

# Jamaica's Policy for the School Reintegration of School-Age Mothers

## How Are We Doing and Where Do We Need to Go?

Dasmine Kennedy



## Dasmine Kennedy | Jamaica

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Dasmine's work spans approximately 22 years in the field of education, both at the classroom and policy levels. She has been instrumental in several research undertakings to ensure system-wide improvement in educational quality, including an analysis of the multigrade system in Jamaica. Ms. Kennedy has also been involved in a number of gender-related initiatives, including the Regional Capacity-Building Workshop on Gender Analysis in Education, and the development of the Jamaican Education Sector Development Plan to reflect gender inclusion. She is both a Commonwealth Scholarship Alumnae and a Jamaican Government Scholar. Ms. Kennedy holds a Master's degree in Curriculum Pedagogy and Assessment from the Institute of Education, University College of London, and a Master's degree in Educational Planning and Management from the International Institute for Educational Planning, UNESCO.



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOs	Government organizations
MOEYI	Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information
NGOs	Nongovernmental organizations
PATH	Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education
RGD	Registrar General's Department
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WCJF	Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation
WHO	World Health Organization

## Executive Summary

The role of women in society has morphed from merely that of a mother, wife, and homemaker to one who is critical in decisionmaking, economic development, and labor market participation. Advocacy for equitable access to education for girls to ensure that they can take their rightful place in society has become prominent over the past two decades.

One of the social problems that may inhibit women's participation in education is teenage pregnancy. High rates of teenage pregnancy prevailed in Jamaica in the 1970s but have been declining since 2008. The rate, however, remains higher than the global average.

Pregnancy for some girls in Jamaica could mean the end of their educational pursuits. However, a policy to facilitate school reintegration after childbirth has opened the scope for continuing education.

This paper examines the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Jamaica, the girls most affected, and where and when they are most vulnerable. The paper also discusses the provisions for continuing education under the National Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System. It assesses whether the policy is reaching the target group and its effectiveness in addressing access to secondary education for teen mothers.

The findings indicate the prevalence of teenage pregnancy among 15–19 age cohort and among girls predominantly from low socioeconomic, rural, and inner-city communities. These communities for the most part have a high incidence of poverty, crime, gang warfare, and single-parent and extended-family households. Income-earning capacities of these households are predominantly low. The result also revealed that more teen mothers are attending school through the reintegration policy and that the policy is largely achieving their reintegration and completion of secondary education. However, for some girls, other social needs have to be

addressed if they are going to benefit from a second chance at education.

Absenteeism, dropouts, financial and child care-related problems, and discrimination are among the issues that may prevent some girls from fully benefiting from a second chance at education. Lack of communication, data recording and management issues, and limited counseling and monitoring support may also thwart the effectiveness of the policy.

Against this background, the research recommended measures to close the policy and implementation gaps to include the development and implementation of a communication campaign and a comprehensive database of information on the teen mothers from pre- to post-reintegration. In addition, teen mothers experiencing financial difficulties need to access benefits through the Social Protection Project for low-income families.

The development of Jamaica depends on the human capacity of its people. With this in mind, everyone including teen mothers has to be educated and empowered to achieve their fullest potential in order to improve their lives and contribute meaningfully to the development of their country.

## Introduction: Teen Pregnancy in Jamaica

Globally, 20,000<sup>1</sup> girls under age 18 give birth every day, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Girls under 15 make up 27.4 percent of the 7.3 million teens who become mothers each year. If this phenomenon goes unaddressed, by 2030 an additional million girls will become mothers before their 15th birthdays (United Nations Population Fund, 2013). Indeed, teenage pregnancy is a growing challenge, particularly in low-income countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and the Caribbean.

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<sup>1</sup> This figure represents live births and does not take into account stillbirths.

In Latin America, teenage pregnancy is a pressing problem. Jamaica, known for its excellence in sports, tourism, and music, records the fourth-highest teen pregnancy rate in the region, with a birth rate of 72 per 1,000 adolescent girls in 2008 (UNFPA, 2013) (see Figure 1). This rate means that about 18 percent of live births were among adolescents, particularly girls aged 15 to 17 who have completed less than nine years of schooling, and those in the lowest socioeconomic quintile (Serbanescu et al. 2010). Disaggregated data (Serbanescu et al. 2010) indicated that 67 percent of the pregnancies to women ages 15 to 19 were unplanned and 15 percent were unwanted. Indeed, only 18 percent of the pregnancies to women in the 15–19 age group were planned. However, Jamaica’s adolescent birth rate has decreased in recent years to about 59 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19 compared with a regional and global average of 64 and 47, respectively (World Bank, 2017). Although the pregnancy rate among Jamaican adolescents is trending down, too many

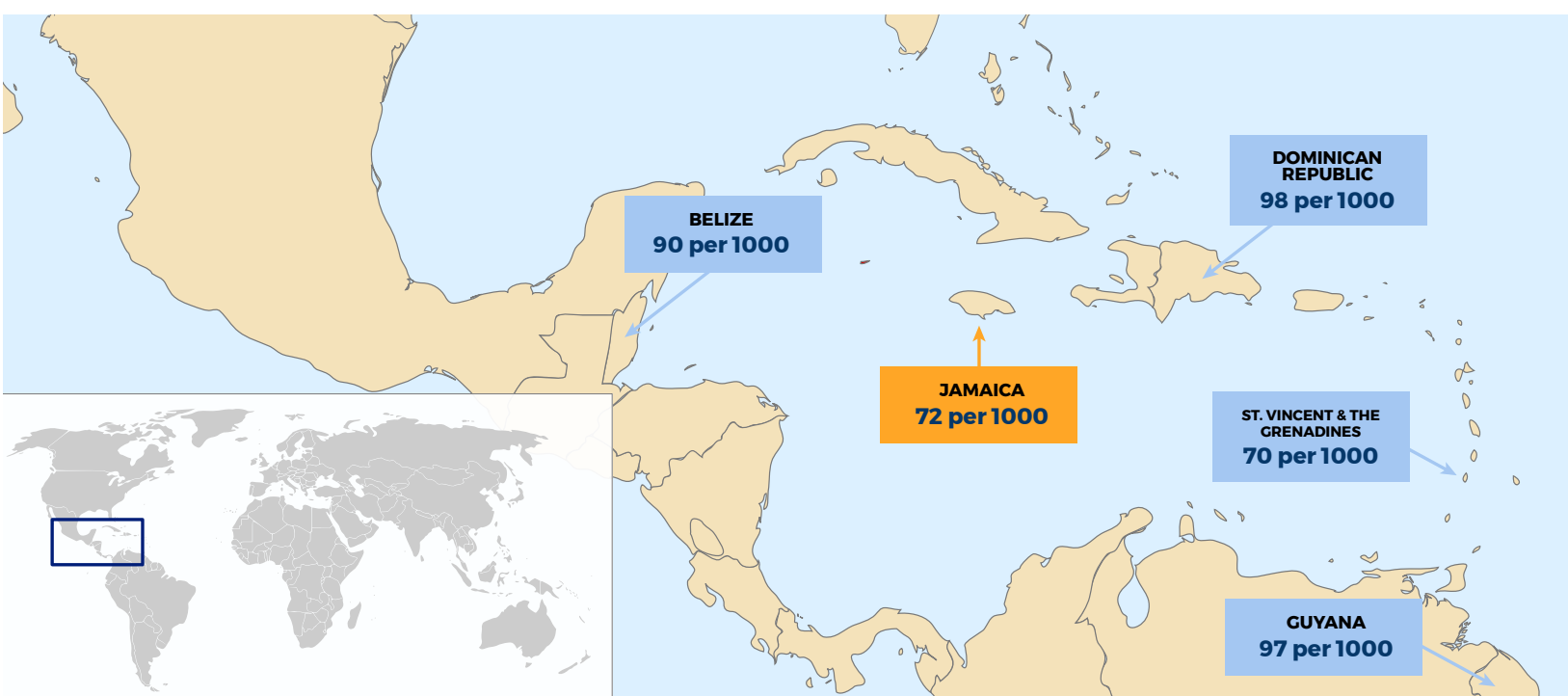
girls are still becoming mothers too young (“Teen pregnancies trending down,” 2016).

