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# JAMAICA

## Artificial Intelligence Readiness Assessment Report

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# **JAMAICA**

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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

|                   |                                                                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AI</b>         | Artificial Intelligence                                                         |
| <b>APIs</b>       | Application Programming Interface                                               |
| <b>BI</b>         | Business Intelligence                                                           |
| <b>CARICOM</b>    | Caribbean Community                                                             |
| <b>CDB</b>        | Caribbean Development Bank                                                      |
| <b>CSV</b>        | Comma-Separated Values                                                          |
| <b>CTU</b>        | Caribbean Telecommunications Union                                              |
| <b>CSEC</b>       | Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate                                       |
| <b>DPA</b>        | Data Protection Act                                                             |
| <b>DPIAs</b>      | Data Protection Impact Assessments                                              |
| <b>EGDI</b>       | E-Government Development Index                                                  |
| <b>EIAs</b>       | Environmental Impact Assessments                                                |
| <b>EU</b>         | European Union                                                                  |
| <b>GDP</b>        | Gross Domestic Product                                                          |
| <b>GDPR</b>       | General Data Protection Regulation                                              |
| <b>GERD</b>       | Gross Expenditure on Research and Development                                   |
| <b>GOJ</b>        | Government of Jamaica                                                           |
| <b>GPU</b>        | Graphics Processing Unit                                                        |
| <b>HEART/NSTA</b> | Human Employment and Resource Training / National Service Training Agency Trust |
| <b>HPC</b>        | High-Performance Computing                                                      |
| <b>ICT</b>        | Information and Communications Technology                                       |
| <b>IDB</b>        | Inter-American Development Bank                                                 |
| <b>IEEE</b>       | Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers                               |
| <b>ISO</b>        | International Organization for Standardization                                  |
| <b>ITU</b>        | International Telecommunication Union                                           |
| <b>JAMPRO</b>     | Jamaica Promotions Corporation                                                  |
| <b>JLA</b>        | Jamaica Learning Assistant                                                      |
| <b>LAC</b>        | Latin America and the Caribbean                                                 |
| <b>MDAs</b>       | Ministries, Departments and Agencies                                            |
| <b>MSME</b>       | Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise                                             |
| <b>MOESYI</b>     | Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information                            |
| <b>MOHW</b>       | Ministry of Health and Wellness                                                 |
| <b>NCU</b>        | Northern Caribbean University                                                   |

|                |                                                                  |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NEPA</b>    | National Environment and Planning Agency                         |
| <b>NIDS</b>    | National Identification System                                   |
| <b>NIRA</b>    | National Innovation and Research Agenda                          |
| <b>OECD</b>    | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development           |
| <b>OIC</b>     | Office of the Information Commissioner                           |
| <b>OPM</b>     | Office of the Prime Minister                                     |
| <b>PDF</b>     | Portable Document Format                                         |
| <b>PPPs</b>    | Public Private Partnerships                                      |
| <b>R&amp;D</b> | Research and Development                                         |
| <b>RAM</b>     | Readiness Assessment Methodology                                 |
| <b>RUN</b>     | Reskilling; Upskilling and New-Skilling (RUN) Project            |
| <b>SDG</b>     | Sustainable Development Goals                                    |
| <b>SIDS</b>    | Small Island Developing States                                   |
| <b>SMEs</b>    | Small and Medium Enterprises                                     |
| <b>STEM</b>    | Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics                |
| <b>TPU</b>     | Tensor Processing Unit                                           |
| <b>UK</b>      | United Kingdom                                                   |
| <b>UN</b>      | United Nations                                                   |
| <b>UNESCO</b>  | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| <b>USD</b>     | United States Dollar                                             |
| <b>UTECH</b>   | University of Technology                                         |
| <b>UWI</b>     | University of the West Indies                                    |
| <b>WIPO</b>    | World Intellectual Property Organization                         |

# Foreword



We have officially entered the Age of Artificial Intelligence (AI). This technology is transforming the world at a pace not seen in generations. AI-based tools are becoming integral to everyday life—helping us work, learn, move, communicate, and access critical services like credit, employment, and public administration. Yet as AI accelerates progress, it also reflects and can deepen global and local inequalities.

Today, nearly one-third of the world's population still lacks reliable internet access. Meanwhile, AI development is heavily concentrated in a few countries—mainly the United States and China—and controlled by a small group of dominant firms. This concentration raises concerns about unequal outcomes, including gender gaps, limited data representation, and algorithmic bias. When AI systems are built by non-diverse teams using incomplete or unrepresentative data, they can inadvertently cause harm to already marginalized individuals and communities—including children, women, vulnerable populations, and even democratic institutions.

To address these ethical and governance concerns, UNESCO adopted the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence in 2021. Supported by 193 Member States, it offers a global framework grounded in human rights, dignity, and sustainability. The Recommendation outlines actionable policy guidance to support responsible AI development. In 2024, this vision was localized for the Caribbean through the Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap, which adapts UNESCO's principles to the region's socio-cultural context. It promotes practical strategies such as regulatory harmonization, inclusive innovation, and digital skills development—all anchored in values like transparency, privacy, and accountability.

Supporting this work is UNESCO's AI Readiness Assessment Methodology (RAM), a structured tool that enables countries to evaluate their preparedness for ethical AI. It provides a comprehensive diagnostic of national capabilities across legal, economic, technical, and institutional areas. The RAM highlights gaps and offers clear recommendations, helping countries align their national strategies with UNESCO's ethical vision and the goals of the regional Roadmap.

Jamaica is among the first Caribbean countries to complete a national AI readiness assessment using this methodology. The results show a country embracing a digital future shaped by inclusive dialogue, cultural sovereignty, and responsible innovation. Jamaica's efforts are grounded in public trust and strong stakeholder engagement. Over 190 participants—nearly half of them women—contributed to the RAM consultations, including representatives from government, academia, the private sector, and civil society.

Jamaica's strengths include a robust tertiary education system, an engaged Broadcasting Commission, and growing public-sector initiatives focused on digital transformation. Yet challenges remain. AI infrastructure is limited outside academia, and research investment remains low, at just 0.06% of GDP. Stakeholders raised concerns around data sovereignty, cultural preservation, internet access, and AI literacy.

Despite these challenges, the RAM findings confirm Jamaica's strong foundation for progress. The report urges further investment in regional AI infrastructure, stronger national laws, expanded AI literacy, and increased participation of women in AI—not just in STEM, but also in ethics, education, and policy. These efforts are vital to shaping equitable and context-aware AI systems.

Jamaica is not just adopting AI—it is helping to define how AI can serve the public good. By implementing the report's recommendations, Jamaica can lead the Caribbean in ethical, inclusive, and sustainable AI innovation.

## **Lidia Brito**

Assistant Director-General ad interim for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO

# Executive Summary

UNESCO has championed ethical AI by uniting its 193 Member States around the 2021 Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, a global standard for harnessing AI's benefits while mitigating its risks to human rights, dignity, and the environment. To help countries gauge their readiness for responsible AI deployment, UNESCO created the RAM—a high-level diagnostic tool that evaluates institutional and regulatory frameworks, human capital, and policy environments. By spotlighting gaps and prescribing improvements, the RAM equips nations to build the governance capacity needed for ethical, inclusive, and sustainable AI development.

The RAM comprises eight key elements:

- 1. Diagnosis of National AI landscape:** Offers a detailed overview of Jamaica's AI journey, capturing both domestic governance structures and notable international accomplishments.
- 2. Legal And Regulatory Dimension:** Examines Jamaica's existing legal instruments, such as the Personal Data Protection Law and AI Ethics Principles, which underpin secure, transparent, and rights-based AI deployment..
- 3. Social And Cultural Dimension:** Highlights national efforts to champion diversity, equity, and inclusion within AI-related initiatives and broader digital transformation strategies.
- 4. Scientific And Educational Dimension:** Reviews the country's commitment to AI advancement through targeted research and development, and investment in scientific output.
- 5. Economic Dimension:** Details strategic initiatives aimed at embedding AI into the economy, with a focus on workforce readiness and the growing need for AI-specific skills.
- 6. Technical And Infrastructural Dimension:** Assesses Jamaica's strides in enhancing digital infrastructure and technical capabilities required to support sustainable AI innovation.
- 7. Development of a National AI Multi-Stakeholder Roadmap:** Centers on the inclusive engagement of public, private, academic, and civil society actors to inform a cohesive AI governance strategy.
- 8. Formulation of Policy Recommendations:** Concludes with the creation of actionable, context-sensitive recommendations tailored to Jamaica's unique AI development landscape, aimed at maximizing impact and minimizing risk.

## Diagnosis of the National AI Landscape

Jamaica has already taken decisive action to prepare for the digital transformation reshaping societies worldwide. The establishment of the National AI Task Force and development of comprehensive AI Policy Recommendations represent significant milestones in charting a responsible path forward. Anchored in Vision 2030, these initiatives reflect a forward-thinking agenda that leverages AI to drive innovation, economic growth, and social well-being.

The UNESCO-facilitated RAM process provided a multi-dimensional diagnostic of Jamaica's AI ecosystem through extensive stakeholder engagement. This process validated the strategic direction established by the AI Task Force while identifying new implementation challenges and policy opportunities.

- **Jamaica National AI Journey**

Jamaica's AI policy evolution spans two decades: the Electronic Transactions Act (2007) established digital-transaction frameworks, the 2011 ICT Policy broadened universal-service to include digital literacy, the Cybercrimes Act (2015) addressed online harms, and the Data Protection Act (2020) (DPA) introduced rights for automated decisions and DPIAs. The Open Data Policy (2021) enhanced data transparency. In 2024, a National AI Task Force was formed, issuing AI policy recommendations in February 2025 aligned with UNESCO's Ethics of AI (2021).

- **Jamaica's AI Governance**

Jamaica's AI governance rests on robust legal foundations, including the Electronic Transactions Act, Cybercrimes Act, and DPA, which establish digital commerce frameworks and data rights. Data and transparency are reinforced by the Open Data Policy (2021) and Access to Information (ATI) Act, mandating machine-readable datasets and right-to-information provisions. Ethics and oversight advance through Jamaica's endorsement of UNESCO's Recommendation on AI Ethics and the National AI Task Force's 2025 policy recommendations. Capacity and infrastructure priorities include the ICT Policy's digital literacy mandate, the National Broadband Initiative, and investments in ICT labs and STEM facilities.

- **International Presence**

Jamaica has formally adopted the Open Data Charter, signaling its commitment to global open-data principles. Its GovTech Maturity Index score of 0.541 places it in Group B among 198 economies, underscoring significant public-sector digital focus. In standards development, the Jamaica Bureau of Standards has drafted a Jamaican Standard for Information Technology – Artificial Intelligence – Management system DJS ISO/IEC 42001: 2024 and participates as a P-member in ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7 on systems and software engineering. There is an active IEEE Jamaica section, however we did not find Jamaican member engagement in IEEE P7000 series working groups. The analysis showed that Jamaican representatives regularly attend ITU and UNESCO meetings, sharing best practices in digital governance and ethical AI—demonstrating the country's dedication to international collaboration and responsible innovation.

- **International Awards**

Jamaican AI innovators have begun earning international accolades. Tech entrepreneur Adrian Dunkley, founder of StarApple AI, was named "Top Caribbean AI Innovator" by UK-based CEO Monthly in June 2025. Sandals Corporate University secured the Global Council of Corporate Universities Bronze Award for Best Generative AI Implementation, its second consecutive win.

- **International Indices**

Jamaica appears in the Oxford Insights Government AI Readiness Index (2024 edition), where it scored an overall 50.11 out of 100, with pillar scores of 37.79 for Government, 34.43 for Technology Sector, and 28.82 for Data & Infrastructure. Jamaica has 13 publications showing up on the OECD.AI research dashboards from 2019-2024. Jamaica is not included in the Stanford AI Index or its Global AI Vibrancy Tool (which covers only the top 36 AI-active countries).

## **Legal and Regulatory Dimension**

Jamaica's digital-governance foundation rests on multiple statutes—the Access to Information Act (2002), Electronic Transactions Act (2007), Cybercrimes Act (2015), DPA (2020), and Open Data Policy (2021). The DPA grants rights to contest automated decisions, mandates DPIAs for high-risk processing, and establishes the Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC) with enforcement powers. No procurement laws govern digital or AI acquisitions, but Jamaica formally adopted the Open Data Charter. In March 2023, the World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index scored Jamaica at 0.541 (Group B), just below the Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) average of 0.547.

## **Social and Cultural Dimension**

Jamaica's digital ecosystem combines strong connectivity—85.1 percent of women and 79.5 percent of men use the internet, with 87 percent urban versus 77 percent rural access—alongside entrenched divides. Pursuant to the 2011 ICT Policy, the Universal Service Fund expanded access via Wi-Fi hotspots. Girls outperform boys by 8.5 points in Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) exams, yet gender-disaggregated STEM data is missing; outreach efforts (FiWi Science, STEM tours, Conversations) are targeted to all levels of society. E-government scores 0.5906 OSI/0.4384 EPI, but trust and AI impact metrics are undefined. Sustainability and digital-health frameworks omit AI assessments and there are no AI policy guidelines for cultural-heritage or language preservation, signifying policy gaps.

## Scientific and Educational Dimension

Jamaica's Research and Development investment is minimal—GERD is 0.06 percent of Gross Domestic Product—with no sector breakdown or standalone government budget allocations for Research and Development and AI research outputs are scant: just 13 AI papers (2019–2024), zero patents, no Kaggle Grandmasters, and a GitHub AI-commit rate of 3.2 per million. There is no AI-researcher registry, though Jamaica Artificial Intelligence Association exists. In education, AI integration is not mandated, but a draft policy and educator training are proposed and programmes are starting to be implemented. By early 2025, 68 percent of schools have broadband, supported by 260 ICT labs, 21 STEM labs, 1,500 tablets, and 144 smart boards. The University of Technology (UTech) offers one BSc in Applied AI and the country's recently announced AI lab where developers, researchers, entrepreneurs and students will be empowered to work together to generate ideas, nurture talent and solve real world challenges using AI. UWI embeds AI modules into their Computing Degree Programmes at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, yet no combined technical-ethical courses or detailed graduate data are publicly available. Public AI education is championed by the Broadcasting Commission.

## Economic Impact Dimension

Jamaica's labour market lacks AI-specific data: no statistics on AI-focused vacancies, data scientists, skill prevalence, or talent concentration. Absent from the Stanford AI Index, Jamaica ranks 76<sup>th</sup> in the 2022 Global Innovation Index (input 88, output 60). Without granular data, the 2025 National AI Task Force recommends reskilling, upskilling, and human–AI complementarity, but these remain unevaluated. National accounts and OECD datasets omit AI service spending and GERD in programming sectors; sectoral GDP is undifferentiated. Trade metrics reveals that high-tech exports rose from 1.38% (2022) to 2.65% (2023). These gaps hinder evidence-based AI policy, demanding routine data collection.

## Technical and Infrastructural Dimension

Despite widespread mobile-cellular subscriptions (115.1 per 100 in 2023) and active mobile-broadband uptake (70.5 per 100), fixed broadband lags at 15.8 per 100. Jamaica enjoys 85 percent internet penetration—5-point gender and 10-point urban–rural gaps—and robust bandwidth (126 000 Mbit/s) and speeds (60.78 Mbps). Yet high mobile-data costs (USD 1.65/GB) and 2 403-minute average annual power outages undermine access. Jamaica has drafted a policy for ISO/IEC 42001 and participates in ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7, but lacks IEEE P7000 engagement. With no datacentre or cloud-policy metrics, Jamaica must expand affordable broadband, stabilize power, and build AI readiness via comprehensive data collection, governance frameworks, and capacity metrics.

## Developing a National Multi-Stakeholder Roadmap

The Jamaica AI Readiness Assessment (RAM) was conducted from February to June 2025 using UNESCO's global methodology to evaluate the country's preparedness to adopt, regulate, and responsibly implement artificial intelligence. The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) served as the lead stakeholder, ensuring national ownership and alignment with Jamaica's development priorities. A central feature of the process was broad, multisectoral engagement, incorporating voices from government, civil society, academia, youth, and the private sector across the five RAM dimensions: legal, technical, economic, educational/scientific, and social/cultural.

The process began with high-level briefings at OPM, followed by comprehensive stakeholder mapping that identified more than 95 key actors. To gather evidence, five customized survey tools, one for each RAM dimension, were distributed. The Jamaica National AI Task Force acted as the Steering Committee, guiding consultations, validating findings, and ensuring the exercise reflected national AI ambitions.

Between April and May 2025, seven consultation sessions were convened, providing a forum for stakeholders to discuss strengths, risks, and opportunities. Nine in-depth interviews with private sector leaders, academic experts, and government officials added further insights. In total, 196 individuals participated across consultations, interviews, surveys, and workshops, representing universities such as UWI, UTech, NCU, CMU, and CASE, alongside ministries, civil society groups advocating for digital rights and ethics, and youth-led initiatives.

The information collected was consolidated into a Diagnostic Report, benchmarked against global AI governance standards and national priorities. Two validation workshops in May confirmed the credibility of findings and emphasized policy gaps. Based on this input, a Synthesis Report was prepared with stakeholder analysis and recommendations to update UNESCO's RAM questionnaire. A draft report was then shared with UNESCO headquarters, OPM, and the National AI Task Force for review and final feedback.

The Final Jamaica AI Readiness Assessment Report was delivered in July 2025, integrating validated findings, stakeholder perspectives, and recommendations into a comprehensive national blueprint. Beyond assessing capacity, the process strengthened Jamaica's collaborative approach to AI governance and created a roadmap for responsible innovation, regulatory development, investment,

and capacity building. The report positions Jamaica to pursue AI adoption in a way that is inclusive, ethical, and aligned with its socio-economic goals, while preparing the country to engage competitively in the global AI economy.

## **Towards a National AI Strategy: High-Level Recommendations**

This section of the report provides targeted recommendations across seven key dimensions critical to the success of Jamaica's AI strategy. Each dimension is explored with specific recommendations designed to address the unique challenges and opportunities within Jamaica's AI ecosystem.

- **Strengthen Legal and Ethical Governance**

Jamaica should enact a standalone AI Act to address bias, liability, classification, and explainability. It should create an independent AI Regulatory Authority or expand the duties of the Data Protection Authority to audit high-risk systems, enforce ethics and mandate impact assessments. Jamaica should embed ethics in procurement, establish an AI Use Registry and redress mechanisms, and maintain stakeholder consultations for adaptive governance.

- **Institutional Frameworks and Governance**

Jamaica's AI readiness assessment found that effective AI governance requires multi-institutional coordination due to AI's cross-sectoral impact. Stakeholders endorsed establishing a National AI Oversight and Implementation Council including government ministries, universities (UWI, UTech, NCU), regulators, civil society, and private sector partners to oversee strategic implementation.

- **Expand AI Education and Community AI Literacy**

Integrate AI Skilling and AI ethics across early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary curricula; provide AI scholarships and mentorships for women and underrepresented groups; expand vocational and continuing AI education via HEART/ NSTA and online platforms; scale public AI awareness through libraries, mobile hubs, and social media; and set national AI literacy benchmarks in collaboration with UNESCO and OECD.

