



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019 - 2024

# UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

## Strengthening Caribbean Jurisprudence



# Table of Contents

2	<b>Message from the Court President</b>
3	<b>Message from the Registrar and Chief Marshal</b>
4	<b>Introduction</b>
11	<b>Mission of the Caribbean Court of Justice</b>
12	<b>Vision of the Caribbean Court of Justice</b>
13	<b>Values of the Caribbean Court of Justice</b>
14	<b>Strategic Issues</b>
	Strategic Issue 1    Communication
	Strategic Issue 2    Independence and Accountability
	Strategic Issue 3    High Performance Environment
	Strategic Issue 4    Equality, Fairness, Integrity in Promoting the Rule of Law
	Strategic Issue 5    Organizational Capacity for Caseload Growth
	Strategic Issue 6    Enhanced Regional Justice System Capacity and Performance

# List of Abbreviations

CAL	Caribbean Academy for Law
CAJO	Caribbean Association of Judicial Officers
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CAWJ	Caribbean Association of Women Judges
CCJ	Caribbean Court of Justice
CSME	Caribbean Single Market and Economy
JURIST	Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening
MAP	Management Action Plans
OHADAC	Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in the Caribbean
RJLSC	Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission
RTC	Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas
SPC	Strategic Planning Committee



# Message from the Court President



## Stakeholders of the Court,

I am pleased to present to you the Caribbean Court of Justice Strategic Plan for the period 2019 to 2024.

The theme for the new Plan reflects the Court's planned strategic and operational responses to the issues and expectations as expressed by you, our stakeholders. In this new Plan, the CCI's mandate has been revisited and is reflected in the new Mission and Vision statements that speak to our unwavering focus on the development of a Caribbean jurisprudence.

In charting the way forward, it became imperative that the Plan should provide a firm platform for fulfilling this commitment and that our efforts in this regard should be evidenced through every facet of the Court's performance.

"Unlocking Potential" is therefore relevant to

everything that inhibits excellence in the Court's performance. Our intention is to take bolder strides and to be more innovative; to better empower decision makers; to communicate more effectively both internally and with all our stakeholders; to work more meaningfully with partners and justice sector bodies in the region; to strengthen our bonds with the Caribbean people and to advance the rule of law.

A fundamental condition of the accomplishment of these goals is the energizing of staff and already, from the tremendous work and enthusiasm that has gone into the creation and development of the Plan, it is fair to say that we are off to a great start. All the Units of the Court have been fully engaged and are committed to fulfilling the goals of the Plan. Over the next five years, we therefore all look forward to *Providing accessible, fair and efficient justice for the people and states of the Caribbean Community.*



# Message from the Registrar and Chief Marshal



The body of work presented here is the result of a considerable amount of introspection, visioning and alignment in charting a way forward for the institution.

This Strategic Plan represents the united voice of the employees and stakeholders of the CCJ, who continue to enable improvement and a higher standard of court performance.

The concept of continuous improvement is presented in this Plan through various commitments to traditional and contemporary court management principles. These will ensure a purposeful evolution of the Court's operations through its employees, systems, processes, relationships and outcomes.

Our approach will demonstrate a results-

oriented focus on the administration of justice, against the backdrop of the CCJ's mission of "providing accessible, fair and efficient justice for the people and states of the Caribbean Community".

"Unlocking Potential" through the implementation of this Strategic Plan will also encourage a more streamlined monitoring and review of our systems. These systems must, at all times, be characterized by high levels of accountability, transparency, efficiency and fairness and they must be harnessed by the Court's governance principles.

There is much work to be done. The team of professionals, who are the employees of the Court, are willing and committed to the journey that lies ahead, embodying the Mission, Vision and Values through our performance.





# Introduction

Strategic planning and management may appear to be an odd concept for a judicial institution. While some embrace it as a necessary court planning and operations management function, others accept that strategic management should be left to those organizations that are far more agile, competitive in nature and financially driven.

On the contrary...

