# HATIONAL TRANSHEALTH STRATEGY

### ADVOCACY PLAN



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# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Assigned Female at Birth (AFAB): A person assigned female at birth who identifies as male. This person is referred as a transgender man, trans man for short.

Assigned Male at Birth (AMAB): A person assigned male at birth who identifies as female. This person is referred to as a transgender woman, trans man for short.

Gender: The socially defined rules and roles for men and women in a society. The attitudes, customs and values associated with gender are socially constructed; however, individuals develop their gender identities in two primary ways: through an innate sense of their own identity and through their life experiences and interactions with others. Dominant western society generally defines gender as a binary system—men and women—but many cultures define gender as more fluid and existing along a continuum.

Gender identity: How an individual identifies in terms of their gender. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others.

Gender Non-Conforming: A person who does not adhere to societal pressures to conform to gender norms and roles.

Genderqueer/Non-binary: a person who does not identify as man or woman or may embody both.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Gender variant: This is an umbrella term used to describe gender identity, expression, or behaviour that falls outside of culturally defined norms associated with a specific gender.

Trans: An umbrella term that refers to all the identities within the gender identity spectrum.

Transgender/trans: An umbrella term for people whose gender identity differ rom the sex they were assigned at birth and/or whose gender expression do not match society's expectations with regards to gender roles. The term may include identities such as: transsexual, genderqueer, gender-nonconforming, FTM, MTF, and gender variant. Transgender people may or may not choose to alter their bodies hormonally and/or surgically.

Transgender man/trans man: a person who identifies as a man but was classified as a female at birth.

Transgender woman/trans man: a person who identifies as a woman but was classified as male at birth.

TransWave Jamaica: A non-government, non-profit organization that advocates for the rights of the transgender community in Jamaica.

**UNAIDS**: The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. A joint venture by the United Nation's members in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

**UNFPA**: The United Nations Population Fund. An international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trans and Gender Non-Conforming National Health Strategy is a five-year rights-based plan that aims to provide advancement for the health and well-being of trans people. (It not only focuses on the recommendations for the health care system but also takes into consideration the ways in which the societal actors may contribute to providing a more wholistic and equitable approach to achieve services and opportunities for the transgender community.

The Strategy was designed through the collaboration of TransWave Jamaica, UNAIDS and UNFPA in conducting research, community engagement and strategy development, including a monitoring and evaluation framework. A steering committee comprised of civil society organizations, international cooperation partners and government authorities was also utilized in the development of this strategy.

It is important that the Strategy be adapted into policy and legislation to help alleviate the challenges faced by the community and to ensure that trans inclusivity is attained. As such, an Advocacy Plan is crucial. This Advocacy Plan will guide the advocacy implantation to realise the goals of the Strategy, such as gender identity recognition and decriminalizing sex between same-sex partners.

## Goal

To eliminate stigma and discrimination towards the trans community and to advance trans health and human rights.

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

To advocate for inclusive human rightsbased legislation and policies that reduce the social, educational, health and economic vulnerability of trans and gender nonconforming people by 2025.

### **OBJECTIVE 2**

To build and sustain the capacity of the trans community to support, advocate, develop and monitor issues affecting the trans community.

### **OBJECTIVE 3**

To train health providers to deliver differentiated, rights -based trans competent health services based on best practices and the life cycle needs of the trans community through people-centred primary, secondary, and tertiary health care.

#### **Objective 4**

To strengthen and reorient education, childcare and youth sector to create safe physical, emotional and intellectual environments for trans and gender nonconforming students to learn so that no child is left behind by 2025.

#### **Objective 5**

To strengthen and reorient Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation sector to create enabling environments for trans and gender non-conforming applicants and workers

### **Objective 6**

To strengthen and reorient Ministry of Housing to create enabling and safe housing environments and solutions for trans and gender non-conforming housing applicants and residents

#### **Objective 7**

to empower families and communities to fully support the trans and gender-nonconforming community by 2025.

#### **Objective 8**

To promote and empower full citizenship and gender expression among trans and gender nonconforming Jamaicans.

### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**



#### Government

The government should protect transgender people from discrimination by creating rightsbased programs, policies, legislative framework and transfriendly identity policies. They should invest in evidence-based and rights-based programs to achieve health equity for trans communities.



#### Transgender Community

The trans community should form allies and engage in activities that promote trans human rights and amplify trans voices. They should engage in activities promoting trans human rights in the language of health.



