

**Report on the  
Implementation of a Child Rights Education Course:  
A pilot project in Jamaica  
to UNICEF Jamaica**



**Stakeholders of the first Child Rights and Responsibilities Course, April 2009**

**By the Caribbean Child Development Centre, UWI Open Campus**

**October 1, 2008 – September 30, 2009**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Child Rights and Responsibilities Course is the result of a process that began in 2003, when the need for child rights training, in the early childhood development sector, was identified and discussions with key stakeholders, from across the region, confirmed this.

I would like to make special mention of the assistance and support received from Carol Samuels. Her consistent encouragement and support over the years contributed to the success of this project, which builds on her efforts and those of the Jamaica Coalition on the Rights of the Child.

I would also like to make special mention of the eight course trainers: Nancy Anderson, Tania Chambers, Linda Craigie-Brown, Beverley McKenzie, Claudette Pious, Carol Samuels, Lloyd Stanley and Richard Troupe. Their invaluable input, commitment and teamwork was greatly appreciated by the learners and organisers, alike.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the 42 learners who took such interest in this course and for their stellar participation, which was facilitated with the help of Beverley Clarke, President of the Jamaica Association of Social Workers, and Sophia Walters, Training Officer at the Child Development Agency.

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I want to especially thank Professor Julie Meeks, who was a constant source of support and guidance throughout this process, and UNICEF Jamaica for its continued support in the promotion of child rights education.

Heather Gallimore

Course Coordinator

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

**CCDC – The Caribbean Child Development Centre**

**CDA – Child Development Agency**

**CRC - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

**CRRC – Child Rights and Responsibilities Course**

**HCDC – Hope for Children Development Corporation**

**JASW – Jamaica Association of Social Workers**

**JCRC – Jamaica Coalition on the Rights of the Child**

**OCA – Office of the Children’s Advocate**

**UWI – The University of the West Indies**

## 1. Project Background

Since 1989, a number of sensitisation workshops and public education initiatives across Jamaica have introduced the concept and raised awareness of child rights among various stakeholders; a critical first step in promoting the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Those who are aware of the CRC tend to have only superficial knowledge of its provisions and often have difficulty integrating child rights principles into their own decisions and actions in the workplace, home, or community. Many find the concept of child rights personally threatening to their professional and parental authority, and the responsibilities of duty-bearing daunting. The majority remain ill-equipped to translate the CRC's principles into appropriate, effective strategies and practice. There are no available programmes providing child rights education on a current, consistent and comprehensive basis.

In this absence of opportunities for child rights education, in Jamaica and other CARICOM countries, the Caribbean Child Development Centre (CCDC) proposed the implementation of a course, for professionals and paraprofessionals, to provide key information and tools required to transform child rights commitments into common consideration and regular practice. With funding from the UWI Open Campus, CCDC's Child Rights Associate, Heather Gallimore developed the pilot course plan and in 2008, UNICEF provided support for the first phase of the pilot project; the finalisation and delivery of CCDC's Child Rights and Responsibilities Course (CRRC) to two groups: Social Workers and Children's Officers.

Focus groups were held (with the two target groups' representatives from across Jamaica, as well as with young people, ages 13 – 19 years, from a private children's home) to ensure that the course was responsive to the target learners' child rights education needs and interests, taking into account children's opinions on what was needed. These groups informed the development of the course syllabus, which was finalised with the input of key stakeholders, including other UWI departments such as the Social Welfare Training Centre and Dudley Grant Memorial Trust, the Child Development Agency (CDA), the Office of the Children's Advocate, the Independent Jamaican Council for Human Rights, the Jamaican Association of Social Workers (JASW), the Jamaica Coalition on the Rights of the Child (JCRC) and UNICEF. The activities related

to the finalisation of the 39-hour course package were reported in the January 2009 Interim Report (Appendix A).



**Focus Group with Children's Officers, at CCDC, October 2008**

The CRRC was designed to bridge the gap between child rights theory and practice by increasing the learners' understanding of child rights within local, regional and global contexts and by

developing knowledge and building skills to utilise a rights-based approach, to uphold and effectively advocate child rights in the field, their home and community. As the course name implies, it focuses on the responsibilities of adults and children, identifying the various responsibilities and exploring how best to fulfill them.