Strategic Planning and Management for courts is that which supports alignment between the court's operations and its institutional purpose. Moreso, strategic planning and management are indispensable pre-requirements for courts to meet (and exceed) their performance goals and to strive towards better performance management.

Court efficiencies and effectiveness are measured against Court Performance Standards. They are the basis for reporting functions, for budgetary justifications, resource allocation and, most importantly, to promote accountability and public trust and confidence.

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) is fresh off the heels of its first Strategic Plan period (2012 to 2017) with significant results. In forging ahead the Court will take strategic planning a step further, to solidify successes in strategy implementation and performance management.



## Introduction | Continued

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The CCI is therefore well-poised to focus its efforts against the backdrop of internal and external environmental needs and challenges. Its internal environment requires the Court to place greater focus on the development of its personnel and processes. The external environment requires better monitoring to enable appropriate responses to changes within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the wider international community.

A strong Caribbean Community depends upon a strong justice system, firm adherence to the rule of law and the progressive development of Caribbean jurisprudence. The CCI's Strategic Plan is in alignment with the CARICOM Community Strategic Plan and is, in part, a response to the Social Resilience Pillar of CARICOM which seeks to achieve the ultimate outcome of "improved quality of life for all in the Community. More directly, implementation of this Strategic Plan will contribute to the intermediate outcome of "increased citizens' security and justice for all" in the Community.

Important challenges must be addressed over the ensuing five years. Some of the 2012-2017 plan remains. Some of our strategic objectives will always be at the forefront, such as, for example, the enhancement of Access to Justice. There are also some objectives which fall into the

category of unfinished business. On the other hand, some of the plan is new – the result of our recent environmental scan and the issues that were identified by staff and stakeholders.

The resulting Strategic Plan responds to six important issues that emerged from a comprehensive feedback process.

These are:

- Communication
- Independence and Accountability
- High Performance Environment
- Equality, Fairness and Integrity in Promoting the Rule of Law
- Organizational Capacity for Caseload Growth, and,
- Enhanced Regional System Capacity and Performance

### Unlocking Potential

The two words, “unlocking potential” are completely instructive of the Court’s intent in response to its stakeholders’ needs.

This means, internally, creating the best conditions for the release of the full potential of the Court thereby enabling the Court to conduct its affairs with equality, fairness, efficiency and effectiveness. Externally, it means enhancing access, building trust and striving for excellence in regional justice system performance.

As shown below, the Court will embark on a strategic campaign to address the identified issues. These issues include 41 strategies, supporting 14 goals, all directly aimed at unlocking the potential of the Caribbean Court of Justice over the next five years.

### Our Process

For every organization crafting a strategic agenda, the process is as important, if not more than, as the plan itself.

Since the development of the first plan, significant efforts have been made to give every staff member a line of sight to the mission, vision, values and priorities of the Court. The aim of this is to allow everyone to answer positively the question, “What is my contribution?” Additionally, the CCJ has made serious efforts to promote judicial reform and improve the quality of regional judges through a variety of vehicles (CAJO, CAWJ, CAL, and JURIST), community engagement (OHADAC, country visits, and Law Moot Court Competition) and internal department initiatives. These measures played a significant part in energizing the first strategic plan. After 14 years of operation much work remains to be done and the Caribbean Court of Justice is committed to achieving maximum results with the resources at its disposal. The best way to ensure this is through systematic inquiry of the individuals and entities who serve or are associated with the Court, as well as examination of key performance metrics. A Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) was created for this purpose with membership including:







## Introduction | Continued

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- **The Honorable Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders**, Court President and SPC Chairman
- **Mrs. Jacqueline Graham**, Registrar and Chief Marshal
- **Mrs. Susan Campbell-Nicholas**, Human Resources Manager, RJLSC
- **Mr. Vishal Dube**, Information Systems Manager
- **Ms. Jacinth Smith**, Chief Librarian
- **Ms. Heather Dyer-Thompson**, Case Management Officer
- **Ms. Reneiasha Garcia**, Accountant
- **Ms. Seanna Annette**, Senior Public Education and Communications Officer and SPC Coordinator

The Court's thrust included a pro-active approach to the evaluation of the progress made and the creation of a new plan that capitalizes on successes while addressing challenges remaining from the previous planning period. Also, a central task was to ensure the harmonization of internal goals, strategies and objectives with external stakeholder expectations and the CARICOM strategic plan. The emphasis of the Court's leadership on strategic management bodes well for its future effectiveness.

