerment Grant Programme
	Steps To Work
	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH)
	Public Assistance
Ministry of Local Government and Community Development	Parish Council Maintenance Programmes
	Poor Relief Programme and Homelessness Programme
	Public Works Programme (Local Authority)
National Council For Senior Citizens	Meals on Wheels
	Seniors Entrepreneurship Programme
National Irrigation Commission	Irrigation Programme for Agriculture
National Parenting Support Commission	Early Childhood Development Programmes
Office of the Prime Minister	Housing Opportunity Prosperity Employment Programme (HOPE)
	Water, Works and Housing(Representative)

NAME OF AGENCY	PROGRAMME/ INITIATIVE
GOVERNMENT	
Planning Institute of Jamaica	<i>Programmes:</i> Community Renewal Programme GOJ Adaptation Fund Project <i>Technical Expertise:</i> Social Policy Planning and Research (Chairmanship) Poverty Reduction Coordination Social Protection and Gender Human and Community Development Population and Health Unit Economic Planning and Research Sustainable Development and Regional Planning
Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA)	Extension Services Social Services and Home Economic Programme
Social Development Commission	Local Economic Development Support Programme Governance Programme
Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation	Supporting Continuing Education of Adolescent Mothers
NON-GOVERNMENT PARTNERS	
Abilities Foundation	Skills Training and Certification for Persons with Disabilities
Food for the Poor	Food Supply Programme, Housing Programme, Fishing Village Programme
International Youth Fellowship	Youth Development, Parenting and Mentorship Programmes.
JN Foundation	Social Enterprise/Entrepreneurship (Representative)
University of Technology	Representative
University of the West Indies	Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work (Representative)