#### **Health Sector**

Health care providers should be trained to provide safe care to trans persons. The sector should promote trans cultural competency and build transfriendly health systems that rely on informed consent and use the principles of harm reduction.

#### Human Rights Advocates

Integrate trans issues into human rights agendas by consistently including trans community concerns and recognizing gender diversity. There should be active collaboration and partnership with the trans community and integrate trans issues into human rights agendas.

## BACKGROUND

In 2020, TransWave Jamaica produced a National Trans Health Strategy aimed at identifying the challenges being faced by the trans community. This included a needs assessment of lived experiences of the community. This multi sector national strategy can guide the health response and address the needs of the trans community.

Studies suggest that trans people have a high risk of non-communicable diseases based on social vulnerability, poor health seeking behaviours, risk taking and lifestyle factors such as poor diet and substance use, and the lack of access to trans competent health services.

Jamaica has very limited data on the health of the trans community. Most of the focus on the health needs of the trans community has generally been on transgender women as a key population for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, supported by international and donor agencies (UNAIDS, UNFPA, Global Fund, PEPFAR, WHO, among others). Local studies in 2011 and 2017 found an approximately 50% prevalence of HIV among transgender women, which is the highest prevalence of any population group. The Ministry of Health and Wellness' 876 Study in 2017 estimated that the size of trans population in Jamaica was in the range of 5000-6000 people. Survival sex work among trans people to access necessities such as food and shelter increases the risk for HIV and noncommunicable diseases, and places them at greater risk for violence.



The health needs assessment conducted by TransWave Jamaica involved sixty-eight (68) respondents ages 16-34 who identified as transgender, from urban and rural areas across Jamaica were surveyed, and 28 trans people ages 19-40 participated in focus groups. The trans community was found to be a youthful, diverse mix of people, many of whom had fled homes and families due to stigma and discrimination and moved from rural to urban areas for survival. Many had lower levels of tertiary education and high unemployment or were low wage earners. Most were in unstable relationships and unstable accommodation situations, almost one-third had some form of disability and one-third were living with HIV.

Additionally, there were also significant barriers to healthcare reported, in addition to challenges with housing and access to basic amenities based on their gender identity or gender expression. Most reported the barriers in the form of acts of stigma and discrimination perpetrated against them. Therefore, they generally reported a low uptake of health services, especially in the public sector, as most were unable to afford private healthcare. Unsurprisingly, they also reported high levels of stress coping with gender non-conformity in Jamaica and they highlighted the need to access trans-competent mental health support, currently unavailable.

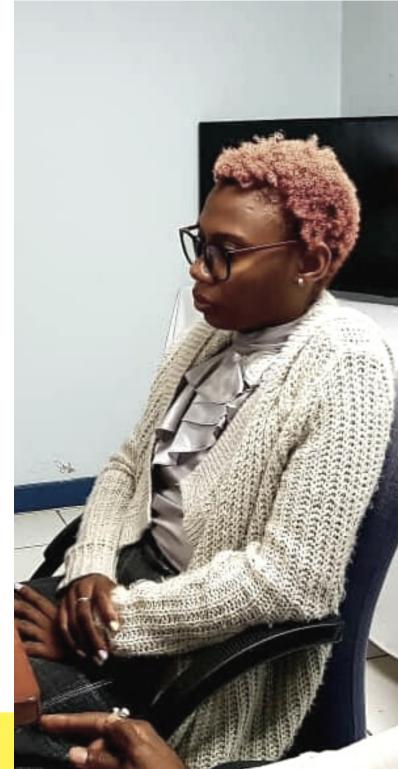
The situation analysis, despite acknowledging the benefit of national policies and plans, reveals the absence of a legal framework to protect the trans community's rights to accessible, affordable, high-quality healthcare, which jeopardizes universal health coverage for people of trans identity and experiences in Jamaica.



Strategic programmatic efforts and mainstream investments are therefore required for the increased wellbeing among the trans community (TransWave, 2020). This requires bold political and crosssector leadership and action to ensure that trans citizens have equal rights and access to justice in all spheres of their lives, throughout the lifecycle.

Jamaica has ratified several key human rights instruments, including the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 (CESCR). These international treaties place a duty on state actors to ensure the rights of all its citizens are protected, respected, and promoted in accordance with these principles.

The Health Strategy acknowledges that Jamaica has a robust rightsbased policy framework that can support its implementation. It includes Vision for Health 2030 - Ten-year Strategic Plan (2019-2030) and multi-sector Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), along with Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and patient-centred, rights-based health care, so that 'no one is left behind'. However, it also highlights the absence of a legal framework that protects the rights of trans citizens in Jamaica, or that recognizes diverse gender identities.