Moreover, teen pregnancy is a problem not just for the girls themselves, but also for the country’s ability to achieve its development goals. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, 2015 Labour Market survey projects that the nation is on a development trajectory that will require skilled labor in strategic development areas, including tourism, agriculture, health services, logistics hub, business process outsourcing, creative industries, the green economy, and renewable energy. As a small island state, Jamaica needs all hands on deck to satisfy its labor market demands. As such, no segment of its population can be excluded from completing an education.

Teenage pregnancy can naturally exclude some women from contributing to and benefiting from Jamaica’s economic development, especially if they do not gain the requisite educational qualifications

**Figure 1**

**Latin American & Caribbean countries with highest birth rate among adolescent girls in 2008**



Data Source: UNFPA, 2013  
Map: Rei-artur (CC-BY-SA-2.5)

to participate in the growth areas above. Already, men constitute the larger share of the labor force at 53.9 percent, and the unemployment rate among women is 17.4 percent, compared with 9.6 percent for men (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2016). The unemployment rate among women who become mothers as teenagers is likely even higher because of their lower chances of completing school. That most of these women come from poor backgrounds points to an urgent need for policy solutions that address their economic and social marginalization through a second chance at education.

In response to the high rates of teen pregnancy in Jamaica, the government established the National Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System to ensure that teen mothers can resume their education. Notwithstanding, after four years of implementation, outside of anecdotal reports there is little scientific evidence of the extent to which the policy is achieving its objectives.

This study therefore seeks to highlight the effectiveness of the policy in reaching the target group and to determine whether it is the right vehicle for addressing inclusive access to secondary education for teen mothers. The paper begins with an overview of the causes and consequences of teen pregnancy in Jamaica. Then I provide a brief overview of the role of education in the country's vision for development, where the education of teen mothers fits within this picture, and how Jamaica has historically attempted to ensure access to education for this marginalized population. I go on to outline the current policy and its program stipulations, as well as the present study for evaluating the policy's effectiveness to date. The paper then summarizes key findings from the evaluation before finally making recommendations for improvement.

## Factors Contributing to Early Pregnancy In Jamaica

Most teen mothers do not plan to get pregnant. Factors that contribute to these unplanned preg-

nancies include a lack of sexual education and child sexual abuse.

### LIMITED SEX EDUCATION

Although we live in the information age, it would appear that not everyone has access to basic information about sexual and reproductive health. Schools provide sex education, but it remains to be seen how effective it has been and to what extent it is being taught. Furthermore, some parents often do not teach their children about sex. Pamela and Mary,<sup>2</sup> in the citations below, indicated their own naiveté about sexual education and the resultant outcome.

**Pamela, age 15:** *I had sex once and there it was, I became pregnant at age 14. I was very worried about this, because I had great plans for my future and, further, my body was not fully developed to carry a child. My mother did not talk to me about sexual matters.*

**Mary, age 18:** *I was naive about sexual and reproductive health and didn't know how to avoid getting pregnant. My parents didn't talk to me about sex education.*

It is important to note that some teens reported that they were fully aware of the risks of engaging in sex but did not take proper precautions. For example, Jane, age 15, reflected, "I was sexually active, knew of the possibility of getting pregnant, but did nothing about it." This points to an additional layer of discussion about whether girls can act on their knowledge or if other barriers of disempowerment must be considered.

### SEXUAL ABUSE

According to the Jamaican Reproductive Health Survey, conducted in 2008, about 50 percent of adolescent females indicated that their first sexual encounter was forced or unwanted (Serbanescu et al., 2010). In some cases, girls are victims of sexual abuse. For instance:

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2 Names are pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

**Sue, age 23:** *I became pregnant when I was 13. After childbirth, I returned to my school of choice. Unfortunately, I was subsequently raped by one of my cousins who was also associated with a gang. I ended up with a second pregnancy and had to discontinue my secondary school education for a second time. I could not tell anyone about how the pregnancy happened because of fear for my life. Now I can talk about it because my cousin is dead. I did not complete secondary school and am too old to return to the formal school system, but now I am working and sending myself back to private school. People had negative things to say, but I was not bothered by them. My children are now 9 and 10 years.*

Sue's account is a testament of the powerlessness girls feel to resist unwanted sex. While programs aimed at empowering them to thwart such encounters are necessary, unequal gender norms and associated gender-based violence in the wider Jamaican society must also be addressed.

## The Consequences of Teenage Pregnancies

When adolescents become mothers, not only do they face innumerable challenges, but there are also social and economic consequences to their children, their communities, and the nation at large. The paper highlights some of these issues below.

### HEALTH CONCERNS

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2014), complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the second highest cause of death for 15- to 19-year-old girls globally. With high rates of maternal mortality, complications during labor, low birth weight, and poor utilization of antenatal health care, teen mothers will likely require significant social services from the government (Serbanescu et al., 2010; Chandra-Mouli, Camacho, and Michaud, 2013). For the teen mother, there is also the possibility of mental stress and suicide attempts

(Wilson-Mitchell, Bennett, & Stennett, 2014), as described by Tony-Ann:

**Tony-Ann, age 20:** *I was extremely brilliant and had big plans for my future, but at the same time was naive and somewhat carefree. My life eventually turned upside down when at age 16, during my final year in high school, I had unprotected sex with my high school boyfriend and found out I was pregnant. I became mentally disturbed [psychologically stressed] because I did not know how to inform my parents. I told my boyfriend that I was pregnant and he told me to have an abortion because he could not take care of a baby at his age. I was not about to abort my baby, so I remained in school and completed my examination without anyone knowing my status. I was mentally disturbed but was able to complete my high school education.*

The evidence also suggests that children of teen mothers are more likely to be born prematurely and at a low birth weight. There is also the probability of infant death, blindness, deafness, chronic respiratory problems, mental retardation, mental illness, cerebral palsy, dyslexia, and hyperactivity (Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, 2008).

### FINANCIAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC BURDENS

In the United States, the government spends an estimated USD 28 billion per year on teen mothers, or an average of \$5,500 each. Costs include health care, foster care, incarceration, and loss of tax revenues because of low educational attainment and income among teen mothers (Hoffman & Maynard, 2008). The complete overall cost to reintegrate and provide other social services for Jamaican girls and their children is not available. However, for the 2017-18 academic year, the Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation (WCJF) received subvention of about JSD 132,000<sup>3</sup> per teen mother to support their continuing education during pregnancy.

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3 This figure is equivalent to about USD 1,000.

The long-term economic implications for teen mothers and the nation as a whole point to an additional urgency to eliminate pregnancy among teens. Jamaica's service-dominant economy is already strained by low GDP growth (less than 2 percent) and high levels of public debt. The data also suggest that poverty is increasing in Jamaica, from 10 percent in 2007 to 20 percent in 2015, and the addition of an infant or an elderly person to any household will further contribute to the poverty rate (STATIN 2017). Pregnant teens who discontinue their education are likely to contribute to this trend because they are more likely to rely on government resources and raise their children in poverty. Furthermore, adolescent pregnancy is linked with intergenerational poverty, hindering the economic development of the country (Boden, Ferguson, & Horwood, 2008; Chevalier & Viitanen, 2003; Corcoran, 1998; Hobcraft & Kiernan, 2001; Jeon, Kalb, & Vu, 2011; Moore et al., 1993; Paranjothy, Broughton, Adappa, & Fone, 2009; Walker & Zhu, 2009).

