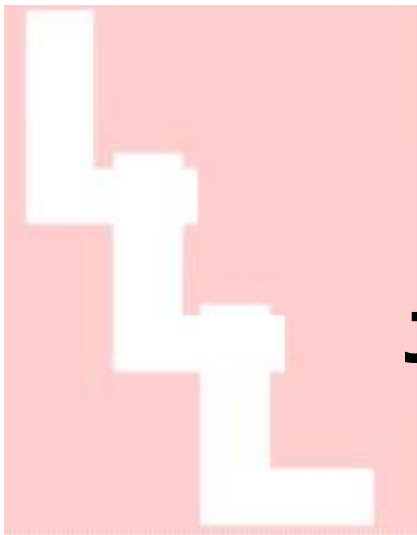


**TOWARDS
A
LIFELONG LEARNING
POLICY**



**FOR
JAMAICA**

*Lifelong
Learning
Focus Group*

**FOR PRESENTATION TO
THE HUMAN RESOURCE COUNCIL OF CABINET**

SEPTEMBER 19, 2005

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Lifelong Learning (LLL) is now not only on the policy agendas of UNESCO, the OECD, the World Bank, and many developed countries e.g., the United Kingdom and Australia, but has become – given the pervasiveness of globalization – the new way of talking about a nation’s education and training policy that is based on the importance of education to productivity in the New Economy.

In the past, lifelong learning was referred to as adult or continuing education. However, with the emergence of the ‘knowledge economy’, the emphasis on learning has shifted from ‘schooling’ and ‘continuing education’ to a ‘cradle-to-the-grave’ approach. Learning as defined by the ‘Campaign for Learning’ in the United Kingdom is:

“a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve the development of skills, knowledge, understanding, awareness, values, ideas and feelings, of an increase in the capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more.”

In the European Union, the accepted definition of Lifelong Learning is

“All learning activity undertaken **throughout life**, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competence within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective.”

Lifelong learning therefore connotes:

- **acquiring and updating** *all* kinds of abilities, interests, knowledge forms, and qualifications from the pre-school years to post-retirement activity. It promotes the development of knowledge and competences that will enable each citizen to adapt to the knowledge-based society and actively participate in all spheres of social and economic life, taking more control of his or her future; and
- **valuing** *all* forms of learning, including formal learning from the early childhood to tertiary levels, non-formal learning that takes place at the workplace, and informal learning that occurs in the bars, playgrounds, and homes across the nation.

This presentation by the Lifelong Learning Focus Group outlines the rationale for a National Lifelong Learning Policy and suggests ways in which, it can address and correct those social and economic development issues that have had major impact on the quality of life of the Jamaican population.

RATIONALE

Within recent times, a number of policies and significant reports relating to education and training have been developed and implemented, but none to date, have definitively addressed the matter of Lifelong Learning. Chief among these documents are:

- The Task Force Report on Educational Reform (2004)
- The National Youth Policy [Draft]
- The National Culture Policy
- The National HIV Policy.

A Lifelong Learning Policy does not necessarily require the implementation of new programmes as there are a number of existing programmes and policies within the public and private sectors that support such a Policy.

Lifelong Learning seeks to foster a climate which allows for, on the economic front national competitiveness, business success, personal employability and prosperity and on the social front, a fair inclusive policy, active citizenship, strong families and personal fulfillment. Key to the success of any Lifelong Learning initiative is government providing the mechanism to facilitate, motivated and inspired citizens to actively participate in lifelong learning. These mechanisms include a national policy which addresses issues such as quality assurance, standards, access and coordination across the sectors – both public and private. According to David Blunkett:

“As well as securing our economic future, learning has a wider contribution. It helps make ours a civilized society, develops the spiritual side of lives and promotes active citizenship. Learning enables people to play a full part in their community. It strengthens the family, the neighbourhood and consequently the nation.”

