

JICA Training and Dialogue Programmes

Intellectual Disability in Community Activity

Inception Report

Submitted by

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Country: Jamaica



May 20, 2011

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1. JAMAICA: GENERAL INFORMATION

Location: Caribbean, island in the Caribbean Sea, south of Cuba

Area: 10,991 sq km

Population: 2,702,300 (est. 2010)

Male: 1,324,100

Female: 1,378,200

- Rural 48% of total population
- Urban 52% of total population

Age Structure:

- 0-14 years: 30.1% (male 438,888/female 424,383)
- 15-64 years: 62.3% (male 882,548/female 904,242)
- 65 years and over: 7.6% (male 97,717/female 120,602) (2011 est.)

Distribution of Income or Consumption by Percentage Share

Lowest 10% - 2.9

Lowest 20% - 7.0

Second 20% - 11.5 Third 20% 15.8

Fourth 20% - 21.8 Highest 20% 43.9

Highest 10% 28.9 *Source: 2000 World Development Indicators*

Life Expectancy Rate:

- total population: 73.45 years
- country comparison to the world: [116](#)
- male: 71.79 years
- female: 75.19 years (2011 est.)

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 (2011 est.) *source: (The World Factbook)*

Maternal Mortality Rate: 95 per 100,000 live births

Literacy Rate:

- Total population: 87.9%
- male: 84.1%
- female: 91.6%

Education The Jamaican educational system runs from early childhood to tertiary levels. There are also segregated primary and secondary schools for children with intellectual, physical hearing and visual disabilities.

The categories in highlight:

- **Early Childhood** – Includes Basic, Infant, Day care and privately operated pre-schools. The age cohort is usually 1 – 6 years.
- **Primary** - When privately owned or run; these schools are called Preparatory Schools. Primary education in Jamaica addresses the basic educational needs of students and prepares them for Secondary Education. It includes children between the ages of 6-11 years. The government provides free education for children at this level. At Grade 6 students sit the Grade Six Achievement Test (GSAT) for placement in secondary schools.
- **Secondary** – (ages 12-16 years – grades 7-11 and sixth form (grade 12). The high schools in Jamaica may be either single-sex or co-educational institutions and are publicly and privately owned. Students sit examinations at the end of grade eleven (*Caribbean Examinations Council Secondary Education Certificate*). Sixth form is divided into upper and lower sixth and is an optional two years long, advanced post secondary program, at the end of which students write the CAPE (Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Exams).
- **Tertiary** – Generally, A-Level or CAPE examinations are required to enter the nation's Universities. One may also qualify after having earned a 3-year diploma from an accredited post-secondary college.

Infant	Primary	Preparatory	Secondary- Public	Secondary- Private	Tertiary
23	56	43	53	18	6

Health System: The Ministry of Health, together with its Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), Agencies and related organizations make up the public health system and are responsible for health care delivery across the island. Health care in Jamaica is free to all citizens and legal residents at government hospitals and clinics. Residents are however required to pay a small user fee. One of the drawbacks to free health care is long lines and waits for appointments accepted by the physicians. Private Doctors and a few hospitals are available providing one has the funds and insurance to cover the cost. There are over 22 hospitals island wide and 243 Health Care Centres that provide primary care.

Major Industry: The Jamaican economy is heavily dependent on services, which now account for more than 60% of GDP. The country continues to derive most of its foreign exchange from tourism, remittances, and bauxite/alumina. Remittances account for nearly 15% of GDP and exports of bauxite and alumina make up about 10% Labour force – by occupation: agriculture: 17% industry: 19% services: 64% (2006)

Employment Rate: 87.6% (2010 est.)

Poverty rate: 16.5% (2011)

2. INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Laws concerned with persons with Intellectual Disabilities

The Jamaican Constitution guarantees certain basic rights for all persons in society, although it does not specifically mention people with disabilities. However, there is a National Policy on Disability developed by Government and the Disability Sector which was passed by Parliament in November 1999. This policy provides guidelines for cooperation between government and civil society in addressing the equalization of opportunities for persons with disabilities. The policy however is not enforceable as it lacks legal sanctions. At present, the government is in the process of developing a National Disabilities Act which is now in its draft stage. In cases of violation of their rights, the primary mechanisms for recourse for persons with disabilities are civil lawsuits, criminal prosecutions, and intervention from an independent human rights organization

Financial Assistance for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

There is no formal programme for persons with intellectual disabilities; however, assistance can be obtained through a conditional cash transfer (CCT) national programme known as the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) funded by the Government of Jamaica and the World Bank. PATH was designed for a number of target groups including persons with disabilities. To qualify for PATH, an applicant must satisfy the eligibility criteria of the Programme that he/she is a member of a poor family.