### ORGANIZATIONAL EXPERIENCE

TransWave Jamaica is the only Trans-led and focused organisation in Jamaica with over five (5) years of experience working with the Trans community including gender-non-conforming and non-binary people. The organisation is growing as a reputable non-governmental organisation (NGO) and has partnered with several local, regional and international development partners.

TransWave Jamaica has notable experience in advocacy and research. Through TransWave Jamaica's advocacy work, there has been engagements of key stakeholders in sensitisation sessions including private-sector agencies, civil society organisations, academic institutions, and the media. The organisation has advocated for the meaningful inclusion and engagement of Trans and gender-non-conforming persons in all facets of society, particularly as it relates to gender identity recognition, employment, housing, Trans-inclusive healthcare and wellbeing. In addition, TransWave Jamaica has participated in the review of policies and protocols, while also publishing policy briefs and research around lived realities of our community.

## TARGET GROUPS

The Trans Health Strategy Advocacy Plan targets key decision makers, the health care sector, trans and gender non-conforming communities in Jamaica, and the general public. According to the Ecological Framework coined by psychologist Bronfenbrenner (1979) it is important to take into consideration the individual, and their affiliations to people, organizations, and their community at large to be effective. The various entities are being targeted to ensure that the implementation of the strategy is well received. Below is a list of the target groups and the justifications for each group:



#### **POLICYMAKERS**

To impress upon policy makers the importance of the implementation of the strategy with a view of them creating policy and a legal framework to realize the goals of the Health Strategy.



HEALTHCARE WORKERS/PROVIDERS

To eliminate stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination within health care facilities.



TRANS COMMUNITY

To empower the trans and gender non-conforming communities in Jamaica to advocate for the implementation of the Transgender Health Strategy.



To eliminate stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination of the trans community by bringing awareness to trans issues.



To eliminate stereotypes, stigma, and discrimination of the trans community by bringing awareness to trans issues.



To promote healthy conversations and information dissemination of information relating to trans issues.



To impress upon policy makers the importance of the implementation of the strategy with a view of them creating policy and a legal framework to realize the goals of the Health Strategy.

### TARGET GROUPS KEY MESSAGES



- Trans persons should feel safer when accessing the care they need after the implementation of the Strategy.
- Elimination of discrimination faced by the trans community face and an avenue to report experiences of discrimination
- The Heath care facilities have the duty to ensure their interactions with trans persons are respectful.



- The Trans Health Strategy is important and there should be better policies developed to address trans issues.
- There should be promotion of the Trans Health Strategy



• Trans persons are deserving of respect and should be free from stigma and discrimination.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
Public Policy (Legislation, Policy, Advocacy, National, State, Local)			
• Based on its commitment to international law principles and as a signatory to international human rights treaties, Jamaica has a duty to protect trans people.	• State has not made any changes to the constitution/local laws to recognise LGB and trans people nor to protect their rights.	• The national health strategy for trans people highlights policy gaps and can be used to advocate for more inclusive public policies in challenging and monitoring human rights violations.	• There are a number of discriminatory laws:
There are several active and credible Human Rights organizations with expertise in monitoring human rights abuses.	• There are no anti-discrimination laws, regarding trans people.	<ul> <li>Yogyakarta Principles +10 strengthen international focus and country commitments to human rights abuses against trans citizens.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Section 3 of the Sexual Offences Act, only cisgender women can be victims of rape.</li> </ul>

The Jamaican trans community is supported by influential international allies in human rights and health.	• There are no laws with regards to Gender Recognition/Self identification.	<ul> <li>To legitimise gender recognition</li> </ul>	• Section 76, 77, 79 Offences Against the Person Act which criminalises male same-sex activity, thus discriminating against gay men and men who have sex with men.
• LGBT Civil Society Organisations are active and participating in health and governance processes	<ul> <li>Funding for HR work is scarce/litigation is costly</li> </ul>	• Sensitise lawmakers.	<ul> <li>Trans women are considered men in Jamaican law.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Vision 2030 focus on health and well-being targets all Jamaicans, including the trans community.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>No policy on trans people gender affirming treatment/surgery.</li> </ul>		<ul> <li>Unregulated trans people practitioners/treatment/surgical gender affirming interventions</li> </ul>
Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework and commitments to Health for All.			<ul> <li>Political inertia/lack of courage to advance rights of trans people in healthcare.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>National HIV Strategic Plan with focus on LGBT communities/enabling environments.</li> </ul>			

