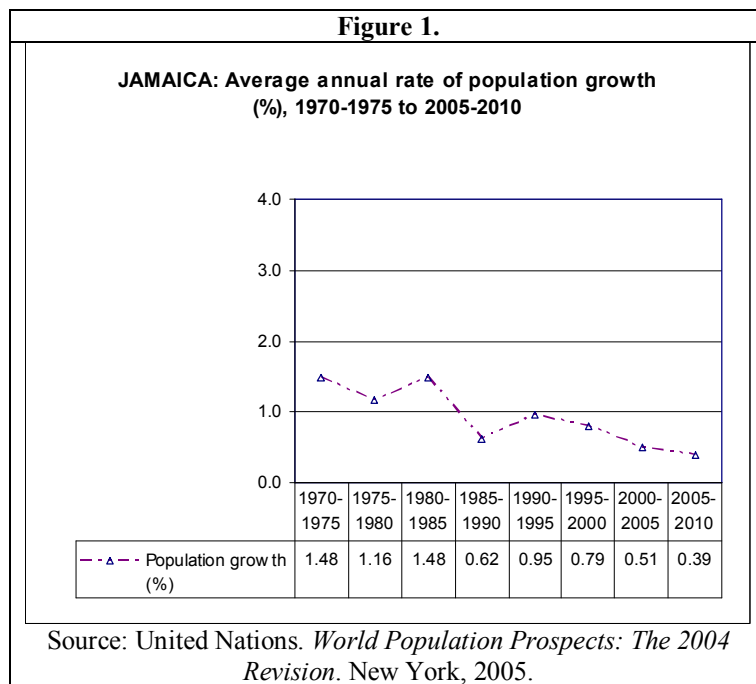


Gender, Ethnicity and Health Unit

Population

The total population of Jamaica is estimated at 2,651,000 in 2005, of which 52.2% live in urban areas.¹ Women represent 50.6% of the total population.² In the year 2004, 727,000 women were 15 to 49 years old, that is, around 54% of the total number of women.³

The average annual rate of growth of the population fluctuated considerably in the period since 1970, but it has had a decreasing trend since the 1990-1995 quinquennium and is currently nearing zero (Figure 1).



The crude death rate, in 2005, was 7.7 per 1,000 population.⁴

Socioeconomic context

In 2003, the gross national income per capita (PPP value) was US\$3,790; the income ratio of the population with the 20% highest and the 20% lowest income was 6.9 (based on expenditure).⁵

¹ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

² Based on data from: PAHO/AIS. Technical Information System. Table Generator. <http://www.paho.org>, 26 January 2006.

³ PAHO/GE. *Gender, Health and Development in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

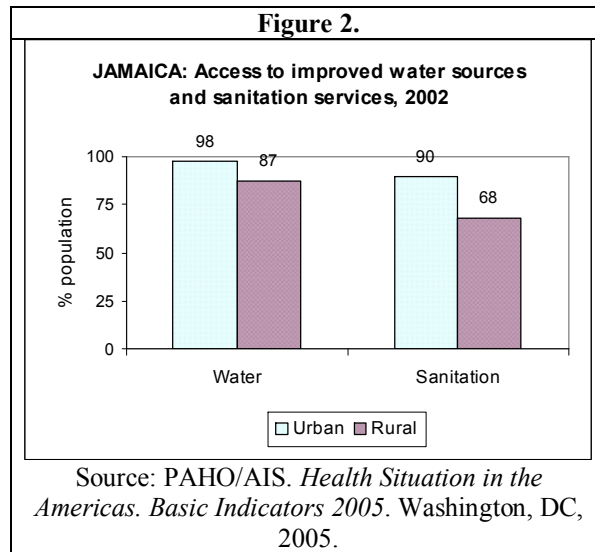
⁴ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

Health expenditure

Public expenditure on health was 1.7% of gross domestic product in 2001-2002, and private expenditure was 4.4% (health and personal expenses) in 2004.⁶

Environmental health

At least ninety percent of the urban population has access to improved water sources and sanitation services, although access is lower among the population in rural areas (Figure 2).



