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An abstract geometric design consisting of several overlapping squares. One square is solid blue, another is solid teal, and others are white outlines. They are arranged in a stepped, descending pattern from the top left.

# **GENDER at WORK in the CARIBBEAN**

COUNTRY REPORT:

**Jamaica**





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First published (2018)

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Gender at Work in the Caribbean: Country Report for Jamaica

Language: English edition  
ISBN: 978-92-2-031056-4 (print); 978-92-2-031057-1 (web pdf)

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## Foreword

Despite the progress towards achieving gender equality in the world of work, considerable constraints remain. As a result, and as the Organization approaches its centenary in 2019, the Director-General launched the Women at Work Centenary Initiative. The initiative aims to better understand and address why progress on delivering on decent work for women has been so slow and what needs to be done towards securing a better future for women at work.

In March 2016, the ILO published the Women at Work – 2016 Trends Report, which presented in-depth analysis of the gender gaps in the world of work and explored the key policy drivers for gender transformative change. Taking this publication as a reference guide, the ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean commissioned country studies to establish an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of five ILO member States: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica and Saint Lucia.

This research is timely since at this juncture we do not have a comprehensive overview of the situation of women at work in the Caribbean. The findings of the report would provide information relevant for the implementation in the Caribbean of the “Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030”, adopted in October 2016. It will also contribute to SDG 5 on Gender Equality, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 10 on Inequalities, as well as the UN Women initiative on 50 50 by 2030.

The goal is to widen our knowledgebase on gender dimensions in the world of work in the Caribbean and how they are currently addressed. It is our hope that this will help direct policy makers as they mainstream gender in decent work policies. The studies use existing data to address important questions such as: What are the gender inequalities in the labour market? What is causing them? Do we have the data we need to understand the realities? Where are the inequalities mostly concentrated in terms of sectors and groups of workers? Are there legal protection and policy issues that are to be addressed? How well have countries done in mainstreaming gender equality dimensions across policies? What institutions, measures, policies and laws exist which promote women’s labour force participation, including in non-traditional types of work, as well as in trade unions, political and social organizations and how well are they being used? What are the good practices that can be identified and possibly replicated?

This initial study is expected to then further inform and guide additional research into the situation of women and men at work and the obstacles to equality and economic empowerment.

I would like to acknowledge, with deep appreciation, the guidance provided by Dagmar Walter, Deputy Director, and Shingo Miyake, Specialist, Labour Law and International Labour Standards, ILO DWT and Office for the Caribbean, in supervising the project and preparing this publication. I would like to express special thanks to Caroline Allen who conducted the research and prepared the draft text, with the invaluable assistance of representatives of the Gender Ministries who provided the information relating to their respective countries. Finally, I am also grateful of all Specialists of ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean who have provided comments and inputs to the draft text.

Claudia Coenjaerts  
Director  
ILO Decent Work Team and  
Office for the Caribbean





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## Acknowledgements

Ms Caroline Allen, PhD, undertook the research and authored the reports, which are aimed at providing a comprehensive overview of the Gender at Work situation in the Caribbean. Drawing from her regional level work, she focused on five country studies – Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica and Saint Lucia. Ms Chantal Toby, Research Assistant, provided support for this report. The findings and insights will allow for informed discussions with constituents and partners to take the subject forward in the countries concerned and beyond.

We thank UN Women and other collaborators who shared literature, data and recommended additional sources of information.

Staff of the ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean (DWT/O-POS) contributed in various ways to this report. Managing the initiative from start to finish were Ms Dagmar Walter, Deputy Director, and Mr Shingo Miyake, Labour Law and International Labour Standards Specialist. Mr Diego Rei, Employment and Labour Market Specialist, provided extensive contributions with respect to statistical data. Other colleagues of the DWT/O-POS provided further technical inputs and administrative support.



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## List of abbreviations

ABIS	Agricultural Business Information System
ACT/EMP	Bureau for Employers' Activities
AWOJA	Association of Women's Organizations of Jamaica
BGA	Bureau of Gender Affairs
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action
BWA	Bureau of Women's Affairs
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CARILED	Caribbean Local Economic Development Project
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CEACR	Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIM/OAS	The Inter-American Commission of Women, Organization of American States
DWT/O-POS	ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESP	Early Stimulation Programme
GAC	Gender Advisory Committee
GAD	Gender and Development
GBTI	Guyana Bank for Trade and Industry Limited
GFPs	Gender Focal Points
GMM	Gender Mainstreaming Manual
IGDS	Institute of Gender and Development Studies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
ILO	International Labour Organization
JADEP	Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme
JAMPRO	Jamaica Trade and Investment Promotion
JBDC	Jamaica Business Development Corporation
JHWA	Jamaica Household Workers' Association
JNRWP	Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers
MESECVI	Follow-up Mechanism to the Belém do Pará Convention
MIDA	Micro Investment Development Agency
MIIC	Ministry of Industry Investment and Commerce



MLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
NGOs	Non–Governmental Organizations
NIS	National Insurance Scheme
NPGE	National Policy for Gender Equality
NTC	National Tripartite Committee
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
PIOJ	Planning Institute of Jamaica
RADA	Rural Agricultural Development Agency
SBAJ	Small Business Association of Jamaica
SIOJ	Statistical Institute of Jamaica
STEM subjects	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics subjects
STWP	Steps to Work Programme
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Social and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNOHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
UN Women	United Nations Entity on Gender and the Empowerment of Women
UWI	University of the West Indies
VAT	Value Added Tax
WEDO	Women’s Entrepreneurship Day Organization (Jamaican Chapter)
WID	Women in Development [Movement]





# Introduction

To mark the commitment of constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to gender equality, and as the Organization approaches its centenary in 2019, the Director-General launched the **Women at Work Centenary Initiative**. The Initiative takes stock of the status and conditions of women in the world of work, and identifies action taken in response to gender inequalities found.

This Country Report is part of an ILO Project to take stock of the situation and identify the response to gender issues in the world of work in the Caribbean. It presents an initial assessment of gender at work in Jamaica, one of five countries initially included in the Project. The information presented is based on desk review research, policy documents and legislation.

An overview of gender at work in the five countries is presented separately in the Project's **Synthesis Report**, which presents a literature review based on Caribbean research on gender at work. It summarizes the results and draws general findings from the five countries. Readers are invited to review the Synthesis Report alongside the individual country reports.

The information in this Country Report is based primarily on secondary sources of information, accessible via publications and the Internet.<sup>1</sup> A wide variety of statistical, policy, national and multilateral agency reports, laws and academic studies were identified and reviewed. The aim of these country studies (and the Synthesis Report) is to provide a basis on which to engage with constituents and stakeholders to further refine and enrich the analysis and fill information gaps, as well as foster explicit gender equality actions in the world of work over the years to come.

The Jamaica Country Report begins with an overview of the general features of gender at work in the Caribbean, based on a review of research literature (Part One). It is based mainly on quantitative data analysis of the labour market situation of women and men.

The focus of Parts Two and Three is analysis of the institutional and legal response to gender at work issues, again comprising mostly qualitative information from reports, laws and academic studies. In the discussion of the findings in Part Four, there is an examination of the specific barriers to gender equality in the world of work in Jamaica, and an evaluation of the actions taken to address them.

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<sup>1</sup> All web links listed in this Report were accessed on various occasions during the period January 2016 to December 2017.







## Overview of gender at work in Jamaica — Key trends and research findings

Jamaica is an island nation with the largest population in the English-speaking Caribbean: 2,697,983 at the last population census in 2011.<sup>2</sup> It is classified as having high human development, with a rank of 94 out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index in 2016.<sup>3</sup> Average life expectancy is 75.8 years and is higher for women (78.5 years) than for men (73.3 years).<sup>4</sup> In 2016, estimated Gross National Income (GNI) per capita was US\$8,350.<sup>5</sup>

The World Economic Forum includes Jamaica in its Global Gender Gap Report, in which countries are ranked using official statistics to show their performance on gender equality with regard to: economic participation, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. A score of one means equality, while lower scores indicate the distance achieving from equality.

<sup>2</sup> *Jamaica Population Census 2011*, SIOJ, 2011, <http://statinja.gov.jm/Census/PopCensus/TotalPopulationbyBroadAgeGroupsandParish.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> The Human Development Index amalgamates data on education, life expectancy and income per capita. UNDP: *Human Development Indicators for Jamaica*. (New York, USA: United Nations, 2016), <http://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/JAM>

<sup>4</sup> *Jamaica Statistics*, UNICEF, 2015, [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/jamaica\\_statistics.html#120](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/jamaica_statistics.html#120).

<sup>5</sup> UNDP, 2016, *ibid*.



This Report will analyse the component indicators of economic empowerment in more detail below. Table 1 shows that Jamaica's overall gender equality score improved between 2006 and 2016, but the country's position in the global ranking fell, as other countries overtook it during the ten-year period. The measure of economic empowerment and opportunity deteriorated, while the other scores remained the same or improved.

**Table 1. Jamaican scores for components of the Gender Gap Index, 2006 and 2016 <sup>6</sup>**

	2006		2016	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
<i>Global Gender Gap Index</i>	42	0.724	25	0.701
Economic participation and opportunity	35	0.733	7	0.738
Educational attainment	1	1.000	1	1.000
Health and survival	1	0.980	82	0.970
Political empowerment	63	0.183	65	0.098
<i>Rank out of:</i>	144		115	

Source: *Global Gender Gap Fact Sheet for Jamaica*. World Economic Forum, 2017.

The Gender Gap Index is a useful summary measure of gender equality. It indicates that in Jamaica, girls and women attend educational institutions in equal (or higher) numbers when compared with boys and men. They also generally outperform boys and men in examinations, as is the case in other English-speaking Caribbean countries. <sup>7 8</sup>

The health and survival component of the index reflects the life expectancy ratio—women live longer than men. It also indicates the sex ratio at birth—slightly more boys than girls were born in 2016. However, it does not reflect the considerable burden of chronic disease in Jamaica. An important survey by Wilks et al (2009) indicates similar levels of diabetes and hypertension between the sexes but does not reveal risk factors such as obesity and cholesterol among women, both of which affect quality of life and long-term health. <sup>9</sup>

The Gender Gap Index also leaves out indicators such as the rate of adolescent fertility (teenage pregnancy), which can be a considerable brake on the economic advancement of girls who become mothers. At 68.8 per thousand females aged 15-19 years, Jamaica's adolescent fertility rate is higher than the global average of 46.1 and that of the non-Hispanic Caribbean of 46.9; but it is similar to the average for Latin America and the Caribbean (66.5) and more than three times as high as for the "more developed regions" (19.2). <sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Global Gender Gap Fact Sheet for Jamaica*, World Economic Forum, 2017, [reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=JAM](https://reports.weforum.org/global-gender-gap-report-2016/economies/#economy=JAM).

<sup>7</sup> M. Figueroa: "Under-achieving Caribbean boys. Marginalization or gender privileging?" in *Commonwealth Education Partnerships 2007*. (London, Commonwealth Secretariat).

<sup>8</sup> B. Bailey: "Boys, Masculinity and Education" in *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies*, Issue 8 (2014), pp.283–288.

<sup>9</sup> R. Wilks, N. Younger, et al.: *Jamaica Health and Lifestyle Survey 2007–2008: Technical report*. (Mona, Jamaica, UWI, Epidemiology Research Unit, Tropical Medicine Research Institute, 2009).

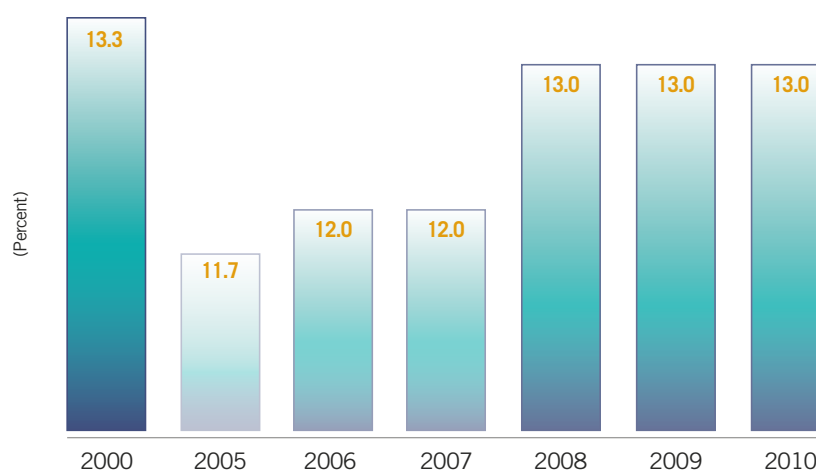
<sup>10</sup> C.F. Allen: *Analysis of progress towards the goals of the adolescent and youth regional strategy and plan of action. Summary document 5: Adolescent fertility rates* (Washington DC, PAHO, 2015).  
UNDESA: *World Population Prospects, 2015 Revision* (Geneva, United Nations, 2015).



As in other Caribbean countries, a considerable percentage of households are headed by single women, estimated at some 41 per cent.<sup>11</sup>

Jamaica's Gender Gap Index is reduced considerably by the political empowerment measure that looks at the ratios of men and women in Parliament, in ministerial positions, and as heads of State. Figures for Jamaica show no improvement (between 2000 and 2009) in the percentage of parliamentarians who are women (see Figure 1), with an average of 12.6 per cent of parliamentarians being women over the period. Figures for 2011 and 2015 likewise show that 12.7 per cent of representatives in the Lower House of Parliament were women. In 2016, the situation improved somewhat, with 17.5 per cent of Lower House representatives being women.<sup>12</sup> The low representation of women persists, despite having had a female Prime Minister, Portia Simpson-Miller, from March 2006 to September 2007 and again from January 2012 to March 2016.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 1.  
Percentage of seats  
held by women in  
Jamaica's Parliament,  
2000–2009<sup>14</sup>



Source: Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals Indicators for CARICOM Countries

Overall, there is a mixed picture concerning health, education and other social indicators, in terms of their likely impacts on the world of work for women and men. At first glance, high levels of life expectancy and education appear likely to offer advantages for women. On the other hand, levels of chronic disease, adolescent fertility and single household headship may impede capacities to work. Low political representation may affect the institutional and legislative environment, which will be examined in later sections.

Jamaica is well represented in large international compilations of national statistics as compared with several smaller Caribbean countries. CARICOM and UN Women also are working with Jamaica as one of four pilot countries in the Caribbean to improve the quantity and quality of gender equality

<sup>11</sup> Multiple indicator cluster survey: Jamaica, UNICEF, 2005, [statinja.gov.jm/Publication/Mics%20Report.pdf](http://statinja.gov.jm/Publication/Mics%20Report.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> Composition and percentage distribution of houses of Parliament (Jamaica) by sex, SIOJ, <http://statinja.gov.jm/Gender-Special-Population.aspx>.

<sup>13</sup> Portia Simpson-Miller, Wikipedia, [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portia\\_Simpson-Miller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portia_Simpson-Miller).

<sup>14</sup> Caribbean specific millennium development goals indicators for CARICOM countries, CARICOM, undated, [www.caricomstats.org/CSMDG.html](http://www.caricomstats.org/CSMDG.html).



indicators, in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. This includes promoting the production of sex disaggregated data on the following indicators of economic activity:

- Indicator 3a — Labour force participation rate for persons aged 15–24 years, by sex
- Indicator 3b — Labour force participation rate for persons aged 15+ years, by sex
- Indicator 4 — Proportion of employed who are own-account workers, by sex
- Indicator 8a — Percentage distribution of employed population in agricultural sector, by sex and age
- Indicator 8b — Percentage distribution of employed population in industrial sector, by sex and age
- Indicator 8c — Percentage distribution of employed population in service sector, by sex and age
- Indicator 9 — Informal employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment by sex and age
- Indicator 10 — Youth Unemployment Rate for Persons aged 15–24 years, by sex
- Indicator 11 — Proportion of population with access to credit, by sex
- Indicator 12 — Proportion of population owning land, by sex, by size of land parcel
- Indicator 13 — Gender gap in wages, by age
- Indicator 14 — Proportion of employed working part-time, by sex and age <sup>15</sup>

The Government/CARICOM/UN Women Project is looking at a number of economic indicators as well as other gender equality indicators. The following observations were made by those working on the Project. The most complete sex disaggregated data in CARICOM countries is for labour force participation and unemployment. Little or no information is collected or disaggregated for informal sector work, labour force participation by sector, and gender wage gaps. <sup>16</sup> The results of the Jamaica pilot have not been published to date.