Services for persons with Intellectual Disabilities

The **Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities (JCPD)**, under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is the mandated government agency with the responsibility for implementing government policies and programmes for persons with disabilities. Services offered by the Council include: Identifying and registering persons with disabilities, early childhood stimulation programmes for children 0-6 years. The aim of this programme is to improve the development of children with any kind of disability through specialised stimulation and training; Guidance and training centre; the creation of workshops to provide opportunities for employment; Assistance in finding employment for persons with disabilities and ensuring the adoption, circulation and acceptance of the national policy for persons with disabilities.

- ✚ Also, in conjunction with the JCPD, The Jamaica Urban Transit Company (JUTC) provides a bus service to people in the disability community. Three accessible buses were recently added to the *Special Service Fleet*, bringing the number to 6. The buses are wheelchair accessible, and will also be able to allow the JUTC greater flexibility to assist the disabled community in respect of participation of major national events.

3. OUTLINE OF ORGANIZATION - JAID

At the Annual General Meeting/Parents Conference in May 2010, the **Jamaica Association on Mental Retardation (JAMR)** officially launched a new name: '**The Jamaica Association on Intellectual Disabilities.**' (See *pictorial in appendix*) JAID was founded by Randolph Lopez, a parent of a child with Down Syndrome in 1956. Together with a group of parents and colleagues, Mr. Lopez worked to set up the first establishment to provide schooling for children with intellectual disabilities. In 1974, the Government of Jamaica joined the partnership and provided funding to allow free education. Today the **Schools of Special Education** are jointly operated by the JAID and the Ministry of Education on some of its programmes and have a network of 28 locations islandwide. The Association provides leadership in the field of Intellectual Disabilities and is today the oldest and largest interdisciplinary organization of professionals and volunteers concerned about Intellectual and other Developmental Disabilities.

Vision:

To provide dynamic leadership, advocacy and influence the full integration and inclusion of persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities in the society.

Mission:

The Jamaican Association on Intellectual Disabilities (JAID) works through education, advocacy and research to improve the quality of life for children and adults with Intellectual Disabilities and their families and work to prevent the causes and the effects of Intellectual Disabilities.

JAID accomplishes its goals through a number of programmes:

A. 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.

B. Schools of Special Education

The schools provide special education for children with intellectual disabilities ages ranging from 6-20 years through a network of five (5) **main schools** each with its own principals and 28 **satellite units** referred to as **Learning Centres**. The current student population is over 1600 with teachers, teachers' aides and other resource personnel. There are three hundred and thirty-three (333) teachers on staff islandwide.

Table 2

<u>Randolph Lopez School of Hope</u>	# of students served
Satellite Schools	
Harbour View Learning Centre	21
Liguanea Learning Centre	6
St. Mary's Learning Centre	12
Maxfield Park Learning Centre	32
Shortwood Learning Centre	21
St. Jude's Learning Centre	10
OLA Learning Centre	25
Elletson Learning Centre	38
St. Peter Claver Learning Centre	12
Stony Hill Learning Centre	21
Yallahs Learning Centre	11
Franklyn Town Learning Centre	10
Port Antonio Learning Centre	27

C. 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:

- Greater Portmore Learning Centre in St. Catherine

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- Llandilo School of Special Education in Savannah- La- Mar, Westmoreland

Teachers target areas of weakness, enhance strengths, and build independence in specific learning strategies and study skills.

D. Parents and Professionals in Partnership (PPROP)

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

- Parent training and advocacy
- a parent support network
- a medium for parent and professional interaction

E. Adult Continuing Education

This vocational training programme for young adults with severe Intellectual Disabilities was started in 1989. In addition to vocational skills development, significant emphasis is placed on social and recreational skills.

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

Position/Duty

My position as **Learning Centre Supervisor (Maxfield Park Centre)** is comprised of the following duties and responsibilities:

- ✓ Design, implement and coordinate programmes for the development of persons with Intellectual Disabilities 6-13years.
- ✓ Plan and execute programmes for the welfare of Parents, Teachers and support staff.
- ✓ Oversee Programme Development and collaborate with other school professionals on strengths/weaknesses.
- ✓ Supervise adherence to educational policies and curricula execution by teachers and support staff, as outlined by the JAID and Ministry of Education.

4. COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES

I have designed and coordinated the following programmes for children with Intellectual Disabilities between the ages 6-13yrs:

a. Mentorship Programme

Purpose of Programme: This programme was started out of concern for a number of pre-teen boys in my school affected by father absenteeism and lack of male role models. The boys are deemed to be in need of behavior modifications to help eliminate behaviors such as fights, bullying and inappropriate sexual behaviours.

Who is involved: It involves young persons from the neighbouring community High School, the University Of Technology, located in Kingston, and the National Youth Service. Plans are currently in place to include volunteers from neighbouring church organizations.

Activities: The mentors visit the school monthly, paired with the children whom they develop relations with, share experiences and educate about issues related to areas of need. The school benefits from the special skills and talents of mentors as they share with the general school population while maintaining a special relationship with their individual mentees.