- **Use AI to Enhance National Productivity**

Pilot AI tools in industries such as agriculture, tourism, and public services to demonstrate tangible benefits and drive adoption. Provide tailored AI toolkits and affordable cloud-access programs to empower rural MSMEs and private entrepreneurs. Embed AI initiatives within the National Productivity Strategy and establish clear performance indicators. Foster innovation partnerships between government, industry, and academia to enable applied AI research capacity and promote responsible AI practices. Prioritize inclusion of women and youth in AI workforce development through targeted training and mentorship programmes.

- **Inclusion and Well-Being**

Promoting diversity and inclusion in the AI and digital sectors is essential to ensuring that AI technologies benefit all segments of Jamaica's society. To achieve this, Jamaica should develop guidelines that encourage the disclosure of diversity statistics by technology companies, particularly those involved in AI development. Additionally, Jamaica should address digital gender gaps in STEM and AI by establishing dedicated scholarship funds for women and creating specialised career pathways that guide female students towards STEM programmes.

- **Invest in Green AI Readiness**

Establish a Green AI Procurement Framework with mandatory environmental disclosures and energy-efficiency standards; require Environmental Impact Assessments for major digital infrastructure; incentivize renewable-powered green cloud contracts; pilot climate-resilient AI projects (e.g., flood forecasting, sustainable agriculture); and embed environmental computing modules in tertiary and vocational AI education.

Jamaica's commitment to ethical AI development, supported by strong governance, robust infrastructure, and strategic investments, will ensure that AI technologies continue to contribute to sustainable and inclusive growth, benefiting all segments of Jamaica society.

The UNESCO RAM process has provided Jamaica with valuable insights into its current strengths and areas for enhancement within the AI landscape. This report now serves as a strategic roadmap, guiding Jamaica's continued progress in AI and aligning with the broader objectives of Vision 2030.



### Jamaica's AI Governance

Jamaica's path to AI governance has been built on two decades of digital and data legislation that steadily matured its regulatory environment. It began with the ATI Act (2002), which enshrined citizen rights to government-held data, followed by the Electronic Transactions Act (2007), creating a legal foundation for e-commerce and automated decision remedies.<sup>6</sup> The 2011 ICT Policy expanded universal-service obligations to include digital literacy and financing support, laying groundwork for inclusive digital uptake<sup>7</sup>. With the Cybercrimes Act (2015), Jamaica addressed online harms—cyberattacks, fraud, malicious communications—extending protection to digital spaces<sup>3</sup>. The landmark DPA (2020) then introduced comprehensive privacy rights, DPIAs for high-risk processing, and automated-decision safeguards directly applicable to AI systems. In July 2021, the Open Data Policy formalized machine-readable publishing of public-sector datasets, advancing transparency and reuse<sup>9</sup>. Also in 2021, Jamaica endorsed UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of AI, affirming ethical AI development commitments<sup>10</sup>. Building on these instruments, the National AI Task Force convened in 2023, issued Policy Recommendations in February 2025—calling for a standalone AI Act, an independent regulatory authority, sectoral ethics guidelines, and mandatory AI impact assessments<sup>11</sup>. While no AI-specific law has yet been enacted, this cumulative body of legislation and multi-stakeholder strategy positions Jamaica to transition from digital maturity toward comprehensive AI governance—with robust privacy, security, transparency, and ethical frameworks that align with Vision 2030 and global best practices.

Several government bodies share responsibilities that touch AI:

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) formulates ICT and AI policy and spearheads AI strategy via the National AI Task Force<sup>12</sup>. It oversees the Information and Communications Technology Authority (formerly eGov Jamaica Limited) which operates the national data centre<sup>13</sup>. The Ministry of Science, Energy Telecommunications and Transport (MSETT) oversees the Universal Service Fund and eLearning Jamaica Company Limited. The OIC enforces AI-relevant provisions of the DPA.

The Ministry of Finance and the Public Service allocates funding for AI initiatives in its annual Estimates of Expenditure<sup>14</sup>. The Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information (MOESYI) leads AI education—launching Jamaica's first AI Lab at UTech and integrating AI into curricula—while HEART/NSTA Trust oversees vocational training and is beginning to explore AI skill development. The Jamaica Bureau of Standards participates in ISO/IEC AI standardization,<sup>15</sup> and the Broadcasting Commission promotes AI literacy and ethical media standards<sup>16</sup>. The Ministry of Health and Wellness is advancing AI in healthcare via the AI-TECH Council<sup>17</sup> and the National Environment and Planning Agency (NEPA) incorporates digital technology considerations into environmental assessments<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>6</sup>Electronic Transactions Act, 2007 (Act No. 9 of 2007), amended 2009 (Act No. 7 of 2009), Government of Jamaica, <https://laws.moj.gov.jm/library/statute/electronic-transactions-act-2007/>. Cybercrimes Act, 2015 (Act No. 31 of 2015), Government of Jamaica, <https://laws.moj.gov.jm/library/statute/cybercrimes-act-2015/>.

<sup>7</sup>Government of Jamaica, Information and Communications Technology Policy (Kingston: Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, March 2011), [https://mset.gov.jm/sites/default/files/ICT%20Policy%20-%20Final%20Version\\_0.pdf](https://mset.gov.jm/sites/default/files/ICT%20Policy%20-%20Final%20Version_0.pdf).

<sup>8</sup>Data Protection Act, 2020 (Act No. 1 of 2020), Government of Jamaica, <https://japarlament.gov.jm/attachments/article/341/The%20Data%20Protection%20Act,%202020.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup>Government of Jamaica, Open Data Policy (Kingston: Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, July 2021), <https://egovja.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GOJ-Open-Data-Policy-July-2021.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup>UNESCO, "Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence," adopted November 2021, <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000377897>.

<sup>11</sup>Office of the Prime Minister, National AI Task Force Report (Kingston: Government of Jamaica, February 13, 2025), <https://opm.gov.jm/news/national-ai-task-force-report-published/>;

<sup>12</sup>Ibid

<sup>13</sup>eGov Jamaica Limited, "eGov Primary Data Center Specifications," accessed June 2025, <https://egovja.com/datacenter>.

<sup>14</sup>Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Estimates of Expenditure 2025/26 (Kingston: MOFPS, 2025), <https://www.mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2025-2026-Estimates-of-Expenditure.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup>Jamaica Bureau of Standards, DJS ISO/IEC 42001:2023(E) (Kingston: BSJ, 2024), [https://www.bsj.org.jm/sites/default/files/Front%20matters%20for%20DJS%20ISO%2042001\\_updated.pdf](https://www.bsj.org.jm/sites/default/files/Front%20matters%20for%20DJS%20ISO%2042001_updated.pdf).

<sup>16</sup>Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica, Code of Practice for Broadcasting Services (Kingston: BCJ), [https://www.bcjamaica.com/Code\\_of\\_Practice.pdf](https://www.bcjamaica.com/Code_of_Practice.pdf).

<sup>17</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "Health Minister Announces Council of Experts to Look at AI in Healthcare," press release, June 10, 2025, <https://www.moh.gov.jm/health-minister-announces-council-of-experts-to-look-at-ai-in-healthcare/>.

<sup>18</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Environment and Planning Agency Act (Act No. 59 of 2001), <https://nepa.gov.jm/sites/default/files/LEGISLATION/National%20Environment%20and%20Planning%20Agency%20Act.pdf>.

## International Presence

Jamaica's AI expertise is gaining international traction. Jamaican institutions contributed 13 AI publications to the OECD.AI database from 2019–2024<sup>19</sup>, entrepreneur Adrian Dunkley was named “Top Caribbean AI Innovator” by CEO Monthly,<sup>20</sup> and Sandals Corporate University won consecutive Global Corporate Universities Bronze Awards for generative AI training. Jamaica has an IEEE Jamaica Section, and an IEEE International Conference planned for 2026. The Jamaica Bureau of Standards participates as a P-member in ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7 and SC/40 on software and system engineering and IT service management and IT governance<sup>5</sup>. Jamaican experts have advised UNESCO's RAM consultations and Jamaican's participate and lead the UNESCO Information for All Programme, underscoring Jamaica's growing role in global AI governance.

## International Indices

Jamaica has achieved the following scores in international AI rankings:

- Global AI Readiness Index 2024 (Oxford Insights): Jamaica scored 50.11, above the regional average of 44.92, placing it 62<sup>nd</sup> out of 188 countries, with a Governance & Strategy pillar score of 37.79 (oxfordinsights.com).<sup>22</sup>
- Public Awareness (Stanford AI Index 2023): Jamaica is not among the top-ranked nations for public familiarity with AI and thus is not separately listed in the AI Index's Public Awareness pillar (hai.stanford.edu).<sup>23</sup>
- OECD AI Policy Observatory: Four Jamaican AI policy instruments appear— DPA (2020), Cybercrimes Act (2015), Open Data Policy (2021), and the 2025 National AI Task Force Recommendations—far fewer than the dozens seen in leading countries (oecd.ai).<sup>24</sup>
- Smart City Index 2024 (IMD): No Jamaican city ranks in the global top 100; Kingston and others fall well below the published thresholds (imd.org)<sup>25</sup>
- Global Cybersecurity Index 2024 (ITU): Jamaica is the only Caribbean nation in Tier 3 with a score of 58.20, roughly 65<sup>th</sup> globally.<sup>26</sup>

## Jamaica's E-Government Development Index Statistics (2024)

E-Government Development Index (EGDI):

- Jamaica is ranked 96<sup>th</sup> globally with an EGDI score of 0.6678.
- Jamaica is classified in the “H3” (High) rating class.
- Jamaica climbed above the global average between 2022 and 2025.

<sup>17</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, “Health Minister Announces Council of Experts to Look at AI in Healthcare,” press release, June 10, 2025, <https://www.moh.gov.jm/health-minister-announces-council-of-experts-to-look-at-ai-in-healthcare/>.

<sup>18</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Environment and Planning Agency Act (Act No. 59 of 2001), <https://nepa.gov.jm/sites/default/files/LEGISLATION/National%20Environment%20and%20Planning%20Agency%20Act.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “AI Publications by Country: Jamaica,” OECD.AI, accessed June 20, 2025, <https://oecd.ai/en/data?selectedArea=ai-research&selectedVisualization=16738&visualizationFiltersHash=eyJlbmRpdGlkcyI6eyJjb3VudHJ5IjpbIkpBTjSjdfSwiZGF0ZSI6WylyMDE4IiwilMjAyNCJdfQ==>.

<sup>20</sup>“Jamaican Adrian Dunkley Awarded Top Caribbean AI Innovator,” Our Today, June 14, 2025, <https://our.today/jamaican-adrian-dunkley-awarded-top-caribbean-ai-innovator/>.

<sup>21</sup>Jamaica Observer, “Sandals Corporate University Cops Global CCU Award for AI-Powered Training,” Jamaica Observer, May 23, 2025, <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/2025/05/23/sandals-corporate-university-cops-global-ccu-award-ai-powered-training/>.

<sup>22</sup>Oxford Insights, “Government AI Readiness Index 2024,” Oxford Insights, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://oxfordinsights.com/ai-readiness/ai-readiness-index>.

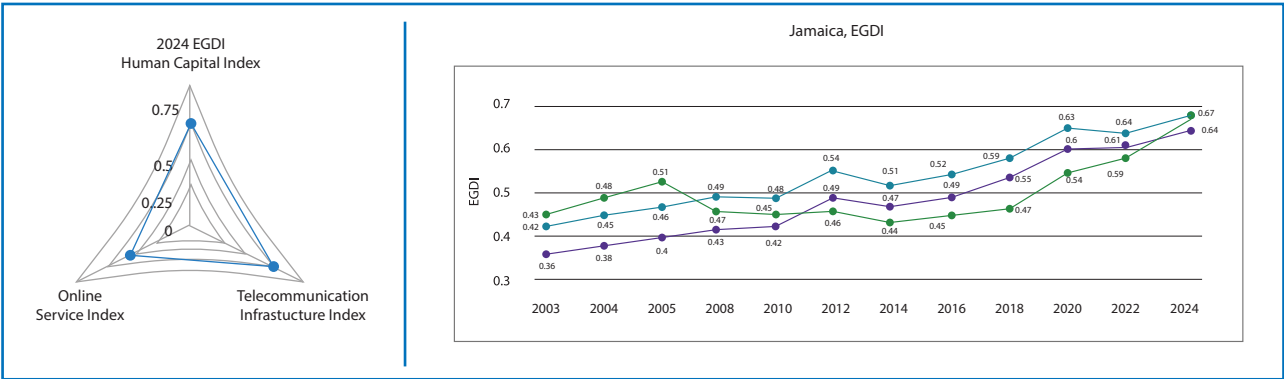
<sup>23</sup>Stanford University, “AI Index Report 2023: Public Awareness,” Stanford University, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://aiindex.stanford.edu/report/#public-awareness>.

<sup>24</sup>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, “AI Policy Instruments: Jamaica,” OECD.AI, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://oecd.ai/policy-instruments?country=JAM>.

<sup>25</sup>IMD World Competitiveness Center, “Smart City Index 2024,” IMD, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://www.imd.org/smart-city-index>.

<sup>26</sup>International Telecommunication Union, “Global Cybersecurity Index 2024,” ITU, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/Index.aspx>.

Figure 2. Jamaica's E-Gov Development Index (EGDI) for 2024 and Historical EGDI Performance



Global Context:

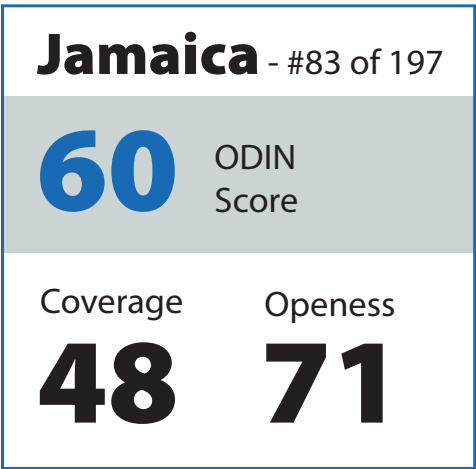
- The global average EGDI value rose from 0.59060 in 2022 to 0.66778 in 2024.
- Jamaica's score of 0.66778 places it 3 percentage points above the world average.
- The Americas region has an average EGDI of 0.6701.

Sub-indices:

- Online Service Index (OSI) – Jamaica scored 0.5677 above the subregion average of 0.4256 and just below the World Average of 0.5754.
- E-Participation Index (EPI) – Jamaica scored 0.4384 giving it a world rank of 102.
- Telecommunication Infrastructure Index (TII) – Jamaica scored 0.7296 a whopping 16 percentage point increase from the 2022 score of 0.56580.
- Human Capital Index (HCI) - Jamaica scored 0.70600 a .88 percentage point increase from its 2022 score of 0.71480.

Jamaica is making significant improvement, moving above the world average and maintaining its position in the High EGDI category among the 193 UN Member States assessed.

Figure 3. Jamaica's Open Data Inventory score



# LEGAL AND REGULATORY DIMENSION

## AI POLICY AND REGULATION

Jamaica currently has no standalone national AI strategy or statute; instead, AI governance relies on indirect instruments—the DPA (2020)<sup>27</sup>, Cybercrimes Act (2015)<sup>28</sup>, and Open Data Policy (2021)<sup>29</sup>—and the National AI Task Force’s February 2025 Policy Recommendations, which advocate a rights-based, ethical approach aligned with UNESCO’s AI Ethics Recommendation<sup>30</sup>. The National AI Task Force, comprised government, academia, civil society, and private-sector representatives. Its recommendations include human-rights safeguards, mandatory impact assessments for high-risk applications (via DPIAs under the DPA), and sectoral ethics guidelines. A permanent AI Regulatory Authority is proposed to oversee implementation, yet no binding AI-specific regulation or procurement guidelines have been enacted, and no drafts are publicly available—reflecting both legislative inertia and the need for capacity building before adopting comprehensive AI laws.

## DATA PROTECTION AND CYBERCRIME LAWS

Jamaica has attained a distinguished position in Tier 3 of the ITU’s Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI)<sup>31</sup>, achieving a commendable score range of 55-85. This reflects Jamaica’s significant commitment to cybersecurity and its role as a global leader and underscores its dedication to establishing a robust, secure, and resilient digital landscape, setting a high standard for cybersecurity practices. Jamaica’s proactive and strategic approach to cyber resilience not only reinforces its national security but also showcases its capability as a leader in the international cybersecurity arena.

The ITU developed the GCI to monitor the cybersecurity measures implemented across the five work areas of the ITU Global Cybersecurity Agenda. Across the 16 Caribbean/CARICOM countries included in the assessment, Jamaica ranked third with a score of 58.20 with pillar breakdowns out of 20 of Legal 16.41, Technical 6.58, Organizational 15.82, Capacity Development 8.26, and Cooperation 11.13<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>27</sup>Government of Jamaica, Data Protection Act, 2020 (Act No. 1 of 2020), sec. 45, <https://japarliament.gov.jm/attachments/article/341/The%20Data%20Protection%20Act,%202020.pdf>;

<sup>28</sup>Government of Jamaica, Cybercrimes Act, 2015 (Act No. 31 of 2015), <https://laws.moj.gov.jm/library/statute/cybercrimes-act-2015/>.

<sup>29</sup>Government of Jamaica, Open Data Policy (Kingston: Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, July 2021), <https://egovja.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/GOJ-Open-Data-Policy-July-2021.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup>UNESCO, Readiness Assessment Methodology for AI (Paris: UNESCO, June 2025).

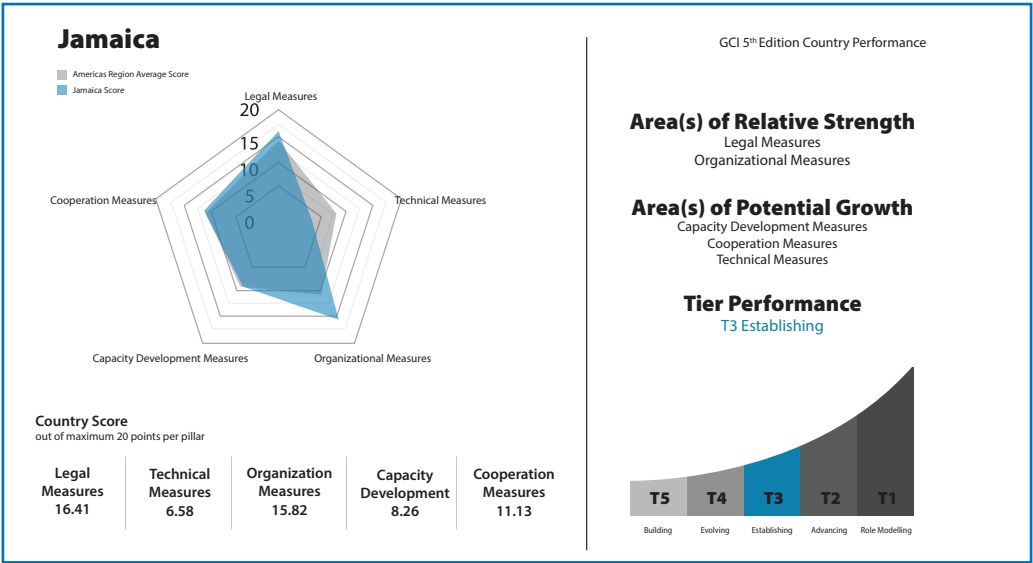
<sup>31</sup>Global Cybersecurity Index, ITU, 2024: 2401416\_1b\_Global-Cybersecurity-Index-E.pdf

<sup>32</sup>ICT Pulse, “Snapshot on the Cybersecurity Measures that Have Been Implemented in the Caribbean Region in 2024,” ICT Pulse, October 2024, [https://ict-pulse.com/2024/10/snapshot-on-the-cybersecurity-measures-that-have-been-implemented-in-the-caribbean-region-in-2024/#google\\_vignette](https://ict-pulse.com/2024/10/snapshot-on-the-cybersecurity-measures-that-have-been-implemented-in-the-caribbean-region-in-2024/#google_vignette).