<ul> <li>Trans persons are able to change their names by deed poll.</li> </ul>			
<ul> <li>Policy makers typically show interest in meeting regarding trans issues.</li> </ul>			
Organiz	ational (Institution	al Environment an	d Ethos)
<ul> <li>Cross sector Steering Committee</li> <li>MOHW HIV programme commitment to improving health of trans people by:</li> <li>Partnering with LGBT civil society.</li> <li>Conducting Research/Creating enabling health environments by: Sensitising</li> <li>Training Healthcare workers to trans people needs</li> <li>Recognising self-identified gender in public health spaces</li> <li>Instructing HCWs to do so/Reducing stigma and discrimination (S&amp;D) in health provision and improving access and establishing systems to monitor and report violations.</li> <li>International and donor agency support/financial/technical/ethical</li> <li>Active civil society/CSO led country coordinating committee (CCM)</li> <li>CSO HIV services that focus on trans people</li> </ul>	of HIV prevention/testing/treatment care and support (TCS) services	<ul> <li>A national health strategy for trans people outlining institutional changes required to achieve equitable healthcare.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Local/global/conservative political/agendas and their effect on funding /international support.</li> </ul>

	<ul> <li>S&amp;D towards trans people pervasive in healthcare provision/access.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Include trans health in nursing and medical training curricula.</li> <li>To improve research/data and M&amp;E on trans people in health.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>CSO Reliance on donor support.</li> <li>Organisational reliance on government to make necessary policy changes to advance rights of trans people in healthcare.</li> </ul>
	CSO capacity to provide healthcare to trans people limited.	<ul> <li>Develop specific protocols to guide how services being offered to the trans community/meet global standards.</li> </ul>	
	HCW/Doctors/Nurses not trained in trans people healthcare.	<ul> <li>Agree policy position on gender affirming healthcare for trans people.</li> </ul>	
Trans persons should feel safer when accessing the care they need after the implementation of the Strategy. Elimination of discrimination faced by the trans community face and an avenue to report experiences of discrimination The Heath care facilities have the duty to ensure their interactions with trans persons are respectful.	• Lack of data on trans people.	<ul> <li>Re-shape health insurance coverage to include trans people.</li> </ul>	
	Access to health insurance.		

Community (Cultural Values and Norms)			
<ul> <li>LGBT community is visible and recognised as a community in Jamaica.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Small number of trans people leaders.</li> </ul>	• TransWave through national strategy can undertake community action and participation to support the implementation of the strategy.	• Transphobia
<ul> <li>Trans people have champions/leaders in the community.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Limited safe spaces for trans people to meet.</li> </ul>	• TransWave can partner with MOHW/CSO and private sector on addressing the needs of trans people.	Hostile cultural context
<ul> <li>Trans people community has established its own cultural, values and norms.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Reliance on international agencies to gain community acceptance.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Support/partnerships/advocacy with global community of trans people.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Fear and threat of violence for trans people/leaders.</li> </ul>
• TransWave (CSO) is developing to improve the lives of trans people in all spheres of life.			<ul> <li>Accusations of promoting 'foreign' agendas.</li> </ul>
• TransWave is contributing to reshaping the norms/values/ narrative in Jamaican society on trans people issues.			<ul> <li>LGB and trans people competing agendas/ideologies/for scarce resources/spaces.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Knowledge of being part of global community of trans people.</li> </ul>			

Below is an analysis of the Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that we predict may impact the implementation of the Trans Health Strategy.

### Interpersonal (Social networks, families and friends)

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• TransWave	Weak social support systems.	<ul> <li>National strategy can initiate education for families/friends /communities/religious organisation on trans people relationships/needs/supports</li> </ul>	• Transphobia
• A small TG&NB community that provide social and emotional support for each other.	<ul> <li>Hostility/Lack of acceptance toward trans family members members/friends/community members/co-workers</li> </ul>		• Hostile cultural context
			<ul> <li>Fear and threat of violence by family members if they support trans relatives/community members.</li> </ul>
			• Homelessness
			• Unemployment

Below is an analysis of the Strengths, weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that we predict may impact the implementation of the Trans Health Strategy.

