



Ministry of Industry, Commerce
Agriculture & Fisheries



THE NATIONAL CRAFT POLICY



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THE NATIONAL CRAFT POLICY

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

The Craft Industry is an important lever to generate new economic opportunities and employment while sustaining livelihoods and contributing to social cohesion.

POPULAR VERSION

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The Need for a National Craft Policy

The Government of Jamaica recognizes the economic significance of the craft industry as a crucial component of Jamaica's cultural and creative industries network, its significant potential for generating foreign exchange earnings, and its positive impact on livelihoods along an extensive global value chain.

A policy for the development of the craft industry therefore, allows the Government to establish clear guidelines for the development of authentic Jamaican craft that has been negatively impacted by low levels of investment and a lack resources to support real industry development. The goal is also to address the fragmented approach to the development of an effective support system for the industry that will ensure sustainability and consistent product quality.

Definition of Authentic Jamaican Craft

For the purpose of the policy, "Craft" is defined as "any traditional cultural expression, contemporary cultural expression, artisanal product, visual art, fine art, souvenir or craftsmanship-based design", which satisfies certain criteria, including:

- Made or assembled in Jamaica utilizing manual or mechanical techniques;
- Made or assembled by a Jamaican citizen or registered Jamaican company;
- Meets existing or new national quality standards.

An Integrated Approach to Craft Industry Development

The National Craft Policy was passed in the Houses of Parliament in November 2019 and seeks to address factors which are critical to the sustainability and growth of the craft industry in Jamaica, and that will enable successful enterprise in the area of craft. It also elaborates strategic objectives from the sourcing of raw materials to the packaging and branding of an 'Authentic Jamaican' brand to ensure that local craft producers and traditional artisans benefit from various marketing and commercial , e.g., in the Tourism Industry.

An integrated and inclusive approach will be taken to the development of the craft industry. It will be led by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries (MICAFA) with the support of other key Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). The Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC) is the lead agency of MICAFA with operational responsibility for enterprise development of the craft industry, and the other key Ministries directly involved are the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports.

Challenges in the Craft Industry

Some of the main issues that have impeded growth in Jamaica's craft industry are outlined below:

WEAKNESSES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low institutional support, sector regulation and governance• High cost and availability of raw material inputs and finishes• A general lack of innovation and product differentiation causes too much homogeneity in goods available for sale.• Limited archiving, preservation and revival of traditional craft skills• Craft producers lack adequate financial resources• Inconsistency in product and service quality• Insufficient use of intellectual property rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High levels of competition from imports and low cost of mass produced items• Socio-economic factors such as crime may have a negative impact on the success of the craft markets and other trading sites• Decline in demand for handmade craft items in favour of product offerings that are more capital intensive• Illicit reproduction of authentic pieces and product duplication• Generational disinterest among the young for craft

Major Policy Elements

The National Craft Policy is centred around six (6) broad thematic principles:

1. Input Supply

Jamaica has an abundance of natural materials to support an indigenous gift and craft industry, including bamboo, Sea Island cotton and other natural fibres, as well as agricultural materials, which can be used to obtain natural dyes and finishes. However, there is need to develop long-term sustainability within the craft product supply chain.

The Policy promotes development of initiatives to support sustainable harvesting and labelling of wood products, research and development of natural fibres and dyes and use of recyclable and reclaimable materials and packaging.

2. Production

In general, there is scope for diversification of products to offer a wider range of options to the prospective shopper for souvenirs, gifts and decorative items. The labour intensive nature of craft production limits supply capacity, and reduces the ability of artisans to produce consistent results, and in the required volumes to meet demand. Furthermore, product designs for Jamaican craft and their merchandising often lack functionality, customer/market awareness and sophistication.

To raise the industry profile and export potential, the policy emphasizes the need for greater focus on standards, supply capability, reliability, costing and pricing, branding, labelling and product innovation with the cross-cutting features of quality and consistency.

3. Wholesale

In general, there are low levels of wholesale supply capability within the indigenous craft sector to meet the needs of corporate buyers for multiples or repeat production. This is compounded by the high production/sales prices of authentic Jamaican craft products relative to imports.

Under the policy, effort will be made to build awareness of customer segmentation, perception of value, costing and pricing among producers and vendors. Additionally, effective mechanisms will be developed to encourage more intermediary wholesalers of authentic Jamaican products and develop new marketing channels, in particular, e-commerce.

4. Retail

There is scope for the expansion in the points of distribution of craft, to include greater sales through airport and cruise ship terminal stores, hotel gift shops, and various visitor attractions as well as through online portals. The policy therefore encourages a private-public sector collaborative approach to enhance craft visibility and distribution such as the organization of a regular calendar of shows, pop-up shops and craft fairs. Retailing of high-end traditional craft could also be positioned as part of the cultural experience - offered within cultural sites and attractions.