## 1.1 Labour force participation

*The labour force participation rate is a measure of the proportion of a country's working-age population that engages actively in the labour market, either by working or looking for work; it provides an indication of the size of the supply of labour available to engage in the production of goods and services, relative to the population at working age.* <sup>17</sup>

Labour force survey statistics presented by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica for July 2017 give labour force participation rates of 71.6 per cent for males, 59.5 per cent for females, and 65.5 per cent for

<sup>15</sup> UN Women: *Synthesis report on the state of data to support the CARICOM gender equality indicators: Belize, Dominica, Grenada, and Jamaica case studies* (Bridgetown, Barbados: UN Women, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> UN Women, 2017, *ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> ILO: *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, Ninth Edition, Nov. 2015, [www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/research-and-databases/kilm/WCMS\\_422090/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/research-and-databases/kilm/WCMS_422090/lang--en/index.htm).

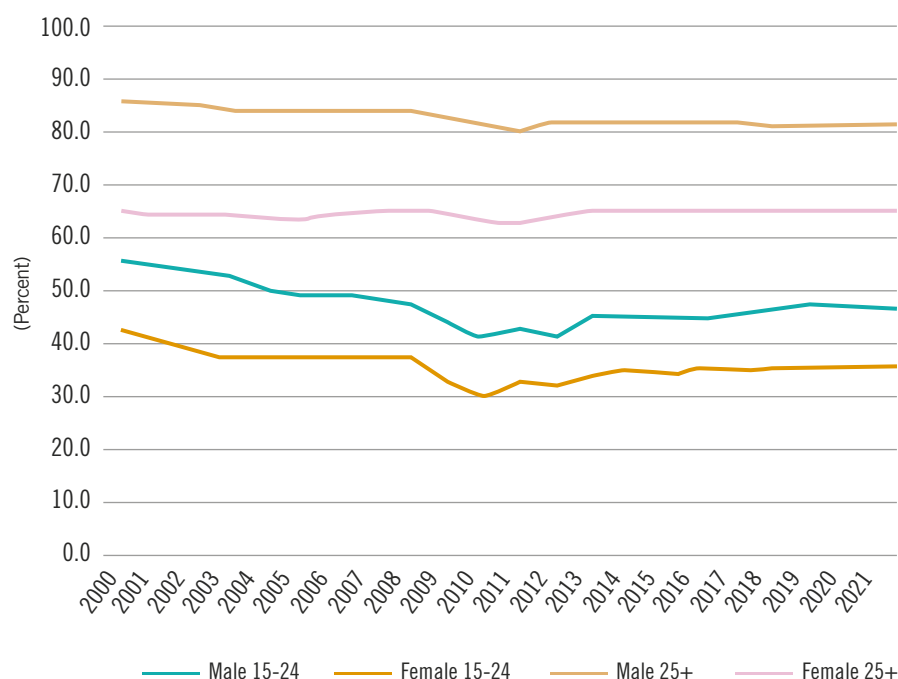


the population as a whole.<sup>18</sup> This 12-percentage point difference by sex compares favourably with the world as a whole. Globally, a gap of 26 percentage points separates women and men in labour force participation—76 per cent of men and 50 per cent of women are in the global labour force.<sup>19</sup>

Data from ILO show a slight decline in labour force participation for men and women in the youth and older adult categories since the turn of the twenty-first century (as illustrated in Figure 2).<sup>20</sup> ILO estimates and projections covering the period 2000 to 2021, show low youth participation, with an average male labour force participation of 47.1 per cent and average female labour force participation at 35.7 per cent. Young men’s participation exceeded that of young women by 31.9 per cent. Among people aged 25 years and older, average male labour force participation was 83.1 per cent, with average female labour force participation at 64.5 per cent. In this age category, the gender gap was similar to that for youth—28.9 per cent.

Youth labour force participation is much lower than that of older adults. The participation of older men in the labour force exceeds that of younger men on average by 76.6 per cent, over the full 2000 to 2021 time-period. The equivalent difference between older and younger women is similar, at 80.8 per cent.

Figure 2.  
Labour force participation rate in Jamaica, by sex and age group, 2000–2021 (ILO estimates and projections)<sup>21</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), July 2015.

<sup>18</sup> The definition of labour force participation used here is, “Labour force as a percentage of population 14+”.

Taken from *Main Labour Force Indicators*, SIOJ, 2017, [statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx](http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx).

<sup>19</sup> Gallup, Inc. and ILO: *Towards a better future for women and work: Voices of women and men* (New York and Geneva, Gallup and ILO, 2017).

<sup>20</sup> “Labour force participation rate—ILO modeled estimates”, in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, ILO, July 2015, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=15](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=15).

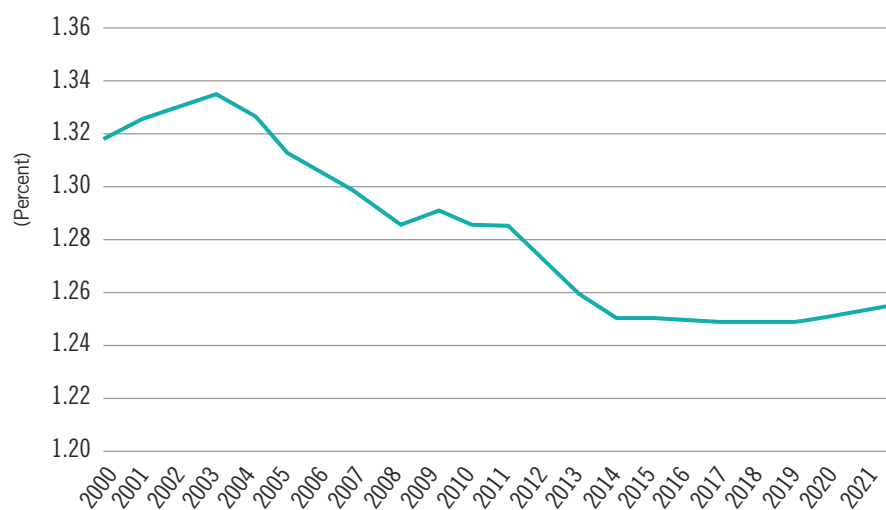
<sup>21</sup> ILO, July 2015, *ibid*.



As shown in Figure 3, men's labour force participation has exceeded that of women by between 25 per cent and 33 per cent over the period studied. However, there has been a narrowing of the gender gap.

Figure 3.

Male to Female ratio in labour force participation in Jamaica, age group 15+ years, 2000–2021 (ILO estimates and projections) <sup>22</sup>

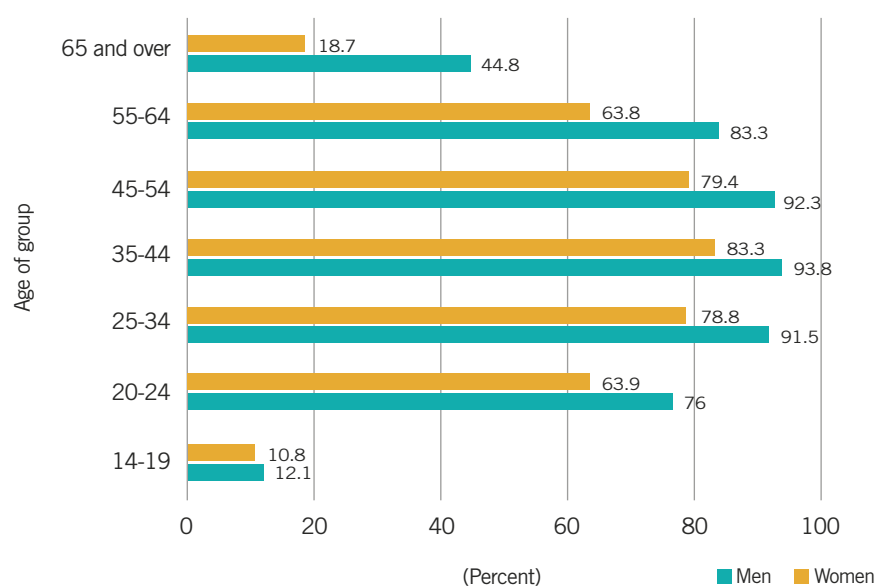


Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), July 2015.

Figure 4 shows that men's labour force participation exceeds that of women in every age group, with the difference being smallest in the adolescent age group (1.3 per cent), and greatest in the age group 65 years and over (26.1 per cent). The large difference among elderly people may be explained partly by the fact that women seem to retire at a younger age (65 years) than men (70 years). <sup>23</sup> This difference in the retirement age is an important area of gender inequality affecting labour force participation rates by sex.

Figure 4.

Labour force participation by age group and sex in Jamaica, July 2017 <sup>24</sup>



<sup>22</sup> ILO, July 2015, *ibid*.

<sup>23</sup> *Retirement*, GOJ, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=81](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=81).

<sup>24</sup> "Labour force participation rate by age group", in *Main Labour Force Indicators*, SIOJ, 2017, <http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx>





## 1.2 Employment-to-population ratios

In July 2017, the male employment-to-population ratio stood at 65.9 per cent for men, 50.5 per cent for women, and 58.1 per cent for the population as a whole.<sup>25</sup> These figures indicate that substantial percentages of Jamaicans are not employed, with around half of women in that situation.

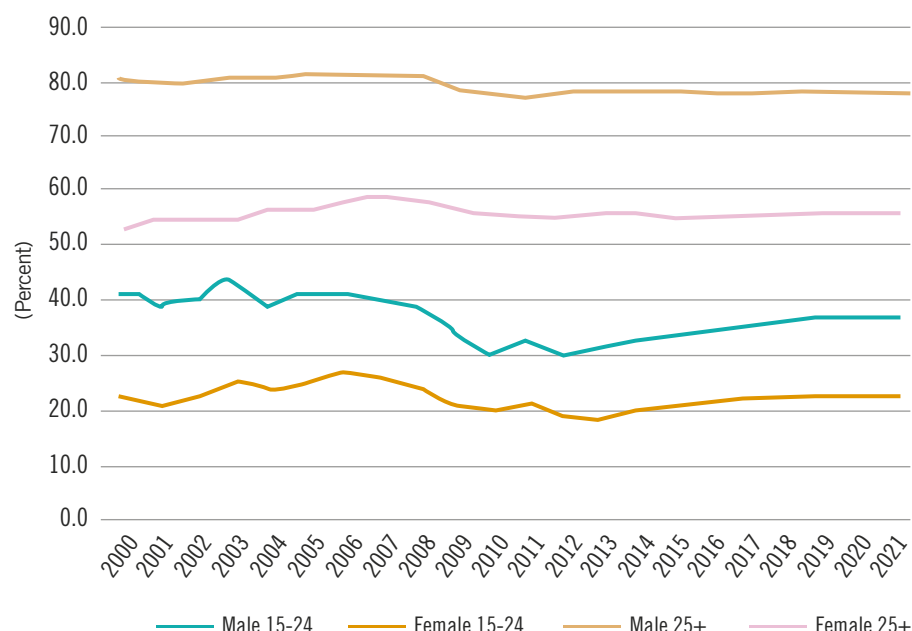
Like the labour force participation rate, the employment-to-population ratio has declined since the turn of the twenty-first century. The only group for which there has been slight improvement is women aged 25 years and over, for whom the employment to population ratio was 53.8 per cent in 2000 and 55.9 per cent in 2015. This figure is projected to rise to 56.1 per cent by 2021.<sup>26</sup>

Gaps between men and women and between adults and youth are larger for the employment to population ratio than for labour force participation. This may indicate systematic discrimination against women and young people or other barriers to participation; fewer women than men get jobs and fewer young people than older people get jobs, among those able and willing to work.

Over the time period, on average the older adult male employment to population ratio was 78.1 per cent; 40 per cent higher than the average older adult female ratio of 55.8 per cent. The gender gap was even wider among youth: on average the male youth employment to population ratio was 36.6 per cent; 63.6 per cent higher than the average female youth ratio of 22.3 per cent.

On average, men aged 25 years and over had an employment to population ratio 2.14 times higher than that of younger men. Women aged 25 years and over had an even greater advantage over their younger counterparts: their employment to population ratio was 2.5 times higher than that of young women.

Figure 5.  
Employment-to-  
population ratios  
in Jamaica, by sex  
and age group,  
2000–2021  
(ILO estimates  
and projections)<sup>27</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), Nov. 2016.

<sup>25</sup> SIOJ, 2017, *ibid*.

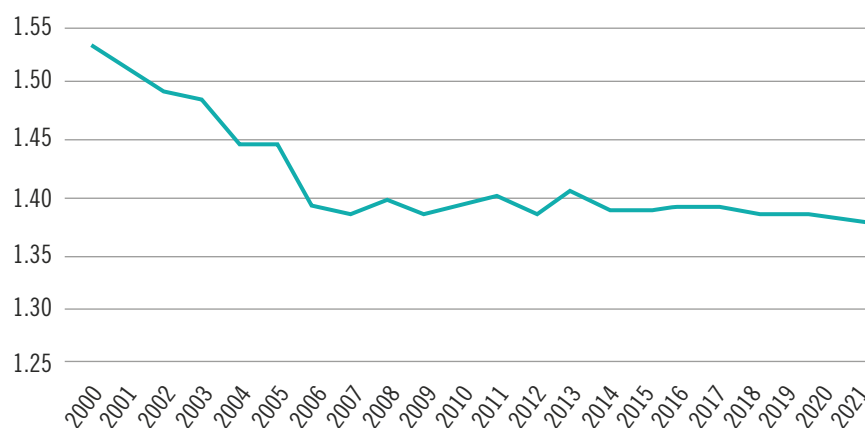
<sup>26</sup> “Employment-to-population ratio—ILO modeled estimates”, in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portallapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=7](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portallapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=7).

<sup>27</sup> “Employment-to-population ratio—ILO modeled estimates”, in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portallapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=7](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portallapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=7).



Figure 6 indicates a narrowing of the gender gap in the employment-to-population ratio in Jamaica. The male–female ratio declined from 1.53 to 1.38 and has remained at around 1.38 since 2012.

Figure 6.  
Male-to-Female  
ratio in employment-  
to-population ratio  
in Jamaica, age  
group 15+ years,  
2000–2021  
(ILO estimates  
and projections) <sup>28</sup>

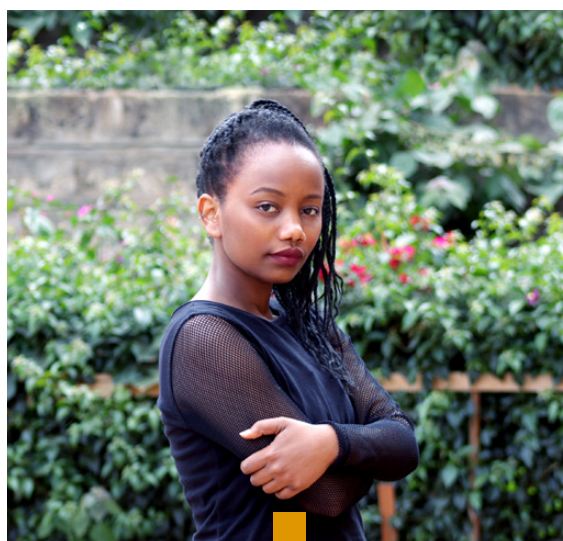


Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM), Nov. 2016.

## 1.3 Unemployment rates

According to data from July 2017, overall unemployment in Jamaica stood at 11.3 per cent, of which male unemployment stood at 8 per cent, while unemployed women were 15.2 per cent. <sup>29</sup>

Quarterly figures since July 2011 show an average male unemployment rate of 10.0 per cent and an average female unemployment rate of 17.9 per cent. The female unemployment rate was, on average, 79 per cent higher than the male rate over the period July 2011 to July 2017, ranging from 61 per cent to 99 per cent higher.



<sup>28</sup> ILO, Nov. 2016, *ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> “Unemployment rates by sex and age group”, in *Main Labour Force Indicators*, SIOJ, 2017, <http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx>.



