

THE NATIONAL WEIGHTLIFTING ASSOCIATION OF JAMAICA

Development Framework 2026 - 2031



Honouring Our Past. Lifting Our Future

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	03
A SPORT BUILT ON STRENGTH	04
BUILDING THE FUTURE	05
STRATEGIC CONTEXT	06-08
OUR VISION & MISSION	09
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	10 - 14
MONITORING & EVALUATION	15

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IWF World Championships 2023, James Daley M96

Introduction

The National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica (NWAJ) has been established to build upon Jamaica's rich weightlifting heritage and create a sustainable pathway for the future growth and development of the sport.

Weightlifting has a proud history in Jamaica, dating back to 1948, with generations of athletes contributing to the sport's development both nationally and internationally, throughout different eras, Jamaican weightlifting has been represented by pioneering athletes and administrators whose dedication laid the foundations for future generations. Notable figures such as Calvin Stamp and Lewis Martin helped establish Jamaica's presence within the sport and inspired those who would follow ^(2,4). Like many sports, weightlifting has experienced periods of growth, success and inactivity. Following a prolonged period of limited activity, the sport began to re-emerge in Jamaica over the past decade through the commitment of athletes, coaches, volunteers and supporters who worked tirelessly to rebuild participation and international representation⁽¹⁰⁾. Their efforts have resulted in renewed national and international engagement, competitive success, and the re-establishment of Jamaica within the global weightlifting community.

NWAJ recognises and values the foundations laid by those who came before us. This Development Framework is not intended to replace that history, but rather to build upon it. It represents a new chapter for Jamaican weightlifting—one focused on strengthening governance, expanding participation, developing clubs and communities, supporting athletes and coaches, and establishing sustainable systems that will benefit the sport for generations to come.

While international success remains an important aspiration, NWAJ believes that the long-term growth of weightlifting depends upon much more than competition results. Our vision is to position weightlifting as a tool for athletic development, education, health and community engagement, while continuing to provide opportunities for athletes to represent Jamaica with pride on the international stage. Through collaboration with clubs, schools, communities, national sporting organisations and international partners, NWAJ seeks to create an inclusive and sustainable environment where individuals of all ages and abilities can access, participate in and excel within weightlifting.

As we honour the achievements of the past, we remain committed to lifting the future of Jamaican weightlifting.

Weightlifting: A Sport Built on Strength, Excellence and Opportunity

Weightlifting is one of the world's oldest Olympic sports and has been part of the modern Olympic Games for more than a century⁽⁴⁾. The sport requires athletes to develop strength, power, speed, coordination, balance, mobility and technical proficiency, making it one of the most comprehensive forms of athletic development available.

Beyond competition, weightlifting delivers significant physical, psychological and social benefits. Research has shown that participation in weightlifting and resistance training can improve muscular strength, bone health, movement competence, confidence, mental wellbeing and long-term health outcomes. The sport also develops important personal qualities, including discipline, resilience, commitment and goal setting, making it valuable for individuals of all ages and backgrounds^(5,6,8).

Importantly, weightlifting is not only a sport in its own right but also a recognised foundation for athletic development. Around the world, weightlifting exercises and training methods are utilised by athletes competing in athletics, rugby, football, basketball, netball, cricket and many other sports to enhance strength, power and athletic performance. As Jamaica continues to develop athletes capable of competing at the highest levels, weightlifting has the potential to play an increasingly important role in supporting sporting excellence across the wider sporting landscape. The importance of weightlifting extends beyond sport. Jamaica, like many nations, faces growing public health challenges associated with physical inactivity, obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular disease^(6,8,9). These conditions continue to place significant pressure on individuals, families and healthcare systems. Encouraging lifelong participation in physical activity and strength-based exercise can contribute positively to the prevention and management of many of these health challenges.

