

# Happy hunting

## *The Edward Seaga Database Collection is now available*

**N**OW OPEN to the public at [www.macrodatab.org](http://www.macrodatab.org), the Edward Seaga Database Collection, is a new and powerful resource for researchers, investors, policymakers and those interested in Jamaica's past and future.

More than 700 macro-economic indicators (think of debt as a percentage of GDP, export/import figures, tax figures) were compiled by Seaga and his team and all this information is available on the database. The data, which come directly from government sources, stretches from 1950 to the present and can be visualised and compared on the website, or downloaded free of cost by the user. Each of the more than 37,000 entries is cited directly from source, usually from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, the Bank of Jamaica, the Planning Institute, and the ministries of finance and education.

"It is something that had to be done," said Seaga of his technologically advanced project. "We can't have all this data out there in a disorganised manner." The new technology, and the fact that all the information can be accessed on the same website, combats the often time-consuming, tedious nature of data collection in Jamaica. "It took me three minutes to get the deficit as the percentage of GDP going



back to the 1950s," he said. "It would have taken me at least three weeks otherwise."

The database marks Jamaica's entry into the world of open data, the current trend of governments

making large swaths of data accessible to the public, online. Going forward, the Edward Seaga Database Collection will be updated and hosted by the Mona School of Business.