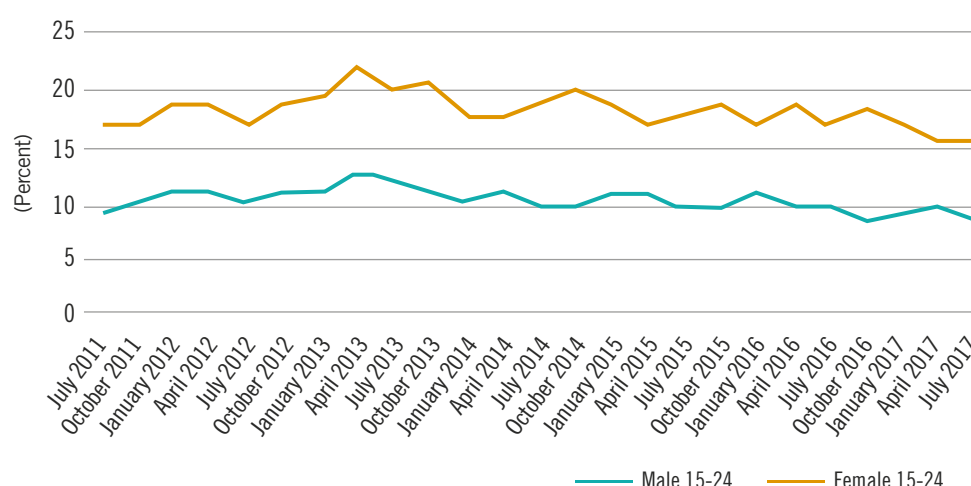


Figure 7 roughly shows parallel variations in unemployment between men and women, without evidence of narrowing of the gap: female unemployment was 81 per cent higher than male unemployment in July 2011 and 90 per cent higher in July 2017. However, there were greater quarterly fluctuations in unemployment among women, possibly reflecting greater instability and temporary employment among them. There were no clear seasonal patterns for either sex.<sup>30</sup>

ILO has compiled data on unemployment by sex since the year 2000, including projections to the year 2021 (See Figure 8).<sup>32</sup> Over this time period, a moderate decline in the ratio of female to male unemployment can be seen, meaning a narrowing of the gap until the year 2012, when the gap began to widen again. Thus, there appears to be little evidence of substantial long-term narrowing of the gap between male and female unemployment. According to the data, in 2000, female unemployment was 2.26 times the male rate; it is projected to reduce slightly, to 2.08 times the male rate in the year 2021.

Figure 7.

Unemployment rates by sex in Jamaica, July 2011 to July 2017<sup>31</sup>



Source: SIOJ Main Labour Force Indicators, 2017.

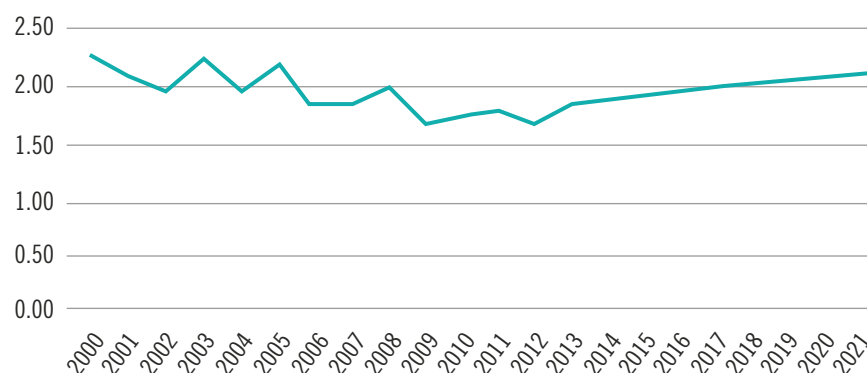
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<sup>30</sup> SIOJ, 2017, *ibid*.

<sup>31</sup> Main Labour Force Indicators, SIOJ, 2017, [statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx](http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx).

<sup>32</sup> “Unemployment rate—ILO modeled estimates”, in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=2](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=2).

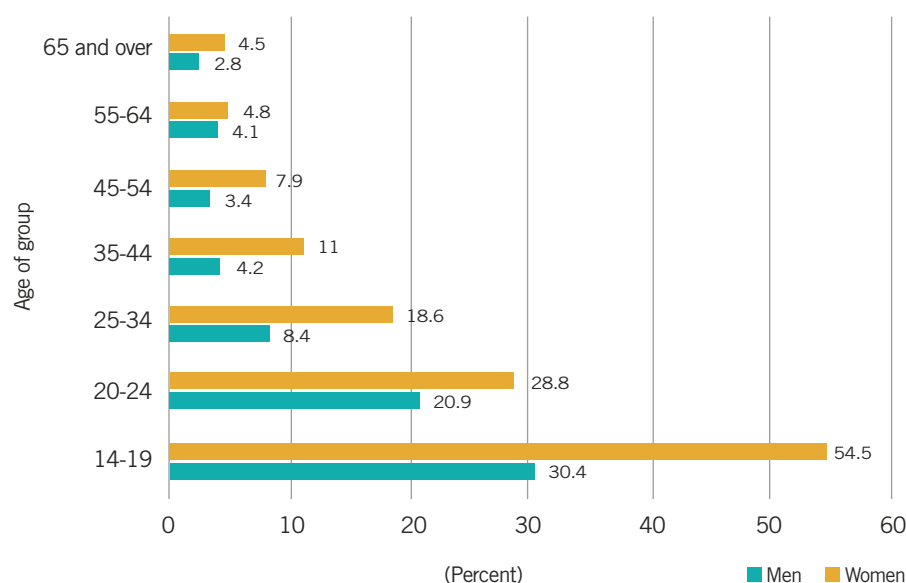
Figure 8.  
Female-to-Male  
ratio of  
unemployment  
in Jamaica,  
2000–2021 <sup>33</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

Unemployment is higher among women than men in all age groups, with the narrowest gap among people aged 55 to 64 years, as illustrated in Figure 9. The gender gap is highest among youth aged 14 to 19 years (24.1 percentage points), followed by those in the group 25 to 34 years (10.2 percentage points). It must be noted that high rates of unemployment among women may discourage them from further participation in the labour force and influence their life choices, in terms of their allocation of working time between “productive” and “reproductive” work. This will be explored further in Section 1.4.

Figure 9.  
Unemployment  
by age group and  
sex in Jamaica,  
July 2017 <sup>34</sup>



Source: SIOJ Main Labour Force Indicators, 2017.

<sup>33</sup> “Employment-to-population ratio—ILO modeled estimates” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=2](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=2).

<sup>34</sup> “Unemployment rates by sex and age group”, in *Main Labour Force Indicators*, SIOJ, 2017, [statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx](http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx).



## 1.4 Division of labour, employment sectors and occupational segregation

In examining the division of labour between men and women, it is important not only to examine employment, but also, the balance between “productive” and “reproductive” work. In many countries, belief in traditional roles for men and women hold sway:

- Men are supposed to work primarily in “productive” roles, mainly through employment; and
- Women are supposed to be responsible for “reproductive” roles, caring for families and members of society less able to participate in “production”.

Reproductive activities refer to domestic duties, including all those activities associated with the care, maintenance and social reproduction of the family. They include caring for children and other members of the family; cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing, among others; and participating in community and social activities.<sup>35</sup> Generally, reproductive work either is unpaid or paid at a low rate, and the time taken to accomplish reproductive tasks reduces the amount of time available for formal or traditional employment.

This aspect of the sexual division of labour often is taken for granted and as such, may not be the subject of study or policy-making.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) has promoted the conduct of time-use surveys to compare the allocation of time to employment, domestic chores, childcare and other matters between men and women.<sup>36 37 38</sup> A seminar to provide training in time-use surveys was carried out by UN ECLAC in 2014, where Jamaica was one of the participating countries.<sup>39</sup> However, the current review did not find evidence that any time-use survey has been carried out in Jamaica.

With regard to the gender division of labour between “productive” and “reproductive” work, it is notable that many more women than men are outside the labour force in the working-age population. This is illustrated in Figure 10. In all age groups from 25 to 64 years, there are more than twice as many women than men outside the labour force. The differences are widest in the 35–44 age group, when women might be heavily involved in child care responsibilities. Even among youth aged 20 to 24 years, there are 50 per cent more women than men who are outside the labour force. Educational data suggest that more women than men, especially in the younger age group, are students,<sup>40 41</sup> and therefore, are not included in the labour force for this reason.

35 D. Cummins and E. C. Harvey: *Women food producers in Barbados: National summary* (San José, Costa Rica, IICA and IDB, 1996). Andaiye: *Domestic care workers at the interface of migration and development in the Caribbean: Action to expand good practice*. Paper presented at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Jamaica, 7–8 Sep. 2011. (PIOJ and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade).

36 United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD): *Gender statistics: Allocation of time and time-use* (UNSD time use data portal, 2016, <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/timeuse/index.html>).

37 S. Stuart: *Situation of unpaid work and gender in the Caribbean: The measurement of unpaid work through time-use studies* (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2014).

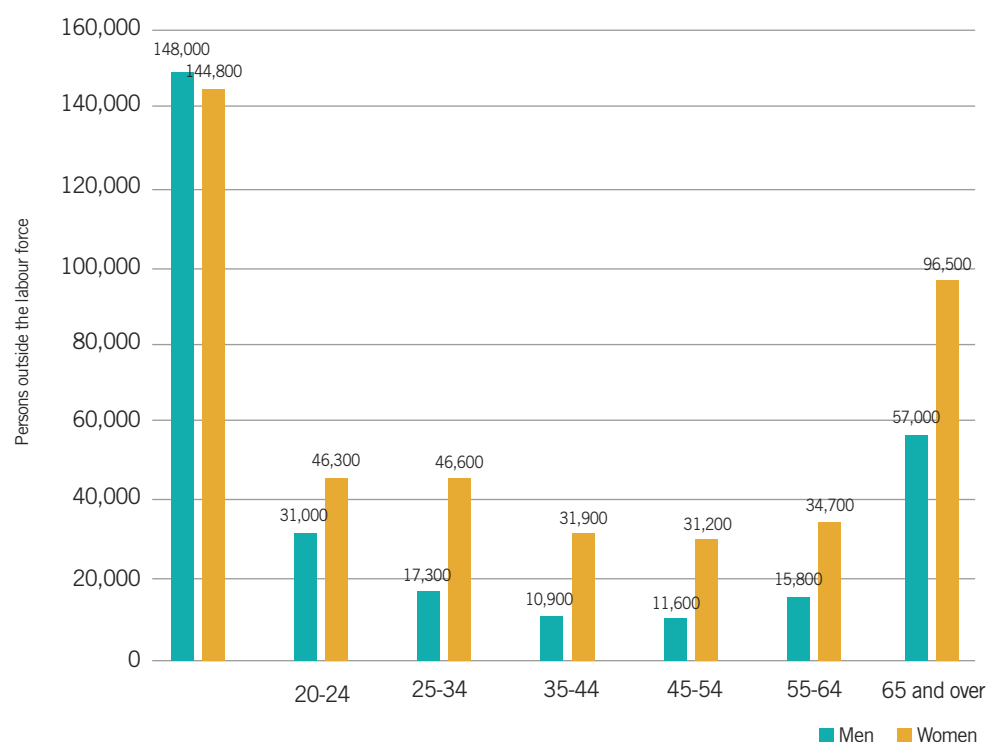
38 R. Aguirre and F. Ferrari: *Surveys on time use and unpaid work in Latin America and the Caribbean experience to date and challenges for the future* (Santiago, Chile, ECLAC, 2013).

39 ECLAC and ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean: *Report of the regional seminar on time-use surveys, 10–11 December 2014, Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines* (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2015).

40 B. Bailey: “Boys, masculinity and education” in *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* (Issue 8, 2014), pp. 283–288.

41 M. Figueroa: *Under-achieving Caribbean boys. Marginalisation or gender privileging?* (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007).

Figure 10.  
Population  
outside the  
labour force  
in Jamaica,  
by age group  
and sex,  
July 2017 <sup>42</sup>



Source: SIOJ Main Labour Force Indicators, 2017.

Analysis of data presented in 2010 from the Inter-American Development Bank of Labour Force Survey found that 12.6 per cent of women and 6 per cent of men worked part-time. <sup>43</sup> However, no information on seasonal work trends for Jamaica has been found to date in the statistical sources reviewed for this current study.

Over time, there has been a shift in the pattern of employment between the major economic sectors in Jamaica, as shown in Figure 11. The data show that the service sector has been the major employer for some time, and that the numbers employed in this sector have increased, while the numbers in agriculture and industry are low and have remained relatively fixed since the turn of the century.

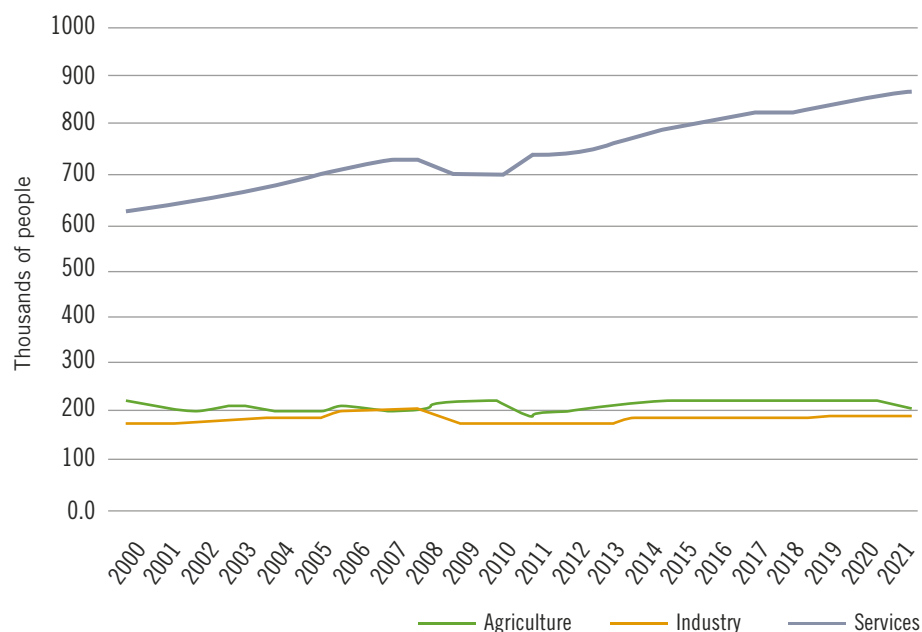


<sup>42</sup> "Persons outside the labour force by age group and sex" in *Main Labour Force Indicators*, SIOJ, 2017, [statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx](http://statinja.gov.jm/LabourForce/NewLFS.aspx).

<sup>43</sup> A. Bellony, A. Hoyos, and H. Nopo: *Gender earnings gaps in the Caribbean: Evidence from Barbados and Jamaica* (IDB, 2010). Working Paper IDB-WP-210.

Figure 11.

Total number of people employed by sector in Jamaica, 2000–2021 (ILO estimates and projections) <sup>44</sup>

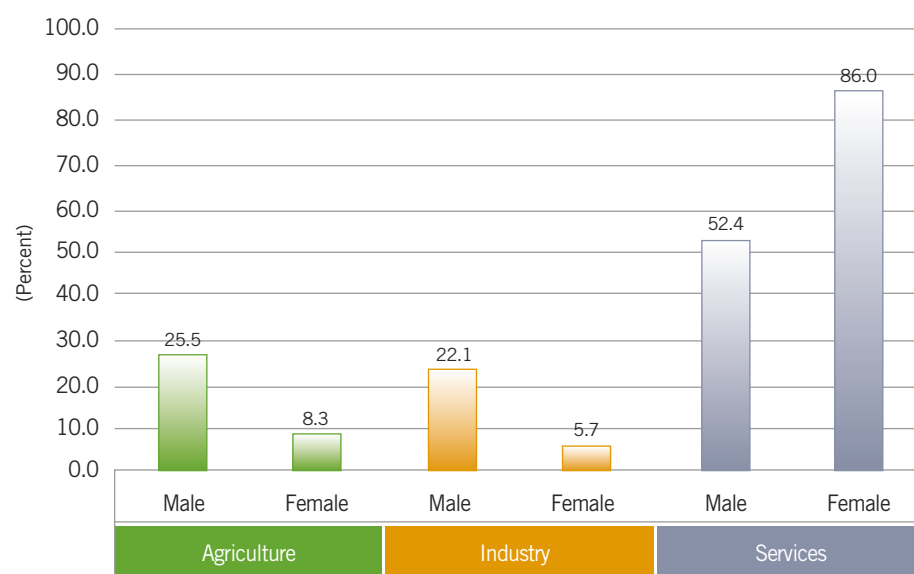


Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

While agriculture and industry employ mostly men, overall, only small proportions of the population are employed in these economic sectors. Meanwhile, women make up the majority of employees in the growing service industries. Thus, an increase in the employment of women in these areas can be expected over time. According to the data, the ratio of female-to-male unemployment has decreased, from 2.26 in the year 2000, to 1.97 in the year 2016. <sup>45</sup> This moderate improvement in the employment prospects of women relative to men may be explained in part by the shift towards increased employment in service industries.

Figure 12.

Occupational distribution by sex in Jamaica in 2015 (ILO estimates and projections) <sup>46</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

<sup>44</sup> “Employment by sector” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=33](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=33).

