

Desmond Tutu refurbishes Close the Gap's 250.000th computer

Close the Gap, an international non-profit organisation giving away high-quality, pre-owned computers donated by European companies to projects which empower the individual and the community, celebrated an important milestone yesterday: the donation of the 250 000th computer to Close the Gap from its donors in Europe.

During a special event organized in Close the Gap's computer refurbishment centre in Culemborg (the Netherlands), Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu, long-term ambassador of Close the Gap, was invited to carry out the last part of the refurbishment process of the symbolic 250,000th computer to be shipped to MKI (in South-Africa), a NGO working on medical health information in townships. Close the Gap also announced new partnerships and the reinforcement of its green initiatives.

Close the Gap aims to bridge the digital divide between high-tech countries and developing countries by offering communities access to IT equipment for educational, medical and social projects. Founded in 2003 by the Belgian Olivier Vanden Eynde, Close the Gap today celebrates the donation of the 250.000th computer with the honored presence of Patron Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu is a very active member of Close the Gap's Board of Recommendation. In the social projects in South Africa that fall under his patronage, he is always very conscious of integrating access to ICT and thus information and knowledge. "The importance of information technologies for education use cannot be underestimated. It gives developing countries the opportunity to skip an entire generation of infrastructure by going directly to Internet technology. I strongly believe in partnerships, in joining forces and in together making this world a better place, where opportunities can be sized by everyone." Archbishop em. Desmond Tutu.

In 2011 Close the Gap succeeded in extending its original concept of shipping IT hardware to projects in developing countries to offering fully fledged IT solutions with networking equipment, software solutions and training programs with the direct and active involvement of qualified local partners.

Since 2003, 250 000 computer assets have been donated by 225 European companies, reaching more than 1.5 million unique users in 2 100 beneficiary organizations supported in 40 countries all over the world. As an organization, Close the Gap is recognized as a NGO associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI) and is a member of the United Nations Global Alliance for ICT & Development (UN GAID) and of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC).

(Source: Close the Gap)

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