Research shows that for every year that a young woman delays her first pregnancy, her chances of being in a family below the poverty level are reduced by 2.2 percent, which further reduces the likelihood of her children perpetuating the cycle of poverty (Hofferth & Moore, 1979).

## **SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND EDUCATION DISRUPTION**

Although access to education is not an issue for the average girl child in Jamaica, it is for teen mothers. The social taboos around teenage pregnancy often leave the young mothers highly stigmatized by society. It also means their expulsion from school and, in a context where strong religious values are upheld, being barred from their original schools after giving birth. This is often done by principals trying to morally safeguard other girls from possible negative influence from teen mothers—a scenario not unfamiliar in other countries, including Tanzania, where the president recently barred pregnant girls from school (Wilson-Mitchell et al., 2014; Ratcliffe, 2017; Pillow, 2004).

However, even in contexts that facilitate inclusion and participation, teen pregnancy can result in school dropout. Factors include a lack of financial means and the absence of parental support in assisting with child care (Chigona & Chetty, 2008). In the U.S., Perper et al. (2010) noted that only about half of teen mothers receive a high school diploma by age 22, while about 90 percent of women who do not give birth during adolescence graduate from high school. Hoffman and Maynard (2008) further supported this claim by indicating that children of young mothers are more likely to drop out of high school, be classified as low achievers, display health-related challenges, become incarcerated, repeat the cycle of teen pregnancy, and add to the unemployment rate. In Jamaica, the overall dropout rate for girls at the upper secondary<sup>4</sup> level is about 8 percent (MOE 2015), but owing to the absence of disaggregated data, it is unclear what percentage of this rate is associated with teen mothers.

For those who do return to school, Chevannes (1996) indicated that 46 percent drop out a second time. This has tremendous long-term implications for the young mother, whose opportunities for personal and professional development become limited, and for the child, who may not receive the benefits that a more educated and professionally empowered mother could provide.

## **The Provision of Education for Teen Mothers in Jamaica**

Access to education is a universal right for all Jamaican citizens, as evidenced by the country's subscription to a number of international treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Sustainable Development Goals. Nationally, the Child Care and Protection Act mandates responsibility to parents to ensure all school-age children (up to age 18) are educated without discrimination. Other national initiatives encourage school attendance, including a No School Fee Policy

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4 Upper secondary refers to grades 10-11 in the Jamaican secondary schools.

at the secondary level, free textbooks, and government funding for exit examinations (which allows the sitting of at least four core<sup>5</sup> subjects), lunch, and a transportation allowance for students on the PATH<sup>6</sup> initiative. In addition, the Jamaican National Development Plan, Vision 2030, aims to empower all Jamaicans to achieve their potential through education and training, including a special provision for teen mothers.

Indeed, attention to the education of teen mothers is not new in Jamaica. In 1978, the WCJF, a state agency, initiated a national program in which girls who were excluded from the formal school system during pregnancy would enroll at the WCJF. After childbirth, the girls would return to the formal education system after spending at least a term at the WCJF. As the problem of teenage pregnancy became more prominent, and in response to the need to ensure quality access for all, the government formalized the program through partnerships with other NGOs and schools.

But even with the intervention provided by the WCJF, competing legislation prevented a number of girls from finishing school because of pregnancy. The Education Regulations, 1980, for example, stipulated that a girl who became pregnant should leave school. This legislation also mandated that school administrators deregister any student who did not report to school for a month. A teenage mother upon the birth of her child could return to the formal school system, but at the discretion of the Minister of Education. At the time, no formal policy framework existed to guide these decisions, which resulted in the exclusion of many girls. It was not until 2013 that the most significant intervention was put in place: the National Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System, ensuring access to quality and

inclusive education for teen girls during and after pregnancy.

## A Look at the Policy

The Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System was designed to uphold the universal right to education by helping adolescent mothers finish school within the formal school system. The policy is built on pillars of inclusiveness, redemption, and non-discrimination, and proposes the following objectives/outcomes:

1. Development and implementation of a system for mandatory reintegration of teen mothers into the formal school system.
2. Implementation of a school-based system for referral and monitoring of pregnant students in partnership with the WCJF's Programme for Adolescent Mothers.
3. Integrated and expanded support services to assist teen mothers to complete their education.
4. Increased public awareness of the right to education for teen mothers and the need to reduce teen pregnancy.
5. Increased institutional acceptance of mandatory reintegration of teen mothers into the formal school system.

The Guidance and Counselling Unit (part of the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information) and the WCJF are the two main gatekeepers of the policy and are responsible for ensuring its effectiveness. Together with the Committee on Reintegration (comprising stakeholders from agencies within and outside of government), they work to achieve the policy's objectives.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the implementation of the policy is a concerted effort across many stakeholders, organizations, and agencies. For starters, the unit is the custodian of the policy and coordi-

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5 Core subjects in this context refer to mathematics, English, a science subject, and a technical and vocational subject.

6 PATH is implemented through the Social Protection Project to help people in the lowest socioeconomic quintile access educational, nutritional, and health benefits.

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7 Funding for the reintegration of teen mothers is provided through the government's subvention.

nates its implementation, while the WCJF serves as the first point of referral for teen mothers and is responsible for facilitating their continued education. The two bodies work with the regional guidance and counseling units; guidance counselors, social workers, and administrators in secondary institutions; private stakeholders; and NGOs to ensure the successful transition of girls from the WCJF to the formal school system, as well as girls who may not have participated in the continuing education program at the WCJF. The unit also implements the policy through stakeholder consultation and sensitization, policy dissemination, training of counselors, monitoring girls' progress, and working with NGOs and GOs to source resources and additional support for the girls. The WCJF also works with other related agencies such as the Child Development Agency, the Registrar General's Department (RGD), PATH, and the Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse.

Girls who are 17 years and under who become pregnant while attending school are referred to a WCJF center or outreach site by teachers, counselors, antenatal clinics, private agencies, and sometimes by concerned citizens. Currently, 18 centers offer specialized service throughout Jamaica, with at least one in each parish. During the 2016–17 reintegration cycle, the WCJF had about 1,300 teen mothers enrolled. Once at the WCJF, girls are provided counseling on health and family life education, additional support and referral services, interventions to delay pregnancy, and a confidential sanctuary where they can speak about their problems without fear of prejudice. In total, the WCJF offers an integrated program with four main phases as explained below.

- **Continuing education:** Instruction is offered in core subjects such as mathematics, English, social studies, and integrated science, as well as skills training and group and individual counseling. The girls also receive family planning counseling and referral for contraceptive services. Parents are asked to sign contraceptive consent forms on behalf

of their daughters (WCJF, 2014). Day nursery services are provided for the teens' babies at each center to facilitate breast-feeding and parenting. Counseling for "baby fathers" and parents of teen mothers is also available.

