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Starlink Internet Now Available in Jamaica, With Expansion to the Rest of the Region Coming in Months

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A Starlink dish mounted on a roof. By. STARLINK.

The introduction of high-speed satellite internet to Jamaica is being hailed by some as a game-changing addition to the island's telecommunications network.

Starlink, an internet service provider belonging to tech billionaire Elon Musk, had a license approved just over two weeks ago by Jamaica's Ministry of Science and Technology to offer satellite Internet services in the country. At the time, Science & Technology Minister Daryl Vaz spoke to CVM Television journalists about the company's plans to launch on the island before the year's end.

Starlink is considered the world's first group of low-orbiting satellites functioning as one system to provide broadband Internet. The latency issues of traditional satellite internet have been mitigated enough that the service is robust enough to allow for streaming, online gaming, video calls, and other services that require low ping times between client machine and network router.

At the time the company's license to operate in Jamaica was approved, Vaz called it a "move in the right direction." In addition to increasing choice in internet service provider for consumers across the island, Starlink's introduction means that residents of remote rural areas that have never had access to broadband internet connectivity previously could now get online.

Starlink's satellite services are also adding resilience to the country, as internet connections can be maintained uninterrupted even in the face of natural disasters. Across the globe, the company's internet services have held up in the aftermath of hurricanes, wildfires, and flooding, and in recent news, the company has provided connectivity to Ukraine, even as its land-based network infrastructure has come under threat from the ongoing Russian invasion.

Some early adopters in Jamaica have already signed up with Starlink, and at least one public figure is Tweeting positively about the service. Gordon Swaby, CEO of Social Educational website 'Edufocal', said that he was able to receive high speed internet within a few minutes of plugging in the easily transportable satellite receiver. He said that all the equipment needed was electricity, and that one receiver could serve multiple people within the same area.

A map on the Starlink website indicates that services are not just available in Jamaica, but also in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, [the U.S. Virgin Islands](#), Martinique & Guadeloupe. Plans are to roll out service to the rest of the region in coming months, including countries such as Saint Vincent & the Grenadines later this year, Antigua & Barbuda and Barbados, in the 1st quarter of 2023, and Saint Lucia and Dominica some time after that.

With Starlink's aggressive expansion plans and ease of signup - Jamaican users say they were charged in local currency with free shipping of equipment, and competitive pricing, the two major telecommunications providers in the region — FLOW and Digicel — must be paying close attention to developments.

As Starlink competes with the two existing networks for customers, market analysts expect broadband prices to change.