

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO JAMAICA

- 1.1 **Middle Income but Vulnerable:** Jamaica is the third largest island nation in the Caribbean Sea with a total area of 11,244 square kilometers; it is 90 miles south of Cuba and 100 miles west of Haiti. Eighty percent of the country is mountainous; therefore most of the population (and main economic activities) are concentrated on the plains and coastal areas. Tourism, bauxite export, as well as agricultural products exported and produced for the local tourism markets are the economy's mainstays.
- 1.2 Although Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean island states are “middle income” countries by international measures, their economies remain fragile and vulnerable to the major adjustments demanded by economic globalization. This has involved the loss of traditional preferential trade agreements, the necessary shift from uni-crop agricultural economies to more diversified and technology driven industries, the effects of fickle tourism in the wake of rising crime statistics and the exigencies of poverty (particularly true of Jamaica), and certainly to the fallout of global terrorist acts and threats. Jamaica is subject to flooding after hurricanes and seasonal torrential rains, and is vulnerable to earthquakes. The last major hurricanes hit in 1988 and 2004, and the last worrisome earthquake in 1993 (5.4 on the Richter scale).
- 1.3 **Governance:** Jamaica became independent in 1962 after 300 years as a British colony, built on slave labour in a largely sugar and banana plantocracy. Since achieving adult suffrage in 1944, a two party system has maintained a Westminster style parliamentary government. There are 14 administrative parishes with limited local government responsibilities; at present parish councils are responsible for internal roads and works, water supplies, public health, poor relief and fire brigades. Central government maintains jurisdiction over the organisation, administration, financing, policies and programmes at the local level.
- 1.4 Two dominant political parties have over decades maintained loyal constituents through systems of patronage/employment; the late 70's and 80's saw increasing political violence, and political "garrisons" in primarily poor urban areas defined community boundaries. Local gunmen soon found drugs trans-shipment and other illegal activities more lucrative and in the 90's largely replaced politicians as "protectors" and "benefactors" within poor communities. Politicians and police seem unable to regain control from these powerful community leaders; many urban Kingston communities have become fearful places for children and families during frequent eruptions of gang warfare over high stakes/reprisals.
- 1.5 **Social and economic indicators:** Jamaica is a youthful nation. Just over 37% of the country's present population of 2.6 million is under 18 years of age; the birth to age 8 cohort comprises 20% of the population. Life expectancy is just over 73 years, and average age is rising. With fertility rate dropping (from 2.8 in 2000 to

- 2.5 in 2004) the population under 18 will be less than 30% by 2020<sup>4</sup>. The population is evenly divided between urban and rural areas as a result of a demographic shift over the last two decades towards urban environments; this trend has slowed in the 90s. The poverty of many of these new urban migrants is evidenced in squatter settlements and in the prevalence of precarious housing conditions in communities that are overcrowded and under-serviced.
- 1.6 After modest annual growth in GDP between 1986 and 1990, the period 1991 through 1995 saw real GDP averaging an annual growth rate of only 1%, and 1995 through 1998 saw negative growth between -0.4 and -2.1%.<sup>2</sup> Government's fiscal policy to contain inflation has been generally successful, but economic growth elusive. High external and internal debt servicing further constrains government's expenditure decisions; the total debt load in 1998 averaged over \$US2700 per person - a significant hindrance to national development objectives in all spheres, particularly when GDP per capita is just over \$US 1500.
- 1.7 **Poverty Indicators:** The Survey of Living Conditions (SLC) of 1998 reported that approximately 16% of the population lived below the poverty line, 4% less than the 20% estimated for 1997, following a declining trend since 1992 "attributable, in part, to continued economic stability, including containment of inflation and the positive effects of interventions under the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NPEP)."<sup>1</sup> This trend, however, reversed slightly in the SLC statistics just announced for 2000, showing a slight increase in the number of persons living in serious poverty. The gap between the wealthiest decile and the poorest is very wide and growing; the mean per capita annual consumption expenditure for the wealthiest 10% is 12.5 times that of the poorest 10%.<sup>2</sup> Rural Jamaican residents are in general considerably poorer than their urban counterparts.
- 1.8 Unemployment rates have gradually reduced over the past decade to an overall [get new figure] 15.5% (2004), with male unemployment at 7.9% and female at 16.4%. Since an average of 42% (2000) of Jamaica's households are headed by women, with even higher figures in urban areas, the implications for conditions of young children within these families are obvious. In addition to the poverty factor of unemployment, data from the 1997 SLC and the 1997 Labour Force Survey (LFS), indicate that over 54% of persons considered "poor" were employed. Since per capita consumption levels have declined over recent years, the percentage of poor employed may be even higher now. Rural communities reflect this trend even more—agricultural production over a two year period dropped by 12% (2000), farming families' consumption dropped by 13%, while in metropolitan Kingston the drop was 1.5%, other towns by 6.8%. Rural development remains a chronically under-invested area.

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<sup>1</sup> Planning Institute of Jamaica (2000). Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 1999, Chapter 24, page 4.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, Chapter 2, page 22.

- 1.9 Because lower-income households have larger numbers of children (mean number 2.46 compared to 1.18 nationally), children, over 49% of persons in poverty are children below the age of 18. Jamaica also has a high incidence of teenage childbearing, with a fertility rate for the 15 to 19 age group of 112 per 1000 live births. Teenage parenthood is a feature of a self-perpetuating cycle of poverty, within which young children are often very vulnerable.
- 1.10 These children of children, and children of the working and non-working poor, make up Jamaica's children at risk - at risk of under-development physically, socially, and educationally. They are Jamaica's children most in need of pre-primary interventions to minimise or counteract these risks. And these are the families most in need of supports such as child health services, day care and preschool programmes, and parenting education/involvement initiatives, within which social and economic inequities can be at least partially redressed.
- 1.11 **Social capital erosion:** In tandem with the country's economic persistent vulnerabilities, Jamaica's traditional social capital of community based and extended family support networks have also eroded from a number of contributing factors. A report from the Jamaica Social Investment Fund (JSIF) cites "increasing crime and violence, partisan politics, emphasis on individualistic rather than collectivist ways of doing things, frustration with state services and promises, migration, increase of women in the workforce, fragmentation of the family, and individualization of leisure time (increase in TV and computer use over social forms of recreation)."<sup>5</sup> The National Poverty Eradication Programme has since 1996 been attempting to rebuild forms of bonding and bridging social capital through its community participation and development initiatives, partnering with government's Social Development Commission. While registering some measures of success, trust building within and across highly polarized climates and classes is often fragile, and the skills required to promote and sustain meaningful participation not always available or applied appropriately.
- 1.12 **Child-rearing practices:** In social climates in which traditional family and community networks for child-rearing are less and less available, un- and under-employment rates are high, and many poor communities experience high daily levels of inter-gang and domestic violence, single and dual parent households are hard-pressed to provide sufficient financial support for their children, much less to provide sufficient supervision, emotional support and educational oversight. A recent national study<sup>6</sup> used a parental stress measure (for the first time in Jamaica) as one of many indicators measuring child and learning environment status at the point of entry to Grade One. Parental stress indicators were *very* high for this national sample of Jamaican parents, and were expressed in parental feelings of inadequacy for their parenting tasks and high levels of harsh corporal punishment. Children's cognitive performance and behaviours were both negatively correlated with this high level of parental stress. Particularly vulnerable are *teen parents* whose own parents are unable to provide modeling or support, and *boys*, who

