**Skills Development for Global Services**

**(JA-L1079)**

**Gender Annex**

**Gender considerations regarding workforce’s lack of skills for the GSS**

**There is a lack of gender-disaggregated data for the GSS industry to better understand gender-based imbalances. However, data from the overall labor market in Jamaica highlight some gender challenges in the workforce. The GSS’s labor supply is partly limited by the low level of educational achievement among males and factors limiting women’s career opportunities.**

**Girls outperform boys in overall educational attainment. While the gender gap in primary school attendance in Jamaica has been almost eliminated, there are gaps in favor of women at secondary levels.** Thefemale lower secondary net enrollment rate is more than five percentage points higher compared to that of males and in upper secondary, the gap increases to almost 12 percentage points (Figure 1).

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| **Figure 1. Net Enrollment rate by gender. 2014-2015** |
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| Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica |

**Morever, the results of standardized tests in Jamaica highlight significant gender differences in student performance in the areas of English and Math, favoring girls**. According to the 2014 grade six achievement test (GSAT) needed to pass to secondary school, girls outperform boys in all academic subjects. Girls are ahead in Language Arts and Social Studies compared to boys (6 and 5 points, respectively). Furthermore, girls perform better than boys on Science and Math tests, with an average score difference of 3 and 4 points, respectively (Figure 2).

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| **Figure 2. Grade six achievement test by subject and gender. Mean score. 2014** |
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| Source:Edustats <http://www.devinfo.org/edustatjamaica/libraries/aspx/Home.aspx> |

These gaps in performance at the end of primary school continue to secondary school, and by the time females and males graduate from this level, they show significant differences in skills, which might add to the lack of skilled labour offer expressed by the GSS sector. Specifically, employers find that skills like communication, teamwork, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, basic Math and English, and awareness of and ability to use digital tools are missing from entry-level candidates.[[1]](#footnote-1) This issue becomes paramount as emerging technologies, particularly automation, are expected to disrupt the nature of the entry-level roles further, reducing the need for human intervention in many routine tasks. In this context, jobs will likely require higher-order critical thinking from the start, and soft, cognitive and digital skills will become fundamental assets for workers’ success.

According to the 2017 Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) Final Report,[[2]](#footnote-2) in 2017, out of 34,885 students from public schools sitting in the examinations (19,694 females and 15,191 males), only 25.2% attained five or more subjects including Mathematics and English A. Of these, 5,559 were female, and 3,144 were male. Moreover, while 62.6% of the 11th-grade cohort of enrolled female students passed English A and/or Mathematics only 53.1% of the male cohort achieved the same (Table 1).[[3]](#footnote-3)

When disaggregating by subject, only 2.5 out of 10 students who enrolled in the 11th grade in a public school in 2017 took and passed the English A and Mathematics subjects, being the percentage of female students higher than that of boys ( 29.9% vs 19.1%).

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| **Table 1. CSEC Achievement Results by gender. May/June 2017** |
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| Source: Caribbean Secondary Certificate (CSEC) Examination 2017. Analysis of the Performance of Public Schools. Ministry of Education, Youth, and Information. |

**Despite the enormous leap forward in women’s education, gender inequality in the labour market is an ongoing challenge, curbing social and economic progress**. According to the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2017, Jamaica faces a 27% gap in economic participation and opportunity, namely in women’s participation in the workforce and in the formal economy.[[4]](#footnote-4) In the last seven years, the female-male gap in labour force participation remains around 12-14 points, with female participation being 58% vs. 70% for that of males in January 2018. This gap is observed for all education levels, although the rates of participation are lower for the least educated population (Figures 3a and 3b). Similarly, the unemployment and job-seeking rates are substantially higher for females than for males (Figures 4a and 4b).[[5]](#footnote-5) Female unemployment is particularly noticeable among the youth and for women with 9-13 years of education (Figures 5a and 5b).

Given that women’s economic participation plays a key role in countries’ economic development[[6]](#footnote-6), low female workforce participation in Jamaica bears a high economic cost as it does not take advantage of the incredible wealth of the highly skilled female labour force.