Figure 4. Global Cybersecurity Index 2024 Tier Performance: Americas (Source: ITU)<sup>33</sup>

| T5                  | T4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | T3                                                                                                                        | T2                                     | T1                      |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Building            | Evolving                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Establishing                                                                                                              | Advancing                              | Role Modelling          |
| Antigua and Barbuda | Argentina<br>Bahamas<br>Barbados<br>Belize<br>Bolivia (Plurinational State of)<br>Dominica<br>El Savador<br>Grenada<br>Guatemala<br>Guyana<br>Haiti<br>Honduras<br>Nicaragua<br>Saint Kitts and Nevis<br>Saint Lucia<br>Saint Vincent and the Grenadines<br>Suriname<br>Venezuela | Chile<br>Colombia<br>Costa Rica<br>Cuba<br>Dominican Rep.<br>Jamaica<br>Panama<br>Paraguay<br>Peru<br>Trinidad and Tabago | Canada<br>Ecuador<br>Mexico<br>Uruguay | Brazil<br>United States |

Figure 5. Jamaica Overall Score (Global Cybersecurity Index 2024)<sup>34</sup>



Jamaica’s DPA represents a landmark achievement in the country’s digital governance landscape and positions Jamaica as a regional leader in data privacy and ethical digital transformation. The Act aligns closely with international standards, particularly the EU’s GDPR, and reflects Jamaica’s commitment to safeguarding the rights of its citizens in the digital age. It enshrines comprehensive data subject rights, including the right to access personal data, the right to object to processing, the right to rectification and erasure, and specific protections around automated decision-making—all of which are highly relevant in the context of AI adoption.

Critically, the Act established the OIC, a robust and independent oversight authority empowered to monitor compliance, investigate complaints, issue enforcement notices, and impose penalties for violations. The OIC plays a central role in ensuring transparency and accountability across public and private sectors, especially as AI systems become more widely deployed in Jamaica.

<sup>33</sup>ICT Pulse, “Snapshot on the Cybersecurity Measures that Have Been Implemented in the Caribbean Region in 2024,” ICT Pulse, October 2024, <https://ict-pulse.com/2024/10/snapshot-on-the-cybersecurity-measures-that-have-been-implemented-in-the-caribbean-region-in-2024>.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

By implementing this forward-looking legislation, Jamaica has created a strong legal foundation for trustworthy innovation, making it well-positioned to govern emerging technologies such as AI in a manner that respects human rights and promotes responsible digital development.

## Data Sharing and Accessibility

Jamaica has made admirable strides in promoting open data initiatives, notably through the establishment of the national Open Data Portal in 2016 and the approval of the GOJ's Open Data Policy by the Cabinet in July 2021. This policy provides a strategic framework aimed at enhancing transparency, accountability, and public participation by facilitating access to government-held data. The Open Data Portal serves as a centralized platform for disseminating datasets from various MDAs, promoting data-driven decision-making and innovation.

An assessment of Jamaica's Open Data Portal ([data.gov.jm](http://data.gov.jm)) reveals a foundational effort to provide public access to government datasets. The portal hosts data across various sectors, including economy, health, education, and transportation, in multiple formats such as CSV, XLS, and PDF. However, concerns have been raised regarding the timeliness and relevance of the datasets. Many datasets have not been updated since 2018, diminishing their utility for current analysis and decision-making. This stagnation hampers the portal's effectiveness in supporting transparency, innovation, and data-driven governance.

Efforts are underway to address these challenges. The GOJ approved an Open Data Policy in July 2021, which aims to enhance the open data ecosystem. The policy outlines strategies for improving data quality, standardization, and accessibility. Key initiatives include upgrading the Open Data Portal to automate data updates, developing a comprehensive data inventory, and conducting user demand surveys to align data offerings with stakeholder needs. Jamaica is also a participant in the International Monetary Fund's enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS). On the Bank of Jamaica's National Summary Data Page (NSDP)-Jamaica there exists additional data sets that seem disaggregated from the Jamaica Open Data Portal.<sup>35</sup>

Despite these initiatives, the portal's current state reflects a need for more consistent data maintenance and user engagement. To realize the full potential of open data, it is crucial to establish clear governance structures, enforce data-sharing mandates across MDAs, and invest in capacity-building for data management. Such measures will ensure that the portal serves as a reliable and up-to-date resource for researchers, policymakers, and the public.

## PROCUREMENT LAWS AND POLICIES

Jamaica's public procurement framework, established by the Public Procurement Act of 2015, is grounded in principles of fairness, transparency, and value for money. However, the Act does not specifically address emerging technologies like AI, creating challenges in assessing the ethical, legal, and technical dimensions of AI systems during procurement—especially for high-risk uses such as facial recognition, predictive policing, or automated social services.

This regulatory gap increases the risk of acquiring AI tools without adequate oversight, potentially leading to bias, privacy violations, or other unintended harms. In March 2025, the Senate passed the Public Procurement (Amendment) Act, aiming to enhance procurement efficiency. This presents an opportunity to integrate AI-specific guidelines that require algorithmic transparency, post-deployment monitoring, and ethical risk assessments during procurement processes.

Specialized training for procurement officials is essential to build their capacity to evaluate AI-related proposals. UNESCO, in partnership with the ITU, offers a six-week global training on AI for the public sector. The course equips public servants with the knowledge to responsibly integrate AI into government operations. It is recommended that Jamaica mandate this training for relevant officials to ensure ethical, rights-based AI adoption.

<sup>35</sup>Bank of Jamaica, "Enhanced General Data Dissemination System (e-GDDS) – National Summary Data Page," accessed June 20, 2025, <https://boj.org.jm/statistics/enhanced-general-data-dissemination-system-e-gdds/nsdp/>.

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACTS AND ACCESS TO KNOWLEDGE ACTS

The Jamaica's ATI Act, enacted in 2002 and implemented in 2004, remains a cornerstone of transparency and democratic governance. It grants citizens the legal right to access official documents held by public authorities, including government ministries, statutory bodies, executive agencies, and companies with at least 50% government ownership. The Act promotes accountability and public participation in decision-making processes.

Under the ATI Act, individuals can request access to a wide range of documents, such as policies, procedures, records, and decisions, without having to provide a reason. Public authorities must respond within 30 days and assist applicants in locating the requested information. While access to view or listen is free, fees may apply for reproductions. The Act outlines exemptions for sensitive material, including national security, personal privacy, and confidential foreign communications.

If access is denied, the Act allows applicants to appeal decisions through an internal review or escalate to an independent tribunal or the courts. Penalties, including fines up to J\$500,000 or imprisonment for six months, apply to those who unlawfully alter or withhold information.

Several Jamaican agencies collect biometric data: the National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) manages the National Identification System (NIDS)<sup>36</sup>; the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency collects biometric data for travel documents; the Jamaica Constabulary Force uses biometric data for criminal investigations; and the Electoral Office of Jamaica collects fingerprints to uphold electoral integrity.

The collection and processing of biometric data in Jamaica are governed by the DPA. This legislation requires data controllers to inform individuals about the purpose and legal basis of data collection and processing, as well as their rights regarding personal data. Specifically, individuals must be provided with accessible information on the identity and contact details of the data controller, the reasons for collecting biometric data, the legal justification for processing, potential recipients, the storage duration, and their rights to access, rectify, or erase their data.

The Act also mandates that data controllers implement robust technical and organizational safeguards to protect biometric data from unauthorized access, unlawful processing, and accidental loss or destruction. In line with these requirements, agencies such as the NIRA have undertaken public outreach efforts, including town halls and campaigns, to inform citizens about the NIDS.

However, civil society organizations have expressed concern that these efforts do not fully reach marginalized communities. Continued investment in public awareness and independent oversight is necessary to uphold privacy rights and build public trust in biometric data systems.

## DUE PROCESS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Jamaica's DPA explicitly addresses automated decision-making. Section 12 of the Act grants individuals the right to object to decisions made solely through automated processing, especially when such decisions significantly affect them. Upon such an objection, data controllers are obligated to reconsider the decision or make a new one that is not based solely on automated processing. This provision ensures that individuals have a mechanism to challenge and seek human review of automated decisions that impact them.

Stakeholders advocated for strengthening these protections by ensuring that the Section 12 provisions of the Act are consistently applied and supported by robust implementation guidelines. They also called for the development of additional regulations to require explainability and transparency in AI systems, especially those used in high-stakes decisions. Proposals included establishing an independent AI Ethics Review Board to oversee complaints, audit high-risk systems, and provide redress mechanisms beyond the data controller. Embedding these safeguards is seen as vital to upholding citizens' rights, building trust in AI, and operationalizing Jamaica's legal commitments to fair and accountable automated decision-making.

<sup>36</sup>The Jamaica NIDS digital identification program: a cautionary tale - Access Now

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## ONLINE SAFETY, INTEGRITY OF SPEECH, AND CYBERSECURITY

Jamaica's sole statutory notice-and-takedown regime resides in the Electronic Transactions Act (2007, am. 2009). Under Section 25, intermediaries are immune if they do not "monitor" content, yet once they obtain "knowledge of liability" for unlawful material—such as defamation, copyright infringement, or child sexual abuse images—they must remove it, suspend services to the offender, and notify law enforcement. Section 31 empowers the Minister to issue subsidiary regulations directing takedowns, but none have been promulgated. No independent assessments of the Act's efficacy have been published. In practice, the framework applies only to content already declared illegal under Jamaican statute. The Act clearly defines intermediary responsibility: a duty to act upon notice of illegal content, remove it promptly, and report violations.

Jamaica has not enacted any AI-specific law or policy for social-media transparency, misinformation, disinformation, or hate speech. Existing instruments—the Electronic Transactions Act, Cybercrimes Act (2015), and DPA (2020)—address online harms, malicious communications, and automated decision-making rights, but none regulate AI-driven content moderation or require platform transparency. No draft AI social-media framework is in development, and no evaluations of such policies exist.

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## PUBLIC SECTOR CAPACITY

### Public Sector Upskilling

Jamaica's public sector is actively working to enhance its capacity to understand, regulate, and implement AI technologies. A significant initiative in this regard is the Reskilling, Upskilling, and New-skilling (RUN) Project<sup>37</sup>, managed by the Transformation Implementation Unit of the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service. This programme offers public sector employees access to over 7,000 self-paced online courses from renowned institutions such as Google, Harvard, and Yale. The courses cover various areas, including data science, Power BI, Microsoft Excel, customer service, and notably, AI.

In addition to the RUN Project, the Jamaican government has announced plans to implement an AI workforce readiness strategy. This strategy includes integrating AI and coding into school curricula at all levels and launching a prompt engineering course through the HEART/NSTA Trust. The course is designed to train students and public-sector professionals to effectively use AI tools, thereby enhancing the country's overall AI competency.

Jamaica's first state-of-the-art AI lab will be established at UTech, in partnership with the Amber Group. This facility will serve as a hub for developers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and students to collaborate on AI solutions fostering innovation and practical application of AI technologies within the public sector.

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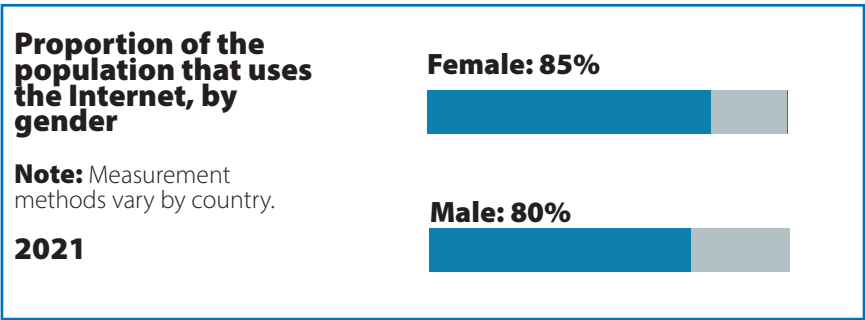
<sup>37</sup>Public Sector Transformation Programme, "R.U.N Project," Public Sector Transformation, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://publicsectortransformation.gov.jm/run-project/>.

# SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSION

## DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUALITY

Jamaica’s digital ecosystem reflects robust connectivity alongside entrenched socioeconomic and geographic divides. By January 2024, 85.1 percent of women and 79.5 percent of men used the internet—a 5.6 percentage point gender gap<sup>38</sup>—while urban penetration stood at 87 percent compared to 77 percent in rural areas.<sup>39</sup> Inclusion goals were codified in the 2011 ICT Policy, which expanded universal-service obligations to encompass information-literacy training and financing support, and are delivered through the Universal Service Fund’s deployment of community Wi-Fi hotspots and computer labs.

Figure 6. Jamaica Internet Usage by Gender<sup>41</sup>



Gender-disaggregated data on tertiary STEM graduates and career aspirations are unavailable, yet academic performance metrics show Jamaican girls outperform boys by 8.5 percentage points in CSEC pass rates and by 3.7–6.4 percentage points in advanced STEM subjects. Although no legislation mandates diversity in the AI workforce or requires diversity reporting by firms or universities, outreach programmes have emerged: UWI Mona’s FiWi Science Initiative, UNESCO-UWI’s “Walking in Her Footsteps” STEM tour, and SRC’s “Conversations in Science” series. English-language digital content is abundant, but Jamaican Patois lacks a formal corpus for AI training.

Jamaica lacks AI-specific cultural-heritage preservation policies. The National Cultural Policy (2003; rev. 2016) encourages new technologies for heritage documentation (sec. 18.2) but omits AI and digital-technology standards. No evaluations of its technology provisions exist. However, its mandate for “full participation of communities” (sec. 6.1(c)) could support future AI-heritage initiatives. Likewise, no policy addresses AI in preserving minority or indigenous languages; the Policy’s oral-traditions clause (sec. 6.1(g)) similarly enables stakeholder engagement. The absence of AI frameworks in these domains highlights a significant governance gap for cultural and linguistic preservation.

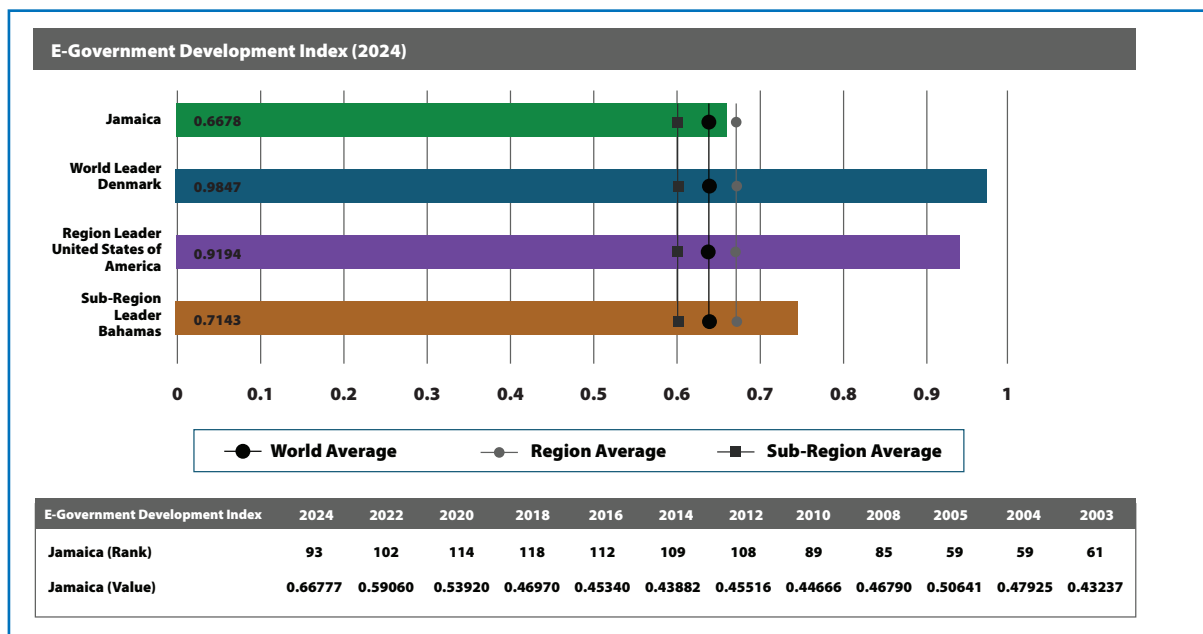
<sup>38</sup>DataReportal, “Digital 2024: Jamaica,” DataReportal, January 15, 2024, <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-jamaica>.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND TRUST

E-government readiness is moderate: Jamaica scores 0.6678 on the E-Government Development Index and 0.4384 on the E-Participation Index, and 68.7 percent of citizens express willingness to use e-services. Yet trust metrics for government platforms and AI remain undefined. Sustainability frameworks—the 2015 Climate Change Policy Framework and Vision 2030—align with SDGs but omit AI-specific environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and energy-carbon considerations.

**Figure 7. Jamaica 2024 Ranking on E-Government Development Index**

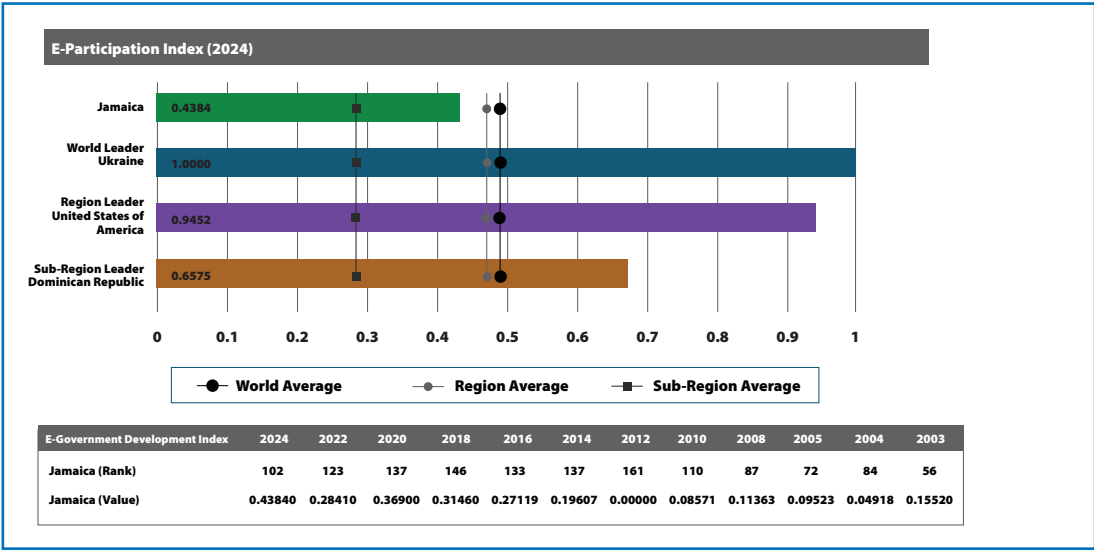


**2024 United E-Government Development Index<sup>40</sup>**: Jamaica is currently scoring 0.6678 in the 2024 E-Government Development Index (UN E-government database), which translates to a rank 96 out of 193.