This plan is the result of substantial inquiry conducted by the SPC in four areas:

- **Regional trends,**
- **Internal staff perceptions and expectations,**
- **Court-user perceptions and expectations, and,**
- **Regional stakeholder perceptions and expectations.**

As with the previous plan, the Court needed to answer the question, "How well are we doing?". This time, it was also necessary to answer the questions, "How well did we do?" and "What are some of the things that we would like to see happen?" in accomplishing the strategic agenda just completed.

Issue Identification and Strategy Evaluation Surveys were completed by regional stakeholder entities and individuals including:

- **Regional Judicial and Legal Services Commission**
- **CCJ Trust Fund**
- **Heads of Judiciaries, Registrars and Court Administrators**



## Introduction | Continued

- **CARICOM**
- **Bar Associations**
- **Law Schools and Faculties of Law**

Interviews were conducted with individual members of each organization to add depth to survey responses.

As a matter of course, the information obtained was compared to similar data from the 2012 planning inquiry process. This allowed the Strategic Planning Committee to see clearly where progress had been made and what work was still needed to be done.

The totality of this feedback was analyzed by the planning team to identify issues, priorities and key areas of performance requiring strategic attention. After numerous reviews and discussions, the Strategic Planning Committee was able to update the Court's Mission, Vision and Values and thereafter create a set of goals and strategies for aligning operations and moving the Court toward strengthening Caribbean jurisprudence over the next five years.

## The CCJ Path to Strategic Management

The CCJ has always seen its Strategic Plan as but one component of a larger strategic management process, becoming a very practical decision-making tool at every level of the organization. The Plan serves to give every employee a “line of sight” from their work to the purpose of the organization. It allows them to identify their particular contribution to the accomplishment of the organization's mission and vision. It causes resources to be concentrated on activities that add value. The chart below illustrates this practical connection.



# Introduction | Continued



Upon completion of the Strategic Plan, staff in every Unit of the Court will be able to connect their work to it through an operational Management Action Planning process including a skills gap analysis and communication planning.

This body of work was made possible with the funding assistance of The Judicial Reform and Institutional Strengthening (JURIST) Project, a judicial reform initiative funded under an arrangement with the Government of Canada.



# Mission of the Caribbean Court of Justice

## Providing accessible, fair and efficient justice for the people and states of the Caribbean Community

The CCJ is “two courts in one”, reflecting both the appellate and original jurisdictions in which the Court functions. Ever conscious of its dual roles, as an apex court and as the exclusive tribunal interpreting and applying the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, the CCJ is obliged to be an exemplar for other courts in the region.

The Court’s mission statement is a succinct reminder to the states in the region, all the Court’s customers, the judicial and staff complement and the general public of what we commit ourselves to do on a daily basis.





# Vision of the Caribbean Court of Justice

## To be a model of judicial excellence

The CCJ is determined to build a model of judicial excellence providing a fair and responsive system of justice while protecting rights and liberties, upholding and interpreting the law, and ensuring access to court services that is cost-effective, timely and sensitive to the needs of the Caribbean people.

This includes an effectively managed judicial system that unlocks the potential of its human resources and fully utilizes technological advancements and communication strategies to guarantee excellence.



# Values of the Caribbean Court of Justice



# Strategic Issues

This strategic plan was developed with the following overarching themes:

- Access to Justice
- Organizational Alignment, Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Trust and Confidence
- Gender Equality

These overarching themes serve as the umbrella under which the six Strategic Issue Areas were identified and defined.