This aligns closely with Jamaica's Vision 2030 National Development Plan, which seeks to create a healthy, educated and productive population capable of contributing to national development. By providing opportunities for participation, education, physical development and community engagement, weightlifting can support broader national objectives relating to health, youth development and social wellbeing. For young people in particular, weightlifting offers opportunities to develop confidence, resilience, leadership skills and healthy lifestyle habits while providing clear pathways into coaching, officiating, volunteering and high-performance sport. As such, weightlifting represents not only an Olympic sport but also a vehicle for personal development, community engagement and national progress.

The National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica believes that weightlifting has a unique role to play in supporting Jamaica's sporting ambitions, improving health outcomes and developing stronger communities. Through this Development Framework, NWAJ seeks to position weightlifting as a sport that contributes not only to international success but also to the wider social, educational and health priorities of the nation.

Building the Future of Jamaican Weightlifting

Jamaica is recognised globally as one of the world's leading sporting nations. The success of Jamaican athletes on the Olympic stage has inspired generations and demonstrated what can be achieved through talent, commitment, effective leadership and sustainable athlete development systems. Weightlifting forms part of this proud Olympic tradition. Since Jamaica's first participation in Olympic weightlifting in 1948^(2,3,6), generations of athletes have represented the nation on the international stage and contributed to the development of the sport. Their achievements and commitment laid the foundations upon which today's athletes, coaches and administrators continue to build. While the sport has experienced periods of growth, success and inactivity, its place within Jamaica's sporting history remains significant.

The National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica recognises that the future success of the sport must be built upon strong foundations. While international representation and competitive success remain important aspirations, sustainable performance can only be achieved through effective leadership, meaningful development opportunities and long-term investment in people. This Development Framework, therefore, represents more than a plan for competitive success. It is a commitment to strengthening the structures that support weightlifting throughout Jamaica. Through improved governance, expanded participation opportunities, stronger clubs, a skilled workforce and clear athlete pathways, NWAJ aims to create an environment where individuals can progress from community participation to national and international representation.

As an Olympic sport, weightlifting provides Jamaican athletes with opportunities to compete at the highest levels of international competition, including the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Pan American Games, Central American and Caribbean Games, and World Championships. NWAJ is committed to creating the systems and support structures necessary to help future generations pursue these opportunities and represent Jamaica with pride. Guided by the principles of Leadership, Development and Performance, NWAJ seeks to honour the achievements of those who came before us while creating a sustainable future for those who will follow. By building upon Jamaica's rich weightlifting heritage and embracing a modern approach to sport development, we believe weightlifting can continue to contribute to Jamaica's sporting success, youth development, community wellbeing and national identity for generations to come.

As we honour our past, we remain committed to lifting our future.

Strategic Context

Weightlifting in Jamaica stands at an important point in its development. While the sport benefits from a proud history, committed volunteers and growing international engagement, it continues to face several structural challenges relating to participation, infrastructure, workforce capacity and sustainability.

At the same time, significant opportunities exist to strengthen the sport through improved governance, expanded participation, workforce development and stronger partnerships across education, health and sport sectors.

The following analysis highlights the current landscape and informs the strategic priorities outlined within this Development Framework.

Current Organisational Assessment

An assessment of the current state of weightlifting in Jamaica based on available information, stakeholder consultation and organisational experience.

Table 1: Organisational Assessment of Jamaica Weightlifting)

Area	Current Position	RAG Status
Heritage & Legacy	<i>Olympic history since 1948 and a proud national heritage</i>	Strong
Governance & Leadership	<i>A new governance framework is being established</i>	Developing
Athlete Pathway	<i>Active international representation and some grassroots participation, but a limited pathway depth and support</i>	Developing
Clubs & Participation	<i>A limited number of affiliated clubs nationwide, with most clubs concentrated in Kingston.</i>	Priority Area
Coaches & Workforce	<i>A small group of coaches from grassroots and international capacity, expansion and pathway is required.</i>	Priority Area
Technical Officials	<i>No technical officials available and pathway needed - the area needs to be developed</i>	Priority Area
Facilities & Equipment	<i>Limited access to facilities to be coached outside of Kingston</i>	Priority Area
Community Participation	<i>Limited structure programmes - partnerships to be developed with sports colleges and athletics clubs</i>	Priority Area
Partnerships	<i>Emerging opportunities in the sport and education sectors</i>	Developing
International Representation	<i>Increasing visibility and participation</i>	Strong

Strategic Analysis

To support the development of this Framework, the National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica (NWAJ) undertook a review of the current weightlifting landscape in Jamaica. This review considered the sport's history, current capacity, participation opportunities, workforce, governance structures and future development potential.