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| **Figure 3a. Labour force participation by gender. 2011-2018** | **Figure 3b. Labour force participation by gender and years of schooling. 2014** |
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| Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica | Source: Harmonized surveys data from the IDB Social Sector. |

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| **Figure 4a. Unemployment rate by gender. 2011-2018** | **Figure 4b. Job-seeking rate by gender. 2011-2018** |
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| Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica | |

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| **Figure 5a. Unemployment rate by gender and age. 2017-2018** | **Figure 5b. Unemployment rate by gender and years of schooling. 2014** |
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| Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica | Source: Harmonized surveys data from the IDB Social Sector. |

**Levels of occupational segregation by gender are high in Jamaica. The structure of the labour force by occupation groups reflects that there are still traditional male and female dominated occupational groups.** Women are more represented in education, health, social work, community/social and personal services, and private household employment.

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| **Figure 6. Employment rate by industry and gender. January 2018** |
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| Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica |

**The segregation in the labour market is also reflected in tertiary graduation rates.** While women account for around 70% of graduates in 2014 and 2015, the percentage of men that followed a tertiary career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)[[7]](#footnote-7) almost tripled that of women (Figure 7).[[8]](#footnote-8) Along the same lines, information from Jamaica’s National Training Agency, HEART Trust/NTA,[[9]](#footnote-9) suggests that women tend to enroll less than men in technology-based training courses (e.g. computer services, webpage design) (Figure 8).

**Persistent gender differences in these fields of study mean that women will benefit less from the new occupations in the GSS industry[[10]](#footnote-10) that have a heavy STEM basis**, like those in financial services (e.g. risk management analysis) and information technology (e.g. software research and development).

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| **Figure 7. Tertiary graduates in STEM fields. 2014-2015** |
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| Source: The Port Authority of Jamaica. Achieving the Growht Target of 200,000 new jobs in the Jamaican BPO Sector in three years (Jamaica, 2017). Compiled from data supplied by the University of the West Indies, University of Technology and other Tertiary Institutions |

HEART-Trust/NTA data suggest that for courses related to the Creative Industries, women are more inclined to take those in Fashion Design (35% of women enrolled and 30.9% certified) while men go to Digital Animation (24.7% of men enrolled and 15.9% of men certified). Likewise, in the ICT sector, while women (70% of women enrolled and 67% of women certified) and men (37.6% of men enrolled and 42.7% of men certified) primarily go the Call/Contact Center and Data Operations courses, men also have a relatively high enrollment (12.9%) and certification (5.5%) in Computer Servicing and Support (Computer Repairs Technician) and in Webpage and Website Design (7.9% of enrolled men and 11.7% of men certified). As most jobs created in the following years will have a technology component, it will become increasingly important for women to understand the skills they will need to excel in this new labour market. Women will need skills that enable them to work within technological systems and to fill gaps created by advancing technology.

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| **Figure 8. Actual Enrollment and Certification by Sector Trained. 2016-2017** |
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| Source: Labour Market Research Unit and Intelligence Department of HEART Trust/NTA. |

The gender disparities observed in the workforce are mirrored in the annual Tracer Study[[11]](#footnote-11) conducted by HEART Trust/NTA, which evaluates the labour force outcomes of the Agency’s certified beneficiaries. Of the 3,617 respondents, males stood a greater chance of gaining employment compared to females (79.1% vs 65.5%, respectively). Likewise, females are more likely to be unemployed (25.5%) or outside the labour force (9.0%) as compared to men (15.6% and 5.4%, respectively) (Figure 9a). Additionally, women and men tend to concentrate in particular areas and this pattern is later mimicked in the labour market (Figure 9b). Men tend to be more represented in the Creative Industry as well as in Information and Communications Technology.

