



## Community of Practice on Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for Caribbean countries

12 January 2021

*Meeting Notes*

**Participants: Bahamas; Jamaica; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; ECLAC.**

### **Recording and presentation**

To access a recording of the meeting, please visit:

<https://eclac.webex.com/eclac/ldr.php?RCID=591de181c9f0420cb080e67573f98e21>

Password: Cepal2021

The presentation by Jamaica is enclosed as an attachment to these notes.

### **Objective of the meeting**

This community of practice is an informal space for exchange among peers and sharing of good practices with regards to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in general and the preparation of VNRs in particular; and aims to provide a space to regularly communicate with peers.

The specific goal of this session was to address the topic of integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national development plans, showcasing the example of Jamaica.

### **Introduction**

ECLAC introduced the topic of the integration of the SDGs into national planning instruments as essential to the national and sub-national implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In the region, government entities responsible for 2030 Agenda implementation tend to be Ministries or Institutes of Planning and country efforts to prioritize different SDGs aligned with national priorities have progressed greatly. One of the challenges that many members of the Community of Practice have shared in previous sessions is engaging actors across sectors, ministries and government levels. ECLAC asked participants to share their experience on how they have dealt with the nexus between short-term and urgent priorities, especially in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the longer-term planning, including the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

### **Presentation**

**Jamaica** presented their experience on integrating the SDGs into their National Development Plan. The presentation (enclosed) included the following key points:

- The SDGs have been integrated in Jamaica's implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica and the strategic priorities of the country, including the country's priority strategies for achieving growth.
- In 2015, Jamaica initiated a broad participatory process to develop the country's position on the SDGs. The mid-term socio-economic Framework (MTF) 2015-2018 shows alignment of the SDGs with the 4 national goals and 15 national outcomes of Vision 2030 Jamaica. It was approved by Jamaica's Cabinet in the same week the 2030 Agenda was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The MTF allowed various stakeholders across different sectors to contribute and informed the development of the Vision 2030 Jamaica.



- The MTF 2018-2021 provides the policy and strategic framework for the development of Strategic and Operational Plans of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and other partners in development. It serves as the selection criteria for government priority projects and as the results framework for Medium Term Results-Based Budgeting.
- Jamaica developed a Road Map for SDG Implementation through the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) process, which was informed by a Rapid Impact Assessment (RIA). The Road Map looks at SDG alignment, prioritizing SDG accelerators, financing the SDGs, data, monitoring and reporting; and coordination and advocacy. The RIA identified a 91.3 % alignment (105 targets fully or partially reflected) between Jamaica’s national development agenda centered on Vision 2030 Jamaica and the SDGs, with 115 SDG targets being relevant to Jamaica. The RIA is also linked to the 5 Ps of the 2030 Agenda, namely People, Planet, Peace, Prosperity and Partnerships.
- Jamaica has established an SDG Core Group to inform its Road Map, which was approved by Cabinet in June 2017 along with the establishment of the institutional mechanisms for SDGs implementation as well as a commitment to financing the SDGs. Jamaica stressed that it is important to count on a buy-in from the highest level.
- As a next step, Jamaica went from the political to the strategic level, aligning SDG targets to sectoral development policies. Jamaica illustrated this step with the concrete example of population composition numbers, which are determined by mortality, fertility and migration rates and recommended not only to monitor high-level outcomes, but also track sectoral outcomes to evaluate progress.
- The VNR process was stakeholder-driven, evidence- and results-based at the same time. The VNR report was developed through a participatory process aligned with the development and implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica, based on key results-based processes, namely Evidence- and Results-Based Management (RBM), including M&E, Mechanism and Tools for Plan Implementation, Coordination and Institutional Arrangements, and Financing.
- The VNR reported on development performance and progress towards the SDGs based on the implementation of Vision 2030 Jamaica through successive 3-year MTFs. Gaps were found regarding *how* to proceed with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Statistical Annex was demonstrative of not only the global focus on measuring development results but also the national prioritization as such.
- As Jamaica seeks to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda, particular focus will be placed on the full and effective implementation of national priorities outlined in the MTF 2018–2021; strengthen the National Statistics System; improve the monitoring and evaluation framework; identify strategies for financing the implementation of the SDGs; improve policy coherence and build capacity in the area of policy integration; and ongoing SDGs communication and public engagement.
- Led by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), Jamaica is currently seeking to establish a coordinated National Statistical System (NSS), including the development of a Statistics Master Plan. Based on Government of Jamaica (GoJ) priorities, lessons learned, and a process of Strategic Review, focus is being given to strengthening the framework and systems for evidence- and results- based management (ERBM), which includes strengthening the monitoring and evaluation framework and integrating the SDGs in same.
- There are on-going efforts to develop national capacity for Innovative Financing as well as Results-Based Budgeting. The efforts at strengthening ERBM will support policy coherence – includes focus on strengthening the National Strategy Framework and Theories of Change.



## Discussion

**ECLAC** recognized the alignment of the SDGs with Jamaica's National Development Plans and the sectoral M&E processes in place, and inquired about SDG integration in ministerial M&E processes and how the VNR can support these processes for the next cycle of the mid-term evaluation.

**Jamaica** explained that the SDGs have facilitated the path for using forward the National Development Plans and stressed that it is important to gain buy-in at the highest level. The SDG Reporting Mechanisms have also facilitated M&E at the national level. When it comes to reporting, all actors, such as stakeholders and ministries, want to know *how* they can align to the 2030 Agenda. Hence, it would be recommended to develop national guidelines on this alignment.

## Closing

**ECLAC** reminded participants to visit the newly created webpage dedicated to the Community of Practice, which can be found on: <https://www.cepal.org/en/topics/2030-agenda-sustainable-development/eclac-community-practicevoluntary-national-reviews>

The webpage contains all materials from previous sessions of the Community of Practice for participants' reference, including meeting minutes, power-point presentations, session goals, videos and occasional links to further events and resources. Participants were encouraged to share the link with colleagues and any other person who might find the resources useful.

**ECLAC** reiterated its commitment to continue supporting the countries of the region in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in the preparation of the VNRs through the monthly meetings of the Community of Practice, which take place every second Tuesday of the month at 12.00 pm (Chile Time).

## Next Steps

- ECLAC will share the presentation along with the minutes of the meeting with the participants.
- The next meeting of the Community of Practice for Caribbean countries will take place on **9 February 2021 at 12:00 pm (Chile time)**.