



VIOLENCE PREVENTION ALLIANCE – JAMAICA CHAPTER **“Working together to find solutions”**

VIOLENCE PREVENTION ALLIANCE (VPA) FACT SHEET

WHAT DOES THE VPA DO?

The VPA provides an opportunity for organizations from all sectors of society to unite around a shared public health approach to violence prevention. The public health approach addresses the root causes of violence and improves services for victims.

WHY IS THE VPA SO CRITICAL FOR JAMAICA?

The VPA’s mission is to create a violence-free and safe Jamaica. Jamaica, an island of only 2.7 million people, is locked in a crisis of aggression and violence. Forty percent of the recurrent hospital budget of the Ministry of Health is consumed in the treatment of trauma. Scholars at the Mona Campus of The University of the West Indies estimate that the cost to the country of criminal violence alone is between four and five percent of GDP. The damage to the country’s image overseas, not least among the Jamaican Diaspora, is incalculable, while at home there is no easy way to estimate the fear, mistrust, edginess, personal depression, social tension and demoralisation that are the by-products of the escalating rate of violence and homicide.

SUCCESSSES OF THE VPA

Initiatives sponsored by the Alliance have already resulted in reduction of violence in several communities which have become ‘safe communities’. This reduction demonstrates the value of the Alliance and its participants. By bringing together varying organizations and creating discourse, the VPA is able to initiate interventions from the roots and dance hall level to governmental and international agencies.

SOME OF OUR PROJECTS AND EVENTS

The Crime Observatory Project is a facility which integrates data about crime and violence from several organizations, including the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the University of the West Indies Peace and Justice Centre, and the Ministry of Health.

The Learning for Life Programme uses the Canadian 'Auto Skills' software to improve literacy and vocabulary skills, while simultaneously teaching computer skills. This is intended to improve the mental outlook of young inner city men.

Peace Day Initiatives with PALS (Peace and Love in Society) Jamaica include a peace march, concert, and various community activities. Peace Day has evolved into a month long campaign for Peace.

Click – To shoot or not to shoot- “Click” is the answer – an annual summer project sponsored by SuperPlus Ltd & other corporate bodies with 20 youngsters

from “safe communities” learning digital photography skills while experiencing mentorship, guidance & life skills from trained tutors.

THE VPA’S PATRON AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The VPA’s Patron is His Excellency, Professor Sir Kenneth Hall. The VPA also has a board of trustees comprised of persons who have demonstrated excellence and successful leadership in their various fields. Members are Bishop Charles Dufour, Dr. Deanna Ashley, Mesdames: Donna Duncan-Scott and Kathy Moss, Messrs: Danny Williams, Andrew Cocking, William Mahfood, Mark Golding, and Roger Cogle.

THE VPA’S CHAIRPERSONS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr Elizabeth Ward, Chairperson of the Board, is the Director of Disease Prevention and Control at the Ministry of Health (MOH), Jamaica. She has produced a wide range of scholarly publications on violence and injury surveillance.

Professor Barry Chevannes chairs the vibrant Steering Committee. He is a Professor of Social Anthropology, former Head of the Department of Sociology, Social Work & Psychology and former Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at The University of the West Indies (UWI).

The Executive Director, Dr. Deanna Ashley, is the former Director of Health Promotion and Protection at the Ministry of Health and the winner of the prestigious Pelican Award from UWI.

WHO ARE THE VPA STEERING COMMITTEE PARTICIPANTS

Participation in the VPA is open to many kinds of organizations: governmental, non-governmental, inter-governmental, community-based, and private. The participants are representatives from the following organizations:

UN Agencies	Ministry of Health	Peace Management Initiative
Jamaica Defence Force	Jamaica Constabulary Force	Tertiary Institutions
Ministry of National Security	Music Industry	Media Association of Jamaica
Kingston Restoration Company	Child Development Association	Dispute Resolution Foundation
Citizen’s Security and Justice Programme	Community Representatives	Ministry of Education Youth & Culture
Child Development Association	Nursing Association of Jamaica	Medical Association of Jamaica
Planning Institute of Jamaica	Private Sector of Jamaica	NGOs
PALS	Ministers’ Fraternity	Youth Organizations

HOW DOES THE VPA ASSIST THE PARTICIPANTS?

The VPA provides the participants with an infrastructure through which they can work together to (a) *build partnerships and increase the capacity for information-gathering and sharing on violence*; b) *improve knowledge about what works in violence prevention and programming*; and c) *encourage widespread implementation of policies and programs known to be effective* and d) *raise funds for the implementation of community based projects*

BACKGROUND OF THE VIOLENCE PREVENTION ALLIANCE (VPA)

The global Violence Prevention Alliance was launched at the World Health Organization in Geneva in January 2004. The VPA (Jamaican chapter) was launched in November 2004 at the UWI Medical Research Conference. The VPA has been incorporated under the Companies Act as a limited company.

Location and Contact Information:

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