

Jamaica



Population: 2,847,232 (July 2010 est.)
Population Growth Rate: 0.747% (2010 est.)
Birth Rate: 19.47 births/1,000 population (2010 est.)
Life Expectancy: total population: 73.48 years; male: 71.8 years; female: 75.25 years (2010 est.)
Literacy Rate: total population: 87.9%; male: 84.1%; female: 91.6% (2003 est.)
Net Migration Rate: -5.52 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2010 est.)
Unemployment Rate: 14.5% (2009 est.)
Gross Domestic Product per Capita: \$8,200 (2009 est.)
Religions: Protestant 62.5%, Roman Catholic 2.6%, other or unspecified 14.2%, none 20.9% (2001 census)
Languages: English, English patois
Ethnic Groups: black 91.2%, mixed 6.2%, other or unknown 2.6% (2001 census)
Capital: Kingston¹

Trafficking Routes

Jamaica is a destination country for individuals trafficked from Haiti for forced labor. Jamaican men, women, and children are also trafficked internally, especially in the sex trade.² Women and children are trafficked from rural areas for sexual exploitation in urban and tourist areas.³ There have been reports of Jamaicans trafficked to the United States for forced labor.⁴

Factors That Contribute to the Trafficking Infrastructure

The dependence of Jamaica's economy on prostitution and the existence of widespread poverty are two aspects that foster child prostitution.⁵ Children are often coerced into exploitation by promises of better living conditions and economic prosperity.⁶

The phenomenon of "barrel children" also contributes to the sexual exploitation of children in Jamaica. "Barrel children" are those whose parents have migrated, usually for the

¹ CIA, THE WORLD FACTBOOK (2010), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/jm.html>.

² Glenda Simms, *Human trafficking: modern-day slavery*, JAMAICA GLEANER, May 11, 2008, available at: <http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20080511/focus/focus5.html>.

³ Janet Shan, *Sex Trafficking Alive in Jamaica*, ASSOCIATED CONTENT, Oct. 1, 2007, available at: http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/395660/sex_trafficking_alive_in_jamaica.html?cat=17.

⁴ Michelle Chen, *Today's Slave Trade*, RACEWIRE, May 28, 2009, available at: http://www.racewire.org/archives/2009/05/todays_slave_trade.html.

⁵ Shan *supra* at 2.

⁶ PACT, *Why Jamaican Children and Young People are Tempted*, available at: http://www.jamaica-kidz.com/Traficking_Children/tempted.html (last visited July 27, 2009).

purpose of employment, and who are left to care for the rest of the family. The absent parents are unable to provide adult supervision but presumably send money and “barrels” of clothing and gifts to the youngsters they have left behind. These children are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation and prostitution.⁷

Forms of Trafficking

Women are trafficked within and to Jamaica for sexual exploitation, and individuals are trafficked to Jamaica for forced labor.⁸ Children are trafficked within Jamaica for the purpose of sex tourism,⁹ and there have been cases of children trafficked for organ harvesting.¹⁰

Government Responses

The Child Care and Protection Act of 2004 prohibits the trafficking of children in article 10: “No person shall sell or participate in the trafficking of any child.” A fine and/or imprisonment of up to 10 years may be imposed on anyone who violates this law.¹¹

In 2005, the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons was established. Goals of the task force include training police officers, customs officials, and members of the judiciary; recommending amendments to legislation; enhancing the protection of victims; and instituting protocols for victim intervention.

In 2007, the Jamaican Senate passed the Trafficking in Persons Act, which was based on three primary goals: protecting the victim, prosecuting the perpetrator, and preventing future acts. The antitrafficking act was based on the U.N. Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Palermo Protocol.¹²

In July 2009, it was announced at a seminar on human trafficking in Jamaica that the Ministry of Justice is funding the refurbishment of three trafficking victims’ shelters. One will soon be functional and will provide shelter and social services to victims of trafficking.¹³

Currently, the Child Pornography Prevention Bill is before Parliament in Jamaica, and would criminalize actual or simulated sexual activities with a child in visual presentations, audio

⁷ International Organization for Migration (IOM), *Jamaica*, available at: <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/463>.

⁸ Simms *supra* at 2.

⁹ Heather Little-White, *Sex Tourism and Children*, JAMAICA-GLEANER, May 18, 2008, available at: <http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20080518/out/out9.html>.

¹⁰ PACT *supra* at 6.

¹¹ The Child Care and Protection Act of 2004, available at: http://www.cda.gov.jm/downloads/Child_Care_and_Protection_Act_2004.pdf.