The 'Christmas in July Corporate Gift Showcase', initiated in 2015 and presented for the last three years in Kingston to corporate gift buyers, is an encouraging example of a successful collaborative effort between MICAF (JBDC), Ministry of Tourism, and the private sector through the Tourism Linkages Manufacturing Working Group.

5. Consumption

Purchases in the craft industry are generally motivated by a desire to partake in a cultural and artistic experience and/or to obtain a gift or distinctive reminder of travels to a specific destination. Consumption of craft therefore depends on adequate visibility, promotion of makers and products and ease of access to products by the prospective purchaser. Appropriate promotional programmes are therefore required on an ongoing basis at the local and international levels in order to sustain the demand for authentic Jamaican craft products, which is in part a key strategy in leveraging the power of 'Brand Jamaica'.

The policy emphasizes the creation of new markets, enhanced market access and penetration. Additionally, producers, vendors and retailers of craft need to be educated in the fundamentals of customer service, cross-cultural promotion and export promotion of authentic Jamaican products within the context of national interest.

6. Cross-Cutting Issues

The specific areas that affect various stages of the craft value chain and that the policy will seek to address are outlined below:

- Product expansion and positioning based on culture and heritage as well as archiving, preservation and revival of traditional craft skills;
- Viability, incentives and financing;
- Environmental sustainability;
- Institutional support, sector regulation and governance;
- Education, training, skills enhancement and capacity building;
- Increased linkages with agriculture, tourism, ICT, energy and other economic sectors;

- New product development and innovation in authentic Jamaican products; and
- Enforcement of intellectual property rights and consumer rights and protection.

Objectives and Strategies

The policy aims to streamline the craft industry by facilitating incremental improvements in quality, variety, value, sales, customer satisfaction and profits. The articulation of a craft policy and related implementation strategies provides a focal point for the engagement of inter-agency collaboration to support the development of individuals, associations and communities towards the sector's development while streamlining the allocation of human and financial resources.

Notably, the policy recommendations are closely linked to the main challenges identified for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) across Jamaica, namely informality, access to finance, market access, business support services, training and development, innovation and productivity, technical skills, promotion of entrepreneurship, as well as policy research and linkages.

The key strategic activities of the policy include:

- Establishment of a Craft Industry Council.
- Development of Artisan Villages in key tourist locations.
- Strengthening of business support organizations to improve innovation, design, development, quality, merchandising, customer service and business principles.
- Registration of producers as well as establishing a rating system.
- Refurbishment of Craft Markets.
- Conservation, archiving and promotion of traditional skills.
- Commercialization of new products linked to culture and heritage.

Key Ministries and Agencies involved in developing and supporting implementation of the craft policy framework

1. The Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture & Fisheries

Assigned portfolio responsibility for the development of the craft industry and therefore has responsibility for the implementation of the Craft Policy.

The Ministry has a number of key agencies within its portfolio, with mandates impacting craft sector development. These include the JBDC, the Jamaica Intellectual Property Office (JIPO), Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), the Bureau of Standards Jamaica, the National Compliance and Regulatory Authority, the Department of Cooperatives and Friendly Societies, the Rural Agricultural Development Authority, the Trade Board and the Consumer Affairs Commission.

2. The Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport (MCGES)

Through its culture agencies, the Institute of Jamaica (and its seven Divisions); the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission; the Jamaica National Heritage Trust; the National Library of Jamaica; the Jamaica National Commission for UNESCO; and the Creative Production and Training Centre, the Ministry will be a key partner in among other areas, implementing policy, providing advice on the cultural aspects of supporting traditional cultural expressions in authentic Jamaican craft and cultural tourism experiences and providing training opportunities to diverse stakeholders.

3. The Ministry of Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism through its agencies, the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF), Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) and the Tourism Product Development Company Limited (TPDCo), will provide support to the implementation of the National Craft Policy and Strategy of Jamaica, and closely collaborate with respect to Artisan Villages.

4. The Ministry of Transport and Mining

The Ministry of Transport and Mining provides the leadership and the enabling activities which deliver, in a safe and environmentally sustainable manner, an integrated and efficient transport system that serves the diverse needs of all users and a minerals sector that optimizes the value of the resources extracted and processed.

5. The Ministry of Local Government and Community Development

The Municipal Corporations are the local and community development secretariats for the Government and are responsible for the operation and management of several craft markets. They will be key partners in the transformation of craft markets into cultural shopping experiences through public-private partnerships.

6. The Urban Development Corporation

The UDC will be a key implementation partner with responsibility for advisory support on infrastructure development to support key policy actions.

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