The CRRC was delivered to the first cohort between January 29 and March 12, 2009. Its content was revised, per consultation and course evaluation recommendations, for delivery to the second group, May 28 to July 9, 2009. The schedules for both courses are attached (Appendix B and Appendix C). All sessions were held at the CCDC on the UWI Mona Campus.

## 2. Project Participants

### 2.1 The Learners

Forty (93%) of the forty-three course participants successfully completed the course.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Attributes</b>
<p><b>1. Social Workers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 21/53 applicants were accepted and registered</li> <li>• 19/21 successfully completed the course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majority possessed first degrees and/or diplomas in related disciplines</li> <li>• Ages ranged from mid-20s to mid-60s, majority in the range of 31 – 35 years</li> <li>• 20% male</li> <li>• 75% government employees</li> <li>• 20% commuted from rural parishes</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. CDA Professionals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22/22 applicants were accepted and registered</li> <li>• 21/22 successfully completed the course</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Majority possessed first degrees and/or diplomas in related disciplines</li> <li>• Ages ranged from mid-20s to mid-50s, majority in the ranges of 26-30 and 31– 35 years</li> <li>• 9% male</li> <li>• 86% Children’s Officers (others were a Residential Child Care Facility Manager, an Investigator and the Training Officer).</li> <li>• 73% commuted from rural parishes</li> </ul>

List of participants is attached in Appendices D and E.

### 2.2 The Trainers

Terms of Reference (TOR) were developed for the trainers and eight persons were contracted for the delivery of both courses (see sample TOR in Appendix F). They were required to have specialised knowledge of child rights and related training experience. Their responsibilities included preparation of course materials and lesson plans, leading

sessions and presenting course material, responding to trainee feedback and assessing learners and evaluating the course.

The trainers were:

:

1. Nancy Anderson, Human Rights Attorney, Lecturer (Norman Manley Law School), and former Teacher of mentally retarded children;
2. Tania Chambers, Attorney and Lecturer (Child Justice Studies and Human Rights Law at the Justice Training Institute);
3. Linda Craigie-Brown, Social Worker and Parenting Educator;
4. Dr. Beverley McKenzie, ECD Specialist and former Guidance Counsellor and Teacher;
5. Claudette Pious, Social Worker and Executive Director of Children First;
6. Carol Samuels, Child Rights Advocate and former Guidance Counsellor and Nurse;
7. Lloyd Stanley, Executive Director of JCRC and Organizational and Human Resource Development Consultant;
8. Richard Troupe, Social Worker and Executive Director of Hope for Children Corporation.



**Trainer, Tania Chambers, provides guidance to Social Workers during a group activity.**

The Project Coordinator attended all sessions and assessed the performance of the trainers. All performed well. The same group of trainers was contracted to deliver the second course. They sufficiently ensured that the participants understood what was expected of them as well as the concepts and techniques being presented. They facilitated the achievement the respective Unit objectives using a variety of creative participatory teaching methods, and helped determine the criteria used to measure the learners' knowledge and skills acquisition (as outlined in their lesson plans, see Appendix G for

the lesson plan template). They contributed to the course design, development, delivery and evaluation; of the learners and of the Course.

Due to time constraints, the trainers submitted their lesson plans shortly before the commencement of each course and workbook materials for each unit were compiled prior to the presentation of the unit, in time for each class. The workbook remained a work in progress as it is revised for each group of learners, depending on their needs.

Pre- and post-course meetings were convened with the trainers who shared information to strengthen the training activities. At every meeting, the discussion included issues that children face. All trainers have expressed interest in continuing to support the CRRC; however, one trainer has temporarily relocated to pursue studies but she provided detailed notes on the topics she presented.

### 2.3 Children

Children participated in the delivery of the Course, eight girls and three boys served as panelists in a forum designed for them to freely express their opinions and engage in dialogue with the learners.