<sup>40</sup>E-Government Development Index, United Nations, 2024: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Data-Center>

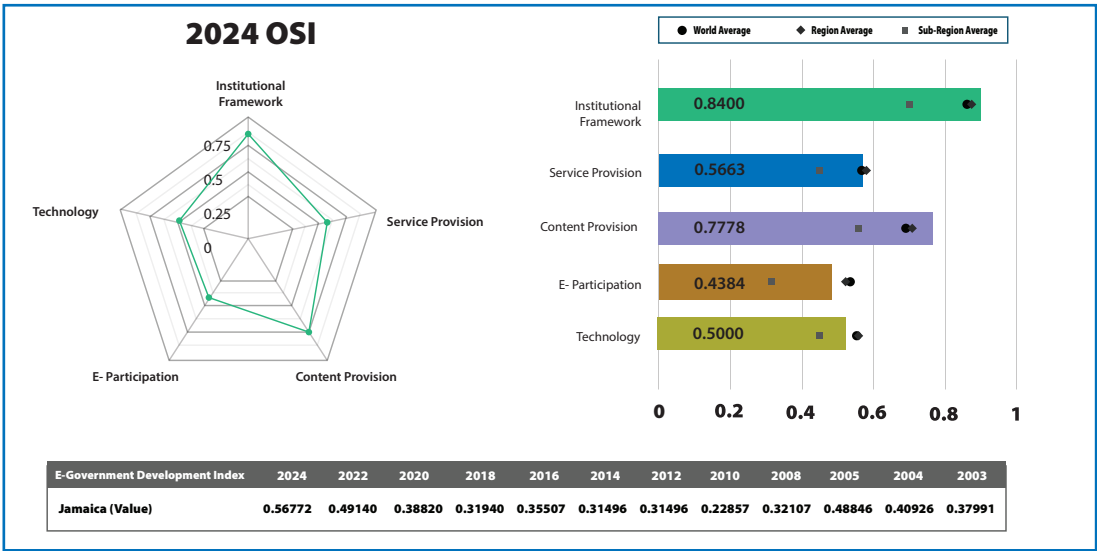
<sup>41</sup>E-Government Development Index, United Nations, 2024: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Data-Center>

Figure 8. Jamaica 2024 Ranking on E-Government Development Index (UN E-government database)



**2024 United E-Participation Index<sup>41</sup>**: Jamaica is currently scoring 0.4384 in the 2024 E-Government Participation Index, which translates to a rank of 102 out of 193.

Figure 9. Jamaica 2024 Ranking on Online Services Index (UN E-government database)



**2024 United Nations Online Services index<sup>42</sup>**: Jamaica is currently scoring 0.5677 in the 2024 Online Services Index (UN E-government database).

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICIES

Jamaica has no policy specifically addressing AI's environmental or sustainability impacts, nor any in development. Existing climate and development frameworks—such as the 2015 Climate Change Policy Framework and Vision 2030 Jamaica<sup>43</sup>—align with the SDGs but omit references to AI or digital-technology impacts on land, water, energy, or carbon emissions. EIAs are mandatory under NEPA<sup>44</sup> legislation for major projects but do not cover AI systems or require social components. No provisions exist for AI-specific EIAs, nor for evaluating use-case impacts (e.g., autonomous vehicles or AI-driven resource extraction).

Despite the absence of policy, experimentation with AI continues. The Our Shared Ocean “AI4Coasts” project applies machine-learning to sparse oceanographic and community data to pinpoint the most climate-vulnerable coastal locations and guide resilience planning in Jamaican parishes.<sup>45</sup> Under UNDP's AI for SIDS 2.0 initiative, a joint Barbados–Jamaica Blue Economy AI Lab trains local marine biologists to build custom reef-health models using edge-AI and solar-backed compute.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup>E-participation Index, United Nations, 2024: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Data-Center>

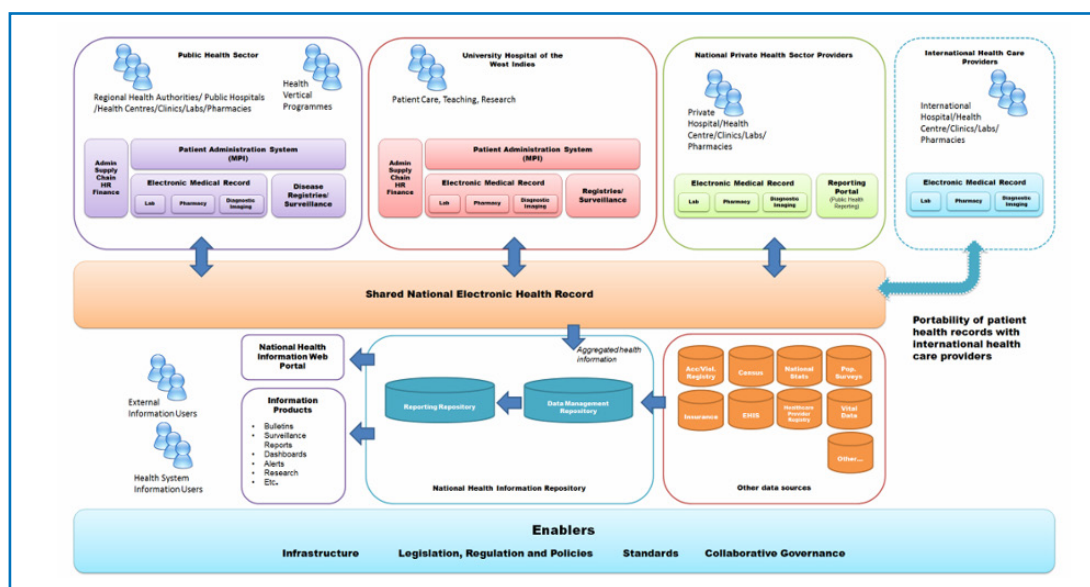
## AI in Health-Related Policies

Jamaica has made progress in addressing the well-being of its youth, particularly regarding mental health and the impacts of social media. Programs like UNICEF's "You Matter" mental health chat line,<sup>50</sup> the Ministry of Health and Wellness's (MOHW) mental wellness toolkit,<sup>51</sup> and the Caribbean Youth Mental Health Champions Project provide young people with essential resources and support. U-Report Jamaica<sup>52</sup> also gathers data on youth engagement with social media and its effects on mental health, highlighting the need for targeted interventions.

However, despite these initiatives, Jamaica still lacks a standalone digital-health policy. The National Health Information System Strengthening and e-Health Strategic Plan 2014–2018,<sup>53</sup> as well as the 2023 EHR rollout,<sup>54</sup> have yet to fully address the integration of AI, mental health, or paediatric impacts, and do not require AI impact assessments.

In response, the MOHW has shown openness to AI, establishing the AI-TECH Council of Experts<sup>55</sup> with J\$30 million from the National Health Fund to guide AI applications in areas like radiology, chronic care support, and remote monitoring. Notably, the Council approved an AI-enhanced portable breast-cancer screening tool<sup>56</sup> in July 2025. While these steps are promising, integrating AI solutions in a comprehensive digital health policy—especially focusing on youth and mental health—remains a critical area for development.

**Figure 10. Conceptual View graphical representation of the vision for a National Health Information System and e-Health for Jamaica<sup>55</sup>**



<sup>43</sup>Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Climate Change Policy Framework for Jamaica (Kingston: MEGJC, September 2015), [https://climate-laws.org/document/climate-change-policy-framework-for-jamaica\\_f5e2](https://climate-laws.org/document/climate-change-policy-framework-for-jamaica_f5e2).

<sup>44</sup>Planning Institute of Jamaica, Vision 2030 Jamaica: National Development Plan (Kingston: PIOJ, 2009), <https://www.pioj.gov.jm/policies/vision-2030-jamaica-the-national-development-plan/>.

<sup>45</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Environment and Planning Agency Act (Act No. 59 of 2001), <https://nepa.gov.jm/sites/default/files/LEGISLATION/National%20Environment%20and%20Planning%20Agency%20Act.pdf>.

<sup>46</sup>Our Shared Ocean, "Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Improve Coastal Resilience in Data-Sparse Locations: Caribbean Region Case Study (AI4Coasts)," Our Shared Ocean, accessed June 20, 2025, <https://oursharedocean.ie/projects/using-artificial-intelligence-ai-to-improve-coastal-resilience-in-data-sparse-locations-caribbean-region-case-study-ai4coasts/>.

<sup>47</sup>Kem-Laurin Lubin, AI for SIDS 2.0: Smart Islands – Transforming Government Services with AI for Small Island Developing States (New York: UNDP, May 2025), [https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-05/lubin\\_kem-laurin\\_ai\\_sids\\_2.0.pdf](https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-05/lubin_kem-laurin_ai_sids_2.0.pdf).

<sup>48</sup>UNICEF, "You Matter" Mental Health Chat Line, accessed June 15, 2025, <https://www.unicef.org/jamaica/you-matter-mental-health-chat-line>.

<sup>49</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "Mental Wellness Toolkit" Government of Jamaica, accessed June 15, 2025, <https://moh.gov.jm/health-ministry-shares-new-mental-wellness-toolkit-for-young-people>.

<sup>50</sup>U-Report Jamaica, "Mental Health and Social Media Polls," accessed June 15, 2025, <https://jamaica.ureport.in/opinion/754>.

<sup>51</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "National Health Information System Strengthening and e-Health Strategic Plan 2014–2018," Government of Jamaica, October 2013.

<sup>52</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "2023 EHR Rollout under the Health System Strengthening Programme," Government of Jamaica, 2023.

<sup>53</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "Health Minister Announces Council of Experts to Look at AI in Healthcare," press release, June 10, 2025, <https://www.moh.gov.jm/health-minister-announces-council-of-experts-to-look-at-ai-in-healthcare/>.

<sup>54</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "AI Technology to Enhance Breast Cancer Screening," press release, May 8, 2025, <https://www.moh.gov.jm/ai-technology-to-enhance-breast-cancer-screening/>.

<sup>55</sup>World Health Organization, National Health Information System Strengthening and e-Health Strategic Plan 2014–2018: Jamaica (Geneva: WHO Global Observatory on Digital Health, October 2013), [https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/digital-health-documents/global-observatory-on-digital-health/jamaica\\_ehealth2014\\_2018.pdf](https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/digital-health-documents/global-observatory-on-digital-health/jamaica_ehealth2014_2018.pdf).

Jamaica has not enacted any AI-specific policy for cultural-heritage preservation. The National Cultural Policy of Jamaica (2003; rev. 2016) urges the adoption of “new technologies” for documenting and disseminating heritage (sec. 18.2) but makes no mention of AI or digital-technology standards.<sup>56</sup> No independent evaluation of its technology provisions has been published.<sup>57</sup> However, the Policy mandates “the full participation of communities in cultural expression and cultural development” (sec. 6.1(c)), offering a basis for stakeholder engagement in any future AI–heritage initiatives.<sup>58</sup>

Likewise, Jamaica has not adopted any policy on using AI for minority or indigenous-language preservation. The National Cultural Policy’s oral-traditions clause (sec. 6.1(g)) recognizes the importance of safeguarding linguistic heritage but does not reference digital or AI considerations.<sup>59</sup> No efficacy assessments exist, and no framework currently allows community members to participate specifically in AI–language-preservation regulation or development.

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<sup>56</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Cultural Policy of Jamaica (Kingston: National Library of Jamaica, 2003; rev. 2016), secs. 6.1(c), 6.1(g), 18.2, <https://nlj.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/national-cultural-policy.pdf>.

<sup>57</sup>Author’s review of policy evaluations, June 2025 (no published assessments located).

<sup>58</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Cultural Policy of Jamaica, sec. 6.1(c).

<sup>59</sup>Government of Jamaica, National Cultural Policy of Jamaica, sec. 6.1(c).

# SCIENTIFIC AND EDUCATIONAL DIMENSION

## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

### R&D Expenditure

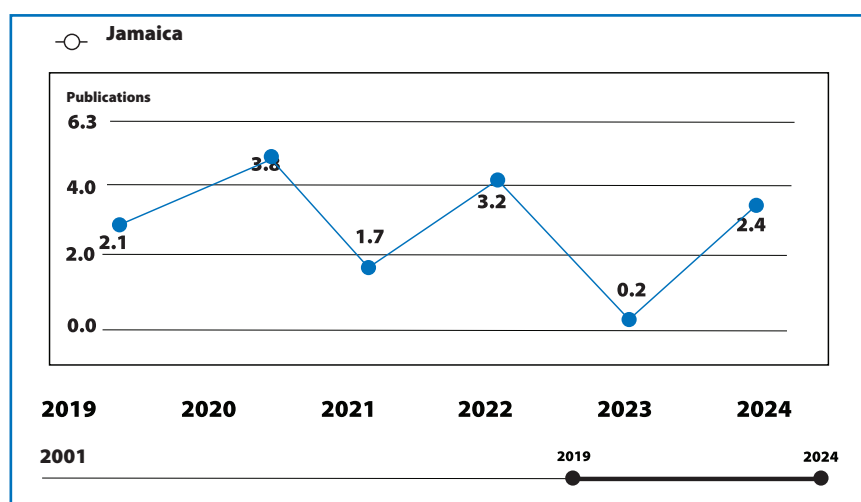
Jamaica's GERD remains exceedingly low at just 0.06 percent of GDP; nine times lower than the average for LAC (i.e., 0.61%)<sup>60</sup>. There is no breakdown for AI-specific public or private R&D. The GOJ's Estimates of Expenditure for fiscal year 2025/26 total J\$1.3 trillion<sup>61</sup>, making the R&D investment approximately J\$780 million. Notably, there is an Accelerated Capital Allowance regime proposed in the budget but it specifically excludes "intangibles such as research and development (R&D) and intellectual property rights" from eligible assets<sup>62</sup>, underscoring that R&D is not being incentivized through this measure.

The 2022 National Science Technology and Innovation Policy sets a target of 1.5 percent GERD by 2029—equivalent to Singapore's investment in 1998—implying a 21-fold increase in both GERD and full-time equivalent researchers per million people, and a seven-fold rise in publications per capita. With only eight new STEM PhDs produced annually (2016/17–2022/23), meeting these goals in five years presents a formidable undertaking.<sup>63</sup>

### Research Outputs

Between 2019 and 2024, Jamaican researchers authored 13 AI-related publications according to the OECD.AI database.<sup>64</sup> Local innovators like Adrian Dunkley, named "Top Caribbean AI Innovator," exemplify growing regional leadership. Institutions such as UTech and the Scientific Research Council increasingly integrate AI into applied projects, while Sandals Corporate University's award-winning generative AI training underscores private-sector engagement. These outputs signal Jamaica's emergence as a contributor to AI research and innovation.

**Figure 11. Jamaica OECD AI Publications 2019-2024<sup>65</sup>**



<sup>60</sup>UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Mapping Research and Innovation in Jamaica (Paris: UNESCO, 2024), 23, <https://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/mapping-research-innovation-jamaica-2024.pdf>.

<sup>61</sup>Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Estimates of Expenditure 2025/26 (Kingston: GOJ, 2025), <https://www.mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2025-2026-Estimates-of-Expenditure.pdf>; Fayval Williams, Budget Debate Speech, March 11, 2025 (noting the J\$1.3 trillion expenditure budget).

<sup>62</sup>KPMG Jamaica, Budget Review 2025, March 11, 2025, 12, <https://sandbox.mnt/data/KPMGJamaica%20Budget%20Review%202025.pdf>.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, "AI Publications by Country: Jamaica," OECD.AI, accessed June 20, 2025, <https://oecd.ai/en/data?selectedArea=ai-research&selectedVisualization=16738&visualizationFiltersHash=eyJlbmRpdGllcyJ6b3VudHJ5IjpbblkpBTSJdfSwiZGF0ZSI6WylyMDE4IiwuMjAyNCJdfQ==>.

<sup>65</sup>OECD.AI Policy Observatory as of September 2024: <https://oecd.ai/en/data?selectedArea=ai-research&selectedVisualization=ai-publications-time-series-by-country>

## Ethical AI Research

Jamaican institutions are beginning to provide workshops on ethics education and governance. In November 2024, Mona Academy of Science and Technology at the UWI, Mona in collaboration with StarApple AI held an I.M.P.A.C.T. Workshop Series—“AI Foundations for Science, Ethics, Integrity and Innovation”—which blended technical AI training with modules on information ethics, research integrity, and social implications of technology<sup>66</sup>.

## AI Talent

There is no official registry of AI researchers in Jamaican universities or PROs, but a survey of computing and data-science faculty at UWI Mona, UTech, and NCU identified<sup>67</sup> approximately 22 individuals specializing in AI—equating to about 8 AI researchers per million inhabitants (population 2.84 M). Jamaica reports zero Kaggle Grandmasters<sup>68</sup>, yielding 0 grandmasters per million inhabitants.

## Innovation Output

While R&D figures for AI specifically are not readily available, GERD represented 0.06% of Jamaica’s GDP<sup>69</sup> in 2021. Despite growing interest in AI research, Jamaica has yet to record any AI-specific patent filings, as there is no publicly available data from the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office to support such claims. The Jamaica Patents and Designs Act (2020) does not explicitly address AI-generated inventions, though it permits patent applications for new technologies. This near absence of AI patenting indicates that innovation in Jamaica largely remains at the research stage, underscoring the need for greater efforts to bridge the gap between academic research and commercialization.

# EDUCATION

## Education Strategy

As of the 2023 school year, Jamaica’s enrolment landscape shows strong recovery from pandemic disruptions and marked gender differences. Net primary enrolment rebounded to 89.4 percent (90.1 percent for boys; 88.6 percent for girls), up from a 2021 low of 87.0 percent when schools reopened post-COVID. Lower-secondary gross enrolment climbed to 114.0 percent (117.0 percent boys; 111.0 percent girls), while upper-secondary reached 117.6 percent (113.4 percent boys; 122.0 percent girls), reflecting both over-age and under-age participation. Girls consistently outpace boys at higher levels, particularly in upper secondary, underscoring strong female retention and completion rates.<sup>70</sup>

Jamaica’s MOESYI has embarked on a transformative journey to integrate AI into the nation’s educational framework. This initiative aims to enhance personalized learning, streamline administrative tasks<sup>71</sup> and prepare students for a digitally driven future. A key component of this strategy is the pilot programme deploying AI tools in schools to assist teachers with grading and administrative duties. This allows educators to dedicate more time to interactive teaching and student engagement. Additionally, the forthcoming Jamaica Learning Assistant (JLA), an AI-powered tutoring platform, is set to offer customized learning experiences, adapting to individual student preferences through various interactive formats, including stories, quizzes, and dialogues.