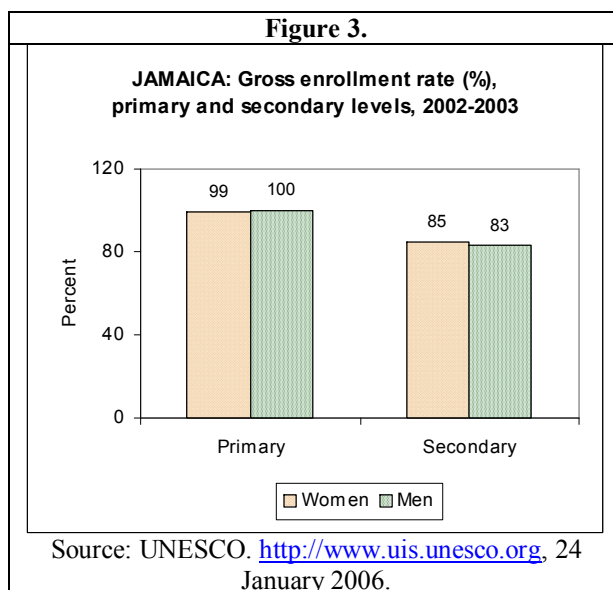
Education

Literacy among the population aged 15 years and over was 88.7% in 2005; male literacy was 85.0% and female literacy, 92.3%.⁷ The gross enrollment rate for the primary level is estimated to be roughly 100% for both sexes, but secondary enrollment has not yet reached that level (Figure 3).

⁵ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.



Political participation

Percent of women ⁸ :	
- in Parliament (2002)	14%
- in ministerial posts (2001)	13%

Resources that facilitate initiatives leading to gender equality

Commitment to gender equality		
The facultative protocol for the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ⁹ :	Yes	No
- Was signed	X	
- Was ratified by the legislature	X	

Abortion policy ¹⁰		
	Yes	No
Does the penal code prohibit abortion?	X	
Are there exceptions:	X	
- To save the life of the mother	X	
- To preserve the physical and mental health of the mother		X
- In cases of rape or incest		X
- Other exceptions		X

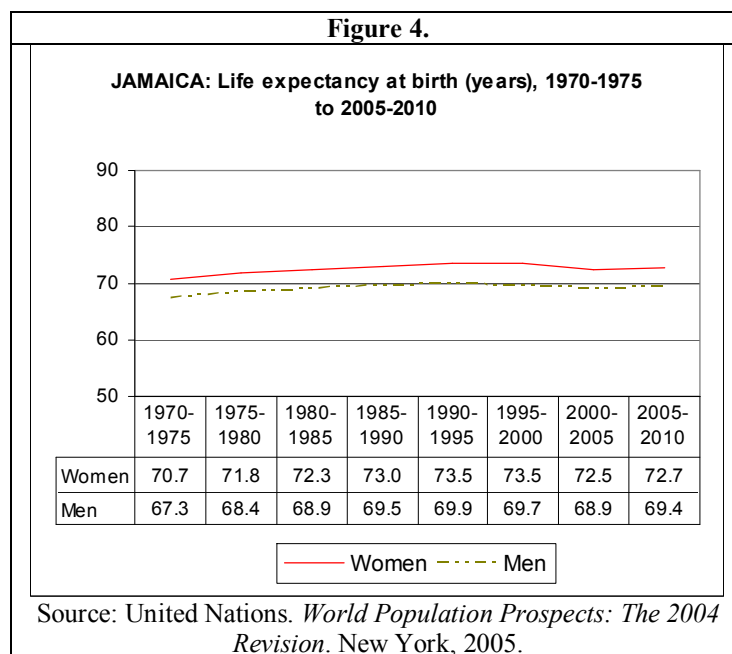
⁸ PAHO/GE. *Gender, Health and Development in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

⁹ United Nations. Division for the Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>, 27 March 2006.

¹⁰ United Nations. Population Policy Data Bank, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/abortion/doc>, 27 March 2006.

Health Situation

In 2005, life expectancy at birth was 72.7 years for women and 69.2 years for men.¹¹ Recent demographic estimates found a gain of about 2 years since the 1970-1975 quinquennium, for women and men, while the gap between the sexes has remained relatively steady at around 3.4 years more for women (Figure 4).



In 2002, high estimated incidence rates of malignant neoplasms of female breast and cervix were found among women (see table).

JAMAICA: Estimated incidence of malignant neoplasms, adjusted (per 100,000), 2002		
Site	Women	Men
- lung	6.0	24.1
- stomach	11.6	26.2
- female breast	43.5	n.a.
- cervix	31.2	n.a.

PAHO/AIS. Technical Information System. Table Generator. (December 2005) <http://www.paho.org>

n.a.= not applicable

Risk factors¹²

The prevalence of tobacco consumption in the population 13-15 years of age was 15% among women and 24% among men (2001). Prevalence data on obesity in the population 15 to 49 years old are available for Spanish Town only (urban): 34% among women and 9% among men (1998).

¹¹ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

¹² PAHO/GE. *Gender, Health and Development in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, 2005.

Mortality

The most recent year for which mortality data from Jamaica are available by sex, age and cause of death is 1992¹³; since it is doubtful that these data represent the current situation in the country, they are not included here.