studies have indicated are more harshly treated, given less responsibility and social training as well as less emotional support, and who are expected earlier than girls to contribute economically to the household.

- 1.13 **Education:** Adult literacy stands at 69% for men, 81% for women (1996); functional illiteracy among school leavers is unacceptably high and has been growing. Current reforms of the primary and secondary schools curricula are tackling this and other problems, including growing concern at male under-participation (attendance) and under-performance (exam outcomes) within the school system. Only a minority of children benefits from private tuition preschools and preparatory (primary\_) schools. The majority (almost 90%) attends publicly subsidized community-based basic schools, then public primary school. At the end of the Grade six primary school, less than half of the age cohort are selected via examination results to attend academic high schools; the rest attend lesser quality secondary schools or "all-age" schools, which end at Grade 9. Unless children in these schools pass an exam that qualifies them for high school admission to Grade 10, they are at the end of their schooling at around age 15.
- 1.14 These statistics reflect prevailing social class inequities: over 25% of the poorest quintile were out of school by age 16, while true of only 2.2% of the wealthiest quintile. Seventy percent of the wealthiest 10% of children ages 17-18 are still in educational institutions, compared to under 29% of the poorest 10%. So where are these dropouts? Of the group that started primary schooling in 1986/87, at the end of 1994/5 there were 5,500 female school leavers (23%) from all age schools, and 7000 males (30%).<sup>3</sup> These children are two to three years too young for the national school leaver vocational training programmes or the volunteer National Youth Services which train and place young persons in basic skills employment.
- 1.15 **Social sector spending** in a slow/no growth economy has been seriously constrained. The 1995 World Summit on Social Development target of 20% of national expenditure for social sector spending has yet to be achieved; spending on health, water, sanitation, social services and education has averaged just above 11% between 1980 and 1996. Funding for education was 17% of the expenditure budget in 1975, dropping to less than 9% in 1994, but despite limited growth has more recently been given higher expenditure priority in 1998 (15%) and in 1999 (13%). It must be noted, however, that 90% of this expenditure budget, similar to the health sector budget, represents recurrent expenditures, primarily salaries and wages, and thus very limited capital funds are available to address the deteriorating infra-structural needs, much less the demands for expanded services, within the two sectors so central to children's wellbeing.

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<sup>3</sup> Chevannes, Barry (1999). *What we sow and what we reap: Problems in the cultivation of male identity in Jamaica*, Grace Kennedy Foundation Lecture Series.

## **2a) Organisation and structure of the educational system**

- 2a.1. This report benefits from recent and widely publicized attention given Jamaica's Education System as a result of the Government's appointment of a special Education Task Force in late 2003 to address serious concerns about poor school performance and high drop-out rates from the public system. The Task Force sent its initial report to the Prime Minister in September 2004, which focused primarily on the primary and secondary levels of education, and then commissioned a second report on the Early Childhood sector which was presented to the Prime Minister in March 2005. The Report has generated considerable public debate and pressure to move swiftly in the direction of many of its recommendations.
- 2a.2 A short historical background on the Education Sector is important here, to provide context for achievements, as well as to illustrate why the Early Childhood Sub-Sector is receiving increasing policy and budgetary attention as a critical plank of the Task Force's recommended reforms towards " a strategic transformation of Education in Jamaica."
- 2a.3 Public education is only 170 years old in Jamaica, starting under Britain's colonial rule with grants administered by local religious institutions to educate the children of recently freed slaves. A two tiered system was quickly created—elite schools for children of the small landed gentry and publicly-funded schools for all the rest. The elite schools prepared children for professional careers and national leadership, while public schools were concerned with preparing artisans, the semi-skilled and the unskilled for the labour force. "This dualised system became entrenched into the social fabric and for more than a century education functioned as the most powerful gatekeeper of the status quo".<sup>7</sup> A small technical/managerial middle class gradually began to emerge to include some educated children of the lower class.
- 2a.4 It was not until the country was on the brink of its independence (in the 1950's) that local government ministries were given gradual autonomy in the country's affairs generally, and in education of its people specifically. With full independence in 1962, the necessity of tackling educational reform was stark and urgent; the achievements of the first twenty years of independence were in fact considerable:
- Nearly universal primary enrolment had been achieved
  - More than 80% of children were enrolled in lower secondary grades (7-9)
  - Almost 60% of children were enrolled in higher secondary grades
  - Approximately 83% of teachers were college trained (e.g. teaching diploma)
  - Government took over the operating costs of the traditionally elite schools in order to facilitate entry of children from the working class into these schools via an examination system at the end of primary school.