To support these advancements, in April 2025 the MOESYI announced the establishment of Jamaica’s first state-of-the-art AI Laboratory at Utech opening September 1, 2025.<sup>72</sup> This facility—equipped with GPU-accelerated workstations, cloud-linked research clusters, and collaborative lab spaces—will enable students and teachers to develop AI-driven educational tools tailored to national needs. Concurrently, the Ministry is embedding AI literacy into teacher-training programs. The launch of the JLA is being conducted alongside a deployment of 15,000 laptops, 600 interactive smart boards, and 25,000 teacher-voucher subsidies to ensure broad access and skill development.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>66</sup>University of the West Indies, “I.M.P.A.C.T. Workshop Series: AI Foundations for Science, Ethics, Integrity, and Innovation,” Faculty of Science and Technology, University of the West Indies, accessed June 15, 2025, <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/fst/impact-workshop-series-ai-foundations-science-ethics-integrity-and-innovation>.

<sup>67</sup>Author’s compilation of AI-specialist faculty at UWI Mona, UTech, and NCU against World Bank population data (2.84 million), June 2025.

<sup>68</sup>Kaggle, “Grandmasters by Country,” accessed June 2025, <https://www.kaggle.com/grandmasters>.

<sup>69</sup>World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GB.XPD.RSDV.GD.ZS?locations=SA>

<sup>70</sup>Statistical Institute of Jamaica, “Primary and Secondary Enrolment Jamaica, 2018–2023,” powered by dataZoa.

<sup>71</sup>Jamaica Information Service, “AI Pilot in Several Schools to Mark Papers,” Jamaica Information Service, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://jis.gov.jm/ai-pilot-in-several-schools-to-mark-papers/>.

<sup>72</sup>Corrine Duffus, “First AI Lab to Be Established at UTech,” Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information, June 10 2025, <https://moey.gov.jm/first-ai-lab-to-be-established-at-utech/>.

<sup>73</sup>Jamaica Tests AI Tools to Aid Teachers,” Digital Watch Observatory, April 23 2025, <https://dig.watch/updates/jamaica-tests-ai-tools-to-aid-teachers>.

## Education Infrastructure

As of early 2025, approximately 68% of schools in Jamaica have broadband internet access, marking a significant advancement in the country's educational infrastructure. This progress is part of the government's broader efforts to enhance digital connectivity in education, which also includes the establishment of 260 ICT labs and 21 STEM labs in primary schools, the distribution of 1,500 tablets to early-childhood institutions, and the provision of 144 interactive smart boards across the education system.<sup>74</sup>

Despite these improvements, challenges remain. Even though 68% of schools are connected to the internet<sup>75</sup>, in some schools, broadband access is limited to administrative offices, restricting students' ability to utilize digital learning tools. To address this, the MOESYI is actively working to extend internet connectivity throughout entire school campuses, ensuring that both students and teachers can fully benefit from digital resources. These initiatives align with the goals outlined in the Jamaica Education Transformation Commission Report<sup>76</sup>, which emphasizes the need for equitable access to technology to prepare learners for a digitally driven future.

## Curriculum Content

In education, no law mandates AI integration into curricula however a draft AI policy was found<sup>77</sup>. The policy advocates for AI integration in secondary schools. An analysis of Tertiary programmes found only 1 dedicated AI degree—UTech's BSc in Applied AI; however, it was noted that while UWI, Mona campus does not currently offer a standalone bachelor's or master's degree titled "Artificial Intelligence", AI is embedded within existing computing programmes such as COMP3120 and COMP5210. NCU's Department of Computer and Information Sciences also does not offer degree programmes in AI but incorporates AI courses in a variety of applied degrees. No formal courses across all academic institutions blended technical and ethical aspects of AI. Data on STEM and ICT graduates, data-science/ML graduates, AI-related PhDs and post-doctorates are not publicly available. Jamaica has a global rank of 61 out of 109 countries in the Coursera Global Skills Report 2025. In the same report, Jamaica is ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in Latin America and ranked 83<sup>rd</sup> on its AI Maturity Index. Public access to AI education in Jamaica is being actively advanced through initiatives led by the Broadcasting Commission.

**Figure 12. Primary and Secondary School Enrolment (2018-2023)**

|                                                                                                                                                                                       | 2018         | 2019         | 2020         | 2021         | 2020         | 2023         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Primary</b>                                                                                                                                                                        |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>94.3</b>  | <b>90.4</b>  | <b>92.6</b>  | <b>87.0</b>  | <b>88.8</b>  | <b>89.4</b>  |
| <b>Male</b>                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>95.4</b>  | <b>91.0</b>  | <b>93.1</b>  | <b>93.8</b>  | <b>89.3</b>  | <b>90.1</b>  |
| <b>Female</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>93.1</b>  | <b>89.8</b>  | <b>92.1</b>  | <b>80.7</b>  | <b>88.2</b>  | <b>88.6</b>  |
| <b>Lower Secondary</b>                                                                                                                                                                |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>102.0</b> | <b>101.4</b> | <b>108.9</b> | <b>97.9</b>  | <b>111.9</b> | <b>114.0</b> |
| <b>Male</b>                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>101.5</b> | <b>101.4</b> | <b>109.1</b> | <b>101.0</b> | <b>113.7</b> | <b>117.0</b> |
| <b>Female</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>102.5</b> | <b>101.5</b> | <b>108.7</b> | <b>94.9</b>  | <b>110.0</b> | <b>111.0</b> |
| <b>Upper Secondary</b>                                                                                                                                                                |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>111.8</b> | <b>113.0</b> | <b>112.5</b> | <b>105.4</b> | <b>122.5</b> | <b>117.6</b> |
| <b>Male</b>                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>106.4</b> | <b>108.3</b> | <b>106.5</b> | <b>108.6</b> | <b>118.5</b> | <b>113.4</b> |
| <b>Female</b>                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>117.4</b> | <b>117.8</b> | <b>118.8</b> | <b>102.6</b> | <b>126.6</b> | <b>122.0</b> |
| Source: Ministry of Education, Note: School Year begins in September of one year and ends the July of the following year. The year shown represents the beginning of the school year. |              |              |              |              |              |              |
| Published by: Statistical Institute of Jamaica                                                                                                                                        |              |              |              |              |              |              |

<sup>74</sup>Jamaica Observer, "Almost 70 per Cent of Schools Have Internet Access," Jamaica Observer, February 14, 2025, <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/2025/02/14/almost-70-per-cent-schools-internet-access/>.

<sup>75</sup>Jamaica Observer, "Almost 70 per Cent of Schools Have Internet Access," Jamaica Observer, February 14, 2025, <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/2025/02/14/almost-70-per-cent-schools-internet-access/>.

<sup>76</sup>Jamaica Education Transformation Commission, The Reform of Education in Jamaica, 2021 (Kingston: Office of the Prime Minister, 2021), <https://opm.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/flipbook/jetc-reform-of-education-in-jamaica-2021-abridged/PDF.pdf>.

<sup>77</sup>Ministry of Education and Youth, Jamaica, Policy Guidelines on the Use of AI in Schools (Kingston: MoEY, 2024).

## Public Access to Education

Jamaica democratizes AI education through a range of free, publicly accessible initiatives. The AI4IA Conference panel—“Generative AI: Impact on Misinformation and Disinformation”—organized by the Broadcasting Commission with UNESCO and open to all online, spotlights AI’s societal challenges and launched the Caribbean AI Policy Roadmap.<sup>78</sup> Broadcasting Commission’s School Outreach Programme embeds AI literacy modules in its digital-skills training for youth at community centres.<sup>79</sup> The UWI, Mona, offers its I.M.P.A.C.T. Workshop Series: AI Foundations for Science, Ethics, Integrity and Innovation, blending technical and ethical AI training for professionals and students alike.<sup>80</sup> HEART/NSTA Trust is introducing a new Prompt Engineering course to equip Jamaicans with generative-AI tool proficiency.<sup>81</sup> While the Jamaica Library Service provides free computer access and digital-literacy workshops across its 109 branches, AI-specific modules have yet to be integrated into its community outreach programmes.<sup>82</sup> Together, these efforts—from formal courses to emerging public-sector pilots—are beginning to provide broad-based access to AI literacy and inclusion across Jamaican society.

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<sup>78</sup> Jamaica Information Service, “5th AI4IA Conference to Explore AI’s Impact on Inclusivity and Ethics,” *Our Today*, September 2024, <https://our.today/5th-ai4ia-conference-to-explore-ai-impact-on-inclusivity-and-ethics/>.

<sup>79</sup> Broadcasting Commission of Jamaica, “School Outreach Programme,” accessed June 2025, <https://broadcastingcommission.org/resources/speeches-presentations/item/212-journalism-and-ai>.

# ECONOMIC DIMENSION

## LABOUR MARKETS

Despite Jamaica's proactive stance on digital transformation and the establishment of a National AI Task Force, concrete metrics quantifying AI's economic and organizational footprint remain elusive. No official estimate exists of AI's contribution to Jamaica's GDP or its value in USD, as national accounts do not disaggregate AI-specific output. Similarly, there is no registry or published data indicating the number or share of companies classified as "AI companies" relative to all registered firms, nor is there a formal count of AI-focused startups or their proportion of Jamaican enterprises.<sup>83</sup> Anecdotal evidence points to private-sector pilots in business process outsourcing, finance, and agriculture, and government exploration of AI applications through task-force initiatives, yet quantitative measures of AI adoption rates in the public and private sectors are not systematically tracked.

R&D spending is reported only in aggregate form—GERD stands at 0.06 percent of GDP—without a breakdown for AI-specific public or private R&D.<sup>84</sup> Government budgets for grants, loans, or tax incentives targeting AI development are similarly unsegmented, making it impossible to gauge state-led stimulus efforts.<sup>85</sup> On the investment side, private-sector inflows into AI ventures lack centralized reporting, leaving assessments of capital formation and growth potential in the dark. This data vacuum undermines policymakers' ability to monitor AI's economic impact, craft targeted education and skills programmes, or design incentives to spur innovation. To rectify these gaps, Jamaica must institute routine collection of AI-specific indicators—covering economic contribution, company classification, startup activity, usage metrics, R&D spending, government incentives, and private investment—and make these data publicly available. Only with this evidence base can Jamaica chart an informed path toward an AI-enabled economy that is both inclusive and competitive.

Jamaica's education system has responded positively to the labour market's growing demand for AI talent, a trend further supported by data from the OECD AI Policy Observatory. According to LinkedIn analysis, which tracks the percentage of members with AI skills or roles such as machine learning engineers, there is a noticeable structural shift in Jamaica's workforce toward AI-related competencies.

## INTERMEDIATE CONSUMPTION

In terms of intermediate consumption, Jamaica's national accounts and OECD ICT-investment data do not disaggregate spending on AI services (e.g., software-as-a-service) as a share of SIC 62 intermediate consumption. While domestic production of enterprise software is limited, most AI-relevant platforms are imported, underscoring potential dependencies on foreign providers.<sup>86</sup>

## INVESTMENTS AND OUTPUT

The investment and output metrics reveal similar data gaps. Business-enterprise R&D in the computer-programming and consultancy sector (SIC 62) is subsumed within broader ministry budgets, with no per-capita or sectoral breakdown available. Sectoral GDP for SIC 62 is likewise not reported separately. The only concrete quantitative insight comes from trade data: high-technology exports constituted 1.381 percent of Jamaica's manufactured exports in 2022, rising to 2.647 percent in 2023.

<sup>80</sup>The University of the West Indies, Mona Faculty of Science & Technology, "I.M.P.A.C.T. Workshop Series: AI Foundations for Science, Ethics, Integrity and Innovation," September–November 2024, <https://www.mona.uwi.edu/fst/impact-workshop-series-ai-foundations-science-ethics-integrity-and-innovation>.

<sup>81</sup>Nationwide Radio Jamaica, "HEART/NSTA Trust to Introduce New Prompt Engineering Course," June 2025, <https://nationwideradiojm.com/heart-nsta-trust-to-introduce-new-prompt-engineering-course/>.

<sup>82</sup>Jamaica Library Service, "Services & Outreach Programmes," accessed June 2025, <https://www.jls.gov.jm>.

<sup>83</sup>OECD, "Research and Development Statistics," <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/research-and-development-statistics.html>

<sup>84</sup>UNESCO, "Mapping Research and Innovation in Jamaica," <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392322>.

<sup>85</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup>Government of Jamaica, Information and Communications Technology Policy (Kingston: Ministry of Science, Energy and Technology, March 2011), 15, [https://mset.gov.jm/sites/default/files/ICT%20Policy%20-%20Final%20Version\\_0.pdf](https://mset.gov.jm/sites/default/files/ICT%20Policy%20-%20Final%20Version_0.pdf).

## Government Investment

Government investment in AI remains nascent and largely subsumed within broader digital and R&D budgets. The 2025/26 national budget contains no dedicated AI line items, and intangibles—including R&D and AI—are expressly excluded from the Accelerated Capital Allowances regime, meaning AI projects receive no special tax incentives<sup>87</sup>.

Nonetheless, pilot AI initiatives have been funded through programmatic allocations and partnerships: the MOESYI has formalized a partnership with the Amber Group and HEART/NSTA Trust to establish Jamaica's first AI Lab at UTech—launching September 1, 2025<sup>88</sup>—and the MOHW secured an initial J\$30 million from the National Health Fund to seed its AI-TECH Council of Experts, tasked with integrating AI into healthcare delivery<sup>89</sup>. The government is also crafting a national AI workforce-readiness strategy, though financial details are yet to be disclosed. Meanwhile, the Universal Service Fund and eLearning Jamaica Company Limited have supported digital learning by investing J\$8.2 billion in tablets and laptops for schools—laying groundwork for AI literacy<sup>90</sup>.

The GOJ appears to be investing significantly in general technology infrastructure and startup ecosystems through the BIGEE (Boosting Innovation, Growth and Entrepreneurship Ecosystems): project, but specific AI-focused funding initiatives are not prominently featured in current government programmes. The focus seems to be on building foundational digital infrastructure and addressing AI-related challenges in governance rather than proactive AI development funding.

In sum, while AI-focused spending is emerging via targeted programmes, Jamaica lacks a comprehensive, stand-alone AI investment framework; establishing clear budget lines and incentives will be critical to scaling these efforts.

## Private Sector Investment

The private sector in Jamaica has increasingly embraced AI to enhance competitiveness and innovation. The Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ) partnered with Digitopia to introduce tailored AI maturity assessments, enabling companies to benchmark their digital capabilities and chart strategic transformation roadmaps. Digicel Business offers AI-driven cybersecurity services, illustrating early use of AI in risk management. The manufacturing community explored AI at the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association's Manufacture 360 conference, emphasizing robotics, automation, and data analytics as cornerstones of Industry 4.0 adoption. Commentary from the Jamaica Observer highlights a layered, strategic AI adoption path across tourism, finance, and business process outsourcing, moving from pilot projects to scaled implementations.

Despite growing interest, small and medium-sized enterprises face hurdles such as limited technical expertise, high costs, and data governance concerns that constrain deployment. To address these barriers, the National AI Task Force's policy recommendations advocate public–private partnerships, targeted grants, and tax incentives to accelerate private sector AI investment and capacity building. As Jamaican businesses advance beyond experimentation, sustained progress will depend on a supportive policy environment, robust talent pipelines, and collaborative industry ecosystems.

<sup>87</sup>Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Finance and the Public Service, Estimates of Expenditure 2025/26 (Kingston: GOJ, 2025), 12, <https://www.mof.gov.jm/wp-content/uploads/2025-2026-Estimates-of-Expenditure.pdf>.

<sup>88</sup>Corrine Duffus, "First AI Lab to Be Established at UTech," Ministry of Education, Skills, Youth and Information, June 10, 2025, <https://moey.gov.jm/first-ai-lab-to-be-established-at-utech/>.

<sup>89</sup>Ministry of Health & Wellness, "Health Minister Announces Council of Experts to Look at AI in Healthcare," press release, June 10, 2025, <https://www.moh.gov.jm/health-minister-announces-council-of-experts-to-look-at-ai-in-healthcare/>.

<sup>90</sup>Jamaica Information Service, "\$8.2 Billion Invested to Enhance Education Technology," Jamaica Information Service, March 26, 2025, <https://jis.gov.jm/8-2-billion-invested-to-enhance-education-technology/>.

# TECHNICAL AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DIMENSION

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY

### Infrastructure

Jamaica's ICT infrastructure is broadly accessible but challenged by affordability and power instability. Mobile-cellular subscriptions reached 115.1 per 100 inhabitants in 2023, yet fixed-broadband uptake remains low at 15.8 per 100 people, and active mobile-broadband subscriptions stand at 70.5 per 100<sup>91</sup> Despite an average international bandwidth of 126 000 Mbit/s and median fixed-broadband speeds of 60.78 Mbps,<sup>92</sup> internet penetration is 85 percent—85 percent among women versus 80 percent among men, a five-point gender gap—and urban access (87 percent) outpaces rural use (77 percent) by ten points.<sup>93</sup> Mobile data costs average USD 1.65 per GB, placing a financial strain on low-income households.<sup>94</sup>

Nearly universal 3G coverage (99.2 percent) and 97.7 percent electricity access<sup>95</sup> belie frequent outages: Jamaica Public Service Company Limited recorded over 136 552 interruption events in 2023, with customers experiencing an average of 2 403.3 minutes of downtime, underscoring grid vulnerabilities that disrupt digital services<sup>96</sup>

### Connectivity

As of early 2025, Jamaica's internet penetration stood at 83.4%, with approximately 2.37 million individuals online. This reflects a slight decline from the previous year's 85.1%, signaling the need for renewed attention to connectivity equity.<sup>97</sup> While digital access has improved overall, disparities persist, especially between urban and rural communities. In 2021, urban internet usage was approximately 87%, compared to 77% in rural areas.<sup>98</sup> Though updated rural-urban disaggregated data is unavailable for 2025, this divide remains a key policy concern.

Jamaica has made notable strides in expanding broadband access, supported by national projects like the "Connect JA" and "Community Wi-Fi Programme" initiatives under the Universal Service Fund. The latter initiative has enabled wider community access, especially in hard-to-reach areas. However, reliable high-speed internet is still unevenly distributed across the island. Service reliability remains a challenge, particularly during hurricanes or tropical storms, when power outages and damaged infrastructure frequently disrupt connectivity for extended periods. These vulnerabilities underscore the need for more resilient digital infrastructure across the island.

Affordability is another concern, especially for low-income households. The average cost of 1 GB of mobile data in Jamaica is approximately USD 1.65—among the lowest in the Caribbean—but still burdensome for families living in rural or economically challenged areas. For many, cost remains a barrier to consistent internet access and digital participation. Thus, Jamaica scores very poor on the Internet Society's market competitiveness for Internet customers and end users.<sup>99</sup>

As of 2025, Jamaica's two primary telecommunications providers, Cable and Wireless Jamaica and Digicel Jamaica, have made investments in mobile and broadband infrastructure, focusing on enhancing 4G services and expanding fiber-optic networks.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>91</sup> Active mobile broadband subscription, per 100 people, World Bank: <https://prosperitydata360.worldbank.org/en/indicator/ITU+DDD+1>

<sup>92</sup> Speedtest Global Index, "Fixed Broadband Speed Rankings – Jamaica," January 2024, <https://www.speedtest.net/global-index/jm>.

<sup>93</sup> "Fixed Broadband Internet Subscribers (per 100 People) – Jamaica," accessed June 19, 2025, <https://tradingeconomics.com/jamaica/fixed-broadband-internet-subscribers-per-100-people-wb-data.html>.

