

**INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES
INCEPTION REPORT**

1. Jamaica: General Information

Area: 10,991 sq km

Population: 2,868,380

Rural-1, 25,164

Urban-1, 617,216

Life Expectancy Rate:

Total population: 73.45 years

male: 71.79 years

female: 75.19 years

Infant Mortality Rate:

Total: 14.6 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 15.18 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 14 deaths/1,000 live births

Maternal Mortality Rate:

89 deaths/100,000 live births

Literacy Rate:

Total population: 87.9%

male: 84.1%

female: 91.6%

Education

The Jamaican educational system consists of four levels.

1. The Early Childhood Level-this level caters to students ages three to six.
2. The Primary Level-this level caters to students six to twelve (grade 1 to 6). The government provides free and compulsory education for children between the ages of six to twelve while secondary education is accessible through private and public schools. Primary schools are public schools and government controlled.
3. The Secondary Level –this level caters to students ages twelve to sixteen (grade 7 to 11), second-cycle secondary schools – ages sixteen to eighteen (grades 12 and 13) to tertiary level. Government-sponsored scholarships for public secondary schools are awarded based on students' success in an examination taken at age eleven. Students sit examinations at the end of grades eleven (Caribbean Examinations Council Secondary Education Certificate), and at Grade 12 (6th Form) the CAPE as well as the General Certificate of Education, Advanced Level.
4. The Tertiary Level-this level caters to students ages eighteen and onwards. Tertiary education is available through colleges and a number of national and off shore universities.

There are also segregated primary and secondary schools for children with intellectual, physical hearing and visual disabilities.

Unemployment Rate: 12.4%

Laws Concerned with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

There is a National Policy for persons with Disabilities developed by Government and the Disability Sector aimed at achieving equality of opportunities for persons with disabilities. This is still in its draft stage.

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The Jamaica Association on Intellectual Disability (JAID)
March 12, 2012

Financial Assistance for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

There is no formal programme for persons with intellectual disabilities, however, cash assistance can be obtained through a national programme known as the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATHE). PATHE was designed for a number of target groups including persons with disabilities. Assistance received is dependent on specific criteria relating eligibility to school attendance and health care.

2. Outline of the Jamaican Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (JAID)

1. The Jamaican Association of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) was founded by Randolph Lopez, a parent of a child with Down syndrome. Since 1956 the Association has been providing leadership in the field of Intellectual Disability and is today the oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization of professionals and volunteers concerned about Intellectual Disability. It is a non-governmental agency that enjoys a partnership with the Government on some of its programmes. It is a national body with branches across the island and enjoys a solid track record in its field of operation.

Vision

To be the National unifying organization in creating communities where persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities are empowered and fully integrated

Mission :

To provide services that will positively transform the lives of all persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities

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JAID is a multi-service agency which provides services to a target population of over seventy thousand persons with intellectual disabilities in Jamaica. JAID accomplishes its goals through a number of programmes:

Early Intervention Programme

This programme provides stimulation for children with intellectual and other developmental disabilities from birth to six years of age. It prepares them for appropriate school placement.

Schools of Special Education

JAID and the Ministry of Education jointly operate the Schools of Special Education. There is an island network of twenty-seven schools five of which are main schools and twenty-two satellites schools. They cater to the needs of children with intellectual disabilities, their ages range from 4-20 years. The total student population is eighteen hundred with one hundred and forty trained teachers and 150 non-teaching staff.

Resource Programme

This programme provides intensive individualized remedial instruction in language arts and mathematics for at-risk primary and secondary school students in neighbouring communities. It is currently available in Llandilo School of Special Education in Savannah- La- Mar, Westmoreland. The programme targets areas of weakness, enhance strengths, and build independence in specific learning strategies and study skills.

Parents and Professionals in Partnership (PPROP)

PPROP, the parent support group of the JAMR was established in 1994 to offer:

- Parent training and advocacy

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- a parent support network
- a medium for parent and professional interaction

Adult Continuing Education

A vocational training programme for adults with severe Intellectual Disabilities.

3. The **target group** served by the JAMR include children and adults with intellectual disabilities in Jamaica. The number of beneficiaries are over seventy thousand across the island.

