



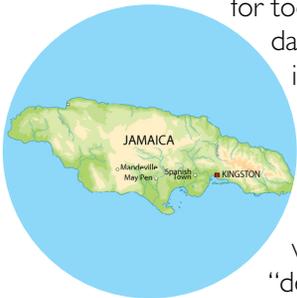
JAMAICA'S SUCCESS STORY:

BECOMING MORE RESILIENT AND LESS VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE CHANGE



Climate change matters to small island states such as Jamaica. More than half of Jamaica's population lives within a mile of the shoreline, an area vulnerable to impacts from sea level rise and increases in the severity of tropical storms and hurricanes. Climate change also poses risks for the Jamaican economy. Tourism, which provides more than \$US 2 billion in receipts, is concentrated mainly along the coast. Jamaica's agriculture sector, which employs approximately 20 percent of the total employed population, is sensitive to changes in precipitation patterns, higher temperatures, and extreme weather events.

USAID has been working with Jamaica since 2012 to build the country's resilience to long-term climate change while also helping it better prepare for today's climate variability and extremes. Activities to date have focused on integrating climate considerations into Jamaica's national development planning and improving the nation's weather and climate information services. These initiatives will protect Jamaica's development gains, improve public health and safety, and enhance the stability of livelihoods while helping the nation meet its goal of achieving "developed country" status by 2030.



RESULTS AT A GLANCE

USAID is helping Jamaica manage its climate risks through a "development first" approach. Results to date include:

- Jamaica is integrating climate change adaptation into its national development plan, *Vision 2030 Jamaica*.
- Practical, high-quality information on climate is being made available to farmers and other weather-dependent stakeholders.
- Lessons and approaches from Jamaica are now being applied in Tanzania and 11 West African countries as they prepare their own adaptation plans.

ENCOURAGING CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT

Jamaica adopted its first long-term national development plan, *Vision 2030 Jamaica*, in 2009. The plan lays out dozens of individual strategies that are linked to a clearly defined set of outcomes, which in turn are designed to achieve the country's development goals. *Vision 2030 Jamaica* includes provisions for the development of a policy framework that would integrate climate change adaptation into development decisions. Jamaica's government launched the climate policy framework development process at a USAID-supported workshop held in Kingston on July 26–27, 2012. The workshop brought together key ministers, government representatives, non-governmental organizations, and development partners to discuss how climate change could threaten the development goals in *Vision 2030 Jamaica* and to identify actions, policies, and resources needed to cope with the climate threats.





Photo by: D. Campbell

Melon farm destroyed by drought

CLIMATE AND WEATHER INFORMATION AS A SERVICE

THE CHALLENGE

Variability and changes in climate pose many challenges to farmers in developing countries. Farmers would benefit from easy-to-understand seasonal forecasts and guidance on how to respond to predicted conditions. But access to reliable forecasts is limited, and weather and climate information that is provided to farmers is often too technical or too general to be of practical use.

USAID'S SOLUTION

USAID is supporting service-oriented improvements to seasonal forecasts and agricultural outreach in Jamaica, focusing on ensuring that information meets the practical needs of farmers and other stakeholders. By facilitating the development and distribution of targeted, reliable, easy-to-understand climate information, USAID and its partners are helping farmers know when to adopt improved technology, intensify production, and replenish soil nutrients.



Photo by: Clenroy Brown, Jamaica Meteorological Service

Rain collection station

The workshop highlighted the cross-cutting and multi-sectoral nature of climate challenges, providing valuable input to Jamaica's efforts to establish a Climate Change Department that will be charged with implementing the policy framework. The framework is expected to identify roles and responsibilities for key players across the government and call for action plans from each ministry responsible for vulnerable components of *Vision 2030 Jamaica*.

USAID is also supporting Jamaica's efforts to develop a low emission development strategy, which will help reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions and prepare Jamaica to join the emerging low-carbon global economy. The support covers activities such as data collection, economic modeling, and sector-specific planning.

BUILDING RESILIENCE THROUGH CLIMATE SERVICES

To address Jamaica's immediate needs and support its longer-term policy initiatives, USAID is working with the country to build its capacity to access and use climate and weather data. In one critical initiative, USAID is working with Jamaica's Meteorological Service to build technical capacity to gather and share more robust information on climate and weather, which can be used by Jamaican farmers and other weather-dependent stakeholders to become better informed and prepared.

The current weather station network in Jamaica includes a variety of weather instruments from different manufacturers, with the result that the network collects data in different and incompatible formats. The incompatibilities have limited the number of stations whose data could be put to use, USAID supported a project to write computer code that improves compatibility of the information reported by the different instruments, allowing data to be combined and analyzed from more stations. These improvements are resulting in more reliable and useful forecasts for farmers.

USAID has also facilitated cooperation between the Meteorological Service and Jamaica's Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA) to provide forecasts and early warnings to farmers across different timescales, including seasonal predictions of drought. RADA can use this information to provide guidance to farmers, for example on seed varieties that are likely to work best under the predicted conditions.

Government agencies in Jamaica can use the weather forecast and early warning information to decide when to offer incentives for practices that may reduce agricultural losses, such as low-interest loans for rainwater harvesting, as well as to forecast their own need to provide relief payments.

CONCLUSION

USAID assistance is making it possible for Jamaica to start integrating climate change considerations into its development plans and strengthen its weather information services. These actions will help protect lives and preserve development gains by reducing the nation's vulnerability, both today and in the future, to climate change and variability. Jamaica's groundbreaking work to incorporate adaptation directly into the national development planning process is being used as a model for developing National Adaptation Plans in USAID's work with other countries.