ICT Project

Last Updated Sunday, 04 January 2009

To introduce and develop the use of ICT in the organisation and for the education of the children.
Project Name: ICT

Why an ICT project?

The ICT project (Information, Communication, Technology), managed by Casa Do Caminho, consists of several component sub-projects, all of which aim to develop the use of information and communication technologies in the orphanages in Xerem. So far, Casa Do Caminho cannot provide free internet access or computer skills training for the children and teenagers. This is what the ICT project is aiming at, as the need for access to computers and modern communication technology is great. Once physical access to ICT is established, it follows that the technology used in projects and trainings must be appropriate to local needs and conditions.

What can ICT experts do for our program?

The most important part is installing all the PC's we have gathered. Several volunteers send in PC's from their home country in parts. Former ICT volunteers Ross and JoanMa have made sure we have stabe electricity supply, a separate ICT room in the childcentre for the younger children and 3 pc's with internet connection at the teenage boys house. Still a lot of pc's need to be installed and build up. We need ICT people who can build new PC's, teach our children and teenagers basic PC skills and continue to search for a possible internet connection at our children's centre in the rural area. Don't worry, you will not be just working with PC's, all our volunteers do a large variety of tasks and spend a lot of time with our children!

Information about the state of the project:

Project Fundraising
No further fundraising activities have taken place since November 2006 on the basis that current funds are considered sufficient for our current project objectives. Moreover, the section Internet Services refers to a recent application made to the Brazilian Government that could potentially save a large cost to be incurred for the payment of internet services to Casa do Caminho. The current project finances are summarised below:

Project Cost to Complete *R$ 16.000,00

Funds ReceivedR$ 10.847,29

Payments (actual)R$ 3.801,62

Payments (projected)**R$ 12.000,00

Funds Required **-R$ 4.954,33

* Total of funds required to complete the objectives. NOTE: This total includes original projections for satellite internet costs
** Projected payments and Funds Required include projection for satellite broadband at Casa do Caminho

Where do our PC's come from?
After some difficulties with the Brazilian import process while trying to import a donation of computers from England-based NGO Computer Aid International, a Brazilian import specialist has offered to provide assistance and is awaiting the License to Import from the customs authorities here. In the meantime, to progress our work, computer parts have been coming in from international volunteers through mail and by means of volunteers that are traveling to Brazil. This means that our more immediate needs have been satisfied by building the PCs and upgrading what we have. The import of 10 PCs is anticipated in the coming months.
A network switch is being sought in Brazil for the Sala do Computadores to complete the network installation there. This will be bought in Brazil as the cost is less than that of importing one we have from abroad.

What software did we decide to use?
We decided to use microsoft software since we can't garantee "Linux specialst " through out the year. We would prefer to use the "free software" but since we couldn't garantee expertise all year long we decided to go for the simple option. In case of emergencies we can always call a local expert. This is not possible with Linux.

How do we try to get Internet Services in the rural area?
An application to a Brazilian government-run programme was made on 6th March 2007 for the supply of Internet via satellite broadband to Casa do Caminho. The GESAC programme (http://www.idbrasil.org.br/) offers the VSAT technology (http://www.wirelessbrasil.org/wirelessbr/secoes/sec_vsat.html) for projects such as our own. For a copy of the application, please request from Ross Duncan at the CRCC general email address. At present, we are unsure how long the process will take to complete, but our ultimate aim is to have an internet connection at Casa do Caminho for September 2007 in order to commence the ‘Year of Casa do Caminho’ project linking the shelter with Dutch schools.

Investigation in to the installation of services at Casa Amigas is still outstanding.

Before and after the preparations A number of further preparations have been made in the Sala de Computadores at Casa do Caminho (below). After some problems with computers being affected by the electrical network, grounding has been installed and power surge protection established for each computer.A number of computers are being installed and will be connected through the switch currently being procured. New glass windows have been installed to replace the previous plastic covering them.

Computer Network at Casa Heppenheim

At Casa Happenheim, the electrical network has also been grounded to prevent damage. The organisation’s administration staff have had their only computer upgraded. Three new computers were installed: one for administration, another one for the adolescents and volunteers, and a third one that acts as firewall and 4-port network hub connected to broadband Internet. Furthermore, there is an available connection in the network for a laptop (volunteers or administration). These computers have seen the first use of the Ubuntu desktop environment and IPCop firewall.