<sup>94</sup> Cable.co.uk, "Mobile Data Pricing: Caribbean 2023," September 2023, <https://www.cable.co.uk/mobilereport/mobile-data-pricing-caribbean-2023/>.

<sup>95</sup> World Bank, "Access to Electricity (% of Population) – Jamaica," World Development Indicators, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EG.ELC.ACCS.ZS>.

<sup>96</sup> Jamaica Public Service Company, "Over 136,000 JPS System Outages Recorded Last Year," Jamaica Gleaner, March 26, 2024, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20240326/over-136000-jps-system-outages-recorded-last-year>.

<sup>97</sup> International Telecommunication Union, "International Bandwidth Usage – Jamaica, 2023," ITU DataHub, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://datahub.itu.int/data/?e=JAM&i=242>.

<sup>98</sup> International Telecommunication Union, "Population Coverage by Mobile Network Technology – At Least 3G – Jamaica, 2023," ITU DataHub, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://datahub.itu.int/data/?e=JAM&i=100095>.

<sup>99</sup> Internet Society, "Country Report for Jamaica," Internet Society Pulse, accessed June 20, 2025, <https://pulse.internetsociety.org/en/reports/JM/>.

<sup>100</sup> Internet Society, 2024. "Infrastructure Upgrades to Enhance Jamaica's Internet Resilience, Reduce Reliance on Power." Pulse, May 29, 2024. <https://pulse.internetsociety.org/blog/infrastructure-upgrades-to-enhance-jamaicas-internet-resilience-reduce-reliance-on-power>.

Figure 13. Internet Penetration Percentages in Jamaica<sup>101</sup>

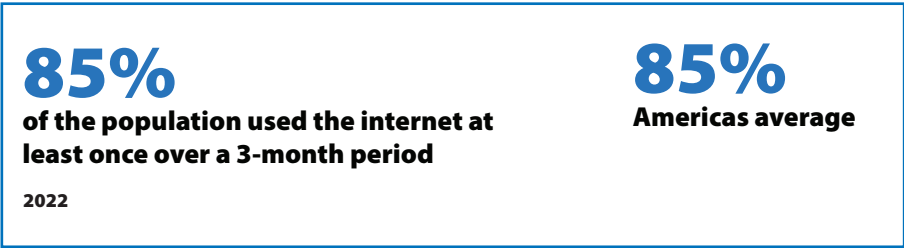
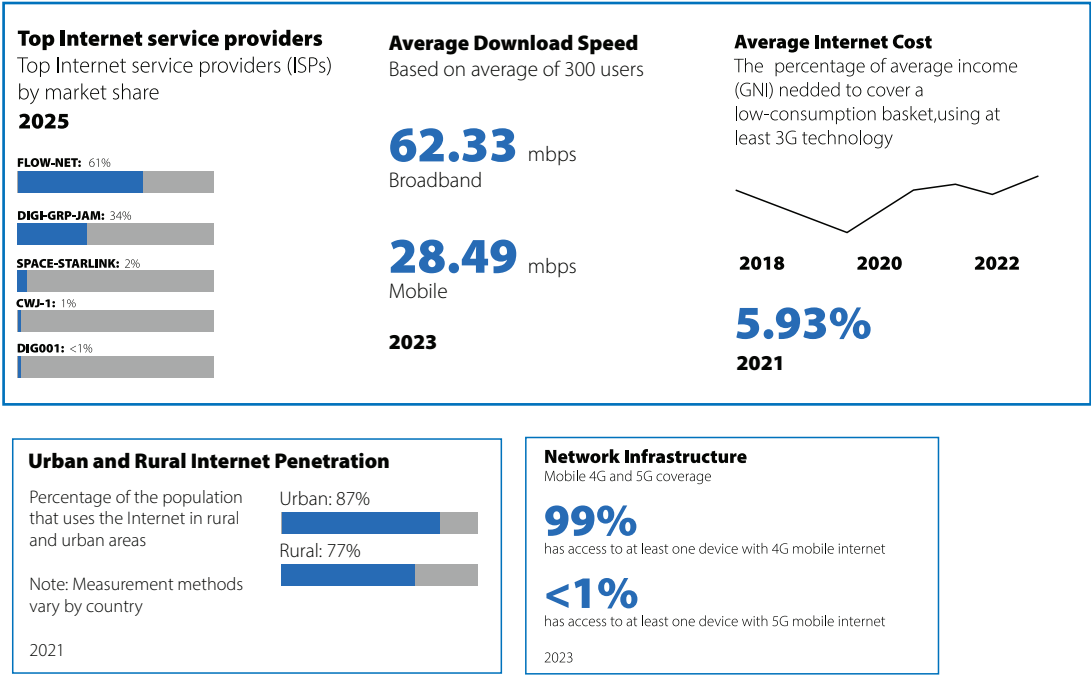


Figure 14. Jamaica Main Connectivity Metrics<sup>102</sup>



## APPLIED STANDARDS

Jamaica's Bureau of Standards have drafted a policy based on ISO/IEC 42001 for AI management systems and participates fully in ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7 on systems and software engineering.<sup>104</sup> Although Jamaica has a local IEEE Jamaica Section, we did not find any local members actively engaged with IEEE P7000 series ethical-AI groups.

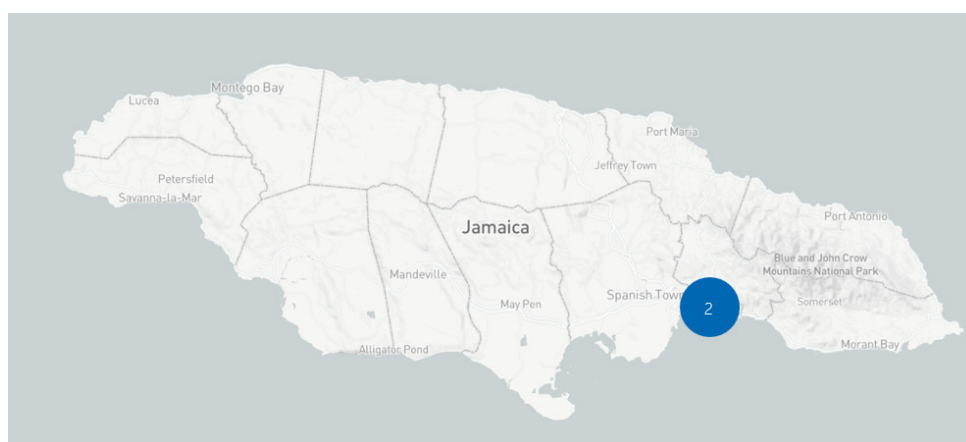
To build institutional readiness, Jamaica would benefit from participating in global standards-development processes and developing a national AI conformity framework that applies across sectors. Training and certification programmes for regulators, software engineers, and public procurement officers would help enforce these standards consistently across government and industry.

## COMPUTING CAPABILITIES

### Data Centres

The Jamaica's government Primary Data Centre in Kingston is Tier 2–compliant with 1,300 TB of storage, a private-cloud platform, a 31 km fibre network linking 700 entities, and a USD 600 million 2024 upgrade; it can run basic CPU-based AI tasks but lacks dedicated GPU/TPU clusters for large-scale training<sup>105</sup>. Jamaica's primary GPU-enabled facility is the UWI Mona campus SPARKS HPC cluster, offering 16 TFLOP CPU and 14 TFLOP GPU capacity for academic research. On the private side, Digicel's Caymanas Data Centre, recognized by the Uptime Institute, provides enterprise hosting and cloud services. These are the only Tier-rated, enterprise-scale centres publicly documented; no other major colocation or hyperscale campuses are registered.

**Figure 16. Datacentres capacity in Jamaica**<sup>106</sup>



### Supercomputers

As of June 2025, Jamaica has one publicly known supercomputer: the SPARKS system. Launched in 2016 at the UWI Mona campus, SPARKS<sup>107</sup> is a HPC and storage platform designed to enhance climate modelling and research capabilities in the Caribbean region. Funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) under the Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience,<sup>108</sup> SPARKS has significantly improved the speed and resolution of climate simulations, enabling more localized and timely data for decision-making in sectors such as agriculture, health, and urban planning. At this time, this supercomputer is only known to be used for academic research and is not open to the public.

While SPARKS is the primary supercomputing facility in Jamaica, the country is actively engaging in regional HPC initiatives. For instance, Jamaica is set to host the Caribbean and Latin American High Performance Computing Conference (CARLA 2025) in Kingston, aiming to foster collaboration and knowledge exchange in HPC across the region<sup>109</sup>. Currently, there are no additional publicly reported supercomputers in Jamaica.

<sup>104</sup> Jamaica Bureau of Standards, DJS ISO/IEC 42001:2023(E) (Kingston: BSJ, 2024), [https://www.bsj.org.jm/sites/default/files/Front%20matters%20for%20DJS%20ISO%2042001\\_updated.pdf](https://www.bsj.org.jm/sites/default/files/Front%20matters%20for%20DJS%20ISO%2042001_updated.pdf); ISO, "ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 7," ISO Member Body List, accessed June 2025, <https://www.iso.org>.

<sup>105</sup> eGov Jamaica Limited, "eGov Primary Data Center Specifications," accessed June 2025, Data Centre Services - eGov Jamaica Limited 107Datacentres capacity in JAMAICA: <https://www.datacentermap.com/jamaica/>

<sup>106</sup> Datacentres capacity in JAMAICA: <https://www.datacentermap.com/jamaica/>

<sup>107</sup> Jamaica Gleaner, "SPARKS Unveiled: Supercomputer Promises Fireworks for Climate Research in the Caribbean," Jamaica Gleaner, December 1, 2016, <https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20161201/sparks-unveiled-supercomputer-promises-fireworks-climate-research-caribbean>.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> RedCLARA, "CARLA 2025: Caribbean and Latin American High Performance Computing Conference," RedCLARA, <https://scalac.redclara.net>.

## Cloud Computing

Jamaica's cloud ecosystem operates on multiple levels:

**Global Cloud Providers:** The major international providers (AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud) serve the Jamaican market, though none have established local data centres in Jamaica. These services are accessed through regional infrastructure, typically from data centres in other Caribbean locations or North America.

**Local and Regional Players:** Companies like Cloud Carib provide regional Caribbean-focused cloud services, while local Information Technology companies like tTech limited, Astra Service Desk, Solutech Innovation, and Inova Solutions offer cloud implementation and support services.

**Service Integration:** Local companies often serve as implementation partners and managed service providers for global cloud platforms, helping Jamaican organizations migrate to and manage cloud infrastructure.

**Figure 17. Key Jamaica Cloud computing providers and providers of cloud computing services**

| Global Cloud Computing Providers | Regional Cloud Computing Providers | Local Cloud Services Providers   |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Amazon Web Services            | • Cloud Carib                      | • tTech Limited                  |
| • Microsoft Azure                | • Digicel Business                 | • Astra Service Desk Limited     |
| • Google Cloud Platform          | • Jamaica IslandNet                | • Inova Solutions                |
| • Oracle Cloud                   | • Flow Business                    | • Innovation Solutech Innovation |
| • IBM Cloud                      |                                    |                                  |

## STATISTICAL PERFORMANCE

**Figure 18. Jamaica and Latin America & Caribbean's score in the World Bank's Statistical Performance Indicators<sup>110</sup>**

| Metric              | Description                                                                                                                                                                                              | Jamaica Score | LAC Score |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Data use            | Captures whether data is used widely and frequently                                                                                                                                                      | 80            | 69.2      |
| Data services       | Captures breadth of services connecting data producers to consumers of data                                                                                                                              | 74            | 64.2      |
| Data products       | Captures accuracy, timeliness, frequency, comparability, and levels of disaggregation of statistical products                                                                                            | 76            | 62.4      |
| Data sources        | Captures whether data collection goes beyond typical censuses and surveys, including administrative and geospatial data, as well as data generated by private firms and citizens                         | 61            | 55        |
| Data infrastructure | Captures development of governance, legislation, and standards, in addition to the skills, partnerships, and necessary funding capabilities to deliver useful and widely used data products and services | 45            | 59.6      |
| SPI Overall Score   | Overall Score of all 5 Sub-scores                                                                                                                                                                        | 67.37         | 66.06     |

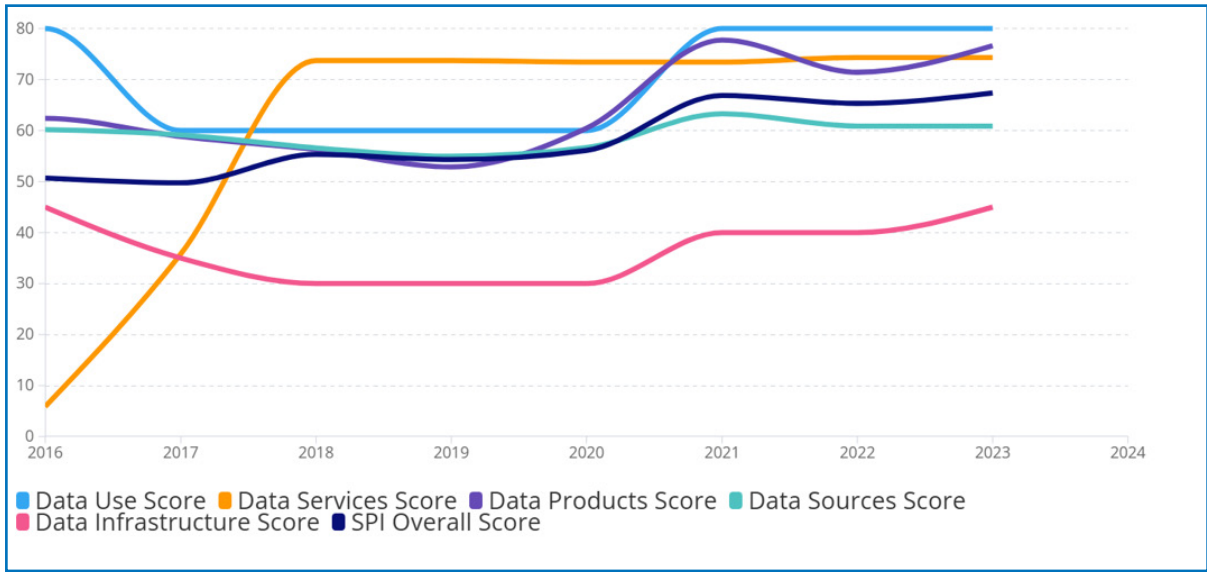
<sup>110</sup>Statistical Performance Indicators, World Bank, 2022: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/statistical-performance-indicators/explore-data>

Jamaica’s score across 4 of the 5 categories and overall average beats the LAC Average score on the Statistical Performance Index of LAC.

Apart from this index, equally important is modernizing Jamaica’s Open Data Portal to better support AI experimentation. Stakeholders called for machine-readable datasets, standardized metadata, public APIs, clear licensing frameworks, and enhanced visibility. These improvements—aligned with international best practices—would foster transparency, innovation, and civic engagement.

Participants also emphasized the need to curate interoperable, high-value datasets in sectors like health, agriculture, education, and justice. Creating Data Stewardship Units within key ministries could support ethical data management and responsible sharing across government and private actors.

**Figure 19. Yearly World Bank Statistical Performance Indicators (SPI) of Jamaica <sup>111</sup>**



<sup>111</sup>Statistical Performance Indicators, World Bank, 2024: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/statistical-performance-indicators/explore-data>

# DEVELOPING A NATIONAL AI MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ROADMAP

## OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The Jamaica AI Readiness Assessment was conducted using UNESCO's global methodology to evaluate the country's preparedness to develop, regulate, and responsibly implement AI technologies. A central component of the process was the design and execution of an inclusive, multisectoral stakeholder engagement strategy. This process ensured the participation of key voices from government, civil society, academia, youth, and the private sector across all five RAM dimensions. The key stakeholder for the Jamaica RAM was the OPM of Jamaica.

The Jamaica RAM Timeline began February 2025 and concluded in early June 2025.

### Initial Briefings and High-Level Meetings:

The process began with a formal engagement of the OPM in February 2025. This meeting established national ownership of the RAM process and aligned strategic priorities across sectors.

### Stakeholder Identification and Mapping:

A comprehensive Stakeholder Mapping Document was developed, identifying key actors across five RAM dimensions—legal, technical, economic, scientific/educational, and social/cultural. Over 95 unique stakeholders were identified and categorized by sector and relevance.

### Survey Instrument Development:

Five customized survey tools were created, one for each RAM dimension. These instruments were distributed digitally and completed by over 46 unique respondents.

### Consultation with the Steering Committee:

The Jamaica National AI Task Force performed the function of Steering Committee and was formally engaged to provide expert guidance, shape the consultation focus, and validate key findings from the assessment. Their participation helped ensure the process remained aligned with Jamaica's national AI ambitions.

### Consultation Sessions and Data Collection:

Between April 1– May 28, 2025, a total of 7 consultation sessions were held: General consultation sessions for each RAM dimension.

### Key Informant Interviews:

In-depth 1:1 interviews were conducted with 9 stakeholders (4 private sector leaders, 3 academic experts, and 2 government officials). These interviews added qualitative depth and institutional insights to complement survey and session data.

### Data Analysis and Diagnostic:

Based on data collected, the team produced a Jamaica RAM Diagnostic Report, identifying strengths, risks, and opportunities across dimensions. Findings were cross-referenced with national development priorities and global AI governance benchmarks.

### Validation Sessions:

Two stakeholder validation workshops were held in May 2025 to share preliminary findings and gather final feedback. Participants confirmed the credibility of the data, emphasized gaps, and validated key policy directions.

### Data Analysis and Synthesis:

Based on the information analysed from the Diagnostic report and the Validation Sessions, a Jamaica RAM Synthesis Report with Stakeholder Analysis and Recommended updates to the RAM Questionnaire were presented at the end of May 2025.

**Drafting and Review:**

Following validation, a Draft RAM Report was prepared and shared with both UNESCO Headquarters, the OPM and the National AI Task Force for review and recommendations.

**Final Report Production:**

The final Jamaica AI Readiness Assessment Report was produced and delivered in July 2025, integrating stakeholder feedback, validated findings, and recommendations. This document now serves as a blueprint for AI governance, investment, and policy implementation.

**Key Statistics:**

**Figure 20. Table Stakeholders Engaged by Activity**

Table Stakeholders Engaged: 196

| Activity                      | Stakeholders Engaged                                                                    |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General Consultation Sessions | 44 participants across five sessions                                                    |
| Validation Workshops          | 82 participants from 57 companies                                                       |
| JA AI Taskforce Meetings      | 15 participants                                                                         |
| Interview Sessions            | 9 interviews (4 Private sector leaders, 3 Academic experts, and 2 government officials) |
| Survey Respondents            | 46 unique responses across all RAM dimension surveys                                    |

**Participants by Industry Type:**

**Private Sector:** Varied representation across sectors.

**Academic Institutions:** Robust participation from UWI, UTech, NCU, Caribbean Maritime University, College of Agriculture, Science and Education and other educational entities.