The infant mortality rate was 19.9 per 1,000 live births in 1998.¹⁴

Sexual and reproductive health

In 2004 the total fertility rate in Jamaica was 2.3.¹⁵

Adolescent pregnancy is one of several reproductive risk categories;¹⁶ it constitutes a barrier that can prevent women from developing capabilities to help them achieve the resources necessary for their well-being. In Jamaica, in 2004, 8% of adolescents 15 to 19 years old gave birth; among women 35 to 49 years, 2% gave birth to a child.¹⁷

In 1987, 53% of pregnant women had iron-deficiency anemia.¹⁸

The maternal mortality ratio was 95.0 per 100,000 live births in the period 2001-2003.¹⁹

There has been an increasing trend in the number of AIDS cases reported annually since the beginning of the epidemic in Jamaica, especially among men but also among women (Figure 5). In September 2005 there were 1,348 people under treatment with antiretroviral drugs;²⁰ an estimated 2,600 people 15 to 49 years old needed such treatment in 2004.²¹

¹³ PAHO/AIS. Technical Information System. Table Generator (December 2005). <http://www.paho.org>

¹⁴ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

¹⁵ PAHO/GE. *Gender, Health and Development in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

¹⁶ Reproductive risk factors: mother's age less than 20 years and over 34 years; birth interval less than 24 months; birth order greater than 3.

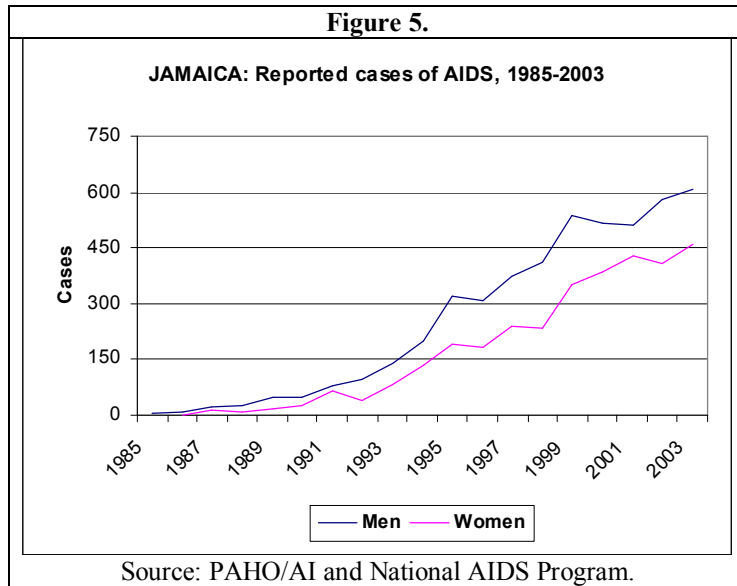
¹⁷ PAHO/GE. *Gender, Health and Development in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

²⁰ PAHO/AI and National AIDS Program.

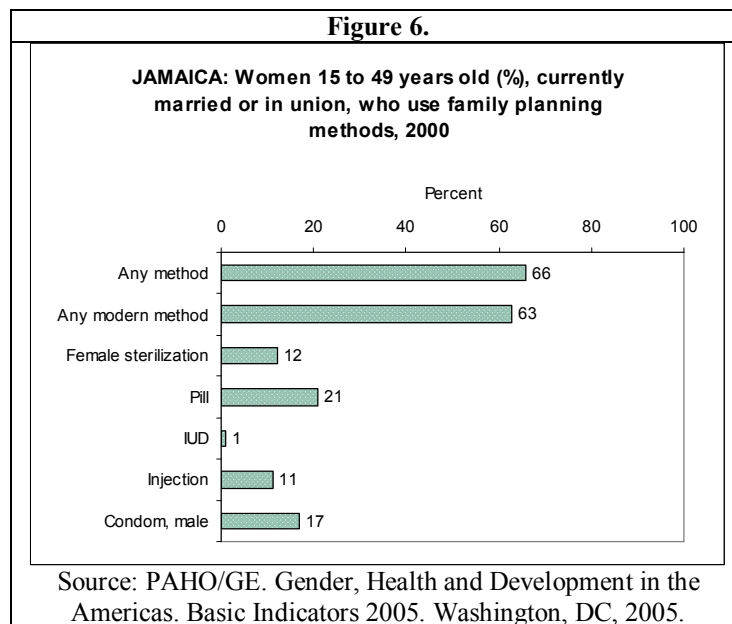
²¹ UNAIDS/WHO.



Access to health services

Family planning services

Among women aged 15 to 49 years who are currently married or currently partnered, 63% use modern methods of family planning and another 3% use other methods (Figure 6). The method most frequently used is the pill (21%).



Prenatal care and care at childbirth

In 2002, 95.0% of all births were attended by trained personnel; 70.1% of pregnant women received at least one consultation for prenatal care, provided by a trained health worker (2001).²²

²² PAHO/AIS. *Health Situation in the Americas. Basic Indicators 2005*. Washington, DC, 2005.

Health personnel

Although this subject is an essential element in the analysis of gender-based inequalities related to the participation of women and men in the health sector, the statistics that would allow such analyses are not currently available.