Source: British Council Lifelong Learning Seminar, 2005

In outlining the Terms of Reference for the members of the Task Force on Educational Reform, the Prime Minister the Most Honourable P. J. Patterson mandated that they:

- “prepare and present an action plan consistent with the creation of a world-class education system with the benefit of modern technology, geared to generate the human capital and produce the skills required for competing successfully in the global economy.” And further, that they
- “propose measures which can ensure continuing partnership between the State, Church, Parents, Teachers, Students, Political Parties, Past Students’ Associations [at home and abroad], Non-Government Organizations, and the entire Civil Society which will result in the provision of education that facilitates lifelong learning and the acquisition of positive social and life skills for all.”

(Task Force on Educational Reform, Jamaica, Final Report – Revised Edition, p. 11)

In the Report, the Task Force noted that

“The Key Outcome Goal for Education is *‘an education which facilitates lifelong learning and the acquisition of social and life skills for all’*.”

Although the Task Force Report focused on the Ministry of Education, Youth & Culture as was its mandate, the concept ‘**lifelong learning**’ can only be made operational and effective when all Ministries are involved. The following key Ministries have a pivotal role to play in this process:

- the Ministry of Education, Youth & Culture;
- the Ministry of Health;
- the Ministry of Local Government, Community Development & Sport;
- the Ministry of Labour & Social Security;
- the Ministry of Development;
- the Ministry of Information;
- the Ministry of Industry & Tourism;
- the Ministry of National Security;
- the Ministry of Finance & Planning;
- the Ministry of Commerce, Science and Technology; and

- the Ministry of Agriculture.

VISION

The vision of the Policy is:

‘A transformed Jamaica in which each person values and participates in Lifelong Learning to generate and sustain personal productivity in the pursuit of national growth and development.’

POLICY GOALS

The three major goals are:

- (a) The development and fostering of a culture of learning that includes and benefits every citizen, inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- (b) The provision of an enabling environment nationwide that ensures access to lifelong learning.
- (c) The development and sustenance of an enlightened, thinking, and competent population.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Policy are to:

- raise the standards and attainment levels throughout the education and training system;
- promote **inclusion and equality of opportunity** for all learners of every age;
- increase access to, and widen participation in the education and training system;
- enhance skills development and employability opportunities, throughout life;
- develop a community focus emphasizing citizenship, good attitudes, and appropriate values;
- create ‘learning organizations’ in public and private sector organizations;

- develop an entrepreneurial spirit among the citizenry;
- increase the levels of productivity of each citizen-worker;
- promote knowledge acquisition and use which builds marketplace competitiveness; and
- improve individual health and well-being through personal empowerment.

STRATEGIES

The following strategies will facilitate the implementation of the Policy:

- introducing legislative amendments;
- informing and educating the public about ‘learning for life’ especially those who may believe that *‘learning [i.e., schooling] is NOT for them;’*
- introducing structured Career Development Programmes at all levels of the formal education and training system;
- encouraging Corporate Jamaica to develop and establish a culture that transforms their workplaces into ‘learning organizations’ that guarantee profitability;
- community mobilization for social and economic improvement at every level;
- providing and expanding programmes and services to facilitate learning activities and to reach a greater and more diverse population for economic performance and growth;
- removing structural barriers to participation in the formal learning process;
- permanently raising the literacy rate to at least 95 per cent;
- ensuring that graduates of every learning institution are literate;
- developing and implementing programmes for personal empowerment;
- incorporating lifelong learning services/programmes into institutions such as libraries, museums, churches, sports clubs, community centres, and cooperatives/cottage industries; and
- promoting programmes for the development of informed, questioning, thoughtful and responsible citizens of every age, who are eager and willing to serve their families, their communities, and the wider society.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The Economy

Since the mid-1990s, Jamaica has experienced severe economic challenges, some of which include sluggish economic growth, high debt to GDP ratio, high interest rates, high inflation rates, high unemployment rates and a persistently high negative external trade balance. Compounding the economic constraints was a 35 per cent real increase in nominal wages, despite slow and negative growth in production. According to the Managing Director of JAMALCO, Mr. Jerome Maxwell “ we are on an undesirable road currently – one we are making every effort to turn away from – one that leads to indiscipline, unemployment and untrained and un-trainable work force, economic and social uncertainty with investors looking elsewhere.” (Jamaica Observer, Monday, July 18, 2004).