**Government:** Comprehensive involvement across relevant ministries and agencies.

**Civil Society:** Diverse groups emphasizing digital rights and ethics.

**Youth Representatives:** Strong engagement from youth-focused tech initiatives.

Figure 21. Jamaica RAM Stakeholder by Industry

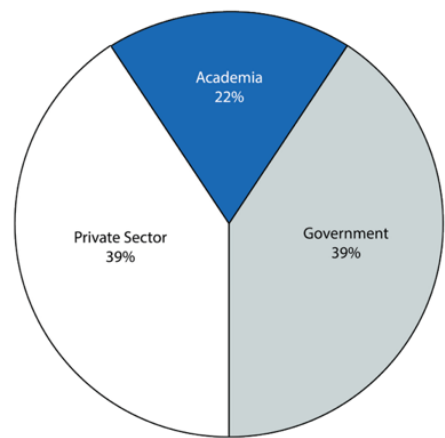
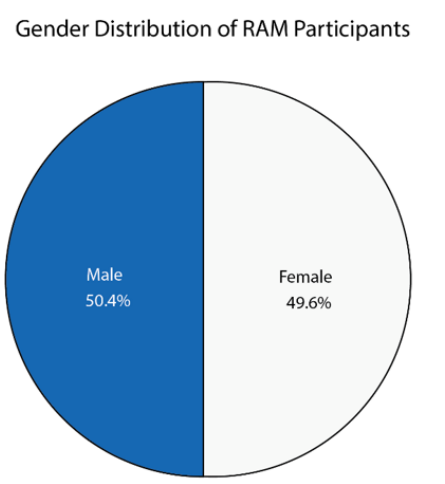


Figure 22. Jamaica RAM Process Stakeholder Engagement by Gender



## MAIN CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED IN THE CONSULTATIONS

Through the consultations held with ecosystem players in Jamaica and with consultations with the National AI Taskforce, several challenges and opportunities have been identified:

**Laws and regulations:**

**Challenges:** Jamaica’s current legal frameworks, including the DPA and Cybercrimes Act, do not fully address AI-specific risks, such as algorithmic bias, accountability in automated decision-making, and transparency. The absence of clear liability structures and oversight mechanisms makes it difficult to govern AI systems effectively. Additionally, there is no comprehensive AI legal framework that defines the rights and responsibilities surrounding AI development and deployment, leaving Jamaica vulnerable to legal and ethical challenges.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica can enhance its legal landscape by drafting a dedicated AI Bill that addresses AI-related risks, liability, and transparency, aligned with global best practices like UNESCO’s Recommendation on the Ethics of AI. Establishing a dedicated AI Regulatory Authority could centralize AI governance, enforce compliance, and provide ethical guidelines for both public and private sectors. The creation of sector-specific AI Ethics Guidelines could further tailor regulations to key industries, ensuring responsible AI development across various domains.

## Capacity building:

**Challenges:** Jamaica faces gaps in technical capacity, with limited access to HPC resources and fragmented data systems that hinder AI innovation. There is also a need for more specialized AI training, as current educational frameworks do not fully equip the workforce with the necessary skills to engage with AI effectively. Furthermore, there is a shortage of AI expertise outside of academic settings, which limits the broader application of AI across sectors.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica has the opportunity to invest in regional collaboration to establish shared AI infrastructure and create open-access research clusters. Upgrading the national Open Data Portal to support AI experimentation and enhancing data management frameworks would foster innovation and transparency. Furthermore, universities like UWI, UTech, and NCU can play a critical role in providing AI training programmes that focus on data governance, AI ethics, and technical skills, building a strong local workforce for the future.

## Responsible technologies and innovation:

**Challenges:** AI technologies often come with risks related to bias, lack of explainability, and misuse, particularly when not adequately regulated. The rapid growth of AI tools without proper oversight risks exacerbating social inequalities, distorting cultural values, and potentially displacing workers. Without a clear framework to ensure responsible development, Jamaica may face challenges in protecting its citizens from the negative impacts of AI, such as job displacement and algorithmic discrimination.

**Opportunities:** Despite these challenges, Jamaica has a unique opportunity to lead in ethical AI adoption by establishing clear regulatory frameworks and publicly communicating how AI is being used by the government. By promoting inclusive innovation and investing in AI literacy, the country can ensure transparency, build public trust, and protect vulnerable populations. Strategic governance and cross-sector collaboration will enable Jamaica to mitigate risks, preserve cultural identity, and harness AI's transformative potential for equitable and sustainable development.

## Institutional frameworks and governance:

**Challenges:** Jamaica faces challenges in establishing a cohesive institutional framework for AI governance. The current regulatory environment lacks clear structures for managing AI development and deployment across multiple sectors, which can lead to fragmented oversight and inconsistent enforcement. While there is a need for cross-sector collaboration, limited institutional bandwidth in key government agencies may slow progress. Additionally, the absence of a dedicated AI regulatory authority creates uncertainty about who holds responsibility for AI ethics, compliance, and national AI strategy implementation. Furthermore, aligning AI governance with regional and international frameworks remains complex, as the country must navigate various governance models to determine the most effective approach suited to its context.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica has the opportunity to build a robust institutional framework by establishing a National AI Oversight and Implementation Council, bringing together diverse stakeholders from government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. This council can oversee the development and execution of the national AI strategy and ensure ethical standards are embedded in all AI applications. Additionally, creating a dedicated AI Regulatory Authority or expanding the mandate of an existing regulatory entity would centralize AI governance and ensure consistent enforcement of regulations. Jamaica can also strengthen its institutional capacity through international collaborations with organizations such as UNESCO, WIPO, and the ITU, leveraging their expertise to guide AI development and ensure compliance with global best practices. This collaborative approach will enable Jamaica to create an adaptable and inclusive AI governance model that is context-specific and forward-looking.

## Inclusion and well-being:

**Challenges:** Jamaica faces persistent gender disparities in STEM fields, with women underrepresented in AI-related professions. Additionally, there is a significant gap in AI literacy, especially in rural communities, the public sector, and non-technical sectors. Without inclusive educational strategies, certain groups may be excluded from the benefits of AI, leading to further digital divides and reduced opportunities for engagement in the AI-driven economy.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica can create targeted programmes to increase female participation in AI and STEM, such as mentorship programmes, scholarships, and early exposure to AI for girls. Expanding AI literacy to rural areas and integrating AI into the national curriculum will ensure that more citizens can engage with AI technologies. Additionally, public campaigns led by organizations like the Broadcasting Commission can raise awareness about AI ethics and responsible usage, further fostering a culture of inclusion and digital equity.

## Investment ecosystem:

**Challenges:** The lack of a cohesive AI strategy and fragmented efforts in AI implementation may hinder Jamaica's ability to attract investments in AI-driven ventures. Limited access to resources for startups and small businesses in the technology space further compounds this issue, restricting the growth of a robust AI ecosystem. Additionally, there is a need for more supportive policies to encourage the commercialization of AI innovations, particularly in creative industries and other key sectors.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica has the potential to strengthen its AI investment ecosystem by creating targeted initiatives for startups and small businesses, such as AI toolkits for MSMEs and funding support from organizations like the Development Bank of Jamaica. Collaborating with global partners to secure resources and expand access to AI infrastructure will foster a more dynamic and diverse AI ecosystem. Additionally, promoting AI applications in sectors like agriculture, tourism, and public services presents an opportunity to drive inclusive growth and attract both local and international investments.

## Environmental Sustainability:

**Challenges:** Jamaica currently lacks a dedicated AI-for-environment policy or framework, leaving environmental impacts of AI implementations unassessed and unmanaged. Existing sustainability plans (Climate Change Policy Framework 2015; Vision 2030) omit AI-specific energy, carbon, land, and water considerations. Mandatory EIAs under NEPA do not cover AI systems or include social components. Without green-AI procurement standards or carbon-footprint labeling, public and private AI deployments risk exacerbating energy demand and emissions. The absence of environmental metrics in AI governance also impedes informed decision-making and fails to leverage AI tools for climate resilience.

**Opportunities:** Jamaica can integrate AI into its Climate Change Policy by mandating AI-specific EIAs and embedding SDG/ESG criteria into green-AI procurement. Establishing a Green AI Lab—powered by renewables and co-managed with CARICOM—would pilot low-carbon AI solutions for flood forecasting, sustainable agriculture, and coastal management. Incentivizing carbon-efficient cloud contracts and e-waste recycling schemes will align AI infrastructure with national climate goals. Finally, incorporating environmental-computing modules into tertiary and vocational AI curricula will build local expertise to drive AI-enabled sustainability innovations.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the challenges and opportunities identified eight critical conclusions have emerged. These conclusions, which reflect the collective insights gathered from all participating stakeholders, serve as essential building blocks for formulating comprehensive high-level recommendations that will assist Jamaica in strengthening development of a national strategy for data and AI:

### 1. Existing Legal Frameworks Provide a Solid Foundation

Jamaica's DPA and Cybercrimes Act lay a strong foundation for digital governance. Expanding these frameworks to address AI-specific risks like algorithmic bias and accountability will ensure clearer rights and responsibilities, enhancing responsible AI usage across sectors and ensuring long-term legal and ethical clarity.

### 2. Strengthening Institutional Frameworks for AI Governance

To govern AI effectively, Jamaica needs a cohesive institutional framework, including a National AI Oversight and Implementation Council. A dedicated AI Regulatory Authority or the expansion of the mandate of an existing regulatory entity would centralize governance, ensuring compliance and aligning with global AI standards, helping Jamaica navigate the complexities of AI regulation in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

### 3. Cross-Sector Collaboration is Critical

AI governance requires cross-sectoral collaboration, with input from government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. Jamaica's ability to convene diverse stakeholders will foster a more inclusive and transparent approach, ensuring AI's broad societal impacts are managed in alignment with national priorities and ethical guidelines.

#### **4. Integrating AI Ethics Across All Levels of Education**

AI literacy and ethics should be integrated into Jamaica's national curriculum, starting from the early childhood level. By embedding AI ethics early on, students will not only acquire technical proficiency but also an understanding of AI's societal implications, helping future generations navigate the complexities of AI responsibly and ethically.

#### **5. Promoting Gender Inclusion and Addressing Education Performance Gaps**

Promoting gender inclusion in AI is crucial, but AI can also help address the educational performance gap, especially for boys. By using AI-driven educational tools, Jamaica can personalize learning experiences, ensuring boys and girls benefit equally, improving outcomes, and fostering a more balanced, inclusive educational environment.

#### **6. Cultural and Data Sovereignty Protection is Essential**

Jamaica must safeguard its cultural heritage and national data sovereignty against exploitation by foreign AI systems. Developing policies like a Cultural Data Protection Framework and establishing a National Data Trust will protect local identity and ensure AI technologies respect Jamaican values while promoting ethical data use.

#### **7. AI Offers Substantial Economic Opportunities**

AI has the potential to enhance productivity in sectors like agriculture, tourism, and public services. Tailoring AI solutions to local needs can improve competitiveness, streamline operations, and drive inclusive economic growth, supporting Jamaica's broader development goals while creating opportunities for innovation and efficiency in key industries.

#### **8. Environmental Sustainability in AI Adoption is Crucial**

As AI adoption grows, Jamaica must consider its environmental impact by implementing a Green AI Procurement Framework. This would ensure that AI systems meet sustainability standards, reducing energy consumption and waste while supporting Jamaica's climate resilience goals, contributing to both economic growth and environmental protection.

# TOWARDS A NATIONAL AI STRATEGY: HIGH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Jamaica has conducted comprehensive stakeholder engagement through facilitated workshops, public consultation sessions, strategic partnerships, and specialized advisory committees. The implementation of the RAM has provided additional strategic intelligence for Jamaica's AI framework by identifying existing capabilities and highlighting priority areas requiring development.

This section presents focused recommendations for Jamaica spanning the following dimensions: regulatory and legal frameworks, institutional structures and governance mechanisms, human capital development, responsible technology deployment and innovation, social inclusion and citizen well-being, investment infrastructure and environmental sustainability.

By anchoring its initiatives in these foundational recommendations, Jamaica can continue to systematically incorporate AI into its national development strategy, tackling urgent priorities like strengthening laws and governance while establishing itself as a Caribbean pioneer in AI innovation and environmental stewardship. The subsequent sections outline sample policy and establish implementation schedules. The proposed framework spans an ambitious 5-year period from 2025 through 2030. While the timeframe seems condensed, Jamaica should begin now to adopt a flexible and streamlined methodology towards execution of these strategies to maximize artificial intelligence opportunities.

Figure 23. List of recommendations

| DIMENSION                               | NO. | RECOMMENDATION                                                                   | TIMELINE  | PRIORITY |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| Laws and Regulation                     | 1.1 | Expand existing laws to address AI-specific challenges                           | 2025-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 1.2 | Develop AI-specific legislation                                                  | 2025-2026 | High     |
|                                         | 1.3 | Create AI compliance and oversight mechanisms                                    | 2025-2030 | High     |
| Institutional Frameworks and Governance | 2.1 | Establish the national AI oversight and implementation council                   | 2025-2026 | High     |
|                                         | 2.2 | Strengthen regional collaboration through CARICOM                                | 2025-2028 | Medium   |
|                                         | 2.3 | Enhance data collection and sharing capabilities                                 | 2025-2028 | Medium   |
| Capacity Building                       | 3.1 | Integrate AI education into all levels of the national curricula                 | 2025-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 3.2 | Promote and equal access to STEM education                                       | 2025-2026 | High     |
|                                         | 3.3 | Expand community-based AI literacy and training                                  | 2025-2028 | High     |
| Responsible Technologies and Innovation | 4.1 | Strengthen innovation ecosystem and invest in open infrastructure                | 2025-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 4.2 | Enhance open data systems for transparency and innovation                        | 2025-2027 | Medium   |
|                                         | 4.3 | Invest in AI applied R&D ecosystem to increase AI output and patents             | 2025-2030 | High     |
| Inclusion and Well-being                | 5.1 | Address gender imbalance in STEM education                                       | 2025-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 5.2 | Incorporate AI research on Jamaican culture, language, and traditional knowledge | 2025-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 5.3 | Promote e-health and well-being initiatives through AI                           | 2025-2026 | High     |
| Investment Ecosystem                    | 6.1 | Pilot AI solutions in high-impact sectors                                        | 2024-2030 | High     |
|                                         | 6.2 | Develop accessible AI toolkits for SMEs                                          | 2025-2030 | Medium   |
|                                         | 6.3 | Integrate AI into national productivity and MSME strategies                      | 2025-2028 | Medium   |
|                                         | 6.4 | Establish AI-focused investment funds and partnerships                           | 2025-2028 | Medium   |
| Environmental Sustainability            | 7.1 | Develop and implement a green AI procurement and deployment framework            | 2025-2030 | Medium   |
|                                         | 7.2 | Promote AI solutions for climate action and sustainability                       | 2025-2028 | Medium   |

## LAWS AND REGULATION

The laws and regulations dimension offers key recommendations to address the specific regulatory needs of Jamaica's rapidly evolving AI ecosystem. As the country advances in AI, it is vital to develop clear, sector-specific legislation, establish regulatory sandboxes, and improve data access policies to ensure AI technologies are deployed securely, ethically, and in alignment with both national and global standards.

### EXPAND EXISTING LAWS TO ADDRESS AI-SPECIFIC CHALLENGES

Jamaica's existing legal frameworks, such as the DPA and Cybercrimes Act, form a solid foundation for digital governance. However, to address the emerging challenges associated with AI technologies, it is essential to amend these laws to account for issues like algorithmic bias, opacity in decision-making, and the accountability of machine-generated outcomes. Expanding these laws should include provisions that require AI systems to be auditable, ensuring that algorithms can be reviewed for fairness, transparency, and accuracy. Furthermore, provisions should be made to ensure that any harm caused by AI systems is addressed through clear liability structures. This would require the establishment of an AI-specific regulatory body or the expansion of existing agencies, such as the OIC, to oversee AI compliance. Additionally, the DPA should be updated to include safeguards against the misuse of personal data in AI applications. By building on the existing frameworks, Jamaica can create a comprehensive legal structure that not only addresses the specific risks posed by AI technologies but also ensures that AI is deployed ethically, with transparency and accountability to protect the rights of citizens and businesses.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

### DEVELOP AI-SPECIFIC LEGISLATION

Given the rapid growth and integration of AI technologies in various sectors, Jamaica must develop a comprehensive AI-specific legislative framework. This framework should provide clear guidelines for the development, deployment, and regulation of AI technologies to ensure their responsible and ethical use. The legislation should address key issues such as transparency, accountability, liability, and ethics in AI systems. AI systems, especially those deployed in critical areas such as healthcare, finance, and public administration, must be subject to stringent standards of transparency, meaning that decisions made by AI systems should be explainable to the public. Additionally, the law should include provisions that ensure accountability for AI-driven decisions, particularly when these decisions result in harm or violation of rights. Liability clauses should be included, specifying who is responsible when an AI system causes damage, whether it be the developer, user, or another party. The AI Bill should also create mechanisms for regular audits of AI systems to ensure compliance with ethical standards and prevent discrimination or bias. By drafting such legislation, Jamaica can ensure that its AI ecosystem develops within a secure, ethical, and transparent environment, fostering trust in AI technologies among the public and encouraging investment in AI innovation.

**Timeline:** 2025-2026

**Priority:** High

### CREATE AI COMPLIANCE AND OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS

For Jamaica to manage AI technologies effectively and ensure they are deployed in a responsible and ethical manner, it is crucial to establish robust compliance and oversight mechanisms. These mechanisms should include the creation of a dedicated AI regulatory body or the expansion of existing regulatory entities, such as the OIC, to include oversight for AI systems. This regulatory body would be responsible for monitoring the deployment of AI technologies, ensuring they comply with national laws, ethical standards, and international best practices. One key responsibility of the regulatory body would be to implement a framework for AI system audits, ensuring that AI algorithms are regularly reviewed for fairness, accuracy, and transparency. The regulatory body should also set guidelines for transparency in decision-making processes, mandating that AI systems provide clear, understandable explanations for their outcomes, particularly in critical areas like public services, finance, and healthcare. Additionally, the regulatory body should enforce accountability by establishing clear protocols for addressing any harm caused by AI systems, whether it be due to bias, inaccuracies, or operational failures. These oversight mechanisms would help to mitigate risks associated with AI, such as discrimination or the abuse of power, and would foster public confidence in the ethical deployment of AI technologies across Jamaica.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** High

## INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND GOVERNANCE

Jamaica's AI Readiness Assessment revealed effective AI governance requires coordinated multi-institutional approaches given AI's cross-sectoral impact. Stakeholders supported establishing a National AI Oversight and Implementation Council comprising government ministries, academic institutions (UWI, UTech, NCU), regulators, civil society, and private sector partners to oversee strategy implementation.

Regional coordination through CARICOM and Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) is essential for shared policies. International partnerships with UNESCO, WIPO, ITU, and OECD will benchmark progress, transforming Jamaica's AI governance from reactive to proactive.

### ESTABLISH THE NATIONAL AI OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION COUNCIL

Create a National AI Oversight and Implementation Council that includes key stakeholders from government ministries (Science, Energy, Technology, Education, Youth, Finance), academic institutions (UWI, UTech, NCU), regulators, civil society organizations, and private sector partners. This council will oversee the development and execution of Jamaica's national AI strategy, ensuring alignment with national priorities, ethical standards, and international best practices.

