

## **Richard Byles: Launch of Jamaica's Financial Inclusion Strategy**

Opening remarks by Mr Richard Byles, Governor of the Bank of Jamaica, at the launch of the National Financial Inclusion Strategy, Kingston, 24 February 2026.

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Today's launch of the second National Financial Inclusion Strategy initiative marks an important milestone.

When Bank of Jamaica launched the first Financial Inclusion campaign in 2019, we did so with a clear and compelling vision: that every Jamaican, regardless of their socio-economic background, income bracket, geographical location or circumstance, should have access to safe, affordable and convenient financial services. We remain resolutely committed to that vision.

Seven years later, we have made meaningful progress. More Jamaicans now have access to digital payment options. More small businesses are engaging with formal financial institutions. There is increased awareness of savings and credit options, as well as financial planning. Yet, despite these advances, a significant number of Jamaicans remain unbanked or entirely outside the formal financial system.

This reality compels us to continue to act with urgency.

Our goal is clear and unwavering: to make it easy for every Jamaican to be part of the formal banking system, with the ability to save securely, access credit responsibly, make and receive payments efficiently and build wealth confidently.

This next phase of our Financial Inclusion Campaign will focus on three critical pillars: access, education and trust.

In respect of access, the central bank will continue working with financial institutions, fintech partners, and community organizations to expand affordable products and digital channels that reach every parish and every age group.

In terms of education, financial literacy must move from being optional to being essential. Jamaicans must not only have access to services—they should understand how to use them wisely. We will strengthen public education efforts to provide Jamaicans with information on how to manage debt, increase savings, and invest for the future.

With regard to trust, we acknowledge that financial inclusion cannot become a reality without there being full confidence in the system. We remain committed to maintaining a stable, secure, and well-regulated financial system that protects consumers, promotes integrity and encourages participation.

As the central bank, we launch this second national financial inclusion initiative, recommitting ourselves to doing even more. We are committed to innovating boldly, collaborating deeply, and measuring success not just in statistics, but by tangible improvements in the lives of the Jamaican people.

Working together, we aim to ensure that no Jamaican is left outside the financial system. We do so, guided by the belief that financial inclusion is not a privilege, but a right!

Thank you.