**Children's panelists from the first CRRC cohort, with the Course Coordinator, Heather Gallimore, February 2009**

The children spoke of their happiest and saddest moments; all were family related. They expressed frustration with not having leisure time, not being given a chance to express themselves, not being informed of or included in decisions that affect them, and disappointment from broken promises and dishonest caregivers. The children in State-care spoke of the lack of confidentiality in school and home (residential institution) matters, as well as a general lack of respect for their privacy. They were articulate and



expressed insightful perspectives, concerns and recommendations on issues related to the realisation of their rights.



**Children's panelists from the second CRRC cohort,  
June 2009**

These informative discussions were well appreciated by the learners and trainers, many of whom were taken aback by the children's level of awareness and moved to tears by their challenging personal circumstances. The children expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the panel and have adults listen to their opinions, as well as to visit the UWI. This session received the most positive feedback of all.

To illustrate the impact of the children's panel on participants, examples of sentiments expressed in e-mails, from a learner and a trainer following the session, are noted:

"I was thoroughly impressed with the entire day, especially with the children's panel. The children were filled with conviction, innocence, and an appropriate understanding of their rights. Interestingly they had very clear expectations of adults' duties and responsibilities. Amid the seemingly emotive, complex and trying circumstance of living they indicated fixity of purpose clearly defined by what they want to become... I note with great interest after listening to the panel that children are hurting even as adults press on with other matters.... I thought long about what I had experienced... We underestimate the intelligence of the young. With the proliferation of information about child rights, and an increase in the literacy level of children it behoves parents and guardians to understand the laws, change our cultural retentions or else we are in deep trouble. For the organizers, the panel was

a plus. The panel cemented an emotive link with the theory of the course; and it brought home forcefully the relevance of child rights.” And,

“The sharing of feelings was so tremendous, I felt really bowled over at times (even after having so much social work experience). There was a kind of strong self-assurance and positivity that I rarely experience in that age group - without being intimidated in the presence of all these strange adults... have we been underestimating the capacities of our children? We need, as a professional group, to continue to provide safe opportunities for the expression of feelings. I was happy that they felt secure enough to express their anger. I don't know if this has been done, but a part of the way forward has to be to get parents to understand how physical/emotional/sexual abuse affects our children's evolving capacities. Collecting , collating, and documenting statements and cases such as we received from these children will 'bring it' to them 'live and direct'... I loved that they were so empathetic to each other, and to other children. They have such loving hearts... Thanks for the experience.”

The children’s panelists were identified with the assistance of two trainers, Hope for Children Development Corporation, Independence City Primary School, and the CDA (Homestead and Glenhope Places of Safety).

Each child was given a \$1,000 bookshop gift certificate and photos of their panel session as tokens of the project’s appreciation.

## **2.4 The Course Advisory Committee**

The Course Advisory Committee was established prior to the consultations and commencement of the Course, to assist with oversight of the course. It included:

1. Heather Gallimore, Course Coordinator
2. Nancy Anderson, Legal Officer, Independent Jamaican Council for Human Rights
3. Carol Samuels, Child Rights Advocate, former Executive Director of the JCRC
4. Beverley Clarke, President, JASW
5. Sophia Walters, Training Officer, CDA

The Committee met to plan the consultation process, review the draft course outline, and discuss course logistics. The members assumed various responsibilities in the course development and delivery, and helped to ensure that the course was responsive to learners’ needs and that content was based on accurate, current data.

## **3.0 Course Delivery**

A letter of invitation, outlining the course and participation requirements, was distributed to the target groups with the assistance of the Jamaica Association of Social Workers and the Child Development Agency. It was accompanied by the course application form.

Application forms were reviewed by the Course Coordinator and offers of acceptance were made to the successful applicants via e-mail. They were then registered and informed of course details.