- **Reintegration into the formal school system:** The young mothers return to the formal school system four to six months after they give birth and after the pre-integration phase at the WCJF. Girls who are of secondary school age (11 to 16 years) go back to the formal school system, while those 17 years and over are referred to a postsecondary program.
- **Facilitation to offer support where needed:** The WCJF has the autonomy of raising funds and often assists the girls in areas of need. For example, the girls may receive a cooked meal daily, clothes for the babies, and maternal accessories as required. Monitoring support is also provided.
- **Completion of secondary school:** Teen mothers who were preparing to sit the school-leaving examinations at the time of their pregnancy attend the WCJF's Kingston Centre, where they are tutored and accommodated to sit the examinations. Success in these examinations will allow the girls to transition to the labor market or to tertiary studies.

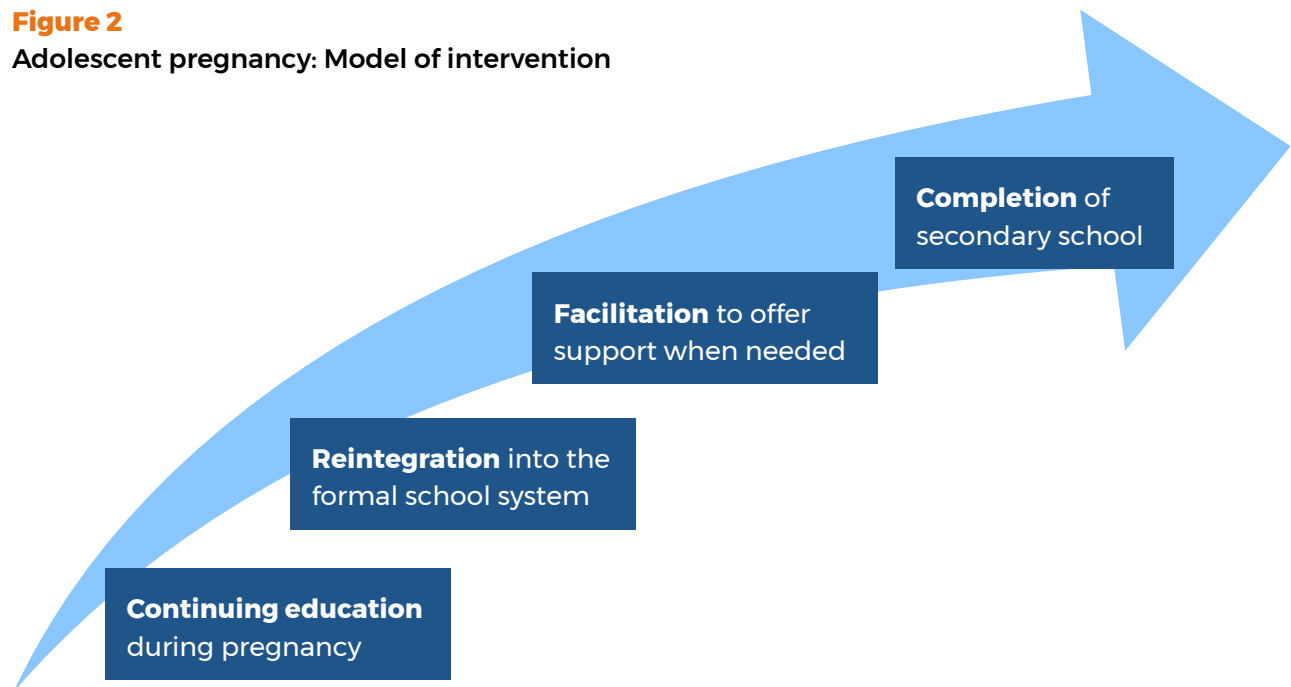
## STUDY OVERVIEW

To date, there has been no formal evaluation of the policy or its implementation. In a preliminary attempt to ascertain the policy's effectiveness, so as to build upon its strengths and address its weaknesses, this study adopted a mixed-method design, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2013), to answer the following questions:

- What is the prevalence of teen pregnancy in Jamaica? Who are the girls most affected? Where and when are the girls most vulnerable?

**Figure 2**

**Adolescent pregnancy: Model of intervention**



Source: WCJF, 2014

- Is the Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System intervention reaching the target group?
- How effective is the reintegration policy in addressing the issue of access to secondary education for teen mothers?

The study draws on information collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders, including developers and implementers of the policy, school administrators, regional and school guidance counselors, social workers, reintegrated girls at the WCJF and in the formal school system, and teen mothers who have completed secondary education. Data were also used from a variety of secondary sources, including birth-related statistics obtained from the RGD and student performance data from the MOEYI (see Appendix 1 for a full description of the methodology).

## **Policy Strengths and Weaknesses: What Is Jamaica Doing Right and Where Is It Falling Short?**

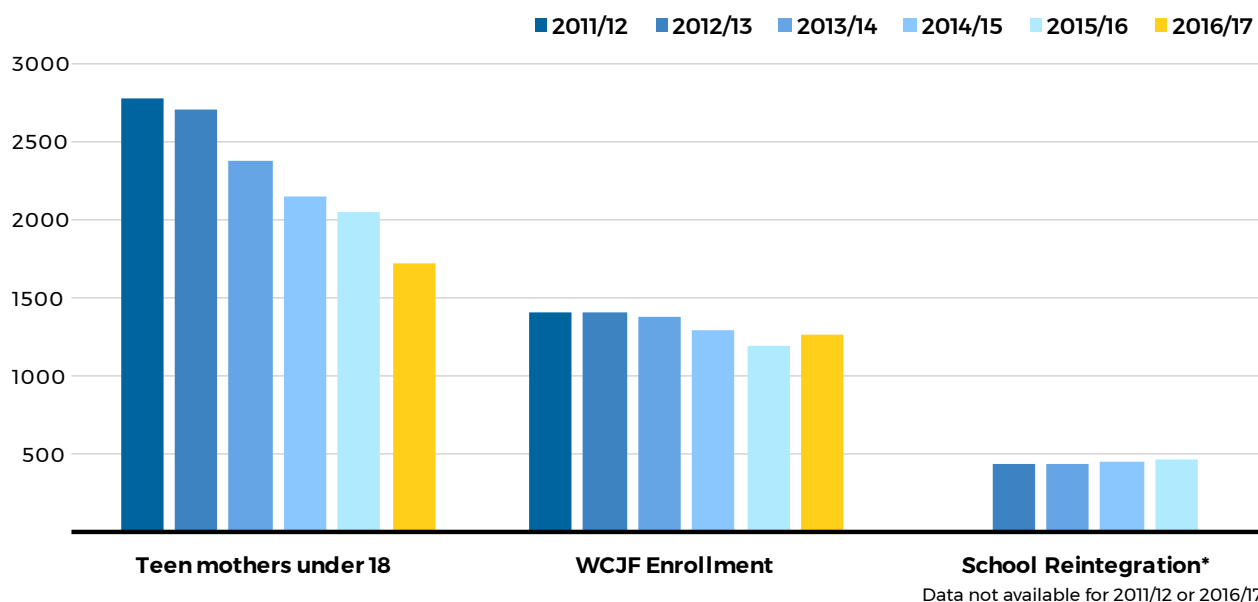
In this section, I focus on the strengths and weaknesses of the policy.

**The policy is reaching the target group, but populations of teen mothers are not being reached.**

The findings suggest that, in general, the policy is reaching the target group. Sixty-seven percent of pregnant teens responding to the survey (from among those integrated in the formal school system and those awaiting reintegration at the WCJF) indicated that they are predominantly from inner-city and rural communities. Community profiles of poverty, crime, gang warfare, and single-parent and extended-family households with low earning capacity and multiple mouths to feed were predominant among participants. The respondents

**Figure 3**

**Number of teen mothers under age 18 years and the number enrolled at the WCJF and the formal school system**



Source: WCJF data, 2017

represent the group of girls most vulnerable to not benefiting from a second-chance education.