4. My position as **Transition Coordinator** is comprised of the following duties and responsibilities:

1. Coordinate the transition programme of the Windsor Cluster of schools in two parishes: St Catherine and Clarendon:
2. Preparing transition plans and assessing student's performances.
3. Identify and liaise with businesses managers, in both private and public sector to facilitate opportunities for work experience placement.
4. Sensitize managers and supervisory staff of business enterprises to on intellectual disability and workplace accommodations for clients in order to facilitate the effective work experience or job performance.
5. Provide support for students through coaching and supervision.
6. Sensitize parents on roles and responsibilities and encourage their involvement in the transition programme.

3. Community Development Programme for Persons with Intellectual Disability:

(i) Project Goals and Objectives

1. Outline of the Project

a. Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to build the capacity of young adults with intellectual disability and their parents to establish income generating projects aimed at reducing the high rate of unemployment that currently exists among the population..

The specific objectives of the project are:

- a. To help participants acquire or upgrade vocational skills and enable them to conduct income generating activities
- b. To train participants to properly managed their income generating projects
- c. To build capacity of family members to support the income generating projects of the participants

b. Expected Outputs

The project seeks to address the high level of unemployment among persons with intellectual disabilities. This would be done through the establishment of income generating projects. This project would also build the capacity of parents who will assist in the establishment and monitoring individual projects. The project is expected to achieve the following results:

- To assist participants to live independent lives and contribute to their own welfare
- To assist participants to successfully market their products in order to generate income
- To assist participants to secure funding for their projects

c. Input of Implementing Organizations

The Windsor School of Special Education under the auspices of the Jamaican Association on Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) will spearhead this project. Support will be sought from agencies such as:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Security (Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities)
- Churches Co-operative Credit Union
- The Local Business Community

The components of the project include:

- Identifying products and developing marketable
- products
- Skills development and training
- Identifying marketing outlets

Budget and Period

The project commenced in September 2012 and will culminate in December 2012.

2. Activities

The following activities will be carried out by with participants with Intellectual Disability

- Co-ordinator seminars on entrepreneurship skills
- Arrange for participants to obtain a food handlers permit.
- Provide resources for training.
- Developed and distribute materials to participants about hygiene, safety and entrepreneurial skills

Intellectual Disability in Jamaica

Persons with intellectual disabilities represent the largest disability group in Jamaica. Many of the services are not offered to persons with ID exclusively. The following table highlights the services provided by both Government and NGOs

Table 1 Services to People with ID

Government	NGOs
Early detection and diagnosis	Early detection and diagnosis and intervention
Education support (remuneration of staff, subvention for recurrent expenditure)	Special Education Intervention
Monitoring and evaluation of special education programmes	Family Support services (care and support)
Provision of information and advice	Public Education
Introduction of policy for persons with disabilities	Advocacy
Introduction of legislation to facilitate access	Vocational Skills Training
	Employment Opportunities
	Social and Recreational Programmes

13. The Roles of Non-governmental Organizations/ Government/Residents

Special education in Jamaica was pioneered by NGOs that have over the years, been responding to needs of persons or groups in individual communities. Their efforts were sustained through their own fundraising activities, but as their services expanded assistance was sought from government and international agencies. In 1974, a formal relationship was established with the Government with regards to the education of children with disabilities.

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With the provision of education the role of Government expanded to include the commitment to support for staff remuneration and recurrent expenditure. They facilitated the establishment of several agencies eg. The Jamaica Social Investment Fund and the Environmental Foundation of Jamaica to which NGOs have been applying for assistance through grant funding. They have also instituted additional support services carried out through The Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities in the areas of transportation, grants for small business initiatives and training through sheltered workshops.

The role of residents and the wider community is highlighted in the provision of support services and general integration.

5. Situational Analysis of Persons with Intellectual Disability in Jamaica

1. Diagnosis of Intellectual Disability/Early intervention

Very limited services exist in the area of early detection of Intellectual Disability. Early detection is primarily done by parents armed with knowledge of developmental milestones and awareness of individual doctors. Currently there are two agencies involved in the early identification of children with disabilities generally. These agencies however, do not offer early intervention programmes.