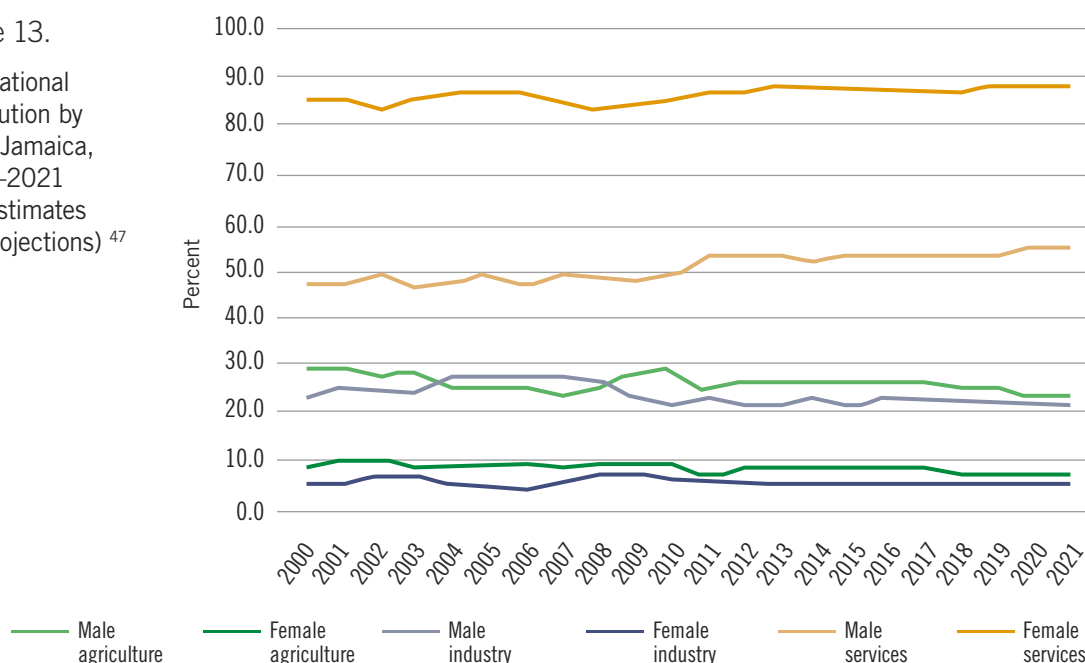
<sup>45</sup> “Unemployment rate” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=2](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=2).

<sup>46</sup> “Employment by sector” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=33](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=33).



Figure 12 shows that the differences in proportions of men and women employed in each sector are not new but have persisted over time. Over the period, there were more than three times as many men as women employed in agriculture (3.04 times), and almost four times as many men as women employed in industry (3.90 times). In addition, there were 48 per cent more women than men employed in the services sector.

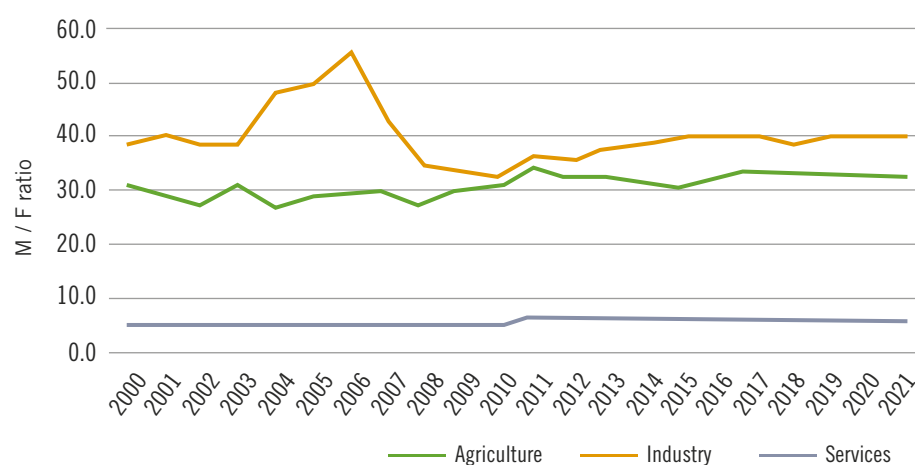
Figure 13.  
Occupational distribution by sex in Jamaica, 2000–2021 (ILO estimates and projections) <sup>47</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

Figure 13 demonstrates that the difference between the sexes has remained stable for the services sector but has fluctuated in the other two sectors, with little evidence of overall increase or decrease.

Figure 14.  
Male–Female ratio by occupation in Jamaica, 2000–2021 (ILO estimates and projections) <sup>48</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

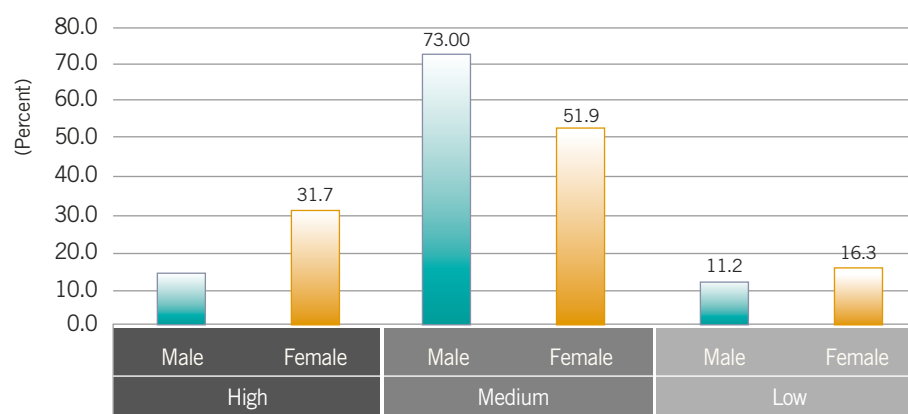
<sup>47</sup> “Employment by sector” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=33](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=33).

<sup>48</sup> “Employment by sector” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=33](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=33).



When examining skill levels, Figure 14 shows that more of the female employees held highly skilled occupations than the male employees in 2015; while more of the men than the women held jobs with medium levels of skill. More of the women than the men had jobs with low levels of skill.

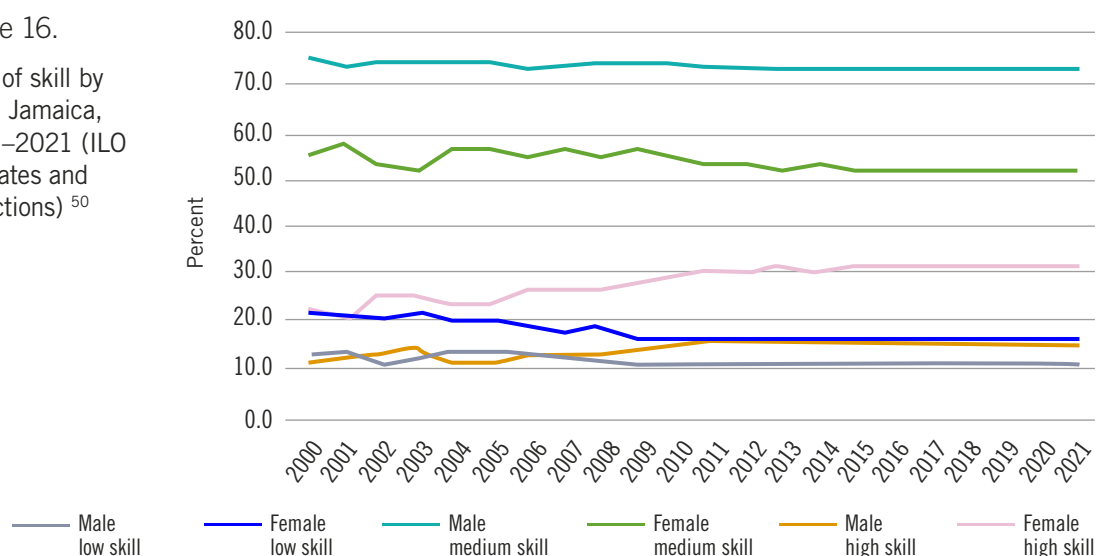
Figure 15.  
Level of skill  
by sex in  
Jamaica, 2015  
(ILO estimates  
and projections) <sup>49</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

Figure 15 suggests that over time there has been an increase in the percentages of both men and women with high skills, and conversely, a decline among both men and women in the proportion of employees with low skills. In addition, there has been a slight decline in the percentage of female employees in the medium skill category.

Figure 16.  
Level of skill by  
sex in Jamaica,  
2000–2021 (ILO  
estimates and  
projections) <sup>50</sup>



Source: ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market, Nov. 2016.

There is a high degree of occupational segregation in Jamaica. As can be seen in Figure 16, the industries in which men outnumber women are: agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing; mining

49 “Employment by occupation” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=12](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=12).

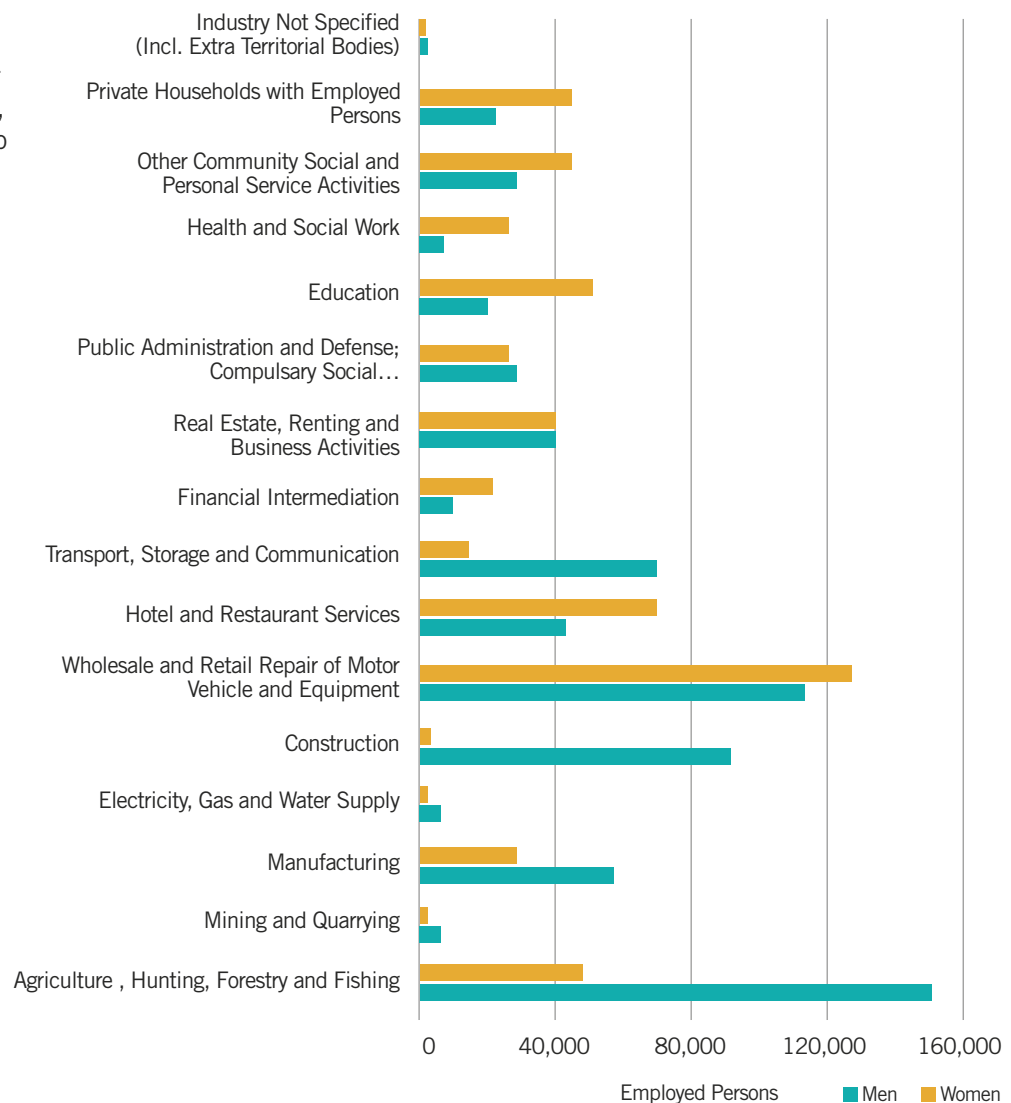
50 “Employment by occupation” in *Key Indicators of the Labour Market—ILO modeled estimates*, ILO, Nov. 2016, [www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI\\_ID=12](http://www.ilo.org/ilostat/faces/oracle/webcenter/portalapp/pagehierarchy/Page3.jspx?MBI_ID=12).



and quarrying; manufacturing; electricity, gas and water supply; construction; and transport and communications. In all of these, except manufacturing, there are more than three times as many male as female employees. In all other industry groups, there are more female than male employees. Groupings with more than twice as many females as males are services, namely: education; financial intermediation; health and social work, and private households with employed persons (domestic work).

Figure 17.

Employed labour force in Jamaica, by industry group and sex, July 2017



Source: SIOJ Labour Force Survey, 2017.





## 1.5 Gender wage gaps

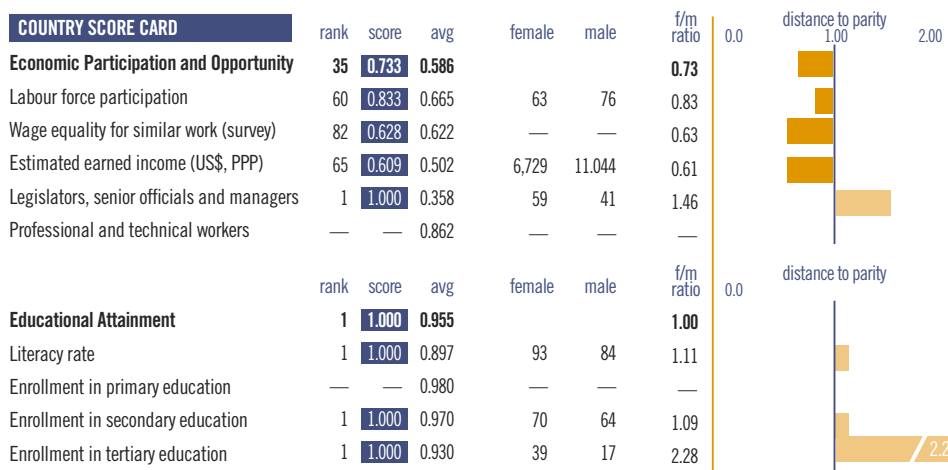
The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2016) ranks Jamaica 35th out of 144 countries in terms of gender parity in economic participation and opportunity. One component of this measure is estimated earned income. In US dollars at purchasing power parity (PPP), female income per capita is given as \$6,729 and male as \$11,044, giving a female to male ratio of 0.61.

On the measure of estimated earned income, Jamaica places 65th out of 144 countries. On the component of wage equality for similar work, Jamaica places lower, at 82nd out of 144, with a female to male ratio of 0.63, and thus a gender wage gap of 37 per cent. The higher position for the measure of economic participation and opportunity as a whole is explained by Jamaica achieving first place among the 144 countries in terms of proportion of female legislators, senior officials and managers, with 46 per cent more women than men holding these positions. Notwithstanding, it appears that women's occupation of the majority of these senior positions is still insufficient to ensure equal pay.

The substantial gender gap in pay appears all the more inconsistent when the higher achievements and participation of girls and women than boys and men in formal education are considered. The Global Gender Gap Report ranks Jamaica first of 144 countries in terms of the literacy rate and levels of enrolment in secondary and tertiary education. However, achievements in education have not translated into equal or higher pay for women.

Figure 18.

Global Gender Gap indicators for Jamaica, 2016<sup>51</sup>



Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Fact Sheet for Jamaica, 2016.

The findings from the 2016 Global Gender Gap Report appear to be inconsistent with those from an IADB 2010 study of gender earnings gaps in Barbados and Jamaica, which found that women's earnings were 0.8 per cent higher than those of men, in the economy as a whole. In part, the discrepancy might be explained by the fact that the IADB study used data from a different time period, namely from the 2003 Labour Force Survey.

<sup>51</sup> World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Fact Sheet for Jamaica, 2016, <http://reports.weforum.org/feature-demonstration/files/2016/10/JAM.pdf>.