The Ministry of Finance and Planning is more optimistic with respect to the future performance of the economy. The Ministry in the 2004/05 budget expressed its confidence that growth will be supported by a continued downward path of domestic interest rates, a more competitive exchange rate, and a resurgence in domestic and export agriculture, tourism, and mining (WTO economic environment).

Jamaica's medium-term economic outlook

(Per cent)

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Real GDP growth	2.2	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0
Inflation	16.5	9.0	7.0	6.0	6.0
Fiscal balance/GDP	-5.8	-(3-4)	0	0.5-1	1.0-2
Primary surplus/GDP	12.3	13.7	13.4	13.1	12.8

Source: Ministry of Finance and Planning (2004a), *2004/05 Budget Memorandum*.

The Labour Market – Employment, Jobs and Certification

An examination of the trends existing in the local Labour Market between 2002 and 2004, has shown growth in employment in some categories of workers and decline in others. Five of the eight categories surveyed

recorded growth recorded of between 5.4 per cent and 8.7 per cent with the latter increase occurring in the category 'Clerks'. Of significance was the decline of 7.3 per cent in employment in the category 'Professional, Senior Officials and Technicians.' It is noteworthy that this category also experienced decline in the number of persons in the labour force.

As is occurring elsewhere in the global economy, a decline of some 5.3 per cent was recorded in the number of persons employed in the Agricultural Sector while growth continued in the Service Sector which was reflected in the increase in employment in the category 'Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers.' This category of persons accounted for the largest group of workers in the labour force but not in the number employed, as agricultural workers still account for the largest category of employed persons.

Furthermore, when a survey was conducted of jobs advertised in both The Gleaner and The Daily Observer for the period May 2002 to June 2005, the highest demand was for managers, directors, educators - lecturers, teachers, instructors, educators, professors and marketing/sales representatives. In other words 'Professionals, Senior Officials and Technicians' (44.0 per cent) and 'Service Workers and Shop & Market Sales Workers' (22.1) i.e. Service Sector workers are in highest demand for the jobs available. This need has also been documented in the case of immigrant workers where data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Security indicate an increase in the number of new work permit applications from 3,122 in 2002 to 3,863 in 2004.

During the period, 2002 to 2004, there was an increase in the number of retired persons in the labour market, created by an increase in life expectancy and the need to earn an income to sustain acceptable living standards persons. Therefore, some remained in the labour force while others were seeking employment.

Over the three year period 2002-2004, there was growth of 5.1 per cent in the number of workers in the labour market who had no certification or training, moving from 762,850 in 2002 to 801,430 in 2004. New entrants to the labour market are entering untrained and uncertified. Professionals with degrees/diplomas accounted for 7.4 per cent of the employed and persons with vocational certification accounting for 6.5 per cent of workers.

Education

School enrollment was almost universal among the age group of 3 – 16 for the period of 1993 – 2002. Over 90 per cent of children from the group were enrolled in a school for the period. There were only minor differences in enrollment between students from different regions and social classes in the age cohort. Only 36 per cent of 17 and 18 year olds were enrolled in school for the period and only 6 per cent of young adults aged 19 – 24.

Social class appeared to play a small role in declining enrollment as students advance to upper secondary and post secondary ages. Though enrollment decline was severely dramatic across the board, 14 per cent of the students from the richest quintile were still enrolled in school compared to 1.6 per cent of the poorest quintile. Enrollment differences was less sensitive between regions, as 4 per cent of young adults from rural areas was enrolled in schools compared to 8.8 per cent of persons in urban dwellings. Only a small minority of persons go on to tertiary education.

The majority of Jamaica's youth exited the school system after secondary school. For the period 1993 to 2002, some 92 per cent of the students who entered Jamaica's formal education system left at the secondary level. Of the persons who exited the education system at that stage, only 7.2 per cent later went on to undertake any type of formal education or schooling. According to the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (2002), 81.2 per cent of persons not enrolled in a school have no academic qualifications and only 2 per cent have passed at least one CXC (general 3+). This compounds the problem of early exit from the school system, because not only are persons leaving early, but they are leaving without any academic qualifications, and without pursuing further education throughout their lifetime.

