

NEWSLETTER

QUARTER 2

TRANSWAVE
JAMAICA
APRIL - JUNE 2026

MESSAGE FROM OUR TEAM

The second quarter of 2026 has been one of growth, collaboration, and continued advocacy for TransWave Jamaica. Throughout the past three months, we have expanded community support programmes, strengthened policy advocacy, increased public awareness and continued creating safer, more affirming spaces for transgender and gender-diverse Jamaicans.

Every milestone achieved reflects the commitment of our staff, community members, partners, donors, and allies who continue to stand with us as we work towards a more inclusive Jamaica.

Signed:

TransWave Team



Community Care in Action

Community care continues to be at the heart of TransWave Jamaica's work. Throughout the quarter, our **Mutual Aid Programme** provided emergency assistance to transgender and gender non-conforming community members facing housing insecurity, medical expenses and other urgent challenges.

We also continued supporting individuals through our **Deed Poll Assistance Programme** by guiding them through the legal name change process and assisting with the preparation of documentation required to obtain government-issued identification.

During this period, five (5) letters of authorisation were prepared to support deed poll applicants as they progressed through the legal process.

Legal Empowerment

Legal empowerment remained another important area of our community programming. On April 13, 2026, we hosted a Legal Literacy Training at the Courtleigh Hotel in Kingston, focusing on the rights of people living in Jamaica, particularly within the workplace. This was followed by an additional session held on May 27, at Larry Chang Centre in St. Ann. These trainings explored the National HIV Workplace Policy, increasing participants' understanding of workplace protections, rights and responsibilities while promoting more inclusive employment environments.

Mental Health Intervention

Mental health and wellbeing also remained a focus throughout the quarter. On June 6, 2026, TransWave Jamaica hosted a Suicide Prevention Workshop, which welcomed 22 participants from the transgender and wider LGBTQIA+ community, including nine (9) transgender women, seven (7) non-binary persons, four (4) cisgender men and two (2) transgender men. The workshop equipped participants with practical tools for recognising signs of emotional distress, managing stress and supporting their own mental wellbeing while encouraging open conversations around suicide prevention and mental health.



Karaoke Lyme

Creating spaces where community members feel connected, supported and empowered remained a key priority. On June 12, 2026, we hosted our Karaoke Community Lyme, bringing together 18 participants, including community members, allies and partners. The event welcomed nine (9) cisgender men, three (3) cisgender women, five (5) transgender women and one (1) transgender man, providing an opportunity to build relationships, celebrate community and strengthen social support networks in a relaxed and affirming environment.

Support Group Sessions

Earlier that day, we also facilitated a Community Support Group Session, attended by 15 participants, including five (5) transgender women, five (5) non-binary persons, three (3) transgender men and two (2) cisgender men. Participants engaged in meaningful discussions on accessing government documents, understanding the impacts of climate change on transgender communities, preparing for natural disasters and recognising and reporting human rights violations. These sessions continue to provide valuable peer support and practical information; however, maintaining consistent attendance remains an ongoing challenge as participants often balance employment, education and other personal commitments that affect their ability to attend follow-up sessions.

Digital Notice Board

To improve communication and ensure community members remained informed, we also continued managing our **Digital Notice Board on WhatsApp**, which has now grown to 38 members. The platform provides regular updates on employment opportunities, upcoming events, funding opportunities, community resources and important organisational announcements, strengthening engagement and improving access to timely information across our network.