The IDB study has additional important findings:

- Earnings levels are boosted for both males and females by tertiary level education, and more of the women (12.5 per cent) than the men (4.5 per cent) had this level of education.
- The earnings gap of negative 0.8 per cent masks the fact that despite women accumulating more schooling (or educational qualifications) than men, they are not compensated for it appropriately. When comparing men and women with the same level of education, the unexplained differences in earnings reach 12.2 per cent of average females' earnings, in favour of men.
- For employed women, the presence of children at home was linked to lower earnings. For employed men, having children at home made no difference. This confirms the important role of caring responsibilities in depressing women's income.
- There were pay disparities in favour of males in the private sector, but no gender differences in pay in public sector and self-employment.
- In the case of Jamaica (but not Barbados which also was examined in the study), occupational segregation tends to reduce the earnings gap. Hence this analysis in the study: *"Jamaica is a country for which a reduction of gender occupational segregation seems to be a wrong target within an agenda of reduction of gender earnings gaps."*
- The largest unexplained gap in favour of males is at the lowest earnings levels, suggesting that poor women experience special difficulties in earning relative to poor males.<sup>52</sup>



<sup>52</sup> A. Bellony et al., 2010, *ibid.*



## Institutional analysis

This section examines institutions concerned with work and gender in Jamaica and analyses how they impact on gender equality and non-discrimination in the world of work.

### 2.1 National entity responsible for gender

Jamaica's formal commitment to achieving gender equality was aided by the establishment of its national women's machinery in 1974. In 1975, the Women's Desk became the Bureau of Women's Affairs.<sup>53</sup> Since then, the Bureau has changed line ministries numerous times; however, at present, it sits within the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, and is presided over by the Honourable Olivia Grange.<sup>54</sup> In 2016, the Bureau of Women's Affairs became the Bureau of Gender Affairs (BGA).<sup>55 56</sup>

A *National Policy Statement on Women* was made in 1987. This Policy recognized the imbalances in the society between men and women and attempted to correct some of these, in keeping with Jamaica's commitment to the ILO Convention on the *Elimination of Discrimination Against Women*.

<sup>53</sup> The Bureau of Women's Affairs and The Gender Advisory Committee: National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) Jamaica. (Kingston, Jamaica, BWA and GAC, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Government of Jamaica, 2017, <https://mcges.gov.jm/>.

<sup>55</sup> Jamaica Information Service (JIS): "It's now the Bureau of Gender Affairs!", in Jamaica Observer (27 Mar. 2016), [www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/It-s-now-the-Bureau-of-Gender-Affairs-\\_55752](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/It-s-now-the-Bureau-of-Gender-Affairs-_55752).

<sup>56</sup> BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.



It was particularly focused on women's economic empowerment, acknowledging that many women must juggle both paid and unpaid labour in the form of domestic tasks in the household.<sup>57</sup> Among the key recommendations were:

- All government policies must encourage equal participation of men and women;
- All economic and social development policies and programmes must encourage equal access to resources for both sexes;
- Policies must recognize women's domestic responsibilities and acknowledge that women often are solely responsible for their households; and
- Special measures should be put in place to counteract the historic and current barriers that women face.<sup>58</sup>

One goal that emerged out of the Policy was to encourage more women to participate in the agricultural sector by providing them with new opportunities and by helping them to develop relevant skills. In addition, the Government committed to resolving problems related to credit access, barriers to market entry and a lack of support services. The Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA) in the Ministry of Agriculture set out to develop the sector, partly by providing technical assistance to women.<sup>60</sup> Despite RADA's efforts, the sector continues to be dominated by men.<sup>61</sup> This will be discussed further in Section 2.4.

With the paradigm shift from *Women in Development (WID)* to *Gender and Development (GAD)*, the National Policy Statement on Women was reviewed in 2001 resulting in the development of the *National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE)*.<sup>62</sup> The WID Movement, which shaped the National Policy for Women, focused on facilitating access to women's economic empowerment. However, feminists soon realized the failings of this framework, as overarching structures that continued to hinder women's development remained unchanged. From this recognition emerged the GAD framework, which shapes current gender policies and initiatives in the region and worldwide.<sup>63</sup> Gender mainstreaming was a major feature of the GAD approach. Section 2.6 outlines the provisions for gender mainstreaming that have been made in Jamaica.

In 2011, the Jamaican Government approved the NPGE.<sup>64</sup> The policy process was initiated in 2004 when the Bureau began several consultations with various stakeholders including NGOs, faith-based groups, community organizations, medical professionals, the security forces and media houses. It addresses the difficulties encountered by Jamaican women in both public and private life. It also provides specific solutions to problems related to women's economic advancement, their political

57 CEDAW: *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: Second, third and fourth periodic reports of States parties: Jamaica*. (New York, United Nations, 1998).

58 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid*.

59 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid*.

60 CEDAW: *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Fifth periodic report of States parties Jamaica* (New York, United Nations, 2004).

61 L.L. Dunn, A. Hamilton, J. Byron, and Q. Palmer: *Gender and women's rights analysis of economic partnership agreements: The implementation of trade liberalisation Jamaica*. (Jamaica, IGDS, 2009).

62 BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.

63 ECLAC: *Study of gender mainstreaming in the Caribbean* (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2000). Available online at [www.cepal.org/en/publications/27456-study-gender-mainstreaming-caribbean](http://www.cepal.org/en/publications/27456-study-gender-mainstreaming-caribbean).

64 Full text available at: <https://sta.uwi.edu/igds/documents/JamaicaNPGE-JA-FINALwCover21311.pdf>.



representation and gender-based violence.<sup>65</sup> The primary aim of the policy is:

*“To mainstream gender, within a human rights-based framework, in all State institutions and their apparatuses, in partnership with private sector, non-governmental and civil society organizations, to ensure that females and males have equal access to opportunities, resources, and rewards in order to eliminate discrimination based on gender and to promote sustainable human development.”<sup>66</sup>*

The NPGE lists several goals specific to gender and labour, which are highlighted in Table 2, below.

Table 2. Key goals for gender and labour in Jamaica’s National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE)	
Goals	Description / Remarks
Improving working conditions for both sexes.	This objective is guided by the <i>ILO Decent Work Agenda</i> , which includes stipulations related to social security benefits and working conditions for workers in low-paid jobs. <sup>67</sup> The Government has taken steps to fulfil these promises by developing the Occupational Safety and Health Bill and the National Disabilities Act. These pieces of Legislation address working conditions to ensure workplace safety for all Jamaicans. <sup>68</sup>
Eradicating gender inequalities in wages and ensuring that labour laws provide for the needs of both men and women.	Progress in this regard will be considered in Section 3.4 of this Report.
Ending sexual harassment in the workplace.	Jamaica’s <i>Sexual Harassment Bill</i> has been developed and will be discussed in Section 3.7 of this Report.
Removing barriers that cause gendered segregation of labour.	The policy outlines that an independent body should be created to monitor policy implementation related to this goal. <sup>69</sup> However, this study could not find any evidence of its establishment. Efforts to integrate women into the male-dominated agricultural sector will be discussed in Section 2.4 of this Report.

<sup>65</sup> T. Maziki and D. Thakur: “The Patriarchal State and the development of gender policy in Jamaica” in *Politics, power and gender justice in the Anglophone Caribbean: Women’s understandings of politics, experiences of political contestation and the possibilities for gender transformation*. (Ontario, Canada, International Development Research Centre, 2014).

<sup>66</sup> BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid.*, p. 18.

<sup>67</sup> BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Resolution A/HRC/RES/30/15—Right to work*, Government of Jamaica, 2016, [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/RighttoWork/Jamaica.docx](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/RighttoWork/Jamaica.docx).

<sup>69</sup> BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid.*





Table 2. Key goals for gender and labour in Jamaica's National Policy for Gender Equality (NPGE) continued

Goals	Description / Remarks
Increasing women's access to formal labour.	The Policy states that research based on women's labour force participation should be used to inform initiatives. Efforts have been made to formalize the MSME sector, particularly by improving access to credit. <sup>71</sup> This will be discussed further in Section 3.8 of this Report.
Establishing social protection methods for women engaging in unpaid care work.	The NPGE states that the monetary value of reproductive work should be determined and that this should be used to inform the social security benefits that persons receive. <sup>72</sup> There is no evidence to indicate that this has taken place.
Addressing threats faced by commercial sex workers.	The Policy identifies Legislation to protect sex workers as an indicator of this target. <sup>73</sup> However, there currently is no such legislation in place. <sup>74</sup>

The NPGE is not without its critics. Maziki and Thakur (2014) state that in an effort to present a balanced policy and to assuage men's concerns—as was illustrated in their study of parliamentary debates regarding the Bill—the Policy loses its power to challenge patriarchy in legislation. The Policy was drafted originally as a tool to foster women's empowerment, but Cabinet rejected this notion.<sup>75</sup>

Furthermore, McFee (2014) notes that the responsibility for the Policy lies with the patriarchal Jamaican State rather than with the BGA. This has resulted in a gender Policy rather than a policy for women, which is not what was intended following the Beijing World Conference on Women. The Policy focuses on how the State manages gender and development and reduces it to “*a language of performance-based budgeting, results-based management, and generally more ‘inclusive’ articulations of old concerns*”,<sup>76</sup> rather than a meaningful tool to secure gender justice.<sup>77</sup>

Moreover, the capacity of the Bureau to implement the Policy is limited. This is said to be partly because of limited financial and human resources, though the current research was unable to find details of the current staff numbers and positions at the Bureau.<sup>78</sup> Added to these constraints are the slow bureaucratic processes with which the BGA must contend, as well as constant changes to its line ministry and minister, which has implications for reporting and accountability.<sup>79</sup> All of these factors work together to hinder the development of the Bureau and its ability to effect change.

70 BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.

71 *MSME and Entrepreneurship Policy*, Government of Jamaica, MIIC, 2013, [www.jamaicatax.gov.jm/documents/10181/106848/msme\\_entrepreneurship\\_policy.pdf/57f7e900-f707-4bc2-b743-077316b7e33d](http://www.jamaicatax.gov.jm/documents/10181/106848/msme_entrepreneurship_policy.pdf/57f7e900-f707-4bc2-b743-077316b7e33d).

72 BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.

73 BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.

74 Jamaica AIDS Support for Life: “Some realities of sex work”, in *Jamaica Observer* (5 July 2017), [www.jamaicaobserver.com/letters/some-realities-of-sex-work\\_100705](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/letters/some-realities-of-sex-work_100705).

75 Maziki and Thakur, 2014, *ibid*.

76 D. McFee: “National gender Policies in the English-speaking Caribbean” in *Politics, power and gender justice in the Anglophone Caribbean: Women's understandings of politics, experiences of political contestation and the possibilities for gender transformation*. (Ontario, Canada, IDRC, 2014), p. 28.

77 D. McFee, 2014, *ibid*.

78 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid*.

79 Maziki and Thakur, 2014, *ibid*.



## ■ 2.2 Ministry responsible for labour and employment

The gender division of labour and the income disparity between men and women in Jamaica both are indicative of the gender inequalities that affect the society. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) is responsible for administering the work-related laws, policies and initiatives to balance these inequalities in the world of work. These include laws such as the *Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act of 1975* and the *Maternity Act*.<sup>80</sup>

### 2.2.1 The STWP and PATH

One MLSS initiative aimed at increasing access to employment for men and women is the Steps to Work Programme (STWP). This Programme targets participants, regardless of sex, between the ages of 15–64, who are participants in Jamaica’s conditional cash transfer Programme—the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH),<sup>81</sup> which will be discussed in further detail in Section 3.6 of this Report. While this Study was unable to find sex disaggregated data for the STWP, it can be assumed that a significant percentage of participants would be female. This is because of PATH’s 380,000 beneficiaries, 55.1 per cent are female<sup>82</sup> and generally, women are more likely to participate in and complete education programmes.<sup>83</sup>

The STWP itself is split into four categories: job readiness and on the job training; business development and support; job matching; and vocational skills development and certification. The Programme delivers these services by working with other State institutions as well as NGOs. Its primary aim is to reduce the dependence of beneficiaries on government welfare and instead, for them to gain access to meaningful employment.<sup>84</sup>



80 *Resolution A/HRC/RES/30/15—Right to work*, Government of Jamaica, 2016, [www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/RighttoWork/Jamaica.docx](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/ESCR/RighttoWork/Jamaica.docx).

81 Government of Jamaica, 2016, *ibid.*

82 ECLAC: *National review: Jamaica in the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* (Chile, ECLAC, 2014).

83 L.L. Dunn, et al., 2009, *ibid.*

84 Government of Jamaica, 2016, *ibid.*



### 2.2.2 Reproductive work, the informal sector and domestic workers

Despite efforts to improve access to work and better working conditions, MLSS has not recognized the importance of unpaid domestic work. Reproductive work has been ignored as a legitimate form of work by the State, although it is necessary for society's survival. The Jamaican Government has not calculated the economic value of this work, though it adopted the *Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA)*, which listed the valuation of unpaid work as a key priority.<sup>85</sup> This failure to acknowledge the unpaid care work undertaken by many women fails to highlight the reality of the balancing act that many women face in their daily lives.

Furthermore, the MLSS has not made sufficient provisions to protect the rights of informal workers. One category of (largely female) informal workers is domestic workers. Estimates place the number of domestic workers in Jamaica at between 56,800 and 100,000 persons. Of this number, 99.8 per cent are women. Domestic workers represent a vulnerable group, since the majority of them do not have formal contracts, nor are they registered with a union or the National Insurance Scheme (NIS), which provides social security to workers.<sup>86</sup> The informal sector is thought to make up 43 per cent of Jamaica's GDP. However, labour laws have not kept abreast of this growing phenomenon. Thus, workers in the informal sector, many of whom are domestic workers, are not classified as workers by law and are subject to low wages and poor working conditions.<sup>87</sup>

## ■ 2.3 Mechanisms to resolve disputes

The Industrial Disputes Tribunal (IDT), which emerged out of the *Labour Relations and Industrial Disputes Act*, hears cases when employers and workers cannot come to an agreement. If the Tribunal cannot resolve the case, it then goes on to the civil courts. In 2011, the IDT heard 23 cases which received decisions after an average of 90 days; the number of cases was not broken down by sex.<sup>88</sup> No information was found on whether any of the cases were brought because of alleged sex discrimination.

The IDT offers more protection to unionized workers than to non-unionized workers. For unionized workers, the dispute must relate to the following:

- Their specific terms of employment;
- The physical conditions to which they are subjected in the workplace;
- Termination or suspension of their employment;
- The rights, privileges and duties of any employer or worker; or
- Any concerns involving bargaining rights.

85 S. Stuart: *The Beijing Platform for Action: Twenty years of implementation in the Caribbean* (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2014).

86 Andaiye: *Domestic care workers at the interface of migration and development in the Caribbean: Action to expand good practice*, Paper presented at the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), Jamaica, 7–8 Sep. 2011. (PIOJ and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade).

87 ILO FORLAC Notes: *Informal employment in Jamaica*. (Peru, ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2014).

88 US Department of State: *Jamaica: 2010 Country reports on human rights practices report*. (US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labour, 2011, [www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154511.htm](http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154511.htm))





Meanwhile, non-unionized workers are limited to three conditions under which they can bring a dispute to the tribunal. These are:

- The physical conditions of their employment;
- Employment termination or suspension; and
- The rights and duties of employers, organizations representing employers, workers or organizations representing workers.<sup>89</sup>

Women are less likely to be unionized than men and therefore, the procedures of the Tribunal may be more beneficial to men.<sup>90</sup> One researcher has noted that education on gender issues would be helpful for IDT members to develop practices supportive of gender equality, following an instance where a judge made inappropriate remarks in commenting on a sexual harassment case.<sup>91</sup>

There is evidence that women are not equitably represented in trade unions in Jamaica, according to studies published in 2011 (Phillips et al) and 2014 (Marsh et al).<sup>92</sup> The 2014 study gives the following figures. The authors note that in all but one of the fourteen Jamaican trade unions studied, men were the majority of executive members. The exception was the union representing nurses, where all executive members were female, highlighting issues of occupational segregation.

**Table 3. Sex distribution by position in fourteen trade unions in Jamaica, 2011**

Position in trade unions	No. of Males	No. of Females	% Females
President	12	2	14.3
General Secretary	8	5	38.5
Vice President	23	7	23.3
Executive Member	86	55 <sup>a</sup>	39.0

Note:

<sup>a</sup> The Nurses Association of Jamaica (NAJ) had 25 female executive members, and no males. If the NAJ is excluded, the percentage of female executive members is 25.9 per cent.

Source: L. Marsh, et al. 2014. "Gender and trade union development in the Caribbean", in *Caribbean quarterly* Vol. 60 No. 3, pp. 39-57.

In explaining the gender imbalance, the authors note that in Jamaica, there is an "absence in initiatives geared towards recruiting, mentoring and motivating women", in contrast with some European countries. They also note "cultural notions of leadership" which encourage members to vote for men, and nepotistic practices by some existing male leaders in favour of other men.<sup>93</sup>

89 S. McGregor: "What is an industrial dispute?" in *Jamaica Gleaner* (23 Jun. 2014), <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20140623/flair/flair91.html>.