### Individual (Knowledge, attitudes and behaviours, self-efficacy)

<ul> <li>Recognition and understanding of gender identity/self-acceptance and advocating for own rights and healthcare needs.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Confusion and lack understanding of gender – identity/sexual orientation.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>To gain greater acceptance of self.</li> </ul>	• Poor health seeking behaviour
	<ul> <li>Self-destructive health behaviours.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>To be able to live according to gender identity, free of interference.</li> </ul>	• Mental illness
	• Non-visibility of trans people.	<ul> <li>To access safe and regulated gender affirming healthcare if desired.</li> </ul>	• Substance abuse
			• Gender Dysphoria

### **ADVOCACY STRATEGY ACTIVITIES**

The Strategy will be implemented at various levels with varying activities:

### **OBJECTIVE 1**

To advocate for inclusive human rights-based legislation and policies that reduce the social, educational, health and economic vulnerability of trans and gender non-conforming people by 2025.

- 1. Presentation/briefing of Trans Health Strategy and needs assessment.
- Submit Trans Health Strategy to Parliament.
   Consult and dialogue with government/ international development partners/ Civil Society Organisations/Private sector and Academia on partnership/commitments and roles in strategy implementation.
- 4.Consult with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports, Ministry of Local Government/Ministry of Tourism/international development partners.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2**

To build and sustain the capacity of the trans community to support, advocate, develop and monitor issues affecting the trans community.

- 1.Host empowerment sessions with the trans community.
- 2. Development and dissemination of IEC material.
- 3.Consult with civil society organisations/allies on the implementation of the community component of the strategic plan.
- 4.Use of social media campaigns to educate the community.
- 5.Offer educational support to twenty (20) trans people. 20 trans persons will benefit from select HEART National Training Agency courses.

#### **OBJECTIVE 3**

To strengthen and reorient education, childcare and youth sector to create safe physical, emotional and intellectual environments for trans and gender nonconforming students to learn so that no child is left behind by 2025.

- 1.Presentation/Briefing of the Trans Health Strategy
- 2.Train healthcare providers to treat trans people with dignity and respect
- 3.Create an awareness campaign to promote inclusive healthcare for all

### **ADVOCACY STRATEGY ACTIVITIES**

The Strategy will be implemented at various levels with varying activities:

### **OBJECTIVE 4**

To strengthen and reorient education, childcare and youth sector to create safe physical, emotional and intellectual environments for trans and gender non-conforming students to learn so that no child is left behind by 2025.

- 1. Develop a guide to raising and educating trans children to be used by parents, schools and other stakeholders in child care.
- 2. Presentation/Briefing of the guide to the Ministry of Education and civil society organization partners.

#### **OBJECTIVE 5**

To strengthen and reorient Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation sector to create enabling environments for trans and gender non-conforming applicants and workers

- 1. Develop a job bank of entities that hire trans people.
- 2. Engage the Ministry in the development of a policy to promote the employment of trans people.
- 3.Public education campaign highlighting how low levels of employment of trans people and its effect on both trans people and the economy.

### **OBJECTIVE 6**

To strengthen and reorient Ministry of Housing to create enabling and safe housing environments and solutions for trans and gender non-conforming housing applicants and residents.

- 1.Create a list of realtors/renters/communities are trans friendly.
- 2.Advocate for a national emergency shelter for the trans community.
- 3.Public education campaign highlighting how homelessness affects the trans people and the wider society.

### **ADVOCACY STRATEGY ACTIVITIES**

The Strategy will be implemented at various levels with varying activities:

### **OBJECTIVE 7**

To empower families and communities to support to fully support trans community members by 2025

> Develop a database of trans friendly mental health providers, particularly experienced in counseling around gender dysphoria, and transitioning

> 2.Create a helpline where trans youth and families of trans children can access immediate psychological support and information