- 2a.5 However, in a UNESCO review of Jamaica's education system in 1983, it was clear that the two-tiered system (with its concomitant social attitudes and barriers) remained largely undisturbed. "The [traditional] high schools hold the promise of post-secondary studies, have a much higher social currency, spend more money per student, experience a continually high demand for admission and have an academically oriented programme. By contrast, New Secondary Schools [the other secondary offerings] enjoy noticeably lower esteem on the part of pupils/parents, which is reflected in a declining tendency of enrolments and transition rates. The curriculum is heavily biased towards pre-vocational, non-academic subjects."<sup>3</sup> The UNESCO report drew pointed attention to the "lack of quality of what is learned in the primary schools together with the inadequacies of large segments of secondary education to meet the needs of the productive sector of the economy as well as the expectations and aspirations of individual students and their parents".<sup>4</sup> Approximately half of the nation's children left primary school illiterate; high numbers that continued on to the secondary system left it without achieving substantive literacy or numeracy skills.
- 2a.6 The Government's Five-Year Development Plan of 1990 focused considerable attention on the need to improve the quality of education inputs, and budget hikes and special programmes accompanied this Plan, including improved textbook provisions and book rental schemes, school feeding programmes, and the upgrading of the facilities and curriculum of several secondary schools. A second five-year plan set out to strengthen these initiatives (which had yet to yield significant improvements in target measures) and scrapped the Common Entrance Examination in which had been the gateway for placements in traditional high schools in favour of a national Assessment Programme with measuring points throughout the primary years. A literacy exam was introduced prior to entrance to Grade Five, and supplementary summer programmes were provided those who failed to achieve an adequate level of mastery. Pilot programmes to improve primary literacy were launched in a pilot sample of 72 schools. A broader Grade Six Achievement Test was used to place all Grade Six leavers in some form of secondary school based on their performance—but as yet this has making little difference in the already skewed realities which send the student "crème" to the top of the secondary system, leaving the children of the poor and disadvantaged with sub-standard facilities and little hope of leaving the system prepared sufficiently for either work or responsible adulthood.
- 2a.7 The challenges faced by the Task Force were starkly apparent. In 2003 average primary attendance was 78% (lowest among boys and in rural communities). Just over half of children enrolled achieved English Language mastery by the end of primary school. Less than 5% of students in the upgraded secondary schools achieved passes in Mathematics, while in traditional high schools this figure was 38%. The figures for English Language for these two types of schools were just over 9% and 55% respectively. With the education system so poorly equipping so many, it is not surprising that for many young people education seemingly offers little for their future, particularly for males who, encouraged from their

early years in “street smarts”, see the labour force and illegal options such as drug sales and larceny as more attractive alternatives to the “holding pen” of schooling.

2a.8 A Current Snapshot of Education Data:

Jamaica’s early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary levels of public and private education serve approximately 800,000 students, which is 31% of Jamaica’s total population of just over 2 ½ million. The distribution of students is approximately:

Early Childhood 25%	Primary School 40%	Secondary School 30%	Tert 5%
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2a.9 Over 22,000 teachers are employed in 1000 public institutions; 20% of these teachers are university graduates (83% have diplomas from teachers colleges). Government expenditure on public education (2004 figures) is \$30 billion (\$US 500 million, or 6.6% GDP, 9.2% total fiscal budget), while households contribute an additional \$19 billion (\$US 316 million)<sup>8</sup>. Public expenditure on the four education levels is distributed approximately as follows (2004/05 figures, representing 83% of total Education Budget, excluding global administrative, technical and training expenditures):

EC 5%	Primary 37%	Secondary 35%	Tertiary 22.8%
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Given the background history above, it is not surprising that minimum performance targets on national and regional assessments, set in February 2001, are not being reached, as the following chart indicates:

MEASURE	2003 Baseline	2015 Target
Percent of students attaining mastery in all four areas of the Grade One Readiness inventory (taken in first month after enrolment in Grade One)	37.2%	90%
Percent of students achieving mastery on the Grade Four Literacy test	57.7%	85%
National mean score at GSAT for each subject (General School Achievement Test, taken at end of Grade Six primary school)	Math: 48% Language 52% Science 48% Soc’l Stud. 54% Comm. Task 65%	Math: 48% Language 52% Science 48% Soc’l Stud. 54% Comm. Task 65%
Percent of cohort attaining Grade 1-3 in five CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate) subjects including English and Mathematics	Less than 11.5%	60%

Source: Task Force Report p. 17, Figures from Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture

## 2b) **Organisation and Structure of the Early Childhood Development Sector**

- 2b.1 **Working towards an integrated approach.** Until the mid-1990s forward, the early childhood sector was in common parlance considered to be the province of the education system, seen as the network of pre-primary basic schools which by the year 2000 enrolled over 90% of the age cohort from age 4 to 6. However, as this paper will shortly describe, the early childhood development sector is deliberately working to dispel this narrow perception in favour of a wholistic and integrated approach, embracing all those services and supports to families of children from ante-natal care through the first two years of Grade One, e.g. for practical purposes from birth through age eight. While this paper will focus attention on the education sector in this integrated approach, its role must be seen as part of the larger picture that has engaged many more partners, both government and non-government, in tackling the needs of young children, particularly those most vulnerable to school failure.
- 2b.2 Fueling work in this direction was the **mounting research evidence** internationally that attention to the earliest years was critical not only to individual children's developmental chances (early brain research the most compelling) but to society as a whole (to which cost-benefit research on quality early years interventions has repeatedly attested). Investing in early childhood was seen as an increasingly important social and economic investment in the country's future productivity; the converse was proving also to be frighteningly obvious—*neglect* in attending to these formative years was promising long-term negative prospects in poor school performance, high crime and under-productivity. Before examining Jamaica's recent multiple strategies to reverse and prevent further such neglect, it is important to provide a picture of the early childhood sector *prior* to 2000.
- 2b.3 **Health supports for children's early years.** For well over fifty years the Government of Jamaica has been delivering, directly and in partnership with the private sector, a range of services directed at the health and well-being of children before their entry into the formal education system. Even before national independence (1962), primary health care for young children extended across the country with Ministry of Health maternal and child health clinics, with public health services included, within reach of nearly every township and village.<sup>9</sup> Despite some pockets of slippage in health access and supports in recent years, Jamaica currently enjoys a high level of child health, relative to developed world standards.
- 2b.4 **Early education from age four.** In parallel developments during the 60s, the pioneer early years educator, D.R.B. Grant at the University of the West Indies Faculty of Education, mobilised major funding support from the international Bernard van Leer Foundation. For over 30 years the Foundation has contributed substantially to capacity building in the field of early childhood education, working closely with the Ministry of Education through projects which:

- a) provided baseline research on existing child-rearing practices and on the needs of young children, particularly within poorer communities;
  - b) built a network of community-owned/supported basic schools for children from age four to six throughout the country; and
  - c) established a government system of training, regulations and monitoring which eventually provided these umbrella supports as well as subsidy financing to the network of community-based preschools which now number just under 2000.
- 2b.5 By the mid-80s the basic school system was an organised layered network of collaborating partners serving the vast majority of children ages 4 and 5. Every basic school, each of which has a local management board/sponsoring body (primarily churches, NGOs), belongs to a Zone Action Committee under the oversight of a Ministry of Education Officer. All the zones within each of the 14 parishes of Jamaica elect a Parish Board, made up usually of Zone Action Committee representatives, representatives of parish-based NGOs, CBOs and service clubs, Ministry of Education officers and other community leaders. Most Parish Boards are active in fund-raising and administrative oversight of early childhood matters within the Parish and meet monthly or quarterly. A National Board made up of 2 to 5 representatives from each Parish meets quarterly and provides a national voice on behalf of the whole network. There is also a parish based and national "Teachers Fellowship" for basic school teachers which serves more as a support group rather than as a union or lobby group.
- 2b.6 **Day Care services.** While the above long-standing partnership of government with communities developed steadily and incrementally over many years, services to care for children below the age of four has had a different and more troubled history. The 1970's saw growing concern for the organisation and regulation of services for working parents of young children, or for children who for other reasons might be in need of daytime care and supervision. Many unregulated services had sprung up primarily in backyards and on verandahs to accommodate a growing demand. Few caregivers had any early childhood training. The Government in 1976 launched an ambitious National Day Care programme, building and staffing twenty eight day care centres in primarily poor areas to support the growing numbers of women entering the formal work force. The programme created a regulatory unit to develop and enforce standards of basic care for all centres nationwide, in conjunction with government departments of public health and safety. Regulations were developed, a legal framework for service delivery proposed, and short-term training offerings for day care workers were delivered directly by government, or by other organisations with external funding/private fees.
- 2b.7 This forward thrust was relatively short-lived, however. Economic structural adjustment policies of the government, beginning in the mid-80s, required access to major loans from the International Monetary Fund and other external financial

institutions. This brought a halt to further developments in this direction, and resulted in staff and budget cutbacks to this sector as well as to many other basic social services. Government still provides very modest subsidies to 19 of the original Government-supported centres, but they still primarily survive on parent fees and fund-raising, as must all other day care centres across the country.

2b.8 **Research prods collective action.** Two studies, finalised in 1993 and 1995, fuelled renewed forward movement for the entire sector, continuing to the present. The first surveyed the status of a representative sample of day care centres<sup>10</sup>; the second was a review of the basic school system.<sup>11</sup> Both were sobering. In subsequent journal article, McDonald summarises the outcomes of these two reports as a "foreboding picture of early childhood provisions with respect to coverage, quality, organization and financing, [which] highlighted the many structural problems in the pre-primary sector."<sup>12</sup> The following findings became critical "push factors" for the ECD sector to renew reform efforts:

- *Inadequate policy and legislation in the EC sector resulting in fragmentation and duplication of efforts*
- *Inequitable distribution of human and financial resources and community supports for day care versus pre-school system*
- *Low budgetary allocations for EC (e.g. approximately 3% of education budget versus 20% for the tertiary level) despite influx of women in the labour force*
- *Insufficient focus on EC in poverty eradication efforts and economic development strategies*
- *Lack of linkage between Day Care Unit (MOH) and Early Childhood Unit (MOE) despite same age beneficiaries within day care centres and pre-schools*
- *Multiple transfers of Day Care Unit across Ministries/agencies resulting in instability, low status and low staff morale*
- *Lack of cohesion between health, education and welfare services for young children*
- *Low coverage of day care system (approximately 10%) of age cohort, particularly in rural areas*
- *Increasing numbers of 3 year olds entering preschools due to inaffordability of day care and inadequate/inappropriate provision for their needs*
- *Access of children with disabilities not addressed*
- *Absence of institutionalized/ongoing training programmes for day care and lack of rationalization of training structures and programmes at the preschool level*
- *Absence of certification system and career path for early childhood personnel*
- *Deficiencies in the monitoring systems for day care and preschools including:*
  - *Absence of registration and licensing procedures*
  - *Insufficient instructional supervision; and*
  - *Weak recording/reporting systems*
- *Lack of a curriculum guide for day care and poor linkage of pre-school curriculum with primary level curriculum*
- *Inappropriate practice and poor quality learning environments in large numbers of day care centres and preschools*
- ***High rates of Grade 1 repetition and problems related to the transition of children from the pre-primary to primary level*** [emphasis added]

- *Low status afforded early childhood due to insufficient parental, government and public understanding of the importance and requirements of early childhood development.*

2b9. While the findings for the day care sector were no surprise after years of minimal government investment, the findings in relation to the poor quality and systemic problems of the basic school sector were more jolting given 30 years of Government, Bernard van Leer Foundation and private sector investment. A resolution was made at this planning meeting for a task force to lobby for integration of all pre-primary services. UNICEF lent its support for this work in its ongoing country programme. A Task Force of key stakeholders within the sector from Government, NGOs and UNICEF was formed which began discussions with the two primary Ministries concerned with these basic services—Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education, with a proposal to integrate administration of these services.

2b.10 **The Task Force on integration of early childhood services** set as its goals the following:

1. Integration of the government's administrative and management structures for day care services and early childhood education services, with a long-term view to address anomalies in levels of government support to the two age-group sub-sectors.
2. Establishing an intersectoral and more integrated collaboration of key players in addressing the holistic needs of children across the age range from birth to school entry.
3. Mainstreaming of early childhood concerns within all government policies and programmes.

The Task Force developed a rationale document for a policy of integration; prepared budget estimates with the implications of integrating the two service systems; and wrote a funding proposal to UNICEF for support to the Task Force. In June 1996 the Minister of Education forwarded a submission to Cabinet for integrating the two services under his Ministry.

2b.11 **Strategic funds realized.** In December 1996, a small grant from UNICEF assisted the Task Force with its administrative, secretarial and consultant requirements. In parallel developments, a proposal to the World Bank by the Caribbean Child Development Centre and the Institute of Education, both at UWI, was approved for a two-year project addressing development of early childhood education policy, models for integrated service delivery, and the development of an accreditation and certification system for early childhood training. This “Child Focus Project” worked alongside the Task Force from mid-1996 and was able to fund activities to sensitise the early childhood directorate and delivery system workers to the implications on the ground for integrating services for children

from birth through age six. The official transfer of the Day Care services unit to the Ministry of Education was effected in April 1997.