**JOIN OUR WHATSAPP
COMMUNITY HERE**



876 375 1134

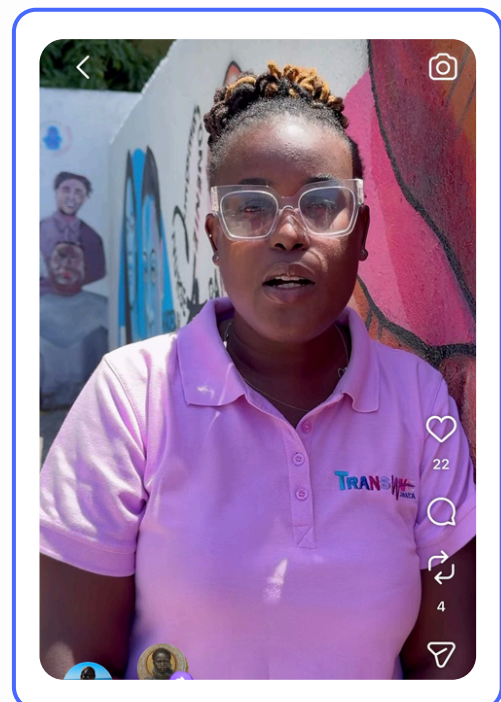
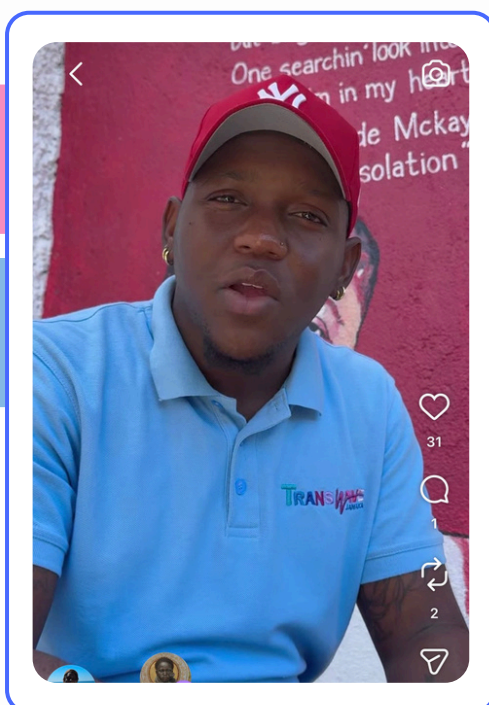
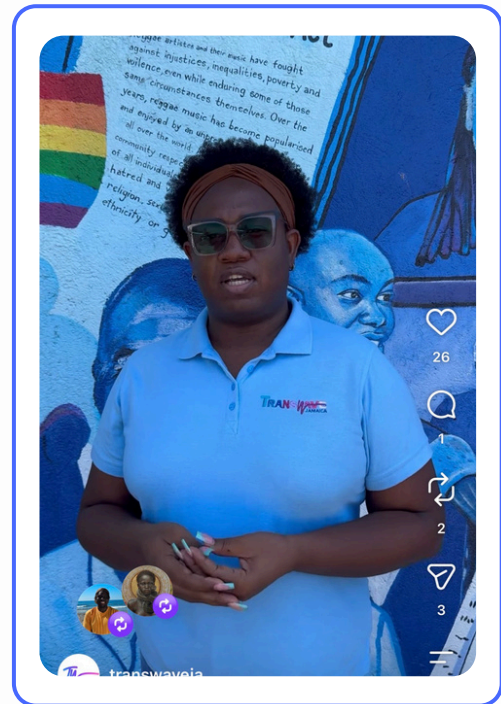
IDAHOBIT 2026:

At the Heart of Democracy

In May, TransWave Jamaica joined the global observance of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) 2026 by developing a three-part digital storytelling campaign inspired by the year's theme, The Art of Democracy. The campaign was created to demonstrate that democracy is strongest when transgender and gender-diverse people are not only protected under the law but are also able to actively participate in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

Across the three videos, members of the TransWave Jamaica team reflected on what democracy means from a transgender perspective, highlighting the importance of inclusion, equal participation, representation and human rights. Released across our social media platforms, the campaign encouraged audiences to consider how meaningful democracy requires every voice to be heard, particularly those who have historically been excluded from civic and political spaces.

To complement the campaign, our Executive Director, Lamar-Shey Grant, authored a policy brief examining the relationship between gender recognition, democratic participation and the lived realities of transgender Jamaicans. Published on the blog section of our website, the brief extended the campaign's message by providing evidence-based recommendations that support more inclusive policies and greater civic participation for transgender and gender-diverse people. Together, the campaign and policy brief strengthened public awareness of trans-inclusive democracy while reinforcing TransWave Jamaica's role as both an advocacy and thought leadership organisation.



BLACK FEMINIST FUND:

BFF @ 5 PHOTO ESSAY



As a proud grantee of the Black Feminist Fund, TransWave Jamaica participated in the Fund's anniversary project celebrating Black trans feminist leadership while strengthening the partnership between our organisations as we continue advancing gender justice in Jamaica. The initiative provided an opportunity to showcase TransWave as a family as well as an organisation, our programmes and community-centred approach, while highlighting the impact of Black trans-led advocacy in the Jamaican context. Through our participation, we strengthened our relationship with the Black Feminist Fund and reaffirmed the value of sustained investment in community-led movements.



As part of the anniversary project's photo essay initiative, we organised and conducted their requested professional photoshoot documenting the everyday work of TransWave Jamaica. The photography captured staff members discussing their updates, engaging with community members, and providing services that reflect our mission of advocacy, care, and empowerment.



THE OPEN CLOSET CLOTHING DRIVE

The session was intentionally held alongside our Open Closet Clothing Drive, allowing the project to authentically document one of our community support initiatives in action. By highlighting both our organisational operations and direct engagement with community members, the photo essay presents a genuine reflection of the work that drives TransWave Jamaica's advocacy and service delivery.



Advancing Human Rights and Inclusive Policy

Advocacy remained at the centre of our work this quarter as we continued documenting cases of human rights violations affecting transgender Jamaicans. The information gathered through our Human Rights Violation Report strengthens our evidence-based advocacy and informs recommendations for policymakers, institutions, and other stakeholders.

We also completed our latest policy brief on **Gender Recognition and Employment Equality**, which is now available through the blog section of our website. In addition, we facilitated legal literacy sessions, healthcare worker trainings, and community sensitisation workshops that promoted human rights, reduced stigma and discrimination, and encouraged greater understanding of inclusive democracy among community members and service providers alike.