The remaining 33 percent of respondents reported live in urban middle-income communities. Similarly, most of these girls were from single-parent and extended-family households, where the main breadwinner has low earning capacities. The majority of respondents explained that before pregnancy, they had experienced poverty, lacked knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, or had been molested.

Although the policy is reaching the target group, subpopulations are being missed, including teen mothers who might encounter financial difficulties in supporting themselves and providing child care. Indeed, an estimated 40 percent of the teen mothers from the lowest socioeconomic quintile who qualified for the Social Protection Project had not applied for benefits. A number of reasons were cited for eligible people not benefiting from the PATH project, including stigma associated with being a PATH beneficiary, lack of information surrounding eligible beneficiaries, and perception of the project

(STATIN, 2017). Guidance counselors also indicated that some of the girls hide their pregnancies, thus preventing adequate reporting and referral.

**Policy reach has improved, but because teen pregnancy rates have decreased.**

In 2011 about 50 percent of teen mothers sought reintegration through the WCJF. In 2016, over 73 percent of girls were enrolled. At first glance, this suggests that policy reach is improving. However, upon closer examination, this gain may be a result of other factors. In particular, since the policy has been implemented, teen pregnancy rates in Jamaica have decreased. Thus the increasing percentage of girls who are being served by the policy may be due to the changing landscape of teen pregnancy in Jamaica. In fact, the policy's reach appears to be limited by program capacity (i.e., space at the WCJF centers). Figure 3 highlights the number of teen mothers under 15 and between 15 and 17 as recorded by the RGD<sup>8</sup> as well as the number who have ac-

<sup>8</sup> The Registrar General's Department maintains records relating to birth, marriage, death, etc.

cessed the reintegration program at the WCJF and have returned to the formal school system.

What is perhaps alarming is that the number of girls who have been reintegrated into the formal school system has stayed relatively constant. For the period 2012–13 to 2015–16, only about 34 percent of participants in the WCJF program were reintegrated in the formal school system. Even though girls may be assigned to reintegrate, some choose not to return to school. Part of the low reintegration rate may also be because many of the girls who were captured by the policy became pregnant at a later age and thus fell outside the age band for reintegration.<sup>9</sup> For these girls, there is allowance for them to sit their Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate exam (CSEC)<sup>10</sup> at the WCJF and for accessing post-secondary education at other institutions. However, this situation may be a non-issue for the 2017–2018 school year as the minister of education has proposed to extend compulsory secondary schooling to 18-year-olds. It is anticipated that reintegration rates will improve.

In addition, according to 2016–17 data, about 27 percent of teen mothers are still not accessing reintegration services through the WCJF. However, it is important to note that girls are not required to reintegrate. Instead, the girls and their parents can make their own arrangements to continue their education outside the WCJF. For girls who did not express an interest in returning to the formal school system, as pointed out by the stakeholders at the WCJF, the school experience might have been unpleasant, or they may have needed to immediately secure a job to support themselves and their babies. It is not clear, however, whether those who indicated that they were not returning will write their CSEC at the Women's Centre and matriculate to postsecondary programs.

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9 It is important to note that 17-year-olds age represent about 54 percent of pregnant teens in the under-15-to-17 age group.

10 The CSEC is the exit examination that students sit at the end of the secondary level. They must pass at least five subjects to matriculate to tertiary studies.

### **The policy has mixed stakeholder buy-in.**

Over half of the school principals who participated in the study supported the reintegration policy and lauded the initiative. However, 42 percent did not and suggested instead that an alternative program be created for the girls to complete their education outside the formal school system. Moreover, among those principals who did not accept the premise of the policy, there was no consensus on where teen mothers should be reintegrated. A few administrators preferred taking their own students back into their school because the girls would be familiar with the school culture and would fit in more easily. In schools with a double shift system, principals prefer to assign the girls to another shift than the one they were in previously, to protect their privacy.

School guidance counselors also had mixed feelings about the policy. For example, 60 percent indicated that the teen mothers should return to the same school, but 40 percent suggested that they be reintegrated into different institutions. The general perception is that if the girls reintegrate in a new environment, the likelihood of their status becoming public would be greatly reduced. However, if they returned to their original schools, they may be discriminated against by their peers or may influence other students negatively by having had an early pregnancy.

The girls' perspective was quite different from that of some administrators. The teen mothers are generally satisfied with the program, with 63 percent of girls who participated in the study lauding the WCJF in preparing them for reintegration. None of the girls who were reintegrated into formal secondary schools reported experiencing discrimination from students or administrators—although this perspective differs greatly from those of school principals.<sup>11</sup> However, 67 percent of principals indicated that the experience varied from having girls who conform to social norms and value the second-chance educa-

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11 Although the girls were assured confidentiality in responding to the questionnaire, girls may have been biased to report only positive perceptions of the program. Also, further research is needed to understand perceptions of the policy held by girls who drop out of the program or are not reintegrated.

tion that was afforded them to girls who displayed disruptive behavior (e.g., getting into fights), demonstrated a lack of interest in being in school, and had difficulty fitting into the school's culture.

### **The policy is not fully supporting the needs of teen mothers.**

It must be understood that teen mothers may require special assistance and counseling given their circumstances and the stigma associated with their early pregnancy. The policy stipulates the importance of catering to the psychosocial needs of the girls, but if this is not adhered to at the implementation level, there is a clear disconnect between policy and practice. For example, Nancy and Jane are twin sisters and are both teen mothers enrolled at School A. The girls' attendance has been quite irregular as they were reportedly, constantly getting into fights and other disruptive behavior which resulted in suspension or other forms of disciplinary measures taken against them by the school or them just staying away from school. Their father believed the school administration was treating his daughters unfairly. According to the principal, in a discussion with the father, the administration explained the behavioral challenges the school was encountering with the girls but the father interpreted the school's report as a form of discrimination and retorted that he would not send the girls back to school because he felt they were being targeted unfairly. Neither the school nor the father had taken the time out to ascertain the reason for the girls' behavior. In some cases, the inattention to the girls' mental health suggests that their psychosocial and mental health needs are not considered as important as their educational needs. Failing to provide for the psychosocial needs of the girls can lead to dropouts and even result in another pregnancy.

Furthermore, lack of financial support and assistance with child care often results in frequent absenteeism among the teen mothers from lower socioeconomic contexts. The women's centers are centralized and not readily accessible to many girls in rural communities. Consequently, this limits access to WCJF programs. Similarly, some reinte-

grated students often cannot manage the associated costs, especially when they have limited support from their parents or the child's father. While the government covers a significant portion of the fees that are associated with secondary school, students have to pay for insurance, educational field trips, and projects that may require the purchase of materials. Irregular attendance often prevails for girls who cannot afford child care.

In one school, the guidance counselor described a particular situation with a teen mother. The girl was having attendance issues because of the location of the school and her inability to afford transportation and lunch on a daily basis. The counselor indicated that there were days when the teen would turn up to school but would have no lunch and no bus fare to return home. In this situation, the guidance counselor would have to assist the girl either through a school welfare fund or from her personal funds.

Another student relates her experience:

**Emily, age 18:** *I did not write my CSEC exam because I was unable to attend school regularly. At times there was no money. I lived with my mother and my other younger siblings. My mother is a day's worker,<sup>12</sup> so whenever she has to work there would be no one to stay with the baby and there was no money for day care services. The baby is asthmatic, and many times I have to stay home with her. The support for myself and my baby comes from my mother. There was no support from the baby's father and his family. He, too, was a high school dropout and he wasn't working.*

Emily describes a typical situation that requires support from the Social Protection Project. Based on her account, she was not benefiting fully from the policy.