### **3.1 The First Cohort**

The CRRC was delivered to the first cohort on six Thursdays (identified by the Social Worker focus group as the best time to hold sessions) from January 29 to March 12, 2009, to 20 Social Workers, including:

- 3 from the Ministry of Justice, Victim Support Unit
- 6 from the Social Development Commission
- 2 from the University Hospital of the West Indies
- 1 from the Department of Correctional Service
- 2 police officers; an Inspector and a Sergeant, who was transferred to the Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse (CISOCA), from the Ministry of National Security
- 1 from Richmond Fellowship Jamaica (Addiction Therapy programme)
- 1 from St. Andrew Care Centre
- 1 from the Scout Association of Jamaica
- 1 from Pure Potential
- 1 from Northern Caribbean University's Social Work Programme

#### **3.1.1 Attendance**

There were high attendance levels with 15/20 learners attending all sessions, 3/20 missed one day of sessions, and 2/20 were absent two days which disqualified them from earning the Certificate of Achievement.

#### **3.1.2 Class Diversity**

The diversity of the learners provided a variety of perspectives and enriched the exchanges, as they gained insight into the duties and experiences of their classmates, and learned about the missions and initiatives of the organisations represented. The social workers noted that, as evident in the class, males are under-represented in the profession.

#### **3.1.3 Pre- and Post Course Test**

The Course commenced with the Pre-course Test (Appendix H) which was designed to assess learners' prior knowledge of child rights. The questions were formulated with the assistance of the trainers.

The class average test score was 35%, with the lowest score being 16% and the highest 56%. The same test was administered at the end of course, and the class average test score was 76%, indicating a marked increase in the learners' knowledge, with the lowest score being 66% and the highest 91%.

### 3.1.4 The Sessions

The CRRC was comprised of six Units; one Unit was covered on each day. The Units, Unit Objectives, Topics covered, and Trainers responsible for each are outlined in the Course Schedule (Appendix B).

The classes began at 8:00 a.m. and were scheduled to end at 4:30, but they often commenced at 8:15 a.m. and ran until 5:00 p.m. For Units 2 through 6, the day started with learners reflecting on lessons learned and issues arising from the previous Unit. The learners, eager for knowledge, most often worked through coffee breaks and part of their lunch break in order to gain as much as they could from the trainers and material being presented. The trainers were flexible and responsive to the learners' requests, and used a variety of multimedia teaching aides and activities to engage them. Group activities were most popular.



**Social Workers engaged in group work**

Upon completion of 35 hours of class instruction, Units 1 -5, from January 29 to February 26, learners prepared their final assignments over a two-week period. These were presented, on March 12, to the class and trainers who assessed each presentation and provided constructive feedback.

Trainer, Tania Chambers, agreed to provide an extra session on the Relevant Laws, Policies and Gaps, at the request of the learners. This was facilitated in a three-hour session on May 21, 2009. Eight learners attended (six others were expected but unable to attend) and expressed appreciation for her thorough coverage of the topic.

### 3.1.5 Course Resources

Learners received a Course Workbook (see Appendix I); each Unit of the workbook was distributed at the start of each day. The Workbook provided an overview of each Unit, outlined the Unit objectives, the agenda for the day, and contained the Trainers' notes,

exercise sheets, outlines of activities, space for note taking, readings (including internet links), assignments related to each session, as well as inspirational notes. The CRRC reading list is attached (see Appendix J).

Publications (produced with the support of UNICEF), provided by the JCRC and CDA, and distributed to the learners include:

- *From Rights to Action: A guide to implementation of the CRC*
- *Teachers Making a Difference – Promoting the Child’s Right to Protection*
- *Protecting Myself*
- *Children Have Rights Too*

An electronic forum was established on CCDC’s website, as a mechanism to facilitate communication between learners and trainers between sessions, as well to accommodate bulky readings. The site, <http://uwi.edu/opencampuses/ccdc/default.aspx> was accessible to the public but only users approved by the forum administrator (learners and trainers) were allowed to post comments. The learners used the site to access readings but rarely for communication, as many noted limited access and challenges with posting comments.

Several learners took the opportunity to visit the CCDC library during breaks and received brochures and posters from the Librarian.