90 M.A. Phillips, D. Roberts, L. Marsh: "Gender and trade union development: A situation analysis of Jamaica" *Social and Economic Studies* (2011, Vol. 60 No. 2), pp. 145–166.

91 S.J. Goolsarran: *Industrial relations in the Caribbean: Issues and perspectives*. (Port of Spain, ILO, 2006), p. 317.

92 Phillips et al., 2011, *ibid.*; and M.A. Phillips, L. Marsh, et al.: "Gender and trade union development in the Caribbean", in *Caribbean quarterly* (2014, Vol. 60 No. 3), pp. 39–57.

93 Phillips et al., 2011, *ibid.*, pp. 162–163.



## ■ 2.4 Government institutions concerned with economic development

Jamaica's economy has struggled to achieve any significant growth since the 1960s. As a result, it has been subject to several trade liberalization strategies, which began with structural adjustment policies in the 1980s. In 2008, Jamaica opened its economy further by signing on to the *Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)* with the European Union. This Agreement places Jamaican goods and European goods on equal footing as it removes all trade barriers. The Agreement has been accused of being imbalanced in favour of Europe as local Jamaican small businesses are forced to compete with European multinational companies that are producing similar goods with a great deal more resources and economies of scale at their disposal.<sup>94</sup>

Jamaica's *National Development Plan–Vision 2030*, developed by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), reflects a commitment to advancing gender equality in the nation.<sup>95</sup> In fact, when the plan was developed, the PIOJ identified gender as one of thirty-one thematic areas that would inform the development of sectoral plans, which then would be integrated into one development plan. As a result, a gender taskforce was established.<sup>96</sup> Specific to trade, the plan identifies the importance of gender-aware trade agreements that recognize their potential impact on female-dominated sectors such as services.<sup>97</sup>

However, Kirton (2013) notes that Jamaica's adherence to a neoliberal model of economic growth is likely to have negative impacts on the economy, and as a result, its vulnerable citizens, including women. Meanwhile, Dunn et al (2009) states that links are weak between the BGA and Government agencies responsible for trade.<sup>98</sup> They warn that a failure to acknowledge the gendered outcomes of trade liberalization can leave many poor women vulnerable, just as it did in the past during the structural adjustment era. To emphasise the point further:

*“Unless a gender-sensitive policy is used to implement the EPA, it is likely to entrench rather than transform gender inequalities in the labour market and in society. The social groups most likely to feel the impact would be public sector workers—the majority of whom are females—who may be laid off. The poorest households also are likely to feel any changes. The majority of these households are headed by single females in low paying jobs.”*<sup>100</sup>

The Policy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade currently is under review and seeks to add to the Government's growth plan.<sup>101</sup> The impact of this new Policy on both men and women remains to be seen.

94 R.M. Kirton: *Gender, trade and public procurement policy Kenya, India, Australia, Jamaica*. (London, Commonwealth Secretariat, 2013).

95 CEDAW: *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Jamaica*. (New York, United Nations, 2012).

96 National Gender Task Force: *Vision 2030: Jamaica national development plan—Gender sector plan* (Kingston, Jamaica, Government of Jamaica, 2009).

97 PIOJ: *Vision 2030 Integrated national development plan* (Kingston, Jamaica, PIOJ, 2009).

98 R.M. Kirton, 2013, *ibid*.

99 L.L. Dunn, A. Hamilton, J. Byron, and Q. Palmer: *Gender and women's rights analysis of economic partnership agreements: The implementation of trade liberalisation Jamaica*. (Jamaica, IGDS, 2009).

100 L.L. Dunn et al., 2009, *ibid*., p. 16.

101 B. Henry: “New foreign trade policy almost ready”, in *Jamaica Observer*, (13 Jan. 2017), [www.jamaicaobserver.com/business/New-foreign-trade-policy-almost-ready\\_86415](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business/New-foreign-trade-policy-almost-ready_86415).



The Rural Agricultural Development Authority (RADA), an initiative of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, specifically targets women by providing them with assistance to seek out opportunities in the agricultural sector.<sup>102</sup> It works closely with the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) to facilitate income-generating activities for women. RADA's Agrimart franchise has been set up as a marketing and distribution outlet to sell women's products such as spices and jellies.<sup>103</sup> Agrimart also has worked with 98 women's group to provide training related to micro, rural and urban agribusiness enterprise management, as well as product development and marketing.<sup>104</sup> Along the way, they collect sex disaggregated data through their Agricultural Business Information System (ABIS).<sup>105</sup>

However, women remain underrepresented in the agricultural sector, with the sectoral workforce comprising nine per cent female workers and 25 per cent male workers. Even though Government policies in the sector are intended to benefit men and women equally, men generally have greater access to land than women do—1.10 hectares of land on average for women and 1.98 hectares for men—because of traditional land inheritance practices that favour men. Women's lack of ownership has a negative impact on their access to credit, as they have difficulty in securing collateral. On average, female farmers also have less technical knowledge than their male counterparts, as well as limited transport for their goods and insufficient equipment.<sup>106</sup>



102 *About RADA*, Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, <http://rada.gov.jm/component/k2/item/422-about-rada>.

103 *Income generating*, Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries, [rada.gov.jm/component/k2/item/433-income-generating](http://rada.gov.jm/component/k2/item/433-income-generating).

104 L. Fulton: "RADA's role in agro development", in *Jamaica Gleaner* (9 Jun. 2013), [jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20130609/cleisure/cleisure2.html](http://jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20130609/cleisure/cleisure2.html).

105 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.

106 L.L. Dunn, et al., 2009, *ibid*.



## 2.5 Civil society and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

NGOs are very important for the implementation of the NPGE as they represent a diverse set of stakeholders. Many non-state actors have helped to further the cause of gender equality in relation to labour in Jamaica.

**Table 4. NGOs and non-state bodies furthering gender equality in the labour arena in Jamaica**

Organization	Description / Remarks
Association of Women's Organizations of Jamaica (AWOJA)	This is an umbrella NGO acting in the interests of women's groups throughout the country by monitoring and organizing their activities. One of their initiatives was the All Island Conference for Women held in 1992. <sup>107</sup>
Women's Construction Collective	The Collective runs construction skills training courses for women and helps them to find employment. <sup>108</sup>
Sistren Theatre Collective	This women's group started in 1977 to encourage women to take action on particular issues through drama. One of their programmes is Sistren Textiles, an initiative which creates screen prints and t-shirts based on the theatre's work to generate income. <sup>109</sup>
Joint Trade Union's Research and Development Centres	These entities ran a programme to encourage women to take on leadership positions in the trade union movement. <sup>110</sup>
Women Business Owners' of Jamaica Ltd	Formed in 2003, the organization attempts to advance women in business through education, mentorship and networking. One particular initiative was known as Strengthening and Promoting Women Entrepreneurs in Jamaica, which focused on training and mentoring women owners of small and medium enterprises with the aim of growing their businesses. <sup>111</sup>
Jamaica Household Workers Union	Established in 1991 by the then Bureau of Women's Affairs, the JHWU started as a collection of grassroots women working for the rights of household workers. In 2012 the organization became a trade union. <sup>112</sup> They now have

107 CEDAW: *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women: Second, third and fourth periodic reports of States parties: Jamaica*. (New York, United Nations, 1998).

108 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid.*

109 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid.*

110 CEDAW, 1998, *ibid.*

111 *Jamaica Bureau of Women's Affairs*, BWA, 2009, [www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/Jamaica.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/Jamaica.pdf).

112 L. Dunn: *Report on a baseline study of household workers in Jamaica*. Prepared for the UN Women and Ministry of Labour and Social Security Project—Advancing Decent Work for Domestic Workers. (UN Women, MLSS, 2014).



Table 4. NGOs and non-state bodies furthering gender equality in the labour arena in Jamaica continued

Organization	Description / Remarks
	<p>approximately 5,700 members registered. The organization provides training, advocacy, mediation services and negotiates collective agreements.<sup>113</sup> Activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying successfully for an increase in the minimum wage;</li> <li>• Establishing a ‘helpline’ service to provide job opportunities for women who provide domestic service, and to assist household workers in crisis;</li> <li>• Referring unresolved employer/employee disputes to the Ministry of Labour; and</li> <li>• Setting up chapters in six parishes<sup>114</sup></li> </ul> <p>The Founder and President of the JHWU, Shirley Price, recently obtained the CARICOM Woman of the Year Award. Ms Price was among activists who adopted the ILO Domestic Workers Convention in Geneva in 2011. She is currently working on the development of a training institute for domestic workers and is Chairperson of the Caribbean Domestic Workers’ Network.<sup>115</sup></p>
Institute for Gender and Development Studies (IGDS)	<p>The IGDS at the University of the West Indies, Mona, conducts research related to gender, work and trade. Dr Leith Dunn, the Head of the Institute, has been particularly involved in research advocating for the rights of domestic workers in Jamaica.<sup>116</sup> One of these studies was “<i>The situation of household workers in Jamaica</i>”, conducted to support the case for ratifying the Domestic Workers Convention of 2011.<sup>117</sup></p>
ECLAC	<p>Jamaica was chosen to be one of five countries in the region to take part in the Gender Equality Observatory, which collects gender disaggregated data on key gender equality indicators. ECLAC also provides training to those using the data produced, including for the Bureau of Gender Affairs. The aim of this programme is to encourage countries to honour the commitments set out in the international Conventions that they have ratified.<sup>118</sup></p>

113 J. Lowrie-Chin: “Jamaica’s household workers in the spotlight”, in *Jamaica Observer*, (9 Oct. 2017).

114 *JHWA can help you*, Jamaica household worker’s association, [jhw1.blogspot.com/p/jhwa-can-help-you.html](http://jhw1.blogspot.com/p/jhwa-can-help-you.html).

115 N. Wilson: “‘Pryce-Less’ — Former Jamaican domestic worker is CARICOM woman of the year”, in *Jamaica Gleaner*, (2 July 2017), <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20170702/pryce-less-former-jamaican-domestic-worker-caricom-woman-year>.

116 *Current Research*, Mona, Jamaica, UWI Institute of Gender and Development Studies, [www.mona.uwi.edu/igds/research.php](http://www.mona.uwi.edu/igds/research.php).

117 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.

118 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.



Table 4. NGOs and non-state bodies furthering gender equality in the labour arena in Jamaica continued

Organization	Description / Remarks
UN Women	As part of their 2017 International Women's Day events, UN Women encouraged Jamaican business owners and leaders to sign the <i>Women's Economic Empowerment Principles</i> , committing them to gender equality in the private sector. <sup>119</sup>
International Labour Organization (ILO)	The ILO has partnered with local institutions such as the Statistical Institute of Jamaica and the Planning Institute of Jamaica to produce research publications related to gender and work. One such study was conducted in 2014, and titled <i>Labour market transitions of young women and men in Jamaica</i> . <sup>120</sup>

## 2.6 Initiatives and tools for gender mainstreaming

The NPGE established gender mainstreaming in the workplace as a key priority for achieving gender equality in Jamaica. In a statement indicating the name change of the BWA to the BGA, the Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport noted: “*Equality in the workplace is paramount, as it speaks not only to the increased inclusion and participation of women, but also the creation of a more family-friendly environment, which will be beneficial to both men and women*”.<sup>121</sup>

Gender Focal Points (GFPs) have been appointed and tasked with mainstreaming gender throughout Government institutions. GFPs are individuals who are dispersed among Government ministries and agencies with a mandate to ensure that gender concerns are considered and incorporated into every strategy, plan and policy, using a gender equality framework.<sup>122</sup> They also are responsible for providing data for regional and international reports.<sup>123</sup> However, the GFPs’ powers to create any impact have been limited, partly due to perceptions that are prevalent in the institutions in which they operate. Actors in these institutions sometimes believe that addressing gender issues requires additional financial resources, or that including gender considerations is a waste of time.<sup>124</sup> Furthermore, GFPs have no powers of implementation. These challenges have made it difficult to guarantee their success as their impact is very dependent on the dynamics present in the specific ministry or agency in which they find themselves.<sup>125</sup>

The Bureau of Gender Affairs recently released a Gender Mainstreaming Manual (GMM) with the intention of supporting public institutions to maintain an awareness of gender issues for their policies

119 UN Women Caribbean: *Gender Equality Means Business*, 2017, <http://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/news-and-events/stories/2017/3/gender-equality-means-business>.

120 SIOJ and PIOJ: *Labour market transitions of young women and men in Jamaica* (Geneva, ILO, 2014), [www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_250104.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_250104.pdf).

121 G.L. Angus: “Change of Name for Bureau of Women’s Affairs”, in *Jamaica Information Service News* (19 Mar. 2016), <https://jis.gov.jm/change-name-bureau-womens-affairs/>.

122 *Jamaica Bureau of Women’s Affairs*, BWA, 2009, [www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/Jamaica.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/mujer/noticias/paginas/8/36338/Jamaica.pdf).

123 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.

124 BWA, 2009, *ibid*.

125 Maziki and Thakur, 2014, *ibid*.





and programmes. It positions gender mainstreaming within the Jamaican context and in so doing, it helps to ensure relevant solutions.<sup>126</sup> It also provides a clearer understanding of the role of GFPs and identifies technical tools that they can employ.<sup>127</sup> Copies of the manual were given to GFPs, partners of the bureau and other public-sector actors.<sup>128</sup> While this seems to be a step in a positive direction, its impact is not yet known.

Similar to the GMM is the Gender Analysis Checklist developed by the BGA to ensure that policy developers maintain a gender perspective. The Checklist includes gender-sensitive questions to ask during each phase of the policy process. The research and consultation section for example, asks questions around whether any sex-disaggregated data exists, whether men and women can access resources equally, or if there are any gender specific concerns that could have an impact on outcomes.<sup>129</sup> This Checklist helps to provide policy analysts—who may have little or no gender sensitivity training—with a straightforward set of parameters to guide their work.

This Report was unable to find any significant information related to comprehensive gender mainstreaming efforts in the MLSS. However, one item of note was the fact that in 2009, the Bureau of Gender Affairs sat on policy committees for several economic sectors, in order to ensure that a gender perspective was present in their policy-making process. One key outcome of those exercises was the MLSS *Occupational Safety and Health Bill*.<sup>130</sup>



126 E. Reckford: “Gender Mainstreaming Manual Developed”, in *Jamaica Information Service News* (24 Feb. 2017), <https://jis.gov.jm/gender-mainstreaming-manual-developed/>.

127 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.

128 E. Reckford, 2017, *ibid*.

129 M. Abrams: *A Manual for Policy Analysts*. (Jamaica, Cabinet Office, 2002), <http://cabinet.gov.jm/resources/manual-for-policy-analysts-abrams/>.

130 BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.







## Legal and policy analysis

### 3.1 International Conventions on gender and work signed by Jamaica

Two Conventions particularly relevant to gender and work are yet to be ratified by Jamaica, namely, the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and the Maternity Protection Convention (No. 183).<sup>131</sup>

However, the country has signed and ratified the following other Conventions concerning gender and work issues:

**Table 5. International / regional Instruments ratified by the Government of Jamaica with gender policy implications**

Instrument	Ratification Year
UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	1984 <sup>132</sup>

<sup>131</sup> ILO: *NORMLEX Database on International Labour Standards: Ratification by country*. Available online at <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11001::NO::>

<sup>132</sup> UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): *Ratification status for Jamaica*. (OHCHR, Treaty Body Database), [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=86&Lang=EN](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Treaty.aspx?CountryID=86&Lang=EN).



Table 5. International / regional Instruments ratified by the Government of Jamaica with gender policy implications continued

Instrument	Ratification Year
Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	1975
Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	1975
Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). The Convention entered into force for Jamaica on 11 Oct 2017. <sup>133</sup>	2016

Sources: United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; and International Labour Organization.

## 3.2 Discrimination and equal opportunity

Jamaica's Charter of Fundamental Rights is found in Chapter III of the country's Constitution.<sup>134</sup> The Constitution was amended most recently in 2011 to include the Charter, which presents a much broader range of citizens' rights to be protected and in so doing, represents a significant advancement for human rights in Jamaica.<sup>135</sup> Specifically, Section 13(3)(i) of the Charter explicitly protects citizens from discrimination by upholding "*the right to freedom from discrimination on the grounds of being male or female, race, place of origin, social class, colour, religion or political opinions*".

While the NPGE seeks to reduce gendered discrimination in all of its forms,<sup>136</sup> the Charter stops just short of this. The CEDAW Committee stated that while the Charter prohibits discrimination on the ground of "*being male or female*", the limited list of other grounds on which citizens can expect to be protected leaves many women (and men) vulnerable, who do not fall into these categories.