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<sup>12</sup> A day's worker is someone who is employed in the informal labor market. Day's work for women would include domestic duties, etc.

A number of behavior change programs being implemented across the school system require the same level of attention from the regional officers as required for the implementation of the reintegration program. As such, the monitoring and support that are required to ensure seamless reintegration are not necessarily being provided. As a result, a second early pregnancy cannot be ruled out for girls from a disadvantaged background who are dealing with teen motherhood (Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy, 2008).

### **There is inconsistent implementation and compliance across schools.**

The type of support offered to reintegrated teen mothers is not consistent across all secondary schools. For example, School Y has a self-contained Guidance and Counselling Department outfitted with computers, discussion tables, and a resource corner. The department established a partnership with social workers from a leading university in Jamaica to empower teen mothers to achieve their fullest potential. The menu of intervention includes special counseling and mentorship sessions, career counseling and placement, child care, motivational presentations from notable public officials, and skills training. This is a neutral space where the girls also go for comfort, relaxation, and emotional support. School Z, however, has no special program to support reintegrated mothers. The guidance counselor at School Z explained that the rationale is that no student should receive special treatment that is not afforded to all. The counselor explained that the teen mothers are treated the same as the other students so as not to draw unnecessary attention to them.

A related finding is that reintegration has not been received with 100 percent compliance. Some principals of traditional<sup>13</sup> high schools, in particular, are not honoring the policy. In particular, some prin-

cipals hesitate to accept teen mothers for reasons described earlier about protecting the morality of other female students or their school's reputation, and will claim that the school has no space. Indeed, 50 percent of principals who participated in this study thought that teen mothers negatively influence other girls in their schools. As a result, they deny girls access to their schools. And without any penalty provisions in the policy for schools that do not comply, principals can keep teen mothers out of their schools without fear of sanctions, even while the Child Care and Protection Act and other national and international legislation grant access to education for all school-age children.

In addition, some guidance counselors who should be responsible for facilitating the girls' reintegration reported not knowing the number of teen mothers in their institutions or even who they were, in some cases. In extreme cases, some guidance counselors were even unfamiliar with the policy or its significance for assuring educational access for teen mothers. Several explained that they were not introduced to the girls, nor were they informed when the girls were enrolled. In other cases, principals and other school administrators were aware of the girls but believed "the guidance counselors do not need to know who these students are. They are carefully supervised and have no need for the counselor." Such occurrences limit the effective implementation of the policy, as they prevent guidance counselors from providing the necessary support to reintegrated teen mothers.

Overall, the process of reintegrating girls into formal secondary schools is inconsistent. Most of the schools, while providing latitude for girls' reintegration, tend to accept students who were previously enrolled in other institutions. This is done to conceal the girls' status. In fact, one-third (33 percent) of the girls surveyed said they returned to their former school while the remaining 67 percent were placed at a new one. The choice is not necessarily up to the girls. Rather, placement depends on a host of factors, including space availability and the administrators' preference. This inconsistent

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<sup>13</sup> Traditional high schools are institutions that existed before the expansion of secondary schools in the 1980s. They are normally regarded as the best secondary type of institutions and require that students perform exceptionally well on their Grade Six Achievement Test to be awarded a place. Securing a space in one of these institutions is highly competitive.

process indicates a weakness in the policy, leaving some girls to be treated differently from others.

Readmission of the girls into the school system can also be difficult through the lengthy admission processes outlined by schools. This is another means of concealing administrators' reluctance to accept some of the girls. One of the guidance counselors responsible for returning girls to the formal school system indicated that before an administrator accepts a teen mother, the school carries out its own background checks to ensure that the student does not have a history of deviant behavior. This suggests that administrators are more interested in accepting girls who are prepared to learn and not necessarily those who will require significant time to become re-socialized.

Finally, stigmatization and discrimination continue. The policy does not stipulate how schools should organize their students, allowing institutions to reintegrate girls at their own discretion. For example, some schools lumped reintegrated girls into classes irrespective of their areas of interest or career choices. In other instances, girls are punished for becoming mothers by not being allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

### **Academic success is unclear.**

Completion and matriculation rates for students who benefited under the policy are unclear, because data collected by the Ministry of Education Youth and Information is not disaggregated in that format. Based on anecdotal accounts from school administrators, however, rates of completion and transition to the next phase of study or work range from high to moderate—specifically, between 90 percent and less than 50 percent.

Pass rates for women who wrote their examination at the WCJF also present inconclusive findings for how well teenage moms enrolled at the WCJF are performing on national exams. Appendixes 3 and 4 compare the performance of teen mothers who wrote their examination at the WCJF between 2011 and 2016 with the overall performance of students

in the public school system (Appendix 3) as well as the overall average performance for girls in the public system (Appendix 4). In general, there was great fluctuation in pass rates in most subject areas. While some girls at the WCJF performed on par with or outperformed students in the public system in specific subject areas, others passed at rates significantly lower than the national average. Based on these results, it is unclear how successful the policy has been in terms of the girls' academic achievement. Ascertaining the performance of girls who returned to the formal school system is even more difficult, since performance data are not disaggregated to allow for the identification of results for these girls specifically.

Notwithstanding, qualitative accounts tell a more successful story. Abigail, 17, who was completing her tenure at School A, gave her account accordingly: "I was always a very brilliant student and even after returning to school after giving birth, I continued to excel. I am always ahead of the class and was always assisting other students with their schoolwork. I was motivated to do well. I did not encounter any bad experience returning to school. I did my work and earned the respect of others. I am currently awaiting the results from my examinations. I sat seven (7) CSEC subjects and I am expecting to do very well." Tony-Ann, mentioned earlier in the paper, also had a positive outcome: She is a final-year student in a tertiary institution. While these stories indicate that teen mothers can go on to do well, better data collection on their academic outcomes pre- and post-reintegration is needed to fully know whether the policy is closing the educational gap of teen mothers.

## **Recommendations**

This research is a preliminary attempt to interrogate the policy. As such, generalizations cannot be made regarding its overall effectiveness. Moreover, limited data create further challenges to drawing conclusions. Nevertheless, some recommendations can be made based on the preliminary findings. First and foremost, the Ministry of Education must

commission a more robust evaluation of the policy. This is critical from the policy level to ascertain how much the target group is benefiting from the intervention and the return on investment. Other recommendations include:

### **1. Develop and maintain a more comprehensive database on teen mothers.**

Due to the absence of a database on teen mothers, the true impact of the policy may be difficult to ascertain. No disaggregated data are available on the number of girls who have successfully completed secondary school as a result of the intervention and reintegration. As such, we must rely on the number of girls seeking readmission as an indicator of effectiveness. There have been no empirical data to substantiate some of the claims reported, for example, the vulnerability of girls in rural areas and inner cities, and successful completion of secondary education outside of what the respondents indicated.

A database to facilitate tracking of the girls should be linked to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information's existing Census. The database would capture data on the girls, such as basic demographic information, where they are enrolled, and their academic progress. Having such disaggregated data would be instrumental to apprising policymakers of pertinent gaps and would inform the decisions they need to make to ensure successful policy outcomes.

### **2. Connect the policy to other social protection initiatives such as PATH.**

Mechanisms need to be strengthened to address basic financial needs for teen mothers coming from the lowest socioeconomic quintile. Greater collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security could ensure that teen mothers and their children benefit from PATH. Registration for the program could be done using the model employed by the RGD in which the teen mothers could register while still at the hospital after giving birth. Another model could be created to facilitate registration at health centers during prenatal and postnatal visits. Finally, job placement would also benefit girls who

would need to secure immediate income support after they finish school.