## Mission | Vision | Values

Overarching Themes:

Access to Justice, Trust and Confidence, Organizational Alignment, Efficiency and Effectiveness, Gender Equality

Strategic Issue



Communication

Strategic Issue



Independence  
and Accountability

Strategic Issue



High Performance  
Environment

Strategic Issue



Equality, Fairness,  
Integrity and Promoting  
the Rule of Law

Strategic Issue



Organizational  
Capacity for  
Caseload Growth

Strategic Issue



Enhanced Regional  
Justice System Capacity  
& Performance



# STRATEGIC ISSUE 1

## Communication

Courts must never underestimate the power of effective communication.





# Strategic Issue 1    Communication

Outcome – Improved communication both internally and with all stakeholders in the regional and global communities

This plan recognizes that communication is interwoven into each facet of daily court operations; from the way we relate with courts in the region, to our physical and electronic interactions with the public, and even those interactions amongst ourselves.

In order for communication to be meaningful and effective, it is critical that the CCJ continues to develop an awareness and an understanding of the needs and expectations of its employees, customers, stakeholders and the general public. This requires systematic development and appropriate deployment of the CCJ's entire communications machinery. Our stakeholder engagement has also strongly suggested that Court communication is a necessary vehicle to support region-wide efforts on judicial transformation.

The CCJ's communication strategy will therefore be aimed at securing greater regional understanding of and support for the role and function of the CCJ, enhancing relationships with regional judiciaries, and promoting a more engaged CCJ employee to champion these causes.

**Goal 1.1 The CCJ will enhance its Communications capacity.**

**Strategy 1.1.1** Strengthen the Court's communications resources, policies, systems, standards and practices.

**Strategy 1.1.2** Ensure a well-informed staff who are ambassadors in support of the Court's communications programme.

**Strategy 1.1.3** Review the Court's communications mechanisms to gauge and analyze stakeholder engagement and make the appropriate adjustments.



## Strategic Issue 1 Communication | Continued



**Goal 1.2 - The CCJ will continue to inform and engage the regional and global community about its role and its work to facilitate greater access to the Court and promote public trust and confidence.**

**Strategy 1.2.1** Develop a communications programme that will increase the public's knowledge and understanding about the Court, its purpose, its work, processes and systems.

**Strategy 1.2.2** Strengthen and support initiatives that inform the public about the Court's role in interpreting and applying the RTC.

**Strategy 1.2.3** Develop a process for continuously soliciting feedback and listening to the needs and expectations of the CCJ stakeholders.

**Goal 1.3 – The CCJ shall re-energize its internal communication machinery.**

**Strategy 1.3.1** Develop tools and solutions that will ensure a more informed and engaged workforce.

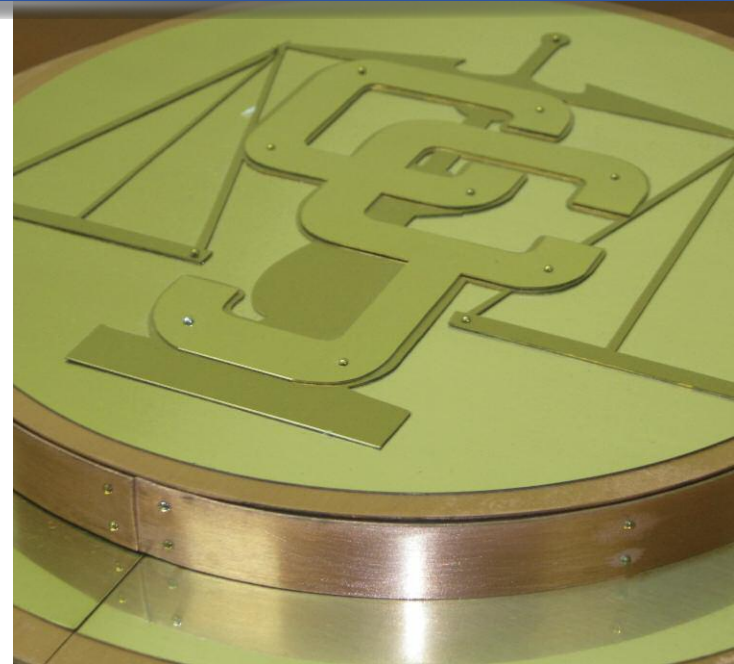
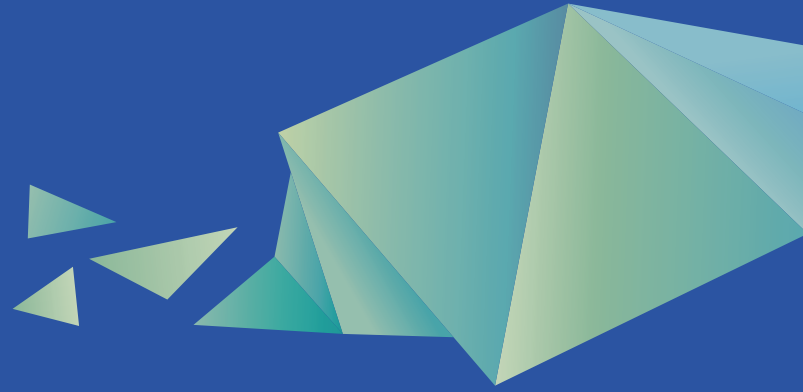
**Strategy 1.3.2** Continually review and analyse the effectiveness of the tools and solutions and make the appropriate adjustments.