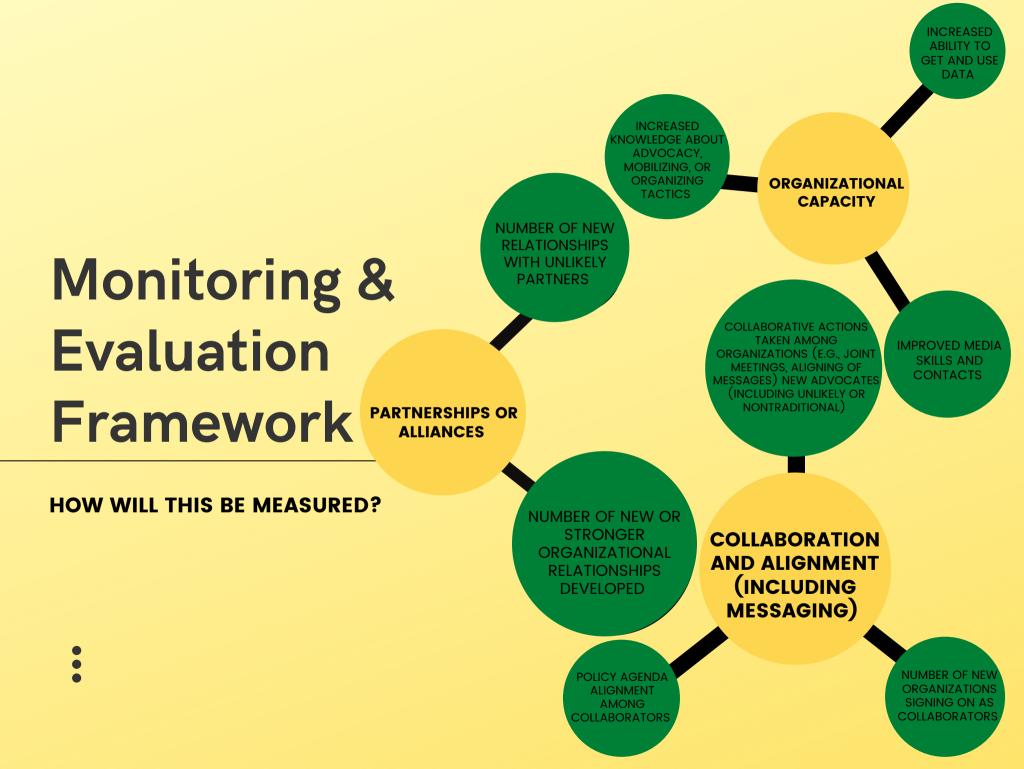
> 3.Partner with other civil society organization to conduct sensitization sessions about trans people among their community members

### **OBJECTIVE 8**

To promote and empower full citizenship and gender expression among trans and gender non-conforming Jamaicans.

1. Presentation/briefing of gender identity policy.

- 2.Provide financial affirmation support twenty (20) trans people in changing their names by deed poll.
- 3. Develop IEC about the deed poll process.
- 4.Social media Campaign around the deed poll process.



NUMBER OF NEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH UNLIKELY PARTNERS

ORGANIZATIONAL VISIBILITY OR RECOGNITION

#### COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS TAKEN AMONG ORGANIZATIONS (E.G., JOINT MEETINGS, ALIGNING OF MESSAGES) NEW ADVOCATES (INCLUDING UNLIKELY OR NONTRADITIONAL)

STRONGER ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS DEVELOPED

NUMBER OF NEW OR

NEW CHAMPIONS (INCLUDING POLICYMAKERS)

POLICY AGENDA ALIGNMENT AMONG COLLABORATORS

NUMBER OF NEW ORGANIZATIONS SIGNING ON AS COLLABORATORS

## Monitoring & Evaluation Framework

**HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?** 

- •
- •
- •

AUDIENCE MEMBERS SAYING ISSUE IS IMPORTANT TO THEM ATTITUDES OR BELIEFS WEBSITE ACTIVITY FOR PORTIONS OF NEBSITE ACTIVITY FO PORTIONS OF WEBSITE WEBSITE WITH WITH ADVOCACY-ADVOCACY-**Monitoring &** RELATED RELATED INFORMATION INFORMATION **Evaluation AWARENESS** Framework NUMBER OF FANS PERCENTAGE OF **HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED? GROUP MEMBERS AUDIENCE MEMBERS OR FOLLOWERS ON SOCIAL MEDIA** WITH KNOWLEDGE OF **AN ISSUE** PERCENTAGE OF **AUDIENCE MEMBERS** WITH FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ISSUE OR **INTEREST** 

PERCENTAGE OF

#### NUMBER OF **CITATIONS OF IDEAS IN POLICY** NUMBER OF ELECTED DELIBERATIONS/ **OFFICIALS WHO** PUBLICLY SUPPORT POLICIES THE ADVOCACY **Monitoring &** EFFORT **Evaluation** Framework NUMBER OF VOTE FOR OR AGAINST SPECIFIC POLITICAL LEGISLATION WILL **HOW WILL THIS BE MEASURED?** NUMBER OF ISSUE **MENTIONS IN** POLICYMAKER SPEECHES (OR DEBATES NUMBER AND PARTY **REPRESENTATION OF BILL SPONSORS AND COSPONSORS**