Ministries across the government must collaborate with the council to ensure AI use cases in various sectors—such as healthcare, education, agriculture, and public services—are effectively implemented and governed. The council will serve as the central body for coordinating AI policies, monitoring AI deployment, and fostering cross-sector collaboration to ensure responsible AI development. By engaging all relevant sectors, the council will promote holistic AI governance and ensure the successful application of AI solutions across the country, ensuring their ethical deployment and alignment with Jamaica's long-term digital goals.

**Timeline:** 2025-2026

**Priority:** High

### STRENGTHEN REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Leverage regional cooperation by engaging with CARICOM and the CTU to create shared AI governance policies and initiatives. This collaboration will enable Jamaica and its Caribbean neighbours to align AI strategies, tackle common challenges, and enhance the region's collective digital capacity. By working together, the Caribbean can address disparities in AI readiness, promote cross-border AI applications, and strengthen the region's influence in global AI conversations. Regional coordination will also facilitate the sharing of resources, data, and AI innovations, ensuring that Caribbean countries collectively benefit from AI advancements.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** Medium

### ENHANCE DATA COLLECTION AND SHARING CAPABILITIES

Jamaica's current data collection infrastructure faces significant challenges, particularly in the inconsistency and limited scope of key statistics across various sectors. The country's Open Data Portal has made strides in improving transparency and access to data, yet it remains underutilized, with gaps in the collection and sharing of high-quality, timely data. To address these shortcomings, there is a pressing need to enhance data collection capabilities through the implementation of AI-powered tools. These tools can improve data accuracy, facilitate real-time reporting, and enable predictive analytics that can drive better decision-making in both the public and private sectors. Furthermore, expanding the Open Data Portal to include more sectors and ensuring data is machine-readable and easily accessible will promote wider usage. Public education plays a crucial role in improving data literacy.

By integrating data education into the national curriculum and launching public awareness campaigns, citizens can be taught the importance of data, its uses, and how to engage with data-driven decision-making. Establishing a national data bank would provide a centralized, secure repository for critical data, enabling both governmental and non-governmental entities to access and share vital information. This initiative will not only improve data governance but also empower Jamaican citizens to participate in the digital economy more effectively.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** Medium

## CAPACITY BUILDING

Jamaica's AI Readiness Assessment highlights the urgent need to equip all citizens with the knowledge and skills to engage meaningfully with AI, extending beyond technical experts. To ensure AI serves as a tool for inclusive development, efforts must focus on integrating AI education into the national curriculum, promoting gender inclusion in STEM fields, and expanding community-based AI literacy programs. These actions will help bridge gaps in understanding, ensuring equitable participation in the digital society.

### INTEGRATE AI EDUCATION INTO ALL LEVELS OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULA

AI education in Jamaica should start from early childhood and continue through primary, secondary, and beyond, with a strong emphasis on both technical skills and applied ethical understanding. At the early childhood and primary levels, AI education can begin with simple concepts such as learning about ethics of AI especially in social media applications. These early lessons should be integrated into playful, engaging activities that encourage curiosity about technology and its uses, preparing young learners for more complex AI topics in the future.

As students progress through primary and secondary school, AI curricula should become more applied, with an increasing focus on ethics alongside technical education. By incorporating real-world examples, students can explore how AI is being used in sectors such as healthcare, transportation, and public services, learning about its potential to create both positive and negative societal impacts. Applied ethics should be woven into the curriculum, teaching students not only how AI works but also its societal implications, such as fairness, bias, transparency, and accountability. This will ensure students develop a balanced understanding of AI, preparing them to consider both its technical capabilities and ethical responsibilities.

In secondary and tertiary education, the curriculum should integrate more advanced AI topics, while continuing to stress the importance of ethical decision-making. Collaborative partnerships with universities and industry professionals can bring practical examples and case studies into the classroom, reinforcing the ethical challenges that arise in the real world. By embedding ethics throughout the AI learning process, Jamaica can cultivate a generation of responsible AI practitioners who are prepared to create technology that serves the public good.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

### PROMOTE EQUAL ACCESS TO STEM EDUCATION

Promoting gender inclusion and ensuring equal access to STEM education is vital for fostering a diverse and inclusive AI and tech workforce in Jamaica. Although women represent a significant portion of tertiary enrolment, gender disparities persist in STEM fields, particularly in AI and computing. Women account for only 35–40% of STEM graduates and a smaller percentage of AI professionals. To address these disparities, targeted strategies must be implemented to encourage more women and underrepresented groups to pursue careers in AI and technology. These strategies can include early exposure to STEM concepts for girls, mentorship programs led by women in technology, and providing scholarships for women pursuing AI and computing fields. Educational institutions, in partnership with organizations like HEART/NSTA Trust, should also create initiatives to offer tailored support to female students in STEM, ensuring they have the necessary resources to succeed. Additionally, gender-specific challenges, such as lack of confidence or access to role models, should be addressed through awareness campaigns and networking opportunities. By fostering an inclusive environment, Jamaica can tap into the full potential of its workforce and ensure that women play a prominent role in the development and deployment of AI technologies, contributing to a more equitable and innovative future.

**Timeline:** 2025-2026

**Priority:** High

## EXPAND COMMUNITY-BASED AI LITERACY AND TRAINING

AI literacy must extend beyond traditional classrooms to reach all sectors of society, particularly in rural communities and the public sector. The Broadcasting Commission has made strides through public campaigns and outreach on AI ethics, but these efforts should be scaled to ensure broader access and understanding. Libraries, mobile hubs, and school media clubs can serve as platforms for expanding AI education, bringing learning directly to communities. Additionally, modular vocational training in coding, algorithmic thinking, and ethical AI use should be offered by institutions like HEART/NSTA Trust, providing flexible, accessible education for youth and adults alike. These training programmes will help demystify AI technologies, such as ChatGPT and facial recognition, ensuring they are understandable and usable by the general public.

To further enhance awareness, public signage and simple AI-related explanations should be integrated into government systems, making AI concepts clearer and more accessible to citizens interacting with AI in public services. By expanding AI literacy through these accessible initiatives, Jamaica can empower all its citizens to engage meaningfully with AI, participate in the digital economy, and contribute to the responsible development and use of AI technologies. This will foster a more inclusive society where the benefits of AI are shared equitably across all communities.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** High

## RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION

Responsible technologies and innovation dimension outlines recommendations for driving innovation through strengthening this innovation ecosystem, enhancing the AI infrastructure, data management, and an investing in robust research ecosystem. The focus is on expanding technological capabilities while ensuring sustainability and ethical considerations guide the development and deployment of AI.

## STRENGTHEN INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM AND INVEST IN OPEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Building a robust and inclusive AI ecosystem in Jamaica requires addressing gaps in technical infrastructure and data systems while fostering an environment conducive to innovation. One key initiative is expanding access to the HPC cluster at the UWI for startups, public sector agencies, and independent researchers. By broadening access to this infrastructure, Jamaica can enable AI-driven innovation across sectors like agriculture, healthcare, and education, ensuring that local challenges are met with cutting-edge solutions. Additionally, investing in open-access research clusters, regional data processing hubs, and subsidized computing credits will further support emerging businesses and institutions. Collaborating with regional organizations such as CARICOM, the IDB, and the CDB will help create sustainable infrastructure, providing vital resources for AI development. These initiatives will reduce barriers to entry for innovators, encouraging collaboration across sectors and stimulating the growth of new AI technologies. By creating shared resources and expanding access to critical infrastructure, Jamaica can ensure that AI innovations are both locally relevant and globally competitive, driving inclusive economic growth and enhancing the country's digital transformation.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

## ENHANCE OPEN DATA SYSTEMS FOR TRANSPARENCY AND INNOVATION

Modernizing Jamaica's Open Data Portal is a crucial step in enhancing the country's AI ecosystem and ensuring that AI technologies are used responsibly and innovatively. By providing machine-readable datasets, standardized metadata, public APIs, and clear licensing frameworks, the Open Data Portal can support AI experimentation and foster greater transparency. These improvements will allow developers, researchers, and innovators to easily access high-quality data, promoting the creation of AI solutions that address local challenges in sectors such as healthcare, education, and justice. A modernized data portal will also encourage transparency in government operations and ensure that data is managed ethically, with clear guidelines for usage and sharing. Public access to high-value datasets can stimulate innovation and encourage the development of AI applications that improve the delivery of public services. Additionally, these open data systems will promote civic engagement by providing citizens with the information they need to understand AI's impact on society and hold both government and private entities accountable. By curating high-value, interoperable datasets and improving accessibility, Jamaica can strengthen its AI ecosystem, create new opportunities for AI innovation, and ensure that data is used in a way that benefits all citizens, particularly those in underserved communities.

**Timeline:** 2025-2027

**Priority:** Medium

## INVEST IN AI APPLIED RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT ECOSYSTEM

To foster long-term innovation and global competitiveness, Jamaica must prioritize investment in AI R&D. This includes supporting academic institutions, research centres, and private sector initiatives that focus on AI innovation, particularly in high-impact sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, and public services. Funding R&D will not only drive the creation of AI solutions tailored to Jamaica's unique challenges but also help boost the country's global presence in AI development. Additionally, investing in AI patents is crucial for protecting intellectual property and encouraging local inventors to develop new technologies. By increasing investment in AI patents, Jamaica can enhance its capacity to generate AI-driven products and solutions, further positioning itself as a leader in AI innovation.

Government policies should incentivize AI research, promote partnerships between universities and industry, and create frameworks that allow for the commercialization of AI inventions. This investment will contribute to a more robust AI ecosystem, increase Jamaica's competitive advantage in the global AI space, and foster an environment where AI breakthroughs are encouraged, protected, and brought to market.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

## INCLUSION AND WELL-BEING

The inclusion and well-being dimension offers recommendations to promote diversity, preserve cultural heritage, bridge digital gender gaps, and ensure AI technologies are developed ethically and sustainably. By integrating responsible AI principles, Jamaica can foster innovation that benefits all communities, ensuring positive, inclusive outcomes and advancing ethical AI development.

### ADDRESS GENDER IMBALANCE IN STEM EDUCATION

Implement targeted initiatives to increase female participation in STEM fields, particularly AI and technology. This can include scholarship programmes, mentorship opportunities, and after-school programmes specifically designed for girls and young women. Partnerships with organizations, universities, and industry leaders can create pathways for women to enter and thrive in AI-related fields. Additionally, schools and universities should be encouraged to promote female role models in STEM, highlighting the contributions of women in AI research, development, and innovation. Addressing this gender imbalance will ensure that women play an equal role in shaping the future of AI, fostering diversity and inclusion in Jamaica's technology ecosystem.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

## INCORPORATE AI RESEARCH ON JAMAICAN CULTURE, LANGUAGE, AND TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Invest in AI research focused on preserving and promoting Jamaica's cultural heritage, including language, traditional knowledge systems, and indigenous practices. AI technologies can be used to develop tools for translating and preserving Jamaican Patois, documenting oral traditions, and safeguarding indigenous knowledge that is at risk of being lost. Additionally, AI can be applied to digitize and curate traditional practices such as indigenous farming methods, healing techniques, and folklore, ensuring they are accessible for future generations.

By fostering research that integrates AI with cultural preservation, Jamaica can create innovative solutions that celebrate its unique cultural identity while advancing technology that respects local traditions. These efforts will contribute to building culturally sensitive AI systems and preserve Jamaica's cultural legacy in the digital age.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

## PROMOTE E-HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INITIATIVES THROUGH AI

Investing in AI-driven solutions for public health and well-being is crucial for Jamaica, particularly through eHealth initiatives. AI technologies can enhance remote healthcare services, mental health support, and elderly care, addressing the needs of underserved or rural communities. By utilizing AI to enable personalized treatments, early diagnoses, and improved patient outcomes, Jamaica can significantly improve healthcare delivery. Integrating AI into public health strategies will help reduce healthcare disparities, ensuring broader access to quality services and improving the overall health of citizens.

Additionally, AI can optimize healthcare systems, making them more efficient and responsive to the needs of the population. These initiatives will ensure that AI is leveraged as a tool for equitable, inclusive, and sustainable health development, supporting a healthier Jamaica where all citizens, regardless of location or background, can benefit from advancements in healthcare technology.

**Timeline:** 2025-2026

**Priority:** High

## INVESTMENT ECOSYSTEM

The investment ecosystem framework provides strategic guidance for nurturing AI startups and enhancing capital market infrastructure. This dimension emphasizes fostering deeper partnerships between funding entities and AI ventures while directing specialized investment resources toward rapid market expansion and technological advancement.

## PILOT AI SOLUTIONS IN HIGH-IMPACT SECTORS

Jamaica should prioritize the piloting of AI solutions in high-impact sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and public services to address productivity challenges and inefficiencies. AI applications can transform agriculture by using predictive analytics for crop management, pest control, and resource optimization, helping farmers increase yields and reduce losses. In the tourism sector, AI can offer personalized services, such as tailored recommendations for travellers and sentiment analysis to better understand customer preferences. AI can also enhance the public sector by deploying chatbots and virtual assistants to streamline administrative processes, reduce bureaucratic delays, and improve citizen engagement.

However, piloting AI in high-risk use cases, such as healthcare or law enforcement, should be avoided until updated AI laws and regulations are in place to ensure ethical deployment, transparency, and accountability. These AI innovations should be localized to meet the specific needs of Jamaican industries, ensuring they are culturally relevant and accessible to local businesses and communities. By piloting AI solutions in key sectors, Jamaica can boost efficiency, improve service delivery, and support sustainable economic development. These initiatives will help close productivity gaps, creating a more competitive, resilient economy while enhancing the quality of services and driving inclusive growth.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** High

## DEVELOP ACCESSIBLE AI TOOLKITS FOR SMES

To support Jamaica's SMEs, particularly in sectors like the creative industries and retail, accessible AI toolkits should be developed. Many SMEs in Jamaica face barriers to adopting AI due to a lack of resources, technical expertise, and the high cost of advanced technologies. By providing pre-trained AI models, low-code platforms, and digital assistants, Jamaica can empower these businesses to leverage AI for tasks such as inventory management, automated marketing, and customer service. These toolkits should be user-friendly, with easy-to-implement solutions tailored to the specific needs of SMEs, allowing them to automate processes, optimize operations, and enhance customer experiences without requiring deep technical knowledge. Additionally, offering training and support will ensure businesses can effectively adopt and scale these tools. Providing SMEs with affordable access to AI resources will enable them to become more competitive, driving innovation and efficiency. By fostering an AI-friendly environment for SMEs, Jamaica can unlock the full potential of its entrepreneurial ecosystem, enabling small businesses to thrive in the digital economy. This initiative will contribute to economic growth, job creation, and the development of a more inclusive, resilient economy.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** Medium

## INTEGRATE AI INTO NATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY AND MSME STRATEGIES

Jamaica should integrate AI into its National Productivity Strategy and policies for MSMEs to drive economic growth and enhance competitiveness. AI can be a powerful tool for improving productivity across various sectors, particularly in industries where Jamaica faces challenges such as agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing. The integration of AI into national strategies requires coordinated efforts from government ministries, including the Ministry of Industry, Investment, and Commerce, JAMPRO, and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, to ensure resources are effectively allocated and aligned with national development goals. These efforts can support MSMEs by providing incentives for AI adoption, such as tax breaks or grants for businesses implementing AI-driven solutions.

PPPs should also be fostered to provide funding and technical expertise, helping businesses access AI technologies and scale their operations. Additionally, integrating AI into the national strategy will ensure that Jamaica remains competitive in the global market, attracts investment, and aligns with international best practices. By prioritizing AI adoption for MSMEs, Jamaica can foster a more inclusive, productive, and sustainable economy, ensuring that the benefits of AI are shared across all sectors of society.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** Medium

## ESTABLISH AI-FOCUSED INVESTMENT FUNDS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Jamaica should establish AI-focused investment funds and strategic partnerships to support the research, development, and deployment of AI technologies across the country. By creating dedicated funding channels, Jamaica can incentivize innovation in AI while providing financial support for startups, research institutions, and businesses working on AI solutions that address local needs. These funds should target key sectors such as agriculture, healthcare, education, and tourism, enabling the development of AI-driven solutions tailored to Jamaica's unique challenges. Additionally, Jamaica should collaborate with international organizations, such as the ITU's AI for Good program and CARICOM, to access global funding opportunities and share expertise in AI development. These regional and international partnerships can provide technical support, training, and resources to scale AI projects in Jamaica.

Furthermore, ethical guidelines and risk assessments must be incorporated into AI projects to ensure responsible and equitable deployment. By establishing these investment funds and partnerships, Jamaica can create a thriving AI ecosystem, promote innovation, and attract both local and international investment. This will help drive inclusive economic growth, enhance competitiveness, and position Jamaica as a leader in AI innovation in the Caribbean and beyond.

**Timeline:** 2025-2030

**Priority:** Medium

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

As AI adoption expands in Jamaica, it is important to consider the environmental impact of increased digital infrastructure, including energy consumption and e-waste. The rapid growth of AI technologies, particularly in cloud computing, smart tools, and automation, can strain the country's resources if not managed sustainably. To ensure that Jamaica's AI growth aligns with its climate resilience goals and sustainable development, the following steps should be prioritized:

### DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A GREEN AI PROCUREMENT AND DEPLOYMENT FRAMEWORK

Jamaica should establish a Green AI Procurement and Deployment Framework that mandates environmental disclosures from AI system vendors. This framework should require vendors to provide information about the carbon impact of their products and promote energy-efficient models. Additionally, it should integrate sustainability standards into procurement guidelines, ensuring that AI infrastructure—such as data centres, cloud-based services, and smart tools—is environmentally responsible.

By adopting global best practices, such as the EU Green Public Procurement Guidelines and UNESCO's Ethical Impact Assessment Tool, Jamaica can ensure that its AI systems contribute to climate action goals while minimizing environmental harm. This framework will also guide the development of policies for evaluating the carbon footprint, lifecycle impacts, and resource demands of AI technologies, ensuring that future digital infrastructure investments align with Jamaica's climate resilience goals and Vision 2030.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** Medium

### PROMOTE AI SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Jamaica should explore and pilot AI solutions that directly contribute to climate action and sustainability. AI can be used to support efforts in flood prediction, sustainable agriculture, and smart urban planning. For example, AI can optimize irrigation systems for water conservation in agriculture or analyse weather patterns to predict floods and other natural disasters. By leveraging AI to address environmental challenges, Jamaica can not only advance its sustainability goals but also foster innovation in climate resilience.

Continued collaboration with global initiatives such as the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence and the ITU's AI for Good program can help scale these efforts, enabling Jamaica to develop AI solutions tailored to its specific environmental challenges while contributing to global climate action.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** Medium

### INTEGRATE ENVIRONMENTAL AI EDUCATION

To ensure long-term sustainability in AI development, Jamaica should integrate environmental responsibility into AI and technology education. This includes offering courses in green computing, sustainable AI design, and EIAs at universities and vocational institutions. Educating the next generation of AI professionals about the importance of sustainability will help foster a workforce capable of developing AI solutions that prioritize environmental responsibility.

Additionally, embedding sustainability principles into AI-focused curricula will ensure that future AI innovations are designed with climate goals in mind. By building capacity in sustainable AI development, Jamaica can position itself as a leader in environmentally conscious AI in the Caribbean and beyond.

**Timeline:** 2025-2028

**Priority:** Medium

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