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis has been used to provide a structured assessment of the internal and external factors influencing the future development of weightlifting in Jamaica. The SWOT analysis helps identify areas where the sport can build upon existing strengths, address key challenges, maximise emerging opportunities and mitigate potential risks. The findings have directly informed the strategic priorities and focus areas outlined within this Development Framework.

While weightlifting in Jamaica benefits from a rich heritage, committed volunteers and growing international engagement, the analysis also highlights several areas requiring investment and development. These insights will help guide decision-making, resource allocation and programme delivery throughout the lifetime of this Framework.

SWOT Analysis

Table 2: SWOT Analysis of Jamaica Weightlifting)

Strengths • Rich weightlifting heritage dating back to 1948. • Internationally recognised Olympic sport. • Committed athletes, coaches and volunteers. • Existing international relationships through IWF, PAWF and JOA. • Emerging club network	Opportunities • Integration into schools and educational settings. • Growth of strength and conditioning across sport. • Partnerships with national federations. • Community health and physical activity programmes. • Digital education and coach development.
Weaknesses • Limited participation opportunities • Small workforce of coaches and officials • Limited equipment and facilities • Low public awareness • Financial constraints	Threats • Limited funding • Volunteer burnout. • Competition from other sports • Loss of facilities and equipment • Economic pressures affect participation

Strategic Analysis: What does this mean?

The SWOT analysis demonstrates that Jamaican weightlifting possesses strong foundations, including a proud Olympic heritage, committed stakeholders and growing international recognition. However, it also highlights the need to strengthen governance, expand participation opportunities, increase workforce capacity and improve the visibility of the sport.

The analysis further identifies significant opportunities to utilise weightlifting as a tool for youth development, health promotion, athletic performance and community engagement. By addressing identified weaknesses and capitalising on emerging opportunities, NWAJ is well-positioned to support the sustainable growth of weightlifting across Jamaica.

These findings have informed the three strategic focus areas that underpin this Development Framework:

- **Leadership** – strengthening governance, sustainability and organisational capacity.
- **Development** – expanding participation through schools, communities, clubs and workforce development.
- **Performance** – creating pathways that support athlete, coach and technical official development while enhancing Jamaica's presence on the international stage.

(Figure 1: NWAJ Strategic Development Framework)



Our Vision

Our Vision

To become the premier organisation responsible for the education, growth and development of recreational and competitive weightlifting in Jamaica.

Mission Statement

To create and maintain an enabling environment for the holistic advancement and sustainability of weightlifting as the base of strength development for all sports, and ensure viability through education, practice and social development. To raise the profile of weightlifting within Jamaica, and the wider Caribbean.

By 2031 NWAJ aims to:

- Be recognised by JOA, PAWF and IWF as a well-governed national federation.
- Operate a sustainable national club network.
- Have active development programmes across all three counties.
- Have a trained workforce of coaches and technical officials.
- Maintain representation at regional and international competitions.
- Position weightlifting as a recognised pathway for athletic development across Jamaica.



(Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022, Sientje Henderson W87+)

BUILDING ON JAMAICA'S WEIGHTLIFTING HERITAGE SINCE 1948

The NWAJ Development Framework

The National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica (NWAJ) Development Framework 2026–2031 sets out the strategic direction for the growth, development and sustainability of weightlifting in Jamaica over the next five years. The Framework has been developed in response to the opportunities and challenges identified through the strategic analysis. It reflects NWAJ's commitment to building a modern, inclusive and sustainable sporting system that supports participation, development and excellence.

While Jamaican weightlifting benefits from a proud heritage and renewed momentum, achieving long-term success will require more than athlete performance alone. Sustainable growth depends upon strong leadership, meaningful development opportunities and clear pathways that enable individuals, clubs and communities to engage with the sport at every level.

