MONITORING THE STATE OF STATISTICAL OPERATIONS IN LIGHT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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BACKGROUND

• Jamaica registered its first COVID-19 case in March, 2020
• Measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 included: travel restrictions, school closures, curfews, and restrictions on public gathering and entertainment events
• Operations at the NSO were significantly reduced but the office remained open
• Faced dilemma of suspending surveys at a time when access to information was critical as it the
IMPACT ON NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE

• Suspension/reduction in data collection activities
  • Quarterly Labour Force Survey was cancelled in April
  • Annual Survey of Living Conditions was cancelled
  • Monthly CPI was affected by the closure of some business or difficulty accessing establishments

• Reduction in budgetary support as resources transferred to COVID-19 mitigation measures
  • Population and Housing Census postponed from April 2021 to April 2022
MEASURES TO LIMIT IMPACT

• Work from home instituted among staff
  • Increased expenditure on IT and communication infrastructure
  • Internet connection issues
  • Develop systems to ensure that productivity was not negatively impacted

• Enhanced the coordination of efforts across Government, academia and the private sector to optimize research and production of data regarding the impact of COVID.

• Adjust operations to operate in the new normal with provision of PPEs to data collection staff
MEASURES TO LIMIT IMPACT

• Adjustment of data collection mode
  • First nationally representative telephone-survey to assess Knowledge, Attitudes and practices of Jamaicans regarding COVID-19
  • Technical support from the Statistics Division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).
  • Increased use of administrative data
• Meetings and training converted to the virtual platform