### **3. Develop a more robust communication strategy.**

As the findings showed, not all stakeholders are fully aware of the reintegration policy or specific aspects of it. As a result, some components of the policy are not being fully and consistently implemented. Moreover, there is a general lack of awareness of the issue of teenage pregnancy, the needs of young mothers, and the responsibility of different stakeholders in ensuring that teen mothers benefit from an education. The changing landscape of teenage pregnancy in Jamaica may be attributed to increasing prevention messages, but even so, the evidence suggests that the current policy approach falls short of changing gender relations and norms that are underlying causes of girls' disadvantage.

Therefore, a communication plan is necessary. It should include a strong safe-sex and pregnancy prevention and public education campaign to capture the attention of critical stakeholders, including boys and men. Media campaigns that draw on popular musical icons and media personalities could help spread the message of abstinence and responsible sexual behavior. The communication strategy should also aim to reduce discrimination and stigmatization, and encourage support for teen mothers' reintegration into the formal school system. Ongoing sensitization of principals, guidance counselors, teachers, and community personnel regarding their roles and responsibilities under the policy is also critical to the adequate support of teen mothers.

### **4. Work with babies' fathers.**

The Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (2008) suggests that to achieve positive outcomes for the children of teen parents, there must be "outreach that engages teen fathers, makes them a part of the birth experience, facilitates their continued education, assists them with employment and child support, and counsels them on relationships and parenting." One of the guidance counselors in this

study noted that while the schools provide counseling for girls, there are no equivalent programs to help fathers support their children financially and emotionally. Although not all fathers are teenagers, and in some cases fathers are incarcerated, it is evident that they play a critical role in the reintegration of teen mothers.

### **5. Provide for the material, financial, and psychosocial needs of teen moms from disadvantaged situations.**

As the findings showed, even when teen mothers are eligible for the free reintegration services, there are still costs, including transportation, housing, health care, and day care. Assistance with low-income housing and boarding facilities at some of the WCJF centers would greatly benefit teen mothers who are living in poverty. The boarding facilities would provide more access to the WCJF pre-integration program. Support to access day care facilities outside of those provided at the WCJF would also benefit girls who have returned to school.

A more comprehensive post-reintegration monitoring and counseling mechanism also is needed at the regional and school levels in order to provide timely feedback about girls who are most at risk of dropping out. This mechanism would improve vigilance for girls who display potential vulnerability and provide scope for referral to the requisite point of action. For girls who are unable to reintegrate in the formal school system, because of either their age or their fear of stigmatization, every effort should be made to ensure that they benefit from other programs such as the Career Advancement Programme earmarked for students who would require additional opportunities to complete secondary education and would require the necessary material, financial, and psychosocial support to ensure a successful outcome.

## **Conclusion**

The Ministry of Education Youth and Information has an obligation to educate every child regardless of circumstances. Pregnancy does not take away a

girl's right to an education. In fact, it intensifies her rights and her needs, in that an education is critical for her empowerment and serves as a foundation for improving life circumstances for both herself and her child.

The Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System opens up recognition of this right and protects the student by helping her return to school and complete her education. The policy is intended to support the law and ensure that educational institutions provide teen mothers with a formal secondary education.

Although the policy was designed with the best intentions, it is unclear how effective its implementation has been. The research shows that while more teen mothers have enrolled in the WCJF reintegration program, the increase in reach may be due more to the overall decreasing rate of teen pregnancy in Jamaica than to the policy itself. In addition, the number of girls completing the program and matriculating to the postsecondary and tertiary levels has remained relatively constant over the years, and the program's impact on girls' educational outcomes is unclear. There have been persistent accounts of dropout, absenteeism, and non-participation, but this has not been officially documented.

The principals who continue to deny access to the girls might also be communicating issues that may deserve a second look. How many of these critical stakeholders understand the greater need for reintegration and the correlation with girls' empowerment, poverty reduction, and societal development? A communication plan may be the requisite tool for addressing this issue. Indeed, Barber et al. (2011) caution against underestimating the communication challenge and suggest overinvesting in communication. Unless everyone understands his or her role in implementing the policy, the aspirations of policymakers will have no impact.

It is interesting to note that the research identified critical milestones (see Appendix 2) that are yet to be achieved, including a robust communication

strategy to include a prevention campaign and policy evaluation. In addition, it seems that the policy needs more consistent interpretation across stakeholders in terms of its intent, purpose, and goals. The communication strategy should also include a strong prevention campaign on responsible sexual behavior for teenagers, both girls and boys.

The provisions under the policy are well-intended and seek to foster a culture of inclusiveness, redemption, and non-discrimination. All hands are needed on deck to close the gaps identified and to further improve on the gains of the policy. Together everyone achieves more, and together we can secure educational participation and achievement of all our girls.

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## Appendix 1: Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-method design, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2013). The research sought answers to the following questions and garnered information from both primary and secondary level data using a variety of instruments (See figures 2 and 3).

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the prevalence of teen pregnancy in Jamaica? Who are the girls most affected? Where and when are the girls most vulnerable?
- Is the Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System intervention reaching the target group?
- How effective is the reintegration policy in addressing the issue of access to secondary education for teen mothers?

Data were collected using a variety of instruments, including: questionnaires; semi-structured interviews; secondary data sets including student performance data; and statistical data from the WCJF on student enrollment and birth rate. Questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were administered to teen mothers, women who had completed the re-integrated program, guidance counselors, secondary school principals, and other key individuals and policymakers engaged in the policy and its implementation. (See Figures 3 for details on the target groups, sample sizes, data collection techniques, and data type.) Statistical data from the RGD on the prevalence of teen mothers was also collected.

Participants were sampled using convenience and purposive strategies to ensure that all necessary stakeholders as indicated below were represented.

- **Teen mothers** enrolled at the WCJF and at secondary schools. As the immediate beneficiaries of the policy, teen mothers' views on the provision and quality of services are

necessary to ascertain the extent to which the policy is addressing their needs. Sixty (60) respondents participated in the survey, 30 from the WCJF and 30 from secondary schools in keeping with the central limit theorem for a normally distributed population and random sampling (LaMorte, 2016).

- **The executive director** of the WCJF, who was involved in the development of the reintegration policy and now supervises its implementation.
- **Guidance counselors** employed by regional authorities and secondary institutions. These personnel are directly involved in the implementation of the policy. They provide services including counseling, making referrals, sourcing resources and monitoring the implementation of the policy in their immediate context. The sample for this group comprised 36 respondents: 30 from the secondary institutions facilitating reintegration and six (6) from the regional authorities. Each regional authority had a representative.
- **Secondary school principals.** The principals oversee the reintegration of the girls in their institutions and therefore have a responsibility to ensure that the girls receive an equal chance of completing their education in a non-discriminatory and supportive environment. Thirty (30) respondents participated in the survey and were drawn from the same schools in which the teen mothers were selected.
- **Policymakers** in the Ministry of Education, who have a wider vision of the policy goals, the implications of unmet objectives, and the overall implications for society. There were two (2) respondents in this group, the assistant chief education officer and the senior education officer in the Guidance and Counselling Unit at the MOEYI.<sup>14</sup>

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14 MOEYI: Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information

- **Women who had completed the reintegration program.** These women spoke about their experiences with the provision of the policy, their successes or challenges, and their perceptions of the need for the policy. This grouping comprised 10 women.