2b.12 The Ministry then began a pilot period of integrating these services administratively and on the ground, focusing initially on two parishes of Jamaica's fourteen. There were many challenges:

- **Separate regulations for the two sectors had to be rationalised into one regulatory framework** serving the entire age group. A sub-committee of the original Task Force (now an advisory committee to the Ministry on integration) began a long consultation process with broad participation from all levels of the sector during 1997 and 1998, resulting in a set of new and much broader draft regulations which incorporated more rigorous service delivery standards than previously existed, improved child-teacher ratios, and substantial cost implications for both government and parents.
- A rationalization of discrepancies in **qualifications and salaries** of the two units was required to facilitate real administrative integration (of functions and workloads).
- **Training materials** were required to prepare workers with the skills required by full integration of services and of the age band, and which would provide the long-needed career path from entry to diploma level. The Child Focus project with the National Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NCTVET) developed national competency standards for certifying early childhood workers at three levels, from entry point to readiness for formal teacher training or other tertiary training. These standards were officially adopted by NCTVET in March 1999. Over the next two years, a training curriculum for Level One was drafted and in June 2001 a national assessment of worker strengths and training needs was conducted to ascertain training needs. In late October 2001, as a result, over 4000 basic school and day care workers (almost the full cohort) were assessed by NCTVET-approved assessors; 90% achieved Level I certification.
- **A reformed and integrated curriculum for learning environments was required** to tackle issues of the quality of learning and caring environments. The NCTVET standards were used to begin work on classroom curriculum reform; a sub-committee was struck to examine requirements to develop a curriculum for services for children from birth to three (centre and home-based) and to integrate this with a revised four-to-six curriculum, which in turn needed to be coordinated with the Ministry's work to revise the curriculum for the early Primary grades.
- **Resistance to integration administratively and on the ground** had to be met strategically; bureaucracies rarely embrace change, and community-based services sought direction on the implications of these new developments for them. UNICEF assisted with support for sensitization workshops over 1 ½ years, and gradually the field began to see some benefits in the integration movement. The Parish Board structure was not

set up to include day care services. In 2004 this structure was formally reorganized to represent the broad spectrum of services to children from birth through age eight.

- 2b.13 **A Strategic Review of the sector** in 2000-2001 by local consulting firm Peat Marwick (KPMG), initiated by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and funded by UNICEF, pointed out many of the **existing structural and administrative anomalies** remaining as obstacles to the realisation of the full goals of an integrated, intersectoral system of service delivery by government and its partners. **The review's broad-based recommendations included a restructured sector under an Early Childhood Commission that would be intersectoral in its policy and regulatory oversight, and would have an implementation arm with specific areas of responsibility vis-à-vis training and certification, implementation and monitoring of new standards, coordination of external funding inputs, and intersectoral coordination of regional initiatives, public education and communication, and research.**
- 2b.14 Cabinet approved in principle the idea of such a Commission, to be "hosted" by the Ministry of Education in the first instance, with a recommendation that it become a quasi-statal body in the future. KPMG was commissioned for a second study to recommend how the Commission would function and financed, and Donor forums were convened towards "integrating" more effectively donor inputs to this complex process.
- 2b.15 In a parallel development, eighteen states of the English-speaking Caribbean adopted in April 1997 a five-year **Caribbean Plan of Action for Early Childhood Education, Care and Development (ECECD)** with ten substantive goals; this Plan became the foundation plank of CARICOM's Human Development Policy in July of that same year. The KPMG report cited it as the "platform" framework to guide the reformation of the early childhood sector. The goals of the guiding Caribbean POA are as follows:
- Legislate for services to children from birth to eight, within national legislation for child as a legal entity.
  - Entitle the child from birth to eight years living in at risk situations to targeted resources.
  - Ground public and parenting education and children's programmes in local cultures
  - Educate for parenthood before adulthood.
  - Support the parent and the child in the year after a child's birth.
  - Develop the child within the family in the years before preschool.
  - Promote the child's learning and development in all early childhood settings.
  - Implement integrated approaches for children from birth to eight years.
  - Designate budget allocations for ECECD services and plan investment.
  - Improve training support and quality in monitoring and evaluation in ECECD.

- 2b.16 A brief paper cannot do justice to the amount of lobbying work, volunteer committee work by many stakeholders, and strategic assistance given by many funding organizations which led to the passing of the Early Childhood Commission Act by the Jamaican Parliament in March 2003, creating an intersectoral body with responsibility for “oversight of the entire early childhood sector.”
- 2b.17 The “early childhood education and care sector” for which the Commission now had oversight, was a sprawling network of schools, centers and home-based programmes which were, although to some extent subsidized by Government, largely within the domain of the private sector/civil society. The preschool/basic school network touts the highest enrollment rate of children in the 4-5 age cohort within the English-speaking Caribbean—over 95%. But unfortunately the success of providing *access* has not been paralleled with the provision of *quality* (as the earlier survey studies cited above pointed out). The low fees charged parents (ranging from X to X in a 2004 survey)<sup>13</sup> have ensured that all but the very poorest children are enrolled, and many schools take in some of these children by waiving fees. But these same low fees, the relatively small size of the government grants, and the recommended adult-to-child ratio of 1:30 for eligibility for salary subsidy have worked against the realisation of high quality learning environments and the kind of teacher attention to individual child needs that could ensure desired learning outcomes. In a few communities the Ministry of Education has sponsored the development of “infant schools”, serving the same population as basic schools but fully subsidized by government. These schools are sometimes free-standing schools or within a larger primary school setting.
- 2b.18 A parallel system of private sector provision of preschool education has developed in response to the needs of the middle and upper classes of parents who can afford to pay higher fees and whose higher levels of education usually produce higher demand for better quality services. Although these preschools are not recipients of government subsidies, the total picture of early childhood provision still mirrors the dual system for higher level provisions—one type of school of better quality for the society’s wealthier families and another type for those of lesser means. At present, the distribution of the nation’s children from age four until entry to primary school is as follows:

School Type		Number	Enrolment	%
Public	Infant School	29	8,749	6.1
	Infant Department	83	6,273	4.3
Private	Recognised Basic School	1,921	112,627	77.4
	Unrecognised Basic School	147	5,006	3.4
	Preparatory School	209	12,868	8.8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>2,180</b>	<b>145,523</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source of Table: Task Force on Educational Reform Early Childhood Sector Report 2005

The day care sector at the point of the Commission’s start-up, constituted 6 officers within the Ministry of Education’s Day Care Unit, and a register of 411 day care centers and home based nurseries<sup>14</sup>, with the knowledge that probably as

large a number were in operation without registration or monitoring of any kind. All but 18 of these are fully supported by the fees paid by parents and any other fund-raising or corporate sponsorship the management can obtain; small government subsidies go to the 18. Of the other private operations, 135 are home-based small neighbourhood services; 258 are large group care centers. At this writing no 2003 – 2004 figures for enrolment in registered day care centers is available from government.