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| **Figure 9a. Labour force status of HEART Trust/NTA’s certified beneficiaries by gender. 2015-2016** | **Figure 9b. Employment rate by sectoral area trained and gender. 2015-2016** |
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| Note: Sample of respondents: 1586 males and 2031 females. ITC refers to Information and Comunication Technology Industry. Source: Labour Market Research Unit and Intelligence Department of HEART Trust/NTA. | |

**There is also a gender gap in leadership in the workforce. Women remain relatively underrepresented at the management level in private companies.** A recent study of 1,259 publicly-quoted companies in 31 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean highlights the underrepresentation of women. Women in the Carribbean subregion occupy only 18% of board positions, 29% of executive positions, and 3.1% of chief executive positions. Although women’s representation in the Carribbean is low and there is plenty of room for improvement, values on company boards and top management positions are higher comparable with the LAC average, with women occupying 8.5% and 9.2% of those positions respectively. Notwithstanding, the average percentage of women CEOs in the Caribbean is slightly lower than the LAC average, which reaches a value of 4.2% (Figure 10).

**Work remains to be done in Jamaica to ensure gender balanced representation across types of jobs and levels of responsibility and to foster a work environment where all employees can thrive**. Providing a business case for gender equality in the workplace, a regional analysiscovering 345 listed com­panies in LAC find that firms with higher female repre­sentation posted 44% higher returns on equity and 47% higher earnings (EBIT) margins.[[12]](#footnote-12) Morgan Stanley research also shows that more gender diversity in corporate settings can translate to increased productivity, greater innovation, better decision making and higher employee return and satisfaction.[[13]](#footnote-13) This is consistent with behavioral research demonstrating that gender integration improves teams’ collective intelligence, which reflects how well groups perform on a similarly diverse set of group problem-solving tasks.[[14]](#footnote-14)

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| **Figure 10. Women’s representation across selected companies** |
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| Source: IDB. “Female Corporate Leadership in Latin America and the Caribbean Region: Representation and Firm-Level Outcomes.” IDB Working Paper Series No. IDB-WP-655. |

**Proposed Activities for JA-L1079**

**Due to the lack of specific gender-disaggregated data in the GSS industry, to proactively enhance gender equality and prevent widening gender and skills gaps, *Component 1* of the operation will finance the development of a gender diagnosis of the industry. The diagnosis will use the gender-disaggregated data generated by the GSSB and collected through the Talent Platform.** The diagnosis will allow to understand current gender gaps to be able to design measures to address them, setting targets and communicating the benefits of promoting gender parity across the industry.

Furthermore, ***Component 1* will include cross-cutting gender activities to support women’s employment and career development in higher-value added GSS sub-sectors**. Opportunities for real-life experiences with STEM, including hands-on practice, apprenticeships and career counselling can promote female understanding of STEM-related studies and occupations. Also, promoting positive images of females in STEM-related fields can foster female interest in these areas.[[15]](#footnote-15) To this end, the Talent Platform will promote recruiting campaigns targeted to women, share information about career options for women, and showcase women who could serve as role models in higher-value added GSS careers (*Line of Action I*). Furthermore, female access to STEM jobs will be supported by providing higher weights within the competitive fund’s eligibility criteria for training that promotes female participation in STEM related areas *(Line of Action III*).

Finally, to enhance job-readiness skills curricula and align training to industry entry-level standards in the GSS, psychometric instruments will be implemented to measure male and female trainees’ levels and based on these inputs, provide differentiated job-readiness curricula that best fits their needs by gender (*Line of Action iv*).

1. Heart-Trust/NTA. Business Process Management Sector Study. Heart-Trust/NTA, Labour Market & Intelligence Department. Kingston(2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) subjects are examined for certification at the General and Technical Proficiencies. The General and Technical Proficiencies provide students with the foundation for further studies and entry to the workplace. The Council now offers a total of 33 subjects, that is, 28 subjects at General Proficiency and 5 at Technical Proficiency. The six-point grading scheme reports on the performance of the candidate under six overall and profile grades as follows:

