

Meet our guest speaker

Linnette Vassell

She is a Community Development and Gender Specialist who has combined activist work in the communities and women's movements with academic work on women's organisational experience and governance in Jamaica and the Caribbean. In this context she has done extensive capacity building and training at the community level in organisational building, gender and development and participatory development. She recently completed work on the Rural Water and Sanitation Project implemented by the government of Jamaica and the Inter-American Development Bank which focused on building community capacity for the management of water and sanitation to advance health and development in poor communities.



As co-founder and Board member of the 28-year-old Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC), she's promoting sustainable livelihoods, health & wellness, community capacity building, advocacy and communications. WROC is active in both the urban inner-city Kingston and in five (5) rural communities in St. Thomas. Under her leadership, WROC in 2010 completed Phase 1 of the Strengthening Women's Leadership in Jamaica project, under which some 100 professional women and 10 community-based female leaders were trained for participation on Boards and Commissions. This project has resulted in the design of a programme of advocacy for quotas for women in decision-making, currently being promoted by the *51% Coalition-Development and Empowerment through Equity*, a grouping of some 10 women's organisations.

Vassell has undertaken action research on water and sanitation, climate change and politics and governance and has published articles on gender and governance and Caribbean Women's History.

She's committed member of the Christian Church family through Webster Memorial United Church and is active in the Renewal and Transformation process of the United Church in Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. She is married with a daughter and two grandchildren.