- 2b.19 An outreach project begun by an NGO in two parishes in 1992 has been recently recommended for replication by Government in other parishes. The “Roving Caregivers” model trains secondary school leavers (primarily) in basic play and stimulation techniques for children from birth through age three; these “Rovers” visit rural homes which are beyond the reach of day care services either because of distance or expense. During fortnightly visits, the caregivers demonstrate stimulation techniques to the parents (mostly mothers) within the home; they also convene parent meetings to promote discussions of appropriate child-rearing practices. Two studies indicate benefits for the children in readiness for entrance to basic schools and in parent-child interaction; a longitudinal study is being anticipated to see whether long-term gains can be attributed to these interventions, similar to an earlier such study based at the University of the West Indies, indicating that a similar programme of home-based demonstration and stimulation played a critical role in intellectual and physical development of previously malnourished children, even when food supplementation was not provided.<sup>15</sup>
- 2b.20 This basic framework of early interventions, plus the nationwide network of health services, special services for children with disabling conditions, and a wide range of parenting education/support activities by government and NGO departments and agencies, comprise the complex context into which the Early Childhood Commission began to explore how an integrated approach to the child, and to the delivery of services to that child, could be most effectively implemented and coordinated with a great number of public and private players within the sector.

### **3. Enrolment, Grade Retention and Drop Out rates**

- 3.1 Enrolment ratios give us one part of the picture of children’s progress, or lack of it, through the school system. Jamaica boasts over 95% enrolment of the age group 4-5 in pre-primary group settings; by compulsory Grade One registration, enrolment is virtually 100%. Total enrolment in 2002/2003 in primary schools of all types was 328,362. Enrolment in all types of secondary schools (94% public and 6% private) in the same year for Grades 7 through 11 was 245,124. Grade Six examinations determine which secondary schools children will attend. Some children obviously do not progress past Grade six to a secondary placement; thus a crude drop-out rate of 25% is already evident in these total numbers. Classes operated by government and non-government organizations for children with

special education needs (hearing impaired, blind, mentally retarded, physically impaired) account for an additional 3,777 children (2003/04).

- 3.2 An examination of enrolment data of the 1986-87 cohort's sojourn from Grade 1 through Grade 11<sup>16</sup> provides a more detailed picture of attrition rates, including how gender tracks differ:

**A sample year of attrition rates (1987-98)**

GRADE	MALES					FEMALES				
	E	R	E-R	A	AR	E	R	E-R	A	AR
1 (1987)	28385	2299	27086			27416	1556	25860		
2	28298	737	27561	(475)		27175	405	26770	(910)	
3	27448	512	26936	625	<b>2.3</b>	27169	301	26868	(98)	
4	26798	521	26277	659	<b>2.4</b>	25843	353	25490	1378	<b>5.1</b>
5	25744	649	25095	1182	<b>4.5</b>	25685	420	25265	225	<b>0.9</b>
6	NO DATA					NO DATA				
7	25231	206	25025	70	<b>0.3</b>	25478	121	25357	(92)	
8	24550	184	24366	659	<b>2.6</b>	25454	156	25298	59	<b>0.2</b>
9	23235	629	22606	1760	<b>* 7.2</b>	24098	458	23640	1658	<b>* 6.5</b>
10	16261	461	15800	6806	<b>30.1</b>	18485	311	18174	5466	<b>23.1</b>
11 (1997)	13108					15391				

**E= Enrolment R= Repeaters A=Attrition AR = Attrition Rate**

**\* These numbers represent primarily the all-age school leavers; all-age schools end at Grade 9.**

- 3.3 The consistently higher annual attrition rate of males is notable here; males entered the system with a nearly 2000 advantage, but left Grade 11 over 200 fewer than females. Analysis of other year cohorts showed similar trends. By the end of secondary school, another quarter plus of the age cohort has not completed to Grade 11, thus precluding any advance to higher levels of education.

- 3.4 Attendance figures speak even more loudly to issues of school failure. The same study which examined gender differences in enrolment (above) also looked at attendance of the same 1986-87 cohort in Grades 1-5; in this table the variable of urban/rural schools is added to gender:

YEAR/GRADE	U/R	PRIMARY SCHOOLS		ALL-AGE SCHOOLS	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
1986-87 1	U	77	76	64	69
	R	65	67	59	64
1987-88 2	U	76	78	68	72
	R	65	69	69	64
1988-89 3	U	78	81	70	74
	R	76	78	71	69
1989-90 4	U	77	80	70	73
	R	78	76	68	70
1990-91 5	U	71	74	66	71
	R	64	68	56	62

The most recent statistics of the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions 2004 estimates that 75.8% of primary level children had full attendance (sent to school

over a referenced 20-day period); this average represents 80.3% in the Kingston Metropolitan area, 82.6% Other Towns, and 70.6 Rural areas.

- 3.5 Routine child assessments provide the balance of the picture of what is happening in terms of poor school performance. A Grade One Readiness Inventory is administered to all children within the first term of Grade One, assessing mastery, near-mastery or non-mastery of basic school readiness skills and capacities. The results by type of pre-primary institution follows:

**Percentage of children achieving Mastery at GRI 2003:**

SCHOOL TYPE/ Sub-Tests	Visual-Motor Coordination	Visual	Audio	Number/Letter Recognition
Basic	85.5%	52.1	54.5	66.9
Infant	89.8	58.8	63.0	73.9
Preparatory	95.6	77.9	83.4	89.5
NATIONAL	86.3	54.4	57.1	68.7

Source: Education Task Force Report, p. 23

This table makes it clear that the majority of Jamaican children, economically disadvantaged to begin with, end up in pre-primary settings that do not provide them with the basic competencies which the Jamaican primary system requires. Only the 6% of children attending private preparatory preschools can be considered to be nearly ready as indicated by these tests. Already at this age males show lower scores generally on these competencies than females.