The CEDAW Committee does not state the omissions that should be addressed, but a review of the Charter reveals there are no statements to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or nationality. Furthermore, the lack of definition of "*male or female*" leaves the clause open to interpretation. If judgements are based on biological sex at birth, there is a lack of protection from discrimination for transgender and intersex people.

The Committee also expressed concern that the Charter does not align with the CEDAW, as it fails to establish a definition of what qualifies as discrimination against women, again leaving women susceptible to poor treatment as the definition is open to interpretation. The Committee requested that Jamaica adopt a definition of discrimination that encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination, and which covers all areas of life.<sup>137</sup> Thus, while the Charter signifies a step in the right direction, it does not go far enough to protect Jamaica's citizens.

<sup>133</sup> ILO: NORMLEX Database on International Labour Standards: Ratifications for Jamaica. Available online at [www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11200:0::NO:11200:P11200\\_COUNTRY\\_ID:103236](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:11200:0::NO:11200:P11200_COUNTRY_ID:103236).

<sup>134</sup> *The Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (Constitutional Amendment) Act, Act No. 12 of 2011*, Government of Jamaica, Parliament of Jamaica, [www.japarliament.gov.jm/attachments/341\\_The%20Charter%20of%20Fundamental%20Rights%20and%20Freedoms%20%28Constitutional%20Amendment%29%20Act,%202011.pdf](http://www.japarliament.gov.jm/attachments/341_The%20Charter%20of%20Fundamental%20Rights%20and%20Freedoms%20%28Constitutional%20Amendment%29%20Act,%202011.pdf).

<sup>135</sup> CEDAW, 2012, *ibid*.

<sup>136</sup> BWA and GAC, 2010, *ibid*.

<sup>137</sup> CEDAW, 2012, *ibid*, p. 3, paragraphs 11 and 12.



### ■ 3.3 Maternity and paternity leave and parental policies

Jamaica has not yet ratified the *Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)*. However, maternity leave in Jamaica is protected under the *Maternity Leave Act of 1979*.<sup>138</sup> Mothers are granted maternity leave after working for their employer for a continuous period of 52 weeks before the date that their leave begins, or, in the case of seasonal workers, 52 weeks or more in the past five years, as indicated in Section 3(1)(b). According to Section 3(2), leave is granted for twelve weeks for each pregnancy, unless the mother or child is ill. In that instance, the worker is granted up to 14 weeks of additional leave, in accordance with Section 3(4). Maternity pay is granted for eight of these weeks (Section 5).

The fact that only eight of the twelve weeks' maternity leave are covered by maternity pay from the employer, may make it more difficult for women in low incomes brackets to use the full twelve weeks of leave to which they are entitled. The Act also ensures that women can resume their original job upon completion of their leave, covered under Section 4. Employers who violate the conditions of maternity leave are liable to be fined or sent to prison by the Resident Magistrate, as stipulated in Section 7.<sup>139</sup>

Currently, there is no legislation regarding paternity leave in Jamaica, despite recommendations from the Bureau of Gender Affairs. The BGA has advocated that paternity leave would:

- Help to provide support for the mother;
- Enable bonding between father and child;
- Ensure that Jamaica satisfies its commitments to the Beijing Platform for Action; and
- Allow fathers to look after the child in the event of the mother's death.<sup>140</sup>

In addition, the BGA has indicated that paternity leave would be a step towards a more equitable distribution of childcare duties, which often are disproportionately allocated to the mother.<sup>141</sup>

### ■ 3.4 Equal remuneration for work of equal value

According to Jamaican law, men and women must be paid equally when performing equal work. The *Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act* of 1975<sup>142</sup> sought to formally eliminate differential payment between men and women for similar work with the same employer.<sup>143</sup> The Act requires, under Section 3, the payment of equal pay for equal work. The definition of the term "equal work", provided under Section 2(1), contemplates work performed for one employer by women and men workers. The Act, therefore, does not fully implement the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, which necessitates consideration of values of work across different jobs in different industries. This point has been noted by the ILO's *Committee of Experts on the Application*

138 *Maternity Leave Act 1979*, Government of Jamaica, <http://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/Maternity%20Leave%20Act.pdf>.

139 *Maternity Leave Act*, *ibid.*

140 CEDAW: *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women Fifth periodic report of States parties Jamaica*. (New York, United Nations, 2004, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N04/246/29/pdf/N0424629.pdf?OpenElement>. P. 54, paragraph 194.

141 Government of Jamaica, 2016, *ibid.*

142 *Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act 1975*, Government of Jamaica, <http://moj.gov.jm/laws/employment-equal-pay-men-and-women-act>.

143 CEDAW, 2004, *ibid.*



of *Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR)*, a Body of independent experts which monitors the implementation of ILO Conventions and Recommendations.<sup>144</sup> The CEACR has requested that the Jamaica Government review the country's *Equal Pay Act* with a view to fully implementing the *Equal Remuneration Convention*, 1951 (No. 100).<sup>145</sup>

Evidence presented earlier in Section 1.5 of this Report shows that wage gaps between men and women persist,<sup>146</sup> and there is evidence of occupational segregation, as highlighted in Section 1.4. To address pay differences, it is recommended that action to address practices by employers should be complemented by efforts to address the gender division of labour.

### ■ 3.5 Work-family responsibilities, including State-provided childcare services

Parents are guaranteed equal guardianship rights on the death of the other parent, under Sections 3 and 4 of the *Children (Guardianship and Custody) Act*.<sup>147</sup> Under Section 7, both mother and father are able to apply for physical custody. The *Maintenance Act*<sup>148</sup> also regards parents as equals under Section 3, as either parent with whom the child resides can apply to the Family Court for child support. These laws are in line with Article 16 of the CEDAW, which highlights the importance of including shared responsibility in marriage and family relations.



144 Further information on the CEACR is available at [www.ilo.org/global/standards/applying-and-promoting-international-labour-standards/committee-of-experts-on-the-application-of-conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/applying-and-promoting-international-labour-standards/committee-of-experts-on-the-application-of-conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm).

145 CEACR, Observation published in 2014. Available online at [www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13101:0::NO:13101:P13101\\_COMMENT\\_ID:3143780](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:13101:0::NO:13101:P13101_COMMENT_ID:3143780).

146 CARILED: *Country Study 2014: A review of gender related challenges affecting Local Government and MSMES in Jamaica* (Port of Spain, CARILED, 2014).

147 *Children (Guardian and Custody) Act*, last amended in 1991, Government of Jamaica, <http://moj.gov.jm/laws/children-guardian-and-custody-act>.

148 Text is available at <http://moj.gov.jm/laws/maintenance-act>.





In the area of work-family responsibilities, while Jamaica has not yet ratified the *Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)*, Article 11(2)(c) of the CEDAW states that governments must encourage the provision of social services that enable parents to balance family and work commitments, especially through promoting the establishment of childcare facilities.

The Early Childhood Commission was established under the *Early Childhood Commission Act of 2003* as an agency under the Ministry of Education. According to information provided by the Commission, early childhood education is delivered through approximately 2,800 day-care centres, infant schools, infant departments, nurseries and basic schools, all of which it has the responsibility of regulating. These institutions offer services to children below the age of six for a maximum of six hours per day.<sup>149</sup> This service is not long enough to cover regular work hours of eight more, so parents who are working full time would have to find additional childcare. The hours are also not suitable for people working outside regular working hours, such as in the tourism and entertainment sector.

Other countries have implemented policies that facilitate working parents and guardians, such as tax deductions for childcare payments, provision of a child allowance to parents and provision of leave to care for sick relatives.<sup>150</sup> However, such policies have not been implemented in Jamaica.

## ■ 3.6 Social protection

Jamaica's social protection is facilitated through several Government institutions and comprises a range of programmes catering for different audiences. In general, these programmes can be split into two categories: social assistance and social insurance.

### 3.6.1 Social insurance programmes

Jamaica's social insurance is provided by the country's National Insurance Scheme (NIS). The NIS, born out of the National Insurance Act of 1979, is a compulsory contributory Scheme which provides social security for workers. It is taken at a rate of 2.5 per cent from each employed person's salary and an additional 2.5 per cent is taken from their employer.

According to the Act, every employed person and self-employed person above the age of 18 years and below retirement age (the age of retirement is now 65 for women and 70 for men)<sup>151</sup> is liable to contribute.<sup>152</sup> The Scheme is administered by the MLSS and includes provisions for maternity, old age, funerals, invalidity, employment injury, widows/widowers and special children.<sup>153</sup>

Old age pensions are awarded to individuals who have contributed to the Scheme when they have reached retirement age and are no longer employed. Old age pensioners receive payments every two weeks or in a lump sum. To qualify for the Scheme, pensioners must have contributed to it for a minimum of 156 weeks. In cases where a person does not qualify for an old age pension, because they may have not contributed enough to the fund but have made contributions for up to 52 weeks prior, he/she is entitled to a grant.<sup>154</sup>

149 *About us*. Government of Jamaica, Early Childhood Commission, 2016.

150 World Bank: *Women, Business and the Law 2016* (Washington DC, World Bank, 2016), pp. 148–149.

151 *Retirement*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=81](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=81).

152 *National Insurance Act*, Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Justice, [http://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/National%20Insurance%20Act\\_0.pdf](http://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/National%20Insurance%20Act_0.pdf).

153 *National Insurance Scheme*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=20](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=20).

154 *FAQ Retirement*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=94](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=94).



Employment Injury Benefit is awarded to persons who contract an injury or disease as a result of their job. The NIS covers medical treatment for insurable employees. After the first three days of the injury occurring, the benefit includes payment for four continuous days or more that the employee is unable to work. This can be claimed within twelve months of the accident or development of the illness.<sup>155</sup> Not covered by this benefit are: domestic workers, self-employed workers and members of the Jamaica Defence Force.<sup>156</sup> The non-coverage of domestic workers is of concern, since domestic work is done predominantly by women in positions of financial insecurity.

Due to the vast number of unregistered, informal workers in Jamaica, the NIS does not cover the majority of the working age population. In 2012, only 38,817 women contributed to the scheme. With respect to retirement, lower coverage by women means they are more likely than men to receive grants or no payments at all, rather than pensions. In the case of domestic workers, for example, most of whom are women, very few employers contribute to the NIS on behalf of their employees.<sup>157</sup> This leaves the workers vulnerable and is costly for the State, which has responsibility for supporting these individuals through their social assistance programmes.<sup>158</sup> One study notes that the benefits from the NIS are also very low because the required contributions are too low. This limits their ability to provide any meaningful assistance to the recipient.<sup>159</sup>

### 3.6.2 Social assistance programmes

Jamaica's Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) is the Government's primary social protection Programme for people who are not in receipt of NIS benefits. PATH, a conditional cash transfer Programme started in 2002, is directed at the most vulnerable in society, many of whom are women. The elderly, children, those with disabilities, and lactating or pregnant women are all beneficiaries of the Scheme. Means-based testing is used to target recipients and involves an interview and an application that is filled in with the assistance of an MLSS representative.<sup>160</sup> In 2010, female-headed households made up more than half of the total 380,000 PATH beneficiaries.<sup>161</sup>

Any beneficiary of PATH can qualify for a health grant if they are not between the age range 6–18 years. Disabled and elderly people and any other adult participants must go to the Health Centre twice a year, in order to continue receiving the grant.<sup>162</sup> Elderly females accounted for 61 per cent of elderly participants while of the adult poor, 84 per cent were female.<sup>163</sup>

There are no provisions under PATH for people living with HIV/AIDS as benefits are allocated only on the basis of income. An applicant's assessable health status is limited to pregnancy and disability.<sup>164</sup> However, the Government provides free antiretroviral treatment for infected persons at 23 public

<sup>155</sup> *National Insurance Act*, *ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> *Employment Injury Benefits*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=86](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=86).

<sup>157</sup> L. Dunn: *Report on a Baseline Study of Household Workers in Jamaica*. Prepared for the UN Women and Ministry of Labour and Social Security Project—Advancing Decent Work for Domestic Workers. (UN Women, MLSS, 2014).

<sup>158</sup> ILO FORLAC Notes, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Jamaica Social Protection Strategy* (Jamaica, PIOJ, 2014).

<sup>160</sup> *Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH)*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=23](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=23).

<sup>161</sup> ECLAC, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>162</sup> *PATH Frequently Asked Questions*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=59](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=59).

<sup>163</sup> L.L. Dunn, et al., 2009, *ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> *PATH Frequently Asked Questions*, Government of Jamaica, MLSS, [www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=59](http://www.mlss.gov.jm/pub/index.php?artid=59).



health centres.<sup>165</sup> This is especially important for females between the ages of 15–19 years who account for more than four times the number of cases of HIV/AIDS than boys of the same age group.<sup>166</sup>

In addition to PATH, the elderly also qualify for the Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme (JADEP). This initiative enables elderly people, most of them women, to purchase prescription drugs at a nominal price regardless of their economic status.<sup>167</sup> All Jamaican residents (60 years of age and older) who have been diagnosed with one or more of the conditions covered, are eligible to enroll for JADEP membership.<sup>168</sup>

For disabled people, there are additional social assistance programmes in addition to PATH. One such initiative is the Early Stimulation Programme (ESP), managed by the MLSS. The Programme provides activities for children with disabilities, including those with learning and developmental delays.<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, five per cent of houses provided by the National Housing Trust are reserved for people with disabilities. There are also four wheelchair accessible buses for which disabled people are given concessionary bus fares.<sup>170</sup> It can be assumed that social assistance initiatives targeting the disabled will have an impact on the lives of women, as they are largely responsible for care duties in Jamaica. In fact, one report found that all participants in a study on caregivers of mentally ill patients were women.<sup>171</sup>

One group for which the Government's diverse social protection programmes have not been very successful is rural women. These women find it difficult to access healthcare as health centres are not located near to where they live, and transportation costs are high. Pharmacies sometimes are limited in the drugs they have available. Indeed, those pharmacies located closest to these women's homes may not necessarily be a part of any social protection programme, which would allow them access to free or discounted medication.<sup>172</sup>

165 *Jamaica Country Progress Report. Global Aids Response Progress Report.* (Jamaica, Ministry of Health, 2014), [www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/country/documents/jm\\_file%2C94637%2Cfr..pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/country/documents/jm_file%2C94637%2Cfr..pdf).

166 ECLAC, 2014, *ibid*.

167 National Gender Task Force, 2009, *ibid*.

168 National Health Fund: *Jamaica Drug for the Elderly Programme (JADEP)* (Government of Jamaica, Ministry of Health).

169 *Education for All 2015 National Review Report: Jamaica*, Ministry of Education, 2015, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002300/230020E.pdf>.

170 Jamaicans for Justice (JJJ), the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (CVC), the Jamaica Youth Advocacy Network (JYAN), J-FLAG, and Stand Up for Jamaica: *Jamaica Civil Society Report on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, (OHCHR, 2016).

Available online at [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/JAM/INT\\_CCPR\\_CSS\\_JAM\\_25472\\_E.pdf](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/JAM/INT_CCPR_CSS_JAM_25472_E.pdf).

171 P. Miller and A. Murray: “‘I need help’: Caregivers’ experiences of caring for their relatives with mental illness in Jamaica”, in *Mental Health in Family Medicine* (2013, Vol. 10 No. 2), pp. 113–121.

172 National Gender Task Force: *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan Gender Sector Plan*. (Jamaica, Government of Jamaica, 2009).



### 3.7 Violence and harassment and work and relating to work

Jamaica's Sexual Harassment Bill was tabled in December 2015, and currently is before the Parliament,<sup>173</sup> but as at 1st December 2017, had not been passed.<sup>174</sup> However, the Bill is expected to be tabled once more in Jamaica Parliament, before 2018 ends.<sup>175 176 177</sup>

The Bill defines the term “*sexual harassment*” to mean: “*the making of any sexual advance towards a person, by another person, which is reasonably regarded as unwelcome, offensive or humiliating by the person towards whom the sexual advance is made*”. The bill then deals with several connected matters, including prohibited forms of sexual harassment, prevention measures, complaint mechanisms and procedures, and penalties. This is a comprehensive Legislation, but the context of sexual harassment is limited to the workplace, assigning the responsibility of taking action against sexual harassment to employers, or a person in charge of an institution.<sup>178</sup>

The relevant law currently in force is the *Sexual Offences Act*,<sup>179</sup> which deals with physical sexual acts such as rape, sexual assault or marital rape—detailed in Part II of the Act. It also governs incest and sexual offences against children, as well as other offences (in Parts III, IV and V). The Law prohibits these acts and subjects them to specific penalties.