## **3.2 The Second Cohort**

The second cohort delivery was also on Thursdays (identified as the best time by the Children’s Officers focus group), between May 28 and July 9, 2009, to 22 CDA professionals representing all regions across Jamaica, including:

- 17 Children’s Officers
- 1 Residential Child Care Facility Manager
- 1 Team Leader
- 1 Investigator
- 1 Assistant Manager
- The Training Officer, who served as the CDA liaison in the planning process

### **3.2.1 Attendance**

There were high attendance levels with 18/22 attending all sessions, 3/22 missed one day of sessions, and 1/22 was absent two days which disqualified her from earning the Certificate of Achievement. The learner who was absent two days was instead awarded a Certificate of Participation based on her stellar effort to acquire what she missed and for her contribution to the project.

Throughout the course, learners frequently excused themselves from the class to make/receive phone calls which they claimed were necessary, work-related calls. There was also more chatter between the learners during the trainers’ presentations than the first group.

### 3.2.2 Class Diversity

The learners, all CDA professionals, although familiar with the duties of their classmates, provided a variety of perspectives and were able to highlight regional differences in challenges faced and approaches to their work. Class discussions revealed that they did not share the same approach to children and children's issues, nor have a similar knowledge base as it related to their duties. For example, they debated how the newly established Children's Registry is intended to operate, demonstrating conflicting views. They gained insight into the procedures and approaches being taken by their colleagues, and were better able to analyse the CDA organisational approach to implementing child rights than the first group, which had representatives from 10 organisations.

### 3.2.3 Pre- and Post Course Test

The Pre-course Test was revised, based on focus group findings and evaluation recommendations from the first group, and administered at the start of the course (Appendix K). The class average test score was 49% , 13% higher than the Social Worker group. This was attributed to training they recently received on the Child Care and Protection Act. The same test was administered at the end of course, and the class average test score was a commendable 80%, also indicating a marked increase in the learners' knowledge.

### 3.2.4 The Sessions

The CDA Training Officer indicated themes that CDA wanted emphasised, which included work ethics, code of conduct, work effectiveness and efficiency, and moral obligations as they relate to personal responsibilities. The CRRC was revised to meet this target group's child rights knowledge needs and interests, as well as in keeping with some recommendations from the first course. As with the first course, this course was comprised of six Units; one Unit per day, but the order of topics and time allocated for some was changed. The Units, Unit Objectives, Topics covered, and Trainers responsible for each are outlined in the Course Schedule (Appendix C).



**CDA Professionals focused on the task at-hand.**

The classes began at 8:00 a.m. and were scheduled to end at 4:30, but they often commenced at 8:30 a.m. and ran until 5:00 p.m. It is noteworthy to mention the learners from western parishes were often the first to arrive for class (some having commenced their journey from 3:30 a.m.), and by end of the day, showed signs of fatigue. For Units 2 through 6, the day started with learners reflecting on lessons learned and issues arising from the previous Unit. As with the first group, the learners often worked through coffee breaks and part of their lunch break in order to gain as much as they could from the trainers and material being presented. The trainers were flexible and responsive to the learners' requests, and used a variety of multimedia teaching aides and activities to engage them. Group activities were most popular.



**CDA Professionals, like children, learned through fun and games.**

Upon completion of 35 hours of class instruction, Units 1 -5, from May 28 to June 25, learners prepared their final assignments (which were revised to be group assignments) over a two-week period. These were presented, on July 9, to the class and trainers who assessed each presentation and provided constructive feedback.

### **3.2.5 Course Resources**

The Course Workbook (see Appendix L) was revised to meet the needs of this group. Each Unit of the workbook was distributed at the start of each day. The Workbook provided an overview of each Unit, outlined the Unit objectives, the agenda for the day, and contained the Trainers' notes, exercise sheets, outlines of activities, space for note taking, readings (including internet links), assignments related to each session, as well as inspirational notes. The CRRC reading list is attached (see Appendix J).

The same publications shared in the first course were distributed to the learners.

In order to facilitate greater use of the electronic forum by this group, the Forum Administrator (CCDC's Librarian) demonstrated how to use the forum and provided written guidelines on the first day of the course. As with the first group, the CDA learners used the site to access readings but rarely for communication, as many noted limited access and challenges with posting comments.