Healthcare Workers Training

Improving access to respectful, affirming healthcare remains one of TransWave Jamaica's core priorities, particularly as many transgender and gender-diverse people continue to experience stigma and discrimination when accessing health services. During the quarter, we successfully facilitated two specialised healthcare worker training sessions designed to strengthen participants' understanding of transgender health, human rights and the importance of providing stigma- and discrimination-free care.

The first training brought together a diverse group of healthcare professionals, including medical doctors, psychologists, registered nurses and student nurses, creating an opportunity for multidisciplinary learning and dialogue. The second session was delivered in partnership with the HIV and STI Response Unit at the Comprehensive Health Clinic in Kingston, led by Dr. Vikram Asnani, BMSc (Hons), MBBS (Hons), MPH (Dist). Both sessions were facilitated by Leemoy Weaver, one of the consultants who contributed to the development of the Trans Health & Wellness Toolkit, ensuring participants benefited from evidence-based guidance and practical strategies for delivering gender-affirming care.



To complement these in-person trainings, we hosted a live online discussion featuring TransWave Ambassador Dom Bancey, a member of the Sugar Cane Collective, who shared personal experiences navigating Jamaica's healthcare system from a trans masculine perspective. Through honest reflection and lived experience, Dom highlighted the challenges transgender people continue to face when seeking healthcare while also demonstrating the positive impact that affirming and respectful healthcare providers can have on patient outcomes. The discussion encouraged healthcare professionals, community members, and allies to consider how listening to transgender voices can lead to more inclusive and person-centred healthcare services.



By combining professional training with community storytelling, TransWave Jamaica continues to strengthen healthcare providers' capacity to deliver affirming care while ensuring that the lived experiences of transgender people remain central to improving healthcare systems and advancing equitable health outcomes across Jamaica.

STRENGTHENING OUR VOICE

Throughout the quarter, our communications work continued amplifying transgender voices through storytelling, educational resources, and public advocacy. We proudly launched the **Fuel the Wave** fundraising campaign, an initiative designed to strengthen the long-term sustainability of TransWave Jamaica's programmes and services. By encouraging individuals, organisations and allies to invest in our work, the campaign aims to expand our reach and increase access to essential services for the communities we serve.



Ambassador Photoshoot

This quarter, our ambassadors stepped in front of the camera to help tell the story of TransWave Jamaica. The annual Ambassador Photoshoot celebrated the diverse voices, leadership and resilience within our community while creating visual content for upcoming campaigns, advocacy initiatives and fundraising efforts. These powerful images will continue amplifying transgender stories throughout the year.



COMMUNITY IN FOCUS

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Our Executive Director, Lamar-Shey Grant, participated in the Strategic Litigation CSO Training in Saint Lucia, a regional capacity-building programme that brought together civil society organisations to explore the use of strategic litigation as a tool for advancing human rights. The training focused on legal advocacy, identifying opportunities for impactful litigation, strengthening collaboration between civil society organisations and legal practitioners, and developing strategies to challenge discrimination through the courts. As part of the programme, Lamar-Shey also participated in a regional roundtable discussion, contributing TransWave Jamaica's perspectives on the legal and human rights challenges facing transgender communities in Jamaica while exchanging experiences and strategies with advocates from across the Caribbean. The knowledge, partnerships and insights gained through the training will strengthen TransWave Jamaica's ongoing advocacy for legal and policy reform.

Lamar-Shey was also joined by Shere Samuels, Director of Research and Policy, at the Stronger Together Conference, where they connected with regional partners, shared promising practices and explored collaborative approaches to advancing LGBTQ+ rights throughout the Caribbean.



The quarter concluded with Lamar-Shey and Shere representing TransWave Jamaica at Toronto Pride, where they proudly participated in both the Dyke Rally and the Trans Rally & March. They also served as panellists during the discussion, "State of Affairs: 2SLGBTQIA+ Caribbean Communities," sharing insights on the realities, challenges and resilience of transgender and queer communities across the region.

These regional and international engagements continue to strengthen TransWave Jamaica's advocacy, expand strategic partnerships and ensure that the experiences of transgender Jamaicans help inform conversations and solutions both at home and across the Caribbean.



LOOKING AHEAD

As we move into the next quarter, we remain focused on expanding community programmes, publishing new advocacy resources, launching additional media campaigns and strengthening partnerships that advance transgender rights in Jamaica. We are excited to continue creating leadership opportunities, increasing access to essential services and building a future where every transgender and gender-diverse person can live safely, openly and with dignity.

To every community member, volunteer, partner, donor and ally, we thank you for believing in our mission. Your continued support allows us to respond to community needs, advocate for meaningful policy change and create lasting impact.

Together, we will continue to Fuel the Wave and build a future grounded in equality, dignity and justice for all.