**Strategy 1.3.3** Develop a process for continuously soliciting feedback and listening to the needs and expectations of the CCJ staff.

# STRATEGIC ISSUE 2

## Independence and Accountability

Judicial independence – both institutional and individual - is a necessary condition for the promotion and preservation of the rule of law.



# Strategic Issue 2 Independence and Accountability

## Outcome – Strengthened Independence and Accountability of the CCJ

The legal instruments that establish the Caribbean Court of Justice guarantee the Court's institutional independence. The Court must assert that independence and maintain a high quality Bench of unquestioned impartiality and independence.

The CCJ recognizes that independence demands accountability. The Court therefore undertakes to carry out its role as a steward of the public trust by accounting publicly for its performance to the Caribbean people whom it serves. The combination of effective leadership, published performance standards and the maintenance of appropriate relationships with the RJLSC, the CCJ Trust Fund and CARICOM stakeholders, will continue to ensure the Court's independence.





## Strategic Issue 2 Independence and Accountability | Continued

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**Goal 2.1-** The CCJ will enhance the mechanisms that support the Court's independence while ensuring accountability and smooth and effective working relationships among the institutions that underpin the Court.

**Strategy 2.1.1** Continue to enhance and maintain good working relationships with the RJLSC, and the Trust Fund.

**Strategy 2.1.2** Maintain a good and productive working relationship with key stakeholders and bodies within CARICOM.

**Goal 2.2-** The CCJ will continue to work with its governing institutions to review and update the governing instruments to promote the judicial independence and effective management of the Court.

**Strategy 2.2.1** Review and recommend amendments to the Court's governing instruments as and when required.

**Strategy 2.2.2** Keep under review the terms and conditions of service, of judges and Court staff, with a view to recommending such adjustments as may be necessary or appropriate.

**Goal 2.3** The Court will strengthen its internal regulatory frameworks and ensure that they are fair and promote independence and accountability.

**Strategy 2.3.1** Strengthen internal administrative policies, guidelines and procedures, financial oversight and transparency.

**Strategy 2.3.2** Enhance the framework to support the Court's internal compliance requirements.



# STRATEGIC ISSUE 3

## High Performance Environment

A High Performing Environment enables greater levels of efficiency of the Court's services by judges and staff who understand that they are stewards of the trust of a diverse Caribbean Community.



# Strategic Issue 3 High Performance Environment

## Outcome – Improved performance of the CCJ through Strategic Leadership and Management

Critical to this is effective leadership and collaboration to foster an environment of trust, in which all are empowered to contribute to the growth of the Court. Leadership must therefore communicate, with passion, the CCJ's vision and strategic direction to the department and individual levels.