**Table 2**  
**Alignment of instruments and research questions**

Research questions	Instruments	Data source
1. What is the prevalence of school-age pregnancy in Jamaica? Who are the girls most affected? Where/when are the girls most vulnerable?	Quantitative data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State Agency: Registrar General's Department of Jamaica</li> <li>• Enrollment schedule from secondary schools and the Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation</li> </ul>
2. Is the policy/intervention reaching the target group?	Questionnaire/ interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students, guidance counselors questionnaires, enrollment data from educational institutions and women's centers</li> </ul>
3. How effective is the school-age mother's policy in addressing the issue of access to secondary education for school-age mothers?	Examination results  Enrollment document analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSEC Results</li> <li>• Enrollment data</li> <li>• Testimonials</li> <li>• RGD statistics</li> </ul>

**Table 3****Data collection details**

Instrument	Target Group	Sample Size	Sampling Technique	Data Type
Interview	Executive director, WCJF	1	Convenience/ Purposeful	Primary
Interview	Administrators, Guidance and Counselling Unit, MOEYI, Head Office	2	Purposeful	Primary
Interview (Telephone)	Former school-age mothers	10	Convenience	Primary
Questionnaire	Teen mothers at Women's Centre	30	Central limit theory to ensure validity; convenience sample	Primary
Questionnaire	Reintegrated mothers from secondary institutions in three administrative regions (Regions 1, 3, and 6)	30	Central limit theory (Same institutions as guidance counselors & principals)	Primary
Questionnaires	School guidance counselors and principals  Guidance counselors employed at regional offices	30  6	Central limit theory (select from same school as principals & convenience sampling)	Primary
Performance data for 2011-16 exit exam data (CSEC)	Teen mothers who completed secondary education	6	Whole group	Secondary

## Appendix 2: Implementation Matrix

### Policy for The Reintegration Of School-Age Mothers Into The Formal School System: Implementation Framework

Milestones	Timeframes	Status of implementation	Comment on status of implementation
<b>Program implementation structures</b>			
Programme Implementation Unit in place	Year 1		The functions were undertaken by the Guidance and Counselling Unit.
New Terms of Reference established for Reintegration Committee	Year 1	Draft	
Policy-based projects developed and funding secured	Year 1-2	Pending	
<b>Strategic Planning and Change Management</b>			
4-year strategic plan completed	Year 1	Implementation was incorporated in the Guidance and Counselling Unit's Operational Plan.	
Annual work plan completed	Annually		
WCJF curriculum and programs revised	Year 2	The MOEYI curriculum is being used at all sites; where possible, grade level classes have been arranged; programs have been revised and changes made accordingly.	It is difficult to arrange grade level classes since the adolescent mothers are enrolled at varying ages and grade levels. Some classes may therefore not be sufficiently populated.
Referral system instituted in schools	Years 1-2, incrementally	Done	In operation
WCJF student centers increased by 100% to serve at least 60% of pregnant mothers	Years 1-4, incrementally	Incremental increase is seen	
Outreach sites established in remote areas	Annually	3 new outreach stations have been established.	With 18 sites across the island, it is recognized that there is no need for additional outreach stations.
Partnerships established for implementing transitional programs for pregnant teens with disabilities	Years 2-3		
Mandatory reintegration activities integrated in MoEYI and WCJF corporate plans and annual budgets	Annually	Done	Continues
Automatic reintegration process institutionalized in schools through the reservation of space for teen mothers	Years 1-2,		
incrementally	Established	In operation	
Amendment made to education regulations and other laws to enhance fulfillment of rights of teen parents	Year 4	Pending	

Milestones	Timeframes	Status of implementation	Comment on status of implementation
<b>Communications</b>			
Communications plan developed	Year 1	Pending	
Communications materials on policy developed and distributed	Years 1-2	Pending	
Public awareness program implemented	Years 2-4	Pending	
Advocacy program instituted in schools	Years 1-4	Pending	
<b>Prevention Campaign</b>			
Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health programs with teen pregnancy prevention messages developed and implemented	Years 1-4	Pending	
Case studies on past teen mothers documented, with strong non-discrimination and prevention messages	Year 2		
<b>Partnership Building</b>			
Memoranda of Understanding and guidelines for interagency collaboration in place	Years 3-4	In process	
Parish-based networks of school- and community-based organizations providing support to teen parents and their families developed (including health, child protection, mentorship, youth empowerment, SRH promotion, parenting, and faith-based programs)	Years 2-3, incrementally		
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>			
Project M&E system established to ensure full implementation of policy	Years 1-2	Pending. WCJF systematized its monitoring efforts to include scheduled sessions at the sites with the reintegrated adolescent mothers and follow-up visits to the homes and schools. The school social workers have also arranged monitoring sessions with the adolescent mothers.	
Post-integration monitoring system instituted in schools to track teen mothers until they complete secondary education	Years 2-3, incrementally		
Research project developed and implemented to identify and analyze hindrances to effective reintegration	Years 3-4		

Source: Policy for the Reintegration of School-Age Mothers into the Formal School System, 2013

## Appendix 3: Pass Rate % Overall Public School Averages vs WCJF Averages

Examination year/pass rate % overall public school averages vs WCJF averages												
Year	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
Subjects	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (PUBLIC SCHOOLS)	WCJF
English language	68.5	61.0%	52	50.0%	63.7	61.0%	66.4	45.0%	65.0	89.0%	71.2	78.0%
Social studies	69.9	38.0%	70.2	52.0%	68.5	46.0%	58.5	63.0%	66.3	100.0%	55.7	70.0%
Human & social biology	65.2	31.0%	59.8	55.0%	67.1	61.0%	65.2	55.0%	47.6	89.0%	52.5	49.0%
Mathematics	39.9	5.0%	37.5	16.0%	42.2	22.0%	55.5	33.0%	62.0	71.0%	47.7	29.0%
Food & nutrition	92.6	78.0%	89.4	86.0%	91.7	100.0%	92.6	89.0%	86.7	100.0%	89.4	100.0%
Information technology	75.1	0.0%	80.5	86.0%	79.2	63.0%	77.6	67.0%	85.5	100.0%	75.2	0.0%
Principles of business	84.9	47.0%	87.1	75.0%	85.8	69.0%	82.5	56.0%	95.1	100.0%	92.7	88.0%

## Appendix 4: Pass Rate % Overall Public School Averages (Female) vs WCJF Averages

Examination year/pass rate % overall public school averages (Female) vs WCJF averages												
Year	2011		2012		2013		2014		2015		2016	
Subjects	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF	OV. AVG (F SCHOOLS)	WCJF
English language	74.7%	61.0%	58.3%	50.0%	69.9%	61.0%	73.6%	45.0%	72.5%	89.0%	78.4%	78.0%
Social studies	72.9%	38.0%	73.1%	52.0%	72.0%	46.0%	62.8%	63.0%	71.3%	100.0%	61.2%	70.0%
Human & social biology	67.5%	31.0%	60.1%	55.0%	68.9%	61.0%	67.5%	55.0%	50.7%	89.0%	56.1%	49.0%
Mathematics	40.3%	5.0%	39.1%	16.0%	43.0%	22.0%	55.8%	33.0%	63.7%	71.0%	48.4%	29.0%
Food & nutrition	93.5%	78.0%	89.8%	86.0%	92.9%	100.0%	93.2%	89.0%	88.4%	100.0%	91.2%	100.0%
Information technology	76.4%	0.0%	82.1%	86.0%	80.9%	63.0%	78.2%	67.0%	87.2%	100.0%	78.1%	0.0%
Principles of business	85.5%	47.0%	86.4%	75.0%	85.9%	69.0%	83.1%	56.0%	95.0%	100.0%	93.8%	88.0%

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