Compounding the enrollment issues of pupils' later years is the students' performance in secondary-level exams and particularly in the Sciences. Less than half of the number of candidates who sat CXC Biology managed to obtain a grade 1 or 2 pass in 2004, with an average of 53 per cent for the period 2000-2004. Only 37 per cent received similar results in Chemistry in 2004 with an average of 46.8 per cent for the period. Overall pass rates for Physics was better than Chemistry with 47.2 per cent receiving a grade 1 or 2 pass for the period and 48 per cent in 2004.

Mathematics continues to be the biggest concern for all students sitting secondary exams. The subject has produced and continues to produce the worst results. In 2004, approximately 26 per cent of the students who sat the exam (CXC) gained a passing grade 1 or 2, with an average of 30.8 per cent of such passes for the period. In no single year did any group manage to achieve more than 35 per cent success (grade 1 or 2) in the subject.

Despite the performance of the education system, the Government of Jamaica continues to support the system by investing heavily in school programmes. According to GLOBIS, in 2001 Jamaica had the 8th highest education expenditure (6.8%) as a percentage of GDP worldwide. Only two recognized developed countries – New Zealand & Sweden – ranked higher than Jamaica in this regard. The government has allotted \$38 billion to education for the 2005/6 school year. This represents 11 per cent of the total budget, which is an increase of 24 percent over the past year. The average budget expenditure allocated to education from 1996 – 2005 was 10.7 per cent of the total budget, with a high of 14 per cent for the 1997/98 school year.

Crime and Violence

Jamaica is ranked among the most violent countries in the world.

In 1998, the country ranked fourth highest among all countries in terms of homicides per 100,000 persons of the population – recording a total of 37 murders per 100,000 (National Committee on Crime and Violence). By 2000 it ranked third highest in the world with a reduced number of homicides. Violent crimes continue to cost the nation millions of dollars in health care on an annual basis. Hospital-based care as a result of violent-related injuries amounted to half a billion dollars (\$500,000,000) in 2002. Since health seekers default on an estimated 80 per cent of public health cost (KPH), the settlement of the unpaid excess invariably becomes a part of unplanned government expenditure, thereby creating greater budgetary deficits.

BENEFITS OF THE POLICY

The benefits to be gained by the implementation of this Policy are wide in scope and would affect the life of each citizen. They are as followings:

- national economic growth and nationwide prosperity;

- increased personal and national productivity;
- increased personal income derived from participating in world-class enterprises;
- better and more consistent health practices;
- improved rates of participation in formal education programmes and the outcomes;
- the ability to compete more effectively in international markets through the development and evolution of 'niche marketing';
- reduction in criminal activities to tolerable levels; and
- poverty alleviation and reduction.

The empowerment of all citizens to:

- improve their standards of living;
- exhibit consciousness about and understand the importance of environmental issues
- improve maternal and child health, with the concomitant reduction in early and unsafe childbearing practices;
- prepare for and participate in regional integration (CSME) and the global marketplace;
- reduce the high level of dependency on the State;
- increase the individual's prospects for creating, accessing and maintaining employment; and
- pursue active participation in the local legislative process.

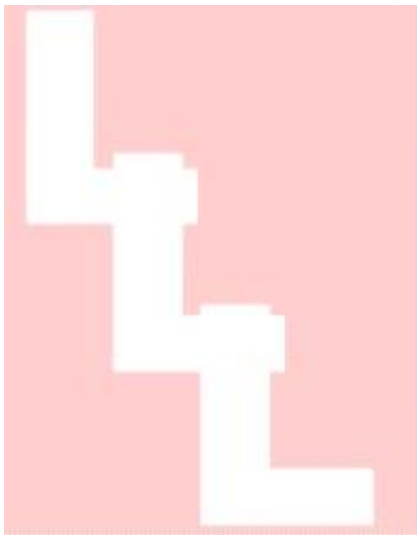
THE WAY FORWARD

The Focus Group's Action Plan for the period 2003-2008 includes:

- The creation of a National Database providing information on training and education opportunities available islandwide.
- Conducting surveys to generate benchmark data.
- The development of a National Public Awareness Campaign to begin at the community level and be supported by advertisement in the print and electronic media.
- The promulgation of a National Lifelong Learning Policy Framework through regional forums.
- Convening LLL Conferences and youth/student forums.
- Establishing partnership networks across the island.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The development of an Employment Policy aimed at attracting investment that will utilize the human capital available.
2. Linkages and partnerships established between the Lifelong Learning Focus Group and the National Transformation Team in relation to the monitoring and coordinating of lifelong learning initiatives.
3. A multisectoral approach to the implementation of all lifelong learning activities.