¹² *Senate Passes Trafficking in Persons Bill*, JAMAICA INFORMATION SERVICE, Jan. 30, 2007, available at: http://www.jis.gov.jm/justice/html/20070129t1000000500_11109_jis_senate_passes_trafficking_in_persons_bill.asp.

¹³ *Victims of human trafficking to benefit from shelter*, JAMAICA-GLEANER, July 17, 2009, available at: <http://www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20090717/news/news6.html>.

recordings, or written material. Violators would be subject to up to 20 years in prison and fines up to \$500,000.¹⁴

The Child Development Agency (CDA) was established in 2004 to focus on the protection of children's rights. The CDA offers residential care, oversees foster care and adoption, and maintains a Children's Court.¹⁵ In 2007, the CDA sponsored the hotline 1-888-PROTECT as a means of access to assistance for young victims of trafficking and as a contact for individuals who wish to report instances of trafficking. The CDA is a member of the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons.¹⁶

Nongovernmental and International Organizations Responses

The nongovernmental organization Shared Hope International (SHI) works in various countries to prevent the trafficking of women and children and to promote victims' rights through programs designed to raise public awareness of trafficking. In 2006, SHI produced *Demand*, a documentary that exposed the prevalence of sexual exploitation within Jamaica. In 2007, SHI partnered with the Theodora Project of the United Church of Negril; a Village of Hope was constructed for at-risk children in Negril, and a computer center was opened to provide these children with skills training to reduce the possibility of exploitation through trafficking.¹⁷

People's Action for Community Transformation (PACT) is a partnership between 26 community-based organizations and NGOs. PACT members, especially the Western Society for Uplifting Children,¹⁸ are currently active in eastern Jamaica and in urban communities. PACT's Educational and Skills Training Project, which is part of its antitrafficking initiative funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, focuses on young people ages 14-24, offering tutoring and instruction in marketable skills. By mentoring vulnerable youths, PACT hopes to decrease their chances of becoming victims of trafficking.¹⁹

Multilateral Initiatives

The Department of Public Security of the Organization of American States (OAS) recently implemented Training Institutes of Foreign Affairs on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in Jamaica. As part of the program, Jamaica consular officers attended a two-day training seminar on July 15-16, 2009. The seminar was designed to enhance knowledge

¹⁴ *Jamaica tables Child Pornography Act*, CARIBBEAN NET NEWS, July 7, 2009, available at: http://www.caribbeanetnews.com/article.php?news_id=17520.

¹⁵ CDA, *About Us*, http://www.cda.gov.jm/noflash/about_us.php (last visited July 24, 2009).

¹⁶ *CDA Launches Toll Free Line for Cases of Human Trafficking*, JAMAICA INFORMATION SERVICE, Jan. 11, 2007, available at: http://www.jis.gov.jm/education/html/20070110T090000-0500_10994_JIS_CDA_LAUNCHES_TOLL_FREE_LINE_FOR_CASES_OF_HUMAN_TRAFFICKING.asp.

¹⁷ Shared Hope International, *Jamaica*, <http://www.sharedhope.org/where/jamaica.asp> (last visited June 30, 2010).

¹⁸ USAID, *Jamaican Anti Trafficking in Persons Project Changing Lives for Vulnerable Youngsters*, May 8, 2009, available at: <http://jamaica.usaid.gov/en/Article.1183.aspx>.

¹⁹ PACT *supra* at 6.

about trafficking in persons, illustrate the difference between trafficking and smuggling, instruct participants on the recognition of victims, and develop a familiarity with the different forms of trafficking. The OAS provided copies of training materials to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jamaica to be used in training future consular officers.²⁰

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been very active in collaborating with the Jamaican government and other Caribbean nations to combat trafficking. IOM held its annual seminar on “Mixed Migratory Flows in the Caribbean” in December 2008. Participants included government officials from 18 Caribbean countries, including Jamaica, and representatives from the Caribbean community, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the United Nations Children Fund or UNICEF. Presentations were made on identification of human trafficking, assistance to victims, and child trafficking. In September 2008, IOM provided training on direct assistance in Kingston for staff members of the Victim Support Unit. IOM also trained 30 operators for the CDA victims’ hotline; participants learned the goals of the hotline and how to offer counseling and guidance to callers.²¹

²⁰ *OAS to train Jamaica consular officers to combat human trafficking*, CARIBBEAN NET NEWS, July 11, 2009, available at: http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/article.php?news_id=17622.

²¹ IOM, *Counter-Trafficking Activities in Jamaica: An Overview of 2008* (Jan. 2009), available at: <http://www.iom.int/unitedstates/ct/PDFs/Building%20Capacity/2008/Jamaica%20-%20Activities%20Summary%202008.pdf>.