- 3.6 Further evidence of trouble is provided at Grade Three, when a diagnostic test of six language arts sub-tests and five mathematics sub-tests are administered, along with a written communications task. **Just over half of the children failed to master any of the skill areas**; 38.3% did not master any of the language arts areas. Only 13.6% (language arts) and 3.8% (mathematics) of the children mastered five skill areas. Females scored higher than males in all sub-tests. [\[More details in ESS 22,7\]](#)
- 3.7 With few exceptions primary children are not retained in grades until they master basic competencies; automatic promotion results in deceptively low grade retention figures. From 2000 a **Grade Four Literacy test** has been used to provide summer remediation, retest, and retention if necessary for those students who do not demonstrate mastery of basic literacy. The results of the 2003 Grade Four Literacy test are as follows:

- Students achieving Mastery level                    57.7%
- Students achieving Near Mastery                    23.9%
- **Students at Non-mastery level                    18.4%**

- 3.7 The Grade Six Achievement Test in 2000 replaced the former Common Entrance Exam, which determined the placement of students in a fixed number of secondary school places by final scores on tests in language arts, mathematics and “mental ability” (cognitive reasoning). More secondary school places were created through the secondary school reform efforts beginning in 1995, and the

examination areas were broadened to include social studies, and communication. In 2004, 48,799 children registered to sit this exam and all were placed in secondary level schools. It is not clear how many children do not register and for what reasons, but it is clear that some of the primary age drop-outs are at this stage. Percentage scores by those who sat the exam in 2003 were achieved as follows:

- Mathematics 48%
- Science 48%
- Social Studies 54%
- Language Arts 52%
- Communication task 67%

- 3.8 With these results, it should therefore not be surprising that the **end-of-secondary Caribbean exams (CXC)** are showing poor performance results. In the June 2004 sitting of the CXC exams 7,527 students (13.9%) passed four or more subjects (minimum for entry to a tertiary institution), and 2920 (5.4%) passed six or more subjects. This was a decline from 17.9% (4 subjects) and 8.6% (six) from the year before. Student performances at Mathematics and English Language were at their lowest, with pass rates of 25.8% and 39.7% respectively. The data showed a decline in the pass rates for both subjects across all school types.
- 3.9 It is not difficult to see from the above figures why increasing attention has been recently focused on the foundation years for educational achievement. With high rates of limited or non-mastery of school readiness skills upon entry to Grade One, high numbers of children continue through the system, automatically promoted despite increasing evidence of poor performance, until Grade Four Literacy alarm bells either reverse the trend with some form of remediation or drop-out of the system results. The GSAT and Secondary school exams continue to show decline in performance. And throughout the system, starting even before Grade One, boys are doing less well than girls.
- 3.10 The Early Childhood Commission has been given a major mandate to try and “fix” that foundation, to tackle with urgency the multiple contributions to this sad and wasteful picture of educational underachievement. It has been proven in other jurisdictions that quality early childhood development will reduce grade retention, improve school performance, and save governments considerable costs in social and educational remediation. After ten plus years of frustratingly unsuccessful efforts at the primary and secondary levels to reverse the downward trends, it is to the work of the Commission that we now turn in Section 4.

#### **4. The Early Childhood Commission’s mandate to reverse school failure**

- 4.1 Section 2b above has outlined the history and status of the early childhood development sub-sectors, and the culmination in the 2000 Strategic Review that recommended the establishment of a Commission with responsibilities for the coordination and monitoring of all Early Childhood services. The Commission is

new—its Board met for the first time in November 2003 and staffing the Commission has only just recently approached full complement of 12 positions. At its official launch in May 2003, the new Chairman spelled out the Commission's mandate (excerpted from a larger statement):

*The Early Childhood Commission was established in recognition of the need for a long term vision and plan for a comprehensive and an integrated delivery of early childhood programs and services to facilitate the appropriate development of the young child. The purpose of the integrated approach to early childhood development is to establish complementarities between line ministries and agencies contributing to the development process of the child. In addition to facilitating optimal development, the integrated approach maximizes the use of limited resources by reducing duplication and fragmentation resulting in a more cohesive delivery of services. The Commission had its genesis in the Early Childhood Integration Movement.*

*The Commission will be a body corporate, governed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of at least sixteen and no more than twenty members. The operational arm of the Commission will be managed by an Executive Director with a support staff of approximately twelve individuals at full complement. The aim of the Commission as part of this new initiative is to forge alliances for improving the quality of early childhood development. The proposed Early Childhood Act, a companion legislation to the Early Childhood Commission Act will prescribe the regulatory powers of the Commission and set standards to which Early Childhood Institutions will be required to conform.*

*Additional functions of the Commission will include:*

- *Advise the Cabinet (through the Minister of Education) on policy matters relating to early childhood care, education and development in Jamaica, including initiatives and actions to achieve national early childhood development goals.*
- *Assist in the preparation of plans and programmes concerning early childhood development.*
- *Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the plans in respect of early childhood care, education and development and make recommendations to the Government through the Minister of Education as it thinks fit.*
- *Act as coordinating agency to ensure effective streamlining of all activities relating to early childhood development.*
- *Convene consultations with relevant stakeholders as appropriate.*
- *Analyse resource needs and submit recommendations for budgetary allocation for early childhood development.*
- *Identify alternative financing through negotiation with donor agencies and liaise with such agencies to ensure effective and efficient use of donor funds.*
- *Provide standards and licensing regulations for all early childhood institutions, with overall improved service delivery as the goal.<sup>17</sup>*

4.2 **Policy and Programmes.** This paper cannot deal with all the present and anticipated functions of the Commission. It will examine the **policy** of the Commission, in terms of its legislated mandate to reorganize the management structure and delivery systems of early childhood services for pre-primary children, and **two** specific **programmes** of the Commission seen as bearing greatest urgency at the outset of its work. While other tasks of the Commission

are also underway, these **two** programmes will provide measurable benchmarks in relation to some contributions to school failure.

4.3 **Structural Reorganisation.** The composition of the Early Childhood Commission speaks to the nature of the reorganization mandate from the outset. Although the Commission reports to Parliament through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, it stands as an inter-sectoral body appointed by the Governor General outside the structure of the Ministry. The Board is constituted of twenty persons, some representing Ministries (Planning, Health, Labour, Education, and Finance), others representing child development specializations (paediatrics, mental health, nutrition, nursing, child development, early education and parenting), plus a representative each of the statutory Child Development Agency, the Coalition for Better Parenting (a national network of services), the Disabilities group, and a representative of the Government's Opposition.