The Act also established the Sex Offender Register and Registry (in Part VI). As sections 3(1) or 5(1) provide, this Act assumes that rapes are committed by men against women. Marital Rape is defined as a sexual offence only if certain types of relationship breakdowns have been declared—such as separation, divorce proceedings have been instituted, a protection order has been granted—or if the husband knows he is suffering from a sexually transmitted infection (Part II, Section 5). These provisos leave married women unprotected from rape by their husbands in most circumstances.

173 Text can be accessed at: <http://www.japarlament.gov.jm/index.php/publications/bills/public-bills>.

174 B. Gloudon: “Where’s the Sexual Harassment Bill?” in *Jamaica Observer* (1 Dec. 2017), [www.jamaicaobserver.com/columns/where-8217-s-the-sexual-harassment-bill-\\_118677?profile=1096](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/columns/where-8217-s-the-sexual-harassment-bill-_118677?profile=1096).

175 B. Henry: “Gov’t shows renewed interest in Sexual Harassment Bill—Inside Parliament with Balford Henry”, in *Jamaica Observer* (17 June 2018), [www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/gov-t-shows-renewed-interest-in-sexual-harassment-bill\\_136089?profile=1373](http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/news/gov-t-shows-renewed-interest-in-sexual-harassment-bill_136089?profile=1373).

176 C. Patterson: “Sexual Harassment Bill Modified to Reflect Current Realities”, in *Jamaica Information Service News*, (26 Jan. 2018, JIS), <https://jis.gov.jm/wp-content/cache/all/sexual-harassment-bill-modified-to-reflect-current-realities/index.html>.  
A. Smith: “Sexual Harassment Bill to Be Tabled this Year”, in *Jamaica Information Service News*, (16 Feb. 2018, JIS), <https://jis.gov.jm/sexual-harassment-bill-tabled-year/>.

177 C. Davis: “PNP Calls For Re-tabling Of Sexual Harassment Bill”, in *Jamaica Gleaner* (9 Mar. 2018), <http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180309/npn-calls-retabling-sexual-harassment-bill>.

178 See Sections 3 and 4 of the proposed legislation (based on the text available as of 14 July 2017).

179 *Sexual Offences Act*, 2011, Government of Jamaica, <http://moj.gov.jm/laws/sexual-offences-act>.





### ■ 3.8 Policies and initiatives to stimulate entrepreneurship

Jamaica's MSME Policy of 2011 aims to increase formality amongst MSMEs in the sector. It includes, among its goals, the encouragement of equal opportunities for males and females. To formalize the sector, the Policy aims to:

- Increase access to credit;
- Raise awareness regarding the existence of business support agencies such as the Jamaica Trade and Investment Promotion (JAMPRO);
- Strengthen organizations, such as the Small Business Association of Jamaica (SBAJ);
- Offer technical skills training through organizations like the Jamaica Business Development Corporation (JBDC); and
- Facilitate links between MSMEs <sup>182</sup>

Furthermore, the *Security Interest in Personal Property Act of 2014* has assisted somewhat in increasing access to credit by expanding the notion of collateral. This Act allows for Jamaicans to secure loans with a collection of personal property, such as household appliances, which helps to open up lines of credit to individuals who previously would not have qualified for loans. This Act is important for women entrepreneurs especially, whose MSME development often is limited by a lack of capital, because of their inability to produce collateral. <sup>183</sup>

Two more initiatives designed to improve access to credit are the Micro Investment Development Agency (MIDA) and the Self Start Fund, both associated with the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries. Since 1991, MIDA has provided loans to self-employed people to grow their businesses, as well as to the unemployed, who would like to start their own businesses. MIDA states that women benefitted primarily from some J\$114.92 million of a total J\$166.21 million in loans. <sup>184</sup> The Self Start Fund, which currently is being restructured, also provides loans for MSMEs for industries including the services sector, agro-industry, manufacturing, the creative industry, and ICT sector. <sup>185</sup>

Notwithstanding the above, this review did not find evidence of Government initiatives specifically targeted to advance MSME development among women, per se. However, several NGOs are involved in such initiatives.

- The Women's Business Owners' Association led a 2011–2014 project titled Strengthening and Promoting Women Entrepreneurs in Jamaica, which was funded by the Multi-Lateral Investment Fund, a member of the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB). The main aim of the Project was to educate, train and mentor women who own small and medium businesses, to facilitate the growth of their businesses. <sup>186</sup>

<sup>180</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> PIOJ, 2009, *ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> ECLAC, 2014, *ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> *Self Start Fund*, Government of Jamaica, MIIC.

<sup>186</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid.*<sup>187</sup>



- The Women's Entrepreneurship Network of the Caribbean aims to assist women business owners across the Caribbean region to grow their business by providing them access to information, networking, training and professional development, funding and markets.<sup>187</sup> The Jamaican Chapter is engaged in this type of work in Jamaica itself.
- The Women's Entrepreneurship Day Organization (WEDO), "*works globally to empower women and girls to become active participants in the economy by igniting a network of women leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs to initiate startups, drive economic expansion, and em-advance communities around the world*".<sup>188</sup> The Jamaican Chapter of WEDO is engaged in powering Jamaican female entrepreneurs and MSMEs.<sup>189</sup>

While the MSME Policy acknowledges the differential impacts of policies on men and women,<sup>190</sup> many female entrepreneurs continue to face many barriers to MSME creation and growth. Despite efforts to formalize the sector, there is still hesitation on the part of business owners, because of what they perceive as excessive red tape and fees that go along with the formalization process. This is especially problematic for female entrepreneurs, as they are more likely than males to have informal businesses. Where this is the case, MSMEs are unable to experience the benefits that the Policy provides.<sup>191</sup>



<sup>187</sup> Official website of Women Entrepreneurs Network of the Caribbean (WENC).

<sup>188</sup> *History of WEDO*, WEDO, 2018, [www.womenseday.org/about-us/our-story/](http://www.womenseday.org/about-us/our-story/).

<sup>189</sup> *Women's Entrepreneurship Day Jamaica*, 2017, [www.facebook.com/womensedayjamaica/](https://www.facebook.com/womensedayjamaica/).

<sup>190</sup> MIIC, 2013, *ibid*.

<sup>191</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid*.



Another remaining challenge is that of personal security, as the country's high crime rate inhibits the earning potential of many female business owners, because they are hesitant to operate their businesses at night. It can be argued that women's business knowledge and networks are fewer than men's, because of the impact of their responsibilities in the home, limiting the time they have available to forge these networks and connect with other business owners.

As a result of these and other inhibiting factors, only 31 per cent of employers are women.<sup>192</sup> Twenty-one per cent of informal small businesses and 42 per cent of informal micro-enterprises are owned by women.<sup>193</sup> A 2010 survey of 230 export firms found that only four of these businesses were owned by women.<sup>194</sup>

These results on ownership contrast dramatically with the situation for management of enterprises, where women comprise the majority of managers. Indeed, a global survey found that Jamaica has the highest proportion of women managers, not only in the Caribbean region, but in the world, with 59 per cent of all managers being women.<sup>195</sup> This emphasizes the point that women in Jamaica are making remarkable progress in moving into senior positions as employees, but that there remain fewer female employers or enterprise owners, when compared with their male counterparts.

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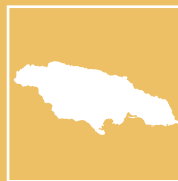
<sup>192</sup> ILO: *Women in business and management: Gaining momentum in Latin America and the Caribbean*, (Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/EMP), International Labour Office, 2017).

<sup>193</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid*.

<sup>194</sup> CARILED, 2014, *ibid*.

<sup>195</sup> ILO, 2017, *ibid*.





## Discussion of the findings and the way forward for future research

### ■ 4.1 A summary of the key findings

This Report has shown that women face greater unemployment and lower pay when matched with men, in terms of education and age. They work predominantly in service-led occupations while manufacturing and agriculture are very largely the preserve of men. Women are found primarily in jobs involving caring and nurturing, while men assume more active and physical jobs, and those requiring innovation and risk.

The Report also finds that there are more women than men in lower skilled jobs. However, there is evidence that women predominate among professionals and the higher skilled workers. Some women remain at the lowest end of the employment skills spectrum (16.3 per cent of employed women were low-skilled in 2015); while others have advanced well among the highly skilled (31.7 per cent of employed women were highly-skilled in 2015). Women's progress into highly skilled jobs has been assisted by their pursuit of educational opportunities and their own determination to succeed. A measure of their success is that Jamaica has the highest proportion of women managers, not only in the Caribbean region, but in the world. Nevertheless, when matched in terms of age and education,



women's pay still is lower than men's, and some studies identify substantial pay gaps. There are substantial obstacles to women's business ownership—only one in five small businesses is owned by a woman.

Data on gender wage gaps is inconsistent. Recent studies suggest a substantial gap, while an IDB study based on data in 2003 showed that pay was roughly equal between the sexes. The IDB study is important because it shows correlations of pay differentials. Higher education brought a pay dividend for both women and men. However, when women and men were matched for education and age, it was found that women were paid less. For employed women, the presence of children at home was linked to lower earnings, but for employed men having children at home made no difference. This confirms the significant role of caring responsibilities have on depressing women's income. A gender pay gap was found in the private sector but not the public sector. Gender pay gaps also were highest among the poor.

The Government has pursued several progressive paths in attempting to achieve gender equality at work. As early as 1975, the *Employment (Equal Pay for Men and Women) Act* was passed; the *Maternity Act* was passed in 1979. A *National Policy Statement on Women* in 1987 committed to resolving problems related to credit access, barriers to market entry and a lack of support services. For the poor, Jamaica has created the Steps to Work Programme, offered to beneficiaries of the conditional cash transfer Programme, PATH. More than half of PATH's clients are female heads of households; the scheme is especially important for them as many are unable to make contributions to the country's National Insurance Scheme.

Jamaica's *Charter of Fundamental Rights of 2011* upholds "the right to freedom from discrimination on the ground of being male or female". The *National Policy on Gender Equality (NPGE)* was also approved in 2011 and committed the Government to mainstreaming gender. The NPGE included a number of provisions relating to women and work, based on the ILO Decent Work Agenda, and promoting the development of legislation on occupational safety and the rights of people with disabilities. There were several goals relevant to gender and labour, covering issues such as sex work, access to social protection and access to formal job markets. However, this review found little action relating to most of these areas. A major recommendation is that Jamaican agencies be contacted to assess how far implementation of the NPGE has progressed, especially with respect to the work-related recommendations. One important recent achievement is the ratification of the ILO *Domestic Workers Convention* that has entered into force in 2017.

The NPGE has also led to the establishment of gender mainstreaming across Ministries and Government agencies, each with Gender Focal Points. Important innovations of the Gender Bureau include the development of a Gender Mainstreaming Manual and Gender Equality Checklist.

The *National Development Plan – Vision 2030*, incorporates gender as a cross-cutting theme, with a gender task force established to ensure that sectoral plans included a gender element. Another important area of work is the collaboration between the Rural Agricultural Development Authority and the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers to empower poorer women in rural areas with agribusiness skills and facilities, including marketing and infrastructure.

An especially noteworthy area of action by the Government of Jamaica concerns laws that facilitate parenting duties by both women and men. Under the *Children (Guardianship and Custody) Act* both





mother and father can apply for physical custody and the power to make all decisions for the child under the Law. The *Maintenance Act* also regards parents as equals, as either parent with whom the child resides can apply to the Family Court for child support. This contrasts with some Caribbean countries which, according to law, favour custody by mothers<sup>196</sup> and maintenance payments to mothers only.<sup>197</sup>

A further area of action is the *Sexual Harassment Bill*, which seeks to engage employers in actions to promote workplace environments free of such harassment. Thus, it moves the locus of responsibility beyond individuals and engages people in positions of authority in creating enabling environments. However, since it was tabled in 2015, this Bill has not been passed, and thus this achievement has not been translated into good practice. It is expected to be re-tabled in Parliament this year.

In the area of enterprise development, the Government of Jamaica has established some gender-responsive schemes. The *Security Interest in Personal Property Act of 2014* has aided access to credit by expanding the notion of collateral to include items such as appliances. This facilitates access of credit by women who are less likely to possess large items such as houses and land.

The Micro Investment Development Agency (MIDA) has granted about 70 per cent of its loans to women.

This review found several limitations in practice to these worthy efforts.

- The Charter of Fundamental Rights does not define discrimination against women and this is up for interpretation. It also does not address discrimination on the basis of transgression of gender norms such as homosexual appearance.
- The NPGE has faced resistance from Parliamentarians and the Gender Bureau has not been provided with extra resources to ensure implementation. Gender Focal Points do not have powers of implementation and their effectiveness is impacted by the dynamics and personalities in the institutions in which they operate. The Gender Bureau has not been fundamentally involved with agencies concerned with trade, which are vital to the roll-out of Vision 2030.
- Agricultural initiatives are still held back by greater male ownership of land, which means that women are held back in their abilities to increase their incomes through agricultural work.
- There is no legal provision for paternity leave, and other provisions that may facilitate employment of people with family care responsibilities are also absent. While there is an extensive network of early childhood education facilities, these have not been oriented to providing work-life balance solutions for parents, and thus, for instance, do not cover full working days in terms of their opening hours.
- Entrepreneurs still face substantial red tape in setting up their businesses, women lack business expertise and networks, and fear of crime prevents some business operations.
- There is an Industrial Disputes Tribunal, but its procedures treat unionized workers more favourably, and more men than women are unionized (as discussed earlier in this Study). Due to lack of sex-disaggregated data, the number of male and female cases seen by the Tribunal is not known.

196 For example, Saint Lucia. See the *Saint Lucia ILO Gender at Work Report*.

197 For example, Barbados. See Allen, C.F.: *Country gender assessment of Barbados* (Wilkey, Barbados, CDB, 2014).



Beyond the Government, there is a strong tradition of women's activism. Many NGOs and agencies have been involved in working on gender and labour issues, notably: the Women's Construction Collective, Joint Trade Union's Research and Development Centres, Women Business Owners' of Jamaica Ltd, Jamaica Household Workers' Union, and the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies. In 2017, UN Women, as a part of their International Women's Day events, encouraged Jamaican business owners and leaders to sign the Women's Economic Empowerment Principles. This is especially important, given findings (above) relating to lower pay for women in the private sector.

## ■ 4.2 Areas of enquiry for the future

Jamaica is making progress in gender equality in the world of work. Gender gaps in labour force participation are lower than in the world as a whole; there has been a narrowing of the gender gap in labour force participation and the employment-to-population ratio of adult women has risen. Perhaps, because of awareness of their relegation in Jamaican patriarchy, girls and women have a record of seizing educational, training and microfinance opportunities. In addition, women increasingly are in prominent positions in the public sector and among professionals. Indeed, the country has had a female Prime Minister in recent times.

These areas of progress have been assisted by a series of institution-building initiatives and legislative measures from Government. The Government of Jamaica has demonstrated gender awareness and responsiveness in a wide range of areas as summarized in the discussion.

Nevertheless, this Report has revealed a range of remaining challenges and targets for reform.

### 4.2.1 Unemployment issues

Women's unemployment remains twice as high as that of men, despite the range of training, business development and legislative reforms. It may be necessary to integrate gender and work initiatives with market-driven strategies, as well as to encourage the expansion of women's training and employment into growth-led areas. This is part of the objective of Vision 2030. Women need assistance with facilities such as childcare to make the most of the market-led opportunities. Moreover, unemployment tends to be concentrated among single-headed households, and there should be continued focus on strategies to facilitate their employment.

### 4.2.2 Support for parents with child care

The Jamaica Government has demonstrated its awareness of the importance of enabling men to take up caring responsibilities, on an equal basis with women, when there is a relationship break-up. There is a need to extend this awareness and support to everyday situations, promoting "share the care" messages and reinforcing these with actions such as developing a network of care facilities at times and in places needed by working parents.

Flexible working arrangements are sorely needed by fathers, mothers and other guardians of children and other dependents. Legislation is needed to support paternity leave. Provisions such as tax breaks for child care expenditure, child allowances and protection of employment should workers need to take leave to care for sick relatives, all would assist in increasing employment and in the economic advancement of women.





Most importantly, care work should be valued by promoting an ethic of care and nurture among both sexes, and campaigning to ensure that jobs associated with care are not the lowest in terms of prestige and pay.

#### 4.2.3 Strengthening connections with non-state actors

Many non-state actors have been identified in this Report who are involved in activities to bring about gender equality in the work especially. Their expertise should be incorporated further into the policy-making and implementation efforts of State agencies, going forward.

Important partners with ILO in enabling new supportive measures include the Bureau of Gender Affairs, local NGOs, the Women's Construction Collective, Joint Trade Union's Research and Development Centres, Women Business Owners' of Jamaica, Women's Entrepreneurship Network, Jamaica Household Workers' Union, the Institute of Gender and Development Studies at UWI and UN Women.





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