The establishment of realistic goals and performance standards, together with job-alignment and employee recognition will promote an environment of innovation and high performance at the CCJ.

**Goal 3.1** The CCJ will foster an organization-wide culture that encourages strategic leadership and management.

**Strategy 3.1.1** Strengthen the Court leadership and management capacity to better enable the achievement of strategic and operational priorities.

**Strategy 3.1.2** Build a culture that encourages innovation, initiative and creativity.

**Strategy 3.1.3** Train staff at all levels in strategic thinking and processes.

**Strategy 3.1.4** Implement a Results Based Management Program for continuously aligning the Court behind a set of agreed objectives.



## Strategic Issue 3 High Performance Environment | Continued

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**Strategy 3.1.5** Implement a management action planning process in each Unit that is linked to the budgeting and performance appraisal processes.

**Goal 3.2** The CCJ will ensure that the performance of the Court is aligned to its strategic goals/direction.

**Strategy 3.2.1** Review and update the CCJ's performance areas and standards.

**Strategy 3.2.2** Revise and implement the performance management systems at the individual and Unit levels.

**Strategy 3.2.3** Train judges and staff to use and apply the court's performance management systems to continuously improve performance.

**Strategy 3.2.4** Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Court's performance management system.

**Goal 3.3** The Court will introduce and actively manage a system of Talent Management that is aligned with the strategic goals and objectives of the CCJ.

**Strategy 3.3.1** Identify the skills/talent gaps within the Court and develop a remediation process for continuously matching skills with job requirements.

**Strategy 3.3.2** Develop and recommend policies, systems and procedures for approval to guide in recruitment, selection, capacity development (training, coaching, mentoring, on-the-job training) and succession planning.

**Goal 3.4** The CCJ will promote an engaged and empowered workforce.

**Strategy 3.4.1** Continue to develop and implement policies and procedures that demonstrate sound and fair human resources practices, that promote gender sensitivity, equality and address diversity.

**Strategy 3.4.2** Develop and implement an Employee Recognition Programme that is linked to individual, unit and organizational performance.





# STRATEGIC ISSUE 4

## Equality, Fairness, Integrity in Promoting the Rule of Law

The just and timely resolution of cases and disputes requires court processes which are fair, impartial and gender sensitive.



# Strategic Issue 4 Equality, Fairness, Integrity in Promoting the Rule of Law

## Outcome – Securing Equality, Fairness, Integrity in Promoting the Rule of Law

The CCJ, in its application to and development of the law, must be impartial to all in the interest of justice. Cases must consistently be resolved on merit, due process and equal protection in accordance with the rule of law.

The CCJ's treatment of all of its stakeholders must be free of bias, the appearance of bias and external influences.

### **Goal 4.1: The Court shall promote and protect the rule of law**

**Strategy 4.1.1** Ensure that the Court's processes are accessible and characterized by competence, equal protection of the law, fairness, efficiency, impartiality and gender sensitivity.

**Strategy 4.1.2** Allocate time, consideration and resources to each case and render decisions, in keeping with published performance standards.

**Strategy 4.1.3** Provide clear guidance to courts in the region, the legal profession, litigants and the general public on the interpretation and application of the law including the RTC.

**Strategy 4.1.4** Disseminate the judgments of the Court in a manner appropriate for use by the Court's stakeholders.



# STRATEGIC ISSUE 5

## Organizational Capacity for Caseload Growth

Heavy caseload and insufficient capacity are major challenges affecting case disposition by courts globally.



# Strategic Issue 5      Organizational Capacity for Caseload Growth

## Outcome – Strengthened organizational capacity to respond to caseload growth

While caseload processes and judicial management are key for guaranteeing the efficient resolution of cases, courts must also improve their capacity by providing the necessary infrastructure, and other critical internal functions, to deliver the highest quality of justice and service to court customers.

Effective strategic management requires the CCJ to clearly understand its current capacity in terms of resources and facility, and make reasoned estimates to suit its future growth and development needs. The CCJ's caseload will grow as the Court's appellate and original jurisdictions are more fully utilized.