4.4 The staffing structure was designed to take the Commission's broad integrated mandate into account. An Executive Director and support staff (finance director and clerk, systems administrator and office support) were to be joined by five key Coordinators, supported by Board Committees:

- Regulation and Monitoring
- Training and Development
- Community Intervention
- Public Education and Information
- Research and Targeting

At this writing, the first two coordinators are on board; the last two to start soon, and the community intervention position **will be filled next year.**

4.5 For the purposes of this paper, we will examine primarily the Regulation and Monitoring functions of the Commission. These have received the greatest public attention and the most intense work of ECC sub-committees to date, and also have wide-ranging implications for the other major function areas of the Commission. The following two project/programme areas under this function will also demonstrate the broadened scope of sector oversight given the Commission, and the challenges inherent in working across Ministries and departments, as well as with private sector entities and organizations of civil society, to address the real developmental needs of young children. These two programme areas are:

- a) Early screening and detection of developmental and behavioural disorders, especially in children from birth to three, and the establishment of referral systems on identification of at-risk children for more effective response and treatment.
- b) The regulations standards for early childhood institutions (day care programmes and preschools) aimed at raising the overall quality of teaching, care and the learning environments, including that of the home

Thus, it could be said that these two programmes of the ECC address (a) those developmental risks that can affect socio-emotional and academic performance of *the child*, and thus cause school failure, and (b) those *systemic* shortcomings that prevent a significant majority of children from reaching their full potential.

- 4.6 The exercise of these regulatory and monitoring functions will require that restructuring and prioritizing strategies occur at the level of each individual early childhood provision, at the level of parish and sub-regional boards and departments, at the level of curriculum provisions for teachers/caregivers and for the children's learning environments, and at the level of inter-governmental responsibilities and coordination.
- 4.7 **Screening and Referral Programme.** There are many risk conditions which can impair a child's development and thus his/her school performance—these conditions can be congenital, or the result of accident, neglect or abuse. They can be the result of community conditions over which the child has little control, such as unsanitary and overcrowded conditions, or endemic inner-city violence. They can manifest as physical symptoms or cognitive/emotional dysfunctions. Many such conditions go undetected, particularly within school systems of large classes and teachers untrained in detecting them. Serious medical, biological or environmental problems demand swift attention and remediation if maximum child development is to be attained. Thus early identification and timely follow-up action is essential to correct or attenuate such problems.
- 4.8 The Early Childhood Commission has designed a year-long project to begin in September 2005 to address the need for early detection and referral of such children for appropriate treatment or support. It will work primarily in partnership with the University of the West Indies Department of Child Health and the Ministry of Health in this major undertaking and is presently in pursuit of the balance of funds required for the completion of all aspects. The "Screening Project" (for short) has two primary sub-components:
- The development of an appropriate screening tool for early detection of developmental disorders in Jamaican children birth to three years. At present there are no facilities in Jamaica which provide such screening. An internationally tested tool<sup>18</sup> will be adapted and tested in the Jamaican context for validity, specificity and reliability, over the course of a year. The output will be a screening tool for use in well child clinics island-wide with recommendations for necessary follow-up.
  - The development of a multi-disciplinary Child Development Therapy course at the diploma level and a Masters programme in Child Development. The course development will be informed by:
    - an objective analysis of existing services for screening, referral and intervention with children from birth through age eight

- Identification of current demand and the personnel requirements within the early childhood sector to meet that demand
  - Research on existing child development courses, materials
  - Consultations with a wide range of professional service providers, education sector specialists, the Standards and Assessment unit of the national Council on Technical and Vocational Education and Training, etc.
- 4.9 In the components of this screening project, the Early Childhood Commission will thus be drawing together a multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary approach to the needs of young children for screening and referral services, and then providing the avenue for which the demands for such services can be appropriately met. From this approach to ensuring that **children are optimally ready** for their learning experiences within the home and at school, we turn to the requirements for making the **learning environments optimally ready** for young children's development.

#### 4.10 **Upgrading service delivery in Early Childhood Institutions.**

Describe the various elements: Regulations and registration requirements  
 Implications of new standards  
 Timeframe for compliance  
 Integrated nature of the reforms  
 Implementation challenges:

- Authority and jurisdiction issues
- Manpower requirements
- Parental/community resistance/education
- Teacher training, levels of resistance
- Resources of each setting

Measurement challenges, opportunities (ECERS Survey, Survey of physical conditions re Compliance, links to screening activities, etc.)  
 Financing challenges: donor agencies, government, parents, private sector  
 Results anticipated

#### 5. Final reflections and pending challenges: summary of main hurdles and opportunities

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<sup>4</sup> Source

<sup>2</sup> Government of Jamaica and European Union, in UNICEF, Changing the future for Jamaica's Children, p. 15.

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<sup>5</sup> D. Jupp (2001) *Enni wey i maaga, a deh so il pap*: the fragile nature of social capital, some experiences in Jamaica.

<sup>6</sup> Samms-Vaughan, M. (2001) A profile of the status of Jamaican preschool children and their learning environments, CCDC, UWI/IDB [\(Get recent publishing date for PIOJ\)](#)

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Task Force on Educational Reform Final Report September 2004, presented by Chairman Dr. Rae Davis to Prime Minister P. J. Patterson.

<sup>2</sup> Task Force Report, p. 18

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Task Force report, p. 19

<sup>9</sup> Sinha, D (1988) Children of the Caribbean 1945-1984: Progress in Child Survival, its determinants and implications. Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute and UNICEF (CAO)

<sup>11</sup> McDonald, K. *The challenge of making the whole greater than the sum of its parts*, for **Caribbean Childhoods**, journal of the Children's Issues Coalition (awaiting publication).

<sup>11</sup> McDonald, K. (1995) Early Childhood Education Evaluation Report for Dudley Grant Memorial Trust

<sup>12</sup> McDonald, K. (1995) Evaluation Report on the Early Childhood Education Programme in Jamaica. The Evaluation and Revitalisation Project/Early Childhood Unit, Ministry of Education and Culture.

<sup>13</sup> [Morrison report on Financing ECD](#)

<sup>14</sup> Figures from Day Care Unit, Early Childhood Unit, Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, May 2005

<sup>15</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Chevannes, B. (1999) What we sow and what we reap: Problems in the cultivation of male identity in Jamaica, Grace, Kennedy Foundation Lecture Series

<sup>17</sup> Dr. Maureen Samms-Vaughan, Board Chairman, at Launch of Early Childhood Commission

<sup>18</sup> The Ages and Stages Parent Completed Questionnaire is highly pictorial (for less literate populations), can be administered in ten minutes and provides those administering the questionnaire with guidance on follow-up.