

## Home for deported women opens in Jamaica

A hostel which will provide temporary shelter and support the rehabilitation of deported women has been opened in Jamaica's capital.

The Stephen's House hostel was built at a cost of J\$1.2 million (US\$14,092) and was funded by the Ministry of National Security in partnership with the Jamaica Reducing Reoffending Action Plan (JRRAP) and the British High Commission.

St Rachel Ustanny, Executive Director of Hibiscus Jamaica Limited which will manage the facility, said up to eight deportees, including children, in need of "emergency accommodation services" will be able to get lodging at any given time.

"Thirty days is the maximum stay time, but they can reapply for additional stay if they have not been able to identify accommodation on their own," she said.

If they find land, but not housing after the extension, the women will also get assistance.

"Through support from us, if they are able to identify family land (or acquire land as a gift or for lease) we would work with Food for the Poor, to see if assistance could be granted, through that organization, to meet those needs," Ustanny added.

She said a play area would be set up at the back of the facility, so that children would have recreational activities.

"We will also make available to them a social worker and a caregiver who will attend to their daily needs, and ensure that their resettlement and reintegration process go smoothly," the official added.

First Secretary, British High Commission, Janet Al-Utaibi, said the project is the first of its kind in Jamaica for women. She noted that while there are other temporary shelters across the island providing much needed services, they are not designed specifically for women and children.

"What Hibiscus has created will do a great deal to help restore the dignity and self esteem of the women who use these services, and this is vital for successful reintegration for those who stay here with their children," Al-Utaibi said.

The services offered by Hibiscus will include case management, accommodation and welfare.

Hibiscus Jamaica is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was established in 1993 to support the resettlement,

reintegration and rehabilitation needs of deported migrant women.