The CCJ will therefore continue to routinely monitor, analyze and work with its institutional partners to adjust its capacity so that those who interact with the Court can continue to be served efficiently and effectively.

**Goal 5.1 The CCJ will ensure that it has the capacity to manage its future caseload.**

**Strategy 5.1.1** Continue to monitor and assess the environment in which the Court operates, so as to make appropriate adjustments to its human, financial and material resources, facilities and capacity.

**Goal 5.2 The CCJ will utilize such resources as necessary and appropriate for the efficient and effective functioning of the Court.**

**Strategy 5.2.1** Continually assess and where necessary adjust the Institutional, Court and Registry processes to ensure the prudent use of resources, so as to maximize their contribution to the mission and vision of the CCJ.



# STRATEGIC ISSUE 6

## Enhanced Regional Justice System Capacity and Performance

The CCI's role, which includes strengthening the rule of law and developing a Caribbean jurisprudence, is vital for the economic and social stability necessary for promoting regional integration and sustainable development.





# Strategic Issue 6 Enhanced Regional Justice System Capacity and Performance

Outcome – Enhanced capacity and performance to support the regional justice system



This goes far beyond the hearing and determination of cases by the Court in its original and appellate jurisdictions. It includes fostering and inspiring the entire regional culture that supports the development of such Jurisprudence, including the improvement of court administration, and contributing to the effectiveness of judicial systems throughout the region.

The Court must serve as a model of justice delivery and best practices and will engage with Judiciaries throughout the region to continue improving justice sector performance and strengthening institutional capacity.

Deliberate and specific attention will be paid to solidifying a professional and collegial relationship with other CARICOM judiciaries and also with law institutions throughout the region.

## Strategic Issue 6 Enhanced Regional Justice System Capacity and Performance | Continued

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**Goal 6.1** The CCJ will organize its management and processes, and collaborate with Judiciaries and other key stakeholders, to play a guiding role in the improvement of justice delivery.

**Strategy 6.1.1** Reinforce our structured relationship with the courts and other tribunals and Heads of Judiciaries in the Region.

**Strategy 6.1.2** Continue to develop partnerships with the CARICOM Secretariat and other external agencies to advance judicial reform in the Region.

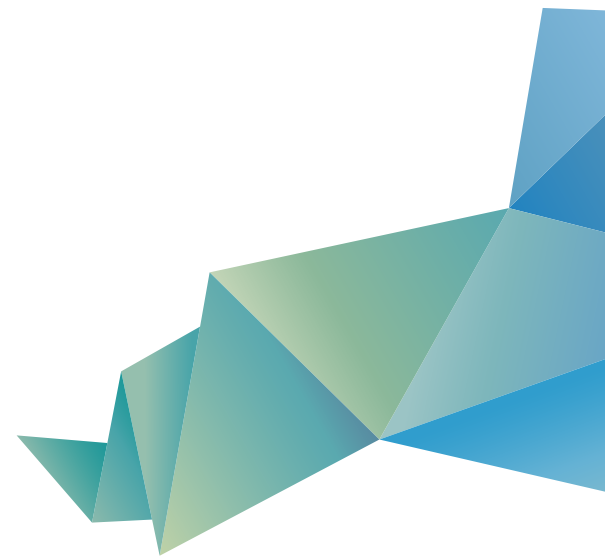
**Strategy 6.1.3** Collaborate with Bar Associations, Law Institutions and other institutions, bodies and groups to promote Caribbean Jurisprudence.

**Strategy 6.1.4** Work with judiciaries of the region to develop and/or strengthen, their judicial and court administration capacity.

**Strategy 6.1.5** Collaborate with courts in the region on matters that would enable or facilitate the effective delivery of Court services.

**Strategy 6.1.6** Develop the Court's capacity to manage and maintain a regional Judicial and Court Administration Knowledge Management System.

**Strategy 6.1.7** Support the work of regional bodies that contribute to the building of Caribbean Jurisprudence.



# Notes

# Notes



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