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## An Ambitious Brazilian Program to Recycle 5,000 Computers a Year

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Around 500 machines, including computers, printers, monitors, and other equipment, were delivered recently to the first Computer Reconditioning and Recycling Center in Porto Alegre, the capital of the Brazilian southern state of Rio Grande do Sul.

The shop, which is functioning in the Marist Social Center (CESMAR) in the northern zone of the city, was set up in partnership with the federal government. The plan is to receive, fix, and redistribute 5,000 computers per year.

"Most of the machines sent here for recycling come from federal government agencies, which get rid of more than 250 thousand computers each year," affirms the director of the CESMAR, Miguel Antônio Orlandi.

Orlandi reports that, after the center was inaugurated, they have received telephone calls from people who want to donate computers and other defective or idle equipment.

"There have been donations from communities close to the state capital," he says. 70 young people are responsible for fixing up the old machines. Most of them are from the Mário Quintana Villa, one of the areas in Porto Alegre where young people are most socially vulnerable.

The Brazilian Recycling Center is based on the Canadian Computers for Schools (CFS) project which began in 1993. "The project envisioned a computer factory. In our negotiations, we proposed that a school be developed first," Orlandi stated. Another model for the program was the Colombian Computers for Education Program (CPE), which got underway in 2000.

The institutions and communities interested in receiving recycled computers should send their digital inclusion requests to the Department of Logistics and Information Technology in the Ministry of Planning.

"The proposals will be chosen by a council in Brasília comprised by representatives of the Ministries of Planning, Education, and Work and Employment," informed the secretary of Logistics and Technology, Rogério Santanna.

Santanna went on to say that other reconditioning and recycling centers will be inaugurated this year in Brasília, São Paulo, Curitiba, and Recife.

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