   Overall grades – I, II, III, IV, V, VI

   Profile grades – A, B, C, D, E, F

   The Council has advised tertiary institutions and Ministries of Education in participating territories that Grades I – III at the General and Technical Proficiencies should be considered as satisfying the matriculation requirement for four-year programmes at universities and entry requirement to community colleges, teachers’ colleges and any tertiary institution offering post-secondary programmes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The English syllabus is organized for examination as English A and English B.  English A emphasizes the development of oral and written language skills through a variety of strategies. English B provides opportunities for students to explore and respond critically to specific literary texts, to observe and appreciate the author’s craft, and to make meaningful connections with human daily interactions (CSEC English, Caribbeann Examination Council, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The economic participation and opportunity subindex of the Global Gender Gap Index measures three concepts: (i) the participation gap; (ii) the remuneration gap; and (iii) the advancement gap. The participation gap is captured using the difference between women and men in labour force participation rates. The remuneration gap is obtained through a hard data indicator (ratio of estimated female-to-male earned income) and a qualitative indicator gathered through the WEF’s Executive Opinion Survey (wage equality for similar work). Lastly, the gap between the advancement of women and men is captured through two hard data statistics (the ratio of women to men among legislators, senior officials and managers, and the ratio of women to men among technical and professional workers). The subindex is measured on a scale of 0 to 1, with 1 indicating complete gender parity in the area of economic participation and opportunity (Schwab et al., 2016: 5). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Statistical Institute of Jamaica defines unemployed individuals as those persons “Looking for work” together with persons “Wanting work, available for work”. This latter category includes persons who were, during the Survey Week, actually engaged in home or other duties not classified as part of Economic Activity, but who were willing and able to accept work during the Survey Week. On the other hand, the job seeking rate considers only the unemployed individuals who were “Looking for a work” (for more information about the methodology see http://statinja.gov.jm/pdf/Labour.pdf). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. It has been estimated that if women’s labour force participation in Latin America and the Caribbean were the same as that of men, per capita GDP would be 16% higher.Cuberes and Teignier, (2016). Increased female employment has also been demonstrated to contribute significantly to declines in poverty and inequality Gasparini and Marchioni (2015): in the first decade of the twenty-first century, income earned by women reduced extreme poverty in the region by 30% and inequality by 28%. World Bank(2012). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. STEM is an acronym for the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. STEM education and training establishes relationships between the four disciplines with the objective of expanding people’s abilities by supporting technical and scientific education with a strong emphasis on critical and creative-thinking skills. Siekmann, G & Korbel, P. (2016). Defining ‘STEM’ skills: review and synthesis of the literature — support document 2, NCVER, Adelaide. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The Port Authority of Jamaica. Achieving the Growth Target of 200,000 new jobs in the Jamaican BPO Sector in three years (Jamaica, 2017). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The Human Employment and Resource Training Trust, National Training Agency known to most Jamaicans simply as ‘HEART’ is a key driver on Jamaica’s road to development. Formed in 1982 and restructured by the amended HEART Act in 1991, the Organisation focuses primarily on stimulating economic growth and job creation. This can only be achieved through the creation of a highly skilled, productive and competitive workforce. The HEART Trust/NTA operates 27 Technical and Vocational Education and Training locations which focus on providing a variety of training options to all Jamaicans seeking to advance their career options. With programmes geared at transforming the lives of school leavers as well as employed persons who require training and certification, HEART Trust/NTA is active in engaging members of the society. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Couto, V. and Fernandez-Stark, K. (2017). For instance, in higher-value ITO and KPO activities engineer, computer sciences, and business administration degrees are required to fulfill positions such as business and finance analysts, and software research and development engineers. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Labour Market Research Unit and Intelligence Department of HEART Trust/NTA (2018). Tracer Study report 2015-2016. Certified Beneficiaries. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. McKinsey Global Institute. “Women Matter: A Latin America Perspective”(2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Morgan Stanley. “A Framework for Gender Diversity in the Workplace,” (2016), and “Putting Gender Diversity to Work: Better Fundamentals, Less Volatility,” (2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Williams W., a., Chabris, C. F., Pentland, A., Hashmi, N., Malone, T. W. 2010. Evidence for a Collective Intelligence Factor in the Performance of Human Groups. Science: 686-688. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Bohnet, Iris. 2016. What works? Gender equality by design. Harvard University Press; UNESCO. 2017. Cracking the code: Girls’ and women’s education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); OECD. 2017.

    Going Digital: The Future of Work for Women, Policy Brief on the Future of Work. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)