There are approximately six agencies that offer inclusive early intervention programmes across the island. They are:

- The Early Stimulation Programme
- McCam Child Development Centre
- Rural Services for Children with Disabilities
- Clarendon Group for the Disabled
- 3D Projects

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The Early Stimulation Programme is operated by the Government and the other agencies by NGOs. These programmes are centre as well as home based.

The formal assessment to confirm the diagnosis of intellectual disability will likely take place when the child is about 6yrs. Although the team approach to diagnosis is recommended and introduced in at least one agency, because of personnel constraints, it is a limited team that is utilized. There are a number of private agencies that offer diagnostic services; however, the cost is often times prohibitive.

- a. Persons with Intellectual Disability represent 3-4% of the population.
- b. Persons involved in diagnosing children with intellectual disability include the Doctor; Clinical Psychologist; Therapist (Occupational, Speech, Physical) Social Worker and the Nurse.
- c. Due to the limited number of school placements, after diagnosis a child will be placed based on the availability of space or be enlisted on the long waiting lists of many schools.

2. Education

a. Children are placed within special education programmes across the island. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the children attending schools island wide, are enrolled in the Schools of Special Education operated by the JAID in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. The remaining thirteen percent (13%) attend small private schools and units operated by the Ministry of Education.

b. Placement Procedure.

Individual organizations employ their own procedures relating to placement within their organizations. Referrals for placement may be made by a parent, teacher, medical professional or community member. However, eligibility for placement will be dependent on the results of a

psycho-educational assessment confirming the diagnosis of intellectual Disability. Placement is usually dependent on space availability and age.

3. Vocational Training

Children with intellectual disabilities participate in vocational training through the school programme in which they are enrolled.

Inclusive training for school leavers with intellectual disability include Abilities Foundation, a programme being offered in collaboration with HEART TRUST/ National Training Agency and workshops operated by the government across the island. The only programme exclusively for adults with ID is operated by the JAID, focussing on Art & Craft.

4. Support Organizations

a. There is no Government Agency that provides services exclusively to people with Intellectual Disability.

b. The Non-governmental agencies that exclusively provide services to people with Intellectual Disabilities are:

- The JAMR
- Special Olympics
- Genesis Academy
- Carberry Courts Special School operated by the Methodist Churches of Jamaica.
- 3d Projects
- Mustard Seed Community

There are over ten other agencies that provide inclusive services across the island.

5. Issues/problems to Solve

The services offered to people with ID in Jamaica are largely limited and where the pockets of services exist, they are inadequate to meet the increasing demand. The following have been identified as major areas that must be addressed before persons with ID in Jamaica can benefit from the support needed to facilitate integration within the wider community. These include:

Early Identification/Diagnosis and Intervention

The services offered are limited. The limited programmes available have resulted in long waiting lists and limited placements with the majority available in urban settings. Expansion of this service is necessary to meet the growing demand for the services, reduce the number of children who remain under stimulated or move through the education system unnoticed until they are too old to access the special education programmes.

Limited Resources/ Personnel/Specialist Skills

Resource constraints have contributed to reduction in service offerings. There is a paucity of specialist skills within the special education programmes to provide the necessary support for children with a variety of challenges. These include clinical psychologists, Speech, Occupational and Physical therapists. This has resulted in staff burnout.

Public Awareness and Acceptance of persons with ID

While there have been pockets of success, persons with ID are not generally accepted within the community. There still exist misconceptions, negative expectations, and stereotypical ideas about people with intellectual disability.

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Employment Opportunities for persons with ID

There are a limited numbers of persons in integrated employment settings. Most of the relatively few adults who are currently employed only hold part-time or temporary positions. Many earn salaries that are lower than the minimum wage and are not able to generate sufficient income even to open a savings account.

There are a number of persons with skills in various areas who are unable to access competitive employment but have capacity to manage a small business with support of organizations or family members. The availability of grants to assist them in establishing income generation projects is a priority for this group

Conclusion

Services for persons with disabilities should be provided, whenever possible within the existing social, health, education and labour structure of society. These include all level of health-care, primary, secondary and higher education; general program of vocational training and placement in employment; and measure of Social Security and Social Services. The best outcome is obtained if persons with disabilities are integrated with all other people, in the family, in the schools, at work, in training and educational establishment, in housing, in community affairs, and in the decision-making.