The Framework, therefore, focuses on three interconnected strategic priorities:

- **Leadership**

To establish a transparent, accountable and sustainable governing body that provides effective leadership for the sport and supports its long-term growth and development.

- **Development**

To increase participation and access to weightlifting through schools, communities, clubs and workforce development, creating opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with the sport.

- **Performance**

To develop athletes, coaches and technical officials through clear pathways and support systems that enable Jamaica to compete successfully at national, regional and international levels.

Together, these priorities provide the foundation for the future development of weightlifting in Jamaica. They recognise that high performance is achieved through strong governance, effective development systems and sustained investment in people. Through collaboration with athletes, coaches, officials, clubs, schools, communities, national partners and international stakeholders, NWAJ will work to create an environment where weightlifting can thrive and contribute positively to Jamaica's sporting, educational and social development.

The following sections outline the strategic priorities, objectives and outcomes that will guide the work of NWAJ throughout the period 2026–2031.

Leadership

Strategic objective

To establish a transparent, accountable and sustainable governing body that supports the long-term development of weightlifting in Jamaica.

(Table 3: NWAJ Strategic Framework: Leadership)

Focus Area	Objective	Achieved by
Governance	- Implement and maintain effective governance structures that align with national and international best practice. - Ensure clear policies, procedures and decision-making processes are in place - Promote transparency, accountability and integrity throughout the organisation. - Support effective leadership at national, county and club levels	2030
Finance	- Develop sustainable and diversified income streams - Strengthen financial management and reporting systems - Increase investment into athlete, club and workforce development - Ensure financial decisions support long-term sustainability of the organisation	2031
Safeguarding	- Create safe, positive and inclusive environments for all participants - Implement safeguarding policies and reporting procedures - Promote welfare, wellbeing and participant protection across all levels of the sport	2030
Partnerships	- Develop strategic partnerships with national, regional and international organisations - Strengthen relationships with education institutions, communities and sporting bodies - Collaborate with stakeholders to increase opportunities for participation and performance - Position weightlifting as a valuable contributor to Jamaica's wider sporting landscape	2031
Sustainability	- Build resilient organisation capable of supporting future generations - Develop succession planning and leadership pathways - Promote environmentally and financially sustainable practise	2031
Communication & Marketing	- Increase awareness and visibility of weightlifting across Jamaica - Celebrate the achievements of athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers - Strengthen engagement with members, stakeholders and partners - Develop a consistent and professional organisation identity	2029

Success Measures

Outcome by 2031

- NWAJ recognised as a transparent and trusted governing body.
- Sustainable governance structures in place.
- Financially stable organisation with diversified income streams.
- Athlete voice embedded in decision making.

Development

Strategic objective

Increase participation opportunities and establish sustainable pathways from grassroots participation to international performance.

Development Framework Focus Areas

(Table 4: NWAJ Strategic Framework: Development)

Focus Area	Objective	Achieved by
Schools & Education	• Introduce weightlifting into primary, secondary and tertiary education settings • Support physical literacy, athletic development and healthy lifestyles • Create clear pathways from school participation into local clubs	2029
Communities	• Establish accessible community programs in each county • Use weightlifting to improve health, wellbeing and social inclusion • Engage underserved communities and young people	2031
Affiliated Club Development	• Develop a sustainable affiliated club network • Provide governance and operational support to clubs • Encourage club growth beyond Kingston and St Andrew	2029
Workforce	• Recruit and develop coaches, technical officials and volunteers. • Create education and training opportunities. • Establish clear workforce pathways. • Support succession planning and leadership development.	2031
Inclusion	• Increase participation amongst women and girls • Promote opportunities for persons with disabilities • Ensure weightlifting is accessible to all communities	2029

Strategic Development Pathway for Weightlifting

The below figure 2 below, highlights how an athlete who enters the NWAJ system can progress through dedicated support and programmes from grassroots through to international representation, and or Games qualification.