Several learners again took the opportunity to visit the CCDC library during breaks and received brochures and posters from the Librarian. Arrangements were made for learners to get copies of videos that were shown by trainers, namely *Pelican Point*, produced by Parenting Partners Caribbean and *Talk Done, Time for Action*, produced by HCDC.

### **3.3 Assessment of Learners**

Learners were required to complete the pre- and post course tests, attend classes, participate in class, and complete the final assignment which they presented on the last day of the course, two weeks after completing Unit 5.

For the first course, learners had the option to complete the final assignment individually or in groups. The majority opted for groups. This was changed for the second course, as recommended by the Trainers, and the final assignment became a group activity; learners were allowed to select their own groups and given the assignment and guidelines (Appendix M).

The final assignment required learners to use the knowledge and techniques acquired in the course, along with the wisdom of their experience, their skills and contacts to prepare a three-month rights-based plan of action to implement and uphold child rights in their work and home environments. They were required to implement their plan for a minimum of one week, record what they did and the immediate outcomes, then present this to the class. Groups were required to outline their collective efforts and the roles and responsibilities of each group member. All learners were required to submit a copy and present their plans and report on its initial outcomes, challenges and successes. The trainers assessed the presentations using the Final Assignment Assessment Form (Appendix N), and along with the other learners, asked probing questions and provided constructive feedback, which generally, was well received.

The assessment criteria included:

- Clearly stated, realistic goals and objectives (action plan)
- Rights-based implementation activities
- Designated responsibilities
- Meaningful inclusion of stakeholders (including child participation),
- Identification of and demonstrated access to required resources,
- A 3-month timetable for implementation

The most common weakness of the learners' plans was unrealistic, over-ambitious goals.



### **3.3.1 Awarding of Certificates of Achievement**

The learners (39/42) who completed both tests (passing the post-course test), attended at least 5/6 days of the course, participated in class and presented their final assignment were awarded a Certificate of Achievement from the UWI Open Campus.



**Prof. Julie Meeks, Head of CCDC, presents the Certificate Of Achievement to a Social Worker, Police Inspector Johnson**

The Certificates were presented to the Social Workers at the evaluation meeting held April 23, and to the Children's Officers, at the final stakeholders' evaluation meeting held September 15. CDA's Training Officer distributed the certificates to those who did not attend.

### **3.4 Refreshments and Lunch**

Refreshments and a cooked lunch were served on the six days of the course. This was arranged with the assistance of CCDC staff and delivered by a caterer. Most often, learners opted to break later than scheduled as they were engrossed in session. They took short lunch breaks, usually discussing course topics while eating and immediately resumed learning activities as soon as they finished eating. The provision of lunch and refreshments is believed to have contributed to the high attendance levels as learners did not have to leave the site.

Lunch was also served at the final evaluation activities; the stakeholders' consultation meetings held April 23 and September 15, at which Certificates of Achievement were presented to the learners who successfully completed the course.

## **4.0 Course Evaluation**

The course was evaluated by the learners and trainers at the end of each course. The results (detailed in Appendices O) indicate that the course was successful in meeting its objectives as well as the stakeholders' expectations.

### **4.1 Learners**

The learners from both cohorts indicated that the course was well delivered and had positively contributed to their development; their knowledge, values, attitude, skills and behaviour. They were, however, concerned that their enthusiasm in promoting child rights would waiver in the months to come.

The CDA group expressed concern about organisational constraints to implementing a rights-based approach, specifically that their overwhelming case loads and reporting requirements did not allow for it nor allow for qualitative case management.

At the post evaluation meetings, learners reported being pleasantly surprised that they did not encounter the much anticipated resistance from parents and colleagues, but rather, their efforts to promote child rights were well received.

### **4.2 Trainers**

The trainers were satisfied with the course experience and committed to continuing to serve as trainers. Having participated in the delivery of the CRRC to both cohorts, they indicated feeling better prepared to facilitate future sessions.

## **5.0 Lessons Learned**

5.1 The assumptions made that the e-forum would facilitate communication and accommodate resources were partially correct. Despite having internet access, many learners were apprehensive about using the forum for its intended purposes, and mainly used it only to access readings.