Impact: Students see their mentors as big brothers or sisters so they share personal stories as well as their fears. Mentors help students to work through problems and share information with them at the level that they can understand and relate.

b. Activity Enrichment Programme

This programme is executed bi-monthly or monthly, and organized in collaboration with agencies and individuals in the community. It provides the exposure to students in a variety of forms:

- ❖ Visit to places of social and cultural interest
- ❖ Participation in ticketed visual and performing arts programmes
- ❖ Participation in National Clubs (**4H Achievement Day**) that allow the students to display skills in art & crafts and food preparation.
- ❖ Participation in social activities such as Movie Days, shopping experiences and Bible club.

Impact: Students become more socially aware as many parents because of their economic situation are not able to expose their children to programmes outside of school.

The students learn to behave in appropriate ways when they visit public places. They also gain the opportunity to interact meaningfully with citizens and facilitate greater integration and levels of acceptance. They gain valuable exposure and experiences and are given the opportunity to show case their skills and abilities at national exhibitions organized for mainstream children through the 4H Club.

c. Helping Hands Programme

Students benefit from the Government's School Feeding Programme by receiving locally made snack and drink items on a daily basis. The **Helping Hands Programme** however is a welfare programme of the Learning Centre that was designed and implemented to specifically address the economic difficulties experienced by some target parents. Students' attendance was also being affected. Food packages are distributed to parents on a two month cycle. After its inception in 2008, the programme was extended to source and distribute clothing items as well to students. Support is received from private benefactors, neighbouring school, the JAID and the Governments Nutrition Programme.

Impact: Reduced emotional stress on the family in providing basic needs. Parents are motivated to enroll their children in school and ensure that they attend regularly. Short-term hunger is alleviated in school children thereby helping to increase their attention and concentration and by so doing, increase the gains in cognitive function and learning. A reduction in absenteeism is also evident and increases in the time spent in school, so that educational outcomes may improve

5. SITUATION OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

1) Diagnosis of Intellectual Disability/Early intervention

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

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. Persons involved in diagnosing children with intellectual disability include the Doctor; Clinical Psychologist; Therapist (Occupational, Speech, Physical) Social Worker and the Nurse. 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 a waiting list. The 2001 Census recorded 163,206 persons with disabilities (6.3 % of the population)

2) Education

a. Approximately 2.3% of children with Intellectual Disability attend schools in Jamaica.

b. 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.

c. 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) Attitudes towards persons with disabilities

Generally speaking, attitudes towards persons with disabilities remain negative though they have improved over the last 20 years because of more publicity. Many persons feel that persons with ID's are unable to work, establish social relationships and make significant contributions to their communities. Including these persons in the workplace often causes discomfort among people and discriminatory attitudes have brought about feelings of pity, and ridicule. A significant proportion of citizens believe that persons with intellectual disabilities are incapable of raising children and very few believe that adults are able to live independently. There are also attitudes of exclusion in relation to social events and recreation areas as some expect persons with disabilities to create uncomfortable social blunders and nuisances.

4) Vocational Training and Job Opportunity

Children with intellectual disabilities participate in vocational training through the school programme in which they are enrolled. The JAID has a **Transition** programme that prepares students for the transition from school to work. The JAID also operates an Adult Continuing Education Programme which is a vocational-based training programme for young adults with severe intellectual disabilities started in 1989. In addition to vocational skills development, significant emphasis is placed on social and recreational skills. Training for school leavers with disabilities includes **Abilities Foundation**, which provides training and education for disabled young adults aged 18–25. However, despite these provisions for training, the majority of adults with disabilities in Jamaica are unable to find gainful employment. Factors that prohibit their inclusion in the workforce are poor education and discrimination. The government is an employer of persons with disabilities, but it fails to meet the National Policy on Disabilities recommendation that a minimum of five percent of government jobs should be filled by persons with disabilities.

5) Support Organizations

a. The Government agencies for persons with disabilities that come under the umbrella of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) are the Jamaica Council for Persons with Disabilities, the **Abilities Foundation** of Jamaica and the Early Stimulation Project.

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

- The JAID
- Special Olympics
- 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.

The Roles of Non-governmental Organizations/ Government/Residents

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 3 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
Public transportation access by a Special Service Fleet	Employment Opportunities
	Social and Recreational Programmes

6) Issues/problems to Solve

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. They are not enjoying their right to participate in their communities. Therefore, there is a need

- To build the capacity of individuals, to design and implement new programmes.
- To facilitate greater integration of persons with Intellectual Disabilities at the community level. This group of persons has been viewed as incapable of participating in community related programmes and as such have excluded from such activities. Therefore more programmes are needed to facilitate this involvement and educate the public about the special needs, as well as capabilities of persons with Intellectual Disabilities.