(Figure 2: Athlete Pathway: Grassroots to International)



Strategic Pathway for Weightlifting

County Development and Structure

To support the sustainable growth of weightlifting throughout Jamaica, NWAJ will establish a county-based development structure aligned to the island's traditional county system: Cornwall, Middlesex and Surrey.

County Development Leads will coordinate local delivery, support affiliated clubs, build partnerships with schools, communities and sporting organisations, and act as the link between local development and the national organisation. This structure will ensure that weightlifting development extends beyond Kingston and creates sustainable opportunities across all regions of Jamaica.

(Table 5: County Development structure)

County	Parishes
CORNWALL	Hanover, St James, Trelawny, Westmoreland, St Elizabeth
MIDDLESEX	St Ann, St Mary, Clarendon, Manchester, St Catherine
SURREY	Kingston, St Andrew, St Thomas, Portland

The Association will work through three County Development Areas aligned to Jamaica's traditional county structure: Cornwall, Middlesex and Surrey. Each county will be supported by a County Development Lead responsible for coordinating local development activities, supporting affiliated clubs, building partnerships and identifying opportunities for growth.

Through this structure, NWAJ aims to:

- Increase participation across all regions of Jamaica.
- Support the establishment and development of affiliated clubs.
- Build partnerships with schools, communities and sporting organisations.
- Develop athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers.
- Create clear pathways from grassroots participation to international representation.

Performance

Strategic Objective

Create sustainable pathways that support the development of athletes, coaches and technical officials from grassroots participation to international representation

Performance Development focus area

(Table 6: NWAJ Strategic Framework: Performance)

Focus Area	Objective	Achieved by
Athlete Development & Pathways	- Establish clear athlete pathways from club participation to national representation (see above figure 2: Athlete pathway) - Support athlete progression through local, regional and international competition opportunities - Promote athlete wellbeing, education and long-term development - Strengthen opportunities for athletes to represent Jamaica on the international stage	2030
Coach Development	- Develop qualified and knowledgeable coaching workforce - Provide coach education, mentoring and continuous professional development opportunities. - Support coaches to progress through national and international certification pathways - Create sustainable coaching structure that supports athlete development at all levels	2031
Technical Officials Development	- Recruit, train and retain technical officials. - Increase national officiating capacity for local and regional competitions - Support officials to achieve international accreditation	2031
National Squad Programme	- Establish a structured National Squad Programme - Provide development opportunities for identified athletes - Support preparation for regional, continental and international competitions - Promote a culture of excellence, professionalism and national pride - Establish and maintain an active National Championships programme.	2031

Performance Outcomes by 2031

By 2031, NWAJ aims to:

- Operate a recognised National Squad Programme
- Maintain representation at Commonwealth, CAC, Pan American and World Championship events.
- Increase the number of athletes achieving international qualifying standards
- Develop a sustainable network of qualified coaches and technical officials

Monitoring and Review

The National Weightlifting Association of Jamaica (NWAJ) is committed to ensuring that this Development Framework remains relevant, responsive and effective throughout its lifespan. Progress against the strategic priorities outlined within this Framework will be reviewed annually by the Executive Board, with responsibility for monitoring implementation shared across committees, county development structures and designated leads where appropriate.

A supporting Operational Action Plan will be developed and reviewed annually to guide the delivery of strategic objectives. Progress against agreed actions, milestones and performance measures will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reported to the Executive Board. To promote transparency and accountability, key achievements, challenges and areas for improvement will be communicated to members through the Annual General Meeting and other appropriate stakeholder engagement opportunities.

The Framework will be formally reviewed at key milestones during its lifecycle:

- 2028 – Mid-Term Review
- 2029 – Progress and Priority Review
- 2031 – End of Framework Review and Development of the Next Strategic Framework

Where necessary, the Executive Board may make amendments to priorities, objectives or delivery plans in response to emerging opportunities, stakeholder feedback, changes in the sporting landscape or national and international developments. Through regular monitoring, evaluation and stakeholder engagement, NWAJ will ensure that this Framework remains focused on delivering sustainable growth, strong governance and long-term success for weightlifting in Jamaica.

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