*Lifelong
Learning
Focus Group*

APPENDIX

Members of the Lifelong Learning Focus Group

The Lifelong Learning Focus group comprises representatives of the Education and Training System, the Church, Trade Union and the private and public sectors, all committed to ensure continuous learning for the entire population.

The members are:

Ms. Vilma Freeman

Chairperson

Member of Policy Framework Committee – Manager, Professional Guidance Information Services (PROGIS) HEART Trust/NTA

Lifelong Learning Programmes Committee members

Mrs. Beverly Henry

Chairperson -Director of Career Services, Work Study & Student Aid, Northern Caribbean University (NCU)

Ms. Erica Williams

Coordinator, Programme Planning & Implementation, PROGIS

Ms. Clover Barnett

Director, Learning Management Service Department, HEART Trust/NTA

Mrs. Antoinette Brooks

Education Officer with responsibility for career development MOEYC, Guidance Unit

David Gordon Rowe

Lecturer, Human Resource Programmes, University College of the Caribbean

Ms. Jacqui Moriah, *Consultant*

Mr. Ward Mills

Human Resource Officer, Grace Kennedy & Co.

Ms. Lorraine Salmon

Labour Market Analyst, Ministry of Labour & Social Security

Mrs. Anita James Thomas

Lecturer, Faculty of Education & Liberals Studies, University of Technology

Research Committee members

Mr. Steven Kerr

Chairman – Manager, Manpower Planning, Planning Institute of Jamaica

Mr. Kerron Lindo

Acting Manager, Research Unit, Planning and Policy Development Division, HEART/Trust NTA

Dr. Delores Brissett

Assistant Chief Education Officer, Guidance Unit, MOEYC

Mr. Richard Shaw

Coordinator for Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, PROGIS, HEART Trust/NTA

Mrs. Ruth Morris

Executive Director, National Council on Education

Ms Kaytana McLeod

Coordinator, Recording Secretariat, Cabinet Office

Policy Framework Committee members

Mrs. Patricia Roberts

Chairperson - Executive Director, Jamaica Library Service

Rev. Harris Cunningham

General Secretary, Jamaica Council of Churches

Mrs. Jacqueline Coke-Lloyd

Executive Director, Jamaica Employers Federation

Mr. Patrick Facey

Assistant Chief Education Officer, MOEYC, Technical Vocational Unit

Mr. Gregory Fletcher

Registrar/Information Technology Specialist, Council of Community Colleges

Mrs. Jeanette Grant Woodham

Senior Programme Officer, University of the West Indies, Mona

Mr. Riley Seymour

Executive Director, JAMAL

Ms. Myra Pusey Powell,

Senior Vice Principal Excelsior Community College

Ms. Gail Williams

Director, Training and Development, Office of the Prime Minister

Public Awareness Committee members

Mrs. Carole Powell

Chairperson – Project Director, Rationalization Project, Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture

Ms. Angella Chaplain

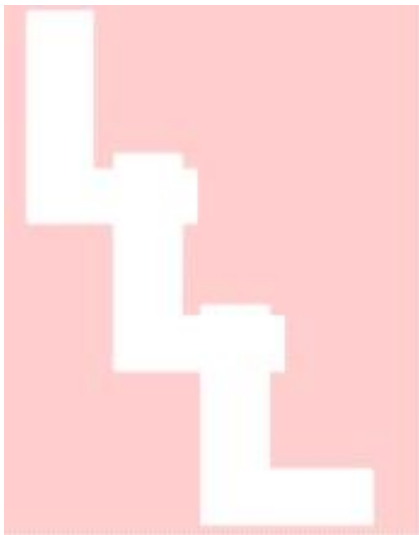
Principal, Vauxhall High School

Mr. Clive Grossett

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Mr. Cyril Lebert

Secretary, Professional Service, Jamaica Teachers Association



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