



The Universal Service Fund (formerly Universal Access Fund) has upgraded the computer laboratory at the Women's Centre of Jamaica Foundation's Trafalgar Road headquarters in St. Andrew at a cost of \$3.5 million.

The lab, which was officially handed over on Monday (January 14) during a brief ceremony, has been outfitted with 20 computers, a server, printer, uninterruptible power supply (UPS), wiring, and other infrastructure.

Managing Director of the Fund, Hugh Cross, said the project was "money well spent" and urged the women and girls at the centre to use the resources wisely. He suggested that they seek to further their education by registering for online programmes.

Executive Director of the Women's Centre, Beryl Weir, expressed gratitude for the renovation, which she said, will greatly benefit girls who are preparing for their Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations.

"We have been challenged over the years, because the computers have not been up to standard," she said, noting that this factor had often impeded the girls in completing their School-Based Assessment (SBA).

She informed that for those who are not computer literate, the intention is to ensure that they complete a basic computer course and be issued with a certificate by the time they leave the facility.

The Women's Centre addresses the problems of interrupted education and the accompanying social issues associated with teenage pregnancy.

It focuses on education, training and developmental counselling, thereby improving levels of employment and productivity among the young women, and delaying unwanted pregnancies.

Some of the services offered by the centre are: 'walk-in' counselling service for women and men; counselling for fathers and parents of teen mothers; skill training for both males and females in the age group 17 to 25; confidential counselling service for children of any age, and group peer counselling sessions at the Kingston Counselling Clinic; and day care facilities for babies of teens and working mothers.