5.2 As is often the case with training programmes, learners' enthusiasm levels were high during and shortly after the course, however, as learners resumed their routine duties, much of that enthusiasm was lost. Consideration should be given to learner-driven follow-up activities to maintain high enthusiasm levels.

5.3 The desired change of attitude and behaviour of learners was demonstrated, but more likely to be sustained when supported by organizational structures.

5.4 There are benefits to having both a multi-disciplinary group of learners and a specific sub-sector of learners.

5.5 There is great need for a forum, in which multi-sectoral professionals can meet and discuss such issues and collectively advocate, on a regular basis. Learners need to have more opportunities to network, share and exchange.

5.6 Confronting uncomfortable issues, such as homosexuality, abortion and HIV/AIDs, is critical to the learning process and to promoting respect for all.

5.7 Despite having job descriptions, many professionals are confused about their role, and consequently do not fulfill all of their responsibilities.

5.8 Learners need to be able to discern each child's understanding and capacity to participate and examine issues.

5.9 Confidentiality is too often not respected and issues considered to be private and of a sensitive nature to children are not treated as such.

## **6.0 Final Recommendations**

There is tremendous scope for the CRRC and other related courses for CCDC to consider in the development of its Child Rights Programme. The course stakeholders have made the following recommendations:

**6.1** The CRRC should be offered year-round to persons who work with children and parents, across Jamaica, and marketed as basic training for all such professionals and paraprofessionals.

**6.2** The CRRC should be accredited and offered as an undergraduate level course.

**6.3** More time should be allocated for some sessions, such as the sessions on Laws, Policies and Gaps, Meaningful Child Participation, Working with Parents, and the Rights-Based Approach, or separate short courses developed to focus on these areas.

**6.4** The class size should be limited to 20 persons.

**6.5** The CRRC should be offered through the Justice Training Institute, and the child justice sector targeted for this course.

**6.6** An impact assessment of the Course should be conducted, using a two-year tracer study.

**6.7** Given the current economic climate, CCDC should lobby organisations to ‘buy in’ to the course and cover the cost of participation of their employees. Without such buy-in, employees may not receive management’s support in the implementation of rights-based programmes and procedures.

**6.8** Consideration should be given to the inclusion of some existing topics as electives offered in concurrent sessions.

**6.9** The course should include a field visit/taking an activity to a children’s facility.

**6.10** Contextually appropriate indicators need to be established for monitoring and evaluation implementation of child rights. CCDC should consider undertaking research in this area.

**6.11** The session on Discrimination, Stigma and Prejudice, which made some learners uncomfortable, must remain in the course, even if they are not popular.

**6.12** More mandatory readings should be included.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Most child rights training programmes in Jamaica and the Caribbean region offered over the past 20 years have focused on sensitising stakeholders, raising their awareness of the UN Convention CRRC, which aims to facilitate attitudinal and behavioural change by introducing new knowledge and different procedures. The course evaluation findings indicate that the learners are better equipped them to operationalise their child rights knowledge, however, without organisational support, the impact of their efforts will be minimal.

According to Jamaica’s National Development Plan, “Vision 2030 Jamaica calls for every citizen to participate in both the responsibilities and benefits of national development and hinges this on partnership as both a fundamental value and a strategy. The new paradigm recognises that transparency and accountability are essential for the efficient functioning of our economy and for fostering social well-being...” This does not only apply to adult citizens, but to Jamaica’s children as well. The guiding principle of *social cohesion* “will engender a sense of belonging in our citizens and generate the trust required to take us through both good and challenging times as we journey towards sustainable prosperity. It will ensure that our citizens coalesce around a set of shared values and responsibilities and a common sense of nationhood.” The CRRC is poised to contribute to this vision.

The CRRC teaches professionals to think about the whole child, someone who needs attention, care and protection here and now, not just as an investment in the future. The course equips them to meet children’s changing needs and to support each child’s best interest.

The revised course package (Appendix P) will be reviewed by the UWI Open Campus